



Police Service
of Northern Ireland

Accountability Report

Presented at Policing Board Meeting:

2 July 2026



**we care
we listen
we act**

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Chief Constable's Foreword



This month has been dominated by serious public disorder in Northern Ireland, viewed through media coverage by a global audience, which brought fear, disruption and uncertainty to all communities but especially our diverse communities. Families were forced to leave their homes. Businesses suffered damage. Communities experienced intimidation, violence and disorder. Many people felt frightened and unsafe in the places where they live and work. The cowardly specific targeting of minority ethnic communities was particularly deplorable and entirely contrary to the values of the society we continue to build together. There can be no justification for such behaviour. Those who do not outright condemn such racist behaviour should hold their heads in shame. These images will deter investment and stifle economic progress in the country. Those responsible are beyond contempt; they have achieved nothing but to damage their own futures and that of their communities.

The overwhelming majority of people in Northern Ireland want safe, peaceful and inclusive communities. They rightly expect differences to be resolved through dialogue and democratic means rather than violence, intimidation or criminality.

Throughout these events, PSNI officers and staff worked tirelessly to protect communities, prevent further harm and uphold the rule of law. They did so with professionalism, courage

and restraint in exceptionally challenging circumstances. I want to place on record my sincere thanks to every officer, member of police staff, partner organisation and the 168 colleagues from police services from across Great Britain who contributed to that response. I also want to acknowledge the support shown by community representatives, local leaders and members of the public who stood firmly against violence and supported efforts to restore calm. It is important that I also acknowledge those many people who lawfully and peacefully protested during those challenging days.

The scale of the policing operation is reflected in the activity that has followed. Thirty-four people have been arrested, 26 of whom have been charged to Court. Forty-nine officers were injured while protecting communities from violence and disorder. Each injury represents not only the impact on the officer concerned and their family, but also a further reduction in operational capacity within a service already operating with record low officer numbers. I have spoken to those officers who mainly received injuries from masonry and other implements being launched at them. A number of officers were concussed, yet on speaking to each one it was inspiring to hear their commitment to protecting our communities and not to let

the thugs and criminals succeed. I want to put on record my enormous gratitude to the Fire and Ambulance Service's. I can state unequivocally that emergency services saved lives during these horrific events. I also want to thank our health workers for their bravery and determination in ensuring that our hospitals and health services could continue operating. I am aware of concerns that health workers experienced challenges in getting to and from work during the disorder. We are looking into these issues but let's not allow the thugs and criminals who perpetrated these vile acts to divide those of us who keep our society safe and healthy. The response to these events has been lauded across the globe. The intensity and volume of disorder were of the like not seen here for decades. This has to stop. Everyone has a duty to stand up to these idiots.

Work remains ongoing investigating the crimes committed during the disorder. Dedicated investigative teams continue to pursue offenders relentlessly, process significant volumes of digital evidence and prepare files for prosecution. The disorder may have subsided, but the workload it created has not. The investigative and criminal justice consequences will continue.

Government support of £4 million is welcome and appreciated. However, with costs currently estimated at £5.4 million, the remaining gap must be absorbed from within an already constrained policing budget, reducing capacity elsewhere and delaying other vital work. The true cost also extends far beyond financial expenditure. It is reflected in officers injured while protecting communities, cancelled rest days, delayed investigations, postponed preventative activity and officers and staff being diverted from the services that communities rely upon every day. It is also reflected in the harm caused to community cohesion, the fear experienced by local communities and the damage done to Northern Ireland's reputation as a welcoming, inclusive and prosperous place to live, work, visit and invest. Those consequences will continue long after the disorder itself has ended.

Responding to such disorder also requires difficult operational decisions. Officers and staff deployed to protect life, restore order and investigate offences are officers and staff who are unavailable for other policing activity. Inevitably, resources must be diverted from neighbourhood policing, investigations, preventative activity and other services which communities rightly expect. These are not choices any police service wishes to make, but they are the reality of responding to sustained disorder while operating with finite resources.

This is the third consecutive year in which significant disorder, including attacks directed at minority ethnic communities, has required a substantial policing response. While each incident has had its own circumstances, together they underline a broader reality: major public disorder cannot be treated as a rare exception. It is becoming a recurring demand that requires significant policing resources to prevent communities being placed at risk. The PSNI has been reduced to such numbers through poor funding that we cannot keep people safe. That is a huge statement for a Chief Constable to make but I will not shy away from the reality of the position policing has been placed in here.

The events of June demonstrated both the importance of policing and the consequences of taking policing for granted. The disorder did not create the challenges facing policing in Northern Ireland, but it has further exposed them.

As in recent years, the reduced workforce of the PSNI is left to lead the response. There is obviously a responsibility for the operational element of addressing such major disorder to sit with policing. However after three consecutive years of such damaging disorder, to the safety of communities and reputation of Northern Ireland, there is surely a need for a Cabinet Office Briefing Room (Cobr) type executive response to coordinate the various ministerial positions across government when

events that damage the wellbeing of the country occur. Such a forum would inevitably inform a more strategic and long term response to seek to identify and address the causes of any national emergency, major disruption or disorder. I have been told such national mechanisms already exist, it is my experience that notwithstanding the good intentions of strategic mechanisms they do not offer the rigour and weight of a Cobr type mechanism.

As we approach the twenty-fifth anniversary of the PSNI, these lessons feels particularly significant. The transformation of policing in Northern Ireland over the last quarter of a century has been one of the most significant successes of the peace process. Through the professionalism, commitment and courage of officers and staff, policing has helped create a safer, more stable and more prosperous Northern Ireland. The progress made should not be underestimated.

Twenty-five years on from the creation of the PSNI, Northern Ireland must also consider what kind of police service it wants for the future.

