Northern Ireland Office

Consultation

Non-Jury Trials
Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007

16 November 2026

CONTENTS

CONTENTS 2
FOREWORD BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND 3
ABOUT THIS CONSULTATION 4
Purpose 4
Scope of the consultation 4
Duration of the consultation 4
How to respond to this consultation 4
Government response 5
HOW WE CONSULT 6
Equality 6
Confidentiality 6
CONSULTATION 8
Non-Jury Trials in Northern Ireland 8
Extended Provisions 8
2024/2025 Public Consultation 8
Terrorist & Paramilitary Threat in Northern Ireland 9
Consultation 10
Consultation Question 10
BACKGROUND INFORMATION 12
The Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 12
The need for provisions in the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 12
Previous Legislative System (commonly referred to as “Diplock Courts”) 12
End of Diplock System 12
Criminal Justice Act 2003 12
Comparison: Criminal Justice Act 2003 and Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 Non-Jury Trials 13
Independent Reviewer of the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 14
ANNEX A: DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS TEST 16
Challenge 17
Protecting sensitive information in a judicial review 17
ANNEX B: HOW NON-JURY TRIALS WORK IN NORTHERN IRELAND 18
ANNEX C: STATISTICS 19
Table 1: Certificates issued and refused for NJTs by the Director of Public Prosecutions (2007-2025) 19
Table 2: Non-Jury trial cases as a percentage of all cases in the Crown Court (2007-2025) 20
Table 3: Percentage of cases where conditions of the DPP statutory test have been met (2007-2025) 22
Table 4: (2007-2025)Acquittal rates for Crown Court defendants where a plea of not guilty is entered in non-jury trials, compared with those in jury trials 24
ANNEX D: FURTHER INFORMATION 26
ANNEX E: Public consultation privacy notice 27

FOREWORD BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Thank you for your interest in this public consultation.

The Northern Ireland Office is seeking your views on the non-jury trial provisions contained within the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007. These provisions are temporary and will expire on 31 July 2027. However, they may be extended for a period of two years by Order approved in both Houses of Parliament.

A non-jury trial under the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 will only take place when the Director of Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland issues a certificate for a specific case, in relation to a trial on indictment (tried in the Crown Court). Decisions for non-jury trials are made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the circumstances of both the offence and the defendant.

In Northern Ireland today, there is a presumption of jury trial in all trials on indictment. In the last five years (2020-2025), less than 1% of all Crown Court cases in Northern Ireland were conducted without a jury.

There are no limits to the number of times these non-jury trial provisions may be extended. However, it is important to note that they were designed to be a temporary measure. The Government remains fully committed to seeing an end to these non-jury trial provisions, when it is safe to do so and compatible with the interests of justice.

I have published this consultation to gather your views on whether to seek Parliamentary approval to extend the non-jury trial provisions, or whether they should be amended in any way. I invite you to respond by 5pm on 8 February 2027.

THE RIGHT HON SIR CHRIS BRYANT MP

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

ABOUT THIS CONSULTATION

Purpose

1. Extending non-jury trial provisions under the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 ("the 2007 Act") requires secondary legislation which must be approved by both Houses of Parliament. The Government recognises the need to keep the public informed and to allow people the opportunity to comment on policy proposals.

2. This consultation invites people to provide views on the extension of non-jury trial provisions under the 2007 Act for a further two years from the end of July 2027, and whether those provisions should be amended in any way.

Scope of the consultation

3. The non-jury trial provisions in the 2007 Act apply only in Northern Ireland. This consultation is open to responses from across the United Kingdom.

Duration of the consultation

4. The consultation closes to responses at 5pm on 8 February 2027.

How to respond to this consultation

5. The Government is seeking views from all interested parties, individuals and groups from across the United Kingdom on the matters covered by this consultation.

6. You can send your consultation responses:
   - **By email:** NJTconsultation@nio.gov.uk
   - **In writing:**
     Public consultation:
     Non–Jury Trial Provisions
     Northern Ireland Office (SPG)
     Erskine House,
     20-32 Chichester St,
     Belfast
     BT1 4GF

7. When responding, please state whether you are doing so as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please make clear who the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were assembled. We will acknowledge your response.

8. All requests for access to the consultation document in other formats will be considered. You can email any queries to: NJTconsultation@nio.gov.uk

Government response

9. A summary of responses to this consultation and details of the action that the Government will take, or has taken, will be published on the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) website.

10. The NIO will aim to publish this information within 12 weeks of the consultation closing date.

HOW WE CONSULT

11. This consultation is being conducted in line with the Cabinet Office consultation principles published in March 2018.

Equality

12. It is also being conducted in line with the NIO Equality Scheme.

13. In accordance with section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the NIO has undertaken an Equality Screening exercise[1] prior to the launch of this consultation to indicate whether there are equality of opportunity and/or good relations impacts associated with extending the non-jury trial provisions.

14. The outcome of the screening exercise is that the likely impact of extending the provisions is "minor" in respect of two of the section 75 categories (religious belief and political opinion) i.e. the policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible, and "none" in respect of the other categories.

