



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2011-00674

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: Mis-fuelling of PSNI Vehicles

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 provide the number of diesel vehicles currently operated by the PSNI.

Question 2

The number of occasions any of these vehicles has been mis-filled with petrol requiring unscheduled servicing during each of the last two years.

Question 3

Please provide the total direct cost associated with the mis-fuelling events.

Question 4

If the motor vehicles are owned/maintained by a leasing company please provide the name of the leasing company.

Answer

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.

It is estimated that the cost of complying with your request for information would 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 (18 hours).

The Police Service of Northern Ireland do not specifically record and/or monitor where maintenance work is necessary due to vehicle mis-fuelling. Vehicle faults are recorded on the basis of the information provided by the customer and we are of the view that mis-fuelling or any repairs required would not always be presented at initial stages as a fault and therefore not recorded as such. To screen records to ascertain those occasions when it is overtly reported as the cause of the fault, would require 74 hours of research which exceeds the appropriate fees level of £450 as specified

in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004. To locate and retrieve the information requested would require a member of staff to carry out a time consuming search of a high volume of records.

It should be noted that as a high percentage of fuel is currently obtained from embedded bulk tanks, the chances of mis-fuelling are negligible as petrol and diesel keys used in the dispensing system are different; you cannot draw petrol on a diesel key and vice versa.

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.

In compliance with Section 16 of the Act, I have considered if your request can be refined to bring it under the appropriate limit, however the nature and structure of the information, unfortunately makes this impossible.

Although excess cost removes the PSNI's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, I have provided below the information which was retrieved before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of the request.

Answer 1

There are currently 1590 diesel vehicles operated by the PSNI.

If you have any queries regarding your request or this 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@xxx.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.psni.police.uk

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