

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Stop and Search Statistics

Financial Year 2015/16

1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016

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Key Statistics

- During the period 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016, 34,171 persons were stopped and searched/questioned. This is 6,632 more persons (24%) than the previous financial year (1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015) when 27,539 were stopped.
- Of those 34,171 persons stopped and searched or stopped and questioned, 2,391 were subsequently arrested (7%).
- There were 6,963 persons stopped and searched under PACE (including a combination of PACE and other powers) of whom 1,133 (16%) were subsequently arrested.
- Of all 34,171 persons stopped and searched, over half (17,989 or 53%) were searched under the Misuse of Drugs Act (including a combination of Misuse of Drugs Act and other powers), a lower proportion than the previous year, when 57% of all stops were under the Misuse of Drugs Act. Of the 17,989 persons stopped, 5,305 were in Belfast City policing district. After Belfast City, the policing district with the greatest number of stops was Lisburn and Castlereagh (2,215 stops).
- Of those 34,171 persons stopped and searched or stopped and questioned, 15% (4,859 persons) were aged 17 and under (where age is known). Of those 4,859 persons aged 17 and under, 61% stopped and searched were under the Misuse of Drugs Act (including a combination of Misuse of Drugs Act and other powers).
- Persons can be stopped and searched or stopped and questioned under a number of legislative powers in Northern Ireland, or combinations of those powers. These powers include the Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) (Northern Ireland) Order, Misuse of Drugs Act, Firearms Order, Justice and Security Act and the Terrorism Act.

Contents

Section One: Persons stopped and searched (*Pages 4 to 6*)

This section highlights the numbers of persons stopped / searched by each legislative power (or combination of powers) and the total number of persons stopped / searched by Police Area and District and age.

Section Two: PACE / Misuse of Drugs Act and Firearms Order stops and searches (*Pages 7 to 8*)

This section focuses on the number of persons stopped and searched under PACE, the Misuse of Drugs Act S23 and the Firearms Order S53. Tables in this section include a breakdown of the reason for the PACE stop and search (stolen articles, articles with blade of point, prohibited articles or fireworks), and a breakdown by Police Area and District of the persons stopped and searched.

Section Three: Trend Information (*Pages 9 to 11*)

This section includes longer term trend information on the use of all legislative powers from 2004/2005.

As part of the Review of Public Administration which came into effect on 1st April 2015, PSNI moved from eight to eleven policing districts, with the new policing model becoming fully operational at the end of September 2015. While previously published figures for Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 were based on a best approximation to the new boundaries, figures for Quarters 3 and 4 in this bulletin are based on the fully implemented boundaries.

An accompanying [Excel Spreadsheet](#) is available on our website which outlines the data in this report.

Data Quality: This report uses information extracted from the PSNI's integrated database designed to capture stop & search information. Officers can either populate this database directly by using their mobile data device when performing a stop & search or complete a hard copy form to be input by local police districts. Validation checks are performed on the information before publishing this data and duplicate entries are removed.

Section One – Persons stopped and searched**Section 1 Table 1 – Number of persons stopped and searched/stopped and questioned by each legislative power: 2014/15 and 2015/16**

Persons stopped under:	2014/15					2015/16				
	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	TOTAL	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	TOTAL
PACE	1,536	1,516	1,692	1,537	6,281	1,468	1,637	2,195	1,523	6,823
PACE & Misuse of Drugs Act S23	23	19	18	23	83	22	33	25	25	105
PACE & Misuse of Drugs Act S23 & JSA S24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
PACE & Misuse of Drugs Act S23 & JSA S21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
PACE & Firearms Order S53 & Misuse of Drugs Act S23	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	2
PACE & Firearms Order S53	1	0	3	1	5	2	2	0	6	10
PACE & JSA 21	5	13	0	6	24	0	0	4	1	5
PACE & JSA 24	2	1	0	1	4	3	1	0	3	7
PACE & TACT S43	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	3
PACE & Other legislative power	6	2	2	1	11	4	0	0	0	4
Misuse of Drugs Act S23	3,816	3,428	3,860	4,421	15,525	3,892	4,220	4,816	4,889	17,817
Misuse of Drugs Act S23 & Other legislative power	3	1	0	0	4	0	1	1	0	2
Firearms Order S53	21	23	42	23	109	58	38	38	43	177
Firearms Order S53 & JSA S21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Firearms Order S53 & Misuse of Drugs Act S23	1	0	1	0	2	4	0	2	1	7
Firearms Order S53 & other legislative power	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Firearms Order S53 & JSA S24	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Firearms Order S53 & TACT S43A	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
TACT S43	25	18	27	22	92	19	36	28	18	101
TACT S43A	1	1	1	3	6	6	2	2	2	12
TACT S47A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TACT S43 & TACT S43A	5	4	4	14	27	9	20	35	36	100
TACT S43 & TACT S43A & JSA S21	1	0	0	4	5	2	0	0	0	2
TACT S43A & JSA S21	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	2
JSA 21	199	207	583	261	1,250	375	323	348	854	1,900
JSA S21 & Misuse of Drugs Act S23	4	11	7	5	27	5	0	7	7	19
JSA S21 & JSA S24	84	112	232	162	590	100	159	198	413	870
JSA S21 & JSA S24 & PACE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
JSA S21 & JSA S24 & Misuse of Drugs Act S23	3	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	1
JSA S21 & JSA S24 & TACT S43	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
JSA S21 & other legislative power	3	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	1
JSA S24	899	523	1,088	762	3,272	988	1,295	1,339	2,436	6,058
JSA S24 & other legislative power	3	1	5	2	11	0	1	5	1	7
JSA S24 & Misuse of Drugs Act S23	5	2	4	3	14	1	2	11	12	26
JSA S24 & Misuse of Drugs Act S23 & other legislative power	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
JSA S24 & TACT S43A	1	2	0	2	5	1	0	1	1	3
JSA S24 & JSA S21 & other legislative power	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
TACT S43 & JSA S21	0	4	3	8	15	4	3	0	0	7
TACT S43 & JSA S24 & JSA S21	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
TACT S43 & JSA S24	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	4
TACT S43 & Misuse of Drugs Act S23	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
TACT S43 & TACT S43A & JSA S21 & JSA S24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TACT S43 & TACT S43A & JSA S24	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
TACT S43A & JSA S21 & JSA S24	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
TACT S43A & Misuse of Drugs Act S23	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	4
Other legislative powers	76	28	35	20	159	21	24	21	15	81
Total Persons stopped and searched/questioned	6,725	5,919	7,609	7,286	27,539	6,989	7,801	9,080	10,301	34,171

Notes: 'Other legislative powers' captures stops / searches conducted under the following less frequently used powers: Schedule 5 to the Terrorism Act 2000, Section 139B of the Criminal Justice Act 1988, Schedule 5 to the Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act 2011, Article 6 Crossbows (Northern Ireland) Order 1988, Article 25 Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 and Article 23B of The Public Order (Northern Ireland) Order 1987.

Source: Statistics Branch, Police Service of Northern Ireland

Number of persons stopped and searched/questioned and persons subsequently arrested under all legislative powers by Police Area and District: 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016

Section 1 Table 2

	Persons Stopped	Persons Subsequently Arrested
	Total Persons	Total Persons
Belfast City Policing	9,978	877
North Area Policing	10,620	658
Antrim & Newtownabbey	2,079	159
Causeway Coast & Glens	2,861	186
Derry City & Strabane	4,281	249
Mid & East Antrim	1,399	64
South Area Policing	13,573	856
Ards & North Down	1,082	80
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	2,984	215
Fermanagh & Omagh	947	101
Lisburn & Castlereagh City	4,323	233
Mid Ulster	1,361	81
Newry, Mourne & Down	2,876	146
Northern Ireland	34,171	2,391

**Number of persons stopped and searched/questioned under all legislative powers by Police Area and District by age group:
1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016**