15. An Equality Screening of the impact of the proposals in this consultation has been published alongside this consultation document. Following the conclusion of this consultation we will review the screening exercise to assess it in light of consultation responses. This is to ensure that the NIO's initial assessment of the likely impact of the proposals remains accurate.

Confidentiality

16. The information you send us may need to be shared with colleagues within other relevant UK Government departments and relevant Northern Ireland Executive departments. The information might also be published in a summary of responses received and referred to in the published consultation report. The published consultation report will include a summary of responses to the consultation exercise and a list of organisations that responded, but will not include personal identifiers, such as names, unless explicit consent has been granted by the respondent to do so. Other contact details will not be published.

17. All information contained in your response, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure if requested under pieces of information rights legislation, such as the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. By providing personal information for the purposes of this public consultation exercise, it is understood that you acknowledge and accept the risk of the possible

[1] Read about the Equality Commission's Section 75 guidance

disclosure and publication of this information. Any personal information provided will be stored for six months before being destroyed in accordance with data protection legislation and our retention and disposal policy.

18. To find out more about the general principles of information rights legislation and how it is applied in the NIO, please contact: foi@nio.gov.uk

19. The NIO is the data controller in respect of any personal data that you provide. The NIO's privacy notice in relation to this public consultation, which sets out the standards you can expect in respect of the handling of your personal data, can be found at Annex E.

CONSULTATION

Non-Jury Trials in Northern Ireland

20. Non-jury trial provisions in the 2007 Act[2] apply only in Northern Ireland. They allow the Director of Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland (DPP) to certify that a trial on indictment (tried in the Crown Court) is to be conducted without a jury in a specific case.

21. There are conditions set out in law that must be met before the DPP can consider issuing a certificate for a non-jury trial. These statutory conditions are set out in more detail in Annex A**.**

22. In a non-jury trial, a single judge sits alone to hear the case. The judge must give reasons for a conviction. Any person convicted before a non-jury court has a right of appeal against sentence or conviction without leave (meaning that there is no need to seek permission to appeal). The vast majority of Crown Court cases in Northern Ireland are jury trials. During 2025, eleven non-jury trials took place. This means that, in 2025, only 0.8% of all Crown Court cases in Northern Ireland were conducted without a jury.

23. More information about the background to non-jury trials can be found at page 12 and more information about how non-jury trials work in practice in Northern Ireland can be found in Annex B.

24. Statistics on the use of non-jury trials in Northern Ireland are available in Annex C.

Extended Provisions

25. The non-jury trial provisions in the 2007 Act are time limited, but may be extended for a period of two years by secondary legislation approved in both Houses of Parliament. The duration of these provisions has been extended by successive orders since 2007. The provisions were last extended in July 2025 and will expire on 31 July 2027. This was the ninth extension since their establishment in 2007.

26. There are no legal limits to the number of times these non-jury trial provisions may be extended. However, it is important to note that they were designed to be a temporary measure.

2024/2025 Public Consultation

27. The NIO carried out a 12-week public consultation on the non-jury trial provisions from 9 December 2024 to 3 March 2025.

[2] Read the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007

28. The views gathered during the 2024/25 consultation indicated that there was a continued need for such provisions to remain in place. The then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland therefore decided to seek to extend the non-jury trial provisions for another two years, which was approved by Parliament. That extension ends on 31 July 2027.

29. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland now needs to decide if the provisions should be extended for a further two years. This is why the NIO is seeking the views of the public again in the form of this consultation.

Terrorist & Paramilitary Threat in Northern Ireland

30. Today there exists a SUBSTANTIAL threat from Northern Ireland related terrorism in Northern Ireland.[3] This was reduced from SEVERE in March 2024.

31. While the lowering of the threat level is a testament to the efforts of security partners, terrorism remains one of the most direct and immediate risks to our national security and to communities in Northern Ireland. There remains a small group of people determined to destabilise the political settlement in Northern Ireland through acts of terrorism.

32. The presence of violent paramilitary groups continues to pose risks to the criminal justice system. Threats and acts of violence demonstrate continued attempts at intimidation of individuals and communities.[4]

33. Following the Fresh Start Agreement in 2015, the Independent Reporting Commission (IRC) was established by an international treaty between the UK Government and the Government of Ireland to monitor progress on tackling paramilitary activity in Northern Ireland. Their eighth report was published in December 2025 and states that “paramilitarism remains a live and serious issue, with paramilitary groups still posing a threat to communities, individuals, and society. The intimidation, coercive control, and threats linked to paramilitary groups persist, and the structures of paramilitary groups that continue intact can be used to facilitate organised crime and other forms of violence.”

---

[3] The threat level for Northern Ireland-related terrorism in Northern Ireland is set separately to the UK-wide threat level posed by all forms of terrorism. Read more about UK threat levels.

