



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: FOI-2023-00385

Keyword: Organisational Information Finances

Subject: Industrial Tribunal Settlements

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 and this is being provided to you. We further consider some information you seek in is exempt by virtue of section 44 of FOIA and have detailed our rationale as to why this exemption applies. We have also provided you with links to guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office which we have followed in responding to your request.

Request

In the year 2019 (01/01/2019-31/12/2019) could you please supply the following information.

How much money did the PSNI spend on Industrial Tribunal settlements?

I am not requesting specific information on any individual case, just the total sum of money paid as by ordered by the Tribunal or 'out of court' settlements, before Tribunal or during a hearing proper, as not ordered by the Tribunal Judge. This must include any out of court settlements where a non-prejudicial settlement was agreed and or was also subject to a non-disclosure agreement.

Basically. I simply want the PSNI to account for the public money spent in this way in 2019. A simple total is all I am requesting.

Answer

In 2019, the Police Service of Northern Ireland spent £13,052.15 on Industrial Tribunal settlements. Please note this is not a total spend as requested, all other spends are covered by mutual confidentiality provisions, contained within settlement agreements. Therefore, this additional information is being withheld, as explained below.

Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Police Service of Northern Ireland, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which:

- (a) states that fact,
- (b) specifies the exemption in question and
- (c) states (if not otherwise apparent) why the exemption applies.

Section 44 (1) – Prohibitions on disclosure

The full text of exemptions can be found at www.legislation.gov.uk and further guidance on how they operate can be located on the Information Commissioners Office website www.ico.org.uk.

Section 44 (1) (c) – Information is exempt information, if its disclosure by the public authority holding it would constitute punishment as a contempt of the court.

Prohibition on disclosure facilitates the withholding of any information that would, if released, lead to contempt of court. Confidentiality clauses are strict agreements stipulating that information will not be disclosed by either party as to do so would compromise that case.

Section 44 is an absolute class-based exemption and there is no requirement to carry out a public interest test.

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.