Section 1 Table 3

Persons Stopped	Total Persons	Not Specified	Aged 17 and under	Aged 18 to 25	Aged 26 to 35	Aged 36 to 45	Aged 46 to 55	Aged 56 to 65	Aged over 65
Belfast City Policing	9,978	79	1,175	3,583	2,924	1,435	616	139	27
North Area Policing	10,620	300	1,675	3,713	2,213	1,407	910	305	97
Antrim & Newtownabbey	2,079	22	452	925	358	186	84	43	9
Causeway Coast & Glens	2,861	112	367	1,005	664	330	250	93	40
Derry City & Strabane	4,281	26	668	1,319	892	718	497	128	33
Mid & East Antrim	1,399	140	188	464	299	173	79	41	15
South Area Policing	13,573	324	2,009	5,901	2,862	1,374	740	278	85
Ards & North Down	1,082	24	300	406	175	90	57	20	10
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	2,984	37	374	1,363	715	307	151	32	5
Fermanagh & Omagh	947	26	112	494	186	72	36	18	3
Lisburn & Castlereagh City	4,323	143	688	1,781	909	392	256	107	47
Mid Ulster	1,361	36	143	598	297	198	63	22	4
Newry, Mourne & Down	2,876	58	392	1,259	580	315	177	79	16
Northern Ireland	34,171	703	4,859	13,197	7,999	4,216	2,266	722	209

Section Two – Police and Criminal Evidence legislation (PACE) / Misuse of Drugs Act / Firearms Order

Number of persons stopped/searched under PACE, Misuse of Drugs Act and Firearms Order and persons subsequently arrested by reason for search: 2014/15 – 2015/16

Section 2 Table 1

	2014/15										2015/16									
	Apr-Jun		Jul-Sep		Oct-Dec		Jan-Mar		TOTAL		Apr-Jun		Jul-Sep		Oct-Dec		Jan-Mar		TOTAL	
	Search	Arrests	Search	Arrests	Search	Arrests	Search	Arrests	Search	Arrests	Search	Arrests	Search	Arrests	Search	Arrests	Search	Arrests	Search	Arrests
Stolen property / articles	928	142	865	132	867	136	815	147	3,475	557	789	151	910	143	1,107	131	919	113	3,725	538
Offensive weapon / Blade or point	235	69	225	69	242	56	283	81	985	275	316	90	322	90	302	84	247	66	1,187	330
Going equipped / Prohibited articles	407	46	409	47	422	75	469	67	1,707	235	393	54	411	74	557	77	396	53	1,757	258
Fireworks	4	0	53	0	184	2	2	0	243	2	1	0	31	2	261	4	1	1	294	7
Drugs	3,855	210	3,462	238	3,891	280	4,452	253	15,660	981	3,926	249	4,258	302	4,862	274	4,943	316	17,989	1,141
Firearms	23	4	24	4	47	12	25	4	119	24	64	19	41	8	41	9	53	8	199	44

Note: Multiple reasons for some searches can be recorded. Therefore, the total number of persons searched and arrested may not equal the sum of all reasons.

Number of persons stopped/searched under PACE, Misuse of Drugs Act and Firearms Order by reason for search by Police Area and District: 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016

Section 2 Table 2

	PACE				Non-PACE	
	Stolen Articles	Articles With Blade or Point	Prohibited Articles	Fireworks	Misuse of Drugs Act S23	Firearms Order
Belfast City Policing	1,219	544	640	17	5,305	96
North Area Policing	957	294	481	114	4,631	40
Antrim & Newtownabbey	216	77	181	39	1,151	16
Causeway Coast & Glens	195	64	74	27	1,321	12
Derry City & Strabane	454	103	185	39	1,443	9
Mid & East Antrim	92	50	41	9	716	3
South Area Policing	1,549	349	636	163	8,053	63
Ards & North Down	121	45	51	1	714	1
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	293	79	152	35	1,909	18
Fermanagh & Omagh	87	30	55	21	650	5
Lisburn & Castlereagh City	686	93	230	35	2,215	14
Mid Ulster	78	40	56	18	843	13
Newry, Mourne & Down	284	62	92	53	1,722	12
Northern Ireland	3,725	1,187	1,757	294	17,989	199

Note: Multiple reasons for some searches can be recorded. Therefore, the total number of persons searched and arrested may not equal the sum of all reasons.

