



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2023-00697

Keyword: Organisational Information Technology and Equipment

Subject: Data and Storage

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 9. We further consider the information you seek in Requests 7 and 8 are exempt by virtue of Section 31 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 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.

Please note: the answers we have provided are based on the responses in your spreadsheet from your initial request.

Request 1

Do you have a policy/strategy on how you use your data? (Outside of data protection and data privacy covered under general legislation)

Answer

No. A number of departments were contacted within the Police Service of Northern Ireland and they have advised there is no policy/strategy on how we use our data.

Request 2

(If yes) What considerations are included in your data policy/strategy?

Answer

N/A due to answer to Request 1.

Request 3

Do you have a dedicated resource aligned to your data initiatives (excluding data protection)?

Answer

C - Budgets for specific data initiatives are managed in the IT department with contributions from other departments.

Request 4

Do you have these roles within your organisation?

Answer

No.

Request 5

Do you outsource these roles?

Answer

No.

Request 6

Who is responsible for setting your data strategy? (Understanding how senior the ownership is within the organisation).

Answer

B - Level 2: CDIO, CIO, CTO, CxO.

Request 7

What percentage of your data is stored:

Answer

PSNI is withholding this information under Section 31 of the Freedom of Information Act. An explanation has been provided 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.

The exemption, as well as the factors the Department considered when deciding where the public interest lies, are listed below:

Section 31(1)(a)(b) Law Enforcement- information which would be likely to prejudice (a) the prevention or detection of crime (b) the apprehension or prosecution of offenders

Section 31 is a prejudice based, qualified exemption and there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in releasing the requested information as well as considering the public interest to ensure that withholding the information is the appropriate response.

The summary of the Harm and Public Interest considerations for Section 31 is provided below:

Harm

The release of information pertaining to where the PSNI stores its data, be that on premises or on a private/public cloud, and/or with what providers would be harmful to PSNI as it will reveal details of sensitive locations that are critical to the ability of PSNI to fulfil its core function of policing within Northern Ireland.

Public Interest Test**Factors favouring disclosure Section 31**

Release of locations of where data is stored will demonstrate transparency by PSNI.

Factors favouring non-disclosure Section 31

The public would not expect the PSNI to release into the public domain any information which may

reveal the location of where PSNI stores it's data. There is a public interest in not making information about the PSNI infrastructure available which would assist those intent on causing harm.

Decision

Whilst PSNI will, were possible, be open and transparent, some information must be withheld in order that PSNI can fulfil its role of keeping people safe. The release of where data is stored could both directly and indirectly impact on the prevention and detection of crime. Consequently, the public interest is best served by not releasing this information into the public domain.

The release of information under the Freedom of Information Act is a release into the public domain and not just to the individual requesting the information. Once information is disclosed by FOI there is no control or limits as to who or how the information is shared with other individuals, therefore a release under FOI is considered a disclosure to the world in general. While there is a strong public interest in releasing the information requested the PSNI must ensure that law enforcement is not adversely affected.

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.

Request 8

What percentage of your data is stored:

Answer

Please see the response provided to Request 7.

Request 9

Post brexit will your organisation store more data in the UK or less data in the UK?

Answer

No Information Held.

Request 10

When developing your data storage strategies what are your main considerations?

Answer

This isn't a valid request under Section 8(1)(c) of FOI Act inasmuch as you are asking for opinion and not specific recorded information.

Request 11

What is the maximum period you would hold data for? (If there are varying period for different types of data, please provide more information)

Answer

Please see the links provided below which shows the Police Service of Northern Ireland's Records Management Service Instruction and our Retention and Disposal Schedule.

<https://www.psni.police.uk/sites/default/files/2022-09/Records Management 8 August 2019.pdf>

<https://www.psni.police.uk/sites/default/files/2022-07/Police Service of Northern Ireland - Review%2C Retention and Disposal Schedule V0.3.pdf>

Request 12

What is the process for identifying obsolete data in your organisation?

Answer

Please see the links provided below which shows the Police Service of Northern Ireland's Records Management Service Instruction and our Retention and Disposal Schedule.

<https://www.psni.police.uk/sites/default/files/2022-09/Records Management 8 August 2019.pdf>

<https://www.psni.police.uk/sites/default/files/2022-07/Police Service of Northern Ireland - Review%2C Retention and Disposal Schedule V0.3.pdf>

Request 13

How mature is your architecture in managing your data end-to-end, from ingestion / generation to final consumption? (**Need a descriptor to define mature)

Answer

B - We capture and share data from multiple applications through data warehouses.

Request 14

At what level does data add value to your organisation?

Answer

This isn't a valid request under Section 8(1)(c) of FOI Act inasmuch as you are asking for opinion and not specific recorded information.

Request 15

What level of analytics methodologies do you master and support?

Answer

C - Statistical analytics and machine/deep learning on big data at rest.

Request 16

How far does your analytics architecture span across your organization?

Answer

C - Our analytics use cases can consume data sources from all relevant applications

Request 17

What are the biggest obstacles in your organization to creating value from data and implementing a data-centric strategy?

Answer

This isn't a valid request under Section 8(1)(c) of FOI Act inasmuch as you are asking for opinion and not specific recorded information.

Request 18

Do you have a policy for open data or transparency data?

Answer

D - Neither - do not have any.

Request 19

Do you outsource your open data service?

Answer

D - We use internal software.

Request 20

Do you have definitive protocols for managing your data in terms of...

Answer

D – Not sure.

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.