



Public
Prosecution
Service

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

[REDACTED]

FOI 706/22-23

14 December 2022

[REDACTED]

I refer to your email dated 23rd November 2022 in which you asked for information relating to prosecution decisions under section 15 of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2015. 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:

“Records created after 10 December 2014, until 23 November 2022, relating to the decision to prosecute under section 15 of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) or, in the alternative, a total of number of decisions to prosecute under that section of that Act by year for 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and to date in 2022”.

In response, please be advised that between 1 January 2015 and 23 November 2022, there have been 7 decisions to prosecute, 13 diversionary decisions (e.g. caution) and 25 no prosecution decisions, giving a total of 45 prosecutorial decisions over the period. We are unable to provide a breakdown by calendar year as the numbers of decisions are too small and would risk of disclosure of identifiable information on individuals.

Independent, fair and effective

The list of relevant offences (including those as amended by Section 15 of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (NI) 2015) used in the analysis can be found below.

Complaint Offence Description	Complaint Offence Legislation
PAYING FOR SEXUAL SERVICES OF A PROSTITUTE SUBJECTED TO EXPLOITATIVE CONDUCT (Offence substituted/repealed from 1.6.15)	Article 64A of the Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order
PAYING FOR SEXUAL SERVICES OF A PERSON	Article 64A of the Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008

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,

Information Management Team
Public Prosecution Service