

Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics

1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

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Key Statistics

During 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021:

- there were 3 security related deaths, compared to one in the previous year. There was also an increase in the number of paramilitary style shootings compared to the previous year, however current levels are markedly lower than 10 years ago. The number of overall shooting incidents recorded was similar to the previous year, while there was a decrease in the number of bombings and paramilitary style assaults.
- there were 15 bombing incidents compared to 21 in the previous year. Other than 2018/19, when there were also 15 bombings incidents, 2020/21 saw the lowest number of bombings since 1995/96.
- there were 41 shooting incidents, one more than the previous year.
- there were 18 casualties of paramilitary style shootings, compared to 13 in the previous year. This increase ends a 3 year downward trend in the number of such attacks that was witnessed between 2016/17 and 2019/20. Of the 18 shootings, 14 were carried out by republicans. All 18 casualties were aged 18 years or older.
- there were 39 casualties of paramilitary style assaults, compared to 67 in the previous year. It is the lowest number of such assaults since 2012/13. Loyalists were responsible for over three-quarters of these assaults and of the 39 casualties, one was under 18 years old.
- there were 105 persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000, compared to 123 in the previous year. It is the lowest number of arrests under this legislation since its introduction in February 2001. The number of persons subsequently charged was 20 compared to 15 in the previous year. It is the highest number of persons subsequently charged in 6 years.



Northern Ireland
Statistics and Research Agency



Keeping People Safe

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We welcome user feedback on these statistics. This can be sent to the email address on the cover page or by contacting us at the telephone number provided.

1. Things you need to know about this release

Coverage

Police Recorded Statistics on the Security Situation for Northern Ireland are collated and produced by statisticians seconded to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) from the Northern Ireland and Statistics Research Agency (NISRA).

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. The PSNI produces statistics on incidents relating to the security situation that are reported to the police, including security related deaths, shooting and bombing incidents, paramilitary style attacks and arrests under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000.

This annual bulletin presents finalised security situation statistics for the financial year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. An accompanying [spreadsheet](#) is available on our website which outlines the data in this bulletin and historic trends. Further information on how these statistics are collated, reported and used is included in the [Security Situation Statistics User Guide](#) available on the [PSNI website](#).

The security situation figures relate to those incidents that took place within Northern Ireland, they do not include any security 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.

National Statistics Status

National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and as producers, it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

These statistics were designated as National Statistics in June 2012 following a full [assessment](#) against the [Code of Practice](#).

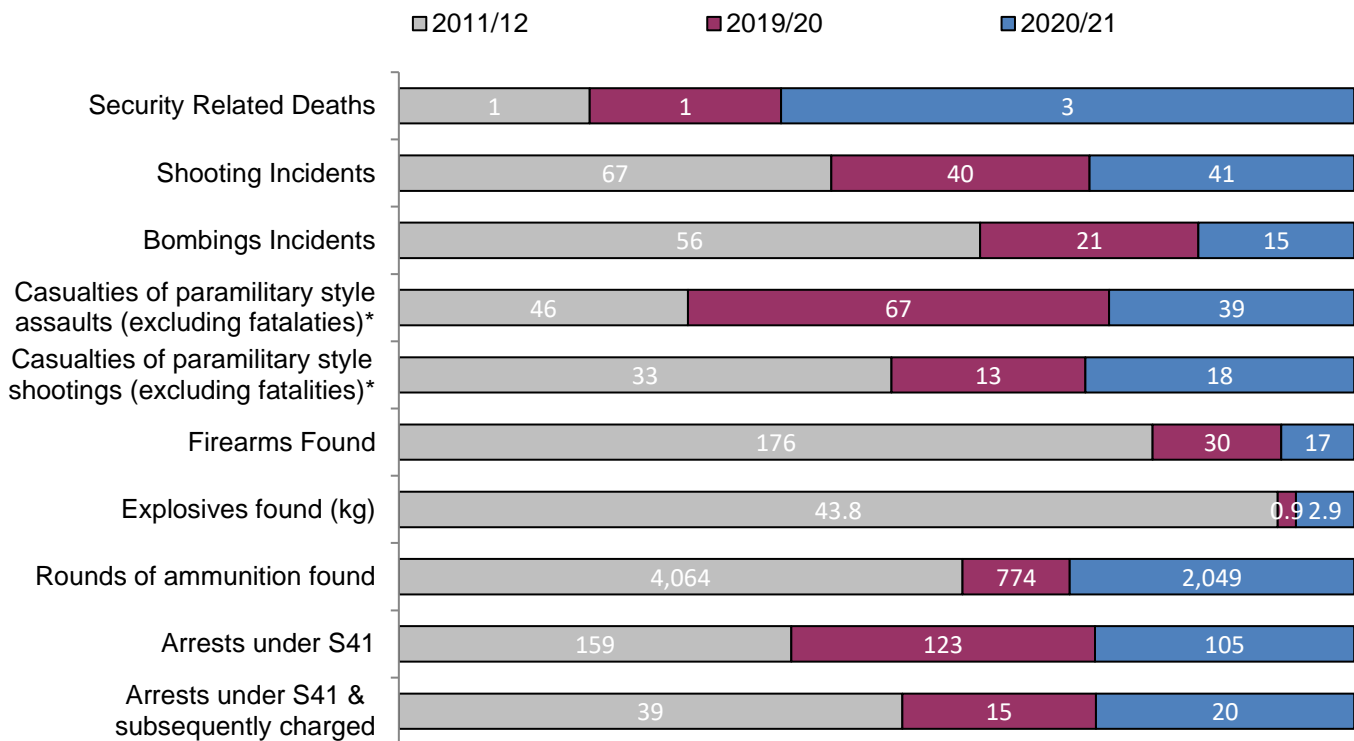
Since the assessment by the UK Statistics Authority, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- Enhanced the amount of information available to users, for example inclusion of longer trend information and District breakdown in annual reports.
- Reviewed and enhanced the format of the monthly bulletins.
- Improved accessibility by introducing user friendly methods of data presentation, for example tables, maps and charts, and providing tables in open document spreadsheet format.
- Continued to conduct regular consultation with internal and external users, for example via a customer satisfaction survey to obtain feedback and suggestions for improvements, with [results](#) published on the PSNI statistics website.
- Assessment against the Administrative Data Quality Assurance framework in 2018 to ensure ongoing quality of outputs and identify improvements.

