

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics

Annual Report covering the period
1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017

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The PSNI is required to report on its performance on a financial year basis and hence this report covers the period 1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017. 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, and 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.

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is a producer's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

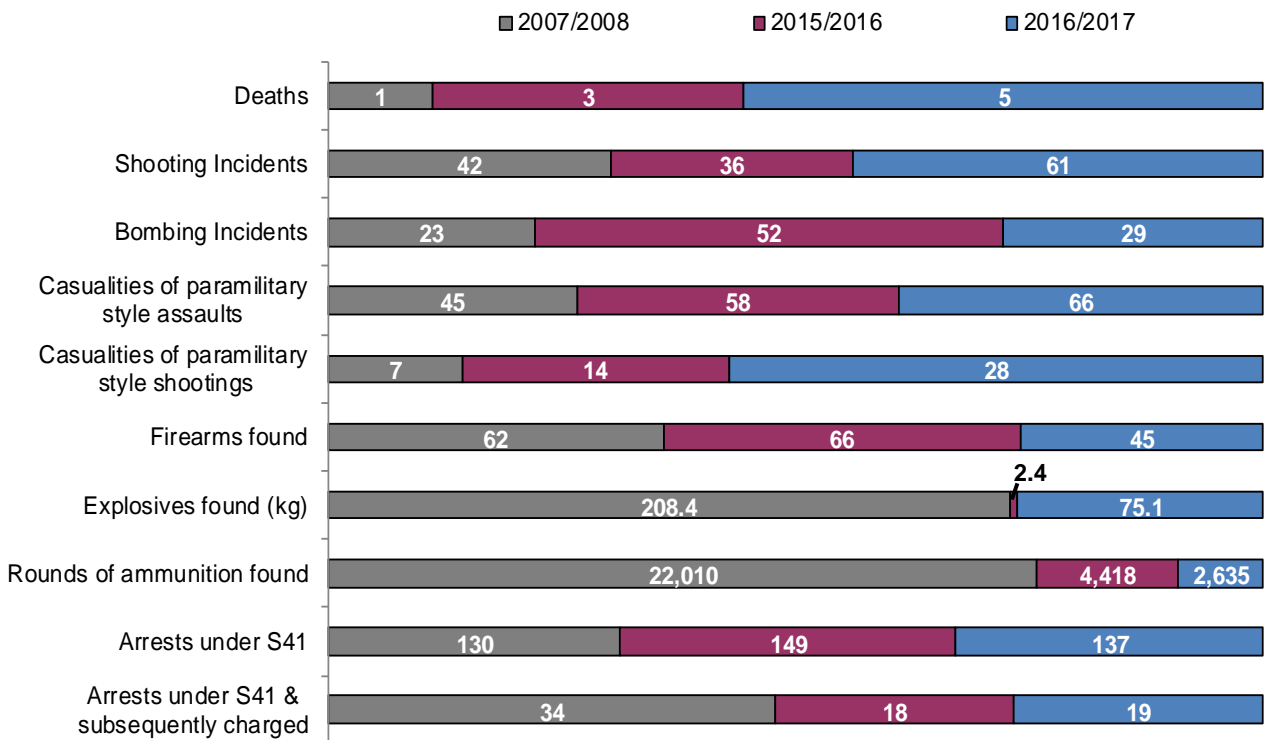
Section 1 – Security Statistics Summary

Security related deaths, shooting and bombing incidents were at relatively high levels in the early 1990s and then after the first ceasefire in 1994, dropped to their lowest levels in 1995/96. They increased again in the early 2000s, albeit at levels well below those pre-ceasefire. After 2002/03 the levels of security related incidents decreased again and have remained relatively consistent over the last 10 years (see Annex 1 for historical figures). However, they still pose a significant threat as evidenced by the number of deaths and multiple shooting and bombing incidents that still occur each year.

During 2016/17 there were 5 security related deaths, two more than occurred during previous year (2015/16). The number of shooting incidents increased from 36 to 61, however the number of bombing incidents nearly halved compared with 2015/16 (52 to 29). The number of casualties resulting from paramilitary style assaults increased slightly compared to 2015/16 (58 to 66), while the number of casualties resulting from paramilitary style shootings doubled from 14 to 28. Compared with the previous year, the quantity of explosives seized by the PSNI increased while the number of firearms and rounds of ammunition seized decreased.

Figure 1 compares the number of security incidents during the past year (2016/17) with the previous year (2015/16) and ten years ago (2007/2008).

Figure 1: Comparing security incidents for 2016/17, the previous year 2015/16 and ten years ago (2007/08).



