



Police Service
of Northern Ireland

Chief Constable's Accountability Report

to Northern Ireland
Policing Board

Report Date:

Covering Period of 27 March 2025 to 2
May 2025

Presented at Policing Board Meeting:

8 May 2025



**we care
we listen
we act**

Contents

Foreword	3
Finance and Resource Update	7
Our Performance	8
Outcome 1: Victim Focused	10
Outcome 2: Community Focused	17
Outcome 3: Workforce Focused	19

Foreword

The Good Friday Agreement was a defining moment in Northern Ireland's history. It brought about a long awaited peace, ending decades of conflict and laid the groundwork for a shared and stable future. Among its many commitments was the creation of a new beginning for policing, one that would be accountable, impartial, community focused, and reflective of a divided society's diverse needs. From this, the PSNI was established, shaped by the recommendations of the Patten Report.

Patten envisaged a forward-looking, human rights based policing service, capable of earning the trust and confidence of the entire community. It was not designed, nor was it resourced, to re-investigate, account for, and make disclosure on thousands of serious crimes that occurred during the conflict. However, with no alternative structure or mechanism in place, the PSNI, as the successor organisation to the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), has inherited responsibility for those legacy issues linked to the Troubles.

This inheritance has brought significant costs, not just financial, but operational, social, and reputational. With no other mechanism to deal with the past, the PSNI gave an undertaking to re-investigate all murder cases from 1969 to 2004. In the last 10 years, the cost of investigating these crimes has reached £94m. In 2014, the number of civil actions against the PSNI relating to legacy issues stood at around 150. By the end of 2017, this had increased to over 800, and today the number exceeds 1,100. Many of these claims remain unresolved due to a lack of resources to effectively manage the disclosure requirements associated with such cases. No work has commenced on a considerable

number of these claims. The recent repeal of provisions in the Legacy Act, which had previously placed limits on new civil claims, means this number is likely to continue to grow.

Since 2018, the PSNI has resolved approximately 30 high value claims. The process for managing these is complex, labour-intensive, and time-consuming and the cost of resourcing the team that deals with legacy litigation during this period has been £18.5m.

Historically there has been a legal approach best described as attritional by the security agencies subjected to legal claims. Policing and our partner agencies, perhaps partly conscious of the responsibility to manage public money, have engaged in what has been for families a frustratingly slow process of putting the plaintiffs to strict proof as regards to these claims. The nett impact of this approach has caused further traumatisation of applicants and families and has had a significant direct and negative impact on public confidence in the security agencies. A mechanism needs to be implemented to ensure that those cases that are without merit are struck out relatively quickly and those that are with merit are resolved expeditiously and with an acknowledgement of any failures being made to the victims and families.

The Policing Plan 2025-2030 sets out that the organisation seeks to be Victim Focused. This strategic priority needs to be meaningful and should drive our approach to legacy. It is important to stipulate the PSNI very much accepts its responsibility in protecting national security interests. However, a focus upon



supporting victims and responding quickly to such claims can be achieved without compromising national security provisions.

I welcome the recent renewed focus on legacy and the review being undertaken by government of the Northern Ireland (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023, and the inquiry being undertaken by the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee in examining the governments approach to addressing the legacy of the past. I ask that both those reviews consider the financial and resourcing implications of addressing legacy on the PSNI.

There has never been a comprehensive and sustained funding allocation to the PSNI to manage legacy or pay families compensation relating to the Troubles or to liabilities inherited from the RUC. In total, the PSNI has incurred costs of **£160m** on legacy matters in the last 10 years. It is critically important that PSNI are separately funded to address legacy matters as this is an incredibly important issue that is a cross cutting themes across Northern Ireland life. To simply fund a new Legacy Commission, established by the recent legislation, is worryingly short sighted as no such body can succeed unless the PSNI can service the demands of such a body and the associated financial demands of inquests and civil cases.

The PSNI is also a core participant in the Omagh Bombing Inquiry. The estimated lifetime cost of our involvement in this inquiry is between £12m and £15m, covering legal representation, resourcing, research, and disclosure.

We are working alongside the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR) to ensure they get unfettered access to material that we hold. While the British Government have indicated they will repeal and replace the Legacy Act, we anticipate that statutory

obligations will necessitate further resource to fulfil requests from the new Commission. It is still unclear what resource will be required, but our early scoping indicates this might be in the region of £1.5m per year.

The cumulative annual cost of legacy equates to approximately 400 police officers. This is a stark figure at a time when the Service faces unprecedented operational pressure and budgetary constraint. Every pound spent on legacy is a pound not spent on frontline policing, neighbourhood safety, organised crime, or public protection. It should be remembered that these incredibly tragic events occurred during direct rule from Westminster and it is simply wrong to expect the Northern Ireland grant provided to fund public services today is also expected to be utilised to pay for the past.

