



6 August 2025

Email:

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Request No: 41793-25
Subject: Union leave
Date Received: 06/06/2025
Date of Monitoring: 10/06/2025

Thank you for your request for information received on 6th June 2025 which was dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) Health and Social Care Trust has now completed its search for the information you requested and that is detailed below.

FOI QUESTION(S)	ANSWER(S)
1- Could you please disclose the total number of hours over the past 12 months that have been granted as Paid union leave for staff that are in any Union capacity I request that you identify how many hours leave have been granted for each of the recognised Trade Unions.	<p>Total Hours for Operational staff = 9185 hours</p> <p>UNISON = 5125 hours UNITE = 2034 hours NIPSA = 1722.5 hours GMB = 303.5 hours</p>
2- Could you please disclose the Total cost of these hours to NIAS and advise if these costs are covered by the individual Unions or the public purse.	<p>The total cost to NIAS was £272,782 gross, which was covered by the public purse.</p> <p>NIAS would like to highlight that figure is made up of a number of essential statutory and non-statutory Industrial Relations activities that fall under this remit. This includes both local, regional and national Trade Union activities.</p> <p>This can and does include local representation of TU members in a range of Employee Relations related activity. This can include attendance at regional pay and terms and conditions strategic negotiations and consultation delivering the regional transformational</p>



	<p>and change initiatives and for some Trade Unions will include national activities all of which contribute to the effective delivery of both the Trust's and broader NHS objectives.</p> <p>It should also be noted that Trade Union time is spent on supporting staff from NIAS in an extremely challenging working environment where staff are subject to extremely challenging clinical and environmental workplace conditions.</p> <p>This can and does include exposure to violence and aggression.</p> <p>Trade Unions support staff in addition to NIAS's internal wellbeing strategies to ensure staff are supported to remain in work and where necessary return to work following challenging workplace incidents.</p>
<p>3- I understand that due to GDPR restrictions you cannot name individual Union members however I would be grateful that you identify in a similar way than shown in the following example to include Union and staff grade.</p> <p>1- Unison member A, operational paramedic = 450 hours</p> <p>2-, Unison, member B = Operational EMT = 630 hours</p> <p>3- Unite, member A = HALO = 2 hours</p>	<p>As a number of our Trade Union's have small numbers of local Reps (less than 5), presenting the data in the manner requested would identify individuals. I have therefore broken down the hours by operational grades across all four Trade Unions</p> <p>Paramedic = 1514.5 EMT = 5228.5 ACA = 772 Training = 23 Control = 1380 Managers = 267</p>

I hope the above fully assists you.

Please note that, under the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations, if you wish to publish or otherwise use this information besides for your own means, you will need to seek our permission to do so.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible, or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter.

In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Director of Planning, Performance and Corporate Services, Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) HSC Trust, Site 30, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast, BT8 8SG.

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request, you may make a complaint under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the Trust has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act.

You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Email: ni@ico.org.uk
Website: [ICO Website](#)
Post: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, CHESHIRE SK9 5AF
Telephone: 028 9027 8757 or 0303 123 1114 (Belfast based Office)

In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. However the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that NIAS replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ <https://nias.hscni.net> Personal details in respect of your request will have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.

Yours sincerely

(not signed – issued by email)

Information Governance Team