

# Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics

1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020

## Key Statistics

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During 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020:

- there were 2 security related deaths, the same number as during the previous 12 months.
- there were 17 bombing incidents, compared to 15 in the previous year and 39 shooting incidents, the same number as in the previous year.
- there were 13 casualties of paramilitary style shootings, compared to 18 during the previous 12 months. All 13 casualties were aged 18 years or older.
- there were 42 casualties of paramilitary style assaults, compared to 67 in the previous 12 months. Of the 42 casualties, one was under 18 years old.
- there were 79 persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000, compared to 147 during the previous 12 months.
- more bombings, shootings and paramilitary style attacks occurred in Belfast than any other policing district.
- Derry City and Strabane saw a considerable decrease in the number of shootings and paramilitary style attacks compared to the previous year.
- Antrim and Newtownabbey saw the largest decrease (from 20 to 2) in the number of paramilitary style assaults compared to the previous year.
- Causeway Coast and Glens saw the greatest increase in the number of shooting incidents, following no such incidents in the previous 12 months, as well as a notable increase in the number of paramilitary style attacks.



Northern Ireland  
Statistics and Research Agency



Keeping People Safe

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We welcome user feedback on these statistics. This can be sent to the email address on the cover page or by contacting us at the telephone number provided.

## 1. Things you need to know about this release

### Coverage

Police Recorded Statistics on the Security Situation for Northern Ireland are collated and produced by statisticians seconded to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) from the Northern Ireland and Statistics Research Agency (NISRA).

Police recorded statistics relating to the security situation in Northern Ireland are the main source of official information on trends and statistics relating to the security situation throughout the Troubles and up to the present day. The PSNI produces statistics on incidents relating to the security situation that are reported to the police, including security related deaths, shooting and bombing incidents, paramilitary style attacks and arrests under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000.

This monthly bulletin presents the most recent security situation statistics for the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020. Figures for the financial year 2020/21 are provisional and subject to minor amendment. An accompanying [spreadsheet](#) is available on our website which outlines the data in this bulletin and historic trends. Further information on how these statistics are collated, reported and used is included in the [Security Situation Statistics User Guide](#) available on the [PSNI website](#). The next monthly update will be published on 5 February 2021.

The security situation figures relate to those incidents that took place within Northern Ireland, they do not include any security related incidents that may have happened either in the Republic of Ireland or in Great Britain.

These statistics only include those incidents that are brought to the attention of the police and some such incidents may not have been reported. Therefore a level of under-reporting may exist and users of the statistics should exercise caution when examining trends based on these police statistics.

### National Statistics

National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and as producers, it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

These statistics were designated as National Statistics in June 2012 following a full [assessment](#) against the [Code of Practice](#).

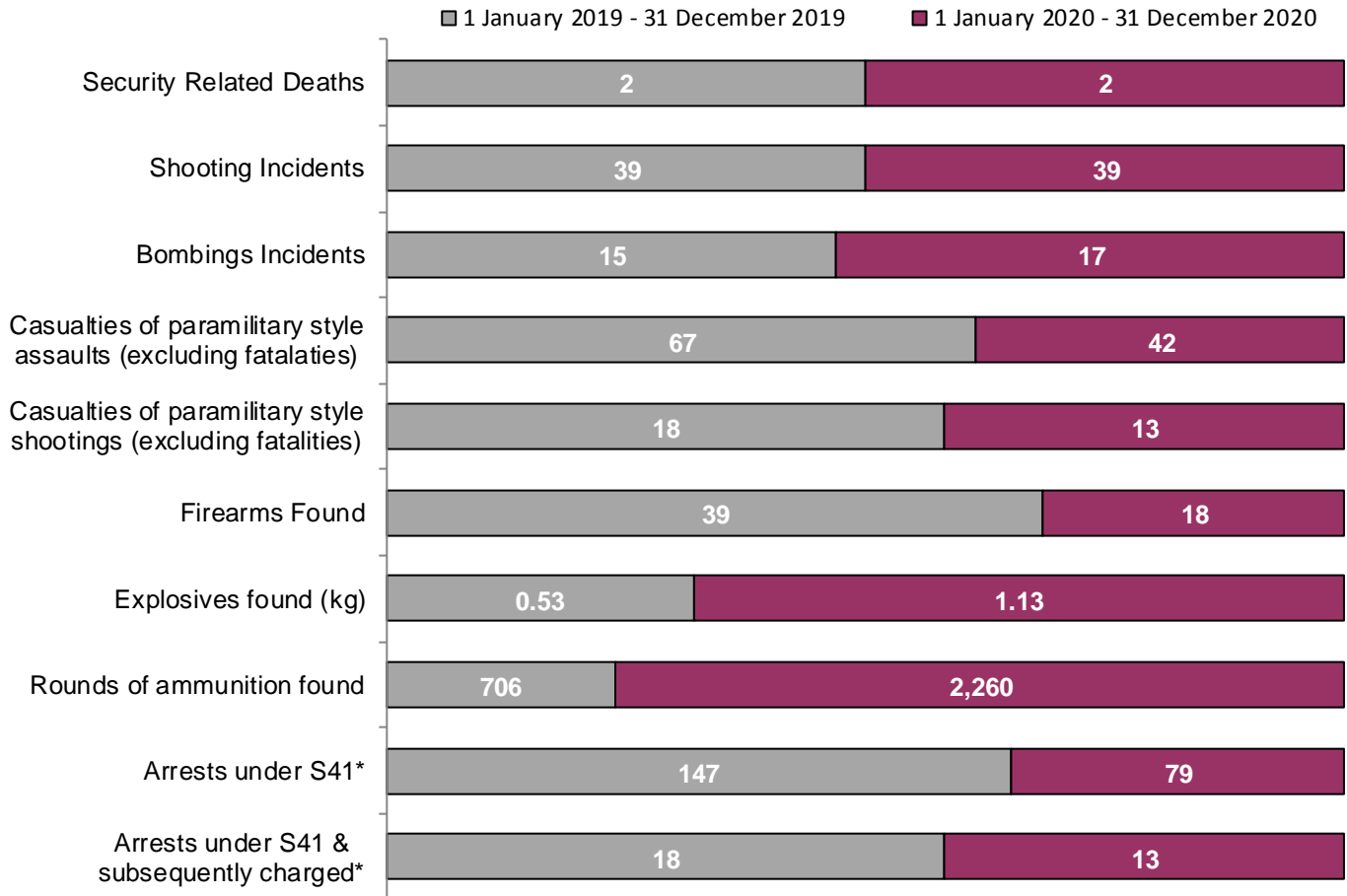
Since the assessment by the UK Statistics Authority, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- Enhanced the amount of information available to users, for example inclusion of longer trend information and District breakdown in annual reports.
- Reviewed and enhanced the format of the monthly bulletins.
- Improved accessibility by introducing user friendly methods of data presentation, for example tables, maps and charts, and providing tables in open document spreadsheet format.
- Continued to conduct regular consultation with internal and external users, for example via a customer satisfaction survey to obtain feedback and suggestions for improvements, with [results](#) published on the PSNI statistics website.
- Assessment against the Administrative Data Quality Assurance framework in 2018 to ensure ongoing quality of outputs and identify improvements.

