



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2013-03261

**Keyword:** Organisational Information/Governance

**Subject:** UAVS Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Systems

### Request and Answer:

#### Question 1

Has your force used (in a trial or otherwise) or considered using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs)?

#### Question 2

If your force has not considered using UAVs, could you state why not?

#### Question 3

If your force has used or plans to use UAVs in a trial or other capacity, could you please provide:

- a. The dates, times and locations of the trials.
- b. The purposes for which they were/are to be carried out.
- c. The manufacturer and model of the UAV used/to be used.

#### Question 4

Has any sort of plan or timetable been produced by the force in order to make preparations for the introduction of UAVs?

- a. If so, please provide a copy of the plan/timetable.

#### Question 5

Have any force representatives held discussions with representatives of UAV manufacturers or manufacturers' industry bodies on the issue of the introduction of UAVs? If so, please can you provide:

- a. Dates, times and agendas of the meetings; b. Minutes of the meetings.

#### Question 6

Have any force representatives held discussions with representatives of other police forces in relation to the use of UAVs?

If so, please can you provide:

- a. Dates, times and agendas of the meetings; b. Minutes of the meetings.

### **Question 7**

Has your force received from central or local government or the Association of Chief Police Officers any instructions, advice, recommendations, guidance or information relating to police use of UAVs?  
a. If so, please provide a copy of the documents provided.

### **Question 8**

Has your force designated a single point of contact (SPOC) for unmanned aerial systems?

### **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.

I have been informed that in excess of 20 staff were involved in contacts with various UAV manufacturers and details of these contacts are held by the individuals involved. As these discussions have taken place over several years a considerable number of documents are involved. To answer question 6 would entail a manual search by over 20 staff and 1 member of staff alone holds in excess of 150 e-mails. Allowing 1 minute to read and check each e-mail would, in endeavouring to answer question 6, take approximately 40 hours. This is well in excess of the 18 hours as laid down in the Freedom Of Information Act.

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.

You may wish to submit a refined request in order that the cost of complying with your request may be facilitated within the 'appropriate limit'. In compliance with Section 16 of the Act, I have considered how your request may be refined to bring it under the appropriate limit.

**It may be possible to provide information on questions 1- 5 and 7- 8 within the cost limit.**

Submission of a refined request would be treated as a new request, and considered in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, including consideration of relevant Part II exemptions.

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 [foi@psni.pnn.police.uk](mailto:foi@psni.pnn.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.psnj.police.uk](http://www.psnj.police.uk)

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