

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

Láithreán Gréasain/Website:

www.garda.ie

Bí linn/Join us  

Ríomh-phoist:/Email: foi@garda.ie

Re: Freedom of Information Request FOI-000362-2017 Request Refused

Dear

I refer to your request, dated and received on 16th August, 2017, 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:

*I request information on the number of applicants that fail the fitness tests before qualifying as a Garda.
If it is possible, could I get the number of failures over the last five years.*

I wish to inform you that I have decided to refuse your request on the 8th September 2017.

The purpose of this letter is to explain my decision.

1. Findings, particulars and reasons for decisions

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.

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I wish to advise you that I am refusing your request for ‘*the number of applicants that fail the fitness tests before qualifying as a Garda*’ under Section 15(1)(c) of the FOI Act, as the records sought are too voluminous.

The Physical Competence Test is part of the final stage of the Garda Recruitment Process.

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 2013 to present.

On average 40 applicants attend testing days which take place on a recent average of 35-40 times a year (1400-1600 applicants). This task would cause an unreasonable disruption to the working of two functional areas of An Garda Síochána by reason of the nature and volume of the records involved.

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,

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-000362-2017**.

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-000362-2017 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,



HELEN DEELY
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION OFFICER

8th SEPTEMBER, 2017