



Northern
Ireland
Office

Statistics and Research Branch

Adult Reconviction in Northern Ireland 2004

Research and Statistical Bulletin 6/2008

D Ruddy & A Brown

Produced by Statistics and Research Branch, Northern Ireland Office

For additional copies write to:

**Statistics and Research Branch,
Massey House,
Stormont Estate,
Belfast BT4 3SX**

Telephone: 028 9052 7157

Fax: 028 9052 7532

Email: statistics.nio@nics.gov.uk

This bulletin and other research and statistical publications
are also available on the Internet at:

www.nio.gov.uk

Introduction

This bulletin analyses the two-year reconviction rates of adult offenders (adults are defined as those aged 17 or over at the date of their non-custodial sentence or on their release from prison). These findings relate to the 2004 cohort only. Straightforward comparisons with reconviction rates for previous years are not appropriate as the reconviction rates are based on unadjusted results, that is, they make no allowance for possible differences in factors known to affect such rates (e.g. age, gender, type of offence and previous criminal history) between the 2004 grouping and those of other years. This bulletin reports on two groups of offenders:-

- ◆ those adults who received a non-custodial disposal in 2004 (e.g. suspended prison or Young Offenders Centre (YOC) sentence, probation order, community service order, combination order, etc.), and
- ◆ those adults discharged from prison or the YOC in 2004 into the community (custodial group).

Summary

- ◆ The two-year reconviction rate for those adults who received a non-custodial disposal was 17%.
- ◆ The two-year reconviction rate for those adults discharged from prison was 44%.
- ◆ For those offenders aged 17-20 years, 69% of the custodial group were reconvicted within the two-year follow up compared with 29% of the non-custodial group.
- ◆ For the custodial group reconviction rates were highest amongst those convicted for burglary (66%) and lowest for those convicted for sexual offences (4%).
- ◆ For the non-custodial group reconviction rates were highest for those convicted for robbery (38%) and lowest for those convicted for sexual offences (10%).
- ◆ Reconviction rates increased with the number of previous convictions. This was the case for both the custodial group and non-custodial group.

Results

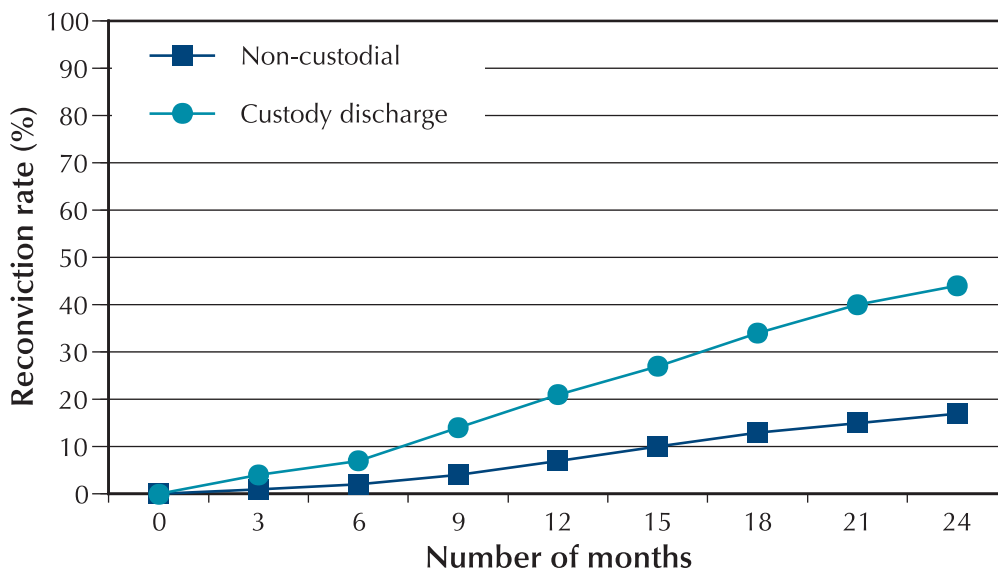
This section presents more detailed results of the overall figures, for both groups of offenders. Information is presented on the overall reconviction rate and reconviction interval, age, baseline offence, baseline disposal and previous criminal histories. A further breakdown of the data is shown in the tabular annex on pages 6-12.

