



Public
Prosecution
Service

Policy and Information Unit
Public Prosecution Service
Belfast Chambers
93 Chichester Street
Belfast BT1 3JR

[REDACTED]

FOI 1042-20/21

[REDACTED]

11 November 2020

[REDACTED]

I refer to your email dated 11 October 2020 in which you asked the PPS for information in respect of sexual offences.

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 for the following:

In the 2018/19 sexual offences bulletin

<https://www.ppsni.gov.uk/sites/ppsnifiles/publications/Sexual%20Offences%20Bulletin%2018-19%20%28and%2017-18%29%20Revised.pdf>, Table 6b provides that there were 48 defendants dealt with in the crown court for the offence of rape in 2018/19 and in 2017/18 there were 63 defendants. I wondered if you could provide some clarity around whether:

- *The figure 48/63 relates to adult rape cases?*
- *If not, how many of the 48/63 were adult rape cases?*
- *How many of these cases actually went through trial or do they include early guilty pleas for example?"*

In response please see tables below detailing the breakdown of the number of adult/youth defendants dealt with for an offence of rape (Table 1.) and the outcome of trials held for 2017/18 (Table 2) and 2018/19 (Table 3) respectively.

Please be advised that the tables should be read in conjunction with the explanatory notes provided as these set out any limitations which may apply to the data.

Table 1: Number of Youth and Adult Defendants¹ Dealt with in the Crown Court for an offence of rape by Financial Year²

| Defendants | 2018/19 | 2017/18 |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Youth | 3 | 3 |
| Adult | 45 | 59 |
| Date of Birth Not Recorded | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 48 | 63 |

¹. Age as at date decision to prosecute issued by PPS (Youth aged under 18). Based on date of birth provided by PSNI.

². Based on data contained within Table 6b of PPS Statistical Bulletin Cases Involving Sexual Offences 2017/18 and 2018/19

Table 2: Defendants Dealt with in the Crown Court for an offence of rape with a Trial Hearing – 2017/18 by Outcome^{1 2}

| Outcome | Number of Defendants |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Convicted of at least one offence | 22 |
| Acquitted | 30 |
| Total³ | 52 |

¹. Based on data contained within Table 6b of PPS Statistical Bulletin Cases Involving Sexual Offences 2017/18

². Based on a Court Hearing Type of 'Stand By Trial'; 'Trial'; 'Trial (Special Measures)' or 'Trial (Committed the Act)' and a Court Diary Status of 'Confirmed'; 'Heard'; 'Resulted'; or 'Active'.

³. Please note:

A further eight defendants had a hearing type of 'Trial' listed but which had a status of 'taken out' or 'cancelled' - five of these defendants were convicted of at least one offence and three were acquitted of all offences.

A further three defendants did not have a hearing type of 'Trial' - one of these defendants was convicted of at least one offence; one was acquitted of all offences and one had an outcome of 'Other'.

Table 3: Defendants Dealt with in the Crown Court for an offence of rape with a Trial Hearing – 2018/19 by Outcome ^{1 2}

| Outcome | Number of defendants |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Convicted of at least one offence | 18 |
| Acquitted | 18 |
| Total ³ | 36 |

^{1.} Based on data contained within Table 6b of PPS Statistical Bulletin Cases Involving Sexual Offences 2018/19.

^{2.} Based on a Court Hearing Type of 'Stand By Trial'; 'Trial'; 'Trial (Special Measures)' or 'Trial (Committed the Act)' and a Court Diary Status of 'Confirmed'; 'Heard'; 'Resulted'; or 'Active'.

^{3.} Please note:

A further eight defendants had a hearing type of 'Trial' listed but which had a status of 'taken out' or 'cancelled' - six of these defendants were convicted of at least one offence and two were acquitted of all offences.

A further four defendants did not have a hearing type of 'Trial' - three of these defendants were convicted of at least one offence and one had an 'Other' outcome.

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. You should state clearly 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

Independent, fair and effective

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

PPS FOI Team