



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2010-00732

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Cases Where One Partner/Spouse has killed the other

Request and Answer:

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested.

Question 1

Please could you confirm how many cases in the last five years have there been when one partner/spouse has killed the other and could you break these down as follows:

by gender of perpetrator and victim, married/unmarried, children present, whether prosecuted for murder or manslaughter and the range of sentences for each group?

Answer

Total number of murders with a domestic motivation involving spouses/partners over the last five years was 19. Of these the total of which the victim was female and suspect/offender was male was 12 and the total of which the victim was male and the suspect/offender was female was 7. The number of cases where the victim and offender were married was 8.

Of these 19 cases 5 offenders were convicted of murder, 4 offenders were convicted of manslaughter and 1 offender was convicted of impeding apprehension of offenders.

Of the remainder, 2 suspect committed suicide, 2 offender died before proceedings, and 5 cases are still pending.

The range of sentences include 2 years imprisonment, 78 months imprisonment with 15 months probation and life imprisonment.

It is estimated that the cost of complying with your request for whether children were present would cause your request to exceed the "appropriate costs limit" under Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which is currently set by the Secretary of State at £450.

Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Police Service of Northern Ireland, when refusing to provide such information (because the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit) to provide you the applicant with a notice which states that fact.

This information is not held centrally but within individual Public Protection Units within the eight District Command Units. The Districts were therefore canvassed for cost estimates for retrieving information in relation to whether children were present and responses indicated that the cost of this (£400 – 16 hours), combined with the cost of responding to the remainder of the request, would exceed the appropriate limit as by the Secretary of State.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter should be considered as a Refusal Notice, and the request has therefore been closed.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland have also considered whether we can be of any assistance in terms of helping you refine your request to bring this part of your question under the cost limit however the nature and structure of the information requested unfortunately makes this impossible.

Question 2

Whether pleaded guilty or not guilty?

Question 3

Whether claimed provocation?

Answer

Searches have been conducted regarding questions 2 and 3 which failed to locate any records or documents outlined in your request and based on the information you have provided. Accordingly, I have determined that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does not hold the information to which you seek access.

For your information, the Public Prosecution Service Northern Ireland may be best placed to provide a response to your request. You can access their Freedom of Information request form by using the following link <http://www.ppsni.gov.uk/default.aspx?CATID=0&page=eform&eid=1> or alternatively you can contact them in writing at the address below;

Public Prosecution Service
Headquarters Sections and Belfast Region
Belfast Chambers, 93 Chichester Street, Belfast, BT1 3JR

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 Freedom of Information Team, 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 Head of Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing xxx@xxxx.xxx.police.uk

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. 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 his 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.