



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2014-02829

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Stolen Animals

Request and Answer:

Question

How many animals have been reported stolen in Northern Ireland over the last five years and a breakdown of the numbers for each type of animal.

How many of those stolen animals have been returned to their owners within the last five years.

Clarification

Do you require figures relating to domestic pets only or relating to all animals (including farm animals)?

Response

All animals, including farm animals.

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 table attached at the end of this correspondence on pages 1 showing the number and type of animals recorded as having been stolen in Northern Ireland from 1st April 2009 to 31st March 2014 including the number recovered.

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.

Animal Theft Offences Recorded in Northern Ireland 2009/10 to 2013/14 by Type of Animal Stolen and Crimes where Animals Were Recovered²

There were 1,443 crimes of animal theft in the five financial years from 2009/10 to 2013/14 in Northern Ireland; 15,041 animals were reported stolen¹ in connection to those crimes. Animals were either recovered by police or recovered by the owners in 39 of those crimes².

The table below shows a breakdown by type of animal:

Type of Animal	Number of Crimes where Animals Were Stolen ¹ 1 st April 2009 – 31 st March 2014	Number of Animals Stolen ¹ 1 st April 2009 – 31 st March 2014	Number of Crimes where Animals Recovered ² 1 st April 2009 – 31 st March 2014
Birds	46	524	0
Cat	11	22	0
Cattle	544	3,258	7
Dog	341	371	21
Donkey/Mule/Ass	6	11	0
Ferret	2	7	0
Fish	26	2,276	1
Gerbil	1	1	0
Goat	15	60	0
Guinea Pig	1	6	0
Hamster	1	1	0
Horse	44	66	4
Insects	1	4	0
Pig	11	163	0
Pigeon	1	16	0
Poultry	61	1,925	1
Rabbit	18	47	0
Reptiles	10	55	2
Sheep	296	6,220	2
Tortoise	3	5	1
Other	4	3	0
TOTAL	1,443	15,041	39

Source: PSNI Statistics Branch

¹ These figures were extracted based on crimes of theft, burglary and robbery recorded by police where the Property Description was 'Animals' and classified as 'Stolen'.

² Of the selected crimes, those where the property was classified as 'Recovered by police' or 'Recovered by owner' were included with the assumption that recovery of the stolen animals in either case would lead to the return to their owner.

Please note: This information is based on data extracted from a live crime recording system and 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, the quantity was determined based on the quantity field from the property table or where possible from the remarks information; this information was not fully available for 178 crimes.