



Independent Custody Visiting Report



**April 2024 to
March 2025**



**Published
13 August 2025**



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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.

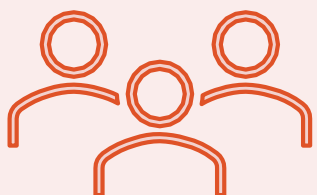
Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) are impartial volunteers from across the community and are independent of the police and the criminal justice system.

This is the annual statistical report covering 12 months from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

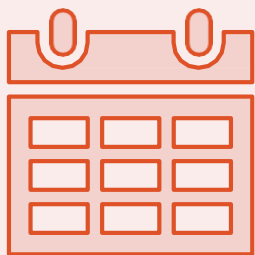
A publication schedule is available on the Northern Ireland Policing Board Website

<https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/statistical-release-schedules-and-policies>

2. KEY FACTS



There were 23 Custody Visitors (31 March 2025)



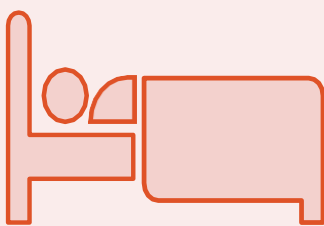
They made 474 visits



1,003 detainees were selected for interview and 464 were visited



28 detainees refused to be interviewed



The most frequent reason for detainees not being seen was that they were asleep (57.1%)



685 custody records were checked

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, Strabane and Waterside

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. These are independently validated and quality assured by the statistician 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 have the potential to disclose sensitive information, disclosure controls have been applied.

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 2024-2025 the guideline number of visits for all custody suites was 500. These visits were divided between the three ICV teams according to the basis outlined above, with North-West allocated 120, South-East allocated 236 and Tyrone-Fermanagh allocated 144.

Table 1: Guideline visits for 2024-2025

Custody Suite	Number	Percent
Coleraine	0	0.0%
Strabane	36	7.2%
Waterside	84	16.8%
North-West Total	120	24.0%
Antrim	59	11.8%
Antrim SCS Announced	0	0.0%
Antrim SCS Unannounced	0	0.0%
Banbridge	36	7.2%
Musgrave	102	20.4%
Musgrave SCS Announced	27	5.4%
Musgrave SCS Unannounced	12	2.4%
South-East Total	236	47.2%
Dungannon	72	14.4%
Lurgan	72	14.4%
Omagh	0	0.0%
Tyrone-Fermanagh Total	144	28.8%
Guideline visits 2024-2025	500	100.0%

6. VISITS IN 2024-2025

ICVs made 474 visits in accordance with guidelines of 500 visits in the year. The North-West team made 121 visits from guidelines of 120 visits. The South-East team made 218 visits out of a guideline number of visits of 236. Tyrone-Fermanagh team made 135 visits out of a guideline of 144 visits. The figure below shows the ICV team and actual visits made compared to guideline visits. Banbridge and Strabane had their guideline visits met, while all other custody suites had fewer than the guideline number of visits.

Figure 1: Actual and guideline visits for 2024-2025

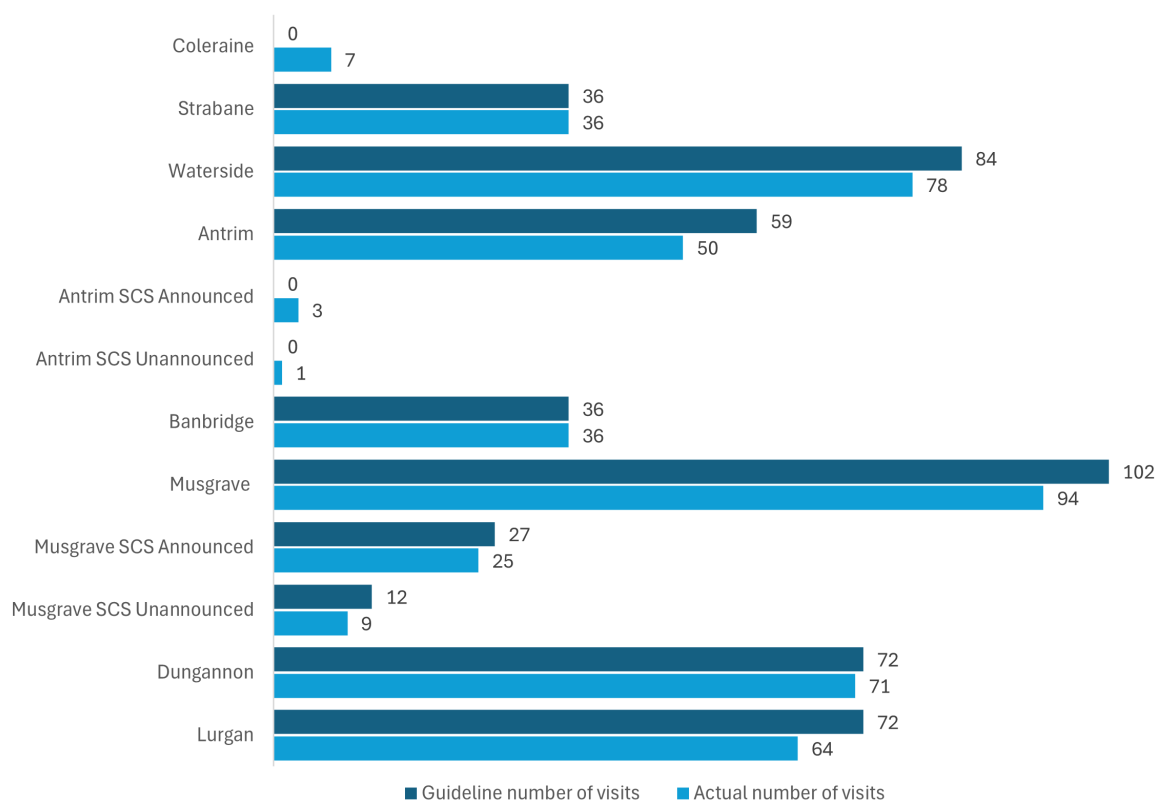


Table 2: Actual visits by team 2024-2025

Team	Number	Percent
North-West	121	25.5%
South-East	218	46.0%
Tyrone-Fermanagh	135	28.5%
Total actual visits 2024-2025	474	100.0%

