

Independent Custody Visiting Report



April 2022 to March 2023



Published October 2023







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#### 1. Introduction

The Northern Ireland Independent Custody Visiting Scheme was first established in 1991 by the Police Authority. The importance of an independent scheme which ensured the rights, health and wellbeing of the detainee and the facilities and conditions of detention was also recognised in 1999 by the Report of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland (the Patten Report). The Scheme was subsequently given a statutory footing by virtue of Section 73 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 which requires the Policing Board to make, and keep under review, arrangements for designated places of detention to be visited by lay visitors (now referred to as custody visitors).

The ICV Scheme is linked to the Police and Criminal Evidence Northern Ireland Order 1989 (PACE) and its revised codes of practice, 2007 edition and in particular Code C, which deals with the detention, treatment and questioning of persons by police officers. In addition, the scheme also has a statutory duty to visit people detained in custody under the Terrorism Act (2000) (TACT). This is governed by PACE (Northern Ireland) Code of Practice H (Code of Practice for the Detention, Treatment and Questioning of Persons under Section 41 and Schedule 8 of the Terrorism Act 2000). TACT Custody Visiting takes place in Musgrave Police Station, within the Serious Crime Suite (SCS), with an overflow capability in Antrim.

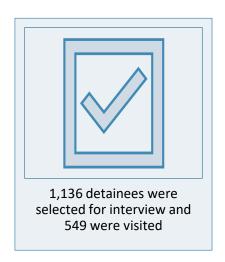
Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) are impartial volunteers from across the community and are independent of the police and the criminal justice system.

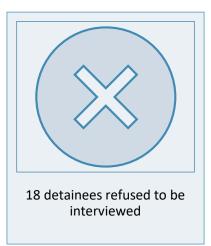
This is the annual statistical report covering 12 months from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. A publication schedule is available on the Northern Ireland Policing Board Website Schedule of Statistical Release Dates (updated June 2023) | Northern Ireland Policing Board (nipolicingboard.org.uk)

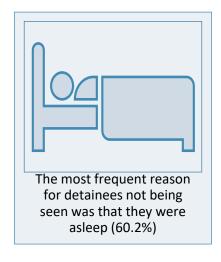
# 2. Key Facts













### 3. Custody Visits - introduction

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) make unannounced visits to police custody suites where they inspect and report on the rights, health and wellbeing and conditions of people being detained in custody, either by conversing with them and/or checking custody records.

The remit of the Northern Ireland Custody Visitor Scheme has been extended by the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 to include all stations in which people may be detained by the police, not just designated suites. Detention in a non-designated station is only permissible under the Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 in limited circumstances.

ICVs are divided into three Custody Visiting Teams and cover custody suites allocated to them based on the team's geographical remit. However, there are occasions when a team member/s may visit detainees in a custody suite outside of their regular team-area. The three team-areas are as follows:

North-West - Coleraine, Strand Road and Strabane

**South-East** – Antrim, which is also used as a contingency Serious Crime Suite (SCS),

Banbridge, Bangor, Musgrave and Musgrave SCS

**Tyrone-Fermanagh** – Dungannon, Lurgan and Omagh

Some ICVs are trained in visiting Serious Crime Suites (SCS) and will sometimes join with another team member, outside of their own ICV team, to visit detainees in the SCS. Visits to the SCS may be announced and unannounced.

ICVs carry out visits to check on

- The rights and entitlements of the detainee;
- Their health and wellbeing; and
- The conditions and facilities of detention

#### 4. Data and Official Statistics

#### **User Information Data sources and validations**

The Board's ICV Management System is a recording system used for the day-to-day management of custody visits. The key principle underlying its operation is that it relies on a small team of staff within Partnership Directorate (Engagement Branch) of the Northern Ireland Policing Board, to input and update information about the ICVs and custody visits made. Key aspects of the information recorded on the system are required for the successful day to day operation of the ICV Scheme and needs to be highly accurate to enable the effective monitoring of visits and in accordance with the Board's statutory function to administer the scheme.

The systems however weren't designed for the production of official statistics and therefore validation and cleansing is required to ensure that meaningful and accurate statistics can be provided from them. The data presented in this bulletin are derived from this Management System and are extracted using SPSS. These are validated and quality assured to ensure that the data is reliable and robust for use. Any inconsistencies are reported back to operational staff within Engagement Branch. If required, any necessary amendments are then made to the data

#### **Rounding conventions**

Percentages have been rounded to one decimal place and, as a consequence, some percentages may not sum to 100.