** In addition to the 28 non-fatal casualties of paramilitary style shootings during 2016/17, as shown in Figure 1, there was an additional fatality as a result of a paramilitary style shooting during this period. This occurred in April 2016. Paramilitary style assaults/shootings that result in death are counted as 'security related deaths'.*

- During 2016/17 there were five security related deaths, two more than occurred during 2015/16 and the highest number per year since 2008/09. Of the five deaths in 2016/17, four occurred in Belfast City policing district between April 2016 and October 2016 and one occurred in Mid and East Antrim policing district in March 2017.
- In 2016/17 the police recorded 61 shooting incidents and 29 bombing incidents as a result of the security situation. This was 25 more shooting incidents than in the previous year

(2015/16) and 19 more than occurred ten years ago in 2007/08. The number of bombing incidents was 23 fewer than in the previous year (2015/16) and the lowest number per year since 2007/08.

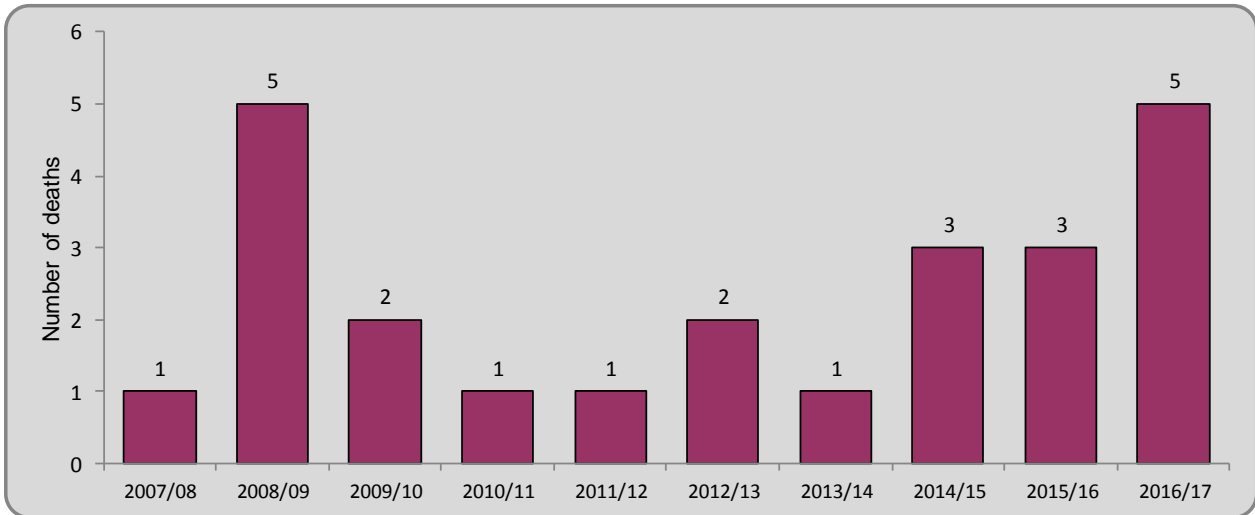
- During 2016/17 there were 28 casualties resulting from paramilitary style shootings, double the number that occurred the previous year, however the 14 casualties recorded the previous year was the lowest number in the previous eight years. Of the 28 casualties during 2016/17 25 were attributed to Republicans and 3 were attributed to Loyalists.
- There were 66 casualties as a result of paramilitary style assaults in 2016/17, 8 more than occurred in 2015/16 and 21 more than the 45 recorded ten years ago in 2007/08. Of the 66 recorded in past year, 56 were attributed to Loyalists and 10 were attributed to Republicans.
- There were 45 firearms seized by the PSNI during 2016/17 compared to 66 seized during the previous year. The 45 firearms seized during the past year was the lowest number seized per year in the past 10 years. The number of firearms seized each year has fluctuated over the last decade with a peak of 176 firearms seized in 2011/12.
- During 2016/17, 75.1kg of explosives and 2,635 rounds of ammunition were seized. This was the largest quantity of explosives seized per year since 2007/08. The 2,635 rounds of ammunition seized during the past year was 40% lower than the previous year (2015/16) and 88% lower than the 22,010 rounds seized ten years ago in 2007/08.
- In 2016/17, 137 people were arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act of which 19 were subsequently charged with any offence. This was 12 fewer arrests than the previous year and other than in 2007/08, when 130 persons were arrested, it was the lowest number of arrests under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act in the past 10 ten years. The 19 persons subsequently charged in 2016/17 was one more than in 2015/16, which was the lowest number of persons subsequently charged in the previous ten years.

Section 2 – Deaths due to the Security Situation

During 2016/17 there were five security related deaths in Northern Ireland, the largest number per year since 2008/09. Four of these deaths occurred in Belfast City policing district in April, May, August and October 2016 and one occurred in Mid and East Antrim policing district in March 2017.

The number of security related deaths has fluctuated over the past ten years. After 2008/09, when there were 5 deaths, the number of deaths dropped to one or two per year during the next five years. The following two years, 2014/15 and 2015/16, saw an increase when there were three deaths each year (Figure 2). This figure increased again during the past year to five deaths.