The impact of legacy is not solely financial. During regular engagement with communities, particularly within Catholic, Nationalist and Republican areas, it is clear that the handling of legacy matters continues to influence public confidence in policing. It remains one of the most significant barriers to achieving a representative workforce and rebuilding trust and legitimacy. Perceptions of PSNI's role in Legacy, alongside the continuing threat from terrorism, contributes to the challenges we face in attracting and retaining officers from across all communities.

My report this month reflects the breadth and depth of work being delivered throughout the PSNI to meet the challenges of today, to keep people safe, protect the vulnerable, and build confidence across our increasingly diverse communities.

As part of our Easter policing operation, officers and staff from across the organisation worked tirelessly with partners to support the safe delivery of these events. I

would like to record my thanks to ACC Ryan Henderson for leading this significant operation, and to all those police officers and staff involved for their dedication and professionalism.

The report highlights some of the most serious and complex policing challenges we have faced since the Board meeting in April, including investigations into recent murders, serious sexual offences, and drug trafficking. Notably, the recovery of cocaine and cannabis with an estimated street value of £860,000 in Kilkeel demonstrates the relentless efforts of officers to disrupt organised crime groups and remove harmful substances from our communities.

Alongside these high-profile cases, I want to recognise the daily policing work that often goes unseen but has a profound impact on community safety and public confidence. Through effective community engagement and direct response to local concerns, neighbourhood officers in Banbridge identified and closed two brothels, safeguarding vulnerable individuals and undoubtedly disrupting organised crime networks. This is a clear example of our commitment to focus on the needs and concerns of local communities. The successful outcome highlights the value of building trust within those communities we serve – we are stronger together.

We continue to see the positive impact of collaboration, both within the Service and across jurisdictions. In Donaghadee, an investigation into a cannabis grow house — again prompted by local community concerns — showcased a strong team PSNI ethos. Officers and staff from Local Policing, Road Policing, Organised Crime Branch, Tactical Support Group, Air Support, and the Incident Co-ordination Centre all worked together to stop a suspect vehicle, detain the occupants, recover 30kg of suspected cannabis and carry out follow-up searches leading to the seizure of further cultivated cannabis and growing

equipment. Separately, our Road Policing Support Unit, working closely with partners in An Garda Síochána, safely intercepted a vehicle carrying a murder suspect as he entered Northern Ireland. The suspect was arrested and subsequently returned to England where he was wanted. This is a further example of the strength and importance of our cross-border operational relationships.

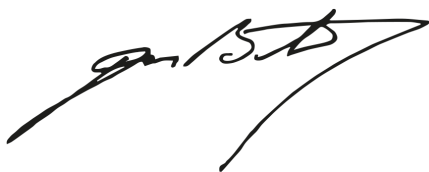
The work of our Safe Transport Team demonstrates the value of visible, responsive policing. During proactive patrols at Belfast Grand Central Station, officers gave chase to, apprehended and detained a fare evader, who was subsequently identified as wanted for serious offences, including vehicle theft, dangerous driving, and arson. This led to his arrest and progression of the investigation into these offences.

Finally, I want to pay tribute to the officers who responded to a call for assistance from the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service regarding a member of the public who had been found unconscious by passers-by. For over 25 minutes, they administered CPR and managed the casualty's airway until the arrival of ambulance staff. NIAS have commended the officers for the leadership, professionalism, and lifesaving efforts shown in dealing with this critical incident.

These examples reflect the professionalism, dedication, and courage shown daily by officers and staff across the Service. I am proud of their commitment to delivering on our core priorities: protecting communities, supporting victims, and building public confidence in policing.

The Good Friday Agreement held out hope that victims and families would, in time, receive truth, accountability and acknowledgement. Yet no dedicated framework or funding was ever established to

realise that ambition. As a result, the responsibility for addressing the past has defaulted to policing, despite the PSNI not being designed, resourced or best placed to deliver on that expectation. At the same time, we must recognise the enduring pain experienced by victims and families affected by the Troubles, and the importance of acknowledging and addressing their needs. However, this cannot come at the expense of the policing of today. Tackling organised crime, safeguarding the vulnerable, building trust and responding to emerging threats all require sustained investment and support. It is time for an honest conversation about how legacy is funded, managed and resolved. Legacy requires a dedicated, properly resourced approach, distinct from the work of today's Police Service. Only by finding long-term, sustainable solutions, can we deal appropriately with the past, preserve the principles of the Good Friday Agreement, and ensure that policing is positioned to deliver a safer, more confident future for all. I welcome the opportunity to engage with the Board and partners on these critical issues and to work collectively towards a balanced approach that meets the needs of victims, communities and wider society.



