



Police Service
of Northern Ireland

Chief Constable's Accountability Report

to Northern Ireland
Policing Board

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**we care
we listen
we act**

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Foreword

The financial position of the PSNI has remained a key focus this month. At present, critical arguments for funding are not sufficiently reaching, or resonating with, those making budgetary decisions. While additional pressures in Health and Education are often raised and addressed, policing continues to absorb unique and unfunded costs, for example, close protection for at risk individuals, the ongoing terrorist threat, and community tensions requiring intensive and nuanced policing. These are not discretionary expenses, they are the cost of stability in our society. And yet, the political priority afforded to policing remains out of step with the scale and seriousness of the threat environment we manage daily.

Benchmarking police funding by conventional UK standards does not account for the complexity of policing in a society emerging from conflict. Visible crime figures tell only part of the story. Beneath them lies a deeper and more enduring challenge, one that demands sustained investment in proactive and preventative policing, community reassurance, and public safety. Our capacity to deliver those outcomes is diminishing. Neighbourhood policing has declined to the point that many communities no longer see a meaningful presence. We face stark gaps in specialist areas such as the management of violent and sexual offenders. Our Major Investigation Team ratios are significantly below those in England and Wales. We are also managing high-risk threat scenarios, particularly around Violence against Women and Girls without the minimum workable resource required to deliver outcomes. The burden of legacy investigations in particular remains significant. We currently have 197 unresolved cases relating to the Troubles. These require careful, resource-intensive

investigation, yet there is no adequate ring-fenced or recurring funding to support them. Unless the Executive and Westminster can agree an enduring solution, these pressures will continue to compromise day-to-day policing. Of course, this burden is not only financial, it also diverts specialist investigative capacity from current threats and safeguarding risks.

Our Recovery Business Case outlines a modest and proportionate approach to restoring the Service to a minimum safe operating level. Without this support, stabilising the organisation and meeting both public expectations and statutory responsibilities will become impossibly difficult. We are grateful to the Justice Minister for her continued support and advocacy, and urge Ministers to prioritise support for policing in the upcoming June Monitoring Round.

Despite the significant constraints faced, officers and staff continue to deliver. This is demonstrated in the annual recorded statistics for 2024/25. Northern Ireland saw a reduction of over 8,200 recorded crimes, a 7.9% decrease from the previous year. Anti-social behaviour reports also fell to their lowest level since records began. These achievements are not incidental. They reflect the dedication, resilience, and professionalism of officers and staff right across the Service.

In recent weeks, we have seen a number of serious assaults on officers, including vehicle rammings and other targeted attacks, as they continue to step forward and put themselves in harm's way to protect the public. These assaults are not 'part of the job.' They are attacks on the very fabric of our society and

must be treated and condemned as such. The personal risks our people face each day to keep others safe must never be taken for granted.

Equally, the psychological and emotional toll of policing, particularly against the backdrop of rising demand and reduced numbers, should not be underestimated. Officers and staff are operating in complex, high-pressure environments, often dealing with trauma and tragedy on a daily basis. As a Service Executive Team, we are committed to doing more to support them. We are enhancing access to psychological care, expanding occupational health support, and strengthening leadership at all levels. We will ensure our people are equipped and cared for, both physically and mentally.

The Police Federation and Superintendents' Association Conferences took place this month with key issues such as the police budget, officer welfare, operational pressures, and conditions of service at the forefront of discussions. Encouragingly, there was recognition of a much improved relationship between these staff associations and the organisation's senior leadership. The engagement, candour and shared resolve to support the workforce and address systemic challenges was evident throughout and is strongly welcomed.

We continue to confront other acts of intimidation and division. Recent displays of paramilitary and racist materials serve only to instil fear and create division. There is no place for such behaviour in a modern, inclusive Northern Ireland. We continue to take robust, proportionate and lawful action, working closely with communities, partners, and elected representatives to remove offensive material and hold those responsible to account.

The increase in racially motivated hate crime reminds us how far we still have to go. These incidents have a devastating impact

on victims and their families and corrode the sense of safety and cohesion that all communities deserve. There is no hierarchy of hate, every form is abhorrent. Tackling hate crime remains a strategic priority for the Service, and we will carry on supporting victims, challenging prejudice, and working in partnership to confront intolerance in all its forms.

In recent months, public attention has been drawn to the serious allegations of sectarianism within the Police Service made by a retired officer. 'Sean's' claims caused great distress to many in the organisation who have struggled to reconcile them with their own experience of the organisation's culture. The impact of these allegations was of course felt most by those closest to these claims and the officer himself. 'Sean' has of course since unequivocally retracted the allegations, acknowledged they were unfounded and expressed deep regret for the distress caused. We want to place on record our appreciation for the professionalism, integrity and dignity demonstrated throughout this incident by both serving and retired colleagues. We aren't complacent or defensive about the potential for wrong doing or poor behaviour within our work place and as we have previously told the board, in line with our commitment under the 'Workforce Focus' strand of the Policing Plan we are continuing to develop our planned 'deep dive pulse survey' to examine culture in the organisation.

We were delighted that our Strategic Communications & Engagement Department staff won the Diversity, Inclusion and Purpose Award at the PRCA DARE Awards Ceremony on 29 May, for the work they have done with Morrow Communications on our inspiring *Power To Change* campaign. This campaign challenges harmful attitudes and



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behaviours towards women and girls, while encouraging men and boys to be part of meaningful change. This award celebrates campaigns that champion diversity, inclusivity and/or positive societal impact - values we are proud to uphold.

Looking ahead, preparations are well advanced for the 153rd Open Championship in Royal Portrush this July. This prestigious event will once again place Northern Ireland on the global stage, bringing significant tourism, economic investment, and a welcome feel good factor across the country. Events of this scale showcase the very best of Northern Ireland and contribute significantly to our national and international reputation.

Policing plays a critical role in making such events possible. From public safety and traffic management to community reassurance and counter terrorism readiness, our Service is central to delivering a safe, secure and successful tournament. Planning for this complex operation has involved months of preparation and close collaboration with partners, including The R&A, local councils, and statutory agencies. Our teams have also engaged extensively with the local community to understand and mitigate any concerns around safety, traffic, and disruption. As with all major events, delivering the Open Championship will place considerable demands on our resources. Coming at a time when officer numbers are at their lowest ever, balancing this high profile operation with core local policing commitments will require focused planning and prioritisation.