## 2. Summary statistics

Figure 1 summarises the number of security related incidents during the past 12 months compared to the previous 12 months.

**Figure 1: Comparison of security incidents between 1 January 2019 – 31 December 2019 and 1 January 2020 – 31 December 2020.**



\* Figures in this publication include only those arrests that are linked to the security situation in Northern Ireland; persons who have been arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act for other reasons are excluded.

### 3. Ten year trends (by financial year)

Figure 2: Number of deaths due to the security situation 2010/11 – 2019/20

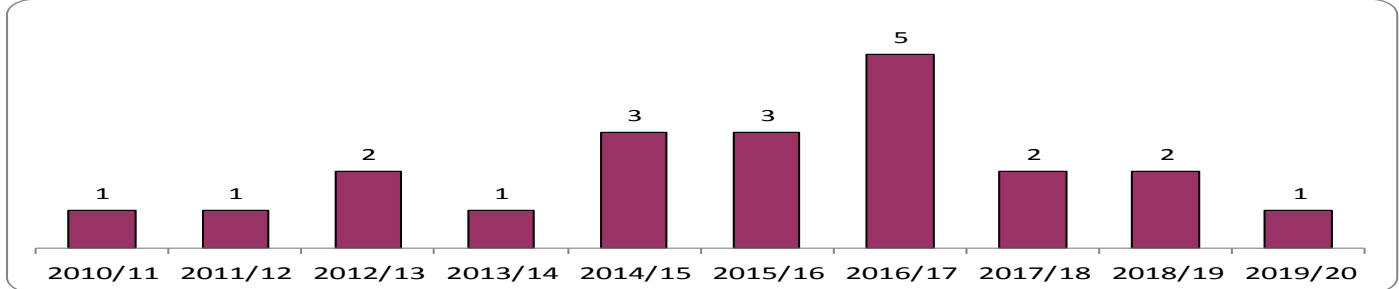


Figure 3: Number of shooting and bombing incidents 2010/11 – 2019/20

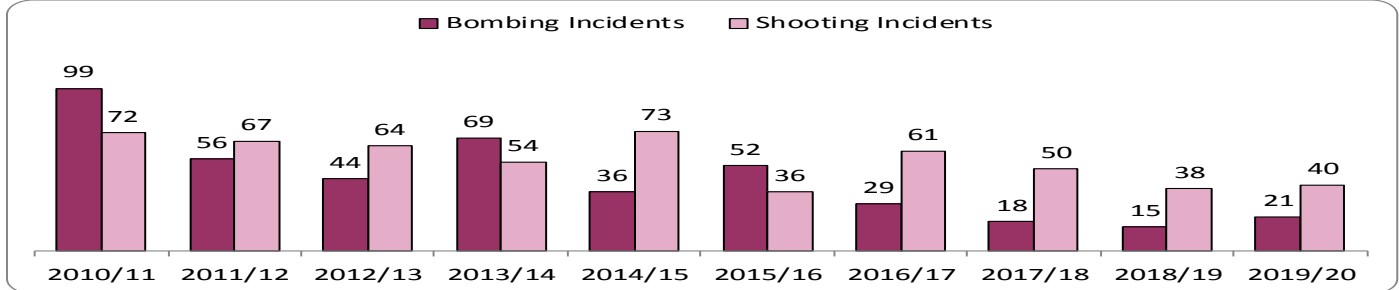


Figure 4: Number of casualties as a result of paramilitary style shootings<sup>(1,2)</sup> 2010/11 – 2019/20

