

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics

Annual Report covering the period
1st April 2012 – 31st March 2013

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The PSNI is required to report on its performance on a financial year basis and hence this report covers the financial year period 1st April 2012 – 31st March 2013. These security statistics relate solely to incidents that occurred within the jurisdiction of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. Further information on context and background is provided in the Notes section of this bulletin and in the [Security Situation Statistics User Guide](#) on the [PSNI website](#). A further breakdown of the information provided in this report can be found in the [accompanying excel spreadsheet](#) which is also published on the PSNI website, it provides a breakdown of the information at Police Area and Police District levels as well as providing historical trends.

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National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

Section 1: Security Statistics Summary

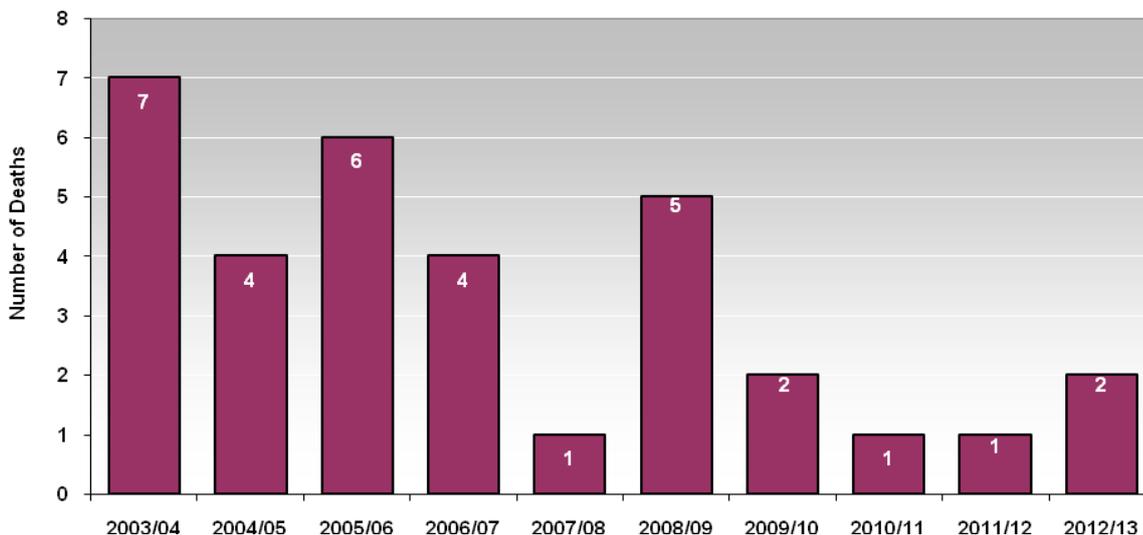
The security situation in Northern Ireland has improved significantly over the last decade with fewer security related deaths, shootings, bombings and paramilitary style shootings and assaults recorded in 2012/13 than ten years ago in 2003/04. However, a significant threat still remains as evidenced by the two security related deaths in 2012/13 and the numerous shooting and bombing incidents as well as the continued use of paramilitary style shootings and assaults.