#### Disclosure control

Where small numbers (less than 5) have the potential to disclose sensitive information, disclosure controls have been applied and numbers less than three have been suppressed.

#### **Official Statistics**

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 NIPB and are responsible for ensuring that the statistics produced comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

#### 5. Guideline Visits

The guideline number of visits to each custody suite are agreed in April and kept under review throughout the year. Guideline number of visits are based on several factors including the size of the custody suite, the number of cells within the custody suite and the number of active independent custody visitors within each team. This number is further adjusted during the year should there be a change to any custody suites, for example if one should close temporarily for maintenance, or if the numbers of available custody visitors change, such as an increase or a reduction in team members following recruitment or the end of tenure. Each designated suite is however, visited at least once every month.

During 2022-23 the guideline number of visits for all custody suites was 490. These visits were divided between the three ICV teams according to the basis outlined above, with North-West allocated 144, South-East allocated 242 and Tyrone-Fermanagh allocated 104.

Table 1: Guideline visits for 2022-23

Custody Suite	Guideline Number of Visits
Antrim	0
Coleraine	72
Strand Rd	72
North-West Total	144
Antrim	60
Antrim SCS Announced	0
Banbridge	36
Bangor	8
Musgrave	84
Musgrave SCS Announced	48
Musgrave SCS Unannounced	6
South-East Total	242
Dungannon	50
Lurgan	6
Omagh	48
Tyrone-Fermanagh Total	104
Guideline visits 2022-2023	490

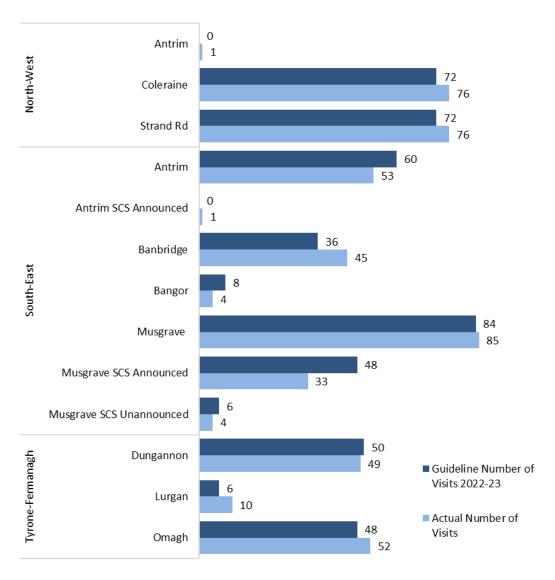
#### 6. Visits in 2022-2023

ICVs made 489 visits in accordance with guidelines of 490 visits in the year. The North-West team made 153 visits from guidelines of 144 visits, including one visit to Antrim custody suite. The South-East team made 225 visits out of a guideline number of visits of 242. Tyrone-Fermanagh team made 111 visits out of a guideline of 104 visits.

The figure below shows the ICV team and actual visits made compared to guideline visits.

Antrim, Bangor, Musgrave SCS (announced and unannounced) and Dungannon custody suites had fewer visits than guidelines while all other custody suites had more than the guideline number of visits.





#### 7. Visits – valid and invalid

Visits to custody suites may be valid or invalid. Invalid visits may be the result of ICVs unable to gain access to the custody suite because there were no staff available to allow entry, staff busy or under pressure, medical reasons or miscommunication between ICVs. Of the 489 visits made from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. There were 473 valid visits and 16 invalid visits. This represents a total of 3.3% of visits which were invalid. Strand Road custody suite (North-West team) had the largest number of invalid visits (7, 43.8%). Of these, 5 were for medical reasons and 2 were because of planned closure and the miscommunication of information between custody visitors.

