

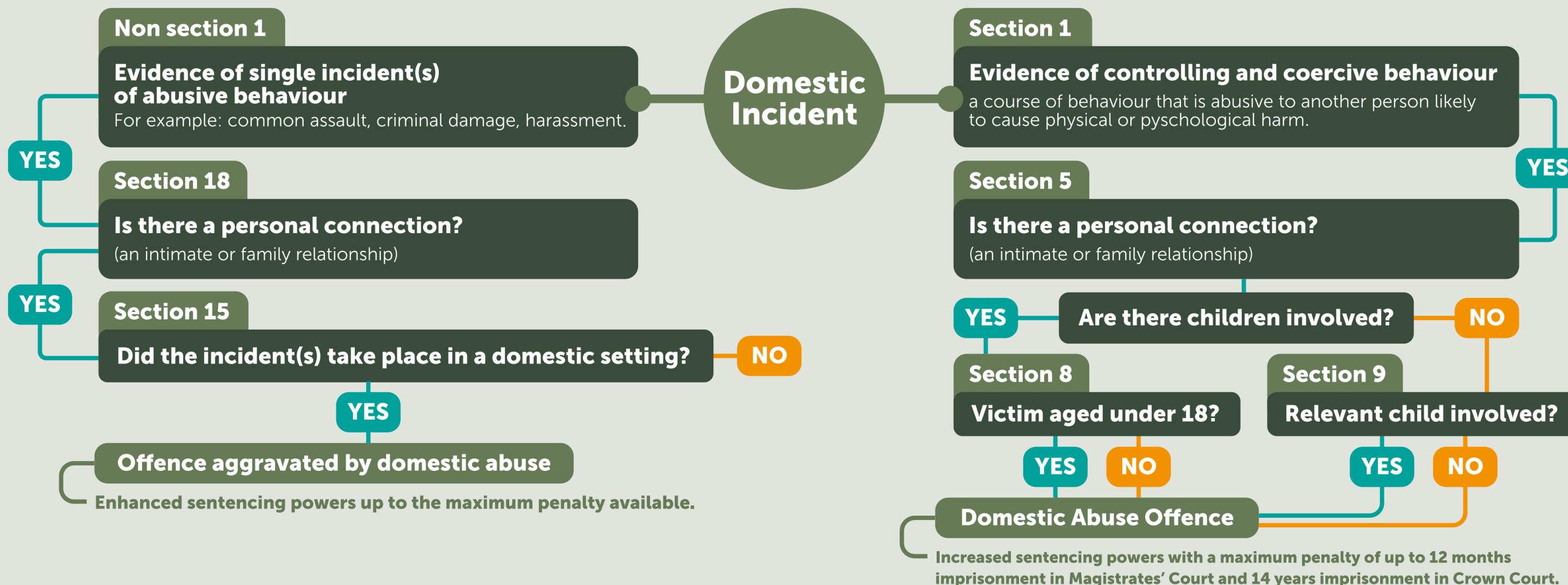
# REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PART 1 OF THE DOMESTIC ABUSE AND CIVIL PROCEEDINGS ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2021 YEAR 2 PROGRESS REVIEW

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## THE DOMESTIC ABUSE AND CIVIL PROCEEDINGS ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2021