7. VISITS – VALID AND INVALID

Visits to custody suites are classified as valid or invalid. Invalid visits may be the result of ICVs being 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 474 visits made from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, there were 464 valid visits (97.9%) and 10 invalid visits.

Invalid visits represented a total of 2.1% of all visits. During the year, the most frequent reason a visit was invalid was due to no available personnel to allow entry/staff busy (5) followed by the custody suite being closed (4).

Table 3: Total visits, valid and invalid with % of invalid visits

Team	Total Visits	Valid	Invalid	% Invalid
North-West	121	118	3	2.5%
South-East	218	215	3	1.4%
Tyrone-Fermanagh	135	131	4	3.0%
Total	474	464	10	2.1%

Table 4: Invalid visits by custody suite

Custody Suite	Invalid Visits	Percent
Antrim SCS (announced)	1	10.0%
Banbridge	1	10.0%
Dungannon	2	20.0%
Lurgan	2	20.0%
Musgrave	1	10.0%
Strabane	2	20.0%
Waterside	1	10.0%
Total	10	100.0%

The reasons given for invalid visits were;

1. Custody suite closed (4).
2. No staffing or personnel to allow entry and/or waiting time exceeded (4) which also includes where the visit is aborted after 10 minutes if no staff are available within that time to take ICVs into the custody suite.
3. Suite busy/staff busy (1) where the custody suite was extremely busy and under pressure.
4. Other reasons (1) which covers instances such as an ongoing incident in the custody suite, the suite being closed for planned routine maintenance or the miscommunication of arrangements between custody visitors.

7. VISITS – VALID AND INVALID

Of the 464 valid visits made during the year, the largest number were made to Musgrave (93, 20.0%) and Waterside (77, 16.6%) Custody Suites. The total number of visits made was comparable to the previous year (474 in 2024-2025 compared with 470 in 2023-24), and the percentage of valid visits remained at 97.9%.

TACT detainees are held within Serious Crime Suites (SCS). There were 52 TACT arrests made during 2024-2025 and 20,100 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 may 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 15.4% of those individuals arrested under TACT and 2.3% of those arrested under PACE.

Table 5: Valid visits by custody suite

Custody Suite	Valid Visits	Percent
Antrim	50	10.8%
Antrim SCS Announced	2	0.4%
Antrim SCS Unannounced	1	0.2%
Banbridge	35	7.5%
Coleraine	7	1.5%
Dungannon	69	14.9%
Lurgan	62	13.4%
Musgrave	93	20.0%
Musgrave SCS Announced	25	5.4%
Musgrave SCS Unannounced	9	1.9%
Strabane	34	7.3%
Waterside	77	16.6%
Total	464	100.0%

8. WELLBEING OF DETAINEES

An ICV's 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 principles of human rights. 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 Health Care Professional (HCP), but the HCP 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 (23), this was followed by detainees requiring to inform somebody of their arrest (13). There were six allegations or concerns expressed by detainees to ICVs during the year. Four of these related to allegations of assault (3) or sexual assault (1) and two pertained to treatment in custody.

Table 6: Welfare matters raised by detainees

Category	Total
Medical attention	23
Informing somebody	13
Allegations made/Concerns raised	6
Adequate food and drink	6
Checks on detainees carried out	6
Strip Searched	4
Access to loo/washing	3
Legal Advice	3
Access to an appropriate adult	2
Dietary/personal requirements	2
Adequate bedding	1
Being told their rights	1
Replacement clothing	1
Other	1
Total	72

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 56 concerns regarding conditions raised by detainees or by ICVs during their visit. In 43 of the 56 instances recorded, concerns over conditions related to faulty equipment and general maintenance. These mainly included toilets and sinks being blocked or slow to drain. Other issues reported included mattresses or pillows requiring replacement and defective equipment in interview rooms.

Conditions in medical rooms and health equipment (4) covered matters such as the medical room or cupboards in the medical room left unlocked and a detainee’s medical form not stored appropriately. Oxygen records are also checked by ICVs during their visits. There was one instance where the oxygen records had not been updated.

There were six safety/security hazards reported during the year. These included unsecured sharps boxes and unanchored chairs in the custody suite.

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 7: Conditions of detention raised by detainees and ICVs

Conditions	North-West	South-East	Tyrone-Fermanagh	Total
Cleanliness	0	1	0	1
Faulty Equipment and Maintenance	5	32	6	43
Medical Rooms/Health Equipment	0	3	1	4
Heating/Lighting	0	1	1	2
Safety/Security Hazards	3	3	0	6
Total	8	40	8	56

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 2025, overall, most visits to custody suites were carried out on a Tuesday and Wednesday and the fewest number of visits were carried out on a Monday. This has however, varied over the years as shown in the table below. There is no specification for visits to take place on a certain day of the week.

