

[REDACTED]

FOI 466/24-25

20 February 2025

[REDACTED]

I refer to your email dated 24 January 2025 in which you requested information in relation to non-jury trials. This was on foot of our response (issued 15 January 2025) to a query raised by you on 2 January 2025. You further confirmed on 14 February 2025 that you sought this information for the period 2015-2025.

Your request has been dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

### **Freedom of Information Act 2000**

The Freedom of Information Act creates rights of access for any person making a request for information to a public authority. The rights of access are twofold. First, to be informed by the public authority if it holds information of the description specified in the request, and if that is the case, secondly, to be provided with that information. These rights are subject to important limitations, which are designed to achieve a proper balance between the right to know and considerations of law and policy in the broader public interest.

You had asked the following:

*“What I want are details of specific trials and what legislative provisions allowed those non-jury trials to be conducted?”*

In response, we would refer you to your original query on 2 January 2025 in which you asked the following question:

*“Has any non-terrorist related indictable trials been conducted without juries?”*

In our reply to you on 15 January 2025, we advised:

*“In addition to what you refer to as ‘terrorist related indictable trials’ some legislative provision exists across the jurisdictions within the United Kingdom to provide for serious or complex fraud trials to be conducted on indictment but without a jury. Similarly, a trial of an indictable matter might take place without a jury in the different jurisdictions where there is danger of jury tampering, or where jury tampering has taken place. We do not hold records of how often such provisions have been used”.*

As advised, the PPS does not hold records on whether non-jury trials were held for reasons *other than terrorist offences*. Any attempt to respond to your request would require a manual search of all cases.

Manual searches for this request would easily exceed the cost limit as defined in Section 12 of the Act which makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit; for the PPS as a Government Department the limit is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

For further information, we would refer you to [statistical reports](#) produced by the Northern Ireland Office. The latest report provides data on the number of non-jury trials conducted over the period 2019-2013. It should be noted that the information relates to cases dealt with under Section 1 of the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 **only**.

Alternatively, you can contact the NI Courts and Tribunals Service who may be in a position to assist with your wider query.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review in accordance with our review procedure. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of this response and you can do so by writing to the Head of Policy and Information, Public Prosecution Service, Belfast Chambers, 93 Chichester Street, BELFAST, BT1 3JR or alternatively by sending an e-mail to [info@ppsni.gov.uk](mailto:info@ppsni.gov.uk). You should state the grounds on which you are requesting the review.

Alternatively, you may wish to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner’s Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

**Information Management Team**  
**Public Prosecution Service**