Table 2: Total visits, valid and invalid with % of invalid visits

Team	Total Visits	Valid	Invalid	% Invalid
North-West	153	145	8	5.2%
South-East	225	218	7	3.1%
Tyrone-Fermanagh	111	110	1	0.9%
Total	489	473	16	3.3%

Table 3: Invalid visits by custody suite

Custody Suite	Invalid Visits	Percent
Antrim	2	12.5%
Banbridge	1	6.3%
Bangor	0	0.0%
Coleraine	1	6.3%
Dungannon	1	6.3%
Musgrave	4	25.0%
Strand Road	7	43.8%
Total	16	100.0%

The reasons given for invalid visits were;

- 1. Medical reasons (5), where there was an infectious disease such as Covid 19 present in the custody suite.
- 2. Suite busy/staff busy (3) where the custody suite was extremely busy and under pressure.
- No staffing or personnel to allow entry and/or waiting time exceeded (3) which also
  includes were the visit is aborted after 10 minutes if no staff are available to take ICVs into
  the custody suite
- 4. Other reasons (5) which cover the custody suite being closed for work and the miscommunication of arrangements between custody visitors.

#### 7. Visits – valid and invalid

During 2022-23, there were 489 visits made to custody suites, of which 96.7% were valid visits.

Of the 473 valid visits made during the year, the largest number were made to Musgrave (81, 17.1%) and Coleraine (75, 15.9%) Custody Suites.

TACT detainees are held within Serious Crime Suites (SCS). There were 121 TACT arrests made during 2022-2023 and 21,474 arrests under PACE. Arrest figures are based on a count of detainees' custody numbers and relate to the period of original detention only (source PSNI).

Although arrest figures relate to initial detentions and do not include repeat arrests, where an individual may be held in custody suites on more than one occasion during the year, it is possible to have some indication of the proportion of detainees visited overall. Based on these figures, ICVs visited approximately 14.0% of those individuals arrested under TACT and 2.5% of those arrested under PACE.

Table 4: Valid visits by custody suite

Custody Suite	Valid Visits	Percent
Antrim	52	11.0%
Antrim SCS Announced	1	0.2%
Banbridge	44	9.3%
Bangor	4	0.8%
Coleraine	75	15.9%
Dungannon	48	10.1%
Lurgan	10	2.1%
Musgrave	81	17.1%
Musgrave SCS Announced	33	7.0%
Musgrave SCS Unannounced	4	0.8%
Omagh	52	11.0%
Strand Road	69	14.6%
Total	473	100.0%

# 8. Wellbeing of detainees

An ICVs role is to check on the welfare of detainees held in police custody, to ensure they are being treated in accordance with PACE Codes of Practice and therefore human rights principles. Custody visiting provides an independent check on the treatment of people held in custody.

Matters regarding health and safety procedures as well as general maintenance within custody suites are recorded by ICVs during their visits. ICVs will raise each matter with custody staff, however they are unable to wait in the custody suite for every resolution, such as where a detainee has requested a GP/nurse, but the health care professional had not arrived before the end of the visit.

The most frequent matters of wellbeing raised during the year related to medical attention, where there was a request by the detainee to see a health care professional (34), this was followed by detainees requiring an appropriate adult (23), requiring to inform somebody (17) and adequate food and drink (17). There were 3 allegations of concern expressed to ICVs during the year. These allegations included concerns raised about excessive handling by the arresting officer, use of force in detention and allegation of sexual assault by a custody officer.

Table 5: Welfare matters raised by detainees

Category	Total
Medical attention	34
Requiring an appropriate adult	23
Adequate food and drink	17
Informing somebody	17
Legal advice	10
Requiring an interpreter	7
Checks on detainees	6
Dietary/personal requirements	4
Access to toilet/washing facilities	3
Allegations made/concerns raised	3
Being told rights	3
Exercise	3
Adequate bedding	2
Parent/Guardian responsibilities	2
Code of Practice	1
Other	1
Total	136

#### 9. Conditions of detention

The conditions of detainees, recorded by ICVs, are provided to the Board for monitoring purposes and to ensure PSNI meet their human rights responsibilities. Conditions of detention include cleanliness and general maintenance.

The table below shows the categories of concerns recorded by ICV teams during the year. There were 53 concerns regarding conditions raised by detainees or by ICVs during their visit. In 32 of the 53 instances recorded, concerns over conditions related to faulty equipment and general maintenance. These included hot water not working, interview room recorder defective and toilets out of use or needing repair.

Conditions in medical rooms and health equipment covered matters such as the medical room or cupboards in the medical room left unlocked, oxygen register not updated, tablets not locked away and one sharps box not sealed.

There were three Safety/security hazards reported during the year. These included unsecured chairs in interview rooms and a monitor left on the floor. In one instance the detainee was in possession of a lighter and had been smoking in the cell. This instance was followed up by custody staff in relation to detainee transport.