Finally, this month's report outlines the exceptional breadth of policing activity happening every day across Northern Ireland. From tackling organised crime to supporting victims and engaging with communities, the commitment of our officers and staff is inspiring. Despite intense and growing pressure, they continue to deliver with professionalism, compassion, and purpose.

As a Police Service, we remain firmly focused on prioritising victims, protecting communities, and supporting our workforce. These values will keep guiding us as we work through the challenges ahead, together.



Robert Singleton
Deputy Chief Constable
Police Service of Northern Ireland



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Finance and Resource Update

The provisional outturn for last year (2024/25) has marginally changed, now reporting a Resource DEL underspend of £0.1m (or 0.014%) and an underspend of £0.5m (or 0.87%) on Capital. These figures are still subject to audit and will be confirmed shortly.

As reported in April, our Final Budget allocation for 2025/26 was issued by the Department of Justice on 8 April and confirmed a further £9.7m of funding. This is now reflected in our Draft Resource Plan which was submitted to the Board's Resources Committee for consideration on 29 May. The Draft Plan projects an unaddressed Resource funding gap of £21m and I would encourage the Board to again advocate for sufficient funding this year.

As a first step, we have already submitted our June Monitoring return and bid for £21m to close the gap. This gap is made up of a £7m National Insurance Contribution shortfall, £7m to recover the workforce, £6m for pressures due to Ill Health Retirements and a £1m shortfall in Legacy Inquest funding. A potential new pressure relating to the Omagh Bomb Inquiry was also highlighted, although the costs are unknown.

As discussed during the Board meeting in April, we continue to carry the burden of legacy costs, detracting from current policing activity.



Our Performance

Data Protection Office

A dedicated Data Protection Office (DPO) has now been formally established within the PSNI. This office will play a vital role in providing independent advice to the organisation's Controller and Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO), Deputy Chief Constable Singleton, specifically in relation to statutory obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

The DPO's core responsibilities include developing and maintaining data protection policy and guidance, monitoring organisational compliance, and acting as a central point of advice on data protection matters. The office also manages escalated incidents, oversees notifications to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), and responds to data protection complaints. In addition, the DPO supports the delivery and governance of key documentation and risk mitigation tools including Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs), Information Sharing Agreements (ISAs), Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), and Records of Processing Activities (ROPAs).

The recent expansion of the DPO team will enhance PSNI's ability to address recommendations arising from Operation Sanukite, ensure continuity for the prescribed DPO function, and enable delivery of several key improvement initiatives. These include embedding a Bronze Data Champions structure across the Service, launching streamlined DPIA, ISA and MOU processes, and developing the ROPA framework. The team will also provide proactive advisory and

training support, drive enhanced compliance monitoring and auditing, and contribute to collaborative information governance projects. These improvements will strengthen PSNI's ability to monitor performance, reduce risk, and ensure compliance with statutory obligations across the Service.

Statistical Update

The information in this section is extracted from our Official Statistics published reports. The full reports can all be accessed from the following link. <https://www.psni.police.uk/about-us/our-publications-and-reports/official-statistics>.

Police Recorded Crime Financial Year Figures

In the 12 months from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025:

- There were 95,968 crimes recorded, a decrease of 8,233 (-7.9%) on the previous 12 months.
- The level recorded in the latest 12 months is the lowest since 2020/21 (when lockdown restrictions were in place).
- There were 50 police recorded crimes per 1,000 population¹ compared with 54 crimes in the previous 12 month period.
- All crime classifications shown have recorded lower levels, with the exception of an increase in sexual offences (+77) and an increase in homicide from 13 to 16 (the lowest and second lowest financial year figures since the start of the data series in 1998/99). Theft offences (excluding burglary) fell by 1,901, with decreases also seen in criminal damage (-1,221), violence

¹ Crime per 1,000 population based on mid-year population estimate of 1,920,382 for 2023, the latest mid-year estimate available at time of compilation. [Mid-year population estimates are available from the NISRA website \(opens in a new window\).](#)



without injury (-1,322), violence with injury (-918) and stalking and harassment (-615)².

- All policing districts, experienced a lower level of crime. The largest decrease was in Newry, Mourne and Down (-14.7%) and smallest decrease in Belfast City (-3.0%).
- Lower crime levels were seen in violence against the person. The largest decrease was in violence without injury, with smaller decreases seen in violence with injury and stalking and harassment.
- Lower crime levels were also seen across robbery, burglary, theft, criminal damage, drug offences, public order offences, possession of weapons offences and miscellaneous crimes against society.
- Higher crime levels were seen in sexual offences.

Anti-Social Behaviour

In the 12 months from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025:

- There were 44,254 anti-social behaviour incidents, a decrease of 1,104 (-2.4%) on the previous 12 months. This is the lowest financial year level recorded, and one of the lowest 12-month figures since the data series began in 2006/07.
- When comparing the current and previous 12 months, nine policing districts showed lower levels of anti-social behaviour.
- Between April 2024 and March 2025, eight of the months recorded lower levels of anti-social behaviour when compared with the same month in the previous year, with the exception of September, November and December 2024, and March 2025.

- Each month April 2024 through to March 2025 recorded the lowest levels of anti-social behaviour for those months since the start of the data series in April 2006, with the exception of May, September and November 2024, all of which recorded their second lowest levels in the data series. December 2024 and February 2025 recorded their third lowest levels in the data series.
- The latest month (March 2025) was 818 incidents higher than February 2025. Levels in March have been higher than those in February in each year since the data series began in 2006/07.

Domestic Abuse Incidents and Crimes

In the 12 months from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025:

- There were 29,751 domestic abuse incidents recorded, showing a decrease of 3,012 (-9.2 %) on the previous 12 months.
- The number of domestic abuse crimes recorded fell to 18,393, a decrease of 1,547 (-7.8 %) on the previous 12 months.
- All eleven policing districts showed a decrease in the number of domestic abuse incidents and the number of domestic abuse crimes.
- There were 15 domestic abuse incidents and 10 domestic abuse crimes per 1,000 population³, compared with 17 domestic abuse incidents and 10 domestic abuse crimes recorded during the previous 12 months.
- There were decreases across all major offence classifications, with the exception of sexual offences.

² Full details are available in points to note on page 3 of The Police Recorded Crime in Northern Ireland Statistical Bulletin, which describes the changes in the recording of these 'behavioural offences' since April 2017 with the latest change from May 2023 requiring fewer such offences to be recorded.

³ Crime per 1,000 population based on mid-year population estimate of 1,920,382 for 2023, the latest mid-year estimate available at time of compilation. [Mid-year population estimates are available from the NISRA website \(opens in a new window\).](#)



- The largest volume decrease in domestic abuse crimes was seen within Violence against the person which showed a fall of 1,163 (-7.5%). The largest percentage fall of 21.8% was within Theft (including burglary). Sexual offences increased by 111 (12.1%).
- Between April 2024 and March 2025, the number of domestic abuse incidents were lower in all twelve months when compared with the equivalent months in the previous 12 month period.

Domestic abuse homicide

In the 12 months from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 there were six homicides with a domestic abuse motivation recorded by the police, compared with three domestic abuse homicides recorded in the previous 12 months⁴. All six of the victims were female, compared with one female and two male victims during the previous 12 months. All nine domestic abuse homicides recorded between April 2023 and March 2025 were murder offences.

What is the difference between a domestic abuse incident and crime recorded by the police?

Not all domestic abuse incidents will result in the recording of a crime, as what has occurred in the incident may not be of the level of severity that would result in a domestic abuse crime being recorded. Some domestic abuse incidents will result in multiple crimes being recorded. Domestic abuse crimes are included in the incident count and the two should not be added together.

Police Recorded Drug Seizures and Arrests

Drug Seizures

In the 12 months from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025:

- There were 6,740 drug seizure incidents, a decrease of 1,779 (-20.9%) on the previous 12 months when 8,519 were recorded.
- There was a fall in the number of seizures incidents across all drug classes.
- Cannabis (Class B) was the most commonly seized drug, followed by cocaine (Class A), pregabalin (Class C) and benzodiazepines (Class C).
- When comparing the current and previous 12 months, ten policing districts showed a decrease in drug seizure incidents.

Drug related Arrests

In the 12 months from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025:

- There were 3,119 drug-related arrests, a decrease of 465 (13.0%) when compared with the previous 12 months.
- While note should be taken of the higher than usual number of drug seizure details outstanding within 2024/25, the trend in drug-related arrests is fairly similar to that seen for the number of drug seizure incidents and drug offences recorded by police over the same time period.
- Drug-related arrests were higher in each of the three months April 2024 to June 2024 when compared with the previous 12 month period, with April 2024 showing the highest increase of 25.
- Drug-related arrests were lower in the nine months July 2024 to March 2025 when

⁴ Homicide consists of the offences of murder, manslaughter, infanticide and corporate manslaughter.



compared with the previous 12 month period, with July 2024, August 2024 and February 2025 showing the largest decreases of 123, 96 and 84 respectively.

- When comparing the current and previous 12 months, nine policing districts showed a decrease in drug-related arrests. Belfast City showed the largest decrease of 236

(15.9%) when compared with the previous 12 months. Belfast City accounted for around two fifths of all drug-related arrests during the latest 12 months.

- There were 386 drug-related arrests in July 2023, the highest monthly figure seen during the time period April 2019 to March 2025.

Overall summary of hate motivated incidents and crimes

	Incidents Apr'23-Mar24	Incidents Apr'24-Mar25	Incidents Change	Crimes Apr'23-Mar24	Crimes Apr'24-Mar25	Crimes Change
Race	1,353	1,807	454	839	1,188	349
Sexual Orientation	384	362	-22	241	219	-22
Sectarian	1,091	910	-181	730	588	-142
Disability	97	68	-29	57	40	-17
Faith/Religion	77	87	10	48	65	17
Transgender Identity	68	63	-5	41	35	-6

Incidents and Crimes with a Hate Motivation

In the 12 months from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025:

- There were more race and faith/religion hate incidents when compared with the previous twelve months.
- Crimes with a race hate motivation saw the largest increase, with a smaller increase seen in faith/religion crimes. Sectarian crimes saw the largest decrease, with smaller decreases in sexual orientation, disability and transgender identity crimes.
- There were 454 more race incidents and 349 more race crimes recorded. The number of both race incidents (1,807) and race crimes (1,188) are the highest financial year levels recorded since the data series began in 2004/05.
- Six of the eight highest monthly levels of race incidents in the data series were

recorded between May and October 2024. The 349 race incidents recorded in August 2024 was the single highest monthly level in the data series, around twice the previous monthly high of 171 recorded in July 2024.

- There was a decrease of 181 sectarian incidents, while the number of crimes fell by 142.
- Sexual orientation incidents and crimes fell from 384 to 362 and from 241 to 219 respectively.

Police Recorded Security Situation

In the 12 months from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025:

- There were no security related deaths, compared to one during the previous year. This was the first financial year since records began in 1969 that there were no security related deaths.
- Shooting incidents were at their lowest level since records began, paramilitary style assaults were at their lowest level in 41 years while paramilitary style shootings were at their lowest level in 17 years. The number of bombing incidents remained at the low level seen during recent years.
- There were 18 shooting incidents, 7 fewer than the previous year (25).
- There were 5 bombing incidents, two fewer than occurred during the previous year (7). Belfast experienced no bombing incidents for the first time in 29 years.
- There were 8 casualties of paramilitary style shootings, 4 fewer than occurred during the previous year (12). Only one paramilitary style shootings was attributed to Republicans in 2024/25, which was the lowest number by Republicans since 1995/96 when there were none. This was also the first year since records commenced at local policing level in 1984/85 that there were no paramilitary style shootings in Belfast.
- There were 24 casualties of paramilitary style assaults, one fewer than during the previous year (25). The majority of paramilitary style assaults (18) were attributed to Loyalists.
- There were 52 security related arrests under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000, compared to 89 during the previous year. The number of persons subsequently charged was 7 compared to 24 in the

previous year. These were the lowest numbers of arrests and charges since records began in 2001/02.

