

22 May 2015

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Request No: AD-IG-01(2)-2015-53

Key Word: Policy/Procedures/Designation of Staff

Subject: Driving/PSNI Reconstruction of Scene

Request: **Date Received:** 24/04/2015 **Date of Response:** 22/05/2015

Thank you for your request for information received on 24 April 2015 and which was dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We would also inform you that Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) Health and Social Care Trust has now completed its search for the information. NIAS would confirm that it holds information in relation to request and would provide the following.

Question 1

Copy of NIAS policy and procedure documentation in relation to driving

Answer 1

At this time, the Trust holds a draft Driving Policy and draft Driving Procedure which has not yet been fully consulted on or developed and it has been decided that at this point in time, the factors in favour of engaging Section 22 exemption – “Information Intended for Future Publication”, outweigh the factors in favour of release of the information at this time. A copy of Section 22 Public Interest Test has been detailed at the bottom of this correspondence which explains this decision fully.

To date, the Trust has worked to the ICHD Driving Manual and AACE/DTAG version (published in 2014) based on the 14 exemptions for driving ambulances under emergency and non-emergency conditions. In support of this, relevant NIAS staff have received training and driving manuals to reflect this guidance. This includes provision of documentation such as:

- (a) Know your Traffic Signs;
- (b) The Highway Code (NI);
- (c) Roadcraft (the Police Driver’s Handbook);
- (d) Emergency Response Driver’s Handbook (AACE/DTAG)
- (e) Pre-course driving material



Question 2

NIAS personnel in attendance in PSNI reconstruction of road traffic collision (which occurred on 16 July 2013) between 20 August 2013 and 31 December 2013.

Answer 2

Records indicate that two reconstructions took place between 20 August 2013 and 31 December 2013 as follows:

24 September 2013

Mr Bryan Snoddy, Director of Operations (observer)

Mr Michael Heasley, Fleet Manager (observer)

Mr John McClintock, Station Officer (observer and made introductions)

Mr Seamus McAllister, Divisional Clinical Training Officer (liaised PSNI)

6 November 2013

Mr Seamus McAllister, Divisional Clinical Training Officer (liaised with PSNI)

Mr Malachy Love, Clinical Support Officer (liaised with PSNI)

Both reconstructions were requested by the Police Service of Northern Ireland and NIAS fully complied with that requirement.

I hope the above and enclosed fully assists you. 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 Finance and ICT Director, 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:

Website: ni@ico.org.uk

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 @ <http://www.niamb.co.uk>. Personal details in respect of your request will have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.

Yours sincerely

Alison Vitty (Miss)
CORPORATE MANAGER

FOI 21/2014 – Section 22 "information intended for future publication" Public Interest Test

The above exemption is a qualified exemption, and a Public Interest Test must be carried out to decide whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Information requested by the applicant

Copy of NIAS Policy and Procedure document on driving

Arguments in favour of disclosure of the requested information

1. Disclosure of the requested information would be in line with a public authority being open and transparent in how it transacts its business, and would help in promoting accountability.
2. Disclosure would also be within the overall spirit of the Freedom of Information legislation in asking public bodies to be open and transparent.

Arguments in favour of engaging the exemption and withholding the requested Information

1. The Trust holds a draft NIAS policy and procedure on driving as at October 2014 which has not yet been fully developed or consulted with on by 3rd parties which may result in amendments or changes.
2. It is the intention of the Trust to publish the NIAS policy and procedure on driving on the Trust's Intranet and Internet. The Trust should not place information in the public domain that may be inaccurate or subject to future amendment.

Result

Taking into account the contentions above, it is felt that the public interest in engaging the exemption to withhold the information at this point in time outweighs the arguments towards disclosure.

As a result, the requested information should not be provided.