



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-00101

Keyword: Crime

Subject: STABBINGS IN NORTHERN IRELAND 2006-8

Request and Answer:

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested and the answers to the questions are as follows.

Question 1

How many stabbings have occurred in Northern Ireland in the past year?

Question 2

How many stabbings occurred in Northern Ireland in 2007?

Question 3

How many stabbings occurred in Northern Ireland in 2006?

Question 4

What part of NI had the most number of stabbings in the past year?

Question 5

What part of NI had the second highest in the past year?

Question 6

What part of NI had the lowest number in the past year?

Question 7

How many knives were recovered in the past year?

Question 8

How many knives were recovered in 2007?

Question 9

How many knives were recovered in 2006?

Question 10

How many stabbings occurred in west Belfast in particular in the past year?

Answer

On the 15th January 2009, we advised you that "We cannot provide any statistics on stabbings or on recovered knives. We can provide the number of recorded offences where a knife was involved in the incident; however, we cannot say how the knife was actually used. This information can be provided for calendar years 2006, 2007 and from 1st Jan to 15th Dec 2008. We can also provide the total number of possession of offensive weapon offences where a knife was

involved in the incident". You indicated that you wished us to proceed to answer your request on this basis.

Please find attached PDF file 1850.

The PSNI's message is clear and simple, never carry a knife. Knives take lives.

We need a collective approach to tackling the scourge of knife crime. Quite simply, knife crime is unacceptable. However it is an issue that police cannot tackle alone. We would urge everyone in the community to assist our efforts and help take knives off our streets for good.

Whilst in Northern Ireland knife Crime is not as major an issue as in other parts of the UK – we are not complacent about it. WE do not want it to become the issue it is elsewhere and our focus is on Prevention.

The Police Service has recently visited a number of the UK Services who are taking part in the 'Tackling knives Action Programme' (TKAP). There are ten Home office forces across the UK taking part in this initiative, which aims to reduce knife crime. We have visited the MET and Merseyside.

We are continuing to enforce through a robust 'stop and search policy' if we suspect a person is carrying an offensive weapon. There were 1,251 stop and searches conducted from 1 April 2008 – 31 December 2008.

In July last year we re-launched our advertising campaign, which included cinema, radio and Adshels throughout Northern Ireland.

Our education programme targets post primary schools across Northern Ireland. Designated community involvement officers deliver knife awareness classes to 11-18 year olds and other interested groups. To date almost 16, 000 post primary school children have received a knife awareness lesson.

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 @ <http://www.psni.police.uk/>

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

Recorded murder, attempted murder and assault¹ offences where a knife was involved in the incident² by DCU

	2006	2007 ³	2008 ³
Antrim	4	7	7
Ards	6	10	5
Armagh	4	3	11
Banbridge	0	6	4
East Belfast	3	7	12
North Belfast	35	36	31
South Belfast	10	17	21
West Belfast	21	24	25
Ballymena	8	6	7
Ballymoney	3	0	1
Carrickfergus	2	10	8
Coleraine	5	15	19
Cookstown	1	1	3
Craigavon	16	19	19
Castlereagh	4	2	9
Dungannon & South Tyrone	1	6	10
Down	10	9	10
Fermanagh	6	6	9
Foyle	29	34	21
Larne	3	4	6
Limavady	5	11	14
Lisburn	2	17	13
Magherafelt	0	2	3
Moyle	1	1	1
Newtownabbey	13	17	22
North Down	14	12	6
Newry & Mourne	16	10	13
Omagh	4	3	5
Strabane	3	9	5
Total	229	304	320

Source: Central Statistics Unit, PSNI

Recorded possession⁴ offences where a knife was involved in the incident²

Northern Ireland

	2006	2007	2008
Recorded	200	113	109

Note: A knife possession⁴ offence will not be counted if the knife has been used in an associated more substantive crime e.g. in the case where an assault was carried out and a knife was used in the incident, one crime of assault will only be recorded.

These figures are provisional and may be subject to change

¹ Assault offences include Wounding/GBH, Wounding with intent/GBH with intent and AOABH.

² The figures relate to crimes where a knife was involved in the incident – it is not known how the knife was actually used.

³ Detailed information, including modus operandi (MO), linked to the crime record has been used to provide the above figures. With the introduction of a new crime recording system in April 2007, the way the MO details are linked to crime records has changed. Prior to April 2007 the MO was linked to each individual crime, however since April 2007 MO is linked to an occurrence which may contain one or more crimes therefore linking the MO to all crimes in each occurrence. This change means that there may be some inflation in the crime levels based on this MO information from 1st April 2007 onwards. (Please note that crime records are counted in exactly the same way on both the previous and current systems.)

⁴ Possession offences include Possessing Article With Blade Or Point In Public Place, Possessing Offensive Weapon In Public Place, Possessing Offensive Weapon On School Premises, Possessing Article With Blade Or Point On School Premises, Possessing Prohibited Weapons and Unlawful Possession Of Prohibited Weapon.