[4] The most up-to-date security statistics available indicated that between 1 August 2025 and 31 July 2026 there were; 12 security related shooting incidents, 18 security related bombing incidents, 24 casualties of paramilitary style assaults, no security-related deaths, 12 firearms found, 1.05kg of explosives and 543 rounds of ammunition seized.

34. Details of where to obtain this report can be found in the Further Information section in Annex D. The statistics on paramilitary style shootings and assaults referenced in paragraph 32 above demonstrate the continued harm that paramilitary groups inflict on communities in Northern Ireland.

35. Statistics from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive indicate that 94 households were accepted as homeless due to paramilitary intimidation between April 2024 and April 2025.

Consultation

36. In advance of the expiry of the current non-jury trial provisions on 31 July 2027, the NIO is seeking your views on extending these provisions for a further two years, to July 2029. The NIO is also seeking views on whether the non-jury trial provisions outlined in the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 should be amended in any way.

37. Any views submitted as part of this consultation will be used by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to decide whether to extend the non-jury trial provisions or allow them to lapse, subject to Parliamentary approval.

Consultation Question

38. The NIO welcomes your views on the following two questions:

1) Do you think the non-jury trial provisions outlined in the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 should be extended for a further two years?

2) Do you think the non-jury trial provisions outlined in the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 should be amended in any way?

39. Please give reasons for your answers, providing evidence where possible. The deadline for responses is 5pm on 8 February 2027.

40. To help you respond to this question, more detailed information on non-jury trials can be found in the next sections and annexes of this consultation document.

41. Please send your consultation responses to the Northern Ireland Office:

- **By email:** NJTconsultation@nio.gov.uk

- **In writing:**
  Public consultation:
  Non-Jury Trial Provisions
  Northern Ireland Office (SPG)
  Erskine House
  20-32 Chichester Street
  Belfast
  BT1 4GF

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007

42. The non–jury trial provisions contained within the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 apply only in Northern Ireland.

The need for provisions in the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007

43. The system under the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 was designed specifically to address the unique challenges faced by the Northern Ireland criminal justice system. Many of these challenges still exist today with the SUBSTANTIAL threat from Northern Ireland related terrorism and the persistent challenge of paramilitarism.

Previous Legislative System (commonly referred to as "Diplock Courts")

44. The current legislation replaced the "Diplock Courts" system which existed from 1972 until 2007. Lord Diplock argued, in a report in 1972, that the terrorist intimidation of jurors in Northern Ireland was an obstacle to dealing effectively with terrorist crime in the courts. If a person was charged with a scheduled offence (as specified in legislation) they were automatically tried before a Diplock Court, without a jury, unless the Attorney General certified that the offence was not to be treated as a scheduled offence.

45. The average number of Diplock Court cases within the final five years that the system existed (up until 2007) was 64 per year. By contrast, in the last five years (2020-2025) there have been an average of 10 non-jury trial cases in the Crown Court per year.

End of Diplock System

46. Following a public consultation on the Diplock arrangements in 2006, and in line with progress towards security normalisation in Northern Ireland, the then Secretary of State announced that a new system would be put in place. This new system would mean a presumption of jury trial in all cases. Non-jury trials would be retained for certain exceptional cases where there is a risk from paramilitary and community-based pressures on a jury.

47. The new system that was introduced in 2007 is the current non-jury trial system and is the subject of this public consultation.

Criminal Justice Act 2003

48. The Criminal Justice Act 2003[5], which applies in Northern Ireland and England & Wales, provides for trials to be heard without a jury in very limited

[5] Read the Criminal Justice Act 2003

circumstances. The threshold for the use of those provisions in the 2003 Act is set much higher than that under the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007.

49. An application under the Criminal Justice Act 2003 requires admissible evidence and the standard of proof is to the criminal standard. This contrasts with the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 which does not require evidence to this standard. Instead, the Director of Public Prosecutions must suspect that one of four conditions has been met and be satisfied that in view of this there is a risk that the administration of justice might be impaired if the trial were to be conducted with a jury. The provisions in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 were not deemed sufficient alone to deal with Northern Ireland's unique terrorist situation and therefore the non-jury trial provisions in the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 were introduced.

Comparison: Criminal Justice Act 2003 and Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 Non-Jury Trials

50. The following table highlights, in summary, the key differences between non-jury trials under the Criminal Justice Act 2003 and the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007. Full provisions are at section 44 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 and at section 1 of the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007.