- Compared with the previous year (2011/12), whilst there was one additional security related death in 2012/13, there were fewer shooting and bombing incidents and fewer casualties resulting from paramilitary style shootings and assaults.
- During 2012/13 there were two security related deaths, one in October 2012 and one in November 2012. This is one more than in 2011/12 but is five fewer than the seven security related deaths recorded in 2003/04.
- In 2012/13 the police recorded 64 shooting incidents and 44 bombing incidents. This is three fewer shooting incidents and 12 fewer bombing incidents than in the previous year (2011/12). The combined numbers of shooting and bombing incidents have decreased in the last ten years with the lowest levels recorded during 2006/07 and 2007/08 before slightly increasing again in subsequent years.
- During 2012/13 there were 27 casualties resulting from paramilitary style shootings, six fewer than the previous year (2011/12) and 122 fewer than ten years ago in 2003/04. Of the 27 casualties resulting from paramilitary style shootings recorded in 2012/13, 26 were attributed to Republicans and one was attributed to Loyalists.
- There were 36 casualties as a result of paramilitary style assaults in 2012/13, this is ten fewer than in 2011/12 and 113 fewer than the 149 recorded ten years ago in 2003/04. Of the 36 recorded in 2012/13, 27 were attributed to Loyalists and 9 were attributed to Republicans.
- There were 57 firearms seized by the PSNI during 2012/13 compared to 176 seized during the previous year. The number of firearms seized each year has fluctuated over the last ten years with a peak of 365 firearms in 2005/06.
- During 2012/13, 11.4kg of explosives was seized compared with 43.8kg in 2011/12.
- In 2012/13, 157 people were arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act and 50 were subsequently charged. Although the number of persons arrested was fairly similar with the previous year (2011/12) the number of persons subsequently charged increased from 39 to 50. Over the last ten years there has been a decrease in the numbers of persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act and in subsequent charges. In 2003/04, 339 persons were arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act with 102 subsequently charged.

Section 2 – Deaths due to the Security Situation

During 2012/13 there were two security related deaths in Northern Ireland, one in October 2012 and one in November 2012. The overall trend shows that there has been a decline in the number of security related deaths since 2003/04, with one or two security related deaths occurring in each of the last four years (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Deaths due to the Security Situation 2002/03 – 2012/13¹



¹ Includes all deaths considered to be directly attributed to terrorism, where the cause has a direct or proximate link to subversive/sectarian strife or where the death is attributable to security force activity.

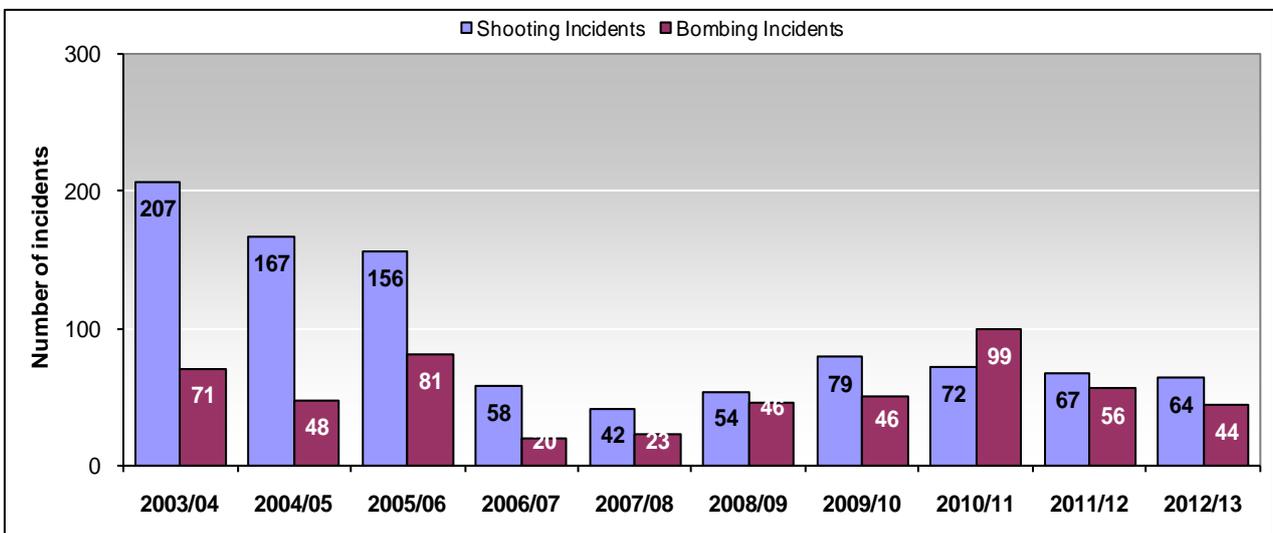
Section 3 – Shooting and bombing incidents

There were 64 shooting incidents in Northern Ireland during 2012/13, 3 fewer than the 67 recorded in 2011/12 and just under a third of the 207 shooting incidents that occurred ten years ago in 2003/04. West Belfast had the most shooting incidents in 2012/13 (19 shooting incidents) followed by North Belfast and Foyle (both with 9 shooting incidents).