The PSNI has, in many respects, become a victim of its own success. Notwithstanding recent events, Northern Ireland has become safer and more stable. As confidence has improved and communities have become more secure, unfortunately policing has increasingly been deprioritised in public spending decisions.

Yet policing remains the foundation upon which democratic society depends. It underpins public safety, community confidence, economic prosperity and the rule of law. It is policing that responds when communities come under attack, when public order deteriorates, when organised crime threatens neighbourhoods, when vulnerable people need protection and when public confidence is tested. It is policing that leads the response to other public emergencies such as life threatening storms. The funding of policing should reflect that responsibility and the reality of the tasks.

Since 2010, policing's share of the Northern Ireland block grant has fallen from approximately 3.8% to 2.4%. During the same period, the policing budget has remained broadly static at around £1 billion. By contrast, Health expenditure has increased from approximately £4 billion to £8.2 billion and Education expenditure from approximately £2 billion to £3.2 billion. Our policing partners on the island of Ireland, An Garda Síochána, have seen their budget increased from approximately €1.3 billion to €2.5 billion. It is frankly a policing miracle that Northern Ireland has the dedicated police service that it does.

This is not an argument against funding other public services. It is, however, a reflection that policing funding has failed to keep pace with the funding of other public services despite continuing demand, increasing complexity and the unique pressures associated with policing in Northern Ireland. Our demands are more complex and more resource intensive than before, yet we do not get the same support, why is this? This funding failure has resulted in PSNI operating with the lowest officer and staff numbers in its history. Support for the Workforce Recovery Business Case represented an important and welcome step forward, and it continues to provide an opportunity to rebuild capacity and resilience. I am grateful for that support.

However, recovery and sustainability are not the same thing. We need a specific focus on police funding and for policing to be prioritised, for a relatively brief period, to allow the organisation to recover our numbers.

The financial outlook remains deeply concerning. The PSNI currently faces projected funding shortfalls of approximately £57 million, £92 million and £149 million over the next three years. Capital funding currently stands at approximately £52 million against an assessed requirement of around £70 million. These figures do not include the costs associated with large-scale public disorder,

mutual aid requirements, holiday pay settlements, major public inquiries, legacy compensation arrangements or other emerging pressures.

As we approach the end of the first quarter of the financial year, the PSNI still does not have an agreed budget. For an organisation responsible for keeping people safe, employing thousands of officers and staff and managing an annual budget approaching £1 billion, that position is difficult to comprehend and impossible to regard as sustainable.

Recent years have demonstrated the extent to which the PSNI has relied upon in-year monitoring allocations simply to balance our budget and maintain core services. Unlike police services in England and Wales, PSNI cannot raise additional revenue through a local policing precept. Funding is determined through the block grant available to Northern Ireland and the priorities set by government. Increasingly, long-term planning is being attempted against a backdrop of short-term financial uncertainty.

These are not simply accounting challenges. This is about capability. It is about resilience. It is about public service. The consequences are increasingly visible.

Independent oversight bodies have repeatedly made these observations. HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services has highlighted the impact that reduced resources are having on neighbourhood policing, public protection and risk management. The Police Ombudsman's investigation into the handling of Alexander McCartney identified capacity and capability concerns in managing the threat posed by a prolific online child sex offender. The Northern Ireland Affairs Committee has recognised the unique pressures facing policing in Northern Ireland, including legacy obligations, national security responsibilities and sustained financial constraint.

Alongside traditional policing responsibilities, officers and staff are responding more frequently to vulnerability, mental health crises, missing

persons, safeguarding concerns and a wide range of non-crime incidents. Through initiatives such as Right Care Right Person, work is ongoing to ensure that individuals receive support from the agency best placed to meet their needs. However, the reality remains that when other services are unavailable or under pressure, policing is often left to fill the gap.

Increasingly, policing has become a service of first and last resort. Unlike many organisations, the PSNI cannot simply step back from demand. When communities need help, officers and staff respond.

The practical consequences of sustained underinvestment can be seen across a number of critical policing functions. Neighbourhood policing has reduced significantly from its original design. A model built around 952 neighbourhood officers is currently operating with 420. In some areas, neighbourhood policing is arguably existing in name only. Similar pressures exist in offender management, where current ratios stand at approximately one offender manager to 119 offenders against a recommended ratio of one to 50. Such pressures inevitably reduce capacity to manage risk, protect communities and intervene early to prevent harm.

The pressures are equally evident across investigative functions. Detective workloads continue to increase. Major Investigation Team workloads remain under significant pressure. Digital investigation requirements continue to expand at pace. Difficult decisions have had to be taken to reduce Public Enquiry Office provision and decrease Tactical Support Group capacity from thirteen units to eleven. Officers are increasingly abstracted from neighbourhood policing and other preventative activity to meet competing operational demands.

Victims experience these pressures through delays, longer waiting times and reduced opportunities for timely engagement,

reassurance and support. Communities experience them through reduced visibility, fewer opportunities for preventative policing and less capacity to build the relationships that underpin confidence and legitimacy. For officers and staff, the consequences are sustained workloads, repeated abstractions, cancelled rest days and increasing operational pressure. Ultimately, these constraints affect our ability to provide the visible, accessible and responsive service that the people of Northern Ireland rightly expect.

Recent years have tested the resilience of our workforce. The attempted murder of Detective Chief Inspector John Caldwell, the data breach, attacks on Lurgan and Dunmurry stations, a continuing terrorist threat, violent public disorder and increasing operational demand have all placed significant pressure upon officers and staff. Despite this, they continue to demonstrate extraordinary professionalism, resilience and commitment to public service. It is of note that detectives investigating the attacks on the PSNI and Dunmurray were diverted to public order duty during the disorder. This is untenable and the workforce resilience should not be mistaken for sustainability. I have written to the First and Deputy First Minister seeking better funding for policing.

