



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

FOI Reference number: FOI 24/2015

Date: 22 May 2015

Request:

I hereby request that Chapter 13 be disclosed in its entirety to me and the Wounded Police & Families Association without delay.

Answer

The Redactions have been made to Chapter 13 of the Scofield report in order to remove references in relation to draft proposals for revised injury benefit regulations in England and Wales.

As the Home Office and Department of Justice will be publishing a draft of the injury benefit regulations for public consultation, at a future date, it is the Board's view that the exemption under section 22 (Information intended for future publication) of the FOIA applies.

The exemption under section 22 is a qualified exemption and a public interest test must be carried out to decide whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure. A copy of our public interest test document 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
12 Cromac Place
Gasworks
Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 2JB.

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

Please be advised that all Policing Board replies under Freedom of Information will 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

FOI 24/2015 – Section 22 Exemption “Information Intended for Future Publication”

Public Interest Test

The above exemption is a qualified exemption, and a Public Interest Test must be carried out to decide whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Information requested by the applicant

- Copy of the unredacted Chapter 13 of the Scofield report.

Arguments in favour of disclosure of the requested information

1. Disclosure of the information would be in line with a public authority being open and transparent in how it transacts its business, and would help in promoting accountability.
2. Disclosure would also be within the overall spirit of the Freedom of Information legislation in asking public bodies to be open and transparent.

Arguments in favour of engaging the exemption and withholding the requested information

1. The draft injury benefit regulations referenced in the Scofield report are an early version and may have been revised since they were provided to the Board.
2. Withholding disclosure would safeguard openness in all communications between the Board, the DOJ and other parties on the draft injury benefit regulations, to ensure a full and frank exchange of views.
3. Release of the information at this time would pre-empt a planned public consultation by the DOJ on the draft injury benefit regulations.
4. The DOJ intend to publish the final injury benefit regulations following resolution by the Northern Ireland Assembly. The Board should not place information in the public domain that may be subject to future amendment.

Result

Taking into account all of the deliberations above, it is felt that the public interest in engaging the exemption to withhold the information outweighs the arguments towards disclosure.

As a result, the requested information should not be provided.