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Crime and Justice in South Australia, 2006

No. 43 (1) Offences Reported to Police, The Victims and Alleged Perpetrators

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CRIME AND JUSTICE
IN
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
2006
-
OFFENCES REPORTED TO POLICE, THE VICTIMS AND ALLEGED PERPETRATORS

A statistical report

OFFICE OF CRIME STATISTICS AND RESEARCH
Attorney-General's Department

First published 2007 by

Office of Crime Statistics and Research
South Australian Attorney-General's Department
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PREFACE

Crime and Justice in South Australia: Offences Reported to Police, the Victims and Alleged Perpetrators is the first of a three volume report on crime and criminal justice statistics in South Australia which, in one form or another, has been published annually by the Office of Crime Statistics and Research since 1987. While Volume 2 deals exclusively with young offenders and the juvenile justice system and Volume 3 focuses on adult courts and correctional services, Volume 1 (ie this volume) contains information on police-related activities for the period 1 January to 31 December 2006.

Five main sections are included in this report, as follows:

- the number of incident reports filed by police;
- the number of offences recorded by police;
- the number of offences cleared by police and the method of clearance;
- characteristics of victims who reported an offence to police; and
- characteristics of alleged perpetrators apprehended by police.

We trust that readers will find this volume of *Crime and Justice in South Australia* useful and informative.

Paul Thomas
Acting Director
Office of Crime Statistics and Research

June 2007

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INTRODUCTION

This report, covering the period 1 January to 31 December 2006, is the eighteenth Crime and Justice report to be based on a calendar year of reporting. Statistics in this report cover five main areas:

- the number of incident reports filed by police;
- the number of offences recorded by police;
- the number of offences cleared by police and the method of clearance;
- the characteristics of victims who reported an offence to police; and
- the characteristics of alleged perpetrators apprehended by police.

Using Crime and Justice reports

As with all quantitative data, the tables in this publication can give rise to misunderstanding and confusion unless assessed carefully. The notes that follow, combined with the detailed explanations outlined in the Appendix, are designed to assist understanding and correct interpretation of the data.

Comprehensiveness

In using this *Crime and Justice* report it is important to understand that it does not provide a comprehensive picture of the incidence and nature of offending in the community. The officially recorded crime statistics contained in this volume are influenced by a number of factors, as described below.

Incidents and offences recorded by police

Sections 2, 3 and 4 of this report detail only those incidents and offences actually reported to police or which come to police attention. They are therefore heavily dependent on whether the victim of an offence chooses to report that offence. Victim surveys have indicated that many offences are never reported and so are never counted in official police statistics. The level of under-reporting also varies from one offence category to another. The most recent victimisation survey conducted in South Australia in 2005 showed that, at one end of the spectrum, 86.5% of motor vehicle thefts in South Australia were reported to police, while at the other end of the scale, the level of reporting of non-sexual assaults was 37.4% (ABS, 2006: Cat. No. 4509.0). This means that while police statistics for *larceny or illegal use of a motor vehicle* are likely to provide an accurate insight into the actual incidence of these offences in the community, they significantly underestimate the number of *assaults*.

Changes in the willingness of victims to report incidents to police will inevitably have an impact on recorded crime trends. In recent years, Governments in all states have introduced a range of measures designed to encourage more victims to report offences (particularly those involving sexual assault). As a result, any increase in recorded crime levels may be due, not to a shift in the actual incidence of illegal behaviour in the community, but to a greater willingness by victims to bring those offences to police attention.

In the case of victimless crimes (such as *possess/use drugs*) the identification or detection of an offence rests predominantly with police. Here, official crime statistics may be influenced by policing practices, and in particular by the number and range of specialist operations conducted in any given year. For example, the number of *driving offences* coming to police attention over a given time period will rise significantly if the police dedicate more resources to enforcing motor traffic legislation. In South Australia, police statistics on drink driving offences increased noticeably following the introduction of random breath testing in 1981, with a particularly sharp rise occurring in 1997 when the number of drivers given a random breath test in that year doubled. Survey data collected by the University of Adelaide indicate, however, that the proportion of individual drivers "over the limit" has actually been decreasing since 1982. Thus, while publicity about drink driving and increased levels of enforcement have served to reduce the actual incidence of this type of offending in the community, the number of officially recorded *drink driving offences* has increased due to greater enforcement activity by police.

The number of incidents and offences recorded by police during a given year are also dependent on how an event is interpreted by police and whether it is entered onto the data collection system. While SAPOL has processes in place to provide direction to police officers, final responsibility for deciding whether a particular criminal incident will be recorded and how it will be recorded is still vested in individual officers. Shifts in how police officers exercise this discretion will impact on the statistics. For example, it is widely acknowledged that in earlier decades, many domestic violence incidents to which police were called did not result in a formal incident report being filed because police viewed such incidents as "internal" family matters. However, as the community's awareness of, and concern about, domestic violence increased, so police willingness to formally record such incidents also increased. Thus any long term upswing in domestic violence assaults over time may be due, not to a change in the actual frequency of such behaviour but a greater willingness by police to actually lodge an incident report, which will then be counted in the official statistics.

Changes to legislation and criminal justice processes themselves also impact on the statistics. For example, in late 2001, the Police Drug Diversion Initiative was introduced to respond to both adults and juveniles detected in possession of drugs or drug implements. Under this scheme, such individuals are diverted to a brief assessment and intervention without the offences being formally recorded on the Police Information Management System. As a result, the numbers of *use/possess drug offences* recorded by police has dropped considerably.

Changes in the efficiency of policing combined with improvements in technology may also affect the official statistics. For example, with the recent expansion in the use of red light and speed cameras, the number of offences involving 'drive unregistered/uninsured' has jumped dramatically in recent years because registration and licence checks are automatically carