



# FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2018-01217

**Keyword:** Crime

**Subject:** Arrests Under Section 127 of the Communications Act (2003)

**Request and Answer:**

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.

**Request 1**

How many people were arrested in 2017 under section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 in your Police Force Area

**Request 2**

How many of these arrests led to prosecutions.

**Request 3**

Also, if possible, please provide me with the same numbers for the years 2016, 2015 and 2014.

**Answer**

Year	Number of People Arrested <sup>1</sup>	Prosecutions <sup>2</sup>
2014	140	28
2015	167	39
2016	172	32
2017	221	63

**Please note:** 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.

These figures includes the following offences:

- Sending menacing messages through a public electronic communications network
- Improper use of public electronic communications network
- Improper use of electronic communications to cause anxiety
- Causing improper use of public electronic communications network
- Causing improper use of electronic communications to cause anxiety
- Persistent improper use of electronic communications to cause anxiety
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<sup>1</sup>The information has been extracted from the custody arrests data from NICHE, please note this includes those persons arrested and processed through police custody. Therefore, those arrested and street bailed or dealt with by other means e.g. Discretionary Disposal, PND etc. will not be included in the figures. The information provided is a count of individuals arrested per year. An individual may have been arrested more than once per year and may have been arrested in each of the years requested. Furthermore, in any one custody record an individual may have been arrested for multiple offences falling under Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003.

<sup>2</sup>Prosecutorial decisions can be made in a different year from the arrest, therefore the data does not directly correlate.

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.psnj.police.uk](http://www.psnj.police.uk)

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.