



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2018-01597

**Keyword:** Crime

**Subject:** Minors Arrested for Supply of Controlled Drugs

### 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 and the decision has been taken to disclose the following.

#### Request 1

I am seeking information concerning arrests of children made as part of investigations into drug supply. Please state how many minors, aged 10 to 17, have been arrested for offences relating to the supply of controlled drugs between January 2017 and June 2018.

#### Answer

There were 79 persons aged 10 to 17 who were arrested and processed in police custody for offences relating to supply of controlled drugs, 01 January 2017 to 30 June 2018.

**Please note:** A person may be arrested on more than one occasion during any time period. The figures provided below are based on a count of persons arrested during the time period requested, not the number of arrest records.

*The number of arrests resulting in subsequent charge may be subject to change where investigations are ongoing.*

#### Request 2

Please disclose how many of those minors have been charged with an offence and break this down by the age of the suspect, and the offence they were charged with, the class of type of drug involved

#### Answer

Of those 79 persons arrested, 10 persons were subsequently charged - 1 person age 13, 2 persons age 16 and 7 persons age 17.

**Please note:** As some persons were charged with more than one offence, the number of charge offences adds to more than the number of persons charged. Also, there may be some cases where the offence code does not specify the class of drug involved.

Please see table below:

Offence Title	Age at time of arrest		
	13	16	17
BEING CONCERNED IN THE SUPPLY OF A CLASS A CONTROLLED DRUG	1	0	0
BEING CONCERNED IN THE SUPPLY OF A CLASS B CONTROLLED DRUG	1	0	0
POSSESSION OF A CLASS A CONTROLLED DRUG WITH INTENT TO SUPPLY	0	1	4
POSSESSION OF A CLASS B CONTROLLED DRUG WITH INTENT TO SUPPLY	0	1	4
POSSESSION OF A CLASS C CONTROLLED DRUG WITH INTENT TO SUPPLY	0	1	0
SUPPLYING CLASS A CONTROLLED DRUG	0	0	1
SUPPLYING CLASS C CONTROLLED DRUG	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	2	3	11

### Request 3

Please state the number of minors arrested by their county of residence (by county, I mean the administrative county of the address you have on record. I will also be happy with either postal town/city if this is easier to provide).

### Answer

Please see the table below.

County of home address	Number of minors arrested
ANTRIM	30
ARMAGH	4
BELFAST	5
DOWN	10
FERMANAGH	4
LONDONDERRY	19
TYRONE	6
OUTSIDE NI	1

### Request 4

If possible, please can you offer any explanation as to why children/young people may be involved in this type of illegal activity.

### Answer

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 legislates for the rights of an individual to seek access to recorded information. The Act only extends to requests for *recorded information* as defined by Section 84 of the Act and does not require public authorities to speculate, answer questions or create information to answer an FOI request.

A question will not necessarily constitute a 'valid request' if it is asking PSNI to speculate or to provide information which is not recorded. Further information on what constitutes a valid request can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office website:

<https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1164/recognising-a-request-made-under-the-foia.pdf>

This part of your request is therefore not a valid request, as PSNI does not hold information on the

speculative element of this question.

### **Request 5**

How many of those arrested remain under investigation as of 30 June 2018.

### **Answer**

As per your previous clarification, you confirmed you are content to withdraw this part of your request.

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

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