There was one condition classified as 'other' recorded by the Custody Visitor and relates to the low stock of meals available owing to supply issues.

If there should be no detainees in the custody suite at the time of arrival, ICVs can access all parts of the custody suite including cells, detention rooms, charging areas, washing facilities, medical rooms, kitchen and storage areas.

All matters regarding conditions of detention are reported by ICVs to the custody staff during their visit. ICV reports on conditions are also submitted to the Board for monitoring.

Table 6: Conditions of detention raised by detainees and ICVs

Conditions	North-West	South-East	Tyrone- Fermanagh	Total
Alarm	0	0	0	0
Cleanliness	0	3	5	8
Faulty Equipment and Maintenance	2	19	11	32
Heating/Lighting	0	0	1	1
Medical Rooms/Health Equipment	2	5	1	8
Other	0	0	1	1
Safety/Security Hazards	0	3	0	3
Total	4	30	19	53

# 10. Day of visits

A visit to a custody suite will usually be unannounced and will not be made at regular or predictable times. The exception to this is for visits to detainees held under the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT) in a Serious Crime Suite (SCS) where the visit can be either announced or unannounced. During the year to 31 March 2023, overall, most visits to custody suites were carried out on a Saturday and the fewest number of visits were carried out on a Sunday. This has however, varied over the years as shown in the table below. There is no specification for visits to take place at a certain day of the week.

Table 7: Visits carried out by day of week by team

Day	North-West	South-East	Tyrone- Fermanagh	Number of Visits	Percent
Monday	29	15	17	61	12.5%
Tuesday	33	36	8	77	15.7%
Wednesday	28	46	10	84	17.2%
Thursday	20	32	20	72	14.7%
Friday	7	37	23	67	13.7%
Saturday	29	34	25	88	18.0%
Sunday	7	25	8	40	8.2%
Total	153	225	111	489	100.0%

Table 8: Visits carried out by day of week 2018-19 to 2022-23

Day	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Monday	14.9%	13.6%	8.0%	9.7%	12.5%
Tuesday	13.0%	14.0%	16.4%	16.0%	15.7%
Wednesday	14.7%	16.9%	20.1%	16.0%	17.2%
Thursday	13.9%	18.0%	16.4%	18.7%	14.7%
Friday	15.1%	17.8%	15.8%	17.1%	13.7%
Saturday	14.1%	9.3%	12.6%	12.1%	18.0%
Sunday	14.3%	10.4%	10.7%	10.5%	8.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

#### 11. Time of visits

At least 10% of visits made by ICVs should be undertaken during unsociable hours (outside of 9am to 6pm). During the year to 31 March 2023, just under one third of visits (29.7%) were in this category.

The North-West team carried out 28 visits during unsociable hours (18.3%), the South-East team 99 visits (44.0%) and Tyrone-Fermanagh team 18 visits (16.2%).

There was one visit made during the year which did not specify a time of access to the custody suite.

Table 9: Visits carried out by time of day by team

Time	North-West	South-East	Tyrone- Fermanagh	Number of visits	Percent
Midnight – 8.59am	0	1	0	1	0.2%
9.00am - 11.59am	38	12	13	63	12.9%
Midday – 2.59pm	45	49	35	129	26.4%
3.00pm – 5.59pm	42	64	45	151	30.9%
6.00pm – 8.59pm	27	97	18	142	29.0%
9.00pm – 11.59pm	1	1	0	2	0.4%
Not stated	0	1	0	1	0.2%
Total	153	225	111	489	100.0%

ICVs work in pairs and agree a suitable time to visit the custody suite, these visits will be unannounced with exception of visits to an SCS which can be announced or unannounced.

Table 10: Visits carried out by time of day 2018-19 to 2022-23

Time	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Midnight – 8.59am	3.1%	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
9.00am - 11.59am	12.0%	14.2%	18.0%	18.9%	12.9%
Midday – 2.59pm	25.6%	24.1%	29.5%	22.0%	26.4%
3.00pm – 5.59pm	25.4%	28.8%	29.2%	22.8%	30.9%
6.00pm – 8.59pm	31.7%	27.7%	22.4%	32.7%	29.0%
9.00pm – 11.59pm	1.7%	1.7%	0.2%	3.1%	0.4%
Not stated	0.6%	1.3%	0.7%	0.6%	0.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

#### 12. Detainees selected – demographics

On arrival at the custody suite, ICVs will ascertain the number of detainees being held. They will then select either all or several detainees to visit. However, detainees must provide consent before an ICV interview can take place.