Section Three – Trend Information

The following table and figures illustrate longer-term trend information for the number of stop and searches/stop and questions carried out since 2004/2005.

Number of persons stopped/searched or stopped/questioned under each legislation between 1st April 2004 and 31st March 2016 by financial year.

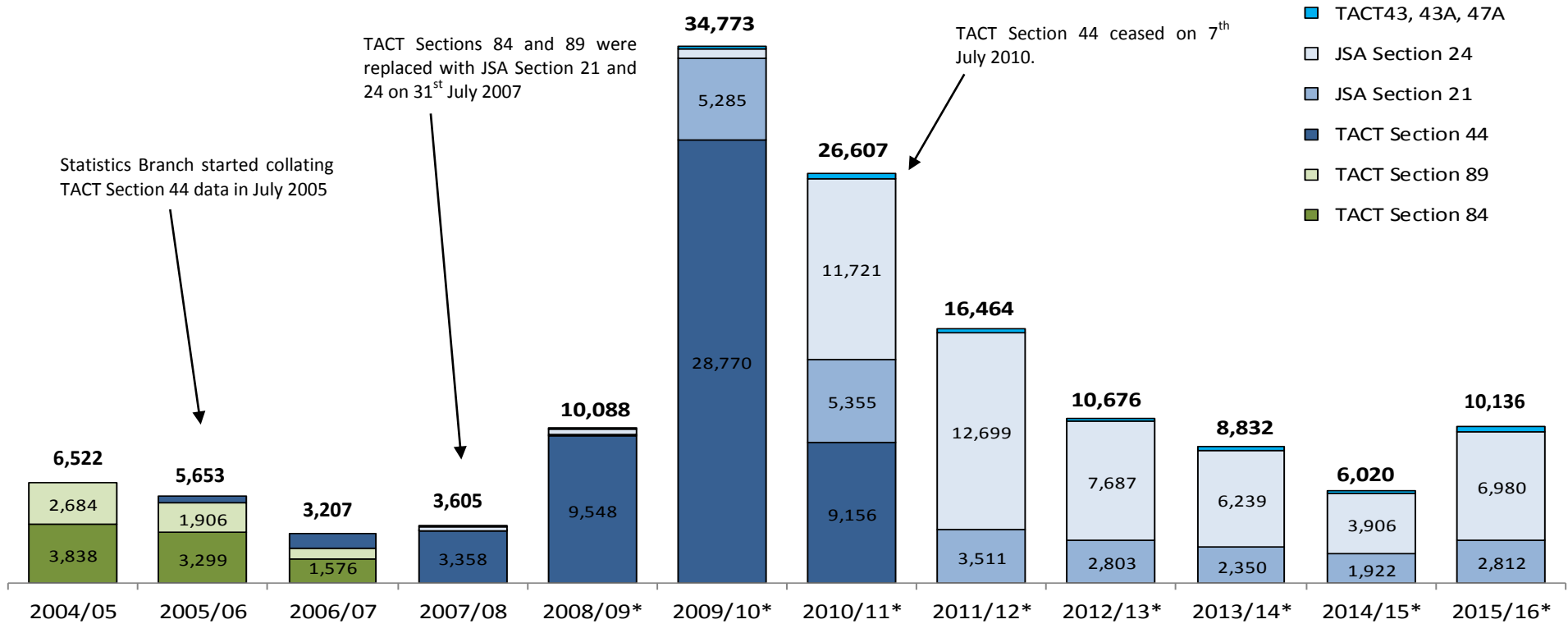
Section 3 Table 1

Legislation	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09 ⁽¹⁾	2009/10 ⁽¹⁾	2010/11 ⁽¹⁾	2011/12 ⁽¹⁾	2012/13 ⁽¹⁾	2013/14 ⁽¹⁾	2014/15 ⁽¹⁾	2015/16 ⁽¹⁾
PACE / Misuse of Drugs Act / Firearms Order	14,434	16,036	16,174	15,362	20,011	23,990	22,785	20,746	20,910	24,428	22,189	25,151
TACT - Section 84 ⁽²⁾	3,838	3,299	1,576									
- Section 89 ⁽²⁾	2,684	1,906	718									
- Section 44 ⁽³⁾		448	913	3,358	9,548	28,770	9,156					
- Section 43/43A ⁽⁴⁾				13	56	97	375	254	186	173	192	344
- Section 47A ⁽⁵⁾								0	0	70	0	0
JSA - Section 21 ⁽²⁾				28	112	5,285	5,355	3,511	2,803	2,350	1,922	2,812
- Section 24 ⁽²⁾				251	372	621	11,721	12,699	7,687	6,239	3,906	6,980
Other legislative powers ⁽⁶⁾									294	417	190	97
Total uses of each legislative power	20,956	21,689	19,381	19,012	30,099	58,763	49,392	37,210	31,880	33,677	28,399	35,384
Total no. of persons stopped/searched⁽⁷⁾	20,956	21,689	19,381	19,012	30,099	53,885	45,394	35,268	30,502	32,590	27,539	34,171
PACE / Misuse of Drugs Act / Firearms Order	69%	74%	83%	81%	66%	41%	46%	56%	66%	73%	78%	71%
All Terrorism Act Powers	31%	26%	17%	18%	32%	49%	19%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
All JSA Powers	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	10%	35%	44%	33%	26%	21%	28%
Other legislative powers	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	<0.5%
All Powers⁽⁸⁾	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

