



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2018-02224

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Pre - Charge Police Bail From 3rd April 2016

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 did your force release on pre-charge police bail between 3rd April 2016 and 2nd April 2017? If possible, please can you state the average length of time these people were on bail for.

Answer

A total of 8140 individuals were released on police bail (12704 instances).¹

Of 12704 total police bail releases in this time frame, the mean duration of bail was 53 days²

Request 2

How many people did your force release on pre-charge police bail between 3rd April 2017 and 2nd April 2018? If possible, please can you state the average length of time these people were on bail for.

Answer

A total of 5827 individuals were released on police bail (11615 instances).¹

Of 11615 total police bail releases in this time frame, the mean duration of bail was 71 days²

Request 3

How many people did your force release 'under investigation' by the police between 3rd April 2017 and 2nd April 2018? If possible, please can you state the average length of time these people were under investigation prior to being charged or charges being dropped.

Answer

A total of 12839 individuals were released to be reported (16781 instances).³

Of 16781 total release to be reported instances in this time frame, the main duration from release to the associated offence being marked as "Resulted" (i.e. a final decision having been taken the

offence) was 143 days. ⁴

Please note the following caveats to be used in conjunction with the data provided above:

Pre charge police bail has been interpreted as an instance where a custody record has been created and a disposal with the title 'Bail to return to police station' or 'PACE 13.1.a' has been recorded against the record.

² Durations for pre charge bail are taken from the creation date of the bail disposal on the custody record to the date on which the person on bail reports back to the police station. Please note that the data quality issues where, for example, the date of report back to the station has been mistyped could impact on this figure. Limited dip testing has been carried out on the results, however to confirm the validity of every instance would require a manual trawl, which would exceed time limits.

3. PSNI does not have an "under investigation" disposal type. However to assist the closest equivalent is the 'Released to be reported' disposal. Released 'under investigation' has therefore been interpreted as:

- A. Instances where a custody record has a release to be reported disposal attached.
- B. Instances where an offence has been recorded against and occurrence and has resulted in a charge or withdrawal without any disposal or custody record (i.e. the person has been under investigation for an offence without having been arrested for that offence).

⁴ Durations for release to be reported durations have been calculated as follows:

- A. Duration from start date of the "Released to be reported" disposal to the result date for the associated offence (i.e. the date on which the offence was withdrawn or charged).
- B. Duration from the creation date of the offence on the occurrence to the result date for that offence.

Please note that potential issues with data quality as described for point 2 above also apply to these durations.

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.psnipolice.uk

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