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 6 firearms found during 2024/25, compared to 20 the previous year.

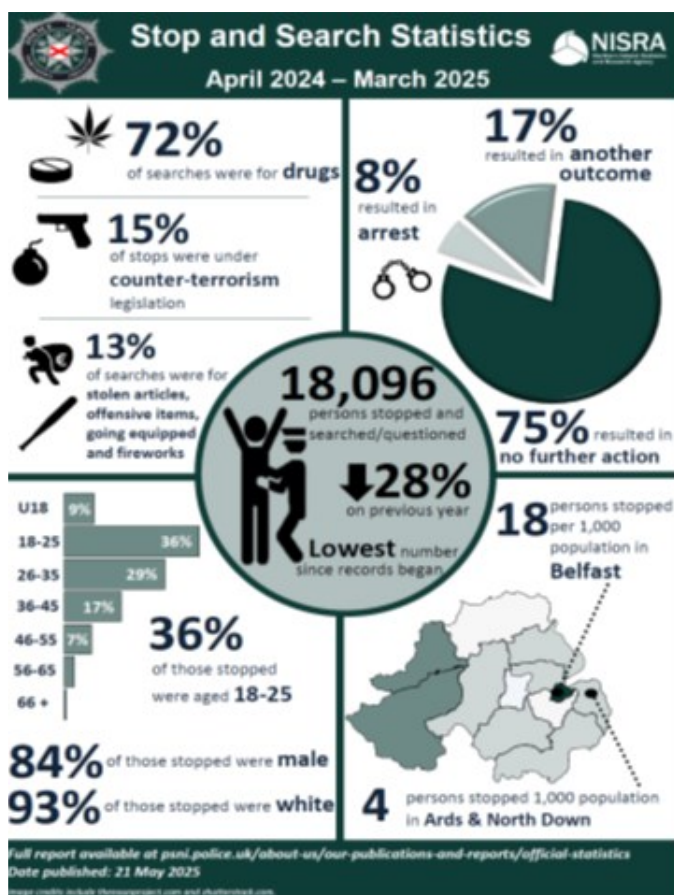
Explosive Finds

There was 0.3kg of explosives found during 2024/25 compared to 3.4kg during the previous year

Ammunition Finds

There were 129 rounds of ammunition found during 2024/25 compared to 851 during the previous year.

Stop and Search



During the 12 months between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025:

- 18,096 persons were stopped and searched/questioned, 28% fewer than the previous year and the lowest number since records began 20 years ago.
- 72% of stops were conducted under the Misuse of Drugs Act* and 13% of stops were conducted under the Police and Criminal Evidence Order*.
- 11% of stops were conducted under the Justice and Security Act Section 24* and 2% under the Justice and Security Act Section 21*.
- There was a decrease in the use of counter-terrorism powers compared to the previous year; the use of the Justice and Security Act* decreased by 55% (from 4,932 to 2,241) and was at its lowest level in the past

16 years, while the use of the Terrorism Act* decreased by 29% (from 584 to 412).

- The use of the Misuse of Drugs Act* decreased by 24% (from 17,120 to 13,063) and the use of the Police and Criminal Evidence Order decreased by 11% (from 2,725 to 2,435) compared to the previous year. The use of the Firearms Order also decreased, albeit by a smaller amount. The combined use of these non-counter-terrorism powers was at its lowest level in the past 20 years.
- 25% of stops resulted in some form of outcome. The arrest rate was 8%, compared to 6% in the previous 12 months.
- 9% (1,578) of those stopped were aged 17 and under. Of these, approximately 6 out of every 10 (61%) were stopped and searched under the Misuse of Drugs Act*.
- 84% of those stopped were male, while 36% were aged 18 to 25.
- There were 9 persons stopped for every 1,000 people in Northern Ireland, compared to 13 for every 1,000 people the previous year.

Motoring Offence Statistics

In the 12 months from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025:

- There were 33,153 detections for motoring offences in Northern Ireland, of which 97% were dealt with by means of a fixed penalty notice or referral for prosecution.
- The remaining 3% (977) resulted in the completion of a speed awareness or safer driver course.
- Total detections decreased by 21% on the 41,744 detections recorded in the previous 12 months, with notable reductions across

* alone or in combination with other powers.

a number of offence groups including insurance, speeding, driving licence and careless driving offences.

- Only one of the 19 offence groups showed an increase in detections over the year –

breach of signs and signals, which rose slightly (12) to 199 detections.

- The largest offence group was insurance offences with 5,236 which along with speeding (4,474) accounted for under one-third of the total detections.

Number of motoring offences by disposal type, 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2025*

	1 st Apr 2023 – 31 st Mar 2024	1 st Apr 2024 – 31 st Mar 2025	Change over last 12 months	Percentage change over last 12 months
Endorsable Fixed Penalty	8,505	6,644	-1,861	-22
Non Endorsable Fixed Penalty	4,592	3,649	-943	-21
Referred for Prosecution	27,479	21,883	-5,596	-20
Speed Awareness Course	771	606	-165	-21
Safer Driver Course	397	371	-26	N/A
Total	41,744	33,153	-8,591	-21

**Figures are provisional and subject to change.*

Safer driver courses were introduced in Northern Ireland in May 2023 as an alternative disposal to the new fixed penalty notice for careless driving.

This report provides statistics on the number of motoring offences detected by police in Northern Ireland from 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025. It does not include any detections by the NI Road Safety Partnership (NI RSP). It presents the most recent motoring offence statistics based on figures extracted on 27th May 2025. Referred for prosecution figures from 1st January 2023 onwards remain provisional and therefore subject to amendment, as do the remaining disposals for the 2025 period only.