The PSNI funding challenge is compounded further by Northern Ireland's unique legacy responsibilities. We continue to have substantial obligations arising from the past.

Legacy currently costs the PSNI approximately £24 million each year. Since 2014, more than £167 million has been spent supporting legacy related activity. Significant resources are devoted to disclosure, inquests, litigation, public inquiries and investigative support. The Patrick Finucane Inquiry alone is expected to cost approximately £23 million over its lifetime. More than 1,100 civil claims are currently being managed.

Legacy is not simply a historical issue. It is a contemporary policing issue. It diverts finite resources away from neighbourhood policing, investigations, safeguarding and public

protection. It impacts upon public confidence, community trust and policing legitimacy. It influences relationships across society and continues to shape how policing is viewed by many communities. This is not a challenge faced by any other police service in the United Kingdom. It directly impacts upon recruitment and trust and confidence.

Legacy has become somewhat of an Achilles heel for the future success of policing in Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Affairs Committee recognised this challenge and recommended a new recurring and ring-fenced Government funding stream for legacy obligations. That recommendation deserves serious consideration and I have written to the Secretary of State in that regard.

As we approach the twenty-fifth anniversary of the PSNI, there is an opportunity not simply to reflect on the past but to decide what the future should look like.

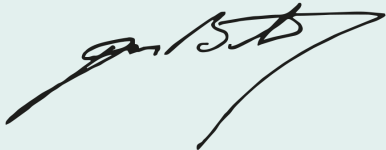
The question facing Northern Ireland is not whether policing matters, the events of last month have answered that clearly. The question is whether policing will be funded in a way that reflects its importance and will enable the PSNI to do the job society expects.

The Workforce Recovery Plan provides an important opportunity to rebuild capacity and resilience. However, recovery seeks to address the consequences of years of underinvestment. Sustainability requires something different. It requires long-term certainty. It requires recognition of the unique pressures facing policing in Northern Ireland. It requires a sustainable funding settlement that reflects the central role policing plays in protecting communities, supporting victims and underpinning democratic society. It also requires a solution to the unique and enduring financial burden created by legacy.

If Northern Ireland wishes to maintain a police service capable of protecting communities, supporting victims, responding to emerging

threats and meeting public expectations, as well as remaining one of the safest regions in the United Kingdom, then it must provide that service with the certainty, stability and investment required to do so.

The alternative is not theoretical. Many of the consequences are already visible. The responsibility now rests with all of us to ensure that the next twenty-five years of policing are as sustainable as they are successful.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Boutcher', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Jon Boutcher QPM
Chief Constable
Police Service of Northern Ireland

Our Performance

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

Recorded Crime

In the 12 months from 1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026:

- There were 93,437 crimes recorded in Northern Ireland, a decrease of 1,597 (-1.7 per cent) on the previous 12 months. The number of crimes recorded in the latest 12 months is lowest since the start of the data series.
- There were 48 police recorded crimes per 1,000 population¹ compared with 49 crimes in the previous 12 month period.
- All policing districts experienced a lower level of crime with the exception of Lisburn and Castlereagh City, Ards and North Down, Causeway Coast and Glens and Mid and East Antrim.
- Lower crime levels were also seen across burglary, theft, criminal damage and public order offences.
- Higher crime levels were seen in sexual offences, robbery, drug offences, possession of weapons offences and miscellaneous crimes against society.
- A clarification issued in the Home Office Counting Rules in April 2025 has contributed to an increase in Business robbery offences of 119.2% (+87 offences).

- Lower crime levels were seen in violence against the person. The largest decrease was in violence with injury, with a smaller decrease seen in violence without injury and an increase in stalking and harassment.
- Lower crime levels were recorded in violence with injury (-804), violence without injury (-649), criminal damage (-570), theft offences (excluding burglary) (-336), burglary (-213) and public order offences (-56).
- Higher crime levels were recorded in stalking and harassment (+247), possession of weapons (+202), miscellaneous crimes against society (+158), drug offences (+132), sexual offences (+105), and robbery (+74).

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

In the 12 months from 1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026:

- There were 44,227 anti-social behaviour incidents in Northern Ireland, a decrease of 121 (-0.3 per cent) on the previous 12 months. This is one of the lowest 12 month figures since the data series began in 2006/07.
- When comparing the current and previous 12 months, six policing districts showed lower levels of anti-social behaviour. Ten policing districts showed higher levels in May 2026 compared with April 2026.
- The latest month (May 2026) was 434 incidents higher than April 2026. Levels in May have typically been higher than those in April since the start of the data series in 2006/07.

¹Crime per 1,000 population based on mid-year population estimate of 1,927,855 for 2024, the latest mid-year estimate available at time of compilation. [Mid-year population estimates are available from the NISRA website \(opens in a new window\)](#).

Domestic Abuse Incidents and Crimes

Recorded

In the 12 months from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026:

- There were 31,558 domestic abuse incidents recorded showing an increase of 1,824 (6.1 per cent) on the previous 12 months.
- The number of domestic abuse crimes recorded rose to 18,748, an increase of 381 (2.1 per cent) on the previous 12 months.
- There were 16 domestic abuse incidents and 10 domestic abuse crimes per 1,000 population¹, compared with 15 domestic abuse incidents and 10 domestic abuse crimes recorded during the previous 12 months.
- Levels rose across all major offence classifications, with the exception of criminal damage and breach of non-molestation orders.
- The largest volume increase in domestic abuse crimes was seen within violence against the person which showed an increase of 201 (1.4 per cent). Within this classification, violence with injury fell by 2, violence without injury decreased by 30 (-0.5%), and Stalking and Harassment rose by 233 (6.6%). The largest percentage increase of 16.0 per cent was within Sexual offences.