During 2012/13 there were 44 bombing incidents, 12 fewer than in 2011/12 and 27 fewer than ten years ago in 2003/04. As with the shooting incidents above the same police areas accounted for the greatest numbers of bombing incidents (6 in North Belfast, 6 in Foyle and 5 in West Belfast).

Data broken down by police area is available in the accompanying spreadsheet on our website.

Figure 2: Shooting and bombing incidents 2003/04 – 2012/13^{1,2}



¹ The following types of shooting incidents are included:

- Shots fired by terrorists
- Shots fired by the security forces
- Paramilitary-style attacks involving shootings
- Shots heard (and later confirmed)

² An individual bombing incident may involve one or more explosive devices. Incidents recorded include explosions and defusings (devices used). Incidents involving hoax devices, petrol bombings or incendiaries are excluded.

Section 4 – Paramilitary-style attacks (shootings & assaults)

Paramilitary style attacks are usually carried out by Loyalist or Republican groups on members of their own community as a so-called punishment and tend to be in the form of either paramilitary style shootings or paramilitary style assaults. The paramilitary grouping deemed responsible for each assault or shooting is based on the perception of the police officer leading the investigation at the time. Each paramilitary shooting or assault is therefore categorised as having either a Loyalist or Republican attribution.

The number of casualties as a result of paramilitary-style attacks has generally decreased over the last ten years with the exception of a peak four years ago in 2009/10. During 2012/13 there were 63 casualties as a result of paramilitary-style attacks this is 16 fewer than the previous year and half the number that occurred in 2009/10. Twenty seven of the 63 casualties were the victim of paramilitary-style shootings while the remaining 36 were the victims of paramilitary-style assaults (Table 1).

Table 1: Casualties as a result of paramilitary-style attacks 2003/04 – 2012/13

	Shootings			Assaults			Total Casualties (Shootings and Assaults)
	Total	By Loyalist Groups*	By Republican Groups*	Total	By Loyalist Groups*	By Republican Groups*	
2003/04	149	102	47	149	101	48	298
2004/05	93	76	17	116	71	45	209
2005/06	76	70	6	76	57	19	152
2006/07	26	14	12	48	36	12	74
2007/08	7	2	5	45	35	10	52
2008/09	20	2	18	41	28	13	61
2009/10	46	1	45	81	69	12	127
2010/11	33	0	33	50	34	16	83
2011/12	33	0	33	46	31	15	79
2012/13	27	1	26	36	27	9	63

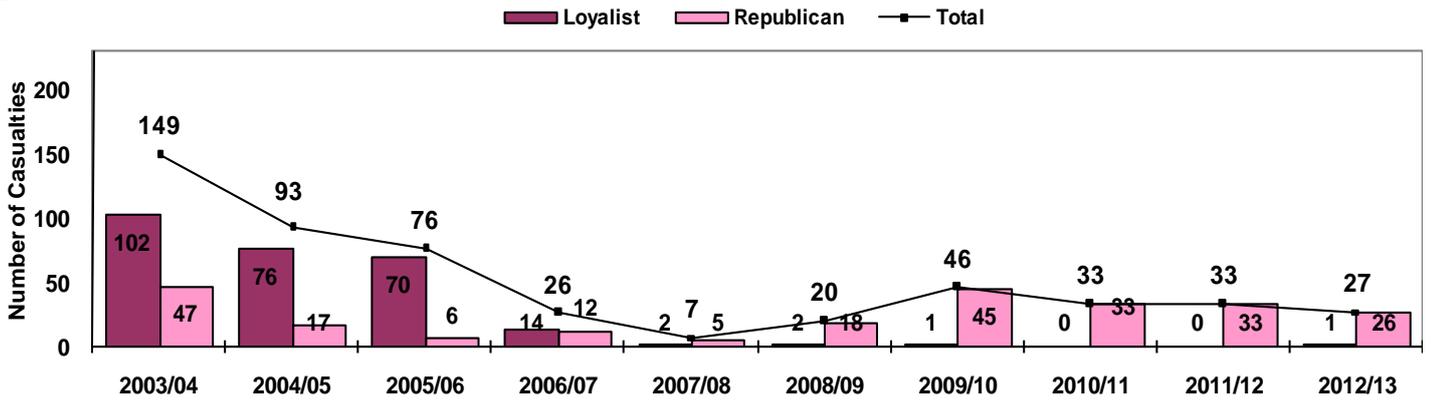
* Attribution is as perceived by PSNI based on the information available and does not necessarily indicate the involvement of a paramilitary organisation.