Table 8: Visits carried out by day of week by team

Day	North-West	South-East	Tyrone-Fermanagh	Number of Visits	Percent
Monday	18	23	11	52	11.0%
Tuesday	20	30	27	77	16.2%
Wednesday	38	28	11	77	16.2%
Thursday	10	45	13	68	14.3%
Friday	15	30	28	73	15.4%
Saturday	11	18	32	61	12.9%
Sunday	9	44	13	66	13.9%
Total	121	218	135	474	100.0%

Table 9: Visits carried out by day of week 2019-2020 to 2024-2025

Day	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Monday	13.6%	8.0%	9.7%	12.5%	12.1%	11.0%
Tuesday	14.0%	16.4%	16.0%	15.7%	14.7%	16.2%
Wednesday	16.9%	20.1%	16.0%	17.2%	16.2%	16.2%
Thursday	18.0%	16.4%	18.7%	14.7%	16.2%	14.3%
Friday	17.8%	15.8%	17.1%	13.7%	13.8%	15.4%
Saturday	9.3%	12.6%	12.1%	18.0%	14.3%	12.9%
Sunday	10.4%	10.7%	10.5%	8.2%	12.8%	13.9%
Total	100.0%	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 2025, just over one third of visits (33.8%) were in this category.

The North-West team carried out 29 visits during unsociable hours (24.0%), the South-East team 108 visits (49.5%) and Tyrone-Fermanagh team 23 visits (17.0%).

One invalid visit was made during the year which did not specify a time of arrival.

Table 10: Visits carried out by time of day by team

Time	North-West	South-East	Tyrone-Fermanagh	Number of visits	Percent
Midnight – 8.59am	0	0	0	0	0.0%
9.00am - 11.59am	19	5	26	50	10.5%
Midday – 2.59pm	19	62	30	111	23.4%
3.00pm – 5.59pm	54	43	55	152	32.1%
6.00pm – 8.59pm	29	104	18	151	31.9%
9.00pm – 11.59pm	0	4	5	9	1.9%
Not stated	0	0	1	1	0.2%
Total	121	218	135	474	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 11: Visits carried out by time of day 2019-2020 to 2024-2025

Time	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Midnight – 8.59am	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.6%	0.0%
9.00am - 11.59am	14.2%	18.0%	18.9%	12.9%	10.0%	10.5%
Midday – 2.59pm	24.1%	29.5%	22.0%	26.4%	27.0%	23.4%
3.00pm – 5.59pm	28.8%	29.2%	22.8%	30.9%	30.6%	32.1%
6.00pm – 8.59pm	27.7%	22.4%	32.7%	29.0%	29.8%	31.9%
9.00pm – 11.59pm	1.7%	0.2%	3.1%	0.4%	1.7%	1.9%
Not stated	1.3%	0.7%	0.6%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

13. DETAINEES VISITED - 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 2024-2025, 1,003 detainees were selected for interview by ICVs. Of these, 809 (80.7%) were adult males, 168 (16.7%) were adult females and 24 (2.4%) were under 18 years of age (juveniles). There were two detainees selected for interview who were being processed and therefore not available for interview. As such, details of their age and gender could not be captured.

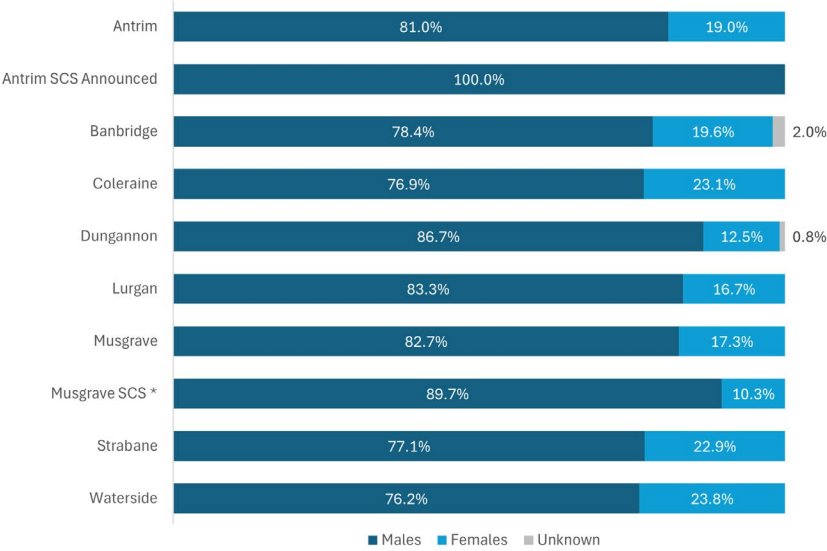
Table 12: Detainees selected for interview by gender

	Number	Percent
Adult Males	809	80.7%
Adult Females	168	16.7%
Juvenile Males	9	0.9%
Juvenile Females	15	1.5%
Unknown	2	0.2%
Total	1,003	100.0%

During the year 2024-2025, there were 20,152 individuals, both TACT and PACE detainees, who were held within custody suites in Northern Ireland (source PSNI). ICVs attempted to visit 1,003 individual detainees, 81.6% of whom were males and 18.2% were females. This compares to arrests under PACE and TACT of whom 81.4% were male and 18.4% were female (source PSNI).