2. Summary statistics

Figure 1 compares the number of security related incidents during the past year (2020/21) with the previous year (2019/20) and 2011/12.

Figure 1: Comparison of security incidents between 2020/21, 2019/20 and 2011/12.



* Paramilitary style assaults/shootings that result in death are counted as security related deaths and are not included in the casualties of paramilitary style assaults/shootings figures.

3. Longer term trends since 1990

Figure 2: Number of deaths due to the security situation 1990/91 – 2020/21

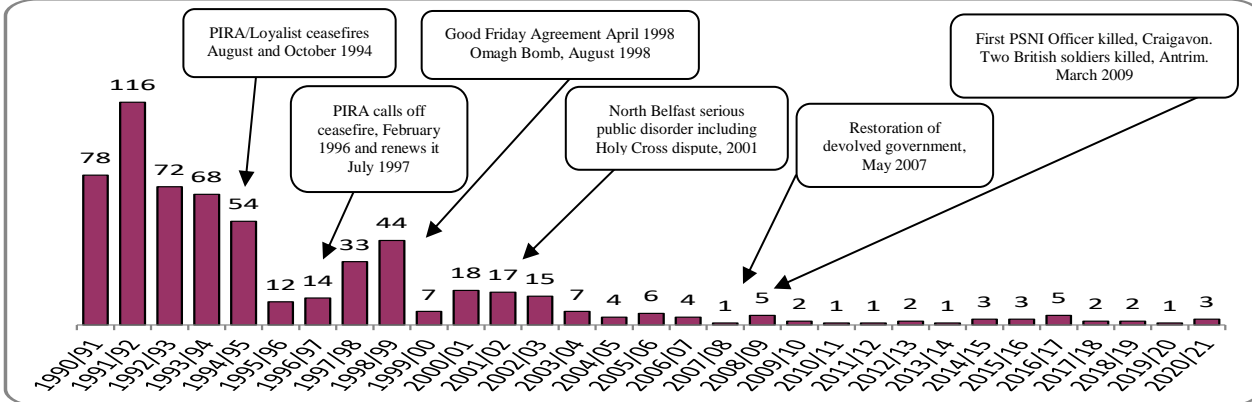


Figure 3: Number of shooting incidents 1990/91 – 2020/21

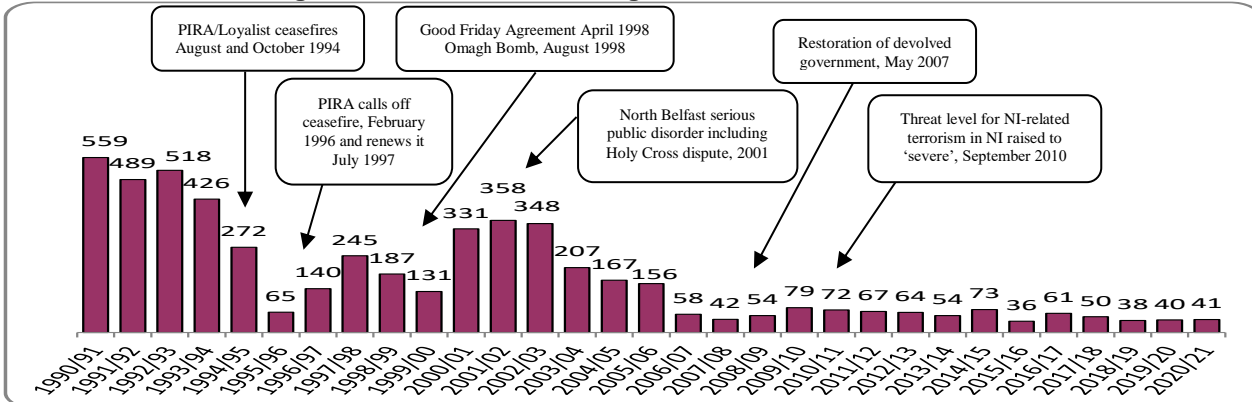


Figure 4: Number of bombing incidents 1990/91 – 2020/21

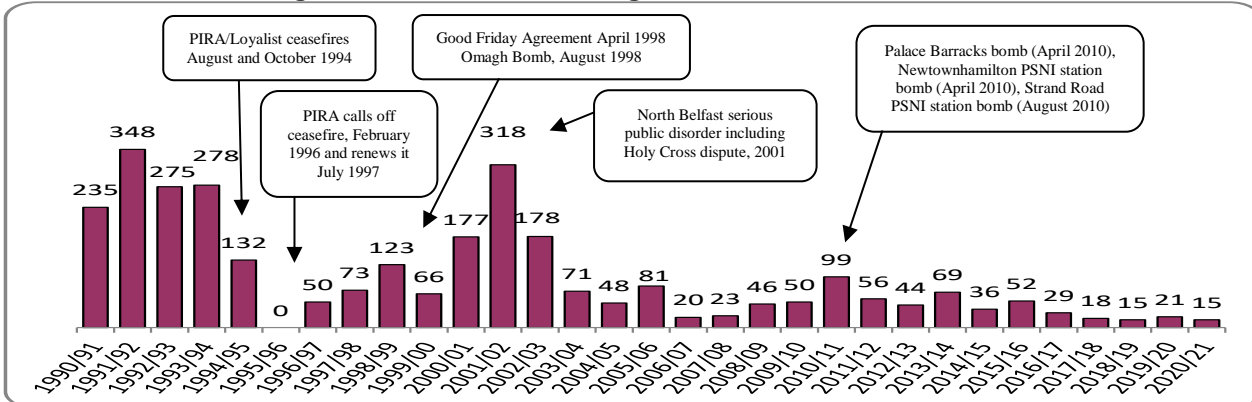
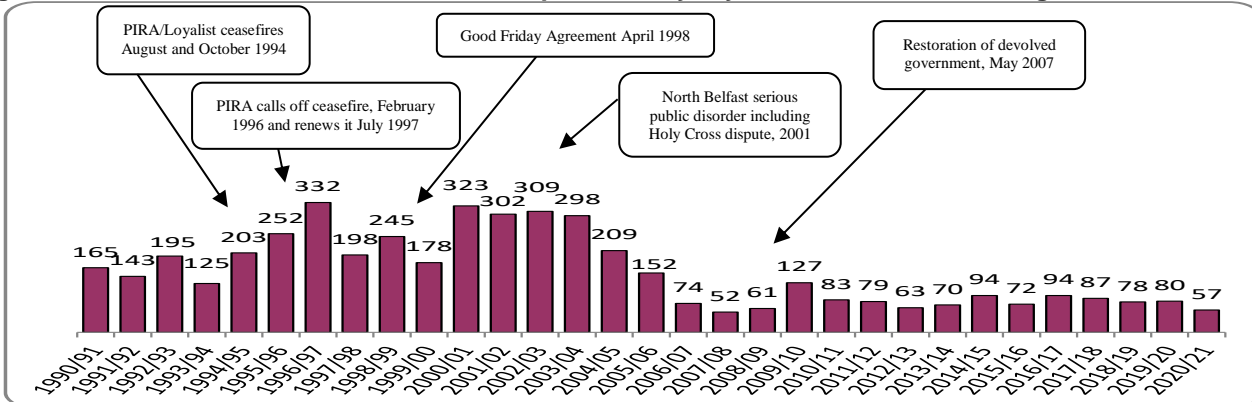


Figure 5: Number of casualties as a result of paramilitary-style assaults and shootings 1990/91 – 2020/21