Figure 2: Deaths due to the Security Situation 2007/08 – 2016/17¹



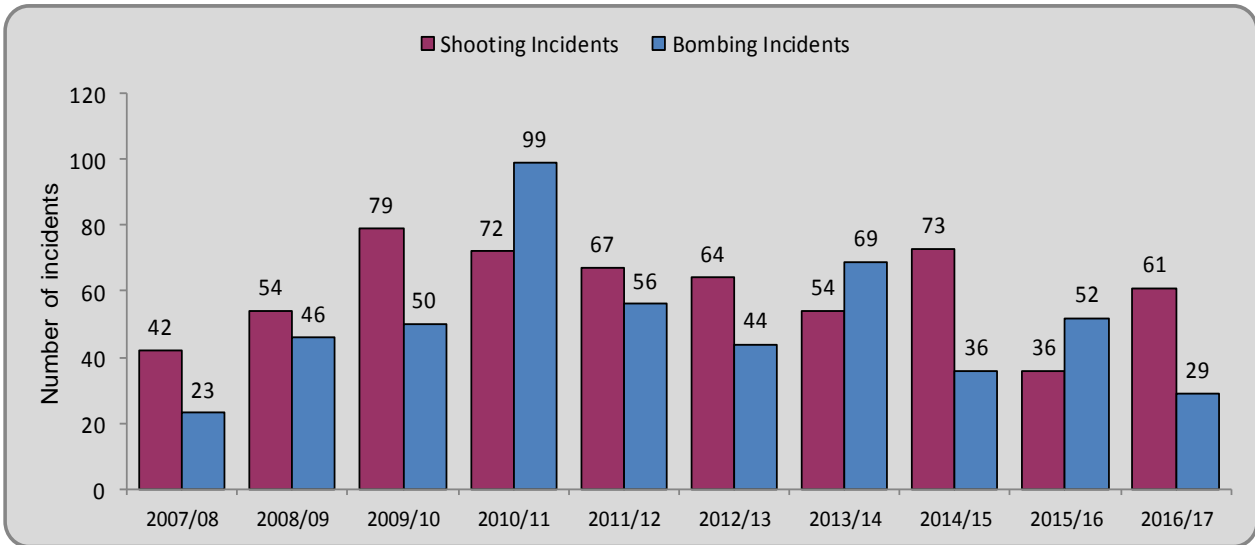
¹ Includes all deaths which are considered at the time of the incident to be directly attributed to terrorism, where the cause has a direct or proximate link to subversive/sectarian strife or where the death is attributable to security force activity.

Section 3 – Shooting and bombing incidents

There were 61 shooting incidents in Northern Ireland during 2016/17, 25 more than during the previous year which recorded a ten-year low of 36 incidents. Figure 3 shows that over the past decade the number of shooting incidents has ranged from 36 in 2015/16 to 79 in 2009/10, averaging 60 incidents per year. The 61 shooting incidents in the past year was 19 more than occurred ten years ago in 2007/08 (42 incidents).

During 2016/17 there were 29 bombing incidents, 23 fewer than the previous year and the lowest number of bombings per year in the last 9 years. A significant level of threat remains as evidenced by the number of bombing incidents over the past five years; during the period 2012/13 – 2016/17 there were 230 bombing incidents, a little lower than the 274 incidents over the preceding five year period, 2007/08 - 2011/12.

Figure 3: Shooting and bombing incidents 2007/08 – 2016/17^{1,2}

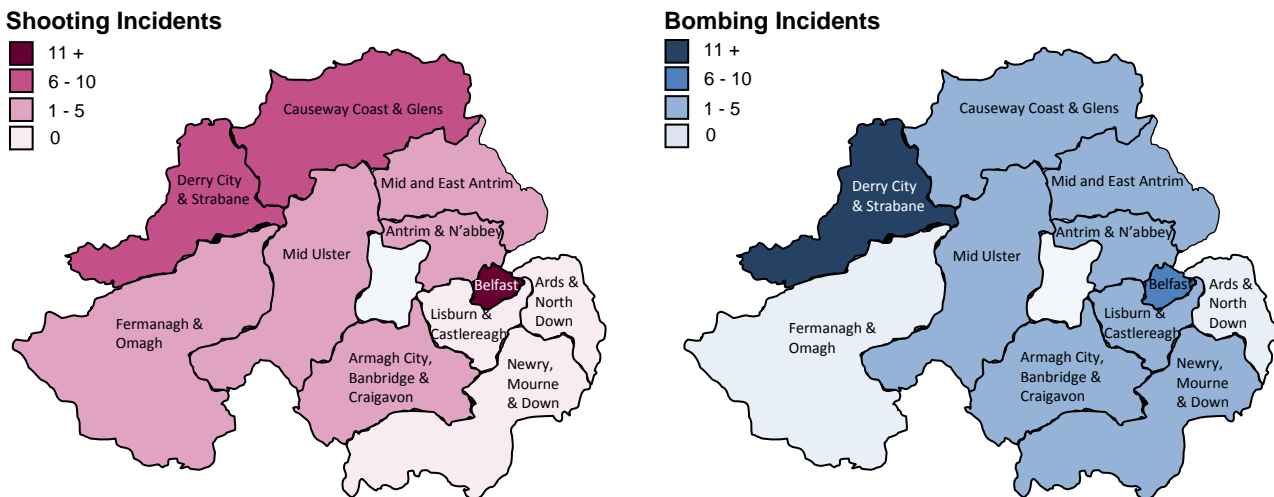


¹ The following types of shooting incidents are included: shots fired by terrorists, shots fired by the security forces, paramilitary-style attacks involving shootings and shots heard (and later confirmed).