13. DETAINEES VISITED - DEMOGRAPHICS

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



* Musgrave SCS Announced and Unannounced combined

In 2024-2025, of the 1,003 detainees selected, 464 (46.3%) were available for interview by ICVs while 539 (53.7%) were not. The majority of detainees not visited by ICVs were asleep (see section 14). Of those detainees interviewed, 81.5% were adult males, 16.6% were adult females and 1.9% were under 18 years of age (juveniles).

Table 13: Detainees visited by gender

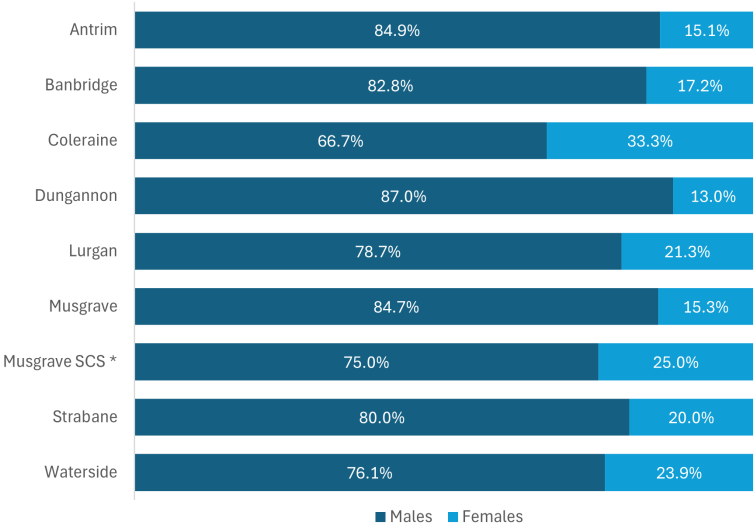
Gender	Number	Percent
Adult Males	378	81.5%
Adult Females	77	16.6%
Juvenile Males	4	0.9%
Juvenile Females	5	1.1%
Total	464	100.0%

Females, both adults and juveniles, made up 18.4% of arrests (source PSNI), 18.2% of those selected for interview and 17.7% of those who were available for an ICV visit. The proportion of females visited during the year in custody suites ranged from 13.0% (seven out of 54) of all detainees visited in Dungannon to 33.3% (three out of nine) of all detainees in Coleraine.

Males, both adults and juveniles, made up 81.4% of arrests (source PSNI), 81.6% of those selected for interview and 82.3% of those who were available for an ICV visit. The proportion of males visited in custody suites ranged from 66.7% (six out of nine) of all detainees visited in Coleraine to 87.0% of all detainees visited in Dungannon custody suite (47 out of 54).

13. DETAINEES VISITED - DEMOGRAPHICS

Figure 3: Detainees visited by gender and custody suite



* Musgrave SCS Announced and Unannounced combined

Almost one third of detainees selected for interview were held in Musgrave custody suite (29.9%), the largest of the custody suites in use, and more than one third (35.1%) of all valid visits took place there (see figure 5). Detainees visited in Antrim (15.7%) and Waterside (15.3%) custody suites made up almost another third of detainees visited by ICVs.

Table 14: Detainees visited by gender and custody suite

Custody Suite	Males	Females	Total	Percent
Antrim	62	11	73	15.7%
Banbridge	24	5	29	6.3%
Coleraine	6	3	9	1.9%
Dungannon	47	7	54	11.6%
Lurgan	37	10	47	10.1%
Musgrave	138	25	163	35.1%
Musgrave SCS Announced	5	1	6	1.3%
Musgrave SCS Unannounced	1	1	2	0.4%
Strabane	8	2	10	2.2%
Waterside	54	17	71	15.3%
Total	382	82	464	100.0%

13. DETAINEES VISITED - DEMOGRAPHICS

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

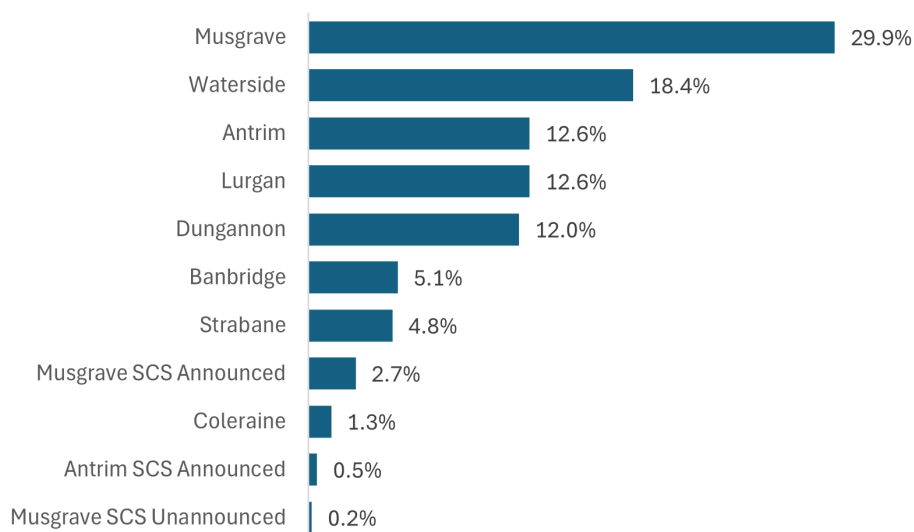
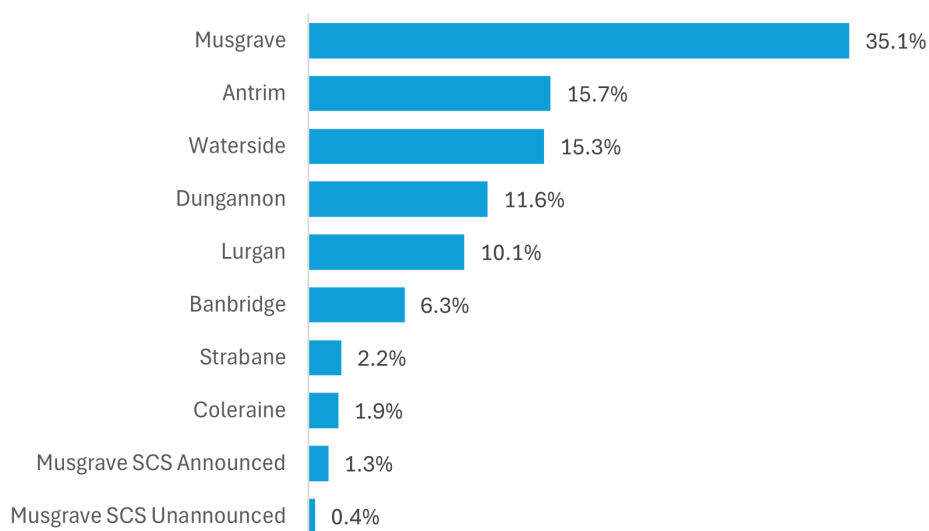


