



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2014-03043

**Keyword:** Crime

**Subject:** Metal Thefts

**Request and Answer:**

### Question 1

I would like to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act.

The number of reported metal thefts (i.e theft of metal from electricity poles etc) in F district in 2012-13 and 2013-14 and broken down by area eg. Cookstown, Magherafelt, Dungannon etc

**Clarification G and F District Required.**

### Answer

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 find attached at the end of this correspondence the information requested for metal thefts.

### Question 2

The number of convictions or fines handed out for metal thefts in 2012-13 and 2013-14 in F district again broken down by area.

### Answer

The PSNI has no specific offence code for the 'theft of metal'.

However, I can confirm that there were a total of 35 convictions that are related to the occurrences that had the 'theft of metal' as a component of the occurrence, please note that the 35 convictions may not have been specifically as a result of metal theft.

PSNI can neither confirm nor deny that it holds any other information with regard to an exempt body as the duty in Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply by virtue of the following exemption:

Section 23(5) Information Supplied by, or concerning, certain Security Bodies.

Section 23 is a class based absolute exemption and there is no requirement to consider the public interest in this case.

Confirming or denying the existence of whether any other information is held would contravene the constrictions laid out within Section 23 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in that this stipulates a generic bar on disclosure of any information applied by, or concerning, certain Security Bodies.

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](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.

Police Service of Northern Ireland

# Metal Theft in Northern Ireland: Quarterly Update to 31 March 2014

Prepared 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014



## Metal theft in Northern Ireland: Update to 31 March 2014

Prepared 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014

This bulletin presents metal theft for the following time periods:

- Latest 12 months April 2013 to March 2014 and previous 12 months April 2012 to March 2013 (ie financial years 2013/14 and 2012/13)

The tables contained within this bulletin along with figures for financial years dating back to 2007/08 and for calendar years dating back to 2011 are available in a separate spreadsheet.

The metal theft figures represent offences of burglary, robbery and theft where metal has been stolen and where property details indicate that it is possible the property was stolen for its metal value.

**Please note:** all figures contained in these tables are subject to revision. Further information is provided in the NOTES section on the last page of this bulletin.

### Key Points

- The number of burglary, robbery and theft offences where metal has been stolen increased year on year from a level of 469 in 2007/08 to 1,786 in 2011/12. The number of offences has since fallen to a level of 1,055 recorded during 2013/14. The level of 1,055 recorded during 2013/14 is 371 lower than 2012/13.
- The number of offences recorded each month during 2013/14 was lower than the number in the same month in 2012/13. The largest drop was seen in June, where there were 140 offences recorded in June 2012 and 94 recorded in June 2013, a difference of 46. The smallest fall was seen in December with 65 offences recorded in December 2013 compared with 70 in December 2012.
- Copper remained the most common type of metal stolen during 2013/14 (46.7 per cent of all metal stolen), with lead remaining the second most common (35.9 per cent of all metal stolen).
- During 2013/14, B and G Districts experienced the highest levels of metal theft (224 offences and 168 offences respectively), followed by H District with 123 offences.
- When comparing 2013/14 with 2012/13 each policing district apart from B District saw a fall in the number of metal theft offences recorded. These ranged from a fall of 94 offences in E District to a fall of 17 offences in H District. B District saw an increase of 17 offences. At policing area level increases were seen in South Belfast (28 offences), Coleraine (4 offences), North Down (2 offences), Ballymoney (1 offence) and Strabane (1 offence). All other policing areas experienced a fall in the number of metal theft offences.
- B District has shown an increase in theft of copper, from 58 to 96 when comparing 2012/13 with 2013/14, while G District has shown an increase in theft of lead, from 66 to 106 over the same time period.