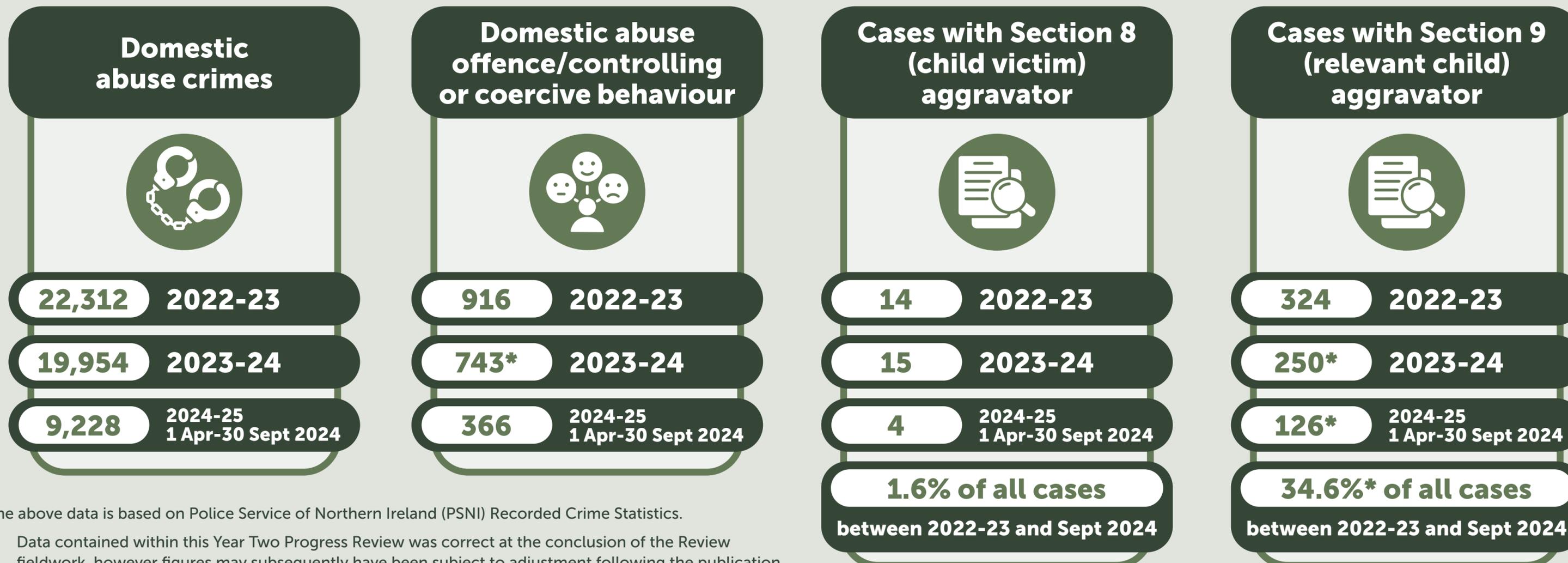
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## USE OF THE ACT DOMESTIC ABUSE OFFENCE AND CHILD AGGRAVATORS TO DATE



The above data is based on Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) Recorded Crime Statistics.

\* Data contained within this Year Two Progress Review was correct at the conclusion of the Review fieldwork, however figures may subsequently have been subject to adjustment following the publication of revised PSNI figures.

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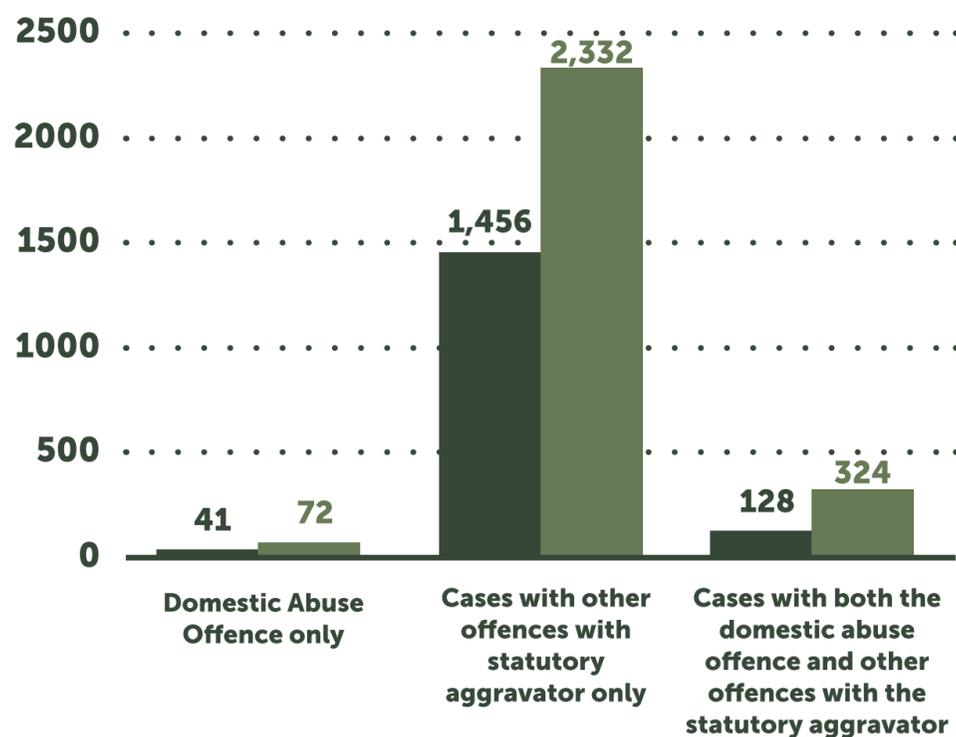
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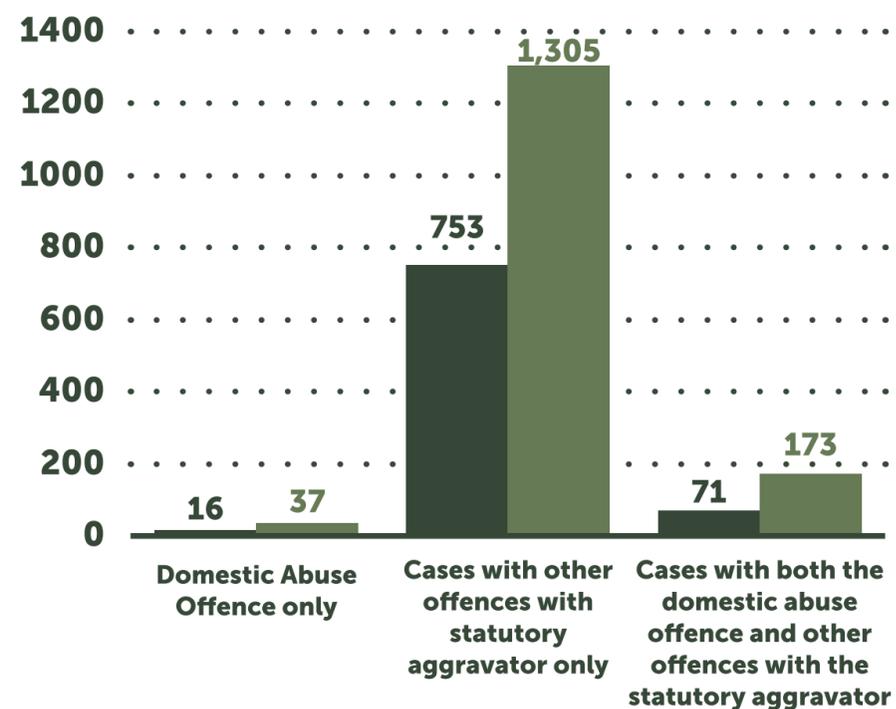
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## PROSECUTIONS AND CONVICTIONS FOR CASES WITH THE DOMESTIC ABUSE OFFENCE OR WITH OTHER OFFENCES WITH THE DOMESTIC ABUSE STATUTORY AGGRAVATOR

