

[REDACTED]

FOI 694/23-24

17 April 2024

[REDACTED]

I refer to your email dated 15 March 2024 in which you asked for information regarding remuneration of counsel. Your request has been dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Freedom of Information Act creates rights of access for any person making a request for information to a public authority. The rights of access are twofold. First, to be informed by the public authority if it holds information of the description specified in the request, and if that is the case, secondly, to be provided with that information. These rights are subject to important limitations, which are designed to achieve a proper balance between the right to know and considerations of law and policy in the broader public interest.

You had asked the following:

- 1. Please confirm the hourly rate offered by the PPS in this case to (i) Senior Counsel and (ii) Junior Counsel.*
- 2. Please confirm if the PPS have arranged for any additional expenses are to be incurred (in any form) to Counsel as part of the instruction in this case.*
- 3. If any of the above expenses encompassed at (2) are not to be incurred by the PPS, but a third-party agency, please specific the third-party agencies to whom are contributing to the costs of same.*

In response to question 1, please be advised that PPS sought and was granted authority by the Department of Finance to offer Treasury Counsel rates to Senior Prosecuting Counsel in the Operation Arabacia case. Treasury Counsel rates were also authorised for Junior Counsel who led in the Magistrates' Court.

In respect of question 2, the PPS has not arranged for any additional expenses in any form for any counsel as part of the instructions in the above case.

In response to question 3, please be advised that there is no third-party agency contributing to the cost of the above case.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review in accordance with our review procedure. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of this response and you can do so by writing to the Head of Policy and Information, Public Prosecution Service, Belfast Chambers, 93 Chichester Street, BELFAST, BT1 3JR or alternatively by sending an e-mail to info@ppsni.gov.uk. You should state the grounds on which you are requesting the review.

Alternatively, you may wish to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Information Management Team
Public Prosecution Service