

Keeping People Safe



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2020-00933

Keyword: Organisational Information/Governance

Subject: Deaf Offenders within the Criminal Justice System.

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

The number of deaf prisoners/offenders within NI between 2014-2019 (And/or in statistical form)

Answer

There have been 11 deaf prisoners/offenders.

Request 2

The number of deaf prisoners/offenders between 2014-2019 (And/or in statistical form) to be convicted of crimes against the person (sexual abuse, or any other crime that constitutes physical harm, i.e., GBH, murder, violence etc.

Answer

There have been 10 deaf prisoners/offenders.

Note

Many of these have been arrested numerous times over all 6 years, however when this has occurred they have been counted as 1 person only.

Request 3

The services used to enable/accommodate deaf people within the criminal justice system, for example the use of interpreters, in line with the PACE 1984 legislation and whether such resources are easily accessible and available to the individual offender. Courtroom services available for deaf offenders and communication alternatives for deaf prisoners if there is an inability to use telephones.

Answer

The PSNI is part of a Department of Justice collaborative contract and the deaf/hard of hearing interpretation services are currently provided by Action on Hearing Loss.

Request 4

The number of deaf offenders with present mental health issues. (And/or in statistical form)

Answer

There have been 5 deaf offenders who have mental health issues.

Request 5

The number of deaf offenders with substance misuse issues (drug and/or alcohol abuse)

Answer

There is 1 deaf offender with substance misuse issues.

Note

The PSNI do not necessarily hold data indicating whether or not someone has a drug or alcohol misuse issue and unless we are informed we do not know, therefore the answer cannot be taken to be an accurate statistic of whether or not the detainee has a drug or alcohol issue.

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 Corporate Information Branch, 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 Corporate Information Branch, 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.