	Criminal Justice Act 2003	Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007
Jurisdiction	England & Wales and Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland only
Reason for a non-jury trial	There is: 1) ***evidence*** of real and present danger that jury tampering would take place; ***and*** 2) despite steps which might reasonably be taken, the likelihood of jury tampering is so substantial that a non-jury trial is necessary in the interests of justice	There is a ***risk*** to the administration of justice. One of four conditions from a statutory test must be met (see Annex A).
Who requests?	Prosecution makes an application to a judge of the	The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) or the Public Prosecution Service (PPS)

	Crown Court, or judge makes an order (see section 46).	make a request to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP)
Who decides?	Judge of the Crown Court	The DPP by following a statutory test (see Annex A)
How is the decision made?	Two conditions must be fulfilled: 1) ***evidence*** of real and present danger of jury tampering; ***and*** 2) despite steps which might reasonably be taken, the likelihood of jury tampering is so substantial that a non-jury trial is necessary in the interests of justice	DPP must apply the statutory test set out in the 2007 Act under which he must consider whether one (or more) of four key conditions is met (see Annex A) and whether, in view of this, there is a risk that the administration of justice might be impaired if the trial were to be conducted with a jury.
How many trials in the last 3 years (total)?	0	34

Independent Reviewer of the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007

51. In February 2024, Dr Jonny Byrne was appointed to the role of Independent Reviewer of the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007. The Independent Reviewer reviews the legislation annually and provides recommendations for improvement after liaising with relevant stakeholders.

52. When the non-jury trial provisions were extended in July 2017, it was agreed in Parliament that the operation of the provisions would be added to the remit of the Independent Reviewer.

53. Findings on non-jury trial provisions were included in all reports since the 10th Annual Report of the Independent Reviewer of Justice & Security (NI) Act 2007.[6]

[6] All published Reports of the Independent Reviewer of the Justice & Security (NI) Act 2007 can be read online

54. The 18th report is the most recently published report. It was written by the current Independent Reviewer, Professor Jonny Byrne, it covers the period from 1 August 2024 – 31 July 2025 and was published in June 2026.

ANNEX A: DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS TEST

1. A non-jury trial under the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 will only take place when the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) for Northern Ireland issues a certificate for a specific case, in relation to a trial on indictment (tried in the Crown Court).

2. Decisions for non-jury trials are made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the circumstances of both the offence and the defendant.

3. The decision for issuing a certificate is based on a two-stage test set out in section 1(3) to (6) of the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007. The DPP must:

    i. Suspect that one (or more) of the four conditions is met; and
    ii. Be satisfied that in view of this there is a risk that the administration of justice might be impaired if the trial were to be conducted with a jury.

Condition One	The defendant is, or is an associate of, a person who: (a) is a member of a proscribed[7] organisation, or (b) has at any time been a member of an organisation that was, at that time, a proscribed organisation.
Condition Two	That: (a) the offence or any of the offences was committed on behalf of a proscribed organisation, or (b) a proscribed organisation was otherwise involved with, or assisted in, the carrying out of the offence or any of the offences.
Condition Three	An attempt has been made to prejudice the investigation or prosecution of the offence or any of the offences and— (a) the attempt was made on behalf of a proscribed organisation, or (b) a proscribed organisation was otherwise involved with, or assisted in, the attempt.

[7] Section 1(10) of the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 provides that an organisation is a "proscribed organisation for the purpose of section 1 if at any time (a) it is (or was) proscribed (within the meaning given by section 11(4) of the Terrorism Act 2000, and (b) its activities are (or were) connected with the affairs of Northern Ireland.

Condition Four	The offence or any of the offences was committed to any extent (whether directly or indirectly) as a result of, in connection with or in response to religious or political hostility of one person or group of persons towards another person or group of persons.

Challenge

4. A legal[8] challenge can be brought against the issue of a non-jury trial certificate[9] only on the grounds of:
    a. dishonesty;
    b. bad faith; or
    c. other exceptional circumstances such as lack of jurisdiction or error of law.

Protecting sensitive information in a judicial review

5. Non-jury trial certificates state which conditions in the DPP's test have been met. This means that when someone challenges a non-jury trial certificate, they will have some information on which to base their challenge. They may not have access to all the information which informed the DPP's decision (for example classified material such as intelligence or other sensitive national security related information).

