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Ms. N. Mcall
request-6892-502e12af@whatdotheyknow.com

Date: 9th March 2009

Tel No.: (DDI) 01622 654429

FOI Ref.: 856/2009

Dear Ms. Mcall,

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST 856/2009

I write in connection with your request for information received by Kent Police on the 29th January 2009. I am very conscious that this response finds you some time after the statutory time limit permitted to a public authority for dealing with requests has passed and for the lateness of our response I apologise.

I note that you seek access to information, in summary, regarding whether Kent Police automatically reduce injury award pensions to the lowest permissible band when the former officer reaches the age of 65.

Following receipt of your request, searches were conducted within Kent Police to locate the information relevant to your request and I can respond as follows:

Question 1. I am requesting certain documents that you may have detailing force policy and procedure in the management and review of police injury award pensions prior to the year 2004. To help you in your search and to direct my enquiry as clearly as possible I am quoting below a paragraph from Home Office Circular 46/2004, Annex C;

'This Guidance is being issued to help ensure a fairer, more cohesive approach to the payment of injury benefits to ill-health retired officers who have reached the compulsory retirement age with their Force. A recent survey found that practice in this area was diverse. Some forces automatically reduced degree of disablement benefits to the lowest banding when this age had been reached - others continued to pay benefits at the same rate until the death of the Officer concerned.'

The above quote identifies two categories of forces - A) one group that automatically reduced degree of disablement benefits to the lowest banding when compulsory retirement age had been reached and; a second group B) that continued to pay benefits at the same rate until the death of the Officer concerned. I am attempting to identify and obtain a copy of documents that show which category (A or B) your force would have been included in prior to receipt of HOC 46/2004. It may be that your response would be sufficient if you simply tell me which group your force was in, but if there was a written policy or procedural document setting out details, then I should like a copy.

Answer: Kent Police do not reduce the injury awards pension to the lowest permissible band when the former officer reaches age 65, and did not reduce these awards prior to the Home Office Circular 46/2004. Kent Police therefore fall into category B as outlined in your request. The force policy surrounding injury award pensions is detailed in L80 Injury Awards: The Provisions of the Police Pensions Regulations and this can be viewed on the Kent Police website via the following link www.kent.police.uk

Thank you for your interest in Kent Police and I hope that the information we have been able to provide is of use to you. A sheet, which summarised your rights, was enclosed with the acknowledgement sent to you and as suggested therein, should you have any further questions concerning your request, please contact me quoting the reference number shown above.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Birchley
Freedom of Information Administrator