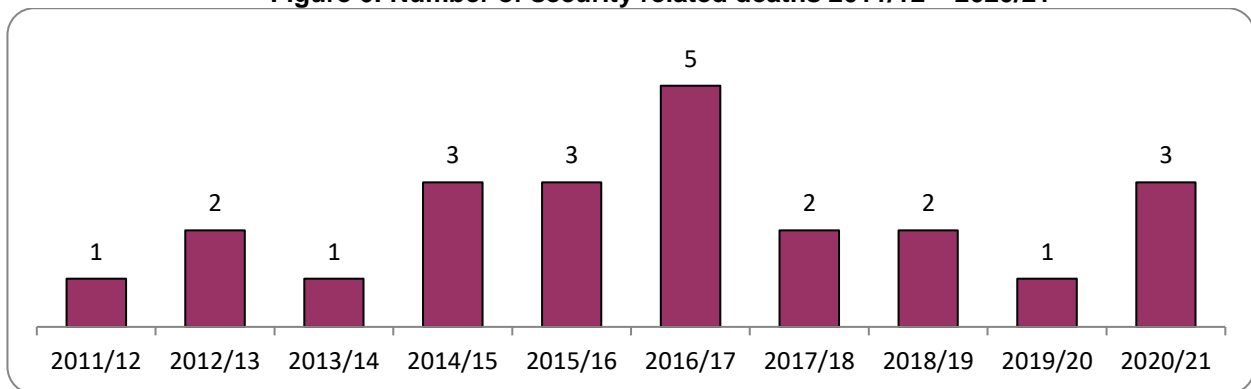
4. Ten year trends

4.1 Security Related Deaths

Security related deaths are 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.

- There were three security related deaths during 2020/21, compared to one or two in each of the previous three years. All three of the deaths during 2020/21 occurred in Belfast, one in May 2020, one in June 2020 and one in February 2021.
- The past 5 years have seen 13 security related deaths compared to the 10 deaths that occurred during the previous 5 years, see Figure 6.

Figure 6: Number of security related deaths 2011/12 – 2020/21

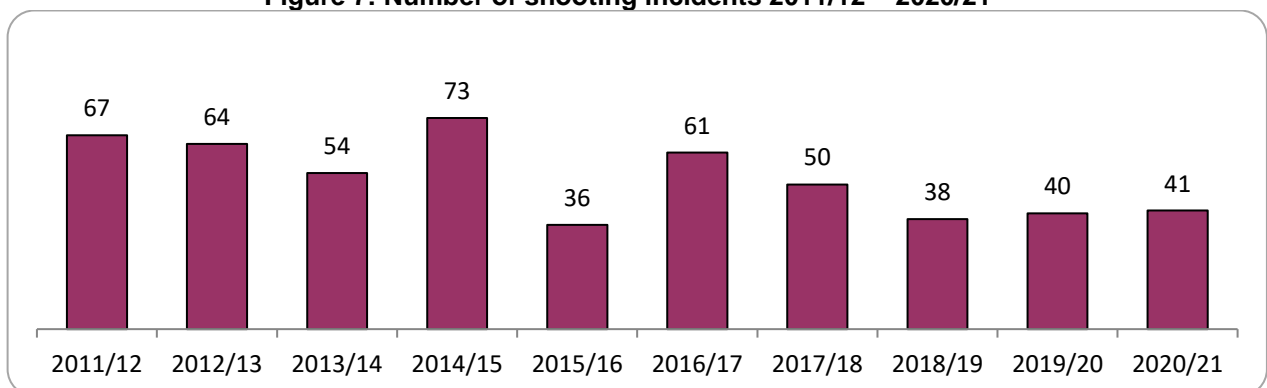


4.2 Shooting Incidents

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).

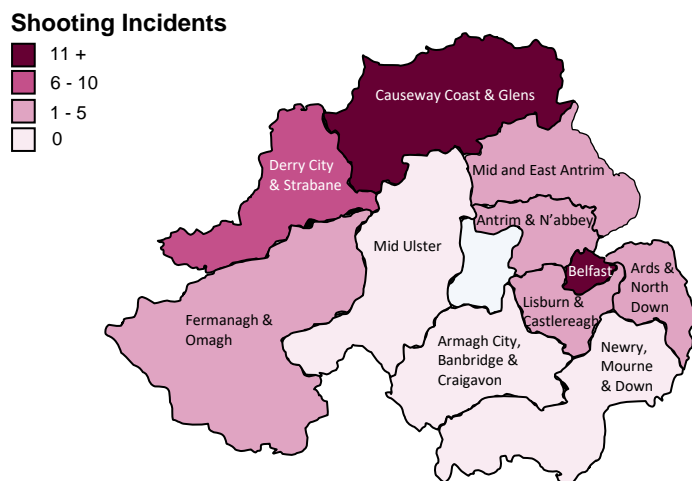
- There were 41 shooting incidents during 2020/21, similar to the numbers that occurred during the previous two years (40 in 2019/20 and 38 in 2018/19); see Figure 7.
- The number of shooting incidents over the past 5 years (230 incidents) has decreased by approximately a fifth (22%) compared to the number that occurred during the previous 5 years (294 incidents).

Figure 7: Number of shooting incidents 2011/12 – 2020/21



- Belfast and Causeway Coast and Glens experienced the greatest number of shootings during 2020/21; almost three-quarters (71%) of all shootings occurred in these districts. There were 17 shooting incidents in Belfast in the past year, one more than the previous year. The number of shooting incidents more than doubled in Causeway Coast and Glens (from 5 in 2019/20 to 12 in 2020/21), while conversely the number halved in Derry City and Strabane (from 12 in 2019/20 to 6 in 2020/21). Figure 8 shows the distribution of shooting incidents during 2020/21 while Section 5 provides a breakdown by Policing District compared to the previous year.