Jon Boutcher QPM

Chief Constable

Police Service of Northern Ireland



Finance and Resource Update

Despite the many financial challenges and funding uncertainties faced by the Service last year (2024/25), I am pleased to report a provisional outturn showing an underspend of just £170k against a Total Resource DEL of £943m, or a variance of 0.018%. This is a remarkable outturn and helps demonstrate our commitment to maximising the use of resources allocated to policing and doing so in a managed way.

Similarly, an underspend of £105k or 0.18% was reported against a capital budget of £56m. This capital expenditure includes the cost of acquiring the Kinnegar site in March, which is a key milestone in the development of a new police college and our estate transformation plans.

The Draft Resource Plan for 2025/26 was considered and approved at our Strategic Management Board in March, with an unaddressed gap of £31m. Since then, our Final Budget allocation for 2025/26 was issued by the Department of Justice on 8 April and confirmed a further £9.7m of funding for PSNI. As a result, the funding gap has been reduced to £21m. The updated Resource Plan is now with the Board's Resources Committee for consideration.

The June Monitoring has also been commissioned, with returns due on 1 May. The remaining pressures in resource, capital and ring fenced funding will be requested as part of this exercise, along with any new or emerging pressures.

Fleet Management

On 8 April 2025, the Northern Ireland Audit Office published its independent report into the management of the PSNI fleet.

I welcome this report and the external scrutiny it provides. I am particularly grateful for the recognition of the very real resource and capacity challenges we face, across both capital and resource budgets, which continue to affect our ability to modernise and maintain a safe and sustainable fleet.

Despite our ongoing commitment to improving the fleet and ensuring that officers and staff are equipped to serve the public safely and effectively, years of underinvestment have had a cumulative impact. The findings of the report echo warnings issued by my predecessor in January 2023 about the consequences of underfunding, including a reduction in the number of operational vehicles and increased delays in repairs.

I remain committed to working with the Board and the Department of Justice to respond to the report's recommendations and to ensure we deliver the best possible outcomes within the constraints we continue to face.

Our Performance

Complaints made to the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland.

The Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland offers an independent system for reviewing and investigating complaints concerning the behaviour of PSNI officers. A complaint against the police refers to a member of the public expressing dissatisfaction with the service they have experienced.

For the year 2024/25, there has been an 8% decrease in the total number of complaints received when compared with 2023/24.

Over the same timeframe, the total number of allegations has decreased by 13%.

Further information can be obtained at [OPONI Quarterly Statistics Bulletins](#), with the annual report anticipated for release in June.

Statistical Update

The information in this section is extracted from our Official Statistics published reports. The full reports can all be accessed from the following link. <https://www.psni.police.uk/about-us/our-publications-and-reports/official-statistics>.

Police Recorded Injury Road Traffic Collisions and Casualties – 2024 Key Statistics Report UPDATED (published 28.03.2025)

Between 1st January 2024 and 31st December 2024:

- There was a total of 4,753 injury road traffic collisions recorded, resulting in 69 fatalities, 939 people seriously injured and 6,486 slightly injured.
- The number of people killed (69) in 2024 was the second highest recorded since

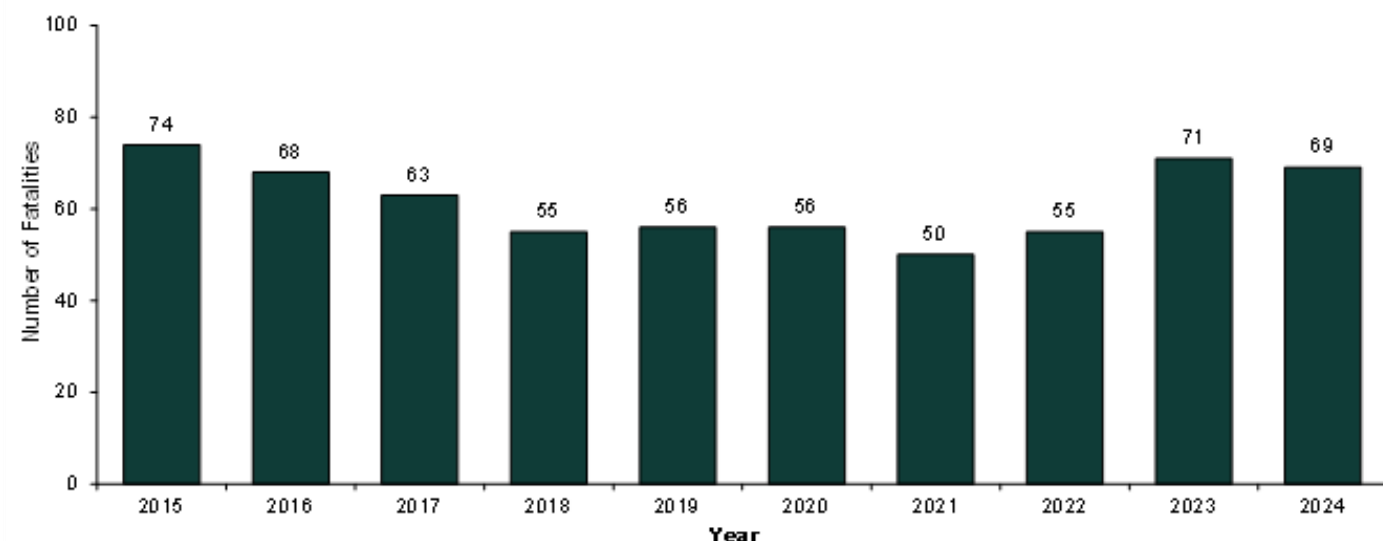
2015. Road deaths decreased significantly from 2010 onwards when compared with the previous decade.

