

15 January 2025

REFERENCE: FOI\24\142

Dear Sir,

RE: Freedom of information request dated 03 December 2024 and clarification on 7 January 2025.

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request as follows:

annual statistical data for the periods April 1969 to April 1998 and from May 1998 to May 2024 on the (a) number of cases in which criminal injuries compensation awards were made to victims of paramilitary style attacks (PSA) in Northern Ireland, and (b) the total amounts of compensation awarded each year.

You clarified your request to advise that you were interested specifically in compensation awards for victims of 'punishment attacks'. You noted that these now appear to be termed as 'Paramilitary Style Attacks' (PSA) in official documents but you are concerned with punishment attacks rather than terrorist type attacks. In relation to your request for information regarding amounts of compensation awarded each year this would apply also only to victims of 'punishment attacks'

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives you two rights of access when you write to us asking for information. You have the right to know whether we hold the information that you are looking for, and you have the right to have the information given to you. These rights may only be overridden if the information you are looking for is covered by an exemption in the Act.

Compensation Services issue compensation awards on an average of 980 applications every year. To provide the information requested one member of staff

would need to manually check every award issued to ascertain if the claimant was a victim of punishment attack and the amount of compensation paid. Analysis would be required of what constitutes a 'punishment attack' e.g. whether such an attack might be perceived as a punishment attack by the applicant and that is not the case, as well as the counter corollary.

The time that it would take to locate, retrieve and extract information from each application is estimated to be 5 mins on average (but some cases could take much longer)

The approximate number of applications to assess per year = 980. The total time to review the applications for one year would therefore be 4,900 mins (81.6 hrs).

At an estimated cost of £25 per hour this would exceed the cost threshold of £600.

The request is therefore considered exempt under Section 12(1) of the FoI Act.

If you are unhappy with the result of your request for information you may request an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request an internal review please do so in writing stating the reasons to the address above.

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the DOJ has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out.

Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Records & Information Manager