## Section 1: Metal theft figures

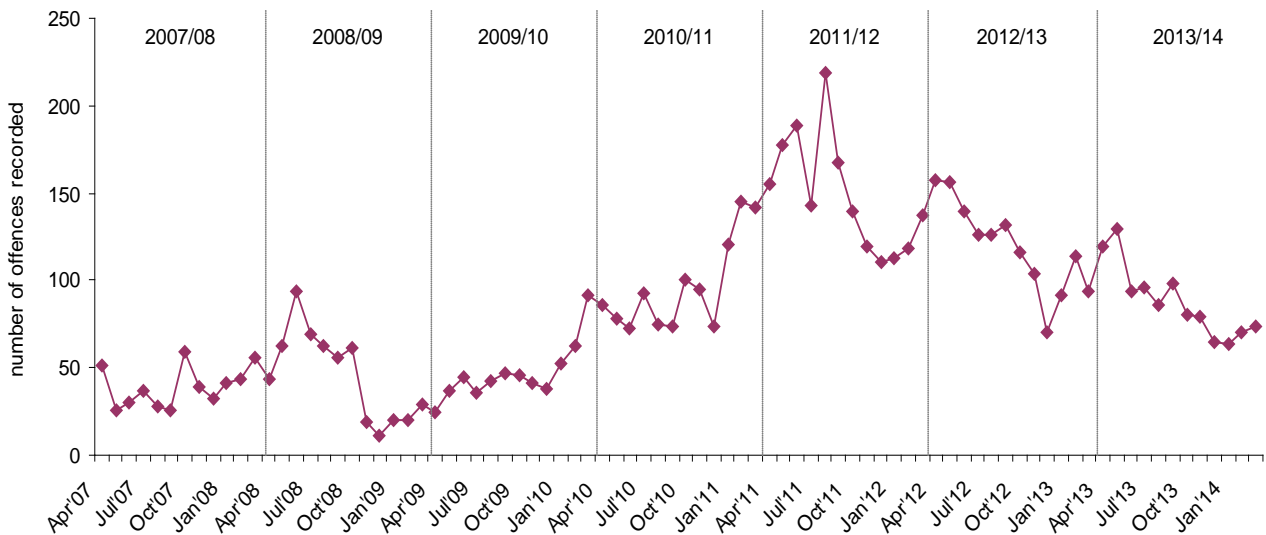
Table 1 Burglary, robbery and theft offences where the property stolen includes metal, by Policing District and Policing Area

	Numbers					
	Financial year			Calendar year		
	2012/13	2013/14	change	2012	2013	change
<b>A District</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>-70</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>-62</b>
North Belfast	144	88	-56	147	97	-50
West Belfast	34	20	-14	35	23	-12
<b>B District</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>-2</b>
East Belfast	73	62	-11	95	64	-31
South Belfast	134	162	28	129	158	29
<b>C District</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>-63</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>-67</b>
Ards	36	19	-17	36	20	-16
Castlereagh	32	19	-13	38	18	-20
Down	63	28	-35	64	37	-27
North Down	15	17	2	17	13	-4
<b>D District</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>-78</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>-71</b>
Antrim	41	38	-3	42	40	-2
Carrickfergus	17	8	-9	16	13	-3
Lisburn	73	39	-34	75	41	-34
Newtownabbey	65	33	-32	68	36	-32
<b>E District</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>-94</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>-60</b>
Armagh	44	18	-26	53	19	-34
Banbridge	42	28	-14	33	40	7
Craigavon	78	50	-28	74	69	-5
Newry & Mourne	49	23	-26	52	24	-28
<b>F District</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>-45</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>-56</b>
Cookstown	25	18	-7	32	13	-19
Dungannon & South Tyrone	40	24	-16	42	25	-17
Fermanagh	67	46	-21	78	49	-29
Omagh	25	24	-1	20	29	9
<b>G District</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>-21</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>-19</b>
Foyle	137	125	-12	147	143	-4
Limavady	22	15	-7	25	17	-8
Magherafelt	16	13	-3	21	12	-9
Strabane	14	15	1	13	15	2
<b>H District</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>-17</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>-12</b>
Ballymena	40	27	-13	39	27	-12
Ballymoney	14	15	1	18	15	-3
Coleraine	41	45	4	36	49	13
Larne	25	17	-8	28	21	-7
Moyle	20	19	-1	22	19	-3
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>1,426</b>	<b>1,055</b>	<b>-371</b>	<b>1,495</b>	<b>1,146</b>	<b>-349</b>

