

Keeping People Safe



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2021-01235

Keyword: Crime

Subject: Cannabis Seizures

Request and Answer:

Your request for information has now been considered. In respect of Section 1(1)(a) of the Act we can confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does hold some information to which your request relates and this is being provided to you. We do not however hold information in relation to the request for an 'estimated value of drugs seized'.

Request

Please can you provide me with the number of recorded crimes for 'Production of cannabis' (Home Office code 92/21) and Permitting premises to be used' (Home Office code 93/21) between 2015 and 2020.

Can you break down the data on a spreadsheet in the following way please: The year; Description of what was seized; Estimated value of the seizure.

Answer

The offence codes specified in your request are available in England and Wales and refer specifically to 'cannabis', however there are no offence codes in Northern Ireland which identify offences of Production or Permitting premises to be used that are specifically related to 'cannabis'.

The offence codes available in Northern Ireland refer to 'Class B' drugs only and are not specific or limited to 'cannabis' with the **exception of the offence code:**

4801087- Occupier of premises permitting the smoking of cannabis, Article 8(d) of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

To assist we have provided the number of recorded crimes for production of a Class B controlled drug and permitting premises to be used re class B controlled drugs.

The separate spreadsheet provides the number of recorded crimes where the incident contains details of a drug seizure involving cannabis is also provided in these tables, along with the format and quantity of cannabis seized. However individual records have not been checked to establish whether cannabis has been seized in any related or linked incidents and so the data may be incomplete.

In response to 'an estimated value of drugs', our enquiries failed to locate any records or documents

relevant to this part of your request.

We can advise that it is difficult to break down estimated values of cannabis seizures for several reasons, mainly because the estimated value of a cannabis production seizure (i.e. plants grown by a suspect) is valued based on individual plant height and weight, which creates a wide variation in estimations. Also, any incidents where a drug expert has given a statement will have a value to the seizure, but a lot of small scale seizures will not fulfil the criteria for that.

Accordingly, we have determined that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does not hold this information to which you seek access.

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 remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, 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', or use the ICO self-service portal available at www.ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/officialinformation-concerns-report/official-information-concern/

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 their 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.