Domestic abuse homicide

In the 12 months from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 there were eleven homicides with a domestic abuse motivation recorded by the police, five higher than the level of domestic abuse homicides recorded in the previous 12 months². Seven of the victims were female and four were male, compared with six female victims and no male victims during the previous 12 months. Ten domestic abuse homicides were murder offences and one was a manslaughter offence.

Recorded Drug Seizures and Arrests

Drug Seizures - In the 12 months from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026:

- There were 7,471 drug seizure incidents, an increase of 520 (7.5 per cent) on the previous 12 months when 6,951 were recorded.
- There was an increase in the number of Class A and Class B seizure incidents and a slight fall in the number of Class C seizure incidents.
- Cannabis (Class B) was the most commonly seized drug, followed by cocaine (Class A), and pregabalin (Class C).

Drug related Arrests - In the 12 months from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026:

- There were 3,170 drug-related arrests, an increase of 42 (1.3 per cent) when compared with the previous 12 months.
- The trend in drug-related arrests is fairly similar to that seen for the number of drug seizure incidents and drug offences recorded over the same time period.
- Drug-related arrests were higher in six of the months between April 2025 and March 2026 when compared with the previous 12 month period, with August 2025 showing the largest increase of 62. Drug-related arrests were lower in six of the months compared to the previous year, with June 2025 showing the largest decrease of 50.
- There were 386 drug-related arrests in July 2023, the highest monthly figure seen during the time period April 2021 to March 2026.

¹ Crime per 1,000 population based on mid-year population estimate of 1,927,855 for 2024, the latest mid-year estimate available at time of compilation. Mid-year population estimates are available from the [NISRA website \(opens in a new window\)](#).

² Homicide consists of the offences of murder, manslaughter, infanticide and corporate manslaughter.

Hate Motivation Incidents and Crimes

In the 12 months from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026:

- The number of incidents recorded rose across four of the six hate motivations (race, sectarian, disability and faith/religion) when compared with the previous 12 months.
- The number of incidents with a race motivation was the highest 12 month level since the recording of these motivations began in 2004/05.
- The number of crimes recorded increased across three of the six motivations (race, sectarian and disability) when compared with the previous 12 months
- The number of crimes with a race motivation was the highest 12 month level since the recording of these motivations began in 2004/05.
- Incidents and crimes with a race motivation showed the largest increases (561 more race incidents and 320 more race crimes).
- Incidents and crimes with a transgender identity motivation showed the largest decreases with 7 fewer incidents and 9 fewer crimes.

Overall Summary of Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes

	Incidents April 2024 - March 2025	Incidents April 2025 - March 2026	Incidents Change	Crimes April 2024 - March 2025	Crimes April 2025 - March 2026	Crimes Change
Race	1,806	2,367	561	1,187	1,507	320
Sexual Orientation	362	359	-3	219	219	0
Sectarian	910	981	71	588	653	65
Disability	68	79	11	40	41	1
Faith/Religion	87	92	5	65	61	-4
Transgender Identity	64	57	-7	36	27	-9

Security Situation

In the 12 months from 1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026:

- There were no security related deaths, as was the case during the previous 12 months. The last such death occurred in January 2024.
- There were 20 bombing incidents, compared to 6 during the previous 12 months and 9 shooting incidents, compared to 17.
- There were 22 casualties of paramilitary style assaults, compared to 18 during the previous 12 months. The greatest number of assaults occurred in Belfast (9). All 22 casualties were aged 18 years or older.
- There were 2 casualties of paramilitary style shootings, compared to 8 during the previous 12 months. Belfast and Ards and North Down each experienced one such

attack. Both casualties were aged 18 years or older.

- There were 21 security related arrests under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000, compared to 41 during the previous 12 months.
- 7 persons were subsequently charged, compared to 5 during the previous 12 months.

Finds of Firearms, Explosives and

Ammunition; *these refer to the seizure or recovery of all illegal firearms, ammunition, explosives, rocket/mortar launchers, detonators and bomb making material/equipment. Replica/blank firing firearms, petrol bombs and petrol bomb making materials, grenades and munitions from World War 1 or World War 2 found on the beach or in attics etc. are not recorded as finds.*

Firearms Finds

There were 12 firearms found during the past 12 months, compared to 5 during the previous 12 months.

Explosive Finds

There were 1.06kg of explosives found during the past 12 months compared to 0.24kg during the previous 12 months.

Ammunition Finds

There were 660 rounds of ammunition found during the past 12 months compared to 148 rounds found in the previous 12 months.

Use of Force

During the 12 months between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026:

- There were 22,827 uses of force reported by PSNI officers, an increase of 20% on the number reported during the previous year (19,028).
- Use of attenuating energy projectiles (AEPs), conductive energy devices (CEDs) and police dog decreased compared to the previous year while use of batons, irritant spray, firearms, handcuffs/limb restraints, unarmed physical tactics and spit and bite guards increased.

- The most common type of force used was unarmed physical tactics, accounting for 58% of all uses of force.
- The most common reasons an officer used force was to protect themselves (80% of the time) and protect other officers (78% of the time).
- Belfast District accounted for one-third of the use of force (32%), followed by Derry City and Strabane (13%) and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon (12%).
- Alcohol was the most common perceived impact factor when force was used (60% of the time).

In relation to those persons* on whom force was used:

- 81% were perceived to be male.
- 35% were perceived to be between 25 and 34 years old.
- 93% were perceived to be white.