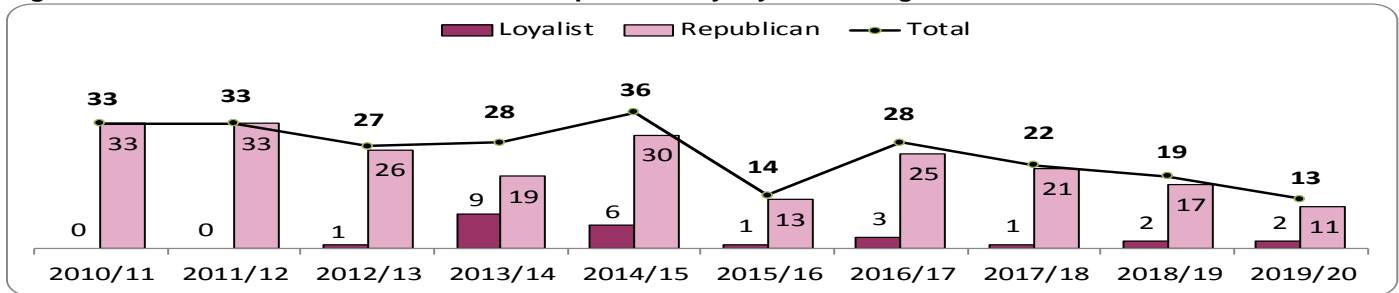


Figure 5: Number of casualties as a result of paramilitary-style assaults<sup>(1,2)</sup> 2010/11 – 2019/20

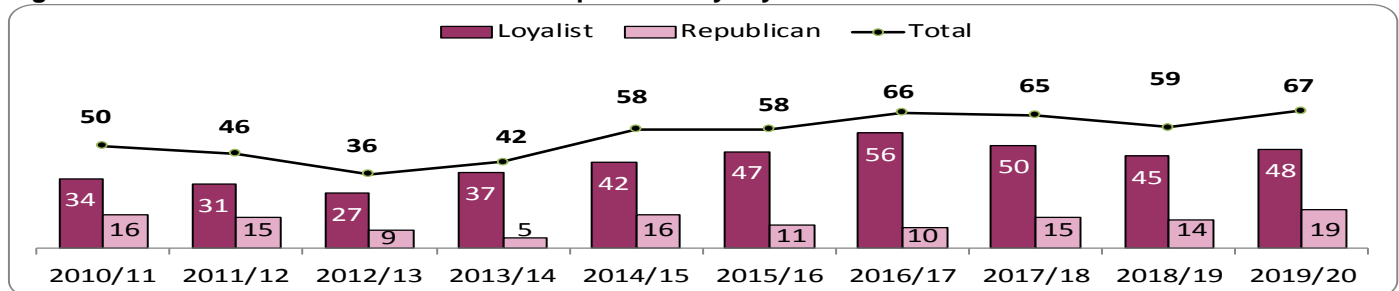
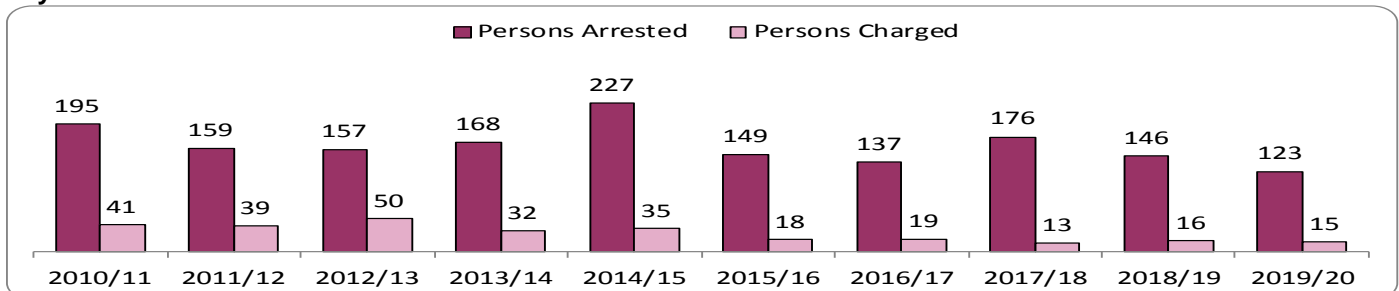


Figure 6: Number of persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act & subsequently charged with any offence 2010/11 – 2019/20



(1) Paramilitary style assaults/shootings that result in death are counted as security related deaths and are not reflected in the paramilitary style assault/shooting figures. (2) Attribution is as perceived by PSNI based on the information available at the time of the incident and does not necessarily indicate the involvement of a paramilitary organisation.

