



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2014-03719

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Drug Offence Arrests

Request and Answer:

Question 1

- a) The number of people under the age of 18 arrested in each of the past five years for suspected drug offences.
- b) Please provide a further breakdown of the annual totals by age, whether it was in relation to possession or intent to supply, class of drug, and where possible the actual drug.

Question 2

- a) The number of people under the age of 18 arrested in each of the past five years for suspected violent offences or possession of weapons.
- b) Please provide a further breakdown of the annual totals by age and suspected offence.

Answer 1a

This is to inform you that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information you requested. The decision has been taken to disclose the located information to you in full.

Please see table below showing the number of persons aged 17 or under arrested for drug offences from 2009/10 to 2013/14^{1,2}

	Number of People Aged 17 or Under Arrested for Drug Offences per Financial Year
1 st April 2009 – 31 st March 2010	180
1 st April 2010 – 31 st March 2011	147
1 st April 2011 – 31 st March 2012	130
1 st April 2012 – 31 st March 2013	129
1 st April 2013 – 31 st March 2014	156
TOTAL³	742

Source: PSNI Statistics Branch

¹This information is based on data extracted from a live system and may be subject to change. It is dependent on the information having been input into the system in such a way as to identify those records that are relevant.

²The age of the person arrested was that at the time of arrest.

³Note that where one individual has been arrested in different financial years and was aged 17 or under in each case, they will be included in the total for each financial year.

Answer 1b

Please find a table at the end of this correspondence on page ***5278** showing the number of persons aged 17 or under arrested for drug offences from 2009/10 to 2013/14 broken down by age and offence type. A further table on page ***5281** provides more information regarding the class and type of drug where this information was recorded.

The figures in each year and each offence type will not add up to the totals presented in answer 1a as one individual may have been arrested at different ages in different years for more than one offence and for possession and/or supply of substances from different classes. Where one individual has been arrested in different financial years and was aged 17 or under in each case, they will be included in the total for each financial year. Where one individual has been arrested for more than one drug-related offence, they will be included in the total for each offence type.

The offence type includes substantive, attempted and conspiracy offences of: possession of a controlled drug, possession of a controlled drug with intent to supply, supply of a controlled drug, offer to supply a controlled drug, being concerned in the supply of a controlled drug, being concerned in the offer to supply a controlled drug, producing a controlled drug, cultivating cannabis, importing controlled drugs, obstructing powers of search for drugs for each respective class of controlled drug when available. A list of controlled drugs involved in incidents resulting in people aged 17 or under being arrested for drug offences from 2009/10 to 2013/14 is provided in the accompanying spreadsheet. Note that the drugs listed in the table on page ***5881** are extracted from the property seized during the incident involving the arrested party at the time. It may not necessarily relate to the drugs that were effectively seized from the arrested party as more than one person of various ages may have been involved and /or arrested during one specific incident.

Answer 2a

Please see table below showing the number of persons aged 17 or under arrested for violent or possession of offensive weapon offences from 2009/10 to 2013/14^{1,2}

	Number of People Aged 17 or Under Arrested for Violent or Possession of weapons offences per Financial Year
1st April 2009 – 31st March 2010	938
1st April 2010 – 31st March 2011	892
1st April 2011 – 31st March 2012	776
1st April 2012 – 31st March 2013	707
1st April 2013 – 31st March 2014	638
TOTAL ³	3,951

Source: PSNI Statistics Branch

Answer 2b

Please see table below showing ages of persons aged 17 or under arrested for violent or possession of offensive weapon offences 2009/10 to 2013/14^{1,2}

	Age of arrested person at time of arrest							
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1st April 2009 – 31st March 2010	1	3	13	25	89	187	253	367
1st April 2010 – 31st March 2011	1	5	14	35	78	142	253	364
1st April 2011 – 31st March 2012	0	3	15	40	87	138	195	298
1st April 2012 – 31st March 2013	0	5	13	24	68	130	185	282
1st April 2013 – 31st March 2014	0	2	8	21	64	124	185	234
TOTAL ³	2	18	63	145	386	721	1,071	1,545

Source: PSNI Statistics Branch

¹Please note: This information is based on data extracted from a live system and may be subject to change. It is dependent on the information having been input into the system in such a way as to identify those records that are relevant. In particular, ongoing investigations and prosecutions may lead to further charges being delivered in the future.

²The age of the person arrested was that at the time of arrest.

³Note that where one individual has been arrested in different financial years and was aged 17 or under in each case, they will be included in the total for each financial year.

Please find a table at the end of this correspondence on page * **5280** providing number of persons aged 17 and under arrested for various violent or possession of offensive weapon offences.

This information has been extracted from the custody dataset (where the arrested person has been processed through custody) and is based on the arrested person being aged under 18 at the time of arrest. The violent offences selected include those which are categorised as follows: murder, attempted murder, assault with injury, assault without injury, assault with intent to cause serious harm and endangering life.

This information is based on data extracted from a live system and may be subject to change. It is dependent on the information having been input into the system in such a way as to identify those records that are relevant.

The age of the person arrested was that at the time of arrest. Note that where one individual has been arrested in different financial years and was aged 17 or under in each case, they will be included in the total for each financial year.

The figures in each year and each offence type will not add up to the totals presented in Answer 2a as one individual may have been arrested at different ages in different years for more than one offence i.e. one or more offences categorised as a violent offence and possession of weapons offence. Where one individual has been arrested in different financial years and was aged 17 or under in each case, they will be included in the total for each financial year. Where one individual has been arrested for more than one offence, they will be included in the total for each offence type.

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 letter.

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.