Outcome 1: Victim Focused

Crime Department

Organised Crime Branch

Organised Crime Unit

Investigations

- On 24 April 2025, local district officers stopped a vehicle on Glenmachan Street, Belfast. The vehicle was found to be displaying false registration plates, and a search recovered gloves, sunglasses, and a black balaclava. Two men were arrested at the scene. Subsequent checks revealed that one of the men was subject to a Serious Crime Prevention Order (SCPO) and had failed to notify police of his access to, and use of, this vehicle, in breach of the order's terms. He was charged with failing to comply with a SCPO and reported to the Public Prosecution Service for the offence of going equipped for theft. He appeared before court the following day and was remanded in custody for the breach of SCPO.
- On 30 April 2025, detectives, supported by officers from the Local Policing Team, a Tactical Support Group and ANPR Interceptors, conducted coordinated searches at a rural shed, a private dwelling, and a business premises in County Antrim. These searches led to the recovery of suspected Class A, B and C controlled drugs, with an estimated street value of £1.6m, along with ammunition and associated paraphernalia. All items have been submitted for forensic analysis. This seizure represents a substantial disruption to organised drug trafficking in the region.
- On 12 May 2025, three men were arrested following searches conducted in connection with the importation and supply of illegal

drugs. The operation followed the seizure of two postal packages on 20 and 23 April, which together contained approximately 6.3 kilograms of herbal cannabis, valued at approximately £95,000. The parcels were destined for an address in Ballymoney, the residence of one of the suspects. During the searches, officers recovered a small quantity of suspected Class A and B controlled drugs, along with over £1,000 in cash. All three individuals were interviewed and have been released on police bail pending further enquiries.

Paramilitary Crime Task Force (PCTF)

Court Outcomes

- On 2 May 2025, a man was sentenced to 30 months for multiple drug-related offences linked to the East Belfast UVF. The charges included possession of a Class A controlled drug, possession with intent to supply, possession of criminal property, and being concerned in the supply of Class A drugs. The sentence will be served half in custody and half on licence.

The conviction followed a proactive PCTF investigation, supported by colleagues from the Tactical Support Group. A targeted search of a property in East Belfast in April 2024 under the Misuse of Drugs Act led to the recovery of controlled drugs, a quantity of cash, and associated paraphernalia. The court additionally imposed a Destruction Order for the drugs and related items, and a Forfeiture Order for the seized cash.

- Also on 2 May, two men were sentenced at Belfast Magistrates' Court following a PCTF led investigation into activity associated with the INLA. The men had



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been arrested in connection with a commemoration event in May 2021, where they were observed wearing or displaying items likely to raise reasonable suspicion of support for a proscribed organisation. Both were subsequently fined for these offences.

These outcomes reflect PSNI's ongoing commitment to tackling paramilitary influence, using all available legislative and investigative tools to protect communities.

Serious Crime Branch

Investigation

- Detectives from PSNI's Terrorism Investigation Unit have charged a man with a series of offences under the Terrorism Act. These include managing a meeting in support of a proscribed organisation, aiding and abetting the wearing of clothing or articles indicating support for a proscribed organisation, and aiding and abetting the breach of Parades Commission conditions relating to a parade in Derry/Londonderry on 21 April 2025
- On 13 May 2025, a coordinated effort between PSNI's International Policing Unit and Terrorism Investigation Unit led to the successful extradition of Sean Walsh from the Republic of Ireland to Northern Ireland. Walsh is wanted in connection with serious terrorism related offences, including belonging to a proscribed organisation, directing terrorism, conspiracy to direct terrorism, and preparation of terrorist acts.

This extradition is part of Operation Arbacia, a long-running joint investigation by PSNI and MI5 into the activities of dissident republican groups, dating back to 2020. The International Policing Unit secured international arrest warrants in November 2021 and worked closely with An Garda Síochána throughout the extradition

process. This marks the fifth and final extradition under Operation Arbacia, and demonstrates PSNI's unwavering determination to pursue wanted individuals who flee this jurisdiction.

- Major Investigation Team detectives have charged a man with the murder of Daniel McClean (2 February 2021) and the attempted murder of Sean O'Reilly (23 February 2025). He has been remanded into custody.

Court Outcomes

- A man was sentenced to two years' imprisonment (half on licence) after defrauding a Lisburn based church of over £400,000. He had previously pleaded guilty at an earlier hearing to 12 counts of fraud by false representation and one of false accounting.
- A man has received a five year sentence (half on licence) for possession of a Glock 17 handgun, a magazine, and 16 rounds of 9mm ammunition. The firearm was recovered during a stop and search in Lurgan on 10 February 2024.
- A man was sentenced to six years' imprisonment (half on licence) following a violent assault on two men visiting Derry/Londonderry on 24 June 2023. Both victims required hospital treatment. A co-accused was previously given a 12 month suspended sentence for assisting an offender.
- A man has received a two month suspended sentence for the harassment of Education Minister Paul Givan and the principal of Lisneal College, Londonderry. He admitted to sending more than 100 abusive emails between 8 January and 21 February 2025.

- A woman has received an 18 month suspended sentence for fraud by false representation relating to the sale of multiple horses across the UK in 2018.
- A man has pleaded guilty to possession of a firearm in suspicious circumstances, conversion of an imitation firearm, and offering a firearm for sale. He is awaiting sentencing.
- Two men were convicted of possession of a firearm and ammunition in suspicious circumstances, possession of a handgun, ammunition without a certificate, and possession of a prohibited weapon. Sentencing is pending.
- A man was convicted of possession of articles for use in terrorism and attempted possession of such articles. Sentencing will follow.

These outcomes reflect the sustained work of Serious Crime Branch in detecting, investigating, and disrupting high-harm criminality, particularly where it poses the greatest threat to public safety and national security.

Public Protection Branch

This year marks the 10 year anniversary of the Public Protection Branch (PPB) within the PSNI. Established in June 2015 through the integration of District Public Protection Units, Rape Crime, the Child Internet Protection Team, and the HQ Public Protection Team, the Branch has evolved significantly in its mission to safeguard vulnerable people. To mark the anniversary, a dedicated media campaign is being developed to celebrate the Branch's achievements, reflect on its journey, and recognise the contribution of its people in tackling some of the most complex and sensitive investigations in policing.

Work continues to strengthen partnership approaches and service delivery through a number of key developments:

- The Adult Safeguarding Joint Protocol has been successfully revised in collaboration with key partners. Joint training for police officers and social workers is being prepared to embed understanding and consistent practice. A final agreement with the Department of Health is expected during the week commencing 26 May 2025 to support roll-out.
- Following the 2024 independent review of the effectiveness of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences in Northern Ireland, a key recommendation was made to establish a new safeguarding and risk management structure. In response, the Department of Justice (DoJ) convened a cross-sectoral working group and established an oversight board, co-led by the Departments of Justice and Health, to explore both the challenges and opportunities involved in implementing the proposed reforms.