Paramilitary-style shootings

The vast majority of paramilitary style shootings carried out in recent years have been attributed to Republican groups whereas before that, between 2003/04 and 2005/06 the majority were then attributed to Loyalist groups (Figure 3). The 27 casualties recorded in 2012/13 is less than a fifth of the 149 recorded ten years ago in 2003/04 and is slightly lower than the levels recorded in the previous two years. Over half of the paramilitary style shootings in 2012/13 were carried out in West Belfast (14 casualties) and a further six in Foyle.

Data broken down by police area is available in the accompanying spreadsheet on our website.

Figure 3: Casualties as a result of paramilitary-style shootings 2003/04 – 2012/13*

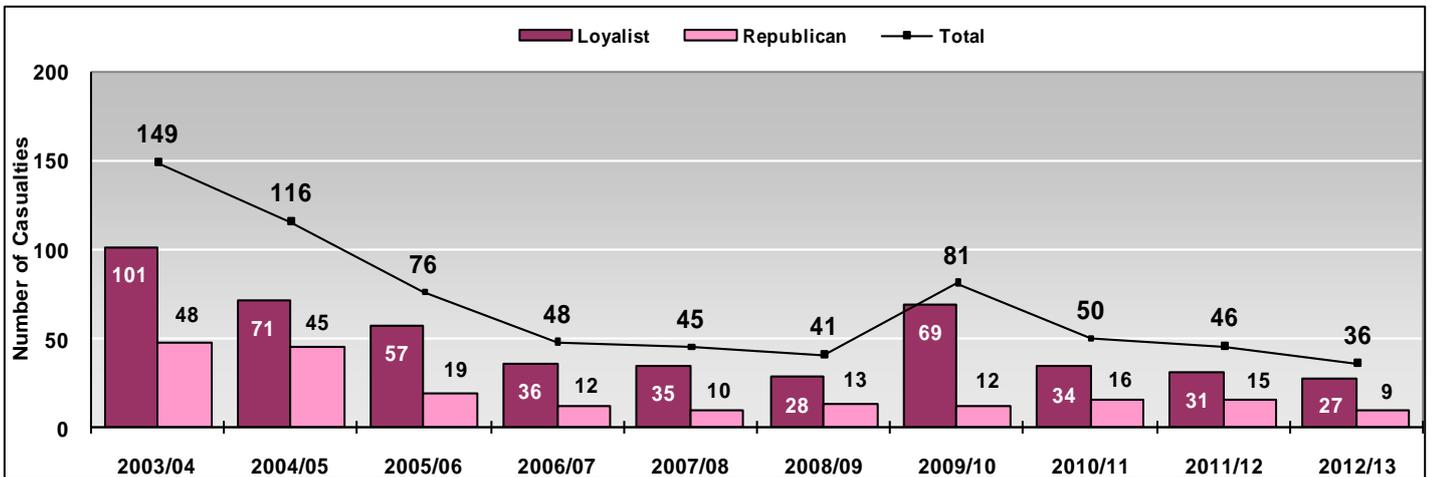


* Attribution is as perceived by PSNI based on the information available and does not necessarily indicate the involvement of a paramilitary organisation.