Figure 8: Number of shooting incidents by policing district during 2020/21

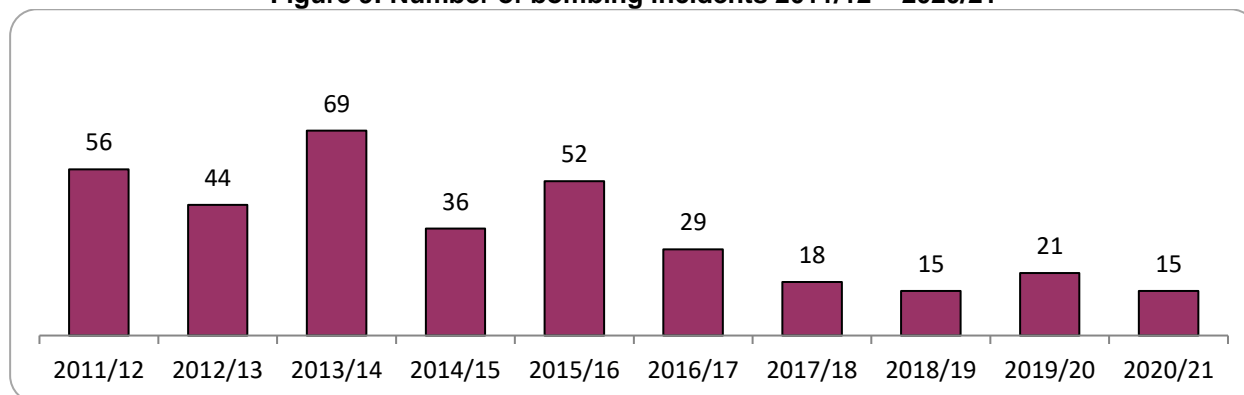


4.3 Bombing Incidents

These include all incidents where a bombing device explodes or is defused. If a device is found that is not complete or armed, then it is recorded as a 'find' and not as a bombing.

- There were 15 bombing incidents during 2020/21 compared to 21 during the previous year (Figure 9). Other than 2018/19, when there were also 15 bombings incidents, 2020/21 saw the lowest number of bombings since 1995/96; see the longer-term trends in Section 3.
- The number of bombing incidents over the past 5 years (98 incidents) is considerably lower (62%) than the number that occurred during the previous 5 years (257 incidents).

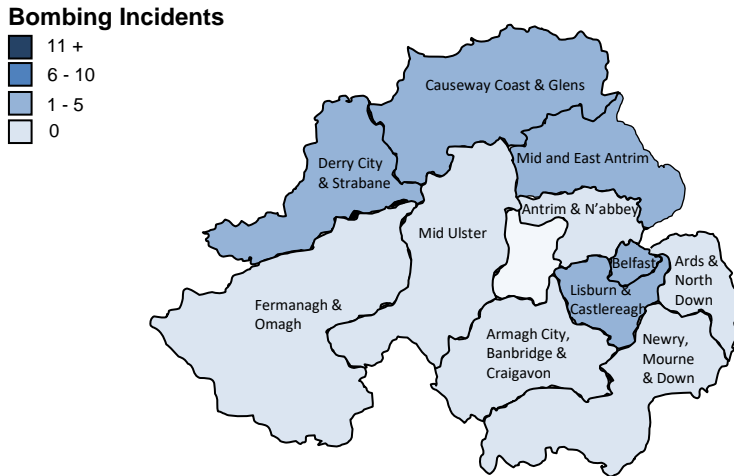
Figure 9: Number of bombing incidents 2011/12 – 2020/21



- Belfast and Causeway Coast and Glens each experienced 4 bombing incidents during 2020/21. While the number approximately halved in Belfast compared to the previous year (from 9 to 4) the 4 bombings in Causeway Coast and Glens in 2020/21 compares to none recorded during the

previous year; see Section 5. Derry City and Strabane and Mid and East Antrim each experienced 3 bombing incidents in 2020/21 and Lisburn and Castlereagh City experienced one (see Figure 10 and Section 5).

