

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 DR 90

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-000120-2016 Request Partially Granted

Dear

I refer to the Freedom of Information Act 2014 (FOI Act) and your submission to this body, dated 26th March 2016 and received on the 29th March 2016.

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:

1. *The number of armed Gardai personnel at both Dublin and Shannon airport as of March 26th 2016.*
2. *The cost of arming one Garda at either Dublin or Shannon airport as of March 26th 2016.*
3. *The total cost of implementing armed Gardai personnel at both Dublin and Shannon airport as of March 26th 2016.*

I wish to inform you that your request is **partially granted**.

The purpose of this letter is to explain my decision.

1. Findings, particulars and reason for decision.

In the first part of your request, you have sought ‘*The number of armed Gardai personnel at both Dublin and Shannon airport as of March 26th 2016*’

I am refusing this part of your request under Section 32(1)(a)(i) of the FOI Act as I am of the opinion that this information can be reasonably expected, if used inappropriately, to prejudice or impair the Garda Organisation's operational capabilities.

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—*
 - (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 matters aforesaid,*

The detail sought by you in your request of the 26th of March 2016 fundamentally seeks to identify the operational capabilities of An Garda Síochána with regard to the number of armed Garda personnel at both Dublin and Shannon Airports. If this information were to be released to the public it could create a serious risk to the security of both Dublin and Shannon Airports. An Garda Síochána has unique functions, as set out in 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.

The data sought, if released, would specifically identify the number of armed Garda personnel at both Dublin and Shannon Airports thus allowing for criminal elements in society to proactively develop and/or acquire countermeasures to negate the possible effect an armed Garda response may have in any given situation. This in turn would diminish effectiveness of the lawful methods employed by An Garda Síochána to prevent and detect offences and apprehend offenders as set out in Section 32(1)(a)(i) of the FOI Act.

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, to individual Gardaí both armed and unarmed and to members of the public.

In the second part of your request you have sought ‘*The cost of arming one Garda at either Dublin or Shannon airport as of March 26th 2016.*’

The financial information on the cost of arming one Garda at either Dublin or Shannon Airport on the 26th of March 2016 is not recorded thus this information is not available.

However, the **total** cost to equip a plain-clothes member of An Garda Síochána with all of the items they require to do their job is €2,255.16 (including VAT).

In the third part of your request you have sought 'The total cost of implementing armed Gardai personnel at both Dublin and Shannon airport as of March 26th 2016.'

Dublin Airport

The financial information on the individual local policing costs incurred by Gardai at either Dublin or Shannon Airports on the 26th of March 2016 is not recorded thus this information is not available.

The Financial Management System (FMS) within An Garda Síochána was queried to identify if the records for costs associated with Dublin Airport could be extracted to provide an answer to your request. It has been determined that financial records do not exist specifically for Dublin Airport however, financial costs associated with the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB), which includes both Dublin Airport and GNIB based at Burgh Quay, can be extracted. This is the lowest level of expenditure report that can be provided by the FMS and therefore records do not exist for Dublin Airport in isolation.

In accordance with the requirements of Section 15(1)(a) of the FOI Act, I am satisfied that all reasonable steps have been taken to identify and locate the records requested in relation to this part of your request. As the records concerned do not exist in the format in which you require them I must therefore refuse your request on this basis.

Refusal on administrative grounds to grant FOI requests

15. (1) A head to whom an FOI request is made may refuse to grant the request where—

- (a) the record concerned does not exist or cannot be found after all reasonable steps to ascertain its whereabouts have been taken,

Shannon Airport

Security at Shannon Airport is reviewed on a regular basis by local Garda Management in conjunction and consultation with the Shannon Airport authorities and other relevant stakeholders. The security operation at Shannon is based on ongoing assessments of threat levels. Regular meetings are conducted to maintain an adequate level of security.

As stated above, the financial information on the individual local policing costs incurred by Gardai at either Dublin or Shannon Airports on the 26th of March 2016 is not recorded thus this information is not available.

However, the **total** cost incurred by An Garda Síochána in providing security at Shannon Airport from 1/1/2016 - 31/3/2016 was €307,836.

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 **F01-000120-2016**.

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 OFFICER

25th April 2016