Figure 5: Percentage of detainees visited by custody suite



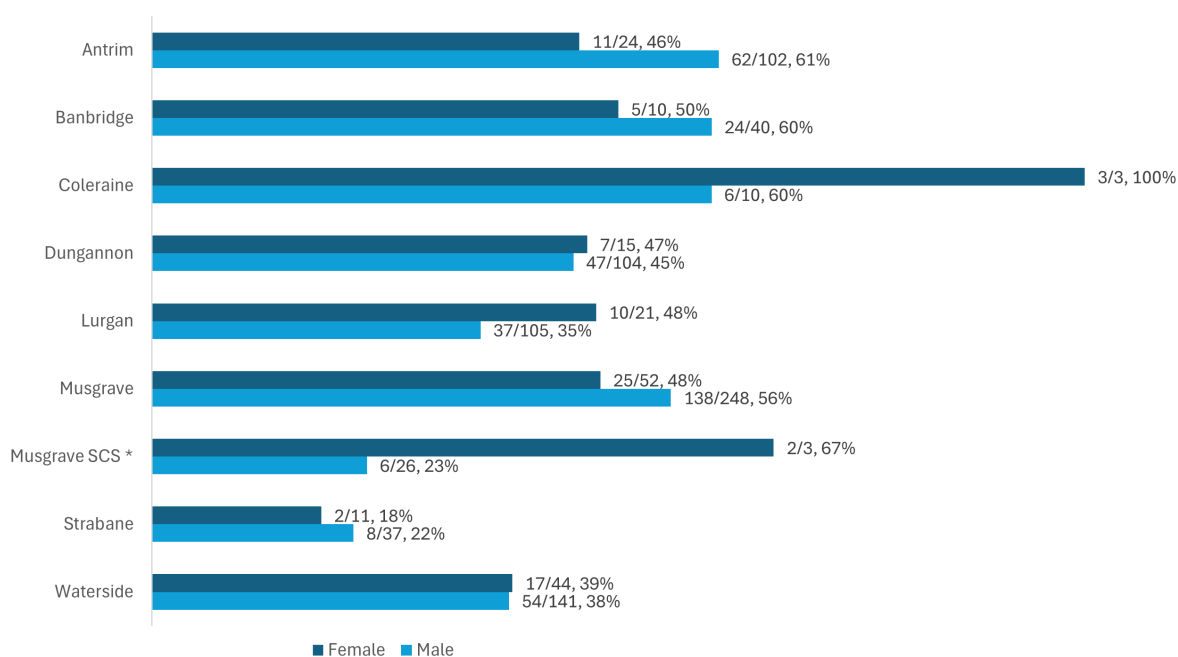
13. DETAINEES VISITED - DEMOGRAPHICS

In 2024-2025, of those detainees selected for a visit by custody visitors, 46.7% of males and 44.8% of females agreed to a visit. Over half of all detainees selected for interview in Antrim, Banbridge, Coleraine and Musgrave Custody Suites gave their consent for a visit. The chart below shows the proportion of detainees visited from those selected for interview by custody suite and gender.

Strabane Custody Suite had the lowest percentage of both male and female detainees visited (21.6% and 18.2% respectively), however numbers were small with a total of 48 detainees selected and 10 seen.

In Waterside Custody Suite fewer than four in 10 male and female detainees were seen. Of the total 185 detainees selected for a visit during the year, 71 were visited, one refused and 69 were asleep when ICVs entered the custody suite. A further 18 were being interviewed or with a solicitor/appropriate adult or health care professional, 12 were regarded as abusive/dangerous or under the influence of alcohol/drugs, three were attending court or hospital and the remaining 11 were not seen for other reasons such as protesting or being processed/transferred/discharged.