## 4. Commentary

### 4.1 Security Related Deaths

**Security related deaths are those which are considered at the time of the incident to be directly attributed to terrorism, where the cause has a direct or proximate link to subversive / sectarian strife or where the death is attributable to security force activity.**

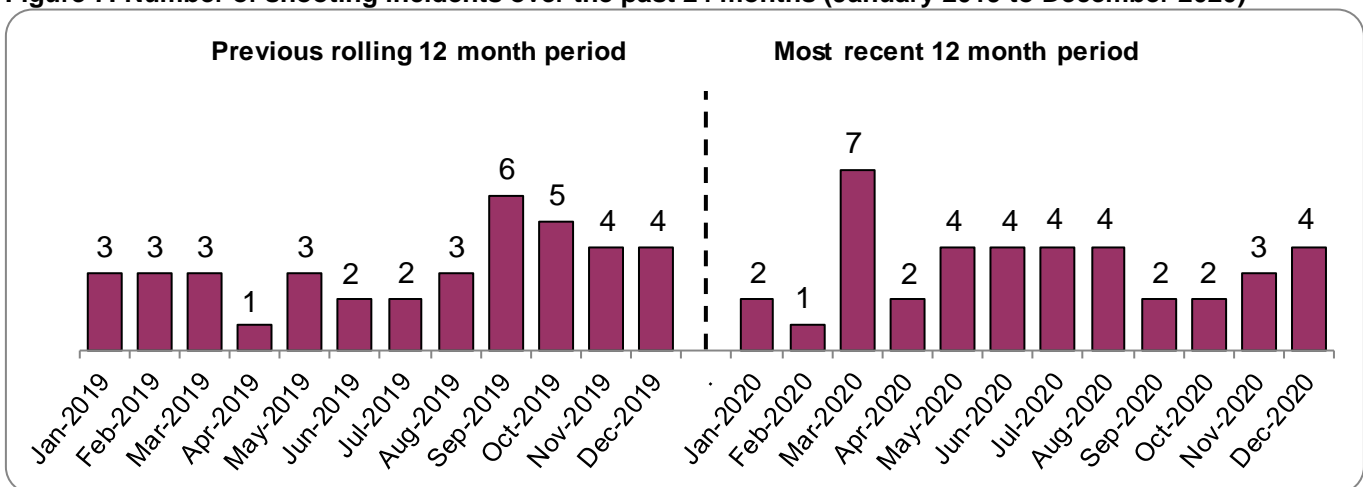
- There were 2 security related deaths during the last 12 month period, the same number as during the previous 12 months. Both these deaths occurred in Belfast, one in May 2020 and one in June 2020.

### 4.2 Shooting Incidents

**These include any shooting incident relating to the security situation and include shots fired by terrorists, shots fired by the security forces, paramilitary style attacks involving shootings and shots heard (and later confirmed by other sources).**

- There were 39 shooting incidents during the last 12 months, the same number as during the previous 12 months. See Figure 7 for a monthly breakdown.
- Of the 39 shooting incidents in the last 12 months, Belfast experienced the most (16 incidents), followed by Causeway Coast and Glens (14 incidents). Causeway Coast and Glens saw the greatest increase in the number of shootings year-on-year (from none to 14) while Derry City and Strabane saw the greatest decrease (from 13 to 4); see Section 5 for a district breakdown.

**Figure 7: Number of shooting incidents over the past 24 months (January 2019 to December 2020)**

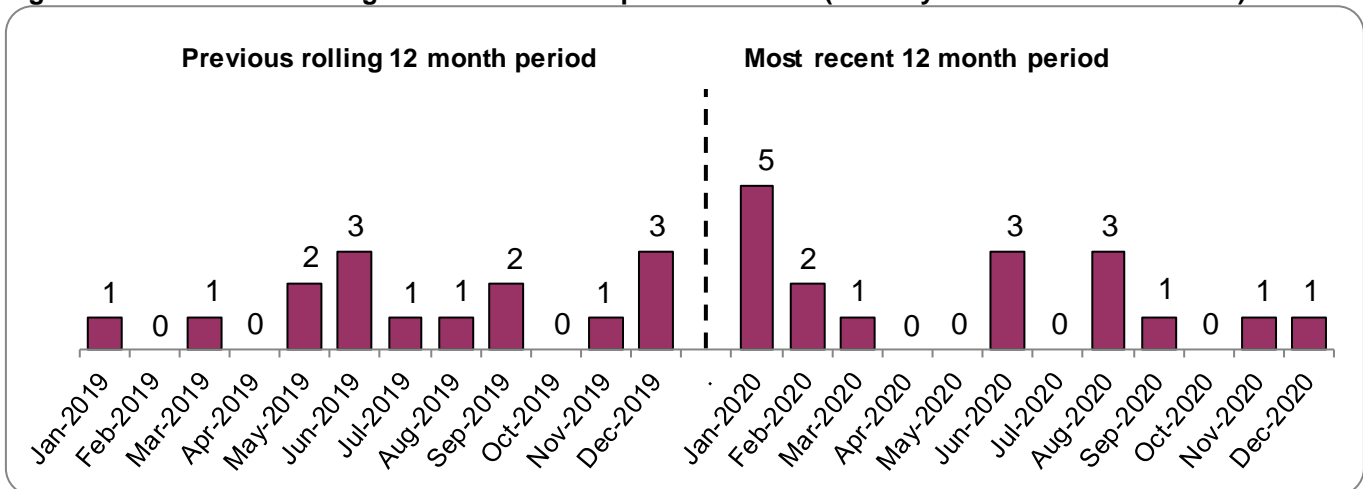


### 4.3 Bombing Incidents

***These include all incidents where a bombing device explodes or is defused. If a device is found that is not complete or armed, then it is recorded as a 'find' and not as a bombing.***