- (1) Combinations of powers were not counted pre-08/09 therefore these figures are a count of the number of persons stopped. Figures from 08/09 are a count of the number of times each individual power was used.
- (2) Part VII of the Terrorism Act lapsed from midnight on the 31st July 2007. As a result Section 84 of TACT was replaced by Section 24 of the Justice and Security Act (JSA) and Section 89 of TACT was replaced by JSA Section 21 (power to stop and question).
- (3) Statistics Branch started collating TACT Section 44 data in July 2005. TACT Section 44 ceased on 7th July 2010.
- (4) Statistics Branch started collating TACT Section 43 and 43A during quarter 3 of 2007/08.
- (5) TACT Section 47A has been in place since March 2011 although the power has only been authorised for use during one period in May 2013.
- (6) On the 31st October 2012 changes were made to the PSNI's STOPS database to ensure that stop/searches conducted under less frequently used powers would be captured under an 'Other legislative powers' category. 'Other legislative powers' captures stops / searches conducted under the following less frequently used powers: Schedule 5 to the Terrorism Act 2000, Section 139B of the Criminal Justice Act 1988, Schedule 5 to the Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act 2011, Article 6 Crossbows (Northern Ireland) Order 1988, Article 25 Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 and Article 23B of The Public Order (Northern Ireland) Order 1987.
- (7) The difference between total use of each power and total no. of persons stopped/searched will be due to persons stopped under combinations of powers being counted under each legislation used (i.e. someone stopped under JSA S21 and JSA S24 will have a count of one under each of these powers).
- (8) Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Terrorism related legislation - Section 3 Figure 1