Overall reconviction rate and reconviction interval

As noted in the summary the reconviction rate for those adults who received a non-custodial disposal during 2004 was 17%, and for those adults discharged from prison or the YOC into the community during 2004 it was 44%.

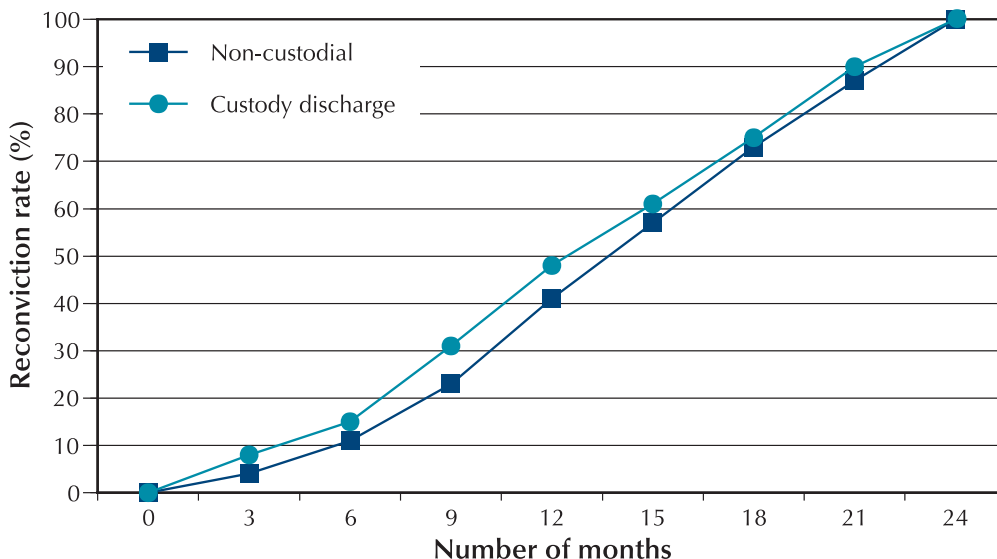
To provide more meaning to the reconviction rates the time to first reconviction is examined; this is known as the reconviction interval. Figure 1 illustrates, for both offender groups, the percentage of those who were reconvicted within three months, six months and so on up to 24 months after they were released from prison or given a community sentence. The rate of reconviction rose more steeply for the custodial group of offenders compared with the non-custodial group. After six months 7% of the custodial group were reconvicted compared with 2% of the non-custodial group. After one year 21% of the custodial group were reconvicted compared with 7% of the non-custodial group.

Figure 1: Reconviction interval by offender group



A further dissection of the reconviction rates is when the reconviction happened within the two-year follow up period; this is illustrated in Figure 2 for both groups of offenders. The custodial group were reconvicted earlier than the non-custodial group. By twelve months 48% of the custodial group who were reconvicted within the two-year follow up had been sentenced compared with 41% of the non-custodial group.