**Figures do not represent a unique count of the number of people who were subject to use of force, but rather how many times force was recorded by police officers, disaggregated by gender, age and ethnicity.*

A use of force is counted as when a police officer uses any of the following force tactics:

- *Attenuating Energy Projectile (AEP) - pointed or discharged*
- *Baton – drawn only or drawn and used*
- *Irritant spray – drawn only or used*
- *Firearm – drawn or pointed, or discharged*
- *Police dog*
- *Conducted Energy Device (CED) – drawn (including aimed, arced, red-dotted) or fired (including drive-stun)*
- *Handcuffs / limb restraints (including flexi-cuffs)*
- *Unarmed physical tactics (including blocks/ strikes, take downs, pressure points, physical restraints, other / improvised)*
- *Spit and bite guard*
- *Water canon – deployed or used*

Use of Stop and Search Powers

During the 12 months between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026:

- 20,597 persons were stopped and searched/questioned, 14% more than the previous year (18,096) but still the second lowest number of stops in the past 18 years.
- Non-counter-terrorism powers, the Police and Criminal Evidence Order, the Misuse of Drugs Act and the Firearms Order, collectively accounted for 82% of all stop and search powers used while counter-terrorism powers, the Justice and Security Act and the Terrorism Act, collectively accounted for 17% of all powers used.
- There was an overall increase (12%) in the use of non-counter-terrorism powers compared to the previous year; the use of the Misuse of Drugs Act increased by 15% (from 13,063 to 14,966) compared to the previous year, while the use of the Police and Criminal Evidence Order decreased by 4% (from 2,435 to 2,349). The use of the Firearms Order and other less frequently used powers increased, albeit by smaller amounts.
- There was an overall increase (37%) in the use of counter-terrorism powers compared to the previous year; although the use of the Justice and Security Act decreased by 8% (from 2,241 to 2,063) and was at its lowest level in the past 17 years. Conversely, the use of the Terrorism Act increased by 281% (from 412 to 1,570) and was at its highest level in the past 15 years.
- 23% of stops resulted in some form of outcome. The arrest rate was 7%, compared to 8% the previous year.
- 8% (1,686) of those stopped were aged 17 and under. Of these, nearly two-thirds (65%) were stopped and searched under the Misuse of Drugs Act*.

- 86% of those stopped were male, while 35% were aged 18 to 25.
- There were 11 persons stopped for every 1,000 people in Northern Ireland, compared to 9 for every 1,000 people the previous year.

Motoring Offence Statistics

In the 12 months from 1 May 2025 to 30 April 2026:

- There were 38,098 detections for motoring offences in Northern Ireland, of which 97% were dealt with by means of a fixed penalty notice or referral for prosecution.
- The remaining 3% (1,196) resulted in the completion of a speed awareness or safer driver course.
- Total detections increased by 5% on the 36,117 detections recorded in the previous 12 months.
- Ten of the 19 offence groups showed an increase in detections over the year, in particular the construction and use group which rose by 48% to 4,417, representing an increase of 1,442 detections.
- The largest offence group was insurance offences with 6,539 which, along with careless driving (4,701) and speeding offences (4,637) accounted for 42% of the total detections.
- The highest speed detected by PSNI officers in the latest 12 months was 143mph, on the M2 Rathbeg Southbound, Antrim.
- Over the last 12 months:
 - The number of motoring offences detected increased by 5% to 38,098
 - Offences referred for prosecution fell by 5%

- Endorsable fixed penalties increased by 12%, while non-endorsable offences increased by 59%
- Number of speed awareness courses increased by 6%
- Safer driver courses increased by 27%.

Police Recorded Injury Road Traffic Collisions and Casualties

Between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026:

- There was a total of 5,130 injury road traffic collisions recorded, resulting in 67 fatalities, 1,073 people seriously injured and 6,850 slightly injured.
- There were 351 more collisions recorded in 2025/26 when compared with 2024/25 and 419 more casualties over the year.
- The 67 fatalities in 2025/26 was 3 more than the 64 recorded for the previous financial year.
- Nearly half of all child KSI (Killed and Seriously Injured) casualties were pedestrians.
- There were 112 children (under 16) killed or seriously injured – 7 more than in 2024/25. In 2025/26, there were 205 KSI in the 65 and over age group, which was an increase of 38 on that recorded in 2024/25 (167).
- The most common principal causation factors for KSI casualties during 2025/26 were ‘inattention or attention diverted’ (119 KSI casualties) followed by ‘wrong course/ position’ (108 KSI casualties), and ‘crossing or entering road junction without care’ (83 KSI casualties).
- Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon district had the highest number of road deaths with 10 fatalities. Belfast City district recorded the most serious injuries in 2025/26 (178 seriously injured).

Outcome 1

Victim Focused

Over the past month, officers and staff have continued to safeguard vulnerable people, support victims and progress investigations into serious crime, domestic abuse and sexual offending. This includes taking early action where risk has been identified, disrupting high-harm criminality and progressing cases through the criminal justice process so that offenders are held to account. We remain committed to a victim focused, trauma-informed approach, treating victims with compassion and respect, and ensuring that those who come to us in need are supported and protected, including through close partnership working with statutory and third-sector organisations.

Serious Crime Investigations and Court Outcomes

Detectives progressed a number of complex investigations during the reporting period, including cases involving serious violence, intimidation and risk to life.

In North Belfast, detectives investigating a knife attack in the Kinnaird Avenue area on 8 June 2026 charged a man with attempted murder, possession of an article with a blade or point in a public place and threats to kill. He has been remanded in custody. This investigation was progressed at pace and, following the incident; Operation Constantness was implemented to manage the wider public order and community safety impacts.