The review's recommendations focus on strengthening victim support and enhancing offender management, building on existing statutory mechanisms such as child protection conferences and the Public Protection Arrangements for Northern Ireland. A draft report has been produced and is currently awaiting Ministerial approval.

The next phase will involve a multi-agency assessment of the draft recommendations, followed by the development of an agreed implementation framework. Some proposals may require new legislation, which will necessitate coordinated input from key partners, including the PSNI, Probation Board for Northern Ireland, DoJ,

Health and Social Care Trusts, Department of Health, and the community and voluntary sector. A full evaluation of the potential impact on current safeguarding practices will be essential to ensure a coherent and effective transition to the new model.

- The Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland inspection into how PSNI recognises, assesses and responds to Child Criminal Exploitation is ongoing. This work is continuing in tandem with a review and progress of practices relating to Child Sexual Exploitation following a previous dedicated inspection. A Gold governance group has been established to coordinate the PSNI response and ensure that concerns raised are addressed at senior level.
- PSNI and the Education Authority are continuing work on an automated referral process for Operation Encompass. A pilot using interim mailboxes is underway, with the ambition to launch before the end of the school term. This will assist with reducing pressure on Support Hubs and frontline officers, and is a move toward a fully automated system similar to that used to manage referrals to Women's Aid, Men's Advisory Project and social services. This development aligns with broader efforts to integrate referrals via the Public Protection Notification (PPN) platform.
- PPB contributed to the Women's Police Association Inspire Awards 2025, held at the Police College on 9 May 2025. The Branch was proud to celebrate one colleague winning in the Engagement category and another named runner-up in Partnership, recognising the outstanding contribution of PPB staff to inclusive and impactful policing.

- The next Public Protection Advisory Group (PPAG) hosted by PPB and focuses on the theme of Leading and Managing Change. Senior leaders from across the UK and Ireland will attend, with keynote speakers including:

- Barbara Gray LVO QPM, former PSNI Assistant Chief Constable, and more recently, Deputy Assistant Commissioner in the Metropolitan Police Service.
- Stephen White OBE, former Assistant Chief Constable RUC GC/PSNI and current Chair of the RUC GC Foundation
- Tom Harding, Assistant Chief Constable, College of Policing, with national responsibility for public protection and VAWG

The event will offer strategic insight, professional development, and meaningful collaboration across sectors.

Investigations

- Following information from law enforcement in Germany regarding a Dark Web child abuse site, three suspects in Northern Ireland were identified. Three house searches have been conducted and two arrests made. Both individuals have been released on bail pending further enquiries. The investigation remains ongoing.
- In relation to the Metropolitan Police Service's investigation into serial rapist Zhenhao Zou, PSNI's Rape Crime Unit has completed their investigative enquiries. No offences have been identified as occurring in Northern Ireland. A public appeal has been issued, and close liaison continues with the Metropolitan Police Service and Queens University Belfast. The matter remains



subject to case conferencing within PSNI's Rape Crime Unit.

Court Outcomes

Child Abuse

- On 9 May 2025, at Craigavon Crown Court, a man was sentenced to five years and two months for 42 online child sexual abuse offences and blackmail. Half the sentence is to be served in custody and half on licence. He will be placed on the Sex Offenders Register for an indefinite period.
- On 15 May 2025, also at Craigavon Crown Court, a man was sentenced to three years for three sexual offences against a child. He will serve half of his sentence in custody and half on licence. He was also placed on the Sex Offenders Register for an indefinite period. The court additionally imposed a Sexual Offences Prevention Order and a Restraining Order.

Rape Crime

- On 8 May 2025, at Coleraine Magistrates' Court, a former PSNI officer was sentenced to 18 months' probation for two counts of sexual assault against a female colleague while on duty. He was placed on the Sex Offenders Register for five years and ordered to pay £1,500 in compensation to the victim.
- On 15 May 2025, at Newry Crown Court, a man was sentenced to four years for attempted rape and sexual assault, alongside unrelated drug offences. He will serve two years in custody and two on licence, and was placed on the Sex Offenders Register for an indefinite period. A Sexual Offences Prevention Order was granted for five years.

Local Policing

Across Northern Ireland, Local Policing Teams continue to take proactive and reactive actions to disrupt crime, protect the vulnerable, and deliver visible reassurance to communities.

South Area

- Lurgan and Banbridge Neighbourhood Policing Teams collaborated in a joint investigation into a suspicious postal package. This led to the recovery of approximately 40,000 Class C controlled drugs (tablets). Two people have been arrested and charged with drug related offences.

This proactive intervention has prevented a significant quantity of harmful substances from reaching communities and highlights our ongoing efforts to disrupt emerging trends in drug distribution, including parcel-point drug deliveries.

- While conducting enquiries into an unrelated matter, officers in Armagh uncovered a cannabis factory within a residential property. Two men were arrested at the scene for drug related offences and have since been charged to court. This discovery, made during routine enquiries, demonstrates the constant professionalism and vigilance of our officers in preventing and detecting crimes and working to reduce harm.

North Area

- On 15 May 2025, officers in Coleraine attempted to stop a vehicle on Drumcroon Road. The vehicle failed to stop and attempted to evade police, driving at speeds exceeding 100mph. Specially trained officers initiated a pursuit, safely bringing the vehicle to a halt using a

stinger device. The driver was arrested and charged with multiple offences including dangerous driving, possession of a Class A drug, possession of an offensive weapon in a public place, and resisting police. He has been charged to Court.

- In Ballymena, District Support Team officers conducted a positive Stop and Search procedure after observing a person leave a nearby property carrying a bag that contained a quantity of drugs. A subsequent search of the address uncovered a suspected methamphetamine laboratory, along with further Class A and B controlled drugs. The suspect was arrested, charged and has been remanded into custody. This operation reflects our firm stance on tackling the production and distribution of illegal drugs, which cause significant harm in our communities.
- Local Policing Team officers in Ballymena carried out proactive patrols that resulted in a successful stop and search procedure being conducted. Subsequent premises searches led to the seizure of a quantity of Class A controlled drugs, an air rifle, and £2,510 in cash. Two suspects were arrested. These targeted patrols continue to play a key role in reducing drug related harm within our communities.
- Mid and East Antrim Policing District is piloting an innovative initiative in partnership with **ONUS** to enhance safety in gyms and leisure facilities across the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council area. Led by the local Chief Inspector and Neighbourhood Policing Team, supported by Public Protection Branch, the programme is designed to raise awareness of inappropriate and harmful behaviours and empower both staff and users to challenge them.

This initiative, grounded in the “Power to Change” campaign, follows a two-step model:

1. **Police led Training:** Neighbourhood officers will deliver a 45 minute session focusing on recognising and addressing harmful behaviours in gym settings. The presentation promotes open conversations and offers practical advice for speaking out and creating inclusive, respectful environments, along with highlighting potential consequences for those who perpetrate harmful behaviours. The aim is to both prevent harm and empower individuals to feel safe within these spaces.
2. **ONUS led Training:** ONUS then delivers a complementary 45 minute session promoting the "Safe Place" message, encouraging gym staff and managers to "Be the Change" by creating visible and informed safe spaces.

Derry City & Strabane

- On 24 April 2025, the District Support Team carried out an intelligence led search operation. Officers searched a residential property and recovered approximately 1.8 kilograms of cannabis, £50,000 in cash, and other items suspected to be linked to the large-scale supply of controlled drugs.

One man was arrested and charged with drug related offences. He has been remanded into custody.

Belfast

- Officers responded swiftly to a report of a dog attack on a member of the public. On arrival, they provided immediate first aid to the injured individual while awaiting the arrival of colleagues from the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service. This prompt



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and compassionate response underlines our officers' dedication to safeguarding victims and delivering care in times of crisis.

- In a separate incident near Ormeau Road, officers attended a report of an assault. While attempting to arrest a suspect one officer was violently assaulted, sustaining a bite injury that broke the skin, facial bruising, and suffered swelling to both knees during the physical struggle. The officer required hospital treatment, including a tetanus injection, and is likely to be left with permanent scarring. The suspect was arrested and enquiries are continuing.

This incident is a reminder of the serious risks faced by frontline officers as they work to protect the public.



Outcome 2: Community Focused

PSNI assistance to wildfires



A prolonged dry spell during early April led to a series of significant wildfires across Northern Ireland, with incidents reported in locations including Black Mountain, Glenariff, Ballygawley, and most notably, the Mourne Mountains. These incidents posed serious risks to public safety, wildlife, and local infrastructure.

The PSNI provided substantial operational support to colleagues in the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) throughout this period. Local Policing Teams were deployed to manage road closures, support public safety, and conduct dedicated patrols in rural and hard-to-reach areas.

Our Strategic Communications and Engagement Department played a key role in delivering timely and preventative public messaging across television, radio, print, and social media. This ensured that communities were well informed on how to stay safe and avoid contributing to wildfire risks.

PSNI Air Support Unit assisted NIFRS operations by providing aerial overviews via helicopter and drone surveillance, enabling better coordination and situational awareness for ground teams.

Notably, the Police Search and Recovery (PSAR) Team, with their extensive experience of operating in the Mournes, provided direct support alongside NIFRS personnel on the mountainside. Their off-road vehicle capability proved essential in transporting firefighters to the seats of the fires, as well as delivering equipment, supplies, and sustenance in challenging terrain.

This joint response exemplifies the value of effective multi-agency collaboration and the PSNI's commitment to public safety and protecting Northern Ireland's natural heritage.

Bikesafe Engagement Arena – NW200



PSNI Chief Inspector Celeste Simpson and AGS Superintendent Stephen McCauley

At this year's North West 200, the PSNI hosted the first ever all United Kingdom and Ireland BikeSafe Engagement Arena, a high profile initiative aimed at promoting motorcycle safety and cross-jurisdictional cooperation.

The arena served as a central 'gateway' for motorcycling enthusiasts attending the event, allowing visitors to engage directly with officers from their home regions regarding

local workshops and road safety initiatives. Representatives included five officers from An Garda Síochána, two from Derbyshire Constabulary (holders of the national BikeSafe portfolio for England and Wales), two from Police Scotland, and four officers from PSNI. Both Derbyshire and An Garda Síochána also showcased their specialist 'show bikes', displayed alongside the PSNI's own, attracting significant public interest.

Over the course of the event, officers engaged with hundreds of spectators, raising awareness of motorcycle safety and promoting the benefits of the BikeSafe programme. In addition to operating the stand, PSNI officers facilitated a BikeSafe workshop on the Friday, delivered a road safety session to over 200 school pupils at a corporate hospitality event, and conducted high-visibility patrols on their show bikes to known motorcyclist hotspots in the area.

The initiative was widely praised as a model of cross-border and inter-service partnership working, enhancing awareness of the Cross Border Road Safety Strategy, led by Chief Superintendent Donaldson. The success of this event reflects our continued efforts to reduce road casualties and engage with the motorcycling community in a proactive and positive manner.

Strategic Partnerships and Prevention Branch

Operation Gallop – Tackling Equine Crime and Promoting Road Safety

The Police Service continues to play an active role in *Operation Gallop*, the UK wide policing response to equine related crime and welfare issues. This multi-agency initiative brings together all UK police forces and numerous sector partners to enhance public safety, protect animals, and support the equestrian community.

Operation Gallop's key objectives include:

- Increasing collaboration between police forces and partners
- Increasing communication and engagement with the equestrian community
- Reducing equine related crime and improving crime prevention
- Addressing fly grazing and welfare issues
- Improving overall road safety
- Increasing awareness of child safeguarding within the equestrian sector

A recent focus has been on promoting road safety awareness. Horse riders and motorists both have vital roles to play in ensuring safe roads. Horses are large, powerful animals, and sudden noise, such as revving engines, loud music, or horns, can startle them, even if they are well trained. Our message is simple: every road user shares responsibility for safety. Riders are encouraged to wear high-visibility clothing and ride responsibly, while motorists should pass wide and slow when approaching horses. Consideration for others is key to preventing injury and building safer road environments.

Officers recently attended the Balmoral Show, where they engaged with members of the equestrian community, shared safety advice, and conducted a public survey to inform future work in this area.