Figure 2: When reconviction took place

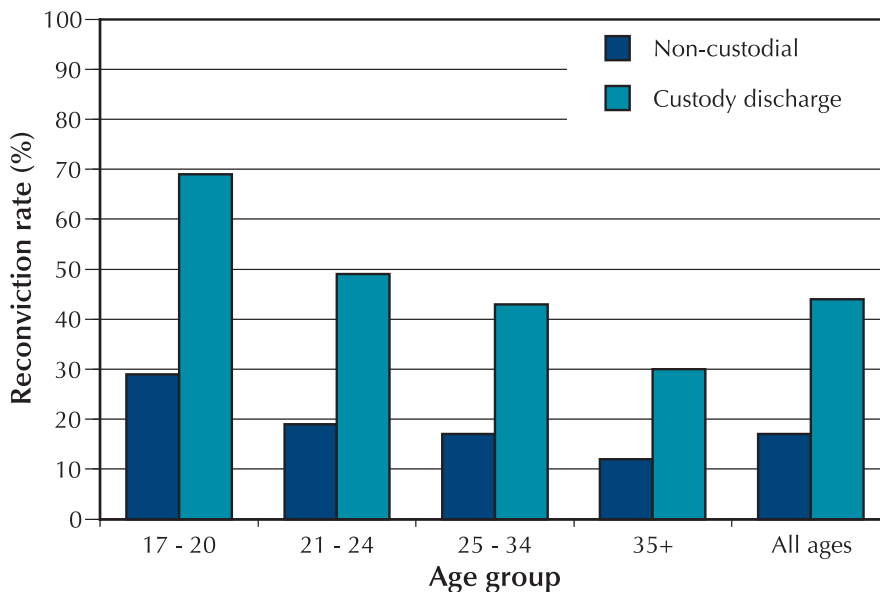


It should not be assumed that offenders were reconvicted in the same category as their original offence (i.e. that an offender convicted for, say, theft necessarily committed another theft as their reconviction offence).

Reconviction rates by age and gender

There were noticeable differences in reconviction rates by age, for both groups of offenders, with the younger age groups being considerably more likely to be reconvicted in the two-year follow up period. Figure 3 shows the reconviction rates by age for both groups of offenders. For those offenders aged 17-20 years, 69% (custodial group) and 29% (non-custodial group) were reconvicted within the two-year follow up period compared with 30% (custodial group) and 12% (non-custodial group) for those aged 35 or over.

Figure 3: Reconviction rates by age of offender – 2004 cohort

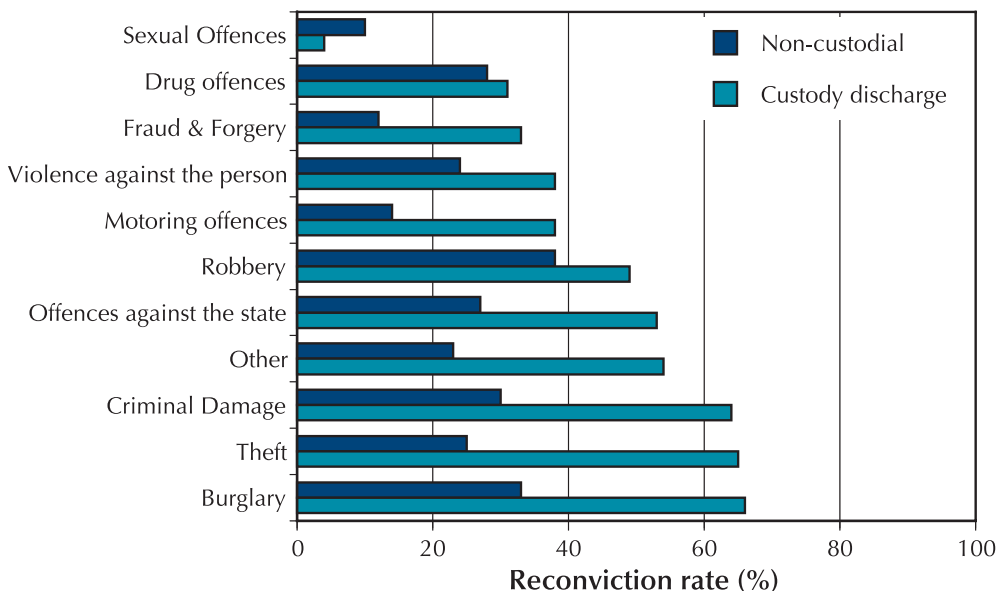


Of those offenders discharged from custody in 2004, 47% of females were reconvicted within the two year follow up period compared to 44% of males. Of those who received a non-custodial disposal, 19% of males and 10% of females were reconvicted within two years.

Reconviction rates by baseline offence

Reconviction rates varied considerably between different types of offence and offender group, as illustrated in Figure 4. For the custodial group reconviction rates were highest amongst those convicted for burglary (66%), theft (65%) and criminal damage (64%) and lowest for those convicted for sexual offences (4%). For the non-custodial group of offenders reconviction rates were highest amongst those convicted for robbery (38%) and burglary (33%) and lowest for those convicted for sexual offences (10%).

