



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2008-04479

**Keyword:** Crime

**Subject:** KNIFE CRIME

**Request:**

**I would like to request the following information for 2006, 2007 and 2008 broken down by month:**

The number of knife enabled crimes committed and the number of knife enabled crimes committed per 100,000 population and for both to be broken down by age (I would like to be able to see the figures for under 25 years of age and over 25 years of age)

I would also like figures for all knife crime broken down by crime category as well as figures per 100,000 population. Once again I would also like this to be broken down by age (so that I can see the figures for under 25 years of age and over 25 years of age)

I would like both sets of figures to be broken down by:

- Local Authority
- Ward
- Police Authority
- Police Force
- Police District

**Answer:**

You responded to our request for clarification, where we advised you what PSNI could supply in answer to your request, on 6th October 2008 stating that you were happy to receive what the PSNI could provide.

**The Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested and the answers provided by our Central Statistics Unit are attached in the 01726 and 01727 pdf's.**

The 01726 pdf contains figures relating to recorded knife enabled crime illustrated in summary tables of the dataset provided in 01727 pdf. We have provided tables showing recorded crime where a knife was involved in the incident by police district and area for the period 1st January 2006 to 30th June 2008 however have been advised by our Statistics unit that to provide these broken down further to include wards would create some 500+ tables which would contain many zero figures and would mean the cost of complying with your request for information would exceed the "appropriate limit" as stated in the Freedom of Information Regulations 2004, which is currently set by the Secretary of State at £450.

To provide further assistance with your request the 01727 pdf contains the knife enabled crime occurrences for the period 1st January 2006 to 30th June 2008 with a column illustrating the ward these occurred in.

The following information should be used in conjunction with the 01727 pdf –

Variable Name	Description
Police District	PSNI Policing District
Police Area	PSNI Policing Area
Month	Month Crime was reported 01 - January, 02 February, 03 March etc
Year	Calendar Year Crime was reported
Home Office Crime Classification Knife Enabled Crime	Crime classed as knife enabled Y - Yes, N - No
Local Government District (LGD)	
Ward (1,2 below)	
Victim_Age_Category (3 below)	Victim's age group under 25 or 25 and over

1. Ward and Local Government District allocation to crime records rely on the existence of a postcode, which allows the manual allocation of crime records other geography levels. Some records do not have a valid postcode and therefore will not have a corresponding ward or LGD. Police areas equate to LGDs with the Belfast LGD split into East, North, South and West Belfast policing areas. Every crime is allocated to a policing area and does not require any additional information (i.e. postcode) to do so. It is possible for differences to occur between LGDs and policing areas where the record has a) a poor quality or invalid postcode b) the attached postcode falling into a ward outside its policing area.

2. It should also be noted that no ward or LGD information is available for data taken from April 2008, as the required level of postcode information will not be available until the end of the 2008/09 financial year.

3. Blank cells under Victim\_Age\_Category indicate that either the victim's age details are incomplete or the corresponding offence does not have a person victim.

Police forces in the United Kingdom are routinely required to provide crime statistics to government bodies and the recording criteria is set nationally however, the systems used for recording these figures are not generic, nor are the procedures used locally in capturing the crime data. It should be noted that for these reasons this forces response to your questions should not be used for comparison purposes with any other response you may receive.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Freedom of Information Team, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this email.

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 Head of Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing [foi@psni.pnn.police.uk](mailto:foi@psni.pnn.police.uk).

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to 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 PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. 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 all PSNI replies under Freedom of Information will be released simultaneously into the public domain via our website @ [www.psni.police.uk](http://www.psni.police.uk).

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.