- Overall casualty levels decreased by 6.1% from 2023, they have continued to remain below pre Covid-19 levels. Conversely though, KSI (killed and seriously injured) casualties were 6.0% higher than 2023 and they remain persistently higher than the totals seen prior to 2020.
- Drivers and passengers accounted for over three-fifths of all KSI casualties (63.5%).
- There were 93 children (under 16) killed or seriously injured – 10 more than in 2023. In 2024, there were 21 fatalities in the 65 and over age group which was 3 more than the number recorded in 2023 and 11 more than the number recorded in 2022.
- Fermanagh and Omagh district had the highest number of road deaths with 16 fatalities. Belfast City district recorded the most serious injuries in 2024 (145).
- The most common principal causation factors for KSI casualties were 'inattention or attention diverted' (148) and 'wrong course/position' (86).
- 'Impairment by drugs or alcohol – driver/rider' was the third most common principal causation factor, attributing for 81 KSIs followed by 'excessive speed having regard to conditions' (76 KSIs).
- Nine of the eleven districts showed a decrease in overall casualties between 2023 and 2024, most notably Belfast City, which decreased from 1,802 to 1,686, a decrease of 116 casualties overall, or - 6.4%.



Police Service
of Northern Ireland

Fatalities resulting from road traffic collisions in Northern Ireland, 2015 - 2024



The number of people killed (69) in 2024 was the second highest recorded since 2015. Road deaths decreased significantly from 2010 onwards when compared with the previous decade. Over the longer term, the highest number of road deaths was recorded in 1972 with 372 fatalities – some 303 more than in 2024.

Most common principal causation factors of those killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions, 2024

Principal Factor	Number of collisions	KSI ¹ casualties	Slight casualties	Total casualties
Inattention or attention diverted	789	148	1,111	1,259
Driving too close	559	32	909	941
Emerging from minor road without care	380	69	541	610
Impairment by drugs or alcohol - driver/rider	281	81	350	431
Crossing or entering road junction without care	265	50	411	461
Turning right without care	246	70	357	427
Wrong course/position	237	86	328	414
Overtaking on offside without care	192	57	254	311
Excessive speed having regard to conditions	187	76	252	328
Changing lane without care	151	13	241	254

¹ Killed or seriously injured

Outcome 1: Victim Focused

Crime Department

Organised Crime Branch

Organised Crime Unit

Investigations

- On 26 March 2025, officers from Roads Policing Unit stopped a vehicle on the A1 near Banbridge. A subsequent search recovered approximately £165,000 in suspected criminal cash. Detectives from Organised Crime Branch arrested a man at the scene. Follow-up searches were conducted at two properties in West Belfast, resulting in the recovery of suspected herbal cannabis worth an estimated £67,500, a further £6,000 in cash, drug supply related paraphernalia, and a single round of ammunition. The man was further arrested for a range of offences, including possession of a Class controlled B drug with intent to supply, possession of ammunition in suspicious circumstances and without a licence, and being concerned in the supply of Class B controlled drugs. He has since been charged and remanded in custody.
- On 29 March 2025, detectives recovered suspected herbal cannabis with an estimated street value of £510,000 following the search of a lorry. A man was arrested and subsequently charged with possession of Class B controlled drugs and possession with intent to supply.
- On 10 April 2025, a proactive search operation was carried out by detectives, supported by Tactical Support Group colleagues, at a property in the Carrigenagh Road area of Kilkeel. Officers seized a substantial quantity of suspected Class A and B controlled drugs, including cocaine

and cannabis, with an estimated street value of £860,000. A man was arrested and has since been released on bail pending further police enquiries.

