

# 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](http://www.garda.ie)

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Ríomh-phoist:/Email: [foi@garda.ie](mailto:foi@garda.ie)

**Ms. Laura Colgan,**

## **Re: Freedom of Information Request FOI-000298-2017 Request Part Granted**

*Dear Ms. Colgan,*

I refer to your request, dated and received on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017 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:

- ‘3. *Details of the spend on personal protective equipment / safety gear for gardai in 2014, 2015 and 2016. Please include the breakdown of the PPE / safety gear bought for gardai each year, excluding specialist units or for units in which this information would compromise operations.*’

Your request was further clarified on the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2017 as follows:

*‘I can confirm I am seeking details of the spend on personal protective equipment / safety gear for gardai in 2014, 2015 and 2016’ and a breakdown of the spend on PPE/safety gear, including Riot Helmets, Riot Shields, Anti Stab Vests, Hi-Vis Garda Jackets, Knee protective pads and Elbow protective pads.’*

The FOI Act does not confer a general right of access to information; rather it confers a right of access to records. Therefore, your request for information has been treated as a request for access to records containing the information you seek.

I have now made a final decision to partially grant your request on the 27<sup>th</sup> July 2017. The purpose of this letter is to explain my decision.

### 1. Findings, particulars and reasons for decision

Details of your request were provided to the Finance Section within An Garda Síochána who conducted a search for records relating to your request.

I wish to advise that I have made a decision to grant the first part of your request ‘*I can confirm I am seeking details of the spend on personal protective equipment / safety gear for gardai in 2014, 2015 and 2016*’.

**Table A** below sets out the total amount paid in respect of the purchase of clothing (protective material and specialised equipment) in 2014, 2015 and 2016 respectively. The costs are categorised under two financial subheads i.e. *Purchase of Clothing – Protective Material* and *Purchase of Clothing – Specialised Equipment*:

**TABLE A**

	2014	2015	2016
<b>Purchase of Clothing – Protective Material</b>	€ 196,907	€ 164,141	€ 658,770
<b>Purchase of Clothing – Specialised Equipment</b>	€ 583,685	€ 543,232	€ 197,593

The records you seek in relation to your request have been subject to a number of previous Freedom of Information requests and the responses are available in our 2015, 2016, 2017 Finance - Procurement Decision Log, which is available at:

<http://www.garda.ie/Controller.aspx?Page=15037&Lang=1>

The following decisions are relevant to your request, specifically **FOI-000063-2016**:

2015 Requests	2016 Requests	2017 Requests
FOI-000029-2015	<b>FOI-000063-2016</b>	FOI-000099-2017
	FOI-000388-2016	

However, in order to provide an updated reply in respect of the second part of your request ‘*a breakdown of the spend on PPE/safety gear, including Riot Helmets, Riot Shields, Anti Stab Vests, Hi-Vis Garda Jackets, Knee protective pads and Elbow protective pads.*’ same was forwarded to the Procurement Section who has provided the following records.

Please see **Table B** below which provides a breakdown of the cost (including VAT) of the specific items you have requested:

**TABLE B**

	2014	2015	2016
<b>Riot Helmets</b>	0	€ 600	0
<b>Riot Shields</b>	0	0	€ 7,626
<b>*Anti Stab/Ballistic Vests</b>	€ 130,900	€ 89,170	€ 482,930
<b>**Hi Vis Garda Jackets</b>	€ 261,226	€ 264,106	€ 59,618
<b>Knee Protective Pads</b>	0	€ 13,653	€ 2,275
<b>Elbow Protective Pads</b>	0	€ 11,070	€ 2,583

\*Anti-Stab/Ballistic Vests include both uniformed and plain clothes member's vests.

\*\*Hi-Vis Garda Jackets include both lightweight and waterproof uniform jackets

The Garda uniform incorporates elements of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which are appropriate for the duties being performed. Certain types of duty require specific PPE elements to be included in the uniforms such as motorcycle and air support duties.

On entering the Garda College a student is provided with a standard uniform which consists of the following items:

- Hat
- Hat Cover
- Epaulettes
- Shirt
- T -Shirts
- Tie
- Tie Pin
- Trousers
- Belt
- Shoes
- Fleece
- Waterproof navy Jacket
- High Visibility waterproof Jacket
- High Visibility light weight jacket
- Anti-Stab Vest

Each member of the force is required to maintain an operational and a formal uniform. It is a disciplinary offence not to comply with An Garda Síochána dress code or to be untidy in uniform.

The specialist equipment assigned to each member of An Garda Síochána serves an operational requirement within the environment in which they operate. Equipment such as Riot Helmets, Riot Shields and Protective Pads as specified in your request are required in highly volatile situations to protect Garda members when dealing with public disorder and violent incidents. The equipment serves as a protective measure in these types of situations allowing Gardaí to carry out their functions to protect society and preserve the peace.

The Anti-Stab Vest is a vital part of equipment issued to members of An Garda Síochána for their personal protection. Similarly, Ballistic Vests are issued to members of specific units of An Garda Síochána. The Hi-Visibility jackets are also a very important part of Garda protective equipment and the jacket is designed to provide a high level of visibility when a Garda is on outdoor duty, especially at night time and when on traffic-related duties.

The Procurement Section of An Garda Síochána when ordering items of clothing or equipment have to take into account lead-in times for the delivery of such items which can take up to twelve months. The increase in items ordered in 2013 for delivery in 2014 was to cater for student intakes, Garda Reserves and promotions. In addition, an internal online ordering system was launched in 2013 leading to an increase in orders for 2014. The increase in the order of Anti-Stab/Ballistic Vests in 2016 relates to operational

demands such as catering for student intakes and the establishment of specialist units who require specific PPE such as ballistics vests. Adequate stocks must be available to cater for the requests of operational personnel at all times.

## 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-000298-2017**.

**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 FOI-000298-2017 is included in the payment details.**

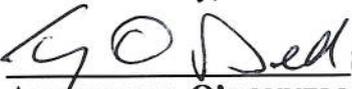
You should submit your request for an Internal Review within 4 weeks from the date of this notification. The review will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of An Garda Síochána and the decision will be communicated to you within 3 weeks. The making of a late appeal 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](http://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  
ANTHONY M. O'DONNELL  
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION OFFICER

27 JULY 2017

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