

Christmas drink drive campaign 2020/21

Northern Ireland

This bulletin summarises available information in relation to the PSNI Christmas drink driving campaign 2020/21, which ran from 1st December 2020 to 1st January 2021 inclusive, specifically the outcomes in terms of Preliminary Breath Tests (PBTs), arrests and evidential procedures. These figures are provisional and subject to change, particularly for PBTs which are likely to increase as more information is uploaded to the system.

Key points:

- During the Christmas drink drive campaign from 1st December 2020 to 1st January 2021, PSNI officers conducted over 5,688 preliminary breath tests (PBTs), a decrease of 9,556 (63%) on the same period last year. Reduced [traffic volumes](#) coupled with selective testing to minimise risk to both the public and police officers due to COVID-19 and competing demands, have impacted on this decrease.
- Of the 5,688 PBTs conducted, 4.4% (253) resulted in a fail or failed to provide, a similar proportion when compared with the 2019/20 campaign (4.0%).
- A total of 280 people were arrested for drink/drug driving related offences during this year's campaign, representing a decrease of 28% compared with the same period last year (389).
- The majority of arrests were made in Belfast (49) followed by Newry, Mourne and Down district with 35.
- A total of 253 evidential procedures were completed, on persons ranging from 16 to 82 years old. Males accounted for the majority, with 217 (86%) subject to evidential procedures.



Northern Ireland
Statistics and Research Agency

Keeping People Safe



Background

There is no one measure of counting alcohol or drug driving offences as this is a complex process and there is no unique source of data. This bulletin has presented the information on the basis that those who have a Preliminary Breath Test with a result of 'Fail' or 'Failure to Provide' are a proxy measure for driving when under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Police will arrest people, collect further evidence via breath, blood or urine and present this to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) who will ultimately decide on the prospect of a successful case.

In terms of the 2020/21 statistics, the PBT figures are based on an extract of the data on 13th January 2021 and are likely to increase as more information is uploaded to the system. The arrest figures and evidential figures were extracted on 4th January 2021. These figures are therefore provisional and subject to change.

Preliminary Breath Tests

Table 1 Number of Preliminary Breath Tests carried out by PSNI by result

Result	1 st Dec 2019 – 1 st Jan 2020		1 st Dec 2020 – 1 st Jan 2021		% change between 2019/20 and 2020/21
	Number	%	Number	%	
Zero	14,258	93.5%	5,278	92.8%	-63%
Pass	347	2.3%	138	2.4%	-60%
Warning	28	0.2%	19	0.3%	-32%
Fail	386	2.5%	165	2.9%	-57%
Failed to Provide	225	1.5%	88	1.5%	-61%
Total	15,244	100.0%	5,688	100.0%	-63%

Arrests

Table 2 Number of arrests for drink/drug driving offences by District

District	1 st Dec 2019 - 1 st Jan 2020	1 st Dec 2020 - 1 st Jan 2021
Antrim and Newtownabbey	31	28
Ards and North Down	10	8
Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon	49	26
Belfast City	69	49
Causeway Coast and Glens	26	22
Derry City and Strabane	38	24
Fermanagh and Omagh	32	25
Lisburn and Castlereagh	26	15
Mid and East Antrim	35	19
Mid Ulster	34	29
Newry, Mourne and Down	39	35
Total	389	280

Evidential Procedures²

Table 3 Details of evidential procedures completed for drink / drug driving offences

1 st Dec 2019 - 1 st Jan 2020	1 st Dec 2020 - 1 st Jan 2021
Total procedures = 372	Total procedures = 253
Youngest: 14 years old	Youngest: 16 years old
Oldest: 83 years old	Oldest: 82 years old
Male: 294 (79%)	Male: 217 (86%)
Female: 78 (21%)	Female: 36 (14%)
Zero: 14	Zero: 18
1 - 34µg/100ml: 39	1 - 34µg/100ml: 32
35 - 49µg/100ml: 55	35 - 49µg/100ml: 31
50+µg/100ml: 195	50+µg/100ml: 112
No breath result: 69	No breath result: 60
Highest breath reading: 163µg	Highest breath reading: 139µg

²Evidential figures include completed procedures only and do not include those drivers who provided a blood/urine sample only and were not entered onto Police Works system.

Source: PSNI Statistics Branch, Lisnasharragh