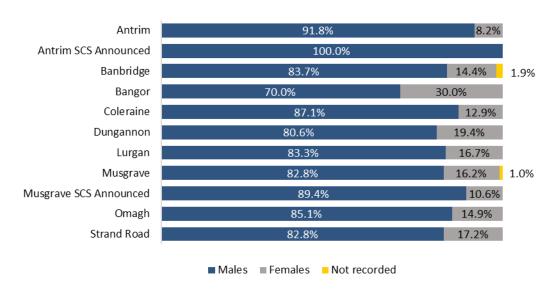
In 2022-23, 1,136 detainees were selected for interview by ICVs. Of these, 81.3% were adult males, 13.9% were adult females and 4.3% were under 18 years of age (juveniles). There were 0.4% of those selected who had neither gender or adult/juvenile category assigned by ICVs.

Table 11: Detainees selected for interview by gender

	Number	Percent
Adult Males	924	81.3%
Adult Females	158	13.9%
Juvenile Males	37	3.3%
Juvenile Females	12	1.1%
Not recorded	5	0.4%
Total	1,136	100.0%

During the year 2022-23, there were 21,595 individuals, both TACT and PACE detainees, who were held within custody suites in Northern Ireland (source PSNI). ICVs attempted to visit 1,136 individual detainees, 84.6% of whom were males and 15.0% were females. This compares to arrests under PACE and TACT of whom 82.3% were male and 17.7% were female (source PSNI)

Figure 2: Detainees selected for interview by gender and custody suite



#### 13. Detainees visited – demographics

In 2022-23, of the 1,136 detainees selected, 549 (48.3%) were available for interview by ICVs. The majority of detainees not visited by ICVs were asleep (see section 16). Of those detainees interviewed, 82.0% were adult males, 14.2% were adult females and 3.8% were juveniles/under 18 years of age (juveniles).

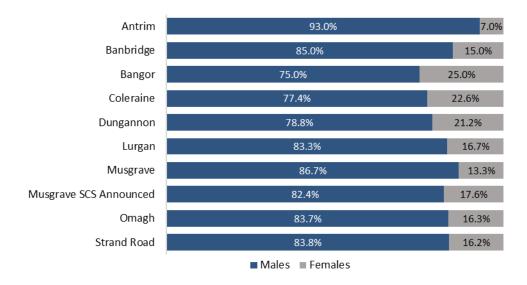
Table 12: Detainees visited by gender

	Number	Percent
Adult Males	450	82.0%
Adult Females	78	14.2%
Juvenile Males	14	2.6%
Juvenile Females	7	1.3%
Total	549	100.0%

Females, both adults and juveniles, made up 15.5% of arrests (source PSNI), 15.0% of those selected for interview and 15.5% of those who were available for an ICV visit. The proportion of females visited in custody suites, ranged from 7.0% of all detainees visited in Antrim to 25.0% of detainees visited in Bangor custody suite.

Males, both adults and juveniles, made up 84.5% of arrests (source PSNI), 84.6% of those selected for interview and 84.5% of those who were available for an ICV visit. The proportion of males visited in custody suites, ranged from 75.0% of all detainees visited in Bangor to 93.1% of detainees visited in Antrim custody suite.

Figure 3: Detainees visited by gender and custody suite



### 13. Detainees visited – demographics

Just over one quarter of detainees selected for interview were held in Musgrave custody suite (26.1%), and just under one third (31.5%) of all interviews/visits took place there. Detainees visited in Strand Road (13.5%), Banbridge (10.9%) and Antrim (10.4%) custody suites made up another third of detainees visited by ICVs.