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.

Approximately half of all shooting incidents in 2016/17 occurred in Belfast City policing district (31 incidents), followed by Derry City and Strabane policing district (9 incidents) and Causeway Coast and Glens policing district (8 incidents). Derry City and Strabane policing district experienced the most bombing incidents during 2016/17 (11 incidents), followed by Belfast (7 incidents) see Figure 4.

Figure 4: Number of shooting and bombing incidents by policing district during 2016/17



More detailed information on shooting and bombing incidents across Police Districts and Areas is available from the accompanying spreadsheet [on our website](#).

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 attribution of each paramilitary style attack as Loyalist or Republican is based on the investigating officer's perception.

The number of casualties as a result of paramilitary-style attacks has lowered considerably over the past decade (2007/08 – 2016/17, 795 casualties) compared to the preceding decade (1997/98 – 2006/07, 2,288 casualties), as illustrated in the trend graph in Annex 1. During 2016/17 there were 94 casualties as a result of paramilitary-style attacks. This was 22 more than the previous year and the same number as occurred two years ago. The year which saw the greatest number of attacks in the past decade was 2009/10 when there were 127 casualties. Sixty six of the 94 casualties during the past year were the victim of paramilitary-style assaults while the remaining 28 were the victims of paramilitary-style shootings (Table 1).

Table 1: Casualties as a result of paramilitary-style attacks 2007/08 – 2016/17

Financial Year	Shootings			Assaults			Total Casualties (Shootings and Assaults)
	Total	By Loyalist Groups*	By Republican Groups*	Total	By Loyalist Groups*	By Republican Groups*	
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
2013/14	28	9	19	42	37	5	70
2014/15	36	6	30	58	42	16	94
2015/16	14	1	13	58	47	11	72
2016/17	28	3	25	66	56	10	94

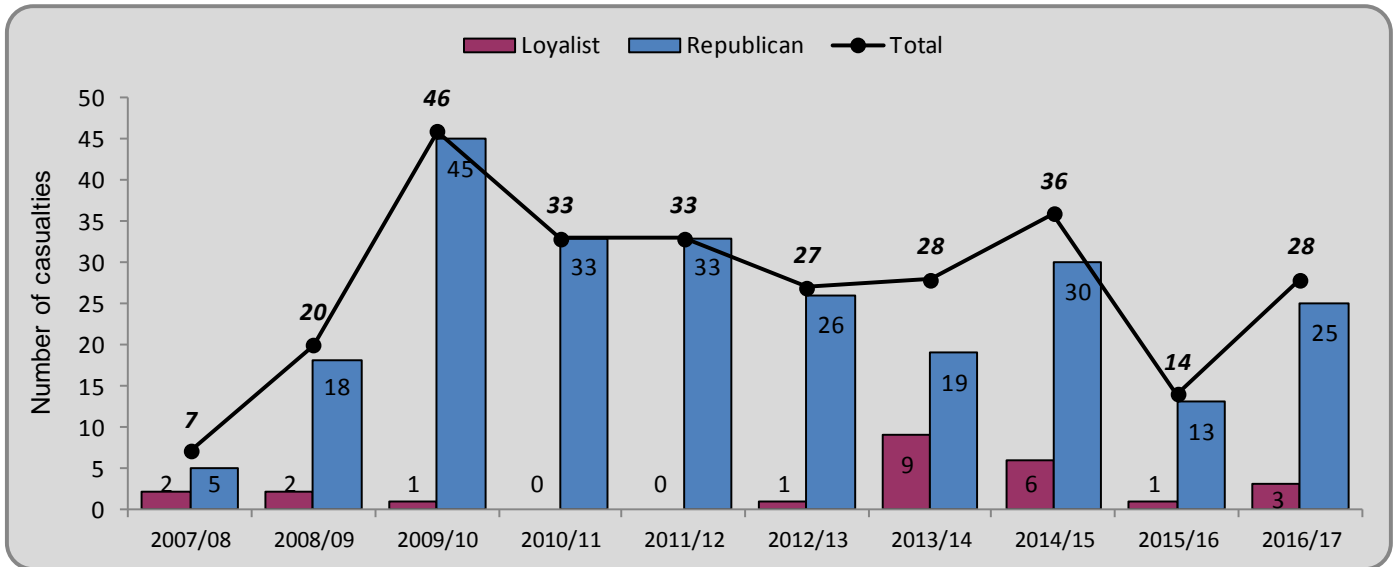
* Attribution is as perceived by PSNI based on the information available at the time of incident. Paramilitary style assaults/shootings that result in death are not recorded as casualties of paramilitary style attacks but are counted as 'security related deaths'.