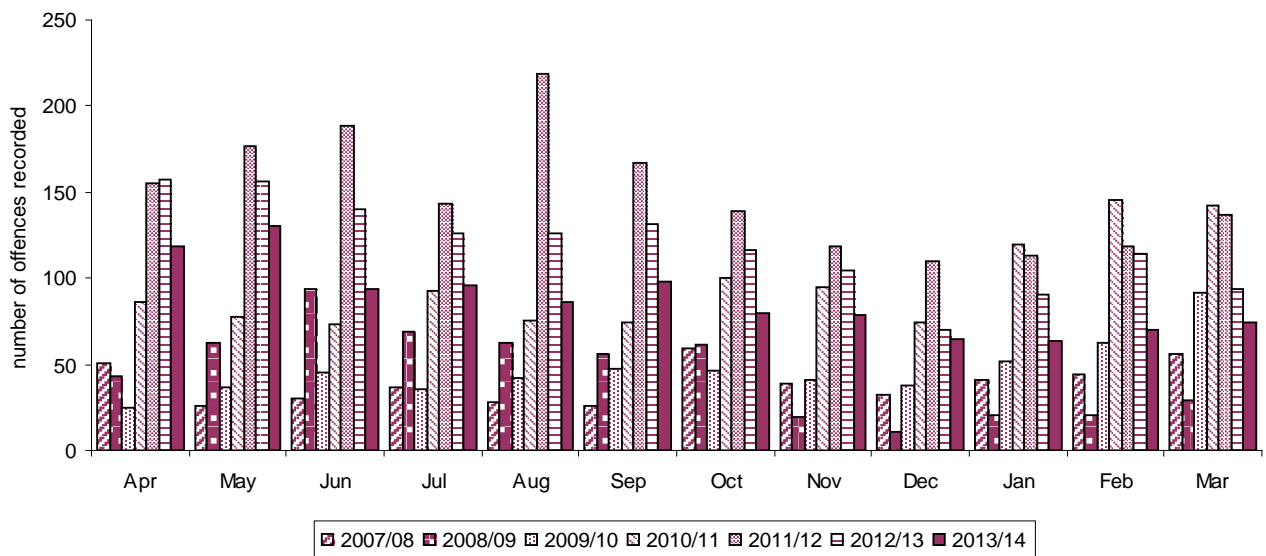
**Table 2 Burglary, robbery and theft offences where the property stolen includes metal, by month**

	Numbers											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2007	-	-	-	51	26	30	37	28	26	59	39	32
2008	41	44	56	43	62	94	69	62	56	61	19	11
2009	20	20	29	25	37	45	36	42	47	46	41	38
2010	52	63	92	86	78	73	93	75	74	100	95	74
2011	120	145	142	155	177	189	143	219	167	139	119	110
2012	113	118	137	157	156	140	126	126	132	116	104	70
2013	91	114	94	119	130	94	96	86	98	80	79	65
2014	64	70	74	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

**Figure 1 Burglary, robbery and theft offences where the property stolen includes metal, by month**



**Figure 2 Burglary, robbery and theft offences where the property stolen includes metal, by month**



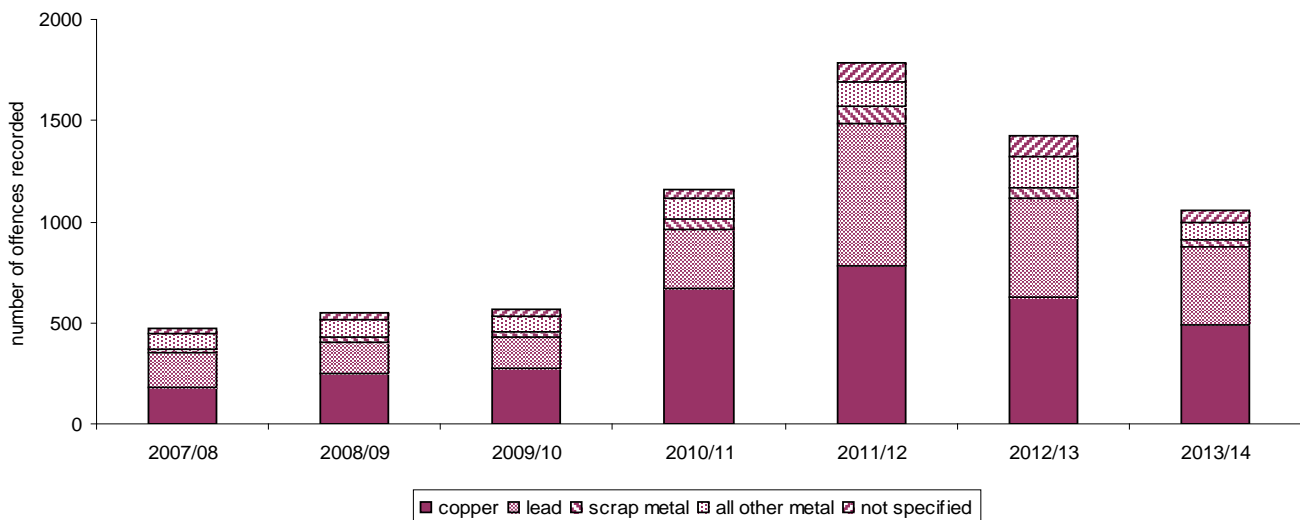
**Table 3 Burglary, robbery and theft offences where the property stolen includes metal, by type of metal (numbers)**

Type of metal	Financial year			Calendar year		
	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	2012	2013	change 2012 to 2013
Copper	630	493	-137	658	511	-147
Lead	490	379	-111	508	423	-85
Steel	62	29	-33	61	37	-24
Aluminium	26	13	-13	23	18	-5
Range of metals including copper, lead, steel or aluminium	32	30	-2	39	33	-6
Other metals	37	16	-21	31	22	-9
Scrap metal	45	39	-6	52	43	-9
Type of metal not specified	104	56	-48	123	59	-64
<b>Total number of offences</b>	<b>1,426</b>	<b>1,055</b>	<b>-371</b>	<b>1,495</b>	<b>1,146</b>	<b>-349</b>

**Table 4 Burglary, robbery and theft offences where the property stolen includes metal, by type of metal (percent)**

Type of metal	Financial year			Calendar year		
	2012/13	2013/14	Change in % pts	2012	2013	Change in % pts
Copper	44.2	46.7	2.6	44.0	44.6	0.6
Lead	34.4	35.9	1.6	34.0	36.9	2.9
Steel	4.3	2.7	-1.6	4.1	3.2	-0.9
Aluminium	1.8	1.2	-0.6	1.5	1.6	0.0
Range of metals including copper, lead, steel or aluminium	2.2	2.8	0.6	2.6	2.9	0.3
Other metals	2.6	1.5	-1.1	2.1	1.9	-0.2
Scrap metal	3.2	3.7	0.5	3.5	3.8	0.3
Type of metal not specified	7.3	5.3	-2.0	8.2	5.1	-3.1
<b>Base</b>	<b>1,426</b>	<b>1,055</b>		<b>1,495</b>	<b>1,146</b>	

**Figure 3 Burglary, robbery and theft offences where the property stolen includes metal, by type of metal (numbers)**





## NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Section 2: Burglary, robbery and theft offences where the property stolen includes metal;  
figures by Policing District

## A District

Type of metal	Financial year			Calendar year			Numbers
	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	
Copper	86	56	-30	87	56	-31	
Lead	77	38	-39	78	49	-29	
Steel	0	3	3	0	2	2	
Aluminium	2	1	-1	2	0	-2	
Range of metals including copper, lead, steel or aluminium	4	3	-1	6	4	-2	
Other metals	1	1	0	1	2	1	
Scrap metal	2	0	-2	3	0	-3	
Type of metal not specified	6	6	0	5	7	2	
<b>Total number of offences</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>-70</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>-62</b>	

## B District

Type of metal	Financial year			Calendar year			Numbers
	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	
Copper	58	96	38	61	96	35	
Lead	118	110	-8	129	106	-23	
Steel	10	1	-9	12	2	-10	
Aluminium	1	1	0	1	1	0	
Range of metals including copper, lead, steel or aluminium	5	7	2	4	8	4	
Other metals	3	3	0	3	2	-1	
Scrap metal	4	4	0	3	5	2	
Type of metal not specified	8	2	-6	11	2	-9	
<b>Total number of offences</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>-2</b>	

## C District

Type of metal	Financial year			Calendar year			Numbers
	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	
Copper	59	35	-24	58	40	-18	
Lead	52	28	-24	60	26	-34	
Steel	5	1	-4	6	1	-5	
Aluminium	0	2	2	1	1	0	
Range of metals including copper, lead, steel or aluminium	3	1	-2	2	2	0	
Other metals	5	1	-4	5	1	-4	
Scrap metal	6	4	-2	6	5	-1	
Type of metal not specified	16	11	-5	17	12	-5	
<b>Total number of offences</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>-63</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>-67</b>	



## NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

**D District**

Type of metal	Financial year			Calendar year			Numbers
	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	
Copper	85	67	-18	85	66	-19	
Lead	62	17	-45	60	28	-32	
Steel	14	4	-10	11	9	-2	
Aluminium	3	4	1	1	6	5	
Range of metals including copper, lead, steel or aluminium	4	6	2	6	5	-1	
Other metals	5	6	1	6	6	0	
Scrap metal	6	6	0	10	3	-7	
Type of metal not specified	17	8	-9	22	7	-15	
<b>Total number of offences</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>-78</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>-71</b>	

**E District**

Type of metal	Financial year			Calendar year			Numbers
	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	
Copper	114	59	-55	114	73	-41	
Lead	42	31	-11	41	40	-1	
Steel	12	5	-7	12	6	-6	
Aluminium	7	0	-7	6	2	-4	
Range of metals including copper, lead, steel or aluminium	4	4	0	4	5	1	
Other metals	8	3	-5	5	5	0	
Scrap metal	12	6	-6	12	10	-2	
Type of metal not specified	14	11	-3	18	11	-7	
<b>Total number of offences</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>-94</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>-60</b>	

