



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2018-02542

Keyword: Crime

Subject: From 2016 Statistics On Psychoactive Substances

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

Since the blanket ban came into force on May 26 in 2016, how many people has your police force arrested on suspicion of possession with the intent to supply new psychoactive substances?

Request 2

Please break the data down by financial years 2016/17 and 2017/18 and by age.

Request 3

Please provide the youngest age of each person arrested, by year.

Request 4

Please see a table below for how I would like the data presented.

Please note that I would like the data in a downloadable Excel file.

Answers

The separate spreadsheet provides the number of arrests made under the 'Psychoactive Substances Act' since its inception on 26th May 2016 until the 14th December 2018 (date data extracted).

There were 18 persons arrested over the two financial years, one person was arrested in both 2016/17 and 2017/18.

The search was completed based on a search of the text 'psychoactive' in the offence description for custody arrests using the following offence codes:

SB4801097 -supplying a psychoactive substance,
SB4801098 -offering to supply a psychoactive substance,
SB4801099 -possession of a psychoactive substance with intent to supply
SB801100 -importing a psychoactive substance

The data extracted is from the custody data held on the police administrative system and includes those arrested and processed through police custody. Therefore, those arrested and street bailed or dealt with by other means e.g. community resolution etc. will not be included in the figures.

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.