



# FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2022-02031

**Keyword:** Crime/Incident Statistics Theft and Burglary

**Subject:** Stolen Drones

**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 further consider the information you seek in request number 6 is exempt by virtue of section 30 of FOIA and have detailed our rationale as to why this exemption applies. We have also provided you with links to guidance issued by the Information Commissioner’s Office which we have followed in responding to your request.

**Request 1**

Between 01/01/2015 and 31/07/2022, the total number of drones reported as stolen within your force area and their corresponding dates?

**Answer**

A word search for ‘Drone’ in the ‘remarks’ and ‘common name’ field of NICHE returned 34 items across 9 difference property categories. Please find below corresponding dates to these 34 items under:

Month/Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 (To July 2022)
Jan				1				
Feb					1	1		
Mar			1					1
Apr		1			1	1	1	1
May			2		1			1
June	1		1			1		1
July	1		1					1
Aug						1		
Sep	1							
Oct		1						
Nov		1				1		
Dec	1	1	4	2				
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>

## **Please Note**

As a key word search of the word “drone” was used this may not reflect the actual number of relevant offences over the almost 7 years for which your request extends.

This information is based on data extracted from a live system and may be subject to change. It is dependent on the information having been input into the system in such a way as to identify those records that are relevant.

## **Request 2**

Between 01/01/2015 and 31/07/2022 of those reported, please specify the make and model of each drone (if recorded)?

## **Answer**

The following makes and model details were recorded in the 7 of the 34 incidents referred to in response to Request 1 as under:

Make	Model
Patriot	
Solo	3DR
Apple	MABIC PRO
SYMA	
YUNEEC	H520
MSI	
DJI	MAVIC

## **Request 3**

Between 01/01/2015 and 31/07/2022 of those reported, please briefly breakdown and classify the type of theft, such as Theft from Motor Vehicle (TFMV), Burglary Domestic, Burglary Commercial, Robbery etc for each of the occurrences?

## **Answer**

The following offence details were recorded in the 34 items referred to in response to Request 1:

Offence Code	Offence	Number of Offences
46	Shoplifting	14
28A	Burglary in a dwelling	3
30A	Burglary in a building other than a dwelling	1
28E	Burglary – Residential	7
45	Theft from a vehicle	6
49	Other theft	1
30C	Burglary – Business & Community	1
34B	Robbery of personal property	1

## **Request 4**

Between 01/01/2015 and 31/07/2022 of those reported, please detail the cost of the stolen item(s)?

## **Answer**

Where information has been recorded relating to values there is no way of confirming if a value e.g. £500 relates solely to a stolen “drone” or relates to the total value of all property that was stolen in an individual incident; e.g. jewellery, bike etc. Consequently any information that we can provide would be inaccurate and misleading.

## **Request 5**

Between 01/01/2015 and 31/07/2022 of those reported, how many have been recovered and how many have led to a conviction?

## **Answer**

In relation to the 34 incidents in response to Request 1:

- There is no recorded incident of property being recovered.
- There have been convictions in relation to 3 incidents.

## **Request 6**

Between 01/01/2015 and 31/07/2022 of those reported, how many have identifying features recorded, such as serial number?

## **Answer**

The PSNI is withholding any identifying features including serial numbers in relation to the incidents identified in Request 1 and the rationale for this is outlined below.

Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Police Service of Northern Ireland, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which:

- (a) states that fact,
- (b) specifies the exemption in question and
- (c) states (if not otherwise apparent) why the exemption applies.

The exemption/s, as well as the factors the Department considered when deciding where the public interest lies, are listed below:

### **Section 30(1)(a)(b) Investigations and Proceedings Conducted by Public Authorities:**

Information held by a public authority is exempt information if it has at any time been held by the authority for the purposes of - (a) any investigation which the public authority has a duty to conduct with a view to it being ascertained (i) whether a person should be charged with an offence or (ii) whether a person charged with an offence is guilty of it.

The full text of exemptions can be found at [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk) and further guidance on how they operate can be located on the Information Commissioners Office website [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).

Section 30 is a class based qualified exemption which means there is no requirement to evidence the Harm that may be caused by releasing the information however it is necessary to conduct a Public Interest Test.

### **Public Interest Test**

#### Section 30 - Factors Favouring Disclosure

There is a strong public interest in ensuring that all investigations are undertaken professionally and rigorously by PSNI. Disclosure of the requested information could promote public trust in providing transparency and demonstrating openness and accountability into how investigations take place.

#### Section 30 - Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

Release of the information requested would put into the public domain information held by police with regard to criminal offences. Release of such information would hinder any investigation by placing into the public domain information that police may hold that would be of interest to those who committed these criminal offences by revealing any unique identifying marks/serial numbers that could identify these stolen items.

#### Balance Test

Although there is a public interest in the transparency of investigations, PSNI has a greater duty of

care to all individuals involved in any investigation. The requested information is held as it is part of an investigation into criminal offences. There is an expectation that information gathered for this purpose would remain confidential. The public would not expect the PSNI to put into the public domain through a FOI release any information that could compromise the PSNI investigation in relation to these incidents. On this basis it has been decided that the balance of the public interest favours withholding the information at this time.

**The release of information under Freedom Of Information (FOI) is a release into the public domain and not just to the individual requesting the information. Once the information is disclosed under FOI there is no control or limits as to who or how the information is shared with other individuals, therefore a release under FOI is considered a disclosure to the world in general.**

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](mailto: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/](http://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](http://www.psni.police.uk)

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.