

An Garda Síochána

Oifig Saoráil Faisnéise
An Garda Síochána
Teach áth Luimnigh
Lárionad Gnó Udáras Forbartha Tionscail
Baile Sheáin
An Uaimh
Contae na Mí



Freedom of Information Office
An Garda Síochána
Athlumney House
IDA Business Park
Johnstown
Navan
Co Meath

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-000118-2016 Grant

Dear

I refer to the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and your submission to An Garda Síochána dated and received on 23rd March 2016.

Part 1(n) of Schedule 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 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 is shown below:-

The application is for all records related to the garda mounted unit and garda dog unit since January 1st 2012 to present date.

I am seeking records relating to the total cost of both the horse/dog unit (including veterinary fees).

Details of where the dogs/horses are purchased from and the total cost of buying horses/dogs since 2012 to date.

Also, details of the units, their roles in the force etc.

I, wish to inform you that your request has been **granted**.

The purpose of this letter is to explain that decision.

1. Findings, particulars and reasons for decision

The Garda Mounted and Garda Dog Units have a national remit and fall under the direction and control of Assistant Commissioner, National Support Services.

The Garda Mounted Unit currently comprises of thirteen (13) horses and is based at Áras an Uachtaráin, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8.

The main functions of the Garda Mounted Unit include:

- Crime Prevention and detection patrols – supporting mainstream policing
- Searches for missing persons over rough terrain that is inaccessible to vehicles
- Community policing including school and community project visits
- Major event policing e.g. matches, concerts and festivals
- Public order and crowd control

The Garda Dog Unit are based at Kilmainham Garda Station, Dublin and also at Cork and Limerick. There are currently twenty one (21) dogs attached to the Unit comprising of general purpose (GP), drugs, firearms and explosives detection dogs.

The main focus of the unit is responding to requests for assistance with various searches, however, all handlers perform routine patrols and respond to incidents either witnessed or received from Command & Control. The Unit plays an important role in supporting and assisting Operational Units and National Specialist Units in the prevention and detection of crime. The Dog Unit responds to requests ranging from public order issues to specialised searches.

Garda general purpose dogs (GP) assist in searches for suspects of crimes and for evidence which may have been discarded. The dogs are also trained to work in support of handlers at major public order disturbances, crowd segregation, and general foot patrol duties. GP dogs are also utilised in searches for missing persons. Specialist search dogs are trained to locate controlled drugs, firearms, and explosive substances.

Your request sought access to records of costings and accordingly this information is now provided in the table as set out below. The table outlines the expenditure associated with the **maintenance** of animals. This includes:

- Veterinary
- Animal Feed
- Grooming Services
- Kenneling Fees
- Purchase of Animals

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016(Jan-Feb)
Garda Dog Unit	51,377.4	53,958.0	60,869.8	58,480.7	5,764.8
Garda Mounted Unit	113,275.6	135,504.6	91,384.9	74,054.4	20,001.4
TOTAL	164,653.00	189,462.60	152,254.70	132,535.10	25,766.10

* The above figures include the purchase of animals

Your request also sought the total cost of buying horses/dogs since 2012 to date. The table below outlines the total cost of **purchasing** dogs/horses from 2012 to date:

	Total Cost	No. of Animals Purchased
Purchase of Dogs 2012 – 2016	€9,750	14
Purchase of Horses 2012-2016	€19,000	4

An Garda Síochána source horses through word of mouth, dealers, breeders and farmers who have a suitable mount with the specific criteria. The most important characteristics of a police horse are its temperament and its physical attributes. Police horses work in busy environments and they need to be brave and able to handle confrontational situations without becoming distressed. The Unit concentrates on Irish-bred horses as these tend to have the most suitable qualities. Horses are initially introduced on a 6 week trial and if suitable they are then trained to become police horses. This process involves slowly introducing them to the various hazards and problems they may encounter whilst on patrol or crowd duty.

The Garda Dog Unit has established links with dog breeders, dog trainers and dog wardens/pounds and rescue centres and the unit makes contact with these people when they are looking for new dogs. Potential Garda dogs are assessed for 3 to 4 weeks and if suitable they start the training programme at the Dog Unit. Further information on the types of dogs and specialities may be obtained by following the link below to the Garda website:

www.garda.ie/Controller.aspx?Page=35&Lang=1

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 **F01-0000118-2016**.

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

20th APRIL 2016