



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2009-02430

**Keyword:** Crime

**Subject:** CHILD ABDUCTION

### Request and Answer:

#### Question 1

I am interested to know how many children have been abducted from public places in the past three years (i.e. as opposed to custody battle type abduction). Please can you advise?

#### Question 2

Can you also advise the number of attempted such abductions there have been in the past three years; the numbers of people questioned in relation to these cases; also the numbers of people arrested; charged and convicted?

#### Question 3

Please also advise the number of such cases where the children were physically harmed or sexually abused.

#### Question 4

Please also advise the number of such cases where the children were physically harmed or sexually abused.

### Answer

I can confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information and I have decided to exempt the information by virtue of Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2005 (cost of complying exceed the appropriate limit).

The information requested is not held centrally and would have to be extracted from a number of data bases in several departments. This would take in excess of 34 hours. To accurately supply the information one department would firstly have to collate all of the 170 recorded Child Abduction/Attempted Child Abduction cases. Then a trawl of a database in another department would have to be carried out to determine the specific details you require. In addition, I have been advised that a 'script' would have to be written by a computer technician to search the database in order to extract the particular information requested in each of the questions. Once written, the extraction of the information would need to be translated into readable format.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland have considered whether we can be of any assistance in terms of helping you refine your request to bring to under the cost limit however the nature and structure of the information unfortunately makes this impossible.

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 (18 hours).

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter should be considered as a refusal notice and the request has therefore been closed.

Under our Section 16 duty to advise and assist please see the attached table which details records of Child Abductions, Attempted Child Abductions and Conspiracy to Abduct a Child by either a parent or other person besides. This table also includes details of the numbers of cases which have been cleared and the numbers cleared by means of charge/summons. This may be of some assistance to you.

If you have any queries regarding your request or this 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 PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released 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.

## Recorded and cleared child abduction offences

### Northern Ireland

	2006/07			2007/08			2008/09		
	Recorded	Of those recorded, the number since cleared	Of those cleared, the number cleared by means of charge/summons	Recorded	Of those recorded, the number since cleared	Of those cleared, the number cleared by means of charge/summons	Recorded	Of those recorded, the number since cleared	Of those cleared, the number cleared by means of charge/summons
Child Abduction (By Parent Etc)	3	1	1	3	2	2	3	2	2
Attempted Child Abduction (By Parent Etc)	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Child Abduction (By Other Person)	10	4	3	9	2	2	9	4	4
Attempted Child Abduction (By Other Person)	65	2	1	41	2	2	24	1	1
Conspiracy To Abduct A Child (By Other Person)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>

Source: Central Statistics Unit, PSNI

**Please Note:** The cleared figures should be regarded as provisional as the uncleared offences may still be part of ongoing investigations and may still be cleared at a later date.