



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: FOI-2023-00380

Keyword: Organisational Information Police/Staff Misconduct and Complaints

Subject: Substance Misuse Tests

Request and Answer:

Your request for information has now been considered. In respect of Section 1(1) (a) of the Act we can confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does hold information to which your request relates. The decision has been taken to disclose the following.

Request 1

Please tell me, with reference to the 2021/22 financial year, the number of:

- a) Substance misuse tests undertaken at random by your force's officers?
- b) Substance misuse tests administered with cause by your force's officers?
- c) Substance misuse tests given on a pre-employment basis?
- d) The number of positive results produced by all of the tests undertaken in the period?

Request 2

Please break down 1d (the number of positive tests) by:

- a) The drug detected (e.g. Cannabis, cocaine)?
- b) The disciplinary measures resulting (e.g. final warning, dismissed, job offer withdrawn)?
- c) Whether the substance misuse test was given at random, with cause or on a pre-employment basis?

Answer

In response to request one, please see data below:

- 1a) In 2021/22 the PSNI carried out 14 random substance misuse tests.
- 1b) In 2021/22 the PSNI carried out 15 with cause substance misuse tests.
- 1c) In 2021/22 the PSNI carried out 915 pre-employment substance misuse tests.
- 1d) In 2021/22 a total of 6 tests produced a positive result.

In response to request two, PSNI can advise of the following data with regards to the 6 positive substance misuse tests:

2a) The following drugs were detected as a result of positive tests; Cocaine, MDMA, Ketamine, Diazepam & Nordiazepam and Oxymorphone. The breakdown is as follows: (2, 1, 1, 1, 1).

2b) The following discipline measures resulted from positive tests – withdrawn application, dismissal and resignation. The breakdown is as follows: (2, 3, 1).

2c) Tests were carried out either ‘with cause’ or for ‘pre-employment purposes’. The breakdown is as follows: (4, 2).

It should be noted that the ongoing effect of restrictions resulting from Covid-19 limited the number of random substance misuse tests which were conducted in 2021/22.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Corporate Information Branch, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this letter.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter.

In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Corporate Information Manager, Corporate Information Branch, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing foi@psni.police.uk.

If, following an Internal Review carried out by an independent decision maker, you remain unhappy about how your request has been handled you have the right to apply in writing to the Information Commissioner, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, at ‘Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

There are a number of other platforms you can use to contact the ICO and these can be found on the ICO’s website at the following link: [Make a complaint | ICO \(https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/\)](https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/).

In most circumstances, the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out however, the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at their discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ www.psni.police.uk

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.