

Police Service of Northern Ireland

# Police Recorded Injury Road Traffic Collision Statistics for Northern Ireland: Quality Report

December 2011

## Quality Report: Police Recorded Injury Road Traffic Collision Statistics for Northern Ireland

Dimension	Assessment by the author
<b>Introduction</b>	<p data-bbox="424 293 1391 333"><b>Context for the quality report.</b></p> <p data-bbox="424 344 1391 546"><i>The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) produces statistics on injury road traffic collisions (RTCs) that are reported to the Police. Damage only collisions or those collisions resulting in no injuries are <u>excluded</u> from these statistics. Records on road traffic fatalities and casualties are held for each year dating back to 1931 with the differentiation between slight and serious injuries having been introduced in 1971.</i></p> <p data-bbox="424 580 1391 916"><i>The road traffic collision statistics reflect the number of injury collisions and associated casualties that were reported to and recorded by the police. It is possible that some collisions or casualties were not brought to the PSNI's attention for a variety of reasons. Recent research conducted in England &amp; Wales has identified discrepancies between casualty data recorded by police compared with that sourced from hospitals and it is assumed that the same finding may well apply to Northern Ireland. However, the PSNI is only in a position to report on those collisions and casualties that are brought to their attention and hence this report is based on police recorded injury road traffic collisions.</i></p> <p data-bbox="424 949 1391 1218"><i>Injury collisions reported to the police are recorded on the PSNI's Command &amp; Control system. Police officers then collate additional details on the circumstances of the collision in line with national standards across the UK on a PSNI Collision Report Form (CRF) (based on the STATS19 form in the UK) and these details are then input onto the PSNI's integrated IT system (Niche). The PSNI's Statistics Branch oversees the completeness and quality of the information captured through an extensive range of audits and checks for each recorded collision.</i></p> <p data-bbox="424 1252 1391 1453"><i>Provisional statistics are reported on a regular basis within a given financial year with the finalised statistics published in May each year. In-year provisional statistics are subject to revision and are updated by subsequent in-year publications. Finalised end of year statistics are not subject to revision. All statistical reports are placed on the PSNI website in accordance with our pre-announced publication timetable.</i></p> <p data-bbox="424 1487 1391 1588"><i>Further details on relevant documentation, especially on methodology and quality are available in the Road Traffic Collision Statistics User Guide on our <a href="#">website</a>.</i></p>
<b>Relevance</b>	<p data-bbox="424 1603 1391 1671"><b>The degree to which the statistical product meets user needs in both coverage and content.</b></p> <p data-bbox="424 1682 1391 1816"><i>The purpose of collating and reporting on injury road traffic collision statistics is to provide accurate and timely management information to PSNI to assist them with tracking trends, identifying problem areas and in developing policies related to roads policing issues.</i></p> <p data-bbox="424 1850 1391 2007"><i>We adhere to the same national guidance for recording injury road traffic collisions as colleagues in England, Wales and Scotland and members of the branch attend regular meetings of the Standing Committee on Road Accident Statistics (SCRAS) to ensure that we keep up to date with changes in the national approach.</i></p> <p data-bbox="424 2040 1391 2107"><i>Police recorded injury road traffic collision and casualty statistics are also used by a variety of organisations and individuals in the public and private sector as well as by the wider general public. Other user needs that have</i></p>

	<p><i>been identified through our consultation exercises are addressed in the relevant section of our website.</i></p> <p><i>Whilst we publish daily updates on the numbers of people killed on the roads, statistics on those seriously or slightly injured are published less frequently with perhaps 4 or 5 updates within a given year. This delay is due to the time it takes police officers to complete follow up investigations and the relevant paperwork. Our internal and external users of the statistics would like these in-year figures to be available on a more timely basis and whilst we have achieved improvements over the years, ultimately it's a matter of work prioritisation amongst police officers.</i></p>
<b>Accuracy and Reliability</b>	<b><i>The proximity between an estimate and the unknown true value.</i></b>
	<p><i>We follow national guidance on the recording of collisions and casualties. The PSNI's Collision Report Form (CRF) is based on the Department for Transport STATs19 form thus enabling comparability with other regions of the UK. We also undertake a variety of detailed and comprehensive validation processes and checks to ensure that the data are as complete and accurate as possible. Data are gathered from the PSNI operational database system and statisticians from the branch have been closely involved in the design and output requirements of this system. However, being an administrative dataset, it relies heavily on the accuracy of the inputters at each stage in the process</i></p> <p><i>As mentioned previously, we are aware that an element of under-reporting may exist as it is possible that not all injury collisions are reported to the police, for a variety of reasons. This is likely to have more of an affect on slight injury collisions as those involving serious injuries or fatalities are far more likely to come to the attention of the police. Research in this area has been conducted by the Department for Transport (DfT).</i></p>
<b>Timeliness and Punctuality</b>	<b><i>Timeliness refers to the time gap between publication and the reference period. Punctuality refers to the gap between planned and actual publication dates.</i></b>
	<p><i>Daily updates of fatalities as a result of road traffic collisions are provided internally via email and a daily report is also placed on the PSNI website. Further regular updates on injury road traffic collisions and casualties are provided on the PSNI website usually within twelve weeks of the end of the reporting period in question. These in-year figures are provisional and are revised in subsequent in-year publications. The publication dates are pre-announced on the branch's publication schedule. Whilst improvements in the timeliness have been achieved in recent years, further improvements are dependent on police officers completing the forms on a more timely basis and, given their other pressing work commitments, the completion of injury road traffic collisions forms is not always seen as a priority. Nevertheless, various changes to working practices and processes have recently been introduced that should improve matters.</i></p> <p><i>Finalised figures for the financial year are published mid-May and are also pre-announced on the PSNI website.</i></p>
<b>Accessibility and Clarity</b>	<b><i>Accessibility is the ease with which users are able to access the data, also reflecting the format in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information. Clarity refers to the quality and sufficiency of the metadata, illustrations and accompanying advice.</i></b>
	<i>Road Traffic Collision statistics are published on the PSNI website to pre-announced schedules. These web-based releases contain contact details if a different format or further explanations are required. Users regularly contact the branch for further trend information or with more specific</i>

