Keeping People Safe

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Request Number: F-2015-02742

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Vehicle Thefts

Request and Answer:

Question 1
Total number of vehicles reported stolen in the years 2009-2014, listed by year and split by: Theft of vehicle / Aggravated TWOC / TWOC / Car key burglary.

Question 2
Of that total number, how many were privately owned vehicles?

Question 3
Of that number, how many were owned by a business?

Question 4
Of the number of vehicles reported stolen, how many vehicles were recovered?

In the instance that any part of this request falls outside of budget/time constraints, I would be grateful if you could provide any data which does fall within these.

Clarification Sought
Statistics branch can provide the number of vehicles where the classification is stolen, this can then be linked with the recorded crime data to provide the offence classification such as theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle, aggravated vehicle taking, robbery or a burglary offence.

There were approximately 22,000 vehicles with classification of stolen from 2009-2014. Statistics branch do not hold information on the ownership of vehicle and therefore cannot provide a response in relation to Q2 and Q3. Of those vehicles classified as stolen in Q1 we may be able to provide the number where there is a classification of recovered. Please advise if you would be content to receive the information that Statistics Branch can provide.

Please also advise if you would like the following vehicle types to be included in the response:

Agricultural vehicle
Bus or coach
Car
Goods vehicle
Horsedrawn

Light 4 x 4 utility
Motorcycle
Other
Plant equipment
Trailer
Tram/light rail
Unknown
Van

Clarification Received
Please can you refine the request to include the information that you hold in relation to Q1. Can the following vehicle types be included:

Agricultural vehicle
Bus or coach
Car
Goods vehicle
Light 4 x 4 utility
Other
Plant equipment
Trailer
Tram/light rail
Unknown
Van

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 2 tables at the end of this correspondence on pages 1 and 2. Table 1 provides a breakdown by calendar year of vehicles recorded as stolen between 1st January 2009 and 31st December 2014 which were linked to incidents and the number subsequently recovered.

Table 2 provides a breakdown by calendar year of vehicles recorded as stolen between 1st January 2009 and 31st December 2014 and the type of offences they are linked to.

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.

Number of vehicles stolen from 1st January 2009 to 31st December 2014

Two separate tables are provided below, along with an explanation of the methods used to extract the data and the limitations of each set of figures.

Table 1 - This table provides a breakdown by calendar year of the vehicles marked as stolen on PSNI systems and linked to incidents having been reported from 1st January 2009 and 31st December 2014. The vehicles selected belong to one of the following vehicle type categories:

Agricultural vehicle
Bus or coach
Car
Goods vehicle
Light 4 x 4 utility
Other
Plant equipment
Trailer
Tram/light rail
Unknown
Van

Note that the system is designed in such a way that vehicles are recorded in respect to their involvement with regards to an incident as opposed to property. Consequently, it is possible that a vehicle classified on the system as stolen can appear in relation to more than one incident – for example one incident relating to the actual vehicle theft, while other incidents with different serial numbers may relate to the stolen vehicle being used in the commission of other offences (e.g. a car is stolen during a burglary and used afterwards in the commission of a robbery). It may also be the case that the same vehicle is entered onto the system more than once, creating duplication. It is not always possible to identify and remove this duplication from the data.

As a result of these caveats, the figures in Table 1 will not reflect the exact number of stolen vehicles but are instead our best estimate of this given the data limitations highlighted above and the fact that to read through each incident to ascertain the exact circumstances would not be possible within cost.

Table 1

CalendarYear	Number of vehicles reported as stolen	Number of those vehicles marked as found or recovered
2009	4,076	813
2010	3,888	755
2011	3,280	654
2012	2,657	725
2013	2,511	713
2014	2,712	787

Source: PSNI Statistics Branch

Table 2–Where a crime of burglary, robbery or theft has been recorded in respect of the records identified in Table 1, these are shown in Table 2 broken down by year reported to the police. Note that more than one offence may be recorded against a given incident and that this is not necessarily a representation of the recorded offences through which a vehicle was stolen. It cannot be assumed that in all occasions the offence recorded related to the vehicle being stolen; there may have been circumstances where the vehicle classified as stolen was used in the commission of the offence.As table 2 shows figures for crimes of burglary, robbery and theft only, the yearly totals in table 2 will be lower than those shown in table 1.

Table 2						
Recorded Offence	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**
Vehicle Offences	1,899	1,921	1,542	1,356	1,339	1,198
Theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle	*1,755*	*1,754*	*1,365*	*1,193*	*1,187*	*1,042*
Theft from a vehicle	*14*	*12*	*20*	*10*	*6*	*10*
Interfering with a motor vehicle	*8*	*3*	*4*	*4*	*1*	*3*
Aggravated vehicle taking	*122*	*152*	*153*	*149*	*145*	*143*
Burglary	840	788	676	526	481	691
Robbery	117	112	120	79	75	69
Other thefts	414	335	305	217	152	180

Source: PSNI Statistics Branch

Please note that 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 data was extracted on 10th September 2015.