Crime Outcomes

- On 25 March 2025, a man from Ballymoney was sentenced to four years imprisonment for the offences of being concerned in the supply of Class A and B controlled drugs, conspiracy to process Class A controlled drugs, namely cocaine, possession of Class A controlled with intent to supply and money laundering offences.
- On 27 March 2025, a man was sentenced to four and a half years (half to be served in custody and the remainder on licence) after pleading guilty to a number of drugs related offences. This followed the recovery of Class A and B controlled drugs with an estimated street value of over £130,000 at a property in Sixmilecross in June 2023.
- On 3 April 2025, a man appeared before Londonderry Crown Court in connection with drugs offences linked to *EncroChat* - a secure encrypted communications platform used by organised criminals. He was sentenced to three years and four months, (half to be served in custody and the remainder on licence). The investigation forms part of *Operation Venetic*, a UK wide effort led by the National Crime Agency and supported by European partners to dismantle criminal use of the platform
- On 10 April 2025, a man was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment. This followed a

large-scale investigation into human trafficking for sexual exploitation. He is one of four individuals sentenced in recent months for a range of offences, including, human trafficking, controlling prostitution for gain, paying for sexual services, and being concerned in the supply of a Class A controlled drugs.

Specifically, he targeted nine vulnerable young women, supplying them with heroin to create dependency and exert control. He groomed and coerced them into sex work, arranged meetings with sex buyers, transported victims to appointments, and also engaged in sexual acts with them.

- On 11 April 2025, three men were sentenced for their roles in the supply of controlled drugs in the North West. Two were sentenced to two years, suspended for three years, while the third received an 18 month sentence, suspended for two years. The men are believed to be part of an organised crime group primarily operating in the Coleraine area, with activity extending into Derry/Londonderry and Claudy.

The group's activity focused on the supply of cocaine. In November 2015, a proactive stop and search operation at Nutts Corner led to the seizure of cocaine with a street value of over £400,000. Follow up action in February 2016 led to the recovery of a further quantity of cocaine worth up to £190,000 at Belfast Central Train Station, where the group had used the rail network to move drugs from Dublin.

The sentencing follows an extensive and sustained investigation, supported by the Public Prosecution Service, which has now seen a total of six individuals held to account for their involvement in this criminal network.

Economic Crime Unit

Court Outcomes

- On 25 March 2025, a man was sentenced to five and a half years' imprisonment (half to be served in custody and half on licence) for a range of serious drug and criminal property offences linked to *EncroChat*.
- The investigation forms part of *Operation Venetic* and involved a search of the man's home in July 2020. A subsequent in-depth analysis of encrypted messages revealed exchanges with multiple criminal associates relating to the international trafficking of controlled drugs into Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The messages also referenced currency conversion and the evaluation of market returns.

He was convicted of 37 offences, including transferring and conspiring to transfer criminal property, being concerned in the supply of a Class A controlled drug, and conspiracy to import and supply Class B controlled drugs.

This conviction is the result of close collaboration between PSNI's Organised Crime Branch, Cyber Crime Centre, Economic Crime Unit, the Public Prosecution Service, and the National Crime Agency.

- In March 2025, following a nine year investigation by detectives from the Economic Crime Unit, a 48 year old man, acting as director of two companies, pleaded guilty to a range of offences related to illegal gaming.

The companies were convicted of 13 offences, relating to charging players of 76 gaming machines amounts in excess of the legally permitted limits. A parallel

confiscation investigation was carried out and resulted in a confiscation order in excess of £500,000 being granted on the same date.

This case reflects the Economic Crime Unit's sustained commitment to tackling financial crime.

- On 11 April 2025, four men were sentenced in connection with a sophisticated and large scale banking fraud. One had previously pleaded guilty to 44 offences of fraud and money laundering and was sentenced to four years' imprisonment (half in custody and half on licence). His accomplices pleaded guilty to assisting an offender at an earlier hearing and were sentenced to 100 hours' community service.

Between 2017 and 2020, the lead defendant phoned a number of account holders, many of them older people. He purported to be a representative from their bank and tricked them into handing over sensitive information. He used this to log into online bank accounts and move money to other accounts throughout the world. The total amount lost to the banking industry was £1.3m.

This was an extremely complex investigation conducted by detectives and financial investigators, with support from law enforcement partners in multiple jurisdictions.

Serious Crime Branch

Investigation

- A man has been charged in connection with the murder of Adam Krzan in Dungannon on 27 February 2025. He has also been charged with robbery and going equipped for burglary. A second man has been charged with offences including withholding information and perverting the course of justice.
- A man has been charged with attempted murder and possession of an offensive weapon in a public place following an incident in Crossmaglen on 30 March 2025.
- A man has been charged with offences including making threats to kill, possession of an offensive weapon with intent to cause an indictable offence, and aggravated burglary with intent to cause grievous bodily injury following an incident in Carrickfergus on 9 April 2025.