	<p>queries.</p> <p>The PSNI's Injury Road Traffic Collision database is also available from the UK Data Archive and can be accessed for mapping purposes via the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information System (NINIS) which is managed by NISRA to provide statistics at neighbourhood levels.</p> <p>Further background information including definitions is provided in the User Guide which is also available on the PSNI <a href="#">website</a>. Information about consultation exercises and user surveys is provided in the User Consultation and User Feedback sections which can be found on the <a href="#">Official Statistics</a> page of the PSNI website.</p>
<p><b>Coherence and Comparability</b></p>	<p><b>Coherence is the degree to which data that are derived from different sources or methods, but refer to the same topic, are similar. Comparability is the degree to which data can be compared over time and domain.</b></p> <p>As all the information contained in the injury road traffic collision statistics publication is derived from the same source coherence is not an issue.</p> <p>Promoting comparability is an important requirement of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics which aids interpretation for the users of the injury road traffic collision statistics. Comparisons within the UK are the most valid as the PSNI adopts the same national approach to the recording on injury road traffic collisions as all the other regions of the UK. Where possible we will provide the most recent comparisons within the reports and bulletins that we publish.</p> <p>In order to allow users to compare trends over time we have provided a number of time series reports on our website. The <a href="#">Reported Injury Road Traffic Collisions archive section</a> on the website gives a collision and casualty summary back to 1931 with the differentiation between slight and serious injuries being introduced in 1971. In response to user requirements these are also now available in Excel format.</p>
<p><b>Trade-offs between Output Quality Components</b></p>	<p><b>Trade-offs are the extent to which different aspects of quality are balanced against each other.</b></p> <p>While we do try to ensure that all injury road traffic collisions reported to the police are included in the statistics, we recognise that a small number may be accidentally omitted due to police officers not recording the fact that any injury resulted. We also recognise that the differentiation between a slight and serious injury can sometimes be difficult to judge and with hundreds of police officers attending collisions and completing the details, it is difficult to ensure that each is correctly recorded. However, this would be the same for any police force across the UK and has also been a problem for many years, so there is no recent adverse impact.</p>
<p><b>Assessment of User Needs and Perceptions</b></p>	<p><b>The processes for finding out about users and uses, and their views on the statistical products.</b></p> <p>User consultation is an important part of our work. It informs our work schedules and statistical planning process. Our <a href="#">Customer Service and Engagement Statement</a> is available on our website and it highlights our aims and standards for dealing with key users and requests from members of the public.</p> <p>We completed a branch-wide user satisfaction survey in October / November 2011 and the <a href="#">survey results</a> are available on the <a href="#">Official Statistics</a> page of the PSNI website.</p> <p>The main uses of the PSNI's Injury Road Traffic Collision statistics are</p>

	<i>highlighted in the <a href="#">User Guide</a>.</i>
<b>Performance, Cost and Respondent Burden</b>	<b><i>The effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the statistical output.</i></b>
	<p><i>Whilst the injury road traffic collision statistics are a by-product of police administrative processes where they record and investigate collisions reported to them, a section of the PSNI's Statistics Branch is dedicated to overseeing that injury road traffic collisions are recorded in compliance with national standards.</i></p> <p><i>There is no additional burden placed on the public or on businesses as a result of collation of these statistics other than the normal paperwork associated with reporting a road traffic collision to the police.</i></p>
<b>Confidentiality, Transparency and Security</b>	<b><i>The procedures and policy used to ensure sound confidentiality, security and transparent practices.</i></b>
	<p><i>The PSNI's Statistics Branch complies with the requirements of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics in relation to Principle 5: Confidentiality. A <a href="#">Confidentiality Protection Arrangements</a> document is available on the statistics section of the PSNI website. It outlines the arrangements for maintaining confidentiality of statistical data and covers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• Physical security</i></li> <li><i>• Technical security</i></li> <li><i>• Staff training</i></li> <li><i>• Statistical Disclosure Control</i></li> <li><i>• Sharing of data with a third party.</i></li> </ul>