Figure 6: Number of male and female detainees visited/selected and percentage visited from those selected for interview by custody suite



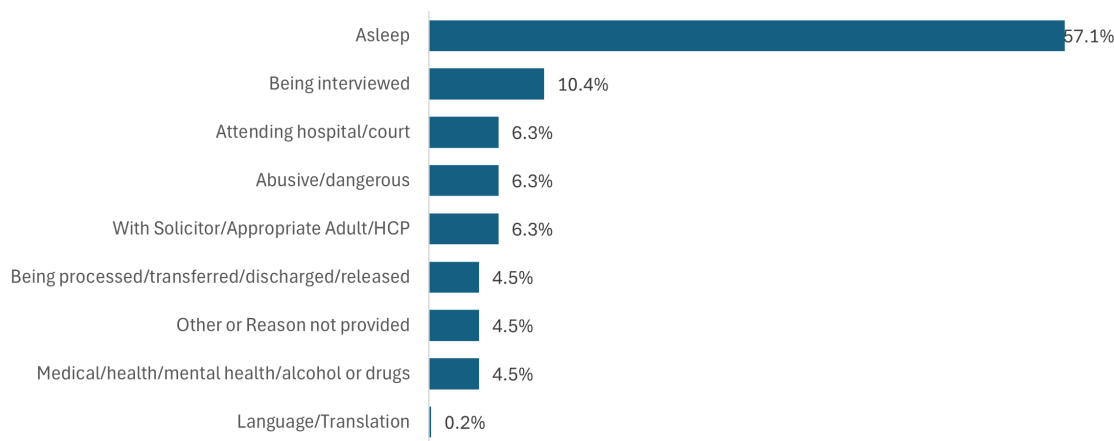
14. DETAINEES – NOT VISITED (EXCLUDING REFUSED)

During 2024-2025, 539 (53.7%) of those who had been selected for interview were unavailable (see chart below for reasons detainees were not seen). Of the 1,003 detainees selected for interview, 28 (2.8%) refused consent and 511 (50.9%) were not interviewed for other reasons. The main reason detainees were not interviewed, other than refusal, was because they were asleep (292, 57.1%) or being interviewed by PSNI (53, 10.4%).

The custody suite with the highest rate of detainees not visited (excluding refusals) was Musgrave (126, 24.7%). This was followed by Waterside (113, 22.1%).

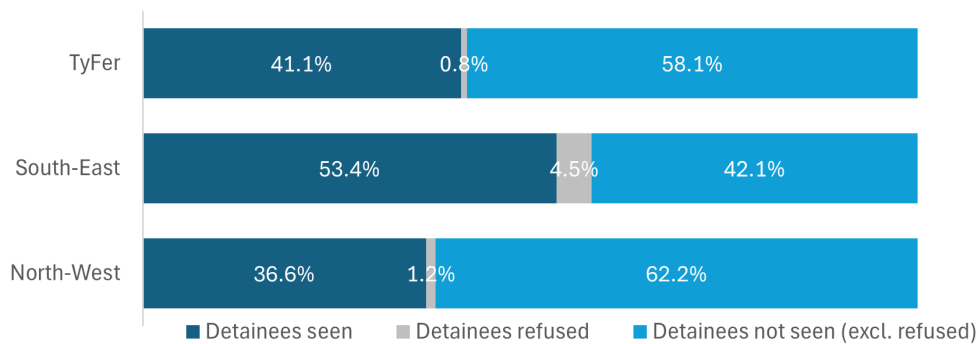
Three quarters of detainees unavailable for interview in Musgrave were asleep (95, 75.4%) and 10 (7.9%) were deemed by PSNI to be abusive/dangerous. In Waterside three fifths of detainees were unavailable for a visit due to being asleep (69, 61.1%).

Figure 7: Reason detainees not seen (excluding refused)



South-East ICV team visited just over half of the detainees selected for interview (53.4%), Tyrone-Fermanagh team visited 41.1% and North-West team 36.6%.

Figure 8: 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 2024-2025 the refusal rate was 2.8%. The refusal rate for the previous two years was 1.6% in 2022-23 and 1.4% in 2023-24.

In 2024-2025 there were 28 detainees who refused consent for an interview. The custody suites with the highest refusal rates were Antrim SCS with one refusal out of five detainees selected for interview (20.0%) followed by Musgrave SCS (announced and unannounced) with five refusals out of 29 (17.2%) and Coleraine with two refusals out of 13 detainees (15.4%). There were no refusals in Lurgan or Strabane custody suites.

Table 15: Refusal rate 2020-2021 to 2024-2025

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
% Refusal Rate	2.2%	1.5%	1.6%	1.4%	2.8%

Reviewing the custody record of detainees is an important element of the Board’s role in terms of protecting those in custody. When ICV’s speak to a detainee they normally obtain their consent before reviewing the relevant custody record. In some instances, the detainee may be unable or incapable of providing consent as they may be asleep, affected by drugs or alcohol and have mental health issues in cases such as these, ICVs would normally be provided access to review the detainees custody record in order to ensure that the detainee has been afforded their rights and entitlements as detailed under the applicable Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Codes.

In September 2024 the PSNI identified an anomaly in the legislative provisions for the ICV Scheme as detailed in the Police (NI) Act 2000. This anomaly has resulted in ICVs now being unable to view the Custody Records for detainees who are unavailable and/or unable to provide consent. In 2024-2025, 685 (68.3%) custody records were checked which is a decrease of 19.3 percentage points on the previous year and the Board believe that the decrease is a direct consequence of the anomaly identified in the Police (NI) Act 2000. The Board is working in conjunction with the Department of Justice (DoJ) and PSNI in order to resolve this issue.