In Belfast, detectives charged two men in relation to the murder of Nicky Gordon, alongside additional serious offences including aggravated burglary and possession of a firearm with intent to cause fear of violence. The charges relate to a report of aggravated burglary at the victim's flat on 12 May 2026, during which the victim was seriously assaulted. He died as a result of his injuries on 16 May 2026. During the investigation, three additional incidents came to light, resulting in further charges.

Detectives investigating the attempted murder of a police officer in Downpatrick have charged a man with attempted murder, aggravated vehicle taking causing injury, aggravated vehicle taking in which a vehicle was driven dangerously, and additional driving offences. There were also a number of significant court outcomes. Following the murder of Sarah Montgomery, a man pleaded guilty to the murder of Sarah and the destruction of her unborn child. A life sentence was imposed, with eight weeks set for pre-sentence reports and submission of victim impact statements, and a tariff hearing listed for 11 September 2026. Separately, Stephen McCullagh, convicted of the murder of Natalie McNally in Lurgan in 2022, was ordered to serve a minimum of 31 years in prison.

Four people were sentenced in relation to the murder of Stephen Peck in Ballymoney in 2021, including a 16-and-a-half-year custodial sentence for one male, alongside custodial and

suspended sentences for assisting an offender and perverting the course of justice.

In relation to the 2023 PSNI data breach, a man appeared at Belfast Crown Court and was found guilty of offences including preparation of acts of terrorism, with sentencing to follow.

In other important sentencing outcomes, a man was sentenced to 2 years and 4 months for a series of child sexual offences including sexual communication with a child, causing/inciting a child to engage in sexual activity, causing/inciting a child to watch a sexual act, and incitement to distribute indecent images of children. He was placed on the Sex Offenders Register for 10 years and made subject to a 10-year Sexual Offences Prevention Order.

Public Protection and Safeguarding

Domestic abuse remains a sustained, high-harm demand. Over recent weeks, officers progressed a number of investigations where victims were supported and safeguarding measures put in place, including cases involving serious threats, coercive behaviour and violence. This included fast time action to protect a victim at immediate risk. Detectives arrested, and subsequently charged, a man for kidnapping, common assault and theft after a member of the public reported that a woman had been assaulted. The victim reported that she had been forced into the rear of a vehicle by her ex-partner, managed to escape, and was then assaulted.

A further report received on 8 June 2026 concerned a woman who reported serious domestic and sexual abuse by her partner. A man was arrested and charged with rape, common assault, domestic abuse, and threatening to disclose private images with intent to cause distress. During the investigation, additional drug and criminal property offending was identified and progressed, with specialist detectives from Organised Crime Branch supporting further charges including drug offences and offences relating to converting and transferring criminal property.

Protecting children from sexual harm remains a priority. In the past month, a number of serious investigations involving offences against child victims were progressed. These included the arrest, charge and remand of a man in connection with serious sexual offences against his 9-year-old stepdaughter, and, in a separate investigation, the arrest and charging of a man in connection with serious sexual offences against his 15-year-old stepdaughter. Safeguarding measures were progressed in parallel with criminal investigations.

Offender management and enforcement of court imposed safeguards remain essential to protecting the public. On 8 June 2026, a man was arrested for multiple breaches of a Sexual Offences Prevention Order and Failure to Notify. A number of devices were seized, and officers from the Offender Investigation Unit charged him to court for these breaches.

On 25 May 2026, a 16-year-old girl reported that she had been the victim of serious sexual offences by an unknown male. The Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) Team conducted enquiries and identified a suspect who was believed to have fled the jurisdiction. On 9 June 2026, local officers, while dealing with serious disorder, identified the male. He was arrested and subsequently charged to court with a number of serious sexual offences.

On 3 June 2026, a male prisoner reported that he had been raped by his cellmate. Detectives secured a production warrant to allow for the arrest and interview of the suspect, who was later released on police bail pending further enquiries.

Delivering Justice for Victims

Bringing offenders before the courts remains central to the victim journey and public confidence in policing.

Notable court outcomes include the conviction of a man for arson and criminal damage following threats to “burn out” his ex-partner and the deliberate ignition of her home. He received a 21-month custodial sentence, followed by 24 months on licence, and a five-year restraining order.

A woman was convicted in relation to ill-treatment or neglect of a number of patients. She pleaded guilty to sharing photographs of patients with dementia and making derogatory comments about patients to other staff members. Sentencing will take place at a later date once victim impact statements have been completed with the families of those affected.

Outcome 2

Community Focused



Policing is most effective when it is visible, trusted and delivered in partnership. Since May's report that has been tested by significant public safety demand, including widespread disorder and intimidation addressed under Operation Constantness, alongside continued neighbourhood and local policing activity to prevent harm and provide reassurance. Our focus has been to protect life, uphold the right to peaceful protest while confronting violence and criminality, and work with communities and partners to reduce tension, support those affected and restore normality. Alongside this exceptional demand, officers and staff have continued to tackle organised crime and drug supply, address local concerns and deliver day-to-day policing that helps communities feel safe and confident in contacting police.

Operation Constantness

On Monday 8 June 2026, officers responded to a serious knife attack in the Kinnaird Avenue area of Belfast, resulting in significant life changing injuries to the victim. A suspect was arrested later that evening and charged with attempted murder. In the aftermath, the incident attracted significant online commentary and heightened community tension, including material encouraging people to gather in a number of locations.

Recognising the potential impact on public safety, a critical incident was declared on Tuesday 9 June and enhanced plans were put in place to prepare for, and respond to, disorder and

violence. Over the evenings of 9–11 June, disorder was experienced across multiple locations, most significantly in Belfast, with further incidents across North Area, South Area and Derry City & Strabane.

In Belfast, commanders were dealing with multiple locations affected by disorder, fires and escalating risk. Resources were prioritised to incidents presenting the greatest threat to life and serious harm, including reports of families trapped in burning buildings and enabling emergency services access so that rescue and firefighting activity could take place. Officers also supported evacuations, including the use of armoured vehicles in higher-risk areas to remove families from immediate danger.