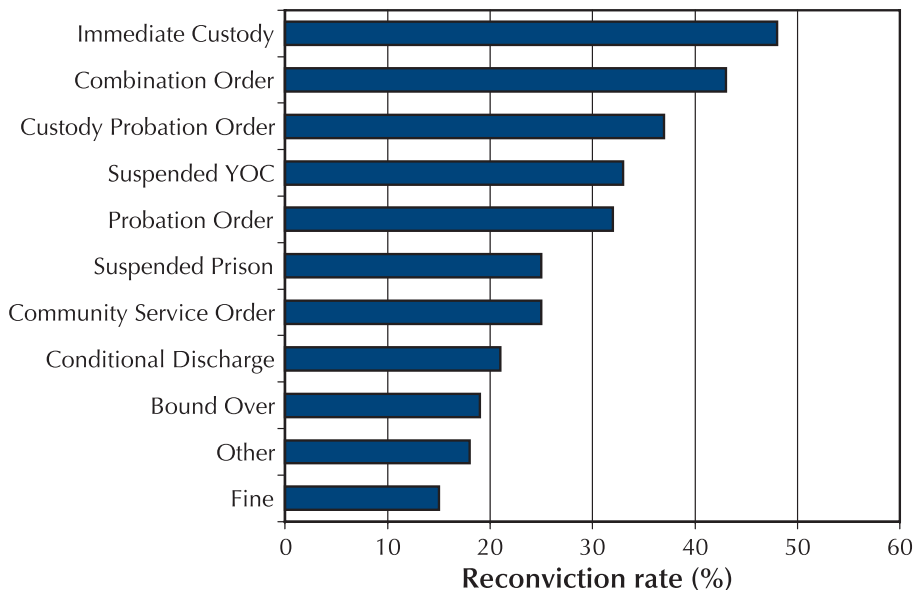
Figure 4: Two-year reconviction rates by baseline offence and type of offender for 2004 cohort



Reconviction rates by baseline disposal

Reconviction rates also varied considerably by baseline disposal, from 48% for those given immediate custody, to 15% of those given a fine (Figure 5)

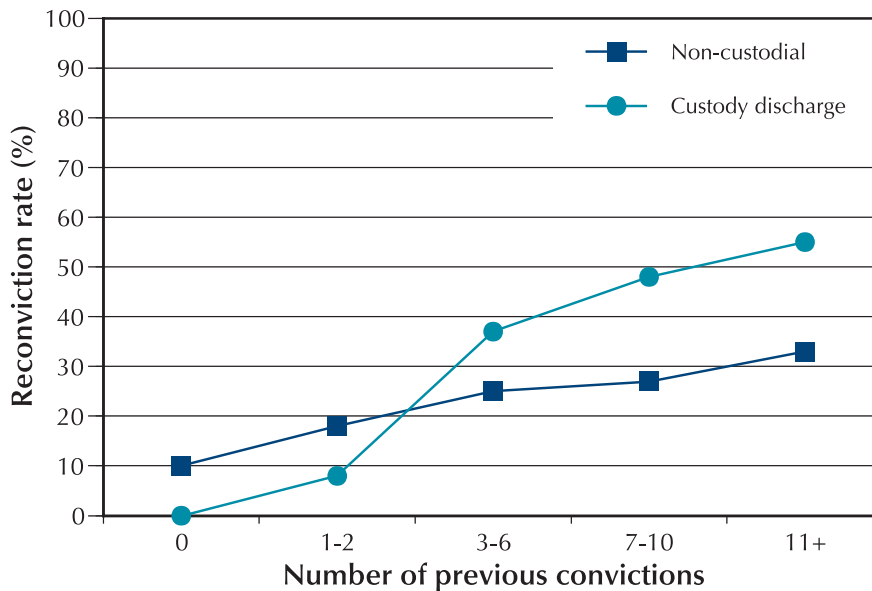
Figure 5: Two-year reconviction rates by disposal