### Prosecutions



### Convictions



■ 2022-23  
■ 2023-24

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**NUMBER OF CASES  
SUBMITTED BY THE  
PSNI TO THE PPS  
FOR A DECISION  
ON PROSECUTION  
THAT HAD A CHILD  
AGGRAVATOR  
(SECTION 8 OR  
SECTION 9) ATTACHED**



**59 CASES  
with  
61 CHILD AGGRAVATORS\***

*\*These figures are based on unpublished PPS data provided to CJI for the purposes of this Review. The data remained unpublished at the conclusion and publication of the Year Two Progress Review Report (9 April 2025).*

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## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS AGAINST YEAR 1 REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

IN CJi'S 2024 REPORT INSPECTORS MADE

TWO STRATEGIC AND NINE OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

THE YEAR 2 REPORT PUBLISHED IN 2025 FOUND:

2 Operational Recommendations



GOOD PROGRESS

2 Strategic Recommendations

4 Operational Recommendations



REASONABLE PROGRESS

2 Operational Recommendations



INSUFFICIENT PROGRESS

1 Operational Recommendation



NO MEANINGFUL PROGRESS

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## WHAT HAS IMPROVED?



There has been a notable cultural shift in how Police Officers and Prosecutors understood and approached domestic abuse.



An Operation Encompass Information Sharing Agreement between the PSNI and the Education Authority was under development, but work was at an early stage and required more collaboration.



A Gateway Pilot between the PSNI and the PPS and an updated Service Level Agreement had potential to improve and reinforce the importance of collaboration in domestic abuse cases.



Work to raise awareness of statutory guidance on the Act within the criminal justice system had been taken forward by the Department of Justice. A revised e-learning package was under development that aimed to improve accessibility and uptake.



A PPS Information Technology solution to ensure the Section 15 aggravator\* is applied to every relevant charge was under development.



PSNI plans for the publication of Section 15 aggravator\* data were at an advanced stage.

\* The Section 15 Domestic Abuse aggravator provides for any other offence, other than the domestic abuse offence to be aggravated where it involves domestic abuse.

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## WHAT REQUIRES FURTHER IMPROVEMENT?



Further discussions are needed with the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland on how *Operation Encompass* can support and be supported by wider child safeguarding practices.



Exploratory work is needed to understand the options for the re-establishment of the specialist domestic abuse Prosecutor role.



An assessment of the effectiveness of the PSNI training on the approach to children in domestic abuse cases is required and training was needed on the approach to domestic abuse cases within the PSNI Contact Management Centre.



Collaborative efforts are needed to ensure the completeness and accuracy of recording of the impact of domestic abuse aggravators on sentencing at Court.