Figure 10: Number of bombing incidents by policing district during 2020/21

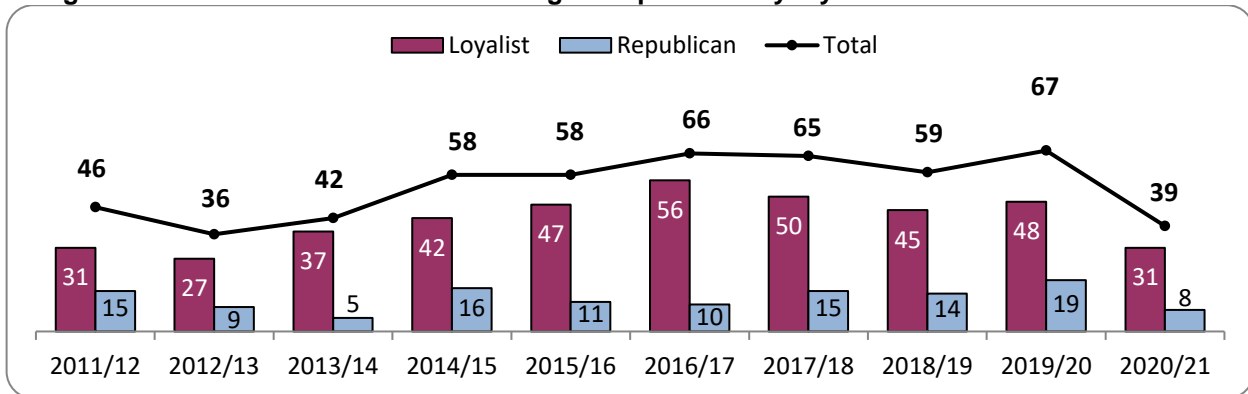


4.4 Paramilitary Style Assaults

Paramilitary style 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. Paramilitary style assaults that result in death are counted as 'security related deaths' and are not reflected in the paramilitary style assault figures.

- There were 39 casualties of paramilitary style assaults during 2020/21 compared to 67 during the previous year. It is the lowest number of such assaults since 2012/13, when there were 36.
- The number of assaults during the past 5 years (296) is approximately a quarter higher (23%) than the number during the previous 5 years (240).

Figure 11: Number of casualties resulting from paramilitary style assaults⁽¹⁾ 2011/12 – 2020/21

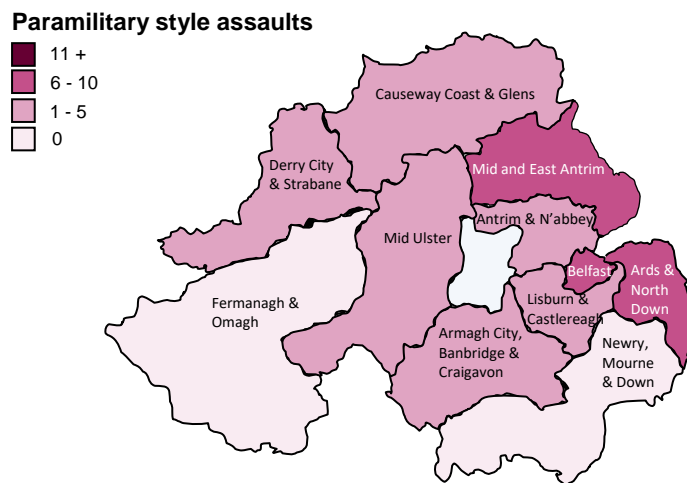


(1) Paramilitary style assaults that result in death are counted as security related deaths and are not included in the casualties of paramilitary style assaults figures. Attribution is as perceived by PSNI based on the information available at the time of incident.

- The majority of paramilitary style assaults continue to be attributed to Loyalists. In 2020/21, over three-quarters (79%) of assaults were attributed to Loyalists with the remaining attributed to Republicans.

- Of the 39 casualties of paramilitary style assaults during the past year, one was aged under 18 years old.
- The greatest number of assaults were carried out in Belfast (9 casualties), followed by Ards and North Down and Mid and East Antrim (8 in each of these Districts). Figures for all districts can be found in Section 5. Figure 12 shows the distribution of paramilitary style assaults across the 11 policing districts.
- Although Belfast experienced 9 such assaults, this was 6 fewer than occurred in this district during the previous 12 months. Similarly, Antrim and Newtownabbey saw a substantial decrease in number of such assaults compared to the previous year (from 13 to 5), as did Derry City and Strabane (from 10 to 3).

Figure 12: Number of casualties as a result of paramilitary style assaults during 2020/21

