



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2016-01700

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Violent or Sexual Crimes Involving Knives or Sharp Instruments

Request and Answer:

Question 1

The monthly total of stabbings for each of the last 5 years. Please provide figures up until and including the most recent completed month where records are available

Question 2

The monthly total of knife crime injuries for each of the last 5 years. Please provide figures up until and including the most recent completed month where records are available. Please provide figures for the number of victims who were teenagers if you have them

Question 3

The monthly total of knife crime incidents for each of the last 5 years. Please provide figures up until and including the most recent completed month where records are available. Please provide a figure for the number of incidents involving machetes

Clarification Provided

Question 1

Please provide the following: The monthly total of stabbings for each of the last 5 years. Please provide figures up until and including the most recent completed month where records are available. Please provide annual figures for the number of victims up to 18 years old.

Question 2

The monthly total of knife crime incidents for each of the last 5 years. Please provide figures up until and including the most recent completed month where records are available. Please provide a figure for the number of incidents involving machetes. Please provide the figures as suggested in the following xls template.

Clarification Sought

Do you no longer require - 'The monthly total of knife crime injuries for each of the last 5 years. Please provide figures up until and including the most recent completed month where records are available. Please provide figures for the number of victims who were teenagers if you have them'?

Clarification received

No longer needed thanks (except the 18 and under part).

Clarification Sought

Q1. Statistics Branch would not be in a position to determine the number of 'stabblings' over the last five years however they do collate knife and sharp instrument statistics which are based on a specific set of offences¹ where a knife or sharp instrument² was involved in an offence. The involvement of a knife does not mean that the victim was stabbed.

¹ Homicide, Attempted Murder, Threats to Kill, Actual Bodily Harm & Grievous Bodily Harm (includes 5D Assault with intent to cause serious harm and 8N Assault with injury), Robbery, Rape and Sexual Assaults.

² Knife/sharp instruments are as defined by the Home Office.

From the knife and sharp instrument figures, over the last five years there were approximately 2,700 offences where a knife was involved in an offence of which more than 1,700 offences, the knife caused an injury to the victim. To read through each of the 1,700 offences would take approximately 425 hours and would be over cost.

Q2. The knife and sharp instrument figures are published on a quarterly basis in the recorded crime monthly update and the figures until the end of September 2016 will be published on Thursday 27th October. Please see link below to the previously published figures.

<https://www.psni.police.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/police-recorded-crime-statistics/2016/june/monthly-crime-bulletin-period-ending-jun-16.pdf>

Statistics Branch can provide a breakdown of these figures on a monthly basis for the last five years and the number where a machete has been recorded as the weapon involved.

Please let me know if you would be content to receive the information Statistics Branch can provide subject to any FOI exemptions which may apply.

Clarification Received

Please proceed as you've suggested using the table provided in the clarified request. Please also provide figures on under 18s too. Thanks

Answer

Your request for information has now been considered. In respect of Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 I can confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does hold information to which your request relates. The decision has been taken to disclose the following.

Please see table below providing a specific set of offences¹ where a knife or sharp instrument² was involved in an offence between 1st October 2011 and 30th September 2016.

Month	Year					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 ³
January		79	78	83	98	74
February		54	71	59	69	58
March		64	59	79	67	50
April		60	70	82	63	67
May		92	55	68	58	61
June		74	57	75	74	44
July		92	88	92	60	80
August		78	86	69	76	65
September		78	56	79	60	52
October	76	81	77	63	77	
November	77	94	80	63	64	
December	74	71	99	99	75	

¹ Selected offences include Homicide, Attempted Murder, Threats to Kill, Assault with Intent to Cause Serious Harm, Assault with Injury, Rape, Sexual Assault and Robbery.

² A sharp instrument is any object that pierces the skin (or in the case of a threat, is capable of piercing the skin), e.g. a broken bottle. The knife and sharp instrument figures presented here are based on weapon details taken from a live operational system and are therefore subject to change.

³ 1 January - 30 September 2016.

⁴ Please note not all offences have a victim age recorded.

There were 75 offences where a machete was recorded as a weapon involved in the incident from the knife and sharp instrument figures in the table above.

There were 317 offences recorded between 1st October 2011 and 30th September 2016 where the victim⁴ was aged under 18.

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.