15.REFUSAL RATE BY CUSTODY SUITE

Figure 9: Custody records checked 2018-2019 to 2024-2025

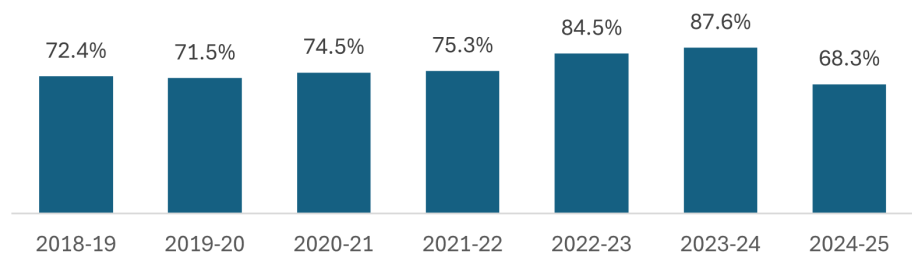


Table 16: Custody records checked

Team	Detainees Selected for Interview	Custody Records Checked	% Checked
North-West	246	162	65.9%
South-East	511	347	67.9%
Tyrone-Fermanagh	246	176	71.5%
TOTAL	1,003	685	68.3%

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 10 invalid visits during 2024-2025 five were related to delays in access to the custody suite. There were also 19 valid visits made which had delays of more than 10 minutes in accessing the custody suite (see table below).

Table 17: Delays to visits of more than 10 minutes – valid visits

Custody Suite	Total
Antrim	1
Banbridge	2
Dungannon	1
Lurgan	2
Musgrave	7
Musgrave SCS Announced	3
Musgrave SCS Unannounced	1
Waterside	2
Total	19

The most frequent reason ICVs experienced a delay in accessing the custody suite was because of limited staff availability or as a result of the suite being busy. The longest wait was 26 minutes for a valid visit to Musgrave custody suite. Medical reasons were cited for two delays of 17 minutes each at Lurgan and Waterside custody suites. ICVs were able to complete the visits following the delay.

16. DELAYS TO VISITS

Table 18: Reason for delays to visits of more than 10 minutes by custody suite

Custody Suite	Time Delay (mins)	Reason for Delay
Musgrave	26	Suite busy/staff busy
Antrim	24	No Staffing/personnel to allow entry
Banbridge	22	Handover
Lurgan	20	No staffing/personnel to allow entry
Musgrave	20	Suite busy/staff busy
Musgrave	20	Suite busy/staff busy
Banbridge	18	Suite busy/staff busy
Musgrave	18	Suite busy/staff busy
Waterside	17	Medical reasons
Musgrave SCS Announced	17	Suite busy/staff busy
Lurgan	17	Medical reasons
Musgrave	15	Suite busy/staff busy
Musgrave SCS Unannounced	15	Suite busy/staff busy
Waterside	15	Suite busy/staff busy
Musgrave	15	Suite busy/staff busy
Musgrave SCS Announced	14	Handover
Dungannon	12	Suite busy/staff busy
Musgrave	12	Suite busy/staff busy
Musgrave SCS Announced	12	Suite busy/staff busy

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 19: Valid visits to Serious Crime Suites (SCS)

	Number of valid visits	Percent
Antrim SCS Announced	2	5.4%
Antrim SCS Unannounced	1	2.7%
Musgrave SCS Announced	25	67.6%
Musgrave SCS Unannounced	9	24.3%
Total	37	100.0%

In total, there were 37 valid visits to SCS during the year. Of the 34 valid visits made to Musgrave SCS, the majority were announced visits (73.5%) with the remainder being unannounced (26.5%). There were three valid visits and one invalid visit made to Antrim SCS, when ICVs did not gain access as the custody suite was closed at the time of their arrival.

ICVs selected 34 detainees for interview in SCS and were given consent to visit 8 detainees. The remaining 26 detainees were not seen. The main reasons for detainees in SCS not being seen was that they were being interviewed (34.6%) or with a solicitor, appropriate adult or health care professional (26.9%). Six of the 26 detainees not seen by ICVs refused to be interviewed (23.1%).

Table 20: Reasons for SCS detainees not being seen

	Total	Percent
Attending hospital/court	2	7.7%
Being interviewed	9	34.6%
Being processed/transferred/discharged/released	2	7.7%
Refused	6	23.1%
With Solicitor/Appropriate Adult/Health Care Professional	7	26.9%
Total	26	100.0%

18. CUSTODY VISITORS - DEMOGRAPHICS

There were 23 active custody visitors on 31 March 2025, the same number as on 31 March 2024. The largest number of custody visitors were in the South-East Team, accounting for just over half of the total number of visitors (12), while North-West Team had five active visitors and Tyrone-Fermanagh Team had six.

Table 21: Number of active custody visitors 31 March 2025

Team	Number	Percent
North-West	5	21.7%
South-East	12	52.2%
Tyrone-Fermanagh	6	26.1%
Total	23	100.0%

Of the 23 active custody visitors, 11 (47.8%) were male and 12 (52.2%) were female. During the year to 31 March 2025, there were four new visitors appointed, and of these, one was female and three were male. Three custody visitors declared a disability, making up 13.0% of all active custody visitors.