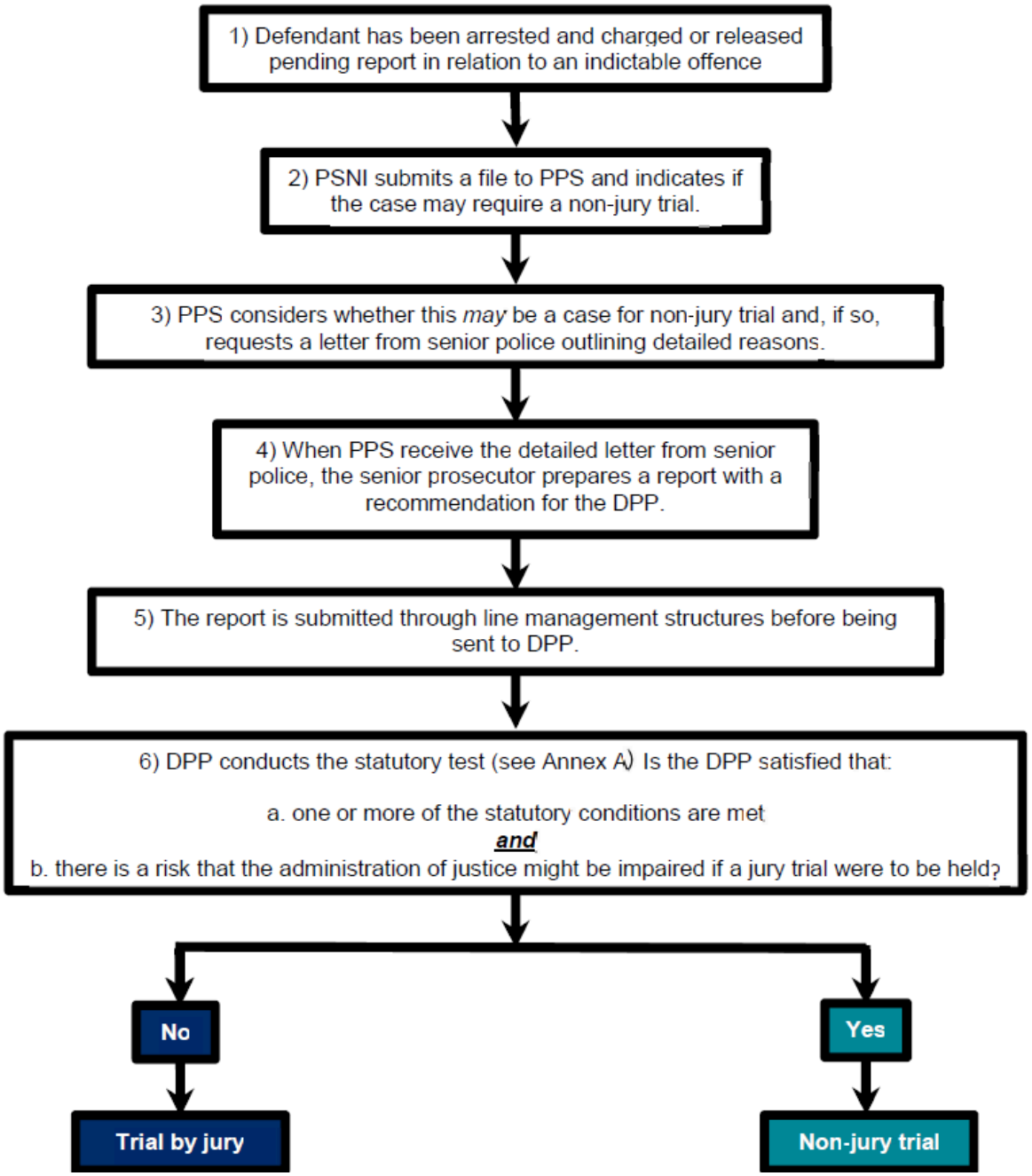
[8] Relevant case law includes:
R v DPP, ex p. Kebilene [2000] 2 AC 326
Shuker & Ors, Re Applications for Judicial Review [2004] NIQB 20
Re Brian and Paula Arthurs [2010] NIQB 75
Hutchings [2017] NIQB 121
[9] Section 7 of the Justice & Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 can be found at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/6/section/7

ANNEX B: HOW NON-JURY TRIALS WORK IN NORTHERN IRELAND

1. A non-jury trial certificate can be lodged with the court at any point before arraignment (the start of the criminal trial, where the charges are read to the defendant and the defendant is invited to enter a plea).

2. In a non-jury trial, a single judge sits alone to hear the case. If the defendant is convicted, the judge must give their reasoning. Any person convicted before a non-jury court has a right of appeal against their sentence or conviction, without the leave of the judge.

3. The following chart summarises the process for non-jury trials:



ANNEX C: STATISTICS

1. The following tables provide statistics on non-jury trials in Northern Ireland, under the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007.

2. It should also be noted that the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic impacted the operation of the Crown Court in 2020 with trials being suspended.

Table 1: Certificates issued and refused for NJTs by the Director of Public Prosecutions (2007-2025)

Year	Certificates Issued	Certificates Refused
2007	12	2
2008	25	2
2009	11	0
2010	14	0
2011	28	0
2012	25	3
2013	23	3
2014	14	1
2015	15	0
2016	19	1
2017	22	1
2018	17	1
2019	13	1
2020	11	2
2021	16	1
2022	22	4
2023	20	3
2024	17	4
2025	18	3
Source: Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland (PPS)		

Chart 1



Table 2: Non-Jury trial cases as a percentage of all cases in the Crown Court (2007-2025)[10]

Year	NJT Cases	Other	Total	% NJT Cases
2007	64	1367	1431	4.5%
2008	33	1338	1371	2.4%
2009	17	1219	1236	1.4%
2010	17	1233	1250	1.4%
2011	14	1472	1486	0.9%
2012	21	1656	1677	1.3%
2013	36	1917	1953	1.8%
2014	28	1660	1688	1.7%
2015	17	1063	1080	1.6%
2016	12	1628	1640	0.7%
2017	9	1400	1409	0.6%

[10] The figures in Table 1 for the number of NJT certificates issued each year do not match the figures in Table 2 for the number of NJT cases disposed each year. There are two factors contributing to this. Most commonly, it is because certificates may be issued in one year but the case then disposed of in another year. Less commonly, separate certificates might be issued for multiple defendants on the same file.