We maintained a high level of readiness to respond, supported by specialist resources. The number of public order units was increased from 25 on 10 June to 28 by 13 June, supported by evidence gathering teams, drone capability, public order dog teams and air support. Given the scale and spread of disorder, additional support was requested through national mutual aid arrangements, providing eight Police Support Units and two public order dog teams, supported by technicians, with 168 mutual aid personnel deployed in total. Mutual aid resources arrived overnight and, following rest, equipment issue, familiarisation and briefing, were deployed within hours to strengthen our ability to keep people safe.

As a consequence of this disorder, 49 officers were injured. Behind each injury is an officer or member of staff and a family affected, and there is a direct impact on frontline capacity, both in sustaining the response to disorder and in maintaining day-to-day policing services across Northern Ireland.

Alongside the public order policing operation, the disorder created exceptional wider demand for policing services. Call volumes rose significantly above expected levels, peaking at approximately 700–800 additional calls per day during the height of the disorder. Contact management capacity was bolstered to manage this increased demand while sustaining emergency access and wider public safety response.

As the immediate public safety situation stabilised, the focus moved quickly to identifying those responsible and progressing criminal justice outcomes. To support this work, a dedicated Public Order Enquiry Team has been established, alongside a public evidence submission portal, supported by teams reviewing footage to identify suspects and progress enforcement action.

Current position (Operation Constantness)

Suspects	TOTAL
Suspects declared	40
Sought for arrest	6
Voluntary interview	0
Arrested	34
Pre-charge bail	7
Charged overnight	22
Charged 28 day	3
Reported to PPS	1
Adult Caution	0
CRN	0
Released Unconditionally	0
In Police Custody	0

This provides a snapshot of enforcement activity and remains subject to change as arrests, charging decisions and investigative actions continue.

Alongside the operational response, we worked with partners to assess impact and coordinate immediate and longer-term support. A multi-agency impact assessment call was established, followed by a Strategic Coordination Group. This work has moved to recovery focused coordination to support communities and restore normal service levels.

Community Reassurance and Protection of Vulnerable People

In the context of wider disorder, officers responded to incidents that caused fear and anxiety within communities, including reports of road blockades, intimidation and hate-related graffiti and damage. Where reports suggested people were being challenged, stopped or threatened, this was treated as an immediate priority and resources were deployed to stop such behaviour and provide reassurance.

Across the operation, commanders worked with local partners and elected representatives to reduce tension, protect vulnerable locations and support community reassurance. This included liaison with health sector partners and targeted reassurance activity where concerns were raised around staff welfare and safe access to healthcare settings.

Separately from the disorder related incidents, officers continued to respond to urgent calls to protect life and safeguard vulnerable people. In Craigavon, officers responded to a call for assistance following an individual leaving the ward of Craigavon Hospital. Officers attended nearby premises, located blood and footprints, and found a locked bathroom with significant blood on the door handle. Staff forced entry and the missing person was located on the ground covered in blood and actively

self-harming with deep wrist injuries. Officers provided first aid, transported the casualty to hospital and remained until triage before transfer into the care of staff. The injuries would have undoubtedly been fatal without the quick response from officers.

Serious and Organised Crime Disruption

Alongside exceptional public order demand, detectives and local teams continued targeted disruption of serious organised criminality and drug supply that causes significant harm in communities.

In North Belfast, detectives recovered suspected cocaine with an estimated street value of £375,000, with two men arrested and charged for drugs offences. Enquiries continue, including liaison with partners in An Garda Síochána, linked to a suspected cross-border supply route involving a Dublin based organised crime group.



In South Belfast, detectives carried out a search of a domestic property and recovered Class B controlled drugs with an estimated street value of £270,000, alongside other items seized for forensic examination and a quantity of cash. Three men were arrested, with two subsequently charged and one released on bail pending further enquiries.



Local Policing

Across districts, neighbourhood and local policing teams continued proactive and intelligence-led activity to reduce harm, tackle repeat offending and provide reassurance.

In Belfast, proactive neighbourhood policing activity by Castle and Court North NPT resulted in the recovery of firearms and ammunition, controlled drugs and criminal assets including cash and high value items, directly disrupting criminality linked to community harm.

In South Belfast, officers responded to a report of a male on a bridge stating his intention to jump. When the male entered the water, one of the officers entered the river, maintained communication with colleagues, and helped bring the casualty safely to the riverbank with assistance from officers on shore and the use of a life buoy. The male was then handed into the care of Northern Ireland Ambulance Service and Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service colleagues.

In Ballymena, officers conducting an arrest in connection with a domestic incident located the suspect concealed within a property and recovered suspected controlled drugs and cash. In a separate incident, proactive work by officers led to a stop and search of an individual and the recovery of Class B controlled drugs and £10,000 cash.

Incidents such as these underscore the reality of frontline demand and the importance of timely police response in preventing avoidable harm.

Partnership and Engagement – Strengthening Prevention and Community Confidence

Beyond the immediate public order response, engagement and prevention work continued across the organisation to strengthen community confidence and improve safeguarding responses. This included Public

Protection Branch (PPB) hosting a visit by the Northern Ireland Policing Board to Antrim Road, providing Board Members with the opportunity to engage with senior leaders and operational teams and to better understand the nature of demand and pressures within the Branch.

PPB also delivered training for Women's Aid staff at the Foyle Family Justice Centre to strengthen shared understanding of police disposal outcomes and the protections that can be put in place for victims, supporting more effective advocacy and advice for those accessing services. Alongside this, stakeholder and academic engagement continued to improve identification of exploitation risks and strengthen coordinated safeguarding practice, including engagement at Queen's University Belfast for the launch of the Centre for Evidence-Based Youth Services (CEBYS), and a jointly hosted roundtable with Ulster University focused on modern slavery and human trafficking in the context of child criminal exploitation.