Court Outcomes

- **Murder of Ian Ogle:** Five men were sentenced to minimum terms of 17½ years, 17½ years, 20 years, 20 years, and 20 years respectively for the murder of Ian Ogle in January 2019. Four others received suspended sentences for assisting offenders and withholding information.
- **Manslaughter of Victor Hamilton:** A man was sentenced to six years' imprisonment (half in custody and half on licence), in connection with the manslaughter of Victor Hamilton in 2022. Two other individuals received two year custodial sentences, also to be served half on licence, for withholding information.

- **Murder of Damien Heagney:** A man has been found guilty of the murder of Damien Heagney, who was reported missing in July 2022. His dismembered body was recovered from a reservoir in county Tyrone the following month. The defendant received a mandatory life sentence, with the minimum tariff to be determined at a hearing in May 2025.
- **Social Media Posts:** A man was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment, suspended for two years, for social media posts deemed to support a proscribed organisation. He is also subject to terrorism notification requirements for 10 years. This is the first prosecution in Northern Ireland for online comments found to recklessly express support for a proscribed organisation.
- **Burglaries in Newtownabbey:** A man was sentenced to four years' imprisonment after pleading guilty to multiple burglaries in the Newtownabbey area in July 2023.
- **Burglaries in Comber:** A man received an eight year custodial sentence in connection with a series of burglaries at commercial premises in the Comber area in November 2023.
- **Bangor and Newtownards Crime Spree:** Two men were sentenced to eight years and two months, and four years and two months respectively, for a range of offences including hijacking and robbery committed in Bangor and Newtownards in May 2023.

Public Protection Branch

Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI) Inspection Update

CJINI is currently undertaking an inspection focusing on how the criminal justice system, including the PSNI, identifies, assesses, and responds to Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) in Northern Ireland. This inspection runs in parallel with a review of progress on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), following an earlier dedicated inspection.

The key objectives of the current inspection are to:

- Examine the effectiveness of CCE organisational strategies and partnerships, including the definitions used and approach to prevention and enforcement;
- Examine the operational response to CCE by criminal justice agencies including how well organisations understand the nature and scale of CCE, how effective their responses to CCE are and how well victims and survivors and their parents or carers are supported and children safeguarded;
- Examine the public awareness raising in educating communities about the signs of exploitation and abuse, the importance of reporting concerns and effective mechanisms to do that; and
- Examine and assess the outcomes of strategies and delivery mechanisms for CCE against identified targets and expectations.

In a 2023 Inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), it was noted that PSNI needed to strengthen its understanding and response to CCE. Unlike the structured approach in place for CSE, inspectors found an absence of dedicated

investigation teams or comprehensive multi-agency collaboration in the area of CCE. This gap has since been recognised and incorporated into the current Policing Plan as a key accountability measure.

As part of the initial fieldwork for the CJINI inspection, the Chief Constable has received correspondence raising concerns around the PSNI's identification of, and response to, both CSE and CCE. Particular concern was expressed regarding the management of missing person incidents, especially in cases involving children in care, and the application of the Philomena Protocol.

In response, a Gold Group has been established to oversee and coordinate immediate actions arising from the inspection and to ensure an effective and timely organisational response.

Recognition for Public Protection Officers from Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)

Officers from Public Protection Branch (PPB) have received formal recognition from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for their support in an ongoing international investigation. The case involves a Canadian national alleged to have committed serious child sexual offences against his daughter while the family resided in the United Arab Emirates.

The victims are currently living in Northern Ireland with their mother. Through the coordinated efforts of PPB and Cyber Crime officers, vital evidence has been secured, including key witness statements and corroborating material from electronic devices. This evidence has played a critical role in case progression and securing a criminal justice outcome.

Child Internet Protection Team (CIPT) / Victim Identification and Image Grading

The Police Service's CIPT continues to deliver strong outcomes in tackling online offending. According to the most recent national data, there has been a significant increase in the length of sentencing for offenders, reflecting the strength of evidence gathered and the seriousness with which these crimes are being addressed.

Notably, PSNI now ranks second fastest in the UK for time taken from the initiation of an investigation through to the charging of a suspect, behind only Police Scotland, which operates under a distinct justice system. On average, CIPT investigations now progress to charge within approximately six months. This reflects the team's efficiency, victim focused approach, and commitment to bringing offenders to justice swiftly.

Investigations

- On 11 January 2025, the PSNI was formally notified of an investigation by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) involving Zhenhao Zou, an individual with previous links to Northern Ireland. In March 2025, Zou was convicted in London of multiple serious offences, including 11 counts of rape, voyeurism, possession of extreme pornographic material, and false imprisonment.

The offences took place between 2019 and 2024, primarily in London and China, following his departure from Northern Ireland. To date, no offences have been identified within this jurisdiction.