Reconviction rates by previous criminal history

Reconviction rates increased as the number of previous convictions increased for both groups of offenders (Figure 6). For the non-custodial group, 18% of those with 1 or 2 previous convictions were reconvicted within the two-year follow period compared with 33% that had 11 or more previous convictions. For the custodial group 8% of those with 1 or 2 previous convictions were reconvicted within the two-year follow period compared with 55% that had 11 or more previous convictions

Figure 6: Reconviction rate by criminal history



TABULAR ANNEX

Table 1: Reconviction rates by gender – 2004

Gender	Non-custodial group		
	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted %
Male	3,218	17,154	19
Female	310	3,141	10
All	3,528	20,295	17
Gender	Custody discharge group		
	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted %
Male	360	810	44
Female	7	15	47
All	367	825	44

Table 2: Reconviction rates by age – 2004

Age Group	Non-custodial group		
	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted %
17-20	988	3,373	29
21-24	644	3,377	19
25-34	988	5,895	17
35+	908	7,650	12
All ages	3,528	20,295	17
Age Group	Custody discharge group		
	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted %
17-20	93	135	69
21-24	88	178	49
25-34	112	263	43
35+	74	249	30
All ages	367	825	44

Table 3: Reconviction rates by offence group and age – 2004

Non-custodial	Age Group				
	17-20 %	21-24 %	25-34 %	35+ %	All ages %
Violence against the person	32	22	21	20	24
Sexual offences	25	50	0	6	10
Burglary	42	26	26	20	33
Robbery	25	60	67	25	38
Theft	36	25	22	18	25
Fraud & forgery	18	10	9	13	12
Criminal damage	35	30	33	21	30
Offences against the state	45	38	14	13	27
Drug offences	38	31	21	22	28
Motoring offences	24	16	15	10	14
Other	36	21	23	15	23
All	29	19	17	12	17
Custody Discharge					
Violence against the person	63	40	44	21	38
Sexual offences	0	0	15	0	4
Burglary	77	79	62	13	66
Robbery	60	54	41	42	49
Theft	96	52	47	45	65
Fraud & forgery	0	0	38	25	30
Criminal damage	83	70	60	56	64
Offences against the state	62	38	27	68	53
Drug offences	0	33	33	29	31
Motoring offences	38	39	42	32	38
Other	78	50	50	47	54
All	69	49	43	30	44

Table 4: Offender numbers by offence group and age – 2004

Non-custodial	Age Group									
	17-20		21-24		25-34		35+		All ages	
	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted	Total
Violence against the person	104	326	58	261	71	342	68	343	301	1,272
Sexual offences	3	12	1	2	0	10	2	34	6	58
Burglary	33	78	12	46	9	34	3	15	57	173
Robbery	2	8	3	5	2	3	2	8	9	24
Theft	89	249	41	164	58	269	50	283	238	965
Fraud & forgery	4	22	4	40	7	74	15	119	30	255
Criminal damage	67	194	32	107	45	135	27	131	171	567
Offences against the state	13	29	14	37	5	36	4	32	36	134
Drug offences	38	99	28	90	26	124	11	50	103	363
Motoring offences	414	1,741	358	2,187	616	4,222	591	5,746	1,979	13,896
Other	221	615	93	438	149	646	135	889	598	2,588
All	988	3,373	644	3,377	988	5,895	908	7,650	3,528	20,295
Custody Discharge										
Violence against the person	10	16	17	42	26	59	10	48	63	165
Sexual offences	0	2	0	0	2	13	0	41	2	56
Burglary	20	26	15	19	13	21	1	8	49	74
Robbery	12	20	14	26	11	27	5	12	42	85
Theft	25	26	11	21	8	17	5	11	49	75
Fraud & forgery	0	0	0	0	3	8	3	12	6	20
Criminal damage	5	6	7	10	6	10	9	16	27	42
Offences against the state	8	13	3	8	3	11	13	19	27	51
Drug offences	0	1	4	12	8	24	8	28	20	65
Motoring offences	6	16	12	31	24	57	12	37	54	141
Other	7	9	4	8	8	16	8	17	27	50
All	93	135	87*	177*	112	263	74	249	366*	824*