Paramilitary-style shootings

During 2016/17 there were 28 casualties as a result of paramilitary style shootings, which was twice that recorded in the previous year. However, 2015/16 experienced the second lowest number of casualties during the past 10 years, while 2007/08 saw the lowest number with 7 casualties. This increased to a high of 46 in 2009/10 before somewhat fluctuating for the next seven years (Figure 5). The majority (91%) of paramilitary style shootings carried out over the past 10 years have been attributed to Republican groups. Almost two thirds (61%) of all paramilitary style shootings in 2016/17 were carried out in Belfast (17 casualties). Of the 11 remaining, 6 were carried out in Derry City and Strabane policing district, 3 in Causeway Coast and Glens policing district, 1 in Mid and East Antrim policing district and 1 in Mid Ulster policing district (Figure 7).

In addition to the 28 non-fatal casualties of paramilitary style shootings shown in Table 1 there was a fatality as a result of a paramilitary style shooting during 2016/17. This occurred in April 2016. Paramilitary style assaults/shootings that result in death are not recorded as casualties of paramilitary style attacks but are counted as 'security related deaths'.

Figure 5: Casualties as a result of paramilitary-style shootings 2007/08 – 2016/17*

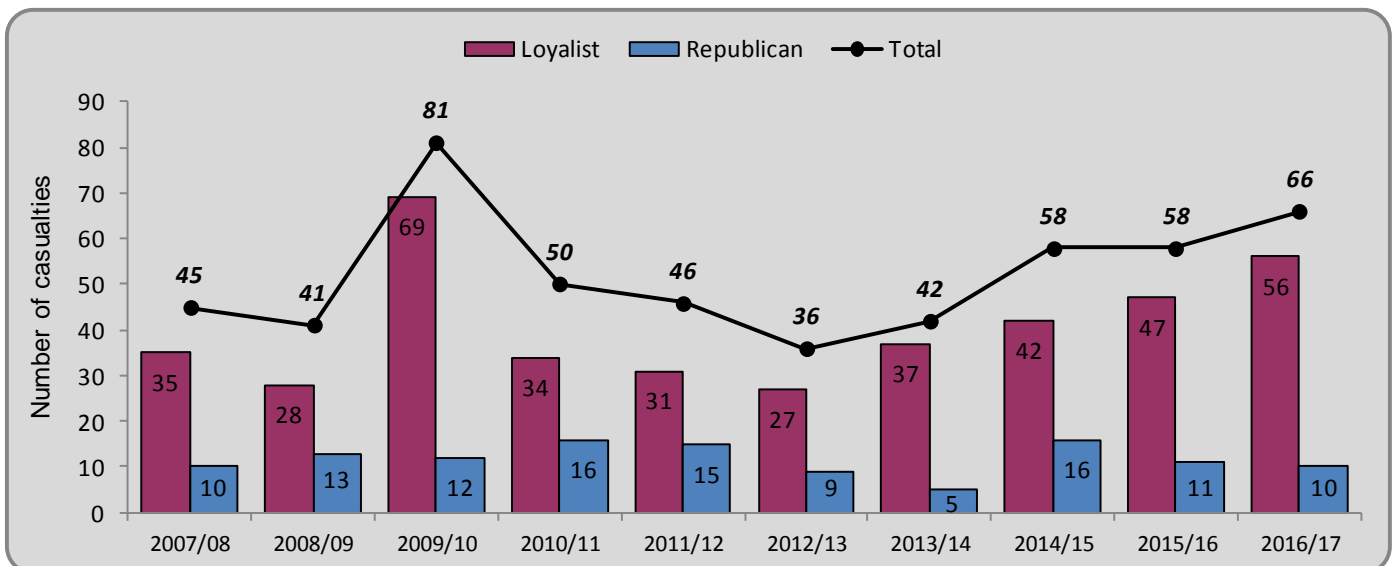


* Attribution is as perceived by PSNI based on the information available at the time of incident. Paramilitary style assaults/shootings that result in death are not recorded as casualties of paramilitary style attacks but are counted as 'security related deaths'.

Paramilitary-style assaults

During 2016/17 there were 66 casualties as a result of paramilitary style assaults. Other than in 2009/10, when there were 81 casualties, 66 was the highest number of casualties in the past 10 years. There has been a general upward trend in the number of casualties per year since 2012/13 (Figure 6). Responsibility for the majority of paramilitary style assaults conducted in the last ten years has been attributed to Loyalists. In 2016/17, 85% of the 66 casualties resulting from paramilitary assaults were attributed to Loyalists while the remaining 15% were attributed to Republicans.