Children and Young People Strategy

The PSNI's five-year Children and Young People (CYP) Strategy, launched in June 2023, continues to guide our efforts in supporting and protecting young people.

The Strategy centres around five thematic areas:

1. Engagement
2. Safety and Protection
3. Suspected Offending
4. Victims and Witnesses
5. Stop and Search

Each theme is led by a subject matter expert who provides regular updates to both the Northern Ireland Policing Board's Partnership Committee and the internal Youth Champion's Forum (YCF). The YCF, held three times per year, is consistently well attended and includes representatives from statutory and voluntary organisations that work directly with or advocate for young people. Officials from the Policing Board also participate.

The Strategy supports our commitment to listening to and working with young people to inform how we deliver policing services. In October 2023, Strategic Partnerships and Prevention Branch hosted a Strategic Youth REAL (Reference, engagement and Listening) event, which brought together diverse voices and partners. A further event is scheduled for 11 June 2025 at the University of Ulster's Belfast Campus, with invitations extended to a broad range of statutory partners and 16 youth focused agencies. Members of the Board have also been invited to attend.

These events represent our proactive approach to co-designing services with young people and embedding their voices into the heart of policing.

Strategic Communications & Engagement

On 17 April 2025, the Strategic Communications & Engagement Team hosted a cultural awareness event at the Museum of Orange Heritage. Senior leadership teams from all local policing districts met with representatives from the Orange Order, participated in a guided tour, and engaged in a Q&A session with Iain Carlisle, Chief Executive of the Grand Lodge of Ireland.

The event provided an opportunity for senior officers to gain a deeper understanding of the Orange Order's heritage, values and future direction. It also reinforced our commitment to open, respectful dialogue with all parts of the community and supports ongoing engagement with cultural and civic partners.

In the lead up to Pride events, the team is now planning a similar engagement event with members of the LGBTQIA+ community, aimed at strengthening relationships, enhancing awareness and supporting inclusive policing. This builds on our commitment to ensure every community sees PSNI as accessible, understanding, and representative of their needs.

Outcome 3: Workforce Focused

Occupational Maternity and Occupational Adoption Pay provisions

Following successful engagement between PSNI and the Department of Justice, and aligned with the implementation of the 2024/25 Police Staff Pay Award, we are pleased to announce an increase in Occupational Maternity and Adoption Pay for both Police Officers and Police Staff.

Effective from 6 April 2025, eligible individuals will now benefit from:

- 26 weeks at full pay, followed by up to 13 weeks at the statutory rate; or
- An alternative option of 21 weeks at full pay, 10 weeks at half pay, and 8 weeks at the statutory rate (for Police Officers only).

These enhancements represent a significant and progressive improvement in PSNI's terms and conditions, furthering our ambition to be an employer of choice that actively supports family life, inclusion, and workforce retention.

Police Officer Leave Entitlement

We are pleased to confirm that the Department of Justice has approved amendments to the annual leave entitlement for Police Officers within the federated ranks. The qualifying period to reach the maximum leave entitlement has now been significantly reduced.

This positive change recognises the demands placed on operational officers and reinforces PSNI's commitment to staff wellbeing, work-life balance, and reward for service.

Local Policing Shift Pattern Pilot

In 2024/25, the Police Service piloted a six on four off shift pattern within Local Policing Teams to explore its impact on officer wellbeing. This was not a cost saving initiative, but an evidence-led pilot grounded in academic research and designed to give officers a genuine voice in shaping future working practices.

Despite continued resourcing pressures, the pilot maintained service delivery and was cost neutral. Feedback gathered through structured surveys showed a mixed response. While many officers welcomed the improved rest period and work-life balance, others reported fatigue, especially when rest days were disrupted by court, training, or overtime.

The final survey showed that 54.1% preferred the new pattern, compared to 41.2% favouring the current one. However, the required 75% threshold for permanent implementation was not met.

The Police Service remains committed to officer wellbeing and will continue to engage with the workforce, using feedback from this pilot to inform future shift planning decisions.

HR Road Shows

In direct response to feedback from the "Your Service, Your Voice" survey, the HR Department launched a series of "Ask Me Anything" Roadshows throughout May, aimed at improving visibility, accessibility, and responsiveness to the needs of officers and staff.

This initiative is a practical demonstration of PSNI's commitment to being a workforce focused organisation. The roadshows

provided opportunities for staff to engage face-to-face with HR colleagues, better understand the support services available, and share feedback on current and future needs.

These sessions enabled HR to outline key developments, answer real-time questions from colleagues, and increase transparency about their ongoing work. The roadshows are expected to continue as a regular engagement mechanism across the Service, contributing to a more informed and supported workforce.

Women in Policing Association Inspire Awards 2025

The Women in Policing Association (WPA) Northern Ireland held their annual Inspire Awards on Friday 9 May at the Police College in Garnerville. This important event highlights the Police Service's ongoing commitment to creating a representative and inclusive workforce and provided the opportunity to formally celebrate the exceptional contribution and commitment of women to policing across Northern Ireland.

This year, thirteen women received Inspire Awards across three categories: Inclusion, Engagement, and Partnerships. Attendees were welcomed by Chief Operating Officer Pamela McCreedy who also presented the awards alongside the Chair of the Northern Ireland Policing Board, Mukesh Sharma.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr Lesley Carroll from the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery, and included a fantastic presentation on resilience.

The event was warmly received and is a key highlight in the PSNI calendar, providing an opportunity to celebrate the achievements and excellence of women across the Service.

Chief Superintendent Promotion Process

The Chief Superintendent Promotion Process began in March 2025 and is still underway. As part of the HR Review of Selection and Promotion, this procedure has been revamped with a few additional features. To be eligible, all candidates had to demonstrate two years' experience as a substantive Superintendent.

In addition, candidates were required to produce a validated portfolio of evidence that was appropriate, along with their qualifications, for promotion to Chief Superintendent. This evidence was corporately reviewed to ensure consistency across all applications. Female candidates account for 60% of applications that have progressed to the next stage. For successful candidates, the next phases include a video media exercise and a presentation exercise with various panels, followed by a competency-based interview.

The final outcome of this promotion process is expected to be confirmed and communicated in July.

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