



Christmas drink drive campaign 2022/23

Northern Ireland

This bulletin summarises available information in relation to the PSNI Christmas drink driving campaign 2022/23, which ran from 1st December 2022 to 1st January 2023 inclusive, specifically the outcomes in terms of Preliminary Breath Tests (PBTs) and drink/drug driving arrests.

These figures are provisional and subject to change, particularly for PBTs which are likely to increase as more information is uploaded to the system.

Key points:

- During the Christmas drink drive campaign from 1st December 2022 to 1st January 2023, initial figures show that PSNI officers conducted over 9,000 preliminary breath tests (PBTs), a decrease of 2.7% on the same period last year.
- Of the 9,343 PBTs conducted, 5.1% (480) resulted in a fail or failed to provide, a similar proportion when compared with the 2021/22 campaign (4.7%).
- A total of 308 people were arrested for drink/drug driving related offences during this year's campaign, representing an increase of 3.0% compared with the same period last year (299).
- The highest number of arrests were made in Belfast (54), while Ards and North Down experienced the largest decrease in arrests when compared with the same period last year (from 27 to 14).
- Males accounted for the majority (86.4%) of those arrested for drink/drug driving offences throughout the 22/23 campaign, while almost half of those arrested were between 30 and 49 years old.
- The highest evidential breath test reading recorded over the campaign was 157µg/100ml.
- The youngest person arrested for drink/drug driving offences during the 2022/23 campaign was 16 years old while the oldest was 83 years old.

Background

There is no one measure of counting alcohol or drug driving offences as this is a complex process and there is no unique source of data. This bulletin has presented the information on the basis that those who have a Preliminary Breath Test with a result of 'Fail' or 'Failure to Provide' are a proxy measure for driving when under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Police will arrest people, collect further evidence via breath, blood or urine and present this to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) who will ultimately decide on the prospect of a successful case.

In terms of the 2022/23 statistics, the PBT figures are based on an extract of the data on 24th January 2023 and are likely to increase as more information is uploaded to the system. The arrest figures were extracted on 12th January 2023. These figures are therefore provisional and subject to change.

Preliminary Breath Tests

Table 1 Number of Preliminary Breath Tests carried out by PSNI by result

Result	1 st Dec 2021 – 1 st Jan 2022	1 st Dec 2021 – 1 st Jan 2022	1 st Dec 2022 – 1 st Jan 2023	1 st Dec 2022 – 1 st Jan 2023	% change between 2021/22 and 2022/23
	Number	%	Number	%	
Zero	8,885	92.5	8,597	92.0	-3.2
Pass	242	2.5	245	2.6	1.2
Warning	23	0.2	21	0.2	-8.7
Fail	304	3.2	326	3.5	7.2
Failed to Provide	147	1.5	154	1.6	4.8
Total	9,601	100	9,343	100	-2.7

Arrests

Table 2 Number of arrests for drink/drug driving offences by District

District	1 st Dec 2021 – 1 st Jan 2022	1 st Dec 2022 – 1 st Jan 2023
Antrim and Newtownabbey	19	25
Ards and North Down	27	14
Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon	36	29
Belfast City	47	54
Causeway Coast and Glens	16	22
Derry City and Strabane	24	29
Fermanagh and Omagh	24	31
Lisburn and Castlereagh	25	16
Mid and East Antrim	10	17
Mid Ulster	35	42
Newry, Mourne and Down	36	29
Total	299	308

Table 3 Number of arrests for drink/drug driving offences by sex

Sex	1 st Dec 2021 – 1 st Jan 2022	1 st Dec 2022 – 1 st Jan 2023
Male	242	266
Female	57	42
Other/Unknown	0	0
Total	299	308

Table 4 Number of arrests for drink/drug driving offences by age group

Age group	1 st Dec 2021 – 1 st Jan 2022	1 st Dec 2022 – 1 st Jan 2023
Under 18	2	4
18 – 29	95	101
30 – 49	154	152
50 – 69	42	46
70+	6	5
Total	299	308

Provisional evidential breath test results

Table 5 Results^{1,2} of evidential breath procedures completed for those arrested for drink/drug driving offences, 1st December 2022 – 1st January 2023

Result	1st Dec 2022 – 1st Jan 2023
Zero	5
1 - 34µg/100ml	17
35 - 49µg/100ml	50
50+µg/100ml	149
Refused to provide	41
No breath result	46
Total	308

¹ 'No breath result' includes those which resulted in a blood/urine sample as opposed to a breath sample, including those being tested for impairment through drugs, the results of which require time to process.

² Figures are provisional and subject to change.

Source: PSNI Statistics Branch, Lisnasharragh