*Data excluded as identification of individual offenders possible

Table 5: Reconviction rate by disposal and age – 2004

	Age Group				
	17-20 %	21-24 %	25-34 %	35+ %	All ages %
Community service order	37	21	19	19	25
Probation order	43	34	33	21	32
Combination order	43	70	36	33	43
Bound over	29	15	18	12	19
Fine	27	17	15	11	15
Conditional discharge	31	22	19	14	21
Suspended - Prison	50	29	25	23	25
Suspended - YOC	33	50	0	0	33
Other	38	26	17	7	18
Immediate custody	70	52	46	34	48
Custody probation order	65	44	36	17	38

Table 6: Offender numbers by disposal and age - 2004

	Age Group											
	17-20		21-24		25-34		35+		All ages			
	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted	Total
Community service order	55	150	20	95	22	115	19	101	116	461		
Probation order	71	164	37	109	52	158	44	209	204	640		
Combination order	12	28	7	10	8	22	3	9	30	69		
Bound over	46	158	15	99	26	144	19	161	106	562		
Fine	621	2,326	447	2,627	709	4,694	652	6,182	2,429	15,829		
Conditional discharge	78	254	28	126	36	187	50	357	192	924		
Suspended - Prison	13	26	71	241	121	493	110	479	315	1,239		
Suspended - YOC	67	201	1	2	0	0	0	0	68	203		
Other	25	66	18	68	14	82	11	152	68	368		
Immediate custody	69	98	62	119	77	166	63	186	271	569		
Custody probation order	24	37	26	59	35	97	11	63	96	256		

Table 7: Reconviction rates by criminal history and age – 2004

Non-custodial	Age Group				
	17-20 %	21-24 %	25-34 %	35+ %	All ages %
No previous	22	10	7	5	10
1 - 2 previous	37	21	14	11	18
3 - 6 previous	50	34	23	16	25
7 - 10 previous	53	37	30	19	27
>= 11 previous	60	40	39	27	33
All	29	19	17	12	17
Custody Discharge					
No previous	0	0	0	0	0
1 - 2 previous	20	7	9	5	8
3 - 6 previous	66	30	37	11	37
7 - 10 previous	77	41	57	14	48
>= 11 previous	75	71	49	45	55
All	69	49	43	30	44

Table 8: Offender numbers by criminal history and age - 2004

	Age Group									
	17-20		21-24		25-34		35+		All ages	
	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted	Total	Reconvicted	Total
Non-custodial										
No previous	459	2,128	159	1,621	163	2,271	155	3,380	936	9,400
1 - 2 previous	272	745	205	974	199	1,437	133	1,251	809	4,407
3 - 6 previous	186	373	175	510	265	1,165	212	1,321	838	3,369
7 - 10 previous	41	77	52	140	131	439	134	692	358	1,348
>= 11 previous	30	50	53	132	230	583	274	1,006	587	1,771
All	988	3,373	644	3,377	988	5,895	908	7,650	3,528	20,295
Custody Discharge										
No previous	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1 - 2 previous	2	10	2	28	3	34	2	38	9	110
3 - 6 previous	25	38	8	27	16	43	4	36	53	144
7 - 10 previous	30	39	13	32	16	28	5	35	64	134
>= 11 previous	36	48	65	91	77	158	63	140	241	437
All	93	135	88	178	112	263	74	249	367	825

Methodological Annex

The findings in this report are based on an analysis of offenders (aged 17 years and over) discharged from prison or commencing a community sentence during 2004. Details of offenders discharged from custody into the community are taken from the Prison Index Database, maintained by the Northern Ireland Office Statistics and Research Branch. This dataset is matched to the Police Service of Northern Ireland's Integrated Criminal Information System (ICIS) in order to track criminal history and monitor re-offending. The data matching process adheres to the 'National Statistics Protocol on Data Matching'.

The community dataset is drawn directly from the ICIS database. Together the final custody discharge and community datasets make up the 2004 cohort.