Figure 6: Casualties as a result of paramilitary-style assaults 2007/08 – 2016/17*

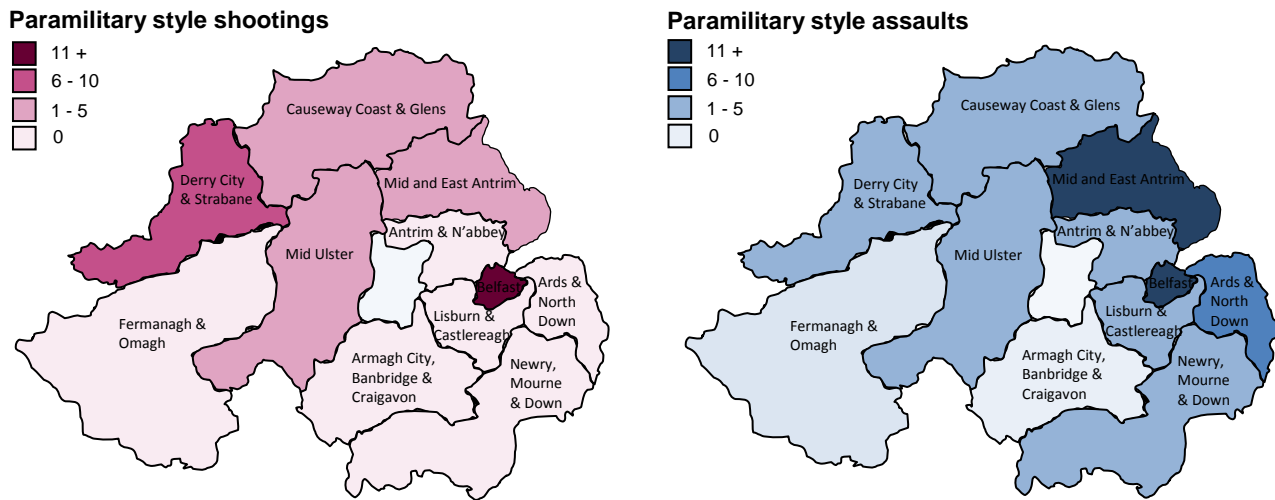


* Attribution is as perceived by PSNI based on the information available at the time of incident. Paramilitary style assaults/shootings that result in death are not recorded as casualties of paramilitary style attacks but are counted as 'security related deaths'.

Approximately half of the paramilitary style assaults in 2016/17 were carried out in Belfast (34 casualties). Other policing districts with the greatest number of casualties resulting from

paramilitary style assaults in 2016/17 were Mid and East Antrim (13 casualties), Ards and North Down (8 casualties) and Causeway Coast and Glens (4 casualties), see Figure 7.

Figure 7: Number of casualties as a result of paramilitary style shootings and assaults by policing district during 2016/17



More detailed information on number of casualties resulting from paramilitary style attacks across Police Districts and Areas is available from the accompanying spreadsheet [on our website](#).

Section 5 – Firearms, ammunition and explosives finds

PSNI officers seized 45 firearms and 2,635 rounds of ammunition during 2016/17. Compared to the previous year (2015/16), the number of firearms found decreased by 21 firearms (from 66 firearms) and the number of rounds of ammunition decreased by 1,783 rounds (from 4,418 rounds). There were 75.1 kg of explosives found during 2016/17, the largest quantity found since 2007/2008, when 208.4kg were found. The majority of the 75.1kg of explosives found in the past year was during a series of finds in Mid and East Antrim policing area during August 2016.

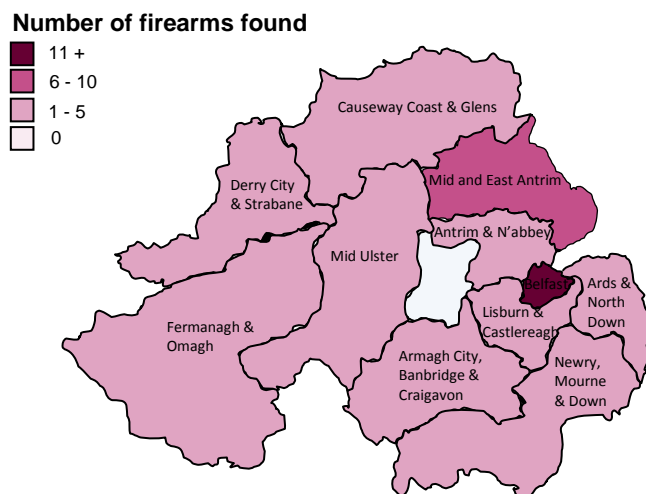
Table 2: Firearms, ammunition and explosives finds 2007/08 – 2016/17

Financial Year	Firearms	Ammunition (rounds)	Explosives (kg)
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
2013/14	101	5,057	23.1
2014/15	58	4,569	22.9
2015/16	66	4,418	2.4
2016/17	45	2,635	75.1

The policing districts with the largest number of firearms seizures in 2016/17 were Belfast City (13 firearms seized), followed by Mid and East Antrim (6 firearms seized). Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, Causeway Coast and Glens and Lisburn and Castlereagh all had 5 firearms seized in each district. The three police districts that recovered the largest number of rounds of ammunition

were Mid and East Antrim (954), Belfast City (637) and Fermanagh and Omagh (466) while the largest quantities of explosives were seized in Mid and East Antrim (69.1kg), Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon (2.3kg) and Derry City and Strabane (1.9kg).

