



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2018-02250

Keyword: Crime

Subject: From May 2016 Statistics For Psychoactive Substance

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 start of the blanket ban on May 26 in 2016, how many people have you stopped for being in possession of the new psychoactive substance spice?

Please provide:

- the age ranges of the people stopped (as provided in the example below)
- the specific age for the youngest person stopped

Request 2

Since the start of the blanket ban on May 26 in 2016, how many people have you arrested on suspicion of dealing the new psychoactive substance spice?

Please provide:

- the age ranges of the people arrested (as provided in the example below)
- the specific age for the youngest person arrested

If you are unable to provide me with details **specifically** on spice, please provide me with details for all new psychoactive substances.

Answers

PSNI do not hold the information specifically held for psychoactive substance 'spice'. Please note that the stop and search form does not require the particular substance to be recorded and the officer may not know what the substance is at the point of seizure.

However between 26 May 2016 and 19 September 2018, the PSNI stopped and searched a total of 15 people under the 'Psychoactive Substances Act 2016', although not necessarily for being in possession of spice.

PSNI cannot identify if any substance found was spice and the persons may have been stopped under Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 alone or in conjunction with other powers.

The table below shows a breakdown of those persons stopped and searched by age. Age may be officer perceived. Figures are provisional and subject to change.

Age of persons stopped	Number of persons stopped
15	1
16	1
17	1
19	1
20	5
28	1
32	1
38	1
50	1
58	1
Unknown	1
Total	15

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.