

# 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

Bí linn/Join us  

Láithreán Gréasain/Website:  
[www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie)

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

## Re: Freedom of Information Request FOI-000050-2018 Request Part-Grant

Dear

I refer to your request, dated and received on 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2018 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:

- *How many trainees undertook the physical competency test for the first time in 2016 and 2017? Could you please provide a breakdown of male and female numbers.*
- *How many males passed first time and how many females passed first time?*
- *What support, if any, is provided to recruits if they fail the physical competency test? Can they retake the test? Can they continue in the training programme if they have failed the test?*

I wish to inform you that I have decided to part-grant your request on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2018.

The purpose of this letter is to explain my decision.

## 1. Findings, particulars and reasons for decision

Details of your request were forwarded to the Appointments Section, Human Resource Management and the Garda College, Templemore who conducted a search of their records for the information that you have requested.

The sections of the Act which may deny access to information are known as its exemptions.

I wish to advise you that I am refusing the first part of your request that seeks records for '*How many trainees undertook the physical competency test for the first time in 2016 and 2017?*' under Section 15(1)(c) of the FOI Act, as the records sought are too voluminous.

The 'Physical Competency Test' is a prerequisite for entry as a Trainee to An Garda Síochána. As such, each trainee will have experienced this test prior to commencing their training as the test is part of the final stage of the Garda Recruitment Process. Therefore, no Trainees in 2016 and 2017 have undertaken the physical competency test for the first time.

The Physical Competence Test is divided into 2 sub tests as follows: (1) Fitness test and (2) Physical Competence Test. Should an applicant fail both parts of the Physical Competence Test, they are required to complete both tests (1 and 2). However, should an applicant fail only one of the tests they are required to complete that sub relevant test.

The following rules apply in regard to repeating the Physical Competence Test:

- All applicants who fail the initial test are automatically deferred. They are subsequently scheduled to attend a re-test on the next available date 3 months after their initial test date.
- Should an applicant fail the second Physical Competence Test, an appeal application in writing may be submitted to the Appointments Office within specific timeframes. An appeal letter must include details of illness, injury, or reasonable cause as to why an applicant should be allowed to undergo a further PCT. The appeal application will then be given due consideration by Garda Management. Should an applicant not submit an appeal their file is closed.
- If an applicant is granted an appeal, they must complete the entire Physical Competence Test regardless of whether they failed sub test 1 or 2 or both on previous testing occasions. Failure of applicants to attend or to meet the required standard at the third PCT attempt will result in their applications receiving no further considerations and their files being closed.

In order to provide a breakdown of the information you have requested, staff within both the Appointments Section and Garda College would be tasked to scrutinise a vast volume of records and spreadsheets to calculate first time failures, repeat failures and appeal failures over the period of testing from 2016 and 2017. This task would cause an unreasonable disruption to the working of two functional areas of An Garda Síochána by reason of the nature of volume of the records involved. In this regard, I am applying Section 15(1)(c) of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 wherein it states:

## 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—*

*(c) in the opinion of the head, granting the request would, by reason of the number or nature of the records concerned or the nature of the information concerned, require the retrieval and examination of such number of records or an examination of such kind of the records concerned as to cause a substantial and unreasonable interference with or disruption of work (including disruption of work in a particular functional area) of the FOI body concerned,*

However, I can advise you that Physical Fitness is delivered as part of the Professional Competency Module in the level 7 BA in Applied Policing which is accredited by the University of Limerick. Trainee Gardaí are required to pass two (2) fitness assessments in the first 32 weeks of their training. In this regard, please see attached table with the figures for years 2016 and 2017:

	<b>2016 Male</b>	<b>2016 Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2017 Male</b>	<b>2017 Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Commenced Training</b>	489	162	<b>651</b>	574	237	<b>811</b>
<b>Passed first time</b>	475	147	<b>622</b>	564	231	<b>795</b>
<b>Failed</b>	14	15	<b>29</b>	10	6	<b>16</b>

Of the 29 who repeated the fitness assessment in 2016, 26 trainees passed and progressed their training and of the 16 who repeated the fitness assessment in 2017, all 16 passed and progressed their training.

All assessments, including Fitness, are governed by The Academic Regulations which stipulates the manner in which failed assessments are dealt with. In the event that a Trainee Garda fails the Physical Competency Test, there is one opportunity for them to repeat the assessment as governed by the academic regulations. In the event that they fail the repeat assessment they are prohibited from continuing their training with their original intake.

However, their training is extended and they repeat the assessment with a later intake. As outlined in the Academic Regulations, they are afforded the same provisions in which to complete their assessment. Of the three (3) trainees in 2017 who failed their repeat fitness assessment two (2) subsequently passed it on completion of their extended training.

There are supports in place should a Trainee fail, this includes- Feedback and feedforward including advice and the provision of a training and development plan aimed at equipping them with the means to pass the repeat assessments. Resource seminars are arranged by the qualified PE instructors on staff which focuses on self-motivated goal setting and achievement. There are weekly PE classes and numerous facilities on campus including gym, swimming pool and use of the sports hall which enables all trainees to maintain their personal fitness.

## 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-000050-2018**.

***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-000050-2018) 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**  
**SHARON KENNEDY**  
**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION OFFICER**

26 FEBRUARY, 2018