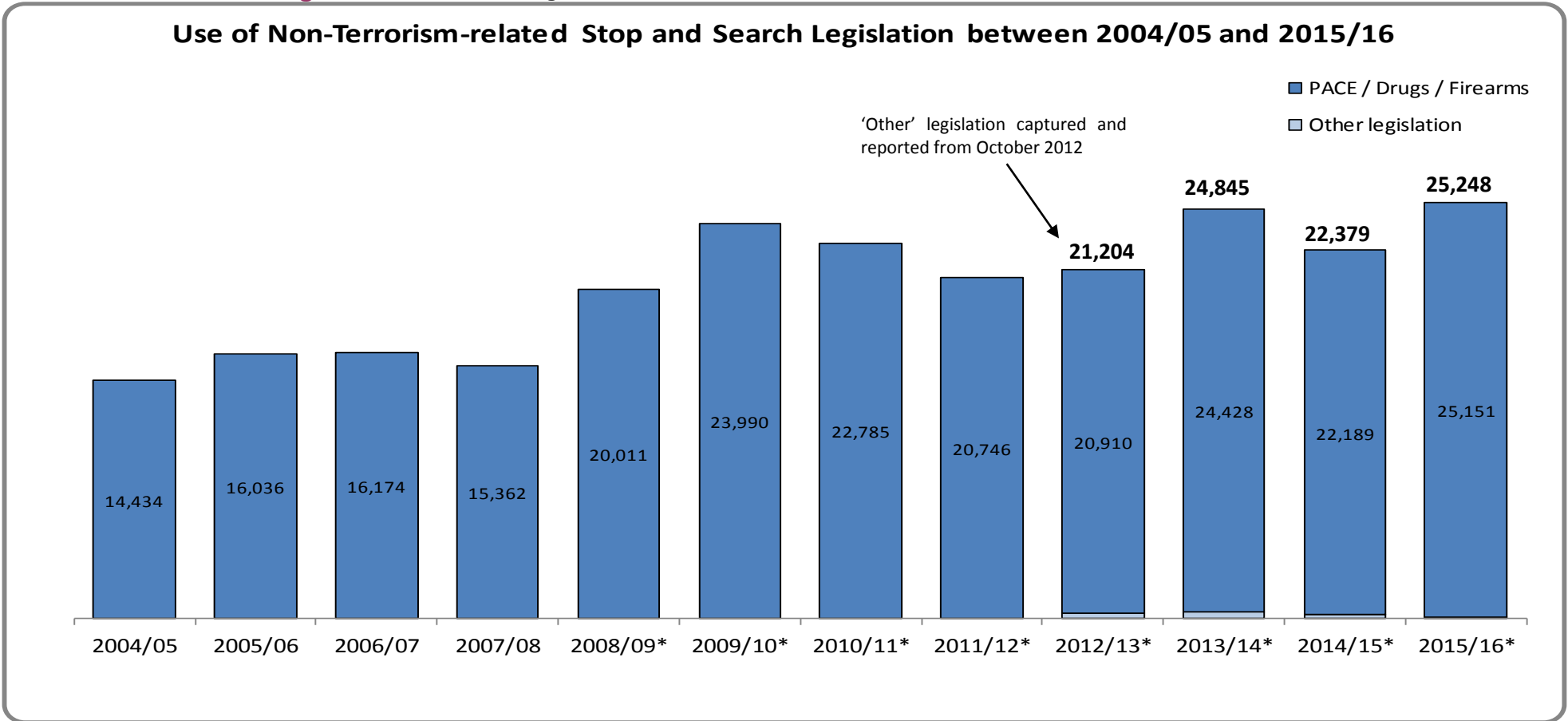
Use of Terrorism-related Stop and Search/Stop and Question Legislation between 2004/05 and 2015/16



* Combinations of powers were not counted pre-08/09 therefore these figures are a count of the number of persons stopped. Figures from 08/09 are a count of the number of times each individual power was used.

** For presentational purposes the count of less frequently used powers are not displayed in the graph above (e.g. TACT S44 in 2005/2006) but are included in the overall totals at the top of each bar. For a count of those less frequently used powers refer to Section 3 Table 1.

Non-Terrorism related legislation - Section 3 Figure 2



* Combinations of powers were not counted pre-08/09 therefore these figures are a count of the number of persons stopped. Figures from 08/09 are a count of the number of times each individual power was used.

** On the 31st October 2012 changes were made to the PSNI's STOPS database to ensure that stop/searches conducted under less frequently used powers would be captured under an 'Other legislative powers' category. 'Other legislative powers' captures stops / searches conducted under the following less frequently used powers: Schedule 5 to the Terrorism Act 2000, Section 139B of the Criminal Justice Act 1988, Schedule 5 to the Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act 2011, Article 6 Crossbows (Northern Ireland) Order 1988, Article 25 Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 and Article 23B of The Public Order (Northern Ireland) Order 1987.

*** For presentational purposes the count of 'Other legislation' (recorded from October 2012) is not displayed in the graph above but is included in the overall totals at the top of each bar. For a count of 'Other legislation' refer to Section 3 Table 1.