



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2023-00425

Keyword: Policing Themes, Operations and Investigations Legislation, Acts and Policies

Subject: Statements at Sentencing when Victims have Statutory Anonymity

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 some information to which your request relates and this is being provided to you. We do not however hold information in relation to request 1 or request 2 below.

Request 1

Copies of communications, directives and/or decisions issued to the PSNI Press Office showing dates of same and who (job title) oversaw this positional change.

Request 2

Clarification of training to facilitate the above and if this included references to and/or inclusion of the JSB Guidance 2019.

Answer to Requests 1 - 2

Enquiries made in relation to your request failed to locate any records or documents relevant to your request as there has been no positional change. Accordingly, we have determined that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does not hold the information to which you seek access.

Request 3

Clarification of the PSNI Press Office understanding of Contempt of Court in such instances.

Request 4

Clarification if the PSNI Press Office understand cases which have no formal reporting restriction in place do not necessarily mean offender identities can be automatically disclosed without appropriate caution to ensure victims under mandatory anonymity are protected.

Answer to Requests 3 - 4

The Police Service of Northern Ireland as a public body operating within the Northern Ireland criminal justice system, follows the legal and ethical guidance set out by the Judicial Studies Board to inform our reporting of sentencing outcomes. We are also a victim-centred organisation and so consult with and keep victims and their families informed throughout.

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.psnipolice.uk

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