The MPS investigation uncovered extensive digital evidence, including video recordings of the crimes. Seven of the rapes are reported to have occurred in China during the COVID-19 lockdown period, and four in London. Zou used

controlled substances to incapacitate victims, and hidden surveillance equipment was discovered in his residence.

MPS have identified 10 female victims from the recovered footage, with formal identification confirmed for two individuals. All known victims to date are Chinese nationals. Zou is due for sentencing in June 2025.

The PSNI has launched a parallel investigation to ensure all possible lines of enquiry have been pursued here in Northern Ireland. This includes engagement with the MPS, liaison with Queen's University Belfast, communications planning, and forensic enquiries. The investigation remains active and under the oversight of a Senior Investigating Officer, with case conferencing ongoing within the Rape Crime Unit.

parents. The child's mother received a four year sentence for child cruelty, while the father was sentenced to 22 years' imprisonment for grievous bodily harm with intent and child cruelty. The victim has sustained life-altering injuries and will require ongoing care and support.

This case highlights the Police Services' commitment to protecting vulnerable children and ensuring perpetrators of serious harm are held fully accountable.

- On Friday 11 April 2025, a man was sentenced after pleading guilty to 19 counts of sexual abuse relating to interfamilial offending. He received a total sentence of 8 and a half years (seven years in custody and 18 months on licence). He has been placed on the Sex Offenders Register indefinitely and is disqualified from working with children until 2049.

Court Outcomes

Child Abuse: On 14 March 2025, a woman was sentenced to four years imprisonment (half in custody and half on licence) after pleading guilty to six child sexual abuse offences, relating to a 15 year old boy. She was a teacher at the school he attended. In addition, she will be placed on the Sex Offenders Register indefinitely and subject to a Sexual Offences Prevention Order (SOPO) for five years.

Rape Crime: On 14 April 2025, a man was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment (half in custody and half on licence) having been found guilty of serious sexual offences against a 16 year old female who he targeted as she walked home. A Sexual Offences Prevention Order (SOPO) has been granted.

Northern Trust – Serious Crime

- An investigation into serious injuries sustained by a four week old baby boy has resulted in custodial sentences for both

Virtual Officer Attendance Pilot

On 23 April 2025, the PSNI launched a four week pilot of the Virtual Officer Attendance (VOA) service, a video-call based service offering victims of crime an alternative to traditional in-person officer attendance or telephone resolution. Operated from a dedicated hub at Castlereagh Police Station by a team of three Sergeants and 16 Constables, the pilot enables officers to make enquiries, record statements and receive digital evidence remotely in cases where there is no immediate threat or risk requiring physical deployment.

The pilot is currently available to victims of crime aged 18 or over, or to those under 18 when accompanied by an adult. It reflects the organisation's commitment to using technology to enhance the ways in which victims and the wider community engage with our services. This digital approach not only



Police Service
of Northern Ireland

offers convenience to the public but also helps reduce demand on frontline officers, allowing them to focus on higher risk and time sensitive incidents. The model is also expected to deliver organisational efficiencies and cost savings.

To date, the team has dealt with approximately 200 calls for service, including 28 video calls during which officers have digitally recorded statements and secured evidential material. Public and staff satisfaction surveys are in progress to inform the pilot's evaluation.

The scheme draws on the experience of Dorset Police, who successfully introduced a similar model in 2023. Future phases will see the rollout of VOA hubs across the four policing areas and explore broader applications within our Crime Department. This expansion will provide meaningful roles for officers unable to perform the full range of operational duties and increase organisational flexibility in staff deployment across Districts.

Outcome 2: Community Focused

Overview of Easter 2025

An extensive policing operation was delivered over the Easter period from 18 to 22 April 2025, with ACC Ryan Henderson acting as Gold Commander, fully supported by Silver and Bronze Commanders. Significant policing resources were deployed to ensure public safety across a wide range of Easter commemorations, parades, and high-attendance events.

With the exception of the annual Easter Monday parade in Derry/Londonderry there were no significant issues or disorder, although a number of investigations have commenced in relation to various matters arising at events across the country.

North Area

The Apprentice Boys of Derry Easter Parade in Lisburn proceeded without major disruption. Police worked closely with partners to support traffic management and reduce anti-social behaviour.

In Causeway Coast & Glens, a high-visibility policing operation was mounted in response to the annual "car cruise" in Portrush and Portstewart. Officers dealt with a range of incidents including anti-social behaviour, assaults, and the removal of unroadworthy vehicles. Operation Roadsafe was also active throughout the weekend.

Officers are investigating the report of a car being overturned in Portrush. While no injuries were reported, enquiries are ongoing to identify those responsible, with engagement continuing with local licensed premises.

South Area

Police deployed to support various commemoration parades across the area. Officers are investigating an un-notified parade in Lurgan involving a masked colour party. Footage is under review and potential criminal justice outcomes are being considered.

