

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-000381-2017 Request Granted

Dear ,

I refer to your request, dated and received on the 4th September 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:

- A) The amount spent on wages, vet costs and so on related to the Garda Mounted Unit in the years 2016 and to-date in 2017
- B) The number of Gardaí by rank & gender in the Garda Mounted Unit in the years 2016 and to-date in 2017
- C) The number of stables available to the Garda Mounted Unit in the years 2016 and to-date in 2017; If all stables are in use; if not the number that are being used
- D) The amount spent on wages, vet costs and so on related to the Garda Dog Unit in the years 2016 and to-date in 2017
- E) The number of Gardaí by rank & gender in the Garda Dog Unit in the years 2016 and to-date in 2017
- F) The number of kennels available to the Garda Dog Unit in the years 2016 and to-date in 2017; if all kennels are in use; if not, the number that are being used
- (G) The number of permanent civilian staff working in either the Garda Mounted Unit and or Garda Dog Unit in the years 2016 and to-date in 2017

I wish to inform you that I have decided to grant your request on the 27th September 2017.

The purpose of this letter is to explain that decision.

1. Findings, particulars and reasons for decision

Details of your request were forwarded to the Finance Directorate and Human Resource Management Sections of An Garda Síochána.

The Garda Mounted and Garda Dog Units have a national remit and fall under the direction and control of Assistant Commissioner, Roads Policing and Major Event/Emergency Planning.

Parts A & E of your request sought '*the amount spent on wages, vet costs and so on related to the Garda Mounted Unit in the years 2016 and to-date in 2017*' and '*the amount spent on wages, vet costs and so on related to the Garda Dog Unit in the years 2016 and to-date in 2017*'

A breakdown of the expenses per unit according to wages, veterinary fees and other related costs is not available. However, please see table A below which outlines the overall expenditure associated with the Garda Mounted and Dog Units. Please note that the expenditure outlined below includes the following:

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

Table A:- Expenditure of Garda Mounted and Dog Units

	Jan – Dec 2016	Jan – Aug 2017
Garda Dog Unit	€852,024	€874,314
Garda Mounted Unit	€1,066,858	€827,699

Part B of your request sought '*the number of Gardaí by rank & gender in the Garda Mounted Unit in the years 2016 and to-date in 2017*'. Please see table B below outlining this information. I can confirm that on the 31st December 2016, there were 1 Sergeant and 10 Gardaí attached to the Mounted Unit. On 13th September 2017, there were 2 Sergeants and 13 Gardaí attached to the Mounted Unit.

Table B:- Garda Mounted Unit Staff

Year	Male	Female	Total
31st December 2016	5	6	11
13th September 2017	7	8	15

Part C of your request sought ‘*the number of stables available to the Garda Mounted Unit in the years 2016 and to-date in 2017; If all stables are in use; if not the number that are being used*’

The Garda Mounted Unit currently comprises of 15 stables which are based at Aras an Uachtarain, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8. There is currently 15 horses attached to the Mounted Unit so all the stables are currently being utilised.

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 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.

Part E of your request sought ‘*the number of Gardaí by rank & gender in the Garda Dog Unit in the years 2016 and to-date in 2017*’. Please see table C below outlining this information. I can confirm that on the 31st December 2016, there were 7 Gardaí attached to the Dog Unit. On 13th September 2017, there were 2 Sergeants and 13 Gardaí attached to the Dog Unit.

Table C:- Garda Dog Unit Staff

Year	Male	Female	Total
31st December 2016	5	2	7
13th September 2017	12	3	15

Part F of your request sought ‘*the number of kennels available to the Garda Dog Unit in the years 2016 and to-date in 2017; if all kennels are in use; if not, the number that are being used*’

The Garda Dog Unit is based at Kilmainham Garda Station, Dublin and also in Cork and Limerick. There are currently 20 dogs attached to the Unit comprising of general purpose (GP), drugs, firearms and explosives detection dogs. These dogs are kenneled with their handlers in the handlers own home. However, there are currently 6 kennels attached to the Garda Dog Unit in Kilmainham which are utilised when personnel are engaged in administration duties or when dogs are on assessment.

The main focus of the Dog 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 Specialists 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 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.

Further information regarding the work and assistance provided by the Garda Mounted Unit and the Garda Dog Unit is available in An Garda Síochána's Annual Report on the Garda Website. The Garda Síochána Annual Report for 2016 is available at the following link, <http://www.garda.ie/Documents/User/Annual%20Report%202016.pdf>.

Part G of your request sought '*The number of permanent civilian staff working in either the Garda Mounted Unit and or Garda Dog Unit in the years 2016 and to-date in 2017*'

A search was conducted in the Human Resource Management Section in this regard and I can now advise you that there were 2 civilian staff attached to the Operational Support Unit as of 31st December 2016 and 13th September 2017. The Operational Support Unit consists of 4 units that provide specialist support to operational Gardaí throughout the country. The civilian staff provide administrative support to both the Mounted and Dog Units in addition to other areas in the Unit.

In addition to the civilian administrative staff in the Operational Support Unit, there has also been 1 groomer attached to the Mounted Unit as of 31st December 2016 and 13th September 2017. Some of the key roles of the groomer is to:

- Attend to daily stable management duties, including mucking out, feeding, watering, etc
- Responsibility for recurring tasks relating to the order of feed and bedding, routine farrier visits, tack maintenance, manure disposal
- Maintain cleanliness and general upkeep of the yard
- Exercise horses in accordance with schedule or as directed
- Observe and monitor the general health of horses
- Report and keep records on feed and water intake or abnormal manure or any evidence of health or lameness problems in horses
- Assist in the schooling of horses for trial periods
- Assist in the care and recuperation of horses with short term illness

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 **F0I-000381-2017**.

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-000381-2017) is included in the payment details.

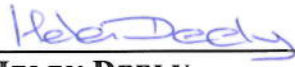
You should submit your request for an Internal Review within 4 weeks from the date of this notification. The review will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of An Garda Síochána and the decision will be communicated to you within 3 weeks. The making of a late appeal 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,

 **SUPERINTENDENT.**
HELEN DEELY.
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION OFFICER.
28TH SEPTEMBER 2017