2018	18	1163	1181	1.5%
2019	14	1281	1295	1.1%
2020	9	956	965	0.9%
2021	8	1350	1358	0.6%
2022	8	1401	1409	0.6%
2023	12	1411	1423	0.8%
2024	11	1487	1498	0.7%
2025	11	1365	1376	0.8%
TOTAL	**359**	**26367**	**26726**	**Average: 1.3%**
Source: NI Courts & Tribunals Service				

Chart 2

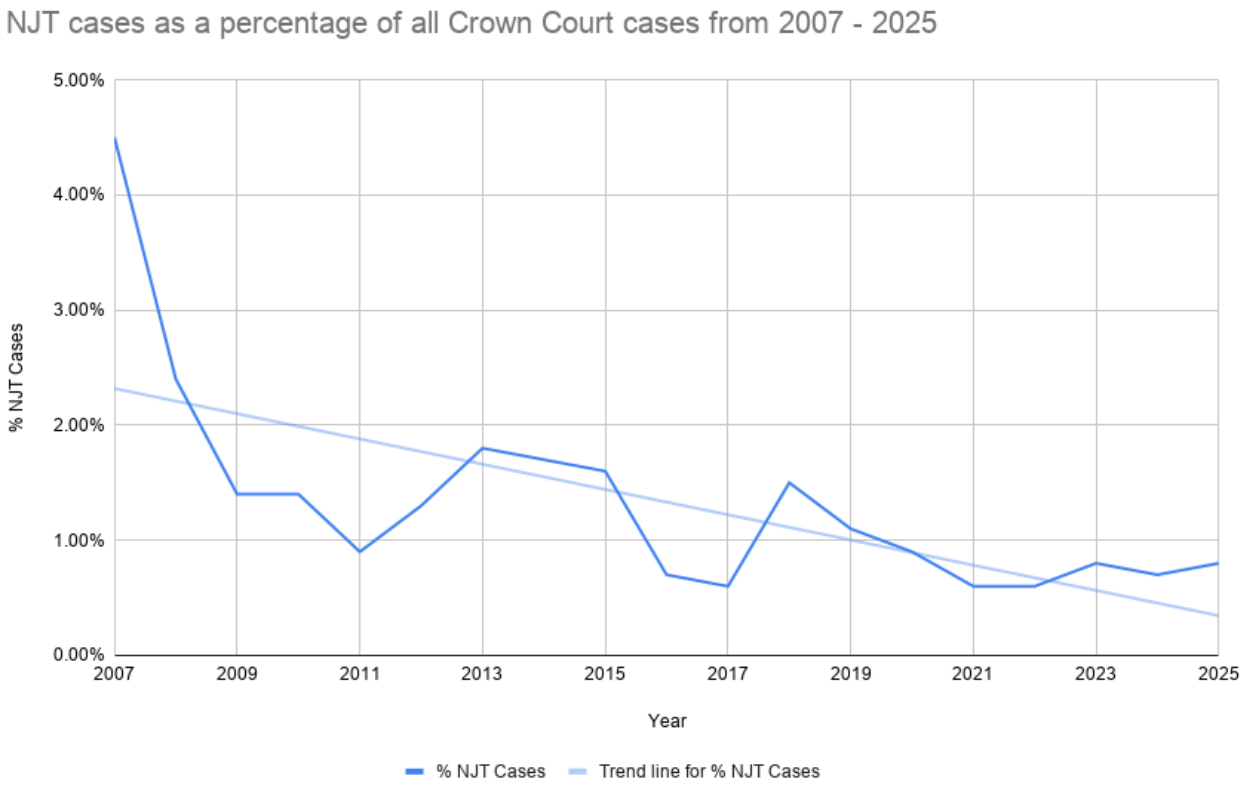


Table 3: Percentage of cases where conditions of the DPP statutory test have been met (2007-2025)

Year	Condition 1	Condition 2	Condition 3	Condition 4	Certificates Issued
2007	100%	50%	25%	33%	**12**
2008	96%	64%	12%	16%	**25**
2009	100%	64%	0%	18%	**11**
2010	93%	64%	14%	21%	**14**
2011	96%	82%	14%	29%	**28**
2012	84%	64%	4%	40%	**25**
2013	96%	70%	13%	91%	**23**
2014	100%	67%	0%	89%	**18**
2015	93%	87%	0%	47%	**15**
2016	91%	100%	0%	64%	**11**
2017	100%	67%	0%	89%	**9**
2018	94%	71%	0%	82%	**17**
2019	77%	69%	0%	62%	**13**
2020	91%	64%	18%	36%	**11**
2021	94%	62%	6%	75%	**16**
2022	77%	73%	0%	23%	**22**
2023	95%	80%	10%	40%	**20**
2024	94%	88%	0%	59%	17
2025	94%	56%	6%	56%	18
Average	**93%**	**71%**	**6%**	**51%**	
Source: Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland (PPS)					