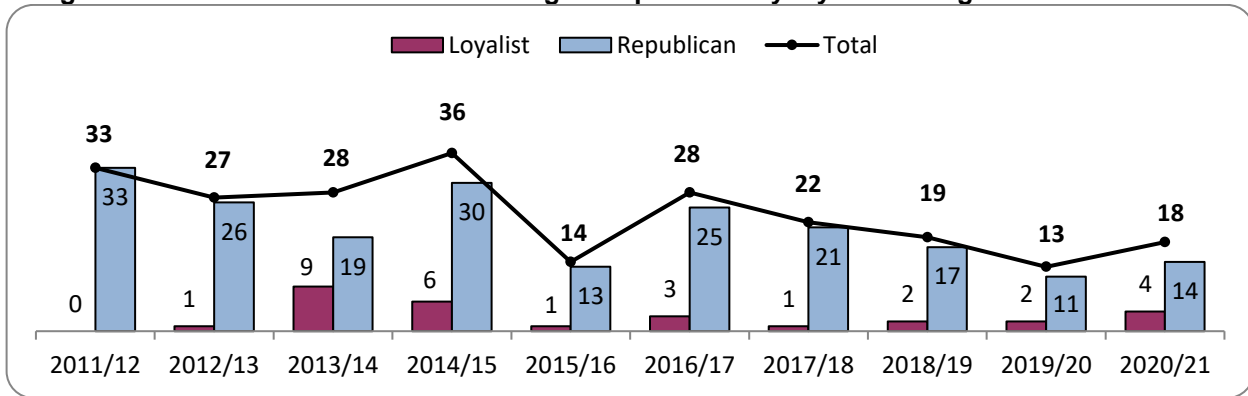


4.5 Paramilitary Style Shootings

Paramilitary style shootings usually result in the injured party being 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. Paramilitary style shootings that result in death are counted as 'security related deaths' and are not reflected in the paramilitary style shooting figures.

- There were 18 casualties of paramilitary style shootings during 2020/21 compared to 13 during the previous year. After 3 years in which the number of such attacks decreased year-on-year, 2020/21 saw a reversal in this trend (Figure 13). However the number of casualties of paramilitary style shootings during the past 5 years (100) is approximately a quarter lower (28%) than during the previous 5 years (138).
- The majority of paramilitary style shootings continue to be attributed to Republicans. In 2020/21, 14 of the 18 shootings were attributed to Republicans while 4 were attributed to Loyalists.

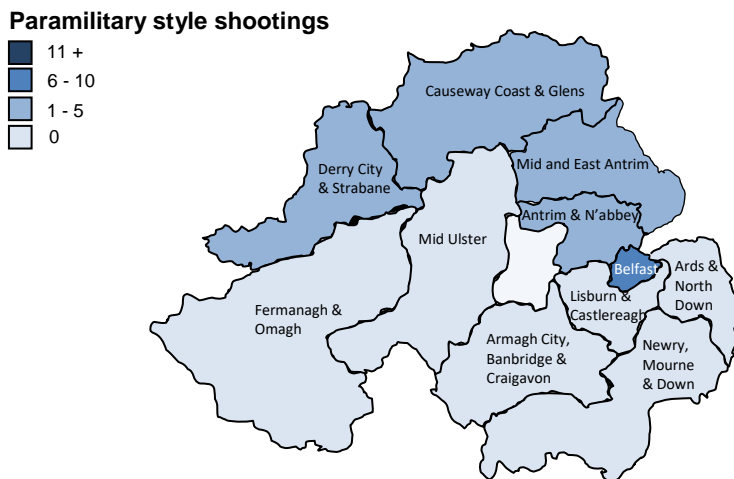
Figure 13: Number of casualties resulting from paramilitary style shooting⁽¹⁾ 2011/12 – 2020/21



(1) Paramilitary style shootings that result in death are counted as security related deaths and are not included in the casualties of paramilitary style shootings figures. Attribution is as perceived by PSNI based on the information available at the time of incident.

- All of the 18 casualties of paramilitary style shootings during the past year were aged 18 years or older.
- Nine paramilitary style shootings in the past year were carried out in Belfast, 5 in Derry City and Strabane, 2 in Causeway Coast and Glens and 1 in each of the districts Mid and East Antrim and Antrim and Newtownabbey.
- Figure 14 shows the distribution of paramilitary style shootings during 2020/21 while Section 5 provides a breakdown by Policing District compared to the previous year.

Figure 14: Number of casualties as a result of paramilitary style shootings during 2020/21



4.6 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.

- There were 17 firearms found during 2020/21 compared to 30 during the previous year. The number of firearms found was the smallest number found since records began in 1969.

- There was 2.9kg of explosives found during 2020/21 compared to 0.9kg during the previous year and 2,049 rounds of ammunition found during 2020/21 compared to 774 during the previous year.

Table 1: Number of firearms, explosives and rounds of ammunition seized by PSNI 2011/12 – 2020/21

	Firearms	Explosives (kg)	Rounds of Ammunition
2011/12	176	43.8	4,064
2012/13	57	11.4	2,589
2013/14	101	23.1	5,057
2014/15	58	22.9	4,569
2015/16	66	2.4	4,418
2016/17	45	75.1	2,635
2017/18	40	0.4	5,758
2018/19	45	1.2	1,284
2019/20	30	0.9	774
2020/21	17	2.9	2,049

4.7 Section 41 Terrorism Act Arrests and Subsequent Charges

Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000 enables police officers to arrest persons whom they reasonably suspect to be a terrorist. Following arrest under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act an individual may be charged with any offence (e.g. attempted murder) and not necessarily an offence listed under the Terrorism Act.

- There were 105 persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000 during 2020/21 compared to 123 during the previous year. This is the lowest number of arrests under this legislation since its introduction in February 2001.
- Of the 105 arrests, 33 of them occurred in Derry City and Strabane and 29 in Belfast (Section 5).
- There were 20 persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequently charged (with any offence) during 2020/21 compared to 15 during the previous year. This is the highest number of persons subsequently charged since 2014/15.

