



**News Release
25th August 2016**

PPS PUBLISHES QUARTERLY STATISTICAL BULLETIN

The Public Prosecution Service (PPS) today published its Quarterly Statistical Bulletin, which presents key statistics on the activity of the PPS, including caseloads and prosecutorial decisions and also includes data on the outcomes of prosecutions at court.

The statistics relate to the first quarter in the 2016/17 financial year (i.e. 1 April 2016 to 30 June 2016) and includes comparisons with the first quarter in the 2015/16 financial year.

Key findings

During the first quarter of the 2016/17 financial year:

- The PPS received a total of 10,931 files. This was an increase of 0.5% on the corresponding quarter of 2015/16 (10,880).
- Four offence classifications have shown an increase in the number of files received compared with the corresponding quarter in 2015/16. These are 'violence against the person' (+214 files), 'motoring offences' (+177 files), 'criminal damage' (+16 files) and 'robbery' (+13 files).
- Of the total files received, 238 were submitted by government departments and agencies, 17% fewer than the equivalent period in 2015/16 (288). The majority of the 238 files were from the Department for Communities (42%) or the Driver and Vehicle Agency (30%).
- 13,261 prosecutorial decisions were issued by the PPS. The Test for Prosecution was met in the majority of cases; more than two-thirds (68%) were issued with a decision for prosecution (7,893) or for diversion from the courts (1,177). This was lower than the equivalent period in 2015/16 (72%).

- There was an increase of 0.9% in the number of decisions to prosecute compared to the first quarter of 2015/16. This comprised of a 7.2% decrease in indictable prosecution decisions and an increase of 1.4% in summary prosecution decisions. The numbers of diversionary decisions fell by 1.9% and no prosecution decisions increased by 17.7%.
- Of the 4,191 decisions for no prosecution, the vast majority (97%) did not pass the evidential test. The remaining 3% did not pass the public interest test.
- The average number of calendar days required for issue of a decision varied by type. Indictable prosecution decisions (prosecution in the Crown Court) were issued in an average of 190 days. Summary prosecution decisions (prosecution in the Magistrates' or Youth Court) were issued in 22 days, cautions in 19 days, youth conferences in 17 days and informed warnings in 8 days. Average days to issue included time taken by the police to respond to decision information requests and, in indictable prosecution decisions, for case preparation.
- 795 defendants were dealt with in the Crown Court. This was an increase of 73% on the corresponding period in the previous financial year (459). This reflected the impact of the withdrawal of criminal defence services by the Law Society and the Bar Council for Northern Ireland in response to the new Crown Court legal aid fee scheme introduced by the Department of Justice. As a result, no new cases were conducted in the Crown Court over the period May 2015 to February 2016.
- The conviction rate in the Crown Court was 89% compared to a conviction rate of 84% in the same period during the 2015/16 financial year.
- A total of 7,220 defendants were dealt with in the Magistrates' and Youth Courts, a decrease of 7% on the corresponding quarter in 2015/16 (7,788). The conviction rate in the Magistrates' and Youth Courts was 78% compared to 79% in the equivalent period in 2015/16.

Notes to Editors

This summary should be read in conjunction with the explanatory notes provided (see pages 18 - 20 of the Statistical Bulletin).

These are 'Official Statistics' as defined in Section 6 of the Statistics and Registration Services Act 2007. Statisticians from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

are seconded to the PPS and are responsible for ensuring that the statistics produced comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

The information presented in this bulletin is derived from the Case Management System, the main operational system within the PPS. This is a 'live' system with data being input on a daily basis. All statistics for the current financial year are provisional and may be subject to change.

The bulletin may be viewed or downloaded at www.ppsni.gov.uk. Any member of the public may comment on the report by contacting PPS as follows:

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