Chart 3

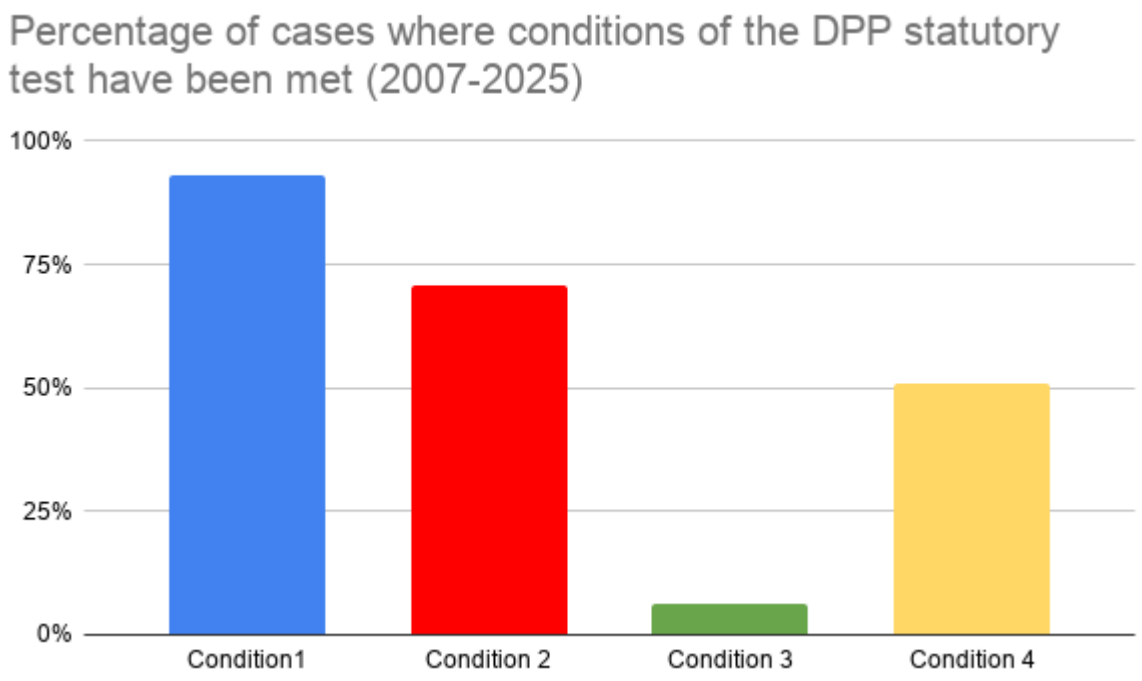
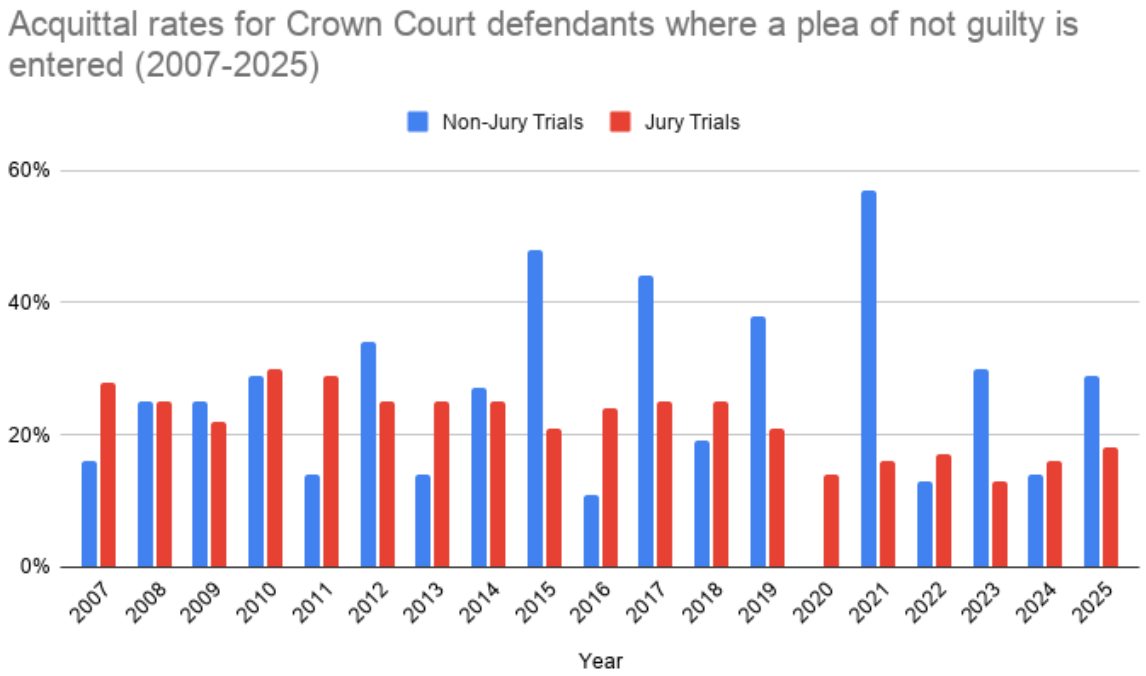