Table 13: Detainees visited by gender and custody suite

<b>Custody Suite</b>	Males	Females	Total	Percent
Antrim	53	4	57	10.4%
Antrim SCS Announced	0	0	0	0.0%
Banbridge	51	9	60	10.9%
Bangor	6	2	8	1.5%
Coleraine	41	12	53	9.7%
Dungannon	41	11	52	9.5%
Lurgan	5	1	6	1.1%
Musgrave	150	23	173	31.5%
Musgrave SCS Announced	14	3	17	3.1%
Omagh	41	8	49	8.9%
Strand Road	62	12	74	13.5%
Total	464	85	549	100.0%

Figure 4: Percentage of detainees selected for interview by custody suite

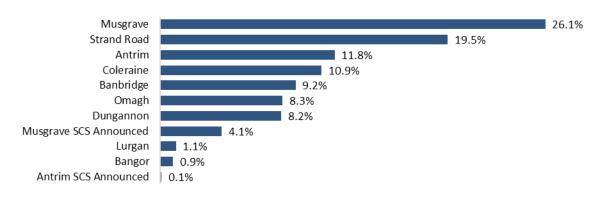
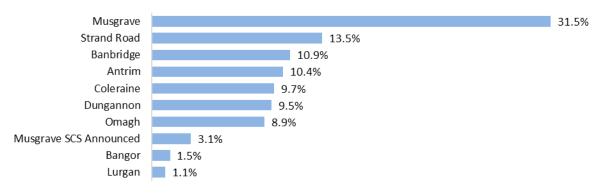


Figure 5: Percentage of detainees visited by custody suite



### 14. Detainees – not visited (excluding refused)

During 2022-2023, 587 (51.7%) of those who had been selected for interview were unavailable (see chart below for reasons detainees were not seen). Of the 1,136 detainees selected for interview, 18 (1.6%) refused consent and 569 (50.1%) were not interviewed for other reasons. The main reason detainees were not interviewed, other than refusal, was because they were asleep (60.2%) or being interviewed by PSNI (15.3%).

Apart from Antrim SCS where there was one detainee held at the time of ICVs visits, and who was unavailable for a visit, the suite with the highest rate of detainees not visited was Strand Road. Two thirds of detainees in Strand Road were not available for interview (147, 66.5%) and of these most were asleep (67.8%), 17.1% were attending hospital/court, being interviewed, processed/discharged or released and 4.1% were abusive/dangerous. Over three quarters (80.0%) of detainees in Bangor suite gave their consent for a visit.

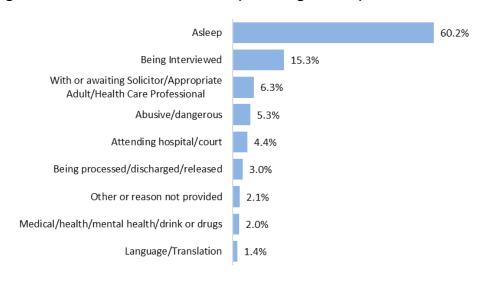


Figure 6: Reason detainees not seen (excluding refused)

Tyrone-Fermanagh ICV team were able to visit 53.8% of detainees selected for interview, South-East team 53.3% and North-West team 36.7%.

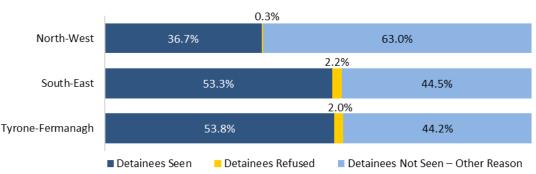


Figure 7: Detainee availability by ICV Team

#### 15. Refusal rate by custody suite

ICVs are allowed access to any person detained at a police custody suite, however detainees may only be spoken to with their consent. The number of detainees who refuse a visit as a proportion of those selected for interview is called the refusal rate. For 2022-2023 the refusal rate was 1.6%. The refusal rate for the previous two years was 2.2% and 1.5% respectively.

In 2022-23 there were 18 detainees who refused consent for interview by ICVs. The custody suite with the highest refusal rate was Musgrave SCS, for announced visits, with 5 refusals out of 47 detainees selected for interview (10.6%) followed by Dungannon with 2 refusals out of 93 detainees (2.2%).

Table 14: Refusal rate 2020-21 to 2022-23

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
% Refusal Rate	2.2%	1.5%	1.6%

Detainees may also consent to ICVs seeing the custody record even if they do not wish to be interviewed and, in circumstances where the detainee cannot give consent, ICVs should be allowed access to examine the custody record. If access to the custody record is denied, ICVs record this along with the reason given. In 2022-2023, 960 (84.5%) custody records were checked of 1,136 detainees selected for interview. This was the highest rate for three years, an increase of 9.2 percentage points on 2021-2022.

