

An Garda Síochána

Oifig Saorála Fáisnéise,
An Garda Síochána, Teach áth Luimnigh,
Lárionad Gnó Udáras Forbartha Tionscail,
Baile Sheáin, An Uaimh,
Contae na Mí.
C15 DR90



Freedom of Information Office,
An Garda Síochána, Athlumney House,
IDA Business Park,
Johnstown, Navan,
Co Meath.
C15 DR90

Teileafón/Tel: (046) 9036350

Láithreán Gréasain/Website:

www.garda.ie

Bí linn/Join us  

Ríomh-phoist/Email: foi@garda.ie

Re: Freedom of Information Request FOI-000239-2020 Request Part-Grant

Dear

I refer to your request, dated and received on 16th July 2020 which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 (FOI Act) for records held by An Garda Síochána.

Part 1(n) of Schedule 1 of the FOI Act states that An Garda Síochána is listed as a partially included agency "insofar as it relates to administrative records relating to human resources, or finance or procurement matters". Therefore, only administrative records that relate to human resources, finance or procurement shall be considered.

Your request sought:

Original Request:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2014, I would like access to the following information:

Materials showing how many detectives of all ranks attached to Cork city division, Cork West division and Cork North division in 2019 and to date in 2020?

Clarified Request:

A disclosure was previously released to you in FOI request FOI-000345-2019 in respect of the number of Detectives in the 3 Cork Division. As 2019 was included in this request I wish to inquire if you are happy to refine your request to the year 2020 only.

*The previous one related to just a section of 2019, not the entire year.
As a result, I am happy to proceed with the latest request as worded.*

I wish to inform you that I have decided to part-grant your request on the 5th August 2020.

1

1. Findings, particulars and reasons for decision

Details of your FOI request were provided to the Human Resource Management (HRM) Section of An Garda Síochána. HRM have provided records to this Office in response to your request.

The table below details the number of detectives at Sergeant and Garda rank attached to Cork City, Cork North and Cork West Divisions combined as of 31/12/2019 and as of 30/06/2020:

CORK (City, North & West)	Detective Sergeant	Detective Garda
2019	24	127
2020	25	131

Due to the small number of detective members above the rank of Sergeant, I am of the opinion that providing the information broken down by Division as requested, could result in the identification of the individuals concerned within the Garda Organisation or within the public domain itself. I am therefore refusing to provide the number of Detective members above the rank of Sergeant in accordance with Section 32(1)(a)(iii) and 32(1)(b) which state:

32. (1) *A head may refuse to grant an FOI request if access to the record concerned could, in the opinion of the head, reasonably be expected to -*

(a) prejudice or impair—

(iii) lawful methods, systems, plans or procedures for ensuring the safety of the public and the safety or security of persons and property,

(b) endanger the life or safety of any person,

The publication of current Garda resources specifically by detective rank for the 3 Cork divisions, in conjunction with the Garda roster system, which are already in the public domain, could provide an opportunity for criminal organisations or likeminded individuals to assess the operational policing capabilities in any location at any given time. I am very conscious of the fact that the release of information under the FOI Act is in effect a release to the world at large.

The effective use of Garda resources is critical to meeting the responsibilities of An Garda Síochána as set out at section 7 of An Garda Síochána Act, 2005 Act. By providing access to current numbers of Garda detectives on a localized level would, in my opinion, be contrary to and hinder the legislative goal of providing policing and security services for the State.

The allocation of Garda detectives is based on operational needs and the security and safety of the public and their property is considered when allocating resources to an area. These methods result in the appropriate staffing levels being identified in each area to ensure the safety of the public and property therein. The release of the requested information may impact in a harmful manner upon the safety of properties and the persons in a specific sub-district.

The harm involved refers to the realistic and reasonable expectation that it will confirm current operational capabilities at specific locations thus actively providing information that could reasonably be expected to assist criminal organisations and likeminded individuals in their development of counter measures and diversionary tactics. Whilst it may be argued that

distraction tactics are already being used by criminal organisations to divert Garda resources it is reasonable to assume that confirmation by An Garda Síochána of the number of Garda detectives allocated to a specific division will allow for more accurate diversionary tactics to be deployed.

This feeds into the prejudicial effect upon policing methods, systems, plans or procedures to prevent crimes against the person and property were this information is to be released.

2. Right of Appeal

In the event that you are not happy with this decision you may seek an Internal Review of the matter by writing to the address below and quoting reference number **FOI-000239-2020**.

Freedom of Information Office, An Garda Síochána, Athlumney House, IDA Business Park, Johnstown, Navan, Co. Meath C15 DR90

Please note that a fee applies. This fee has been set at €30 (€10 fee for a Medical Card holder). Payment should be made by way of bank draft, money order, postal order or personal cheque, and made payable to Accountant, Garda Finance Directorate, Garda Headquarters, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8.

Payment can be made by electronic means, using the following details:

Account Name: Garda Síochána Finance Section Public Bank Account

Account Number: 10026896

Sort Code: 900017

IBAN: IE86BOFI90001710026896

BIC: BOFIE2D

You must ensure that your FOI reference number (FOI-000239-2020) is included in the payment details.

You should submit your request for an Internal Review within 4 weeks from the date of this notification. The review will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of An Garda Síochána and the decision will be communicated to you within 3 weeks. The making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances.

Please be advised that An Garda Síochána replies under Freedom of Information may be released in to the public domain via our website at www.garda.ie.

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

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please contact the FOI Office by telephone at (046) 9036350.

Yours sincerely,



ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL OFFICER

PAUL BASSETT

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION OFFICER


AUGUST 2020