Figure 8: Firearm found/seized in 2016/17



More detailed information on seizure incidents across Police Districts and Areas is available from the accompanying spreadsheet [on our website](#).

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

In 2016/17, 137 persons were arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act (TACT). This is 12 fewer arrests than the previous year and other than in 2007/08, when 130 persons were arrested, it is the lowest number of arrests under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act in the past ten years (Table 3). There has been little change in the number of persons subsequently charged during the past two years; 19 in 2016/17 compared to 18 the year before.

Table 3: Persons arrested under Section 41 of the Terrorism Act (TACT) and subsequently charged 2007/08 – 2016/17*

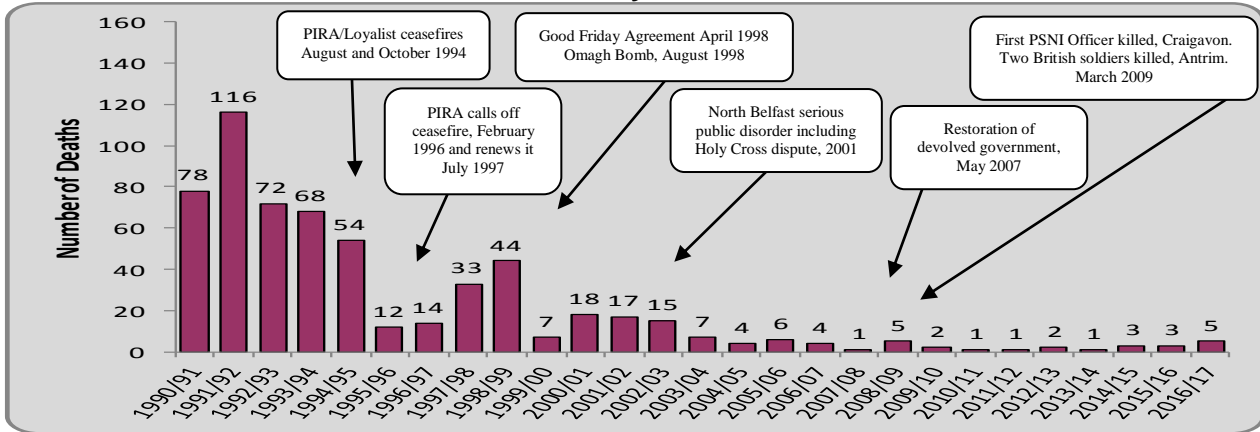
Financial Year	Persons arrested under Section 41 of TACT	Persons subsequently charged ^{1,2}
2007/08	130	34
2008/09	174	40
2009/10	169	36
2010/11	195	41
2011/12	159	39
2012/13	157	50
2013/14	168	32
2014/15	227	35
2015/16	149	18
2016/17	137	19

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.

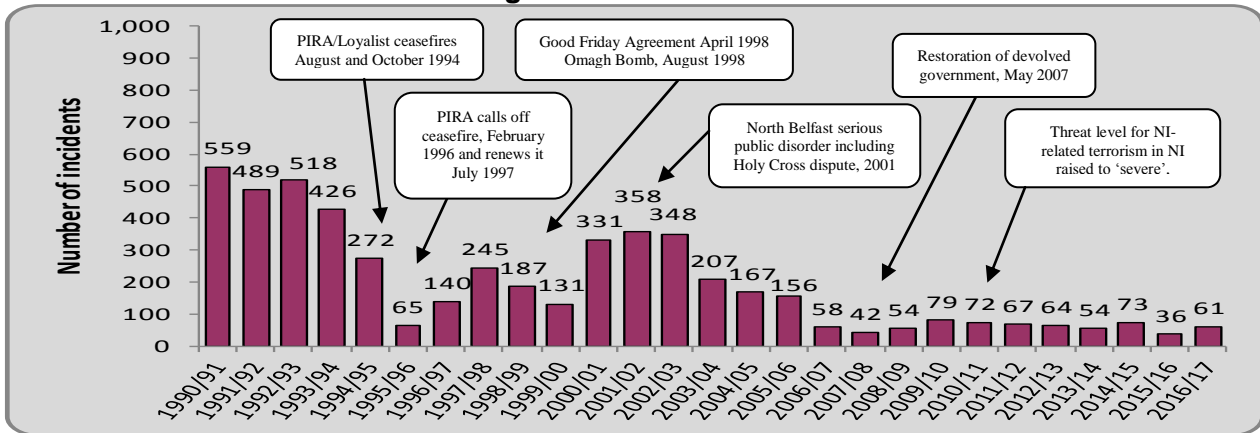
² Please note that persons can be charged under legislation other than the Terrorism Act.