- There were 17 bombing incidents during the last 12 months, compared to 15 during the previous 12 months. See Figure 8 for a monthly breakdown. Belfast saw the highest number of bombing incidents (8) followed by Derry City and Strabane (3).

**Figure 8: Number of bombing incidents over the past 24 months (January 2019 to December 2020)**

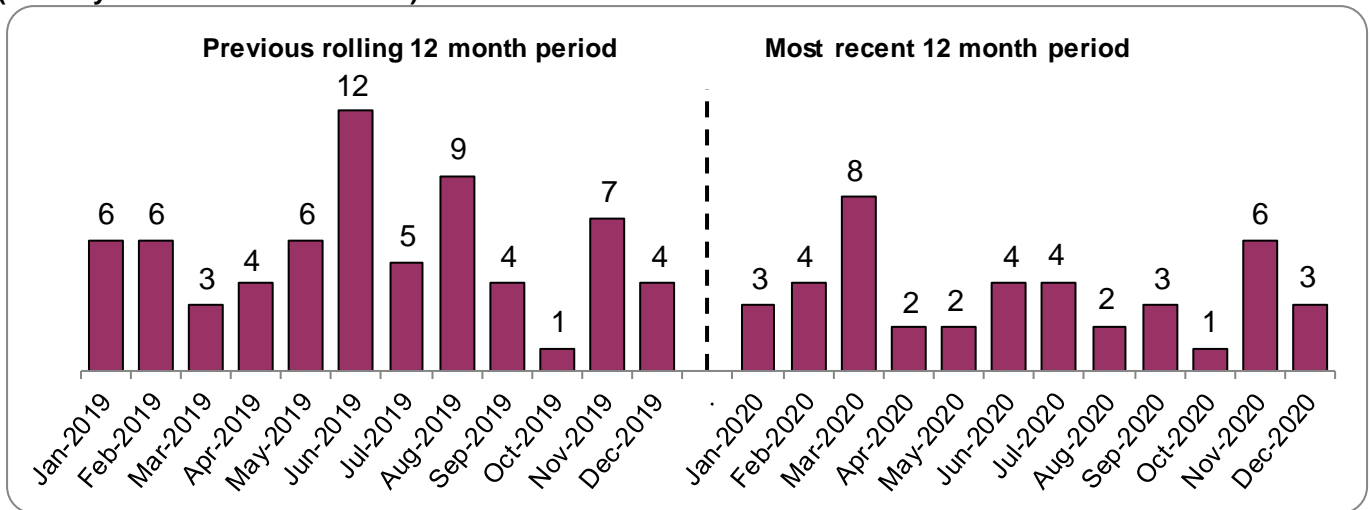


### 4.4 Paramilitary Style Assaults

***Paramilitary style assaults are usually carried out by Loyalist or Republican groups on members of their own community as a so-called punishment. The assault will involve major or minor physical injury to the injured party typically involving a group of assailants armed with, for example, iron bars or baseball bats. Paramilitary style assaults that result in death are counted as 'security related deaths' and are not reflected in the paramilitary style assault figures.***

- There were 42 casualties of paramilitary style assaults during the last 12 months compared to 67 during the previous 12 months. The greatest number of assaults occurred in Belfast (13) and Mid and East Antrim (10). Figures for all districts can be found in Section 5.
- Six districts saw fewer assaults during the past 12 months than the previous 12 months, including Antrim and Newtownabbey (20 to 2), which had the greatest decrease in the number of assaults. Conversely, Causeway Coast and Glens saw the greatest increase in the number of assaults year-on-year (1 to 5).
- Of the 42 casualties of paramilitary style assaults during the last 12 months, one was aged under 18 years old.

**Figure 9: Number of casualties resulting from paramilitary style assaults<sup>(1)</sup> over the last 24 months (January 2019 to December 2020)**