Paramilitary-style assaults

Responsibility for the majority of paramilitary style assaults conducted in the last ten years has been attributed to Loyalists (Figure 4). In 2012/13, three-quarters (75%) of the 36 of the casualties resulting from paramilitary assaults were attributed to Loyalists while the remaining quarter (25%) were attributed to Republicans. There have been fewer casualties resulting from paramilitary-style assaults in 2012/13 than in each of the previous ten years. The policing areas with the greatest number of casualties resulting from paramilitary style assaults in 2012/13 were North Down (five casualties) North Belfast, Castlereagh & Ards (each with four casualties).

Figure 4: Casualties as a result of paramilitary-style assaults 2003/04 – 2012/13*



* Attribution is as perceived by PSNI based on the information available and does not necessarily indicate the involvement of a paramilitary organisation.

Section 5 – Firearms, ammunition and explosives finds

PSNI Officers seized 57 firearms, 2,589 rounds of ammunition and 11.4 kg of explosives during 2012/13. This is less than was seized in the previous year for all types of finds.

Foyle had the largest number of firearms seizures (eight firearms), followed by Craigavon where six firearms were seized. The three Police Areas that recovered the largest number of rounds of ammunition were Craigavon (404), Ards (344) and South Belfast (313). The largest amounts of explosives were seized in Foyle (4.6kg) and North Belfast (2.7kg).

Table 2: Firearms, ammunition and explosives finds 2003/04 – 2012/13

Financial Year	Firearms	Ammunition (rounds)	Explosives (kgs)
2003/04	148	19,017	92.1
2004/05	81	23,822	26.5
2005/06	365	112,748	35.0
2006/07	55	5,086	132.2
2007/08	62	22,010	208.4
2008/09	113	4,420	30.6
2009/10	77	34,962	2.2
2010/11	86	2,574	2.9
2011/12	176	4,064	43.8
2012/13	57	2,589	11.4

Section 6 – Persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act and subsequently charged

In 2012/13, 157 persons were arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act and of these 50 were subsequently charged (Table 3). This is similar to the number arrested in the previous year (2011/12) but the number of persons that were subsequently charged increased in 2012/13. Of the 157 persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act in 2011/12, 40 of these arrests took place in the Foyle area and a further 16 took place in North Belfast.

Table 3: Persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act (TACT) and subsequently charged 2003/04 – 2012/13*

	<i>Persons Arrested under Section 41 of TACT</i>	<i>Persons subsequently Charged^{1,2}</i>
2003/04	339	102
2004/05	231	77
2005/06	273	72
2006/07	177	57
2007/08	130	34
2008/09	174	40
2009/10	169	36
2010/11*	195	41
2011/12	159	39
2012/13	157	50

**Revised figure to that previously published:* The 2010/11 figures were previously reported as 188 persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act and 40 persons subsequently charged. However, this did not include persons produced from prison for interview and so these figures have been revised accordingly to 195 arrested and 41 charged.

¹ Statistics refer to charges brought against a person after the original period of detention (including extensions). Any subsequent charges, additions, deletions to the original charges are not included.

² Please note that persons can be charged under legislation other than the Terrorism Act. Persons may also be charged in a different financial year from which they were arrested e.g. those persons detained at the end of March and charged in April.

NOTES

Further information on how these statistics are collated and reported are included in the [Security Situation Statistics User Guide](#) available on the [PSNI website](#).

National Statistics

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Strengths and Limitations of the data

Strengths

Police recorded statistics relating to the security situation in Northern Ireland are the main source of official information on trends and statistics relating to the security situation throughout the Troubles and up to the present day. They were initially established by the police to provide much needed facts and figures on widespread civil unrest during the late 1960s and early 1970s and then were developed further through the 1980s and 1990s with computerisation. They are a key source of information on the security situation in Northern Ireland since 1969 and are used widely within PSNI and also by colleagues in government departments as well as by the media, academics and members of the public.

Limitations

As the security situation figures relate to those incidents that took place within Northern Ireland, they do not include any related incidents that may have happened either in the Republic of Ireland or in Great Britain.