Figure 10: Percentage of custody visitors by gender

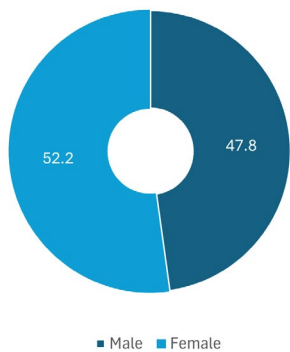
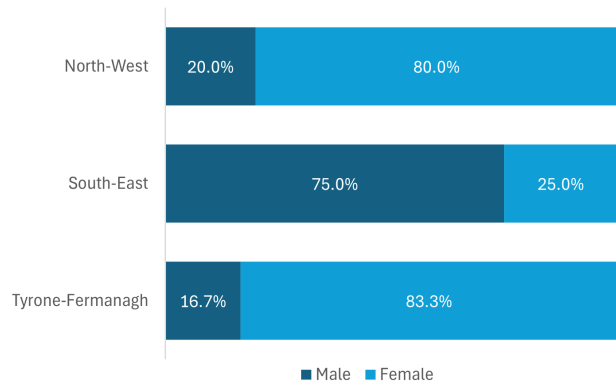


Figure 11: Percentage of active visitors by gender and team

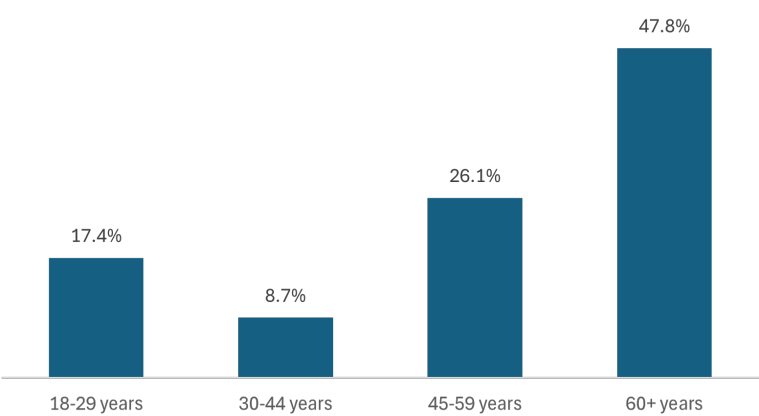


18. CUSTODY VISITORS - DEMOGRAPHICS

One quarter (26.1%) of custody visitors are aged between 18 and 44 years. The remainder (73.9%) are aged over 45.

Of the 23 active custody visitors, 15 (65.2%) were Protestant, five (21.7%) were Catholic and three identified as neither religious group.

Figure 12: Active visitors by age band 31 March 2025



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.

A selection of custody visitors are further trained to visit detainees held under TACT (Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000) within Serious Crime Suites. During the year 2024-2025 a total of eight ICVs were trained to visit TACT detainees. On 31 March 2025, as a result of visitors reaching the end of their tenure or leaving the scheme, there were seven active volunteers within the scheme who had been trained to visit TACT detainees.

Table 22: ICVs trained to visit SCS by team 2024-2025

Team	Number
North-West	1
South-East	6
Tyrone-Fermanagh	1
Total	8

19. CUSTODY VISITORS – YEAR OF APPOINTMENT

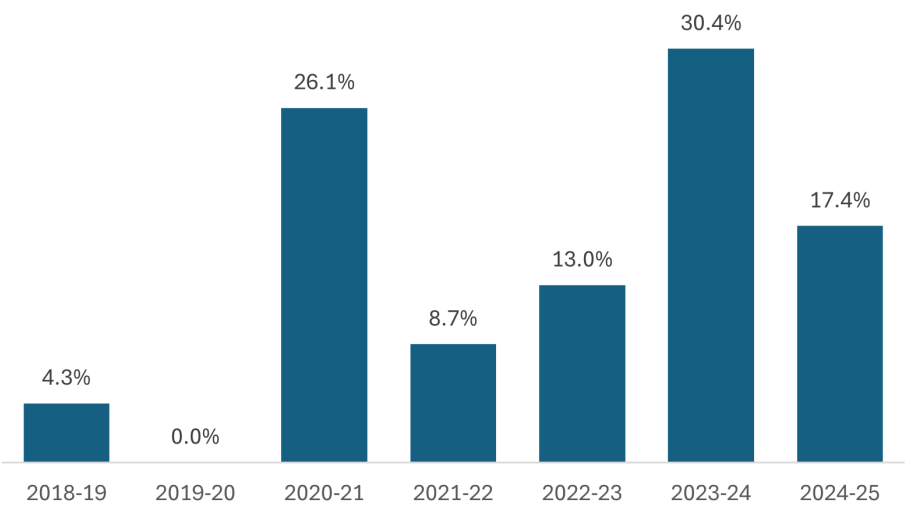
Changes in Independent Custody Visitor numbers takes account of those who have come to the end of their tenure and those who have newly started in their role. The usual tenure for a custody visitor is 3 years with the option of extending this for one further term to 6 years. In exceptional circumstances 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 2024 to 31 March 2025 there were four custody visitors who stepped down from their role, three of whom did so before the end of their tenure. Custody visitors do not need to provide a reason for stepping down from this voluntary role.

There were four new custody visitors appointed during the year 2024-2025.

Table 23: Movements in ICV numbers 2024-2025

Active ICVs 31/03/2024	New starts 2024-2025	Leavers 2024-2025	Active ICVs 31/03/2025
23	4	4	23

Figure 13: Active visitors by year of appointment



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. 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 [survey](#) or contacting the responsible statistician.

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 2024-2025 report (published 17 May 2025) can be found online [Police and Criminal Evidence \(PACE\) Order Statistics | PSNI](#)
Details of TACT arrests (under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000) in Northern Ireland during 2024-2025 provided by PSNI.

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We value your feedback using this link to a short survey:

[User Engagement Survey](#)

or

<https://consultations.nidirect.gov.uk/doj/nipb-statistics-feedback/>

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