



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2016-01376

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: Stop and Search 2015 - 2016 Belfast

Request and Answer:

Question 1

Would you be able to provide details of how many stop and searches were done in Belfast (breakdown north, south, east and west) from 2015 and 2016 (breakdown again please)

Question 2

The amount of people charged after being stopped and searched again for 2015 and 2016.

Question 3

Would you also be able to provide figures for the reason of the stop and search in Belfast also :: IE: terrorism, drugs and firearms etc

Clarification Requested

In relation to question 2 of your request "The amount of people charged after being stopped and searched again for 2015 and 2016"

This would put your request over cost. Would you be happy to remove this question to bring the rest within cost?

Clarification Response

Yes please if you it's leave that out.

Question 1

Would you be able to provide details of how many stop and searches were done in Belfast (breakdown north, south, east and west) from 2015 and 2016 (breakdown again please)

Answer 1

Your request for information has now been considered. In respect of Section 1(1)(a) of the Act 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. As part of the Review of Public Administration which came into effect on 1st April 2015, the PSNI moved from eight to eleven policing districts. Data in relation to stop and searches is recorded on the Stop and Search database at the new Policing District level (i.e. Belfast City policing district) and is not recorded at North, South,

East and West Belfast level (as per the old policing areas). Between 1st January 2015 and 31st December 2015 there were 10,011 persons stopped and searched, or stopped and questioned, in Belfast City Policing District. Between 1st January 2016 and 30th June 2016 there were 4,706 persons stopped and searched, or stopped and questioned, in Belfast City Policing District.

Question 3

Would you also be able to provide figures for the reason of the stop and search in Belfast also :: IE: terrorism, drugs and firearms etc

Answer 3

Please see the table below detailing the number of persons stopped and searched, or stopped and questioned, in Belfast City Policing District during 2015 and 2016 by Legislation.

Legislation	2015	2016
Police and Criminal Evidence Act	2,655	855
Misuse of Drugs Act S23	5,303	2,605
Firearms Order S53	93	35
Terrorism legislation(1)	2,008	1,236
Other(2)	28	14

Please note: (1) Includes persons who were stopped under one or more of the following legislations: Terrorism Act 2000 Sections 43 and 43A and the Justice and Security Act Sections 21 and 24.

(2) 'Other' legislative powers captures stops / searches conducted under the following less frequently used powers: Schedule 5 to the Terrorism Act 2000, Section 139B of the Criminal Justice Act 1988, Schedule 5 to the Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act 2011, Article 6 Crossbows (Northern Ireland) Order 1988, Article 25 Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985, Article 23B of The Public Order (Northern Ireland) Order 1987 and the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016.

Also note if you sum all the legislative powers up for each year you will get a number greater than the numbers provided in question 1 (10,011 for 2015 and 4,706 for 2016). The reason being that more than one legislative power can be used to stop and search/question a person (for example, an individual stopped under PACE and Misuse of Drugs Act will have a count of 1 in both the PACE and Misuse of Drugs categories in the table above but will have been counted as one person in the figures originally provided).

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.