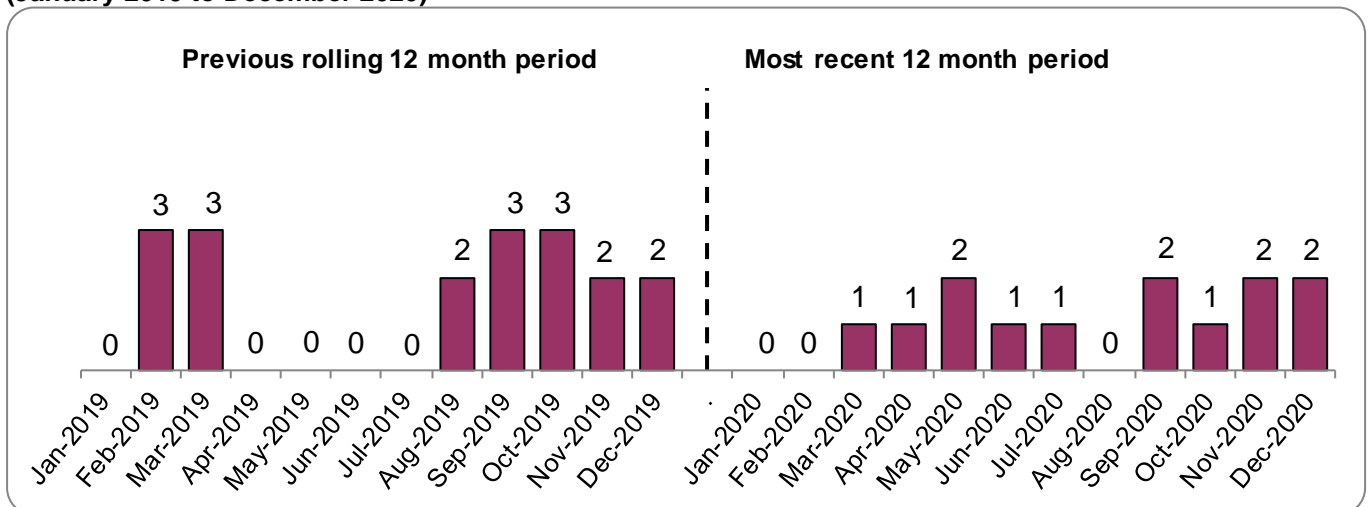
(1) Paramilitary style assaults that result in death are counted as security related deaths and are not included in the casualties of paramilitary style assaults figures.

### 4.5 Paramilitary Style Shootings

**Paramilitary style shootings usually result in the injured party being shot in the knees, elbows, feet, ankles or thighs and the motive is supposedly to punish the person for anti-social activities. These paramilitary style shootings are generally conducted by Loyalist or Republican paramilitary groups on members of their own community. Paramilitary style shootings that result in death are counted as ‘security related deaths’ and are not reflected in the paramilitary style shooting figures.**

- There were 13 casualties of paramilitary style shootings during the last 12 months, compared to 18 during the previous 12 months. Of these 13 shootings, the largest number occurred in Belfast (8). This is the same number as occurred in Belfast during the previous year. Derry City and Strabane saw the greatest decrease in the number of such attacks year-on-year (from 8 to 1).
- Of the 13 casualties of paramilitary style shootings during the last 12 months, all were aged 18 years and above.

**Figure 10: Number of casualties resulting from paramilitary style shootings<sup>(1)</sup> over the last 24 months (January 2019 to December 2020)**



(1) Paramilitary style shootings that result in death are counted as security related deaths and are not included in the casualties of paramilitary style shootings figures.



## 4.6 Finds of Firearms, Explosives and Ammunition

*These refer to the seizure or recovery of all illegal firearms, ammunition, explosives, rocket/mortar launchers, detonators and bomb making material/equipment. Replica/blank firing firearms, petrol bombs and petrol bomb making materials, grenades and munitions from World War 1 or World War 2 found on the beach or in attics etc. are not recorded as finds.*

### Firearms Finds

- There were fewer firearms found during the past 12 months (18) compared to the previous 12 months (39).

### Explosive Finds

- There were more explosives found during the past 12 months (1.1kg) compared to the previous 12 months (0.5kg).

### Ammunition Finds

- There were more rounds of ammunition found during the past 12 months (2,260 rounds) compared to during the previous 12 months (706 rounds). This increase is partly explained by the large quantity of ammunition found during a single recovery in May 2020.

**Table 1: Number of firearms, explosives and rounds of ammunition seized by PSNI over the last 24 months (January 2019 to December 2020)**