Figure 8: Custody records checked 2020-21 to 2022-23

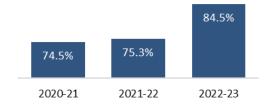


Table 15: Custody records checked

Team	Detainees Selected for Interview	Custody Records Checked	% Checked
North-West	346	265	76.6%
South-East	591	513	86.8%
Tyrone-Fermanagh	199	182	91.5%
TOTAL	1136	960	84.5%

### 16. Delays to visits

Delays of more than 10 minutes in accessing the custody suite are recorded on the ICV report. Should ICVs be unable to access the custody suite, the visit will be recorded as invalid. If ICVs are delayed by more than 10 minutes but subsequently gain access to carry out their visit, then the visit will be classified as a valid visit. Out of 16 invalid visits during 2022-23 three were related to delays in access to the custody suite. There were 14 valid visits made which had delays of more than 10 minutes in accessing the custody suite (see table below).

Table 16: Delays to visits of more than 10 minutes – valid visits

Custody Suite	Total
Antrim	2
Antrim SCS Announced	0
Banbridge	0
Bangor	0
Coleraine	0
Dungannon	1
Lurgan	1
Musgrave	8
Musgrave SCS Announced	2
Musgrave SCS Unannounced	0
Omagh	0
Strand Road	0
Total	14

Table 17: Reason for delays to visits of more than 10 minutes by custody suite

Custody Suite	Time Delay (mins)	Reason for Delay
Musgrave	20	Advised custody busy
Musgrave	15	No reason given
Lurgan	12	No reason given
Musgrave	14	Advised custody busy
Musgrave SCS Announced	13	Custody busy
Musgrave	11	Reception desk busy and weren't taken right away
Dungannon	13	No reason given
Antrim	16	No reason given
Musgrave	12	Staff shortages
Musgrave	17	Detainee issues
Musgrave	12	No reason given
Antrim	13	Distressed detainee at desk plus change over
Musgrave SCS Announced	13	Confused advice from CDO & Police Officer
Musgrave	15	ICVs were not allowed access to carpark (by G4S staff) and had to wait at security barrier until custody staff came to escort them.

### 17. Serious Crime Suites (SCS)

There is a statutory role for the Custody Visiting Scheme which includes visits to detainees held in custody under the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT). TACT detainees are held in Musgrave SCS with a contingency SCS suite in Antrim, if required. Visits to SCS are carried out by ICVs who have received specific TACT training. Since May 2013, visits to TACT detainees are normally announced, although there is the ability for ICVs to carry out unannounced visits.

**Table 18: Visits to Serious Crime Suites (SCS)** 

	Number of visits	Percent
Antrim SCS Announced	1	2.6%
Musgrave SCS Announced	33	86.8%
Musgrave SCS Unannounced	4	10.5%
Total	38	100.0%

Of the 38 visits made to Serious Crime Suites, the majority (86.8%) were announced visits to Musgrave with the remainder being unannounced to Musgrave (10.5%) and one visit to Antrim SCS (2.6%).

ICVs selected 48 detainees for interview and were given consent to visit 17 detainees. The remaining 31 detainees were not seen. The main reasons for detainees in SCS not being seen was that they were being interviewed (38.7%) or with a solicitor, appropriate adult or health care professional (29.0%). Five (16.1%) out of 48 detainees selected refused to be interviewed by Custody Visitors.

Table 19: Reasons for SCS detainees not being seen

	Total	Percent
Asleep	1	3.2%
Refused	5	16.1%
Being Interviewed	12	38.7%
Being processed/discharged/released	1	3.2%
With Solicitor/Appropriate Adult/Health Care Professional	9	29.0%
Other	3	9.7%
Total	31	100.0%

# 18. Custody Visitors - demographics

There were 29 active custody visitors on 31 March 2023. The largest number of custody visitors were in the South-East Team and these account for half of the total number of visitors (15), North-West had 8 active visitors and Tyrone-Fermanagh Team had 6.

**Table 20: Number of Custody Visitors** 

Team	Number	Percent
North-West	8	27.6%
South-East	15	51.7%
Tyrone-Fermanagh	6	20.7%
Total	29	100.0%

Of the 29 active custody visitors, 10 (34.5%) were male and 19 (65.5%) were female. During the year to 31 March 2023, there were 6 new visitors appointed, and of these, 3 were male and 3 were female. There were 3 custody visitors who declared a disability, making up 10.3% of all active custody visitors.