Percentage of cases where conditions of the DPP statutory test have been met (2007-2025)
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
Condition1
Condition 2
Condition 3
Condition 4

Table 4: (2007-2025)Acquittal rates for Crown Court defendants *where a plea of not guilty is entered in* non-jury trials, compared with those in jury trials

Year	Non-Jury Trials	Jury Trials
2007	16%	28%
2008	25%	25%
2009	25%	22%
2010	29%	30%
2011	14%	29%
2012	34%	25%
2013	14%	25%
2014	27%	25%
2015	48%	21%
2016	11%	24%
2017	44%	25%
2018	19%	25%
2019	38%	21%
2020	0%	14%
2021	57%	16%
2022	13%	17%
2023	30%	13%
2024	14%	16%
2025	29%	18%
Source: NI Courts & Tribunals Service		

Chart 4


Acquittal rates for Crown Court defendants where a plea of not guilty is entered (2007-2025)
Non-Jury Trials
Jury Trials
60%
40%
20%
0%
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
Year

ANNEX D: FURTHER INFORMATION

- Criminal Justice Act 2003, Section 44
  http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/44/section/44

- Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007
  http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2007/6/contents

- The Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 (Extension of duration of non-jury trial provisions) Order 2025
  https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2025/875/contents/made

- The Fresh Start Panel report on the Disbandment of Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland June 2016
  https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/publications/fresh-start-panel-report-disbandment-paramilitary-groups-northern-ireland

- Joint analysis from PSNI and the Security Service Paramilitary Groups in Northern Ireland
  https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/469548/Paramilitary_Groups_in_Northern_Ireland_-_20_Oct_2015.pdf

- Eighth Report of the Independent Reporting Commission (reporting on progress towards ending paramilitary activity):
  https://www.ircommission.org/publications/irc-eighth-report

- *Eighteenth Annual Report of the Independent Reviewer of the Justice & Security (NI) Act 2007*, which was published in June 2026:
  https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/annual-reports-of-the-independent-reviewer-of-justice-and-security-northern-ireland-act-2007

ANNEX E: Public consultation privacy notice

The Northern Ireland Office (NIO) is committed to protecting the privacy and security of your information. This notice informs you how we collect and process your personal data in accordance with data protection legislation when you respond to this consultation.

You can respond to this consultation:

- by post
- by email

The way in which your data is handled varies depending on how you submit your response, but all information submitted to us will be treated in accordance with data protection principles.

This privacy notice sets out:

- how we process your personal data when you respond to this consultation
- the rights you have under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

Purpose

We collect your personal data as part of the consultation process:

- to contact you regarding your response or related matters; and
- to produce anonymous statistical data, for example about the types of individuals and groups participating.

The data we collect

We collect and process the following personal data:

- your name
- your email or postal address
- any personal data you volunteer by way of evidence or example in your response to the consultation

Lawful basis for processing your personal data

The lawful basis we are relying on to process your personal data is article 6(1)(e) of the UK GDPR, which allows us to process personal data when this is necessary for the performance of our public tasks in the exercise of our official authority.

What we do with your data

The information you send us may need to be shared with colleagues within the NIO, other relevant UK Government departments and relevant Northern Ireland Executive departments. The information might also be published in a summary of responses received and referred to in the published consultation report

We will not:

- sell or rent your data to third parties
- share your data with third parties for marketing purposes

We will share your data if we are required to do so by law, for example by court order, or to prevent fraud or other crime.

How long we keep your data

Any personal information provided will be stored for six months before being destroyed.

Your rights

With respect to the processing of your personal data described in this notice, you have the right to request:

- information about how your personal data are processed
- a copy of the personal data you submitted in an accessible format
- that anything inaccurate in your personal data is corrected immediately
- that any incomplete personal data are completed, including by means of a supplementary statement
- that your personal data are erased if there is no longer a justification for them to be processed
- in certain circumstances (for example, where accuracy is contested) that the processing of your personal data is restricted

You can also:

- object to the processing of your personal data
- lodge a complaint with the Independent Information Commissioner (ICO) if you think we are not handling your data fairly or in accordance with the law

How to contact us

Contact our Data Protection Officer (DPO) with any concerns about how we or our services handle your personal information:

Data Protection Officer
Northern Ireland Office
1 Horse Guards Road,
Westminster,
London
SW1A 2HQ

Email: foi@nio.gov.uk

Independent advice

You can contact the Information Commissioner for independent advice about data protection issues or to make a complaint:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Email casework@ico.org.uk
Telephone 0303 123 1113
Textphone 01625 545860

Monday to Friday 9am to 4:30pm

If you make a complaint to the Information Commissioner, it does not prejudice your right to seek redress through the courts.