Offenders in the 2004 cohort were followed up for a period of two-years from the date of their discharge from custody or date of sentence and any subsequent conviction flagged as a reconviction. Pseudo reconvictions are not included in this study.

Glossary

Pseudo reconviction – are convictions within the follow up period for offences committed prior to commencement of an order or discharge from custody.

Reconviction interval – the calculation of this depends on which offender group is being studied. For the non-custodial group, the time from the date of the original conviction to the date of the next conviction is counted. For the custodial group, the time from the date of release to the date of next conviction is counted. Time is counted in months.

Reconviction rate – the percentage of offenders who were reconvicted, for any offence, within a specified period (two-years in the case of this study) from the date of their discharge from custody or receipt of their non-custodial disposal.

NOTES

Recent publications available from NIO Statistics and Research Branch:

Research & Statistical Series

Report No. 16	Feasibility Study on the One Stop Shop for Domestic Violence Deloitte MCS Ltd	<i>December 2006</i>
Report No 15	An Assessment of the Reparation Order and Community Responsibility Order in Northern Ireland H Dawson, S Dunn, V Morgan & C Donaghy	<i>December 2006</i>

Research & Statistical Bulletins

5/2008	Perceptions of Crime: Findings from the 2006/07 Northern Ireland Crime Survey B French & R Freel	<i>April 2008</i>
4/2008	Northern Ireland Statistics on the Operation of the Terrorism Act 2000: Annual Statistics 2006 C O'Loan & M McKibbin	<i>February 2008</i>
3/2008	Court Prosecutions and Sentencing 2005 P Campbell & M Wilson	<i>February 2008</i>
2/2008	Reconviction in Northern Ireland: Results from the 2004 cohort A Brown & D Ruddy	<i>January 2008</i>
1/2008	Experience of Crime: Findings from the 2006/07 Northern Ireland Crime Survey R Freel & B French	<i>January 2008</i>
10/2007	Public attitudes towards crime and recovery of assets by the Assets Recovery Agency in Northern Ireland: Findings from the January 2007 Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey M Wilson	<i>December 2007</i>
9/2007	Experience of Drug Misuse: Findings from the 2006/07 Northern Ireland Crime Survey D Ruddy & A Brown	<i>December 2007</i>
8/2007	Adult Reconviction in Northern Ireland 2003 D Ruddy	<i>September 2007</i>
7/2007	Views on Organised Crime: Findings from the January 2007 Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey M Wilson	<i>September 2007</i>
6/2007	Public attitudes towards sex offenders in Northern Ireland A M McAlinden & Research and Evaluation Services	<i>July 2007</i>
5/2007	Experience of Domestic Violence: Findings from the 2005 Northern Ireland Crime Survey M Carmichael	<i>July 2007</i>
4/2007	The Northern Ireland Prison Population in 2006 C O'Loan & K Amelin	<i>June 2007</i>
3/2007	Reconviction in Northern Ireland: Results from the 2003 cohort D Ruddy	<i>April 2007</i>
2/2007	Experience of Crime: Findings from the 2005 Northern Ireland Crime Survey B French & R Freel	<i>April 2007</i>
1/2007	Adult Reconviction in Northern Ireland 2002 D Ruddy & S McMullan	<i>February 2007</i>
6/2006	Public attitudes towards crime and recovery of assets by the Assets Recovery Agency in Northern Ireland: Findings from the January 2006 Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey M Wilson	<i>February 2007</i>
9/2006	Perceptions of Crime: Findings from the 2005 Northern Ireland Crime Survey R Freel & B French	<i>December 2006</i>

Compendia Publications

Digest of Information on the Northern Ireland Criminal Justice System 5	<i>June 2006</i>
A Commentary on Northern Ireland Crime Statistics 2004	<i>August 2005</i>

Northern Ireland Office

Criminal Justice Directorate
Statistics and Research Branch

Massey House

Stoney Road

Belfast

BT4 3SX

Email: statistics.nio@nics.gov.uk

Telephone: 02890 527157

Facsimile: 02890 527532

www.nio.gov.uk