Table 2: Number of persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequently charged 2011/12 – 2020/21

	Persons arrested under Section 41 of TACT	Persons subsequently charged ^(1,2)
2011/12	159	39
2012/13	157	50
2013/14	168	32
2014/15	227	35
2015/16	149	18
2016/17	137	19
2017/18	176	13
2018/19	146	16
2019/20	123	15
2020/21	105	20

(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) Persons can be charged under legislation other than the Terrorism Act.

5. District level tables

Bombing and Shooting Incidents

Policing District	Bombing Incidents ¹			Shooting Incidents ²		
	12 months to March 20	12 months to March 21	Change	12 months to March 20	12 months to March 21	Change
Belfast City	9	4	-5	16	17	1
Lisburn & Castlereagh City	0	1	1	0	1	1
Ards & North Down	1	0	-1	3	1	-2
Newry, Mourne & Down	0	0	0	0	0	0
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	3	0	-3	1	0	-1
Mid Ulster	0	0	0	1	0	-1
Fermanagh & Omagh	1	0	-1	0	1	1
Derry City & Strabane	4	3	-1	12	6	-6
Causeway Coast & Glens	0	4	4	5	12	7
Mid & East Antrim	0	3	3	1	2	1
Antrim & Newtownabbey	3	0	-3	1	1	0
Northern Ireland	21	15	-6	40	41	1

(1) Individual bombing incidents may involve one or more explosive devices. Incidents include explosions and defusings. Incidents involving hoax devices, petrol bombings or incendiaries are excluded.

(2) The following types of incidents are included:

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

Casualties of Paramilitary-Style Attacks

Policing District	Casualties Resulting from Paramilitary-Style Shootings ³			Casualties Resulting from Paramilitary-Style Assaults ³		
	12 months to March 20	12 months to March 21	Change	12 months to March 20	12 months to March 21	Change
Belfast City	6	9	3	15	9	-6
Lisburn & Castlereagh City	0	0	0	3	1	-2
Ards & North Down	1	0	-1	10	8	-2
Newry, Mourne & Down	0	0	0	0	0	0
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	0	0	0	0	1	1
Mid Ulster	0	0	0	0	1	1
Fermanagh & Omagh	0	0	0	1	0	-1
Derry City & Strabane	5	5	0	10	3	-7
Causeway Coast & Glens	0	2	2	3	3	0
Mid & East Antrim	1	1	0	12	8	-4
Antrim & Newtownabbey	0	1	1	13	5	-8
Northern Ireland	13	18	5	67	39	-28

(3) Paramilitary style assaults/shootings that result in death are counted as security related deaths and are not included in the casualties of paramilitary style assaults/shootings figures.

Arrests under Section 41 TACT and subsequent charges

Policing District	Section 41 Terrorism Act Arrests			Persons charged subsequent to S41 arrest ^{4,5}		
	12 months to March 20	12 months to March 21	Change	12 months to March 20	12 months to March 21	Change
Belfast City	59	29	-30	5	4	-1
Lisburn & Castlereagh City	1	5	4	0	1	1
Ards & North Down	4	4	0	1	0	-1
Newry, Mourne & Down	1	1	0	0	0	0
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	3	6	3	0	3	3
Mid Ulster	0	5	5	0	3	3
Fermanagh & Omagh	3	5	2	1	0	-1
Derry City & Strabane	46	33	-13	8	6	-2
Causeway Coast & Glens	2	12	10	0	2	2
Mid & East Antrim	0	0	0	0	0	0
Antrim & Newtownabbey	4	5	1	0	1	1
Northern Ireland	123	105	-18	15	20	5

(4) 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.

(5) Persons can be charged under legislation other than the Terrorism Act.

6. 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. Figures within the current financial year to date are provisional and will be subject to slight revision until figures for the full financial year are published. This means that the totals for each month from April 2020 can change each time the figures are published during the financial year. These amendments can happen for a number of reasons, such as an incident being included or excluded following further investigation by an officer.

Since the publication of the previous bulletin up until 28 February 2021, 9 revisions have been made to the data as detailed below:

- The number of bombing incidents recorded in September 2020 increased by 1 (from 1 to 2), in November 2020 increased by 3 (from 1 to 4), in December 2020 decreased by 1 (from 1 to 0), in January 2021 increased by 1 (from 0 to 1) and in February 2021 decreased by 1 (from 1 to 0).
- The quantity of explosives seized by the PSNI in November 2020 decreased by 0.72kg (from 0.74kg to 0.02kg). The number of rounds of ammunition seized by the PSNI in February 2021 increased by 2 (from 30 to 32).
- The number of persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequently charged in November 2020 increased by 1 (from 0 to 1) and in February 2021 increased by 4 (from 1 to 5).