



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2018-02412

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Possession of Cannabis From 2014 - To Date

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

Please also note I am asking for the information to be broken down by calendar year.

How many people have been proceeded against with possession (just possession, not possession with intent to supply) of cannabis over the past five calendar years?

Answer

Please see the total number from 01 January 2014 – 12 December 2018 in the table below :

Period	Number of People Proceeded Against with Possession of Cannabis
01 Jan 2014 12 Dec 2018	15

Request 2

Can this figure be broken down by year?

Answer

Please see the breakdown per calendar year in the table

Year	Number of People Proceeded Against with Possession of Cannabis
2014	4
2015	2
2016	4
2017	1
2018	4

Request 3

Can you break this information down by outcome?

Answer

The numbers provided in the table below relate to a conviction which was made in that year for the offence of SB4801017. However convictions can be made in different years from the arrest; therefore the data **will not directly correlate** with those figures listed in your response to requests 1 and 2.

Year	Number of Convictions for Possession of Cannabis	Outcome
2014	3	6 months imprisonment in Juvenile Justice Centre & 6 months' probation. Must attend Drug & Alcohol Treatment Programme
		Fine £150
		2 year Conditional Discharge
2015	3	3 months imprisonment suspended for 1 year
		1 year Probation & Must attend Drug & Alcohol Treatment Programme
		Fine £100
2016	5	Fine £90
		Fine £100
		1 month imprisonment suspended for 1 year
		Fine £60
		3 months imprisonment suspended for 2 years
2017	1	100 hours Community Service
Up to 12 Dec 2018	1	2 months imprisonment suspended for 2 years

In conjunction with the data provided in the table above please note the following caveats below:

The term 'proceeded against' was understood to mean those arrests where a decision was taken by Police to prosecute for the offence of SB4801017. The figures have therefore been refined to reflect the number of persons arrested and where that decision was made within the requested time period.

The results provided reflect offences whereby the offence code is equal to 'SB4801017 – 'Possession of a Class C controlled drug' and a search of the 'full charge wording for the text 'Cannabis' within the dates 01 January 2014 to 12 December 2018.

Figures for 2018 are up to 12 December 2018 as the data is live and a full year response is not available yet. It should also be noted the 'full charge wording is a free text column and where PSNI is unable to account for spelling mistakes of the word 'Cannabis' or where the drug name has not been entered.

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.