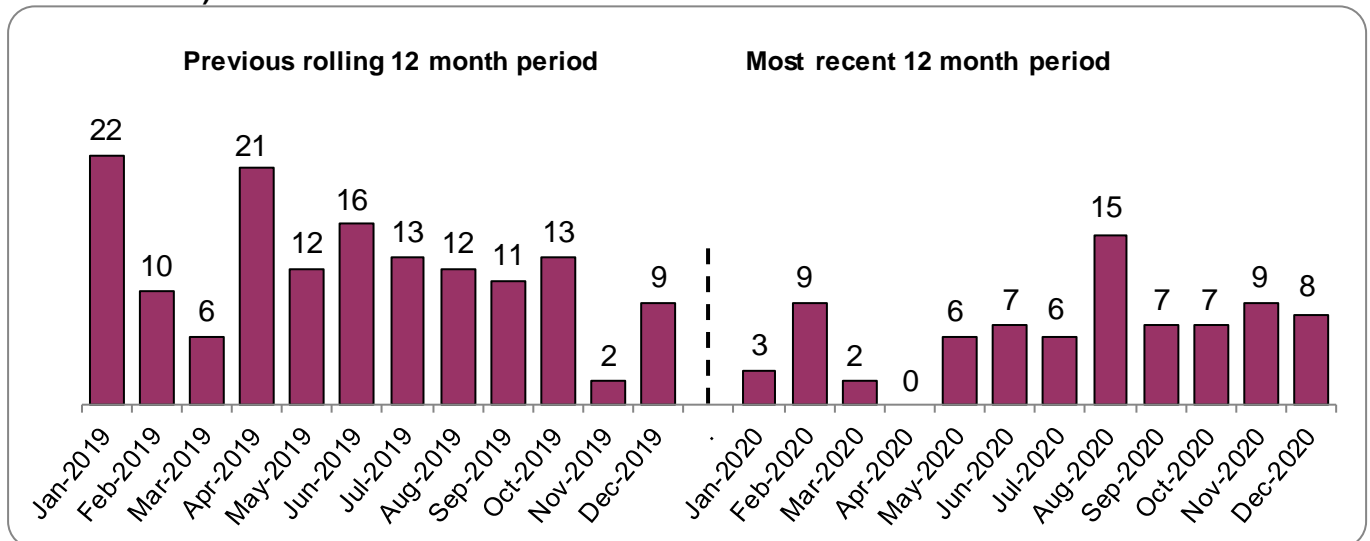
	Previous 12 month period			Most recent 12 month period			
	Firearms	Explosives (kg)	Rounds of Ammunition	Firearms	Explosives (kg)	Rounds of Ammunition	
<b>Jan-19</b>	5	0.00	34	<b>Jan-20</b>	2	0.35	232
<b>Feb-19</b>	6	0.01	105	<b>Feb-20</b>	3	0.00	48
<b>Mar-19</b>	4	0.00	104	<b>Mar-20</b>	1	0.01	31
<b>Apr-19</b>	3	0.00	14	<b>Apr-20</b>	0	0.00	165
<b>May-19</b>	1	0.00	48	<b>May-20</b>	1	0.00	1,003
<b>Jun-19</b>	5	0.00	122	<b>Jun-20</b>	2	0.70	30
<b>Jul-19</b>	0	0.00	35	<b>Jul-20</b>	1	0.00	97
<b>Aug-19</b>	4	0.00	46	<b>Aug-20</b>	0	0.00	336
<b>Sep-19</b>	5	0.48	66	<b>Sep-20</b>	2	0.00	186
<b>Oct-19</b>	3	0.00	53	<b>Oct-20</b>	0	0.02	48
<b>Nov-19</b>	3	0.04	66	<b>Nov-20</b>	4	0.05	70
<b>Dec-19</b>	0	0.00	13	<b>Dec-20</b>	2	0.00	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>706</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1.13</b>	<b>2,260</b>

## 4.7 Section 41 Terrorism Act Arrests and Subsequent Charges

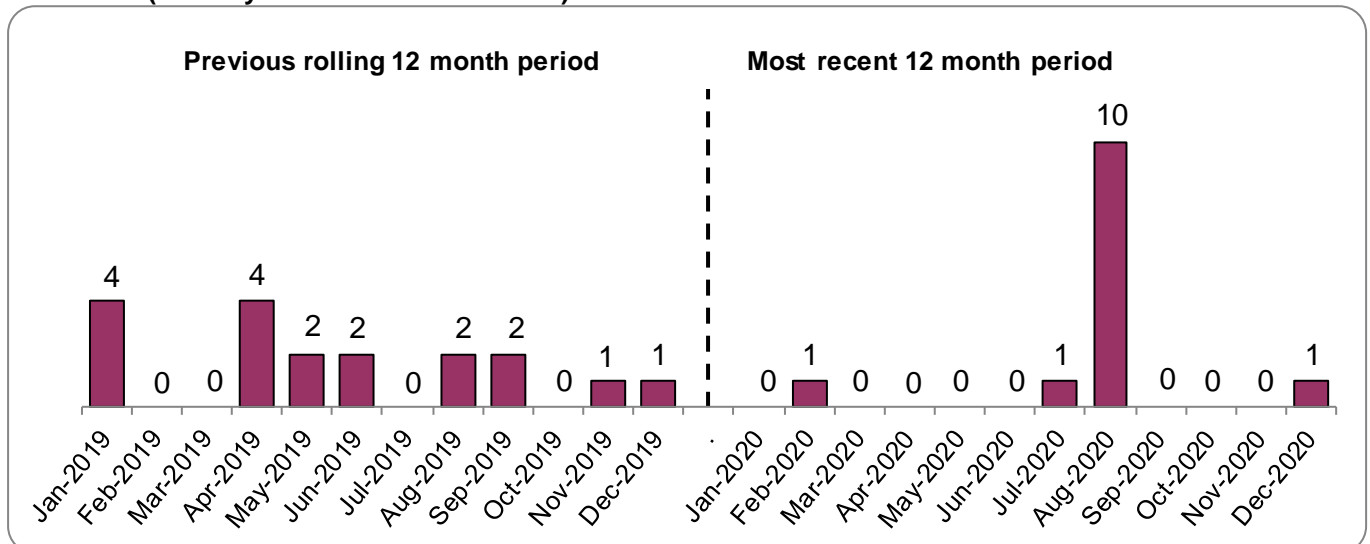
**Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000 enables police officers to arrest persons whom they reasonably suspect to be a terrorist. Following arrest under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act an individual may be charged with any offence (e.g. attempted murder) and not necessarily an offence listed under the Terrorism Act. Figures in this publication include only those arrests that are linked to the security situation in Northern Ireland; persons who have been arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act for other reasons are excluded.**

