

An Garda Síochána

Oifig Saoráil Faisnéise
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-000002-2016 Part-Grant Request

Dear

I refer to the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and your submission to An Garda Síochána dated 1st January 2016 and received on 4th January 2016.

Part 1 (n) of Schedule 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 (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 is shown below:

I wish to request access to the following records under the Freedom of Information Acts:

- i) *The amount paid in respect of contracts for media training by An Garda Síochána in each of the years 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015*
- ii) *The amount paid in respect of contracts for the supply and delivery of firearms and related accessories by An Garda Síochána in each of the years 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015*
- iii) *The total cost of bedding and feed for the Garda Mounted Unit in each of the years 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015*
- (iv) *The number of class 'F' or full-size luxury cars purchased by An Garda Síochána in each of the years 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015; details of the model of each of these cars, the total cost of these purchases, and an indication of whether they were used or new*

I have now made a final decision to **partially grant your request**.

The purpose of this letter is to explain that decision.

1. Findings, particulars and reasons for decisions to deny access

The first part of your request sought:

“The amount paid in respect of contracts for media training by An Garda Síochána in each of the years 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015”

An Garda Síochána completed one tender in respect of media training for Officers and Senior Managers in the period outlined above. The contract was signed on the 1st of October 2015 and no payments have been made to date under this contract.

Part (ii) of your request sought:

“The amount paid in respect of contracts for the supply and delivery of firearms and related accessories by An Garda Síochána in each of the years 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015”

I am refusing part (ii) of your request under section 32(1)(a)(i) and 32(1)(a)(ii) of the Act as I am of the opinion that this information can be reasonably expected, if used inappropriately, to prejudice or impair the Garda Organisation operational capabilities in:

- (i) *“the prevention, detection or investigation of offences, the apprehension or prosecution of offenders or the effectiveness of lawful methods, systems, plans or procedures employed for the purposes of the matter aforesaid”*
- (ii) *“the enforcement of, compliance with or administration of any law”*

The detail sought by you fundamentally seeks to identify the operational capabilities of An Garda Síochána with regard to firearms throughout the Garda Organisation. An Garda Síochána has unique functions, as set out in section 7 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005, of which one is “*protecting the Security of the State*”. I am of the opinion that nothing should jeopardise, impair or prejudice the ability of An Garda Síochána to carry out that function to its fullest capability.

It is my opinion that the release of this information into the public domain in any form via a Freedom of Information request is an unnecessary risk to the law enforcement procedures employed throughout the State and to individual Gardaí both armed and unarmed. It is reasonable to believe that the information sought and merged with other Garda information readily available in the public domain, such as Garda specialist sections, could result in an overall picture being developed with regard to the allocation of firearms throughout the Organisation. This would be of benefit to criminal organisations and individual criminals alike.

In part (iii) of your request, you sought:

“The total cost of bedding and feed for the Garda Mounted Unit in each of the years 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015”

The Garda Mounted Unit has a national remit and is under the direction and control of Assistant Commissioner, National Support Services.

The Garda Mounted Unit, comprising of 13 horses, is based at Áras an Uachtaráin, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8. The main functions of the Garda Mounted Unit include:

- Crime Prevention and detection patrols — supporting mainstream policing
- Searches for missing persons over rough terrain that is inaccessible to vehicles
- Community policing including school and community project visits
- Major event policing e.g. matches, concerts and festivals
- Public order and crowd control

Searches were carried out within the Finance Directorate; however, the specific report for the total cost of bedding and feed for the Garda Mounted Unit is not available. Following a discussion with you on this matter, it was agreed to provide the overall expenses maintaining animals in the Garda Mounted Unit. These figures include:

- veterinary costs
- animal feed
- grooming services
- kenneling fees
- purchase of animals

Year*	2012	2013	2014	2015
Garda Mounted Unit	€113,276	€135,505	€91,385	€74,054

*Figures correct as of 7th January 2016

The last part of your request is seeking:

"The number of class 'F' or full-size luxury cars purchased by An Garda Síochána in each of the years 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015; details of the model of each of these cars, the total cost of these purchases, and an indication of whether they were used or new"

As per section 32(1)(a)(ix), 32(1)(b) and 32(1)(c) of the Act I am refusing to provide the information you requested for reasons directly associated with the risk it could reasonably be expected to pose to the security of both the vehicle and the person(s) to whom these vehicles are made available.

Law enforcement and public safety

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—

(ix) the security of a building or other structure or a vehicle, ship, boat or aircraft, or

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

(c) facilitate the commission of an offence.

I can advise you that An Garda Síochána purchased used “*class 'F' or full-size luxury cars*” to the value of €133,000 during the period 2012 to 2015 inclusive.

The overall expenditure on the Garda fleet and the number of vehicles in the fleet is available on the Garda website under ‘*Transport Section*’ on the Finance Publication Scheme FOI at the following URL:

<http://garda.ie/Controller.aspx?Page=15985&Lang=1>

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 **F01-000002-2016**.

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 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: IE86B0F190001710026896
BIC: BOFIE2D

You must ensure that your FOI reference number 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 me by telephone at (046) 9036350.

Yours sincerely,

 **SUPERINTENDENT**
HELEN DEELY
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

29th January 2016