Figure 9: Percentage of custody visitors by gender

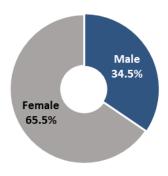
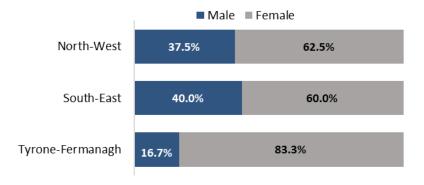


Figure 10: Percentage of active visitors by gender and team



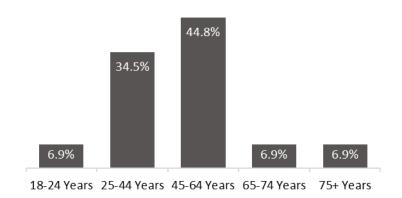
# 18. Custody Visitors - demographics

Two fifths (41.4%) of custody visitors are aged between 18 and 44 years. The remainder (58.6%) are aged over 45.

Of the 29 active custody visitors, 17 (58.6%) were Protestant, 11 (37.9%) were Catholic and one identified as other.

A selection of custody visitors are trained to visit detainees held under TACT within Serious Crime Suites. As of 31 March 2023, there were 9 visitors who had completed this training.

Figure 11: Active visitors by age band



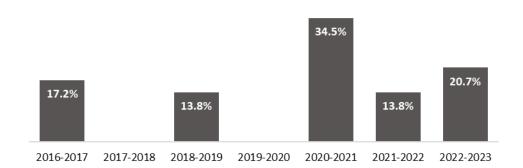
Note: Information on the gender, age and community background of Custody Visitors is based on information they provide voluntarily to the Northern Ireland Policing Board in the administration of the scheme.

# 19. Custody Visitors – year of appointment

Changes in Independent Custody Visitor numbers takes account of those who have come to the end of their tenure and those who have newly started in their role. The usual tenure for a custody visitor is 3 years with the option of extending this for one further term to 6 years. In exceptional circumstances custody visitors may have this second term extended for one year to 7 years in total. Custody visitors can step down from the role at any time during the period of their tenure. During the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 there were 3 custody visitors who stepped down from their role before the end of their tenure. Custody visitors do not need to provide a reason for stepping down from this voluntary role.

There were no custody visitor appointments made in 2017-2018 and 2019-2020 years.





#### Appendix 1 – Methodology and Counting Rules

#### The Analysis

The analysis of survey data was completed by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) working within the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

#### **Data Sources**

The key administrative data sources used by the Board for the production of custody visiting official statistics are:

... Independent custody visiting returns (CV2 and CV4), paper forms detailing visits made by ICVs, the outcome of visits and PSNI Area Commander comments.

Data is sourced from CV2 and CV4 returns provided by Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) who are volunteers from across the community, independent of the police and criminal justice system. The administrative data they provide relates to monitoring of rights, health and wellbeing of detainees and the facilities and conditions of detention.

The system is designed to support the operational function of the Partnership Directorate. A by-product of the system is a variety of management information and official statistics sourced from them. These are used to inform internal management and the wider public about the operation of the Board and the Independent Custody Visitors Scheme in particular. The Independent Custody Visiting Scheme is the result of statutory legislation requiring the Board to make, and keep under review, arrangements for designated places of detention. Previous reports have included the categories of satisfactory and unsatisfactory visits. It was felt that further research and validation on the definition of this category would be required before publishing data on this. A review will be undertaken on the parameters and definition of satisfactory visits and if appropriate, will be included in future reports.

This statistical report will remain subject to testing for quality and the ability to meet user needs. Feedback on this publication can be provided by completing a short <u>survey</u> or contacting the responsible statistician.

# Appendix 1 – Methodology and Counting Rules

#### Statistical Outputs – Designation and Key Measures

In accordance with the Statistics and Registration Act 2007, statistical outputs can be assessed for compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics and, if found compliant, are then designated as National Statistics. This means that they meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and value. The process of determining compliance with the Code and designation as National Statistics is known as Assessment.

The Independent Custody Visiting statistical publication has not yet been assessed and so is currently deemed 'Official Statistics'.

#### Statistical Reference - PSNI data

Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Order Statistics 2022-2023 report (published 19 May 2023) can be found online <a href="Police and Criminal Evidence">Police and Criminal Evidence</a> (PACE) Order Statistics | PSNI Details of TACT arrests (under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000) in Northern Ireland during 2022-2023 provided by PSNI.



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