



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

FOI Reference number: 39/2016

Date: 29 September 2016

Request:

Please advise:

1. How many hearing loss claims were submitted to Blackwell Associates during years August 2014/15 and August 15/16.
2. How many of those claims were initially rejected.
3. How many of those claims after reconsideration by Blackwell Associates were subsequently forwarded to the DOJ for a decision by an IMR.
4. How much do Blackwell Associates charge PBNI for each hearing loss examination.
5. How much do Blackwell Associates charge PBNI for each reconsideration of initial SMP hearing loss decision.

Answer

1. In August 2014/15 there were 270 and in August 2015/16 there were 201 hearing loss claims submitted to Blackwell Associates Ltd.
2. Of those above 224 and 136 respectively were initially refused.
3. Of the claims in point 1 above, 49 and 1 respectively have been forwarded to the DOJ for a decision by the IMR. In 26 and 1 case(s) respectively this followed reconsideration of new evidence provided as part of the appeal.

With regard to the points 4 and 5 of your request I can confirm the Board holds this information. The Board has determined that the exemption at section 43 – likely to prejudice commercial interests - of the Freedom of Information Act (Commercial Interests) applies to these questions.

Section 43 is a qualified exemption and, as such, is subject to a Public Interest Test. The Board has completed a Public Interest and has decided that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

A copy of the Public Interest Test is attached for your information.

If you have queries about this request or the decision, please contact the Board quoting the reference number above. If you are unhappy with the service you have received and wish to make a complaint or request a review you should write to the Board's Chief Executive at the following address:

Northern Ireland Policing Board
Waterside Tower
31 Clarendon Road
Clarendon Dock
Belfast BT1 3BG

email: foi@nipolicingboard.org.uk

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner. Generally, the Information Commissioner's Office cannot investigate or make a decision on a case unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Board. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:-

The Information Commissioner's Office – Northern Ireland
3rd Floor
14 Cromac Place
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB.

Telephone: - 0303 1231114
Email: - ni@ico.org.uk

Please be advised that Policing Board replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ www.nipolicingboard.org.uk.

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