These statistics only include those incidents that are brought to the attention of the police and some such incidents may not have been reported. Therefore a level of under-reporting may exist and users of the statistics should exercise caution when examining trends based on these police statistics. The PSNI's Security Statistics are collated and reported by a small number of experienced staff who manually trawl through PSNI systems on a daily basis to identify all such security related incidents. The reliance on these key individuals means that an element of human error could be involved and that small proportion of incidents could be missed or incorrectly classified as a result. However, various internal checks and validation processes are in place to ensure that this is kept to a minimum.

Revisions

Revisions are carried out in accordance with our Revisions Policy, a copy of which is available in the Official Statistics section of the PSNI Statistics website.

Availability of Additional Data

Additional data are available on the Security Situation Statistics section of the PSNI website. The accompanying spreadsheet for the security situation data provides trend information back to 1968 where available, subject to statistical disclosure policies.

Descriptions of the main security statistics collated

Security statistics generally relate to terrorist and public order type incidents that occur within Northern Ireland and which are recorded on the PSNI's IT systems. The main security related statistics that are collated and reported are as follows:

a) Security related deaths

Each security related death is checked with the investigating officer to ensure that the circumstances fit in with the standard definition adopted by the PSNI's Statistics Branch guidelines i.e. *'those which are considered at the time of the incident to be directly attributed to terrorism, where the cause has a direct or proximate link to subversive/ sectarian strife or where the death is attributable to security force activity'*. At the end of each year, all security related deaths for that period are checked with the PSNI's Crime Operations Department to ensure that the list is complete and accurate before the finalised figures are published. Furthermore, not all security related deaths involve offences of murder as they also include deaths resulting from the use of force by the security forces or could involve persons being killed while planting a bomb which detonated prematurely.

b) Bombings incidents

These include all incidents where a bombing device explodes or is defused. A bombing incident can also relate to more than one device - for example a mortar attack with four devices would be recorded as one bombing incident with four devices. When a device partially explodes (i.e. usually only the detonator or fuse) it is recorded as an explosion. However, if a device is found that is not complete or armed, then it is recorded as a 'find' and not as a bombing.

c) Shooting incidents

These include any shooting incident relating to the security situation and include shots fired by terrorists, shots fired by the security forces, paramilitary style attacks involving shootings and shots heard (and later confirmed by other sources). They exclude the firing of blank rounds.

d) Paramilitary style shooting casualties

Any such paramilitary style shooting incident can have one or more casualties (i.e. two or more persons could be shot in the same incident). The injured party is usually shot in the knees, elbows, feet, ankles or thighs and the motive is supposedly to punish the person for anti-social activities. These paramilitary style shootings are generally conducted by Loyalist or Republican paramilitary groups on members of their own community. The attribution of such shootings is generally recorded as 'Loyalist' or 'Republican' depending on the investigating officer's view on which groups had conducted the shooting. Paramilitary style shootings that result in death are counted as security related deaths and are not reflected in the paramilitary style shooting figures.

e) Paramilitary style assaults

As with the paramilitary style shootings, these assaults are usually carried out by Loyalist or Republican groups on members of their own community as a so-called punishment. The assault will involve major or minor physical injury to the injured party typically involving a group of assailants armed with, for example, iron bars or baseball bats. Multiple casualties may result from a single incident. Confirmation of the paramilitary style assault is generally sought from the investigating officer.

f) Finds of ammunition or explosives

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.

g) Incendiaries

These are different from bombings in that they are used to start fires and not to cause an explosion. They normally consist of a cassette, timer battery and material to cause fire (i.e. petrol, gas or other accelerant) and are usually targeted at commercial property.

h) Persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act who are subsequently charged.

Section 41 of the Terrorism Act enables police officers to arrest persons for the prevention of terrorism. Within the PSNI, weekly returns of all persons arrested under Section 41 are sent to Statistics Branch along with details of any subsequent charges. The charge can relate to any offence (e.g. attempted murder) and does not necessarily need to be an offence listed under the Terrorism Act.