Further preventative engagement included an NCA delivered briefing on online group offending, hosted by PPB, attended by partners from statutory, voluntary, community and faith sectors, supporting shared awareness and coordinated safeguarding.

Preventative engagement remains an important element of reducing harm and encouraging reporting. Detectives attended the Balmoral Show as part of multi-agency engagement, providing advice and signposting and raising awareness of the harms associated with organised crime. Key themes included cybercrime, modern slavery and labour exploitation.



In L District, senior officers met with the Yemeni Community following the incident at Hazelbank Park on 27 May. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss cultural differences and outline legislative challenges linked to the incident. It was unanimously agreed that education and communication are key, and this will be progressed going forward.

In K District, the District Support Hub continues to demonstrate the impact of prevention led Repeat Offender Unit (ROU) work delivered with partners. Under the new preventative strand, a prolific adult offender linked to entrenched drug use and supply and near daily police interaction has been taken on as ROU and, after almost six months, has no new offending, is maintaining sobriety, is engaged with a drug rehabilitation programme, and remains in daily contact with his ROU SPOC, who has secured temporary accommodation and progressed drug and mental health referrals, with the next step focused on supporting a move into employment if stability is maintained. Separately, under the juvenile ROU model, a young male previously identified as vulnerable to child criminal exploitation—with daily offending, drug use, residential placement instability and prolonged missing episodes—was supported through a coordinated wraparound plan with agencies, and is now off drugs, in education, living in a self-contained 16+ facility, and has had no offending and no missing episodes.

Taken together, these actions reflect policing delivered at pace under pressure—protecting life, restoring reassurance, disrupting harm and working with partners to reduce the conditions in which disorder and exploitation can take hold.

Outcome 3

Workforce Focused



Delivering effective policing for victims and communities depends on a workforce that is valued, enabled and supported to meet sustained and increasingly complex demand. Over this period, officers and staff have continued to work in highly challenging circumstances, including responding to serious disorder, safeguarding incidents and high-risk operational demands. We remain focused on building workforce resilience and capability through learning, development and wellbeing support, while continuing to strengthen recruitment and outreach activity as we mark the 25th anniversary of the PSNI. Supporting our people is not separate from operational delivery, it is essential to sustaining public protection, community confidence and long-term organisational effectiveness.

Operation Constantness – Workforce Welfare, Health & Safety and Capability Impacts

What is most visible in a critical incident such as Operation Constantness are the officers deployed to the front line. Ensuring those officers and staff are protected and supported during periods of public disorder is a key element of PSNI's health and safety arrangements and its wider workforce welfare and wellbeing provision. Operation Constantness is set out in Outcome 2 from a public safety and community reassurance perspective; the following summarises the workforce welfare, health and safety and capability impacts of the response.

During the operation, 49 officers were injured. While established controls and protective measures are in place to mitigate hazards and reduce harm, regrettably they cannot prevent assaults and injuries in volatile and fast-moving conditions. Officers and staff operated under difficult circumstances, with many working prolonged shifts, demonstrating their professionalism and commitment to keeping people safe.

Occupational Health provision included local wellbeing hubs to provide rest and refreshment, access to wellbeing volunteers and peer support to assist debriefing and post-incident defusing. Established protocols were applied to ensure timely and appropriate clinical assessment and treatment where required, including specific processes for head injuries and potential exposure to blood borne viruses.

Behind the scenes, a multidisciplinary team of officers and staff also stood up facilities and accommodation to support the welfare and deployment requirements associated with Mutual Aid. These arrangements provided an appropriate environment for briefings, coordination and rest, ensuring personnel had access to welfare provisions while on duty.

Health and Safety Branch monitored accidents and incidents closely, providing updates twice daily. Proactive contact was made with all officers who reported an injury to provide advice and managerial support and, where

required, signpost individuals into Occupational Health pathways.

As with any large-scale public order operation, abstractions from business-as-usual activity also impacted wider workforce initiatives. Some scheduled training activity was disrupted, a number of external recruitment candidates required rescheduling, and some internal promotion timetables may experience minor delay.

The Police College provided operational and investigative support throughout the incident. The College Operations Planning Team coordinated the detailing of College resources at pace, while Tactical Training Faculty public order trainers supported the deployment through training and, given their expertise, provided Public Order Public Safety Advisor (POPSA) support to Silver and Gold commanders.

Throughout the critical incident there was a continued focus on communication with colleagues, recognising collective effort and reinforcing collegiate support for those personally impacted by the events.

Workforce Capability, Professionalism and Learning

Public Protection Branch hosted a third Race Anxiety Training event delivered by Universal Truth for officers from across the organisation, including Local Policing and Criminal Investigation teams. This training supports officer learning and development and was well received by those who attended, strengthening confidence and consistency in frontline engagement.

Recruitment Advocacy and Widening Participation – 25th Anniversary Alumni Network

As part of the 25th anniversary year, we have launched a new Schools, Colleges and Universities Alumni network, aimed at strengthening recruitment advocacy and

showcasing the breadth of careers available across policing.

The network invites officers and staff to reconnect with their former schools, colleges and universities and act as ambassadors, sharing their education and career journeys, supporting outreach activity and helping prospective applicants understand the range of policing roles and pathways available. The network is designed to be flexible, allowing participation when colleagues can, and is intended to strengthen community understanding of policing and encourage applications from across Northern Ireland. 155 colleagues have already signed up, and the invitation remains open to anyone who wishes to participate.