Belfast

Commemorative events at Milltown Cemetery on Easter Sunday were monitored through an evidence-gathering operation. No significant disturbances were reported across the city, and all events concluded peacefully. Footage is being reviewed to assess any breaches or offences.

Derry City & Strabane

The Easter Monday parade in Derry/Londonderry was marred by disorder and breaches of the Parades Commission determination. Masked individuals were observed during the event, and disorder developed in the Nailors Row area which involved the throwing of petrol bombs, fireworks, and masonry. Police were forced to close Bishop Street for a period in the interests of public safety. The orchestrated involvement of young people as a shield for masked individuals was a clear case of child criminal exploitation and is to be condemned. Following the parade, two men were arrested under the Terrorism Act. A vehicle and several items were seized. It is estimated that approximately 50 petrol bombs and fireworks were thrown during the disorder. Footage is being examined with a view to identifying suspects and pursuing further criminal justice outcomes.



Police Service
of Northern Ireland

Op Lifesaver



Tragically, too many lives continue to be lost on Northern Ireland's roads. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, road fatalities have sadly increased, with 71 lives lost in 2023, 69 in 2024, and 14 fatalities recorded as of 20 April 2025. Speeding remains one of the 'Fatal Five' main contributory factors in fatal and serious collisions.

In response, we launched *Operation Lifesaver* on Wednesday 16 April 2025, which is a renewed enforcement and education initiative to tackle excessive speed. The operation began with a high-visibility day of action involving uniformed officers conducting targeted patrols supported by the Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership who deployed Safety Camera Vans at key locations.

The scale of enforcement activity on the launch day was significant, with approximately 260 individual *Operation Lifesaver* taskings carried out and around 800 motoring offences detected, 700 of which related specifically to speeding.

Underpinning the operation was a comprehensive internal and external communications strategy. Bespoke campaign materials were displayed across police systems, social media, motorway gantries in partnership with the Department for Infrastructure, and on digital billboards across Belfast, maximising our reach and visibility.

Despite sustained enforcement efforts, high levels of non-compliance remain a concern. In 2024, nearly 100,000 speeding detections were made across Northern Ireland. Alarmingly, some individuals have been repeatedly detected for speeding. Clearly they are not getting the message.

A Road Safety Plan is currently in development for the remainder of 2025/26, with *Operation Lifesaver* playing a central role in our ongoing efforts to reduce deaths and serious injuries on our roads.



Outcome 3: Workforce Focused

G4S Update

G4S has successfully retained the Operational Support Services contract for PSNI, which includes security guarding, Station Enquiry Assistants, CCTV operators, Close Protection Unit civilian drivers, and property management. This follows a rigorous procurement process. The award decision is a testament to the company's commitment to delivering high-quality, strategic support to the PSNI.

The renewed contract and our ongoing strategic partnership will support the development of new technology and training opportunities, contributing positively to policing.

As G4S begins this new chapter as our strategic partner, both G4S and the PSNI are well positioned to strengthen our collaborative efforts in serving, protecting, and delivering effectively. The renewed contract reflects a shared vision for a safer future and underscores the importance of partnership in achieving policing goals.

Healthy Working Lives Leaders' Conference

Occupational Health and Wellbeing hosted a Healthy Working Lives Leaders' Conference at La Mon Hotel and Country Club on Monday, 7 April 2025, in recognition of World Health Day. The conference aimed to raise awareness of how PSNI wellbeing practices align with global health priorities, develop an understanding on how to foster resilient and healthy leadership in policing and to promote a unified leadership commitment to workplace health and wellbeing.

The event brought together one hundred police officers and staff, with an opening

address from ACO Clare Duffield and Health Minister Mike Nesbitt.

The agenda featured sessions on key messages for leaders and emerging global trends, nutrition, compassionate leadership, workplace relations, stress management and mental health. Each speaker presented evidence based research and shared actionable strategies for enhancing wellbeing within teams.

In addition to the valuable content, the conference provided valuable networking opportunities and fostered a strong sense of community for leaders within Team PSNI. Feedback to date has been extremely positive.

New Police College

We are pleased to confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland completed the acquisition of the new Police College site in Holywood on 28 March 2025.

Since then, significant progress has been made in delivering the initial phase of works required to ensure health and safety compliance across the site, including those buildings identified for retention and future use. Work is also well underway to enhance existing security and communication systems as part of broader site readiness.

In addition to being the future location for the new Police College, the site plays a key role in supporting the PSNI's wider strategic estate rationalisation programme for greater Belfast.

Over the coming months, a detailed, phased demolition plan will be developed in preparation for the implementation of the site masterplan. Initial phases of development are expected to commence during the 2025/26 period.



Police Service
of Northern Ireland

psni.police.uk