- There were 79 persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000 during the past 12 months compared to 147 during the previous 12 months.
- Of the 79 arrests, 35 of them occurred in Derry City and Strabane.
- There were 13 persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequently charged (with any offence) during the past 12 months compared to 18 during the previous 12 months (see Figure 12). Of the 13 persons charged, 10 of them were charged in August.

**Figure 11: Number of persons arrested under S41 Terrorism Act over the last 24 months (January 2019 to December 2020)**



**Figure 12: Number of persons arrested under S41 Terrorism Act and subsequently charged over the last 24 months (January 2019 to December 2020)**



## 5. District level tables

### Bombing and Shooting Incidents

Policing District	Bombing Incidents <sup>1</sup>			Shooting Incidents <sup>2</sup>		
	12 months to December 19	12 months to December 20	Change	12 months to December 19	12 months to December 20	Change
Belfast City	5	8	3	18	16	-2
Lisburn & Castlereagh City	0	2	2	0	1	1
Ards & North Down	0	1	1	3	1	-2
Newry, Mourne & Down	0	0	0	0	0	0
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	2	1	-1	1	0	-1
Mid Ulster	0	0	0	1	0	-1
Fermanagh & Omagh	1	0	-1	1	0	-1
Derry City & Strabane	5	3	-2	13	4	-9
Causeway Coast & Glens	0	0	0	0	14	14
Mid & East Antrim	0	1	1	1	2	1
Antrim & Newtownabbey	2	1	-1	1	1	0
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>0</b>

(1) Individual bombing incidents may involve one or more explosive devices. Incidents include explosions and defusings. Incidents involving hoax devices, petrol bombings or incendiaries are excluded.

(2) The following types of incidents are included:

- Shots fired by terrorists
- Shots fired by the security forces
- Paramilitary-style attacks involving shootings
- Shots heard (and later confirmed).

### Casualties of Paramilitary-Style Attacks

Policing District	Casualties Resulting from Paramilitary-Style Shootings <sup>3</sup>			Casualties Resulting from Paramilitary-Style Assaults <sup>3</sup>		
	12 months to December 19	12 months to December 20	Change	12 months to December 19	12 months to December 20	Change
Belfast City	8	8	0	15	13	-2
Lisburn & Castlereagh City	0	0	0	3	0	-3
Ards & North Down	1	0	-1	9	7	-2
Newry, Mourne & Down	0	0	0	0	0	0
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	0	0	0	0	1	1
Mid Ulster	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fermanagh & Omagh	0	0	0	1	0	-1
Derry City & Strabane	8	1	-7	9	4	-5
Causeway Coast & Glens	0	2	2	1	5	4
Mid & East Antrim	1	1	0	9	10	1
Antrim & Newtownabbey	0	1	1	20	2	-18
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>-5</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>-25</b>

(3) Paramilitary style assaults/shootings that result in death are counted as security related deaths and are not included in the casualties of paramilitary style assaults/shootings figures.

## Arrests under Section 41 TACT and subsequent charges

Policing District	Section 41 Terrorism Act Arrests			Persons charged subsequent to S41 arrest <sup>4,5</sup>		
	12 months to December 19	12 months to December 20	Change	12 months to December 19	12 months to December 20	Change
Belfast City	74	12	-62	9	1	-8
Lisburn & Castlereagh City	2	0	-2	0	0	0
Ards & North Down	4	0	-4	1	0	-1
Newry, Mourne & Down	0	2	2	0	0	0
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	5	6	1	0	3	3
Mid Ulster	0	5	5	0	3	3
Fermanagh & Omagh	2	4	2	1	0	-1
Derry City & Strabane	53	35	-18	7	6	-1
Causeway Coast & Glens	2	10	8	0	0	0
Mid & East Antrim	2	0	-2	0	0	0
Antrim & Newtownabbey	3	5	2	0	0	0
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>-68</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>-5</b>

(4) Statistics refer to charges brought against a person after the original period of detention (including extensions). Any subsequent charges, additions, deletions to the original charges are not included.

(5) Persons can be charged under legislation other than the Terrorism Act.

## 5. Revisions

Revisions are carried out in accordance with our [Revisions Policy](#), a copy of which is available in the Official Statistics section of the PSNI Statistics website. Figures within the current financial year to date are provisional and will be subject to slight revision until figures for the full financial year are published. This means that the totals for each month from April 2020 can change each time the figures are published during the financial year. These amendments can happen for a number of reasons, such as an incident being included or excluded following further investigation by an officer.

Since the publication of the previous bulletin in December 2020 there has been one revision made to the data, as outlined below:

- The number of bombing incidents recorded by the PSNI in November 2020 increased by 1 (from none to 1).