**F District**

Type of metal	Financial year			Calendar year			Numbers
	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	
Copper	74	65	-9	78	63	-15	
Lead	36	22	-14	47	23	-24	
Steel	10	9	-1	8	11	3	
Aluminium	4	0	-4	5	1	-4	
Range of metals including copper, lead, steel or aluminium	4	0	-4	5	0	-5	
Other metals	6	2	-4	4	3	-1	
Scrap metal	6	7	1	7	8	1	
Type of metal not specified	17	7	-10	18	7	-11	
<b>Total number of offences</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>-45</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>-56</b>	

## NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

**G District**

Type of metal	Financial year			Calendar year			Numbers
	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	
Copper	83	46	-37	103	53	-50	
Lead	66	106	40	56	115	59	
Steel	8	3	-5	9	2	-7	
Aluminium	3	2	-1	2	3	1	
Range of metals including copper, lead, steel or aluminium	8	5	-3	9	6	-3	
Other metals	4	0	-4	4	1	-3	
Scrap metal	6	3	-3	8	3	-5	
Type of metal not specified	11	3	-8	15	4	-11	
<b>Total number of offences</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>-21</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>-19</b>	

**H District**

Type of metal	Financial year			Calendar year			Numbers
	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	2012/13	2013/14	change 2012/13 to 2013/14	
Copper	71	69	-2	72	64	-8	
Lead	37	27	-10	37	36	-1	
Steel	3	3	0	3	4	1	
Aluminium	6	3	-3	5	4	-1	
Range of metals including copper, lead, steel or aluminium	0	4	4	3	3	0	
Other metals	5	0	-5	3	2	-1	
Scrap metal	3	9	6	3	9	6	
Type of metal not specified	15	8	-7	17	9	-8	
<b>Total number of offences</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>-17</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>-12</b>	

## NOTES

Like any administrative data, police recorded crime statistics are affected by the rules governing the recording of data, systems in place and operational decisions in respect of the allocation of resources. More proactive policing in a given area could lead to a change in crime levels recorded without any real change in underlying crime trends. These issues need to be taken into account when using these data.

### Definitions

**Metal theft** covers burglary, robbery and theft offences where metal has been stolen and where property details indicate that it is possible the property was stolen for its metal value. This information is identified from both drop down pick lists and free text searches on NICHE using key words such as 'metal', 'aluminium', 'lead', 'scrap', 'brass', 'ferrous', 'non-ferrous', 'steel', 'copper', 'bronze', 'iron', 'gold' or 'zinc'.

### Data Accuracy and Revisions

Metal theft figures are based on a range of information extracted from a live crime recording system and, as such, will always be subject to revision.

Within the current financial year revisions may occur because:

- There will be incidents identified as crimes but not processed on the crime recording system by the time the figures are extracted for presentation in these tables.
- Figures may change from month to month due to crimes being reclassified from one crime type to another during the financial year. This may be because quality checks have identified the crime as incorrectly classified, or further information may indicate that the circumstances surrounding the crime were not as initially recorded.
- The Home Office Counting Rules allow crimes initially recorded to be 'no crime'd' or removed from the crime figures.

Revisions to any records within the dataset may also occur as information in relation to property stolen, may be updated on the live system. This may be through adding additional information or updating existing information based on more up-to-date details.

### Further information

[Trends in Police Recorded Crime in Northern Ireland 1998/99 to 2012/13](#) was published on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2013 and provides detailed trend information covering this time period. An updated publication covering trends from 1998/99 to 2013/14 will be available in early July 2014.

Further details on Police Recorded Crime statistics are available in the [User Guide to Police Recorded Crime Statistics in Northern Ireland](#), and in the [Police Recorded Crime Statistics Quality Report](#). These are reference guides with explanatory notes regarding the issues and classifications which are key to the production and presentation of police recorded crime statistics.

Copies of other PSNI publications are available from the PSNI Internet site:

[http://www.psnipolice.uk/index/updates/updates\\_statistics.htm](http://www.psnipolice.uk/index/updates/updates_statistics.htm)

For further information about the police recorded crime statistics for Northern Ireland, or to contact the PSNI Crime Statistician please:

Email: [statistics@psni.police.uk](mailto:statistics@psni.police.uk);

Write to: Statistics Branch, Lisnasharragh, 42 Montgomery Road, Belfast, BT6 9LD; or

Telephone: 028 9065 0222 ext 24135, Fax: 028 9092 2998