



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-02569

Keyword: Crime

Subject: SECTARIAN VIOLENCE

Request and Answer:

Question

Please provide statistics on acts of sectarian violence and attacks for the years 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009

Answer

Please find attached 02488.pdf containing the statistics you requested.

Data Quality:

The PSNI's statistics on incidents and crimes with a hate motivation are derived from a motivation 'tick box' contained in the Occurrence Management Form which has to be completed by a police officer or member of police staff for each such reported incident/crime. The correct application of a hate motivation for all such incidents/crimes is not quality assured by the PSNI's Central Statistics Branch.

Definition of hate incidents/crimes:

Any occurrence which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate (ACPO Definition) will be recorded as having a hate motivation.

If no criminal offences have occurred then a hate incident will be recorded. If, however, a crime has occurred then the incident will be recorded as both a hate incident and a hate crime. Crimes with a hate motivation are therefore a subset of hate incidents.

Definition of 'Sectarian'

A sectarian incident/crime is defined as any incident which is perceived to be sectarian by the victim or any other person. The term 'sectarian', whilst not clearly defined, is a term almost exclusively used in Northern Ireland to describe incidents of bigoted dislike or hatred of members of a different religious or political group. It is broadly accepted that within the Northern Ireland context an individual or group must be perceived to be Catholic or Protestant, Nationalist or Unionist, or Loyalist or Republican.

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

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

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

Incidents and Crimes with a sectarian motivation

Time period	No. of incidents	No. of crimes
1 Apr 2005 to 31 Dec 2005 ¹	1,462	1,258
1 Jan 2006 to 31 Dec 2006	1,754	1,288
1 Jan 2007 to 31 Dec 2007	1,446	969
1 Jan 2008 to 31 Dec 2008	1,606	1,045
1 Jan 2009 to 31 Jul 2009 ²	981	674

Source: PSNI Central Statistics Unit

¹Data is not available for the full 2005 calendar year as incidents and crimes with a sectarian motivation were only recorded for the first time from April 2005 onwards.

²Data for the 2009/10 financial year to date are taken from a live operational database and are therefore subject to change.

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