



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

[REDACTED]
Via email: [REDACTED]

FOI 3460-18/19

15 March 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

I refer to your email dated 4 March 2019 in which you asked for information about prosecutions for crimes involving the use of a drone in 2018.

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:

- 1) *How many prosecutions took place in 2018 for the use of a drone to commit a criminal offence? These are crimes that would typically be prosecuted using the Air Navigation Order legislation.*
- 2) *How many prosecutions took place in 2018 in total of all crimes? (This is just to derive a percentage of drone prosecutions versus all other crime).*

The legislation that relates to the flying of a small unmanned surveillance aircraft without permission such as a drone is 'Article 241(1) and (6) of the Air Navigation Order 2009.'

In response please see Table 1 below for statistics in relation to decisions issued by the PPS in 2018 under this legislation and Table 2 for all decisions issued in 2018 where the test for prosecution was met.

Table 1. Decisions issued by the PPS for offences under Article 241(1) and (6) of the Air Navigation Order 2009 (involving a drone) - 1 January 2018 - 31 December 2018 (as of 5th March 2019).

Based on Most Serious Decision Issued

	Decision Type	
Calendar year - decision issued	Summary Prosecution	No Prosecution
2018	-	0

'-' refers to a number less than three that cannot be provided in order to prevent disclosure.

Table 2. Decisions Issued by the PPS 1 January 2018 - 31 December 2018 (as of 5th March 2019)

	Decision Type			
Calendar year - decision issued	Indictable Prosecution	Summary Prosecution	Diversion	Total
2018	1,634	28,784	3,694	34,112

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

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized name, possibly "B. Smith" or similar, written in a cursive style.

PPS FOI Section