Annex 1: PSNI Security Statistics: Trends over the last 27 Years

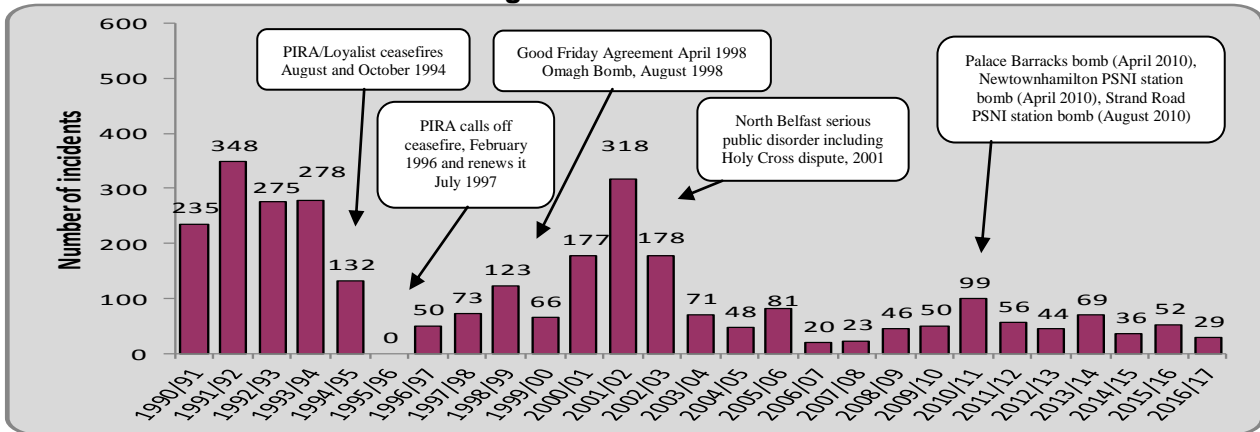
Deaths Due to the Security Situation 1990/91 – 2016/17



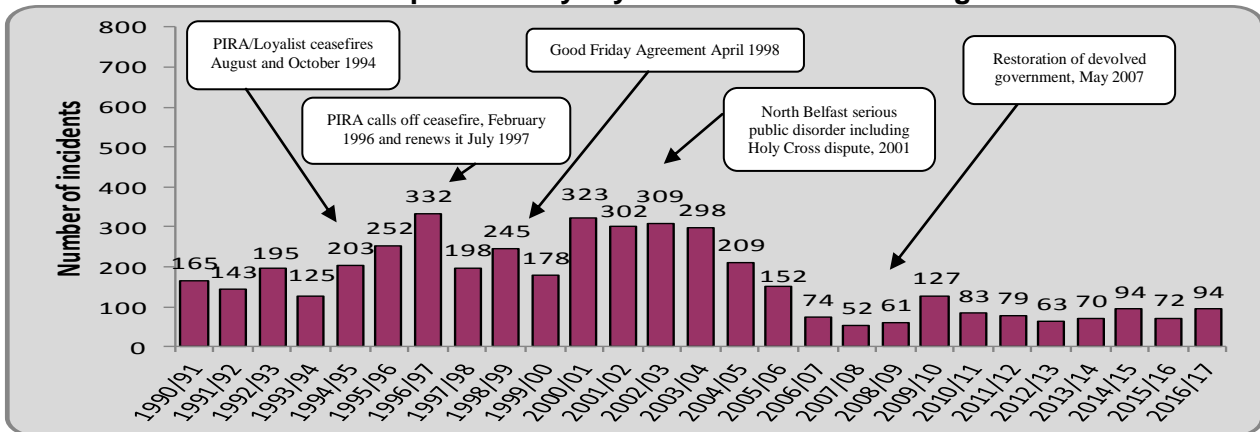
Shooting Incidents 1990/91 – 2016/17



Bombing Incidents 1990/91 – 2016/17



Casualties as a result of paramilitary-style assaults and shootings 1990/91 – 2016/17



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

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.

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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 a 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. Figures within the financial year 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 2016 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. The figures in this report are finalised figures for the 2016/17 financial year.

Since the publication of the previous bulletin up until 28 February 2017, seven revisions have been made to the data as detailed below:

- The number of shooting incidents recorded by the PSNI in February 2017 increased by one incident (from 6 incidents to 7 incidents).
- The number of rounds of ammunition seized by the PSNI increased by 32 rounds (in May 2016), by 35 rounds (in August 2016) and by 1 round (in February 2017).
- The quantity of explosives seized by the PSNI increased by 1.67kg (in May 2016), by 65.25kg (in August 2016) and by 0.45kg (in September 2016).

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.

Further Research

Research into the history of the security situation in Northern Ireland is available from a number of different areas including academics, media and charities. Included below are a few websites which users may find interesting. This list is not exhaustive.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/northern-ireland-terrorism-legislation-annual-statistics-201415>

www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/The-Sense-of-Safety.pdf

www.cain.ulst.ac.uk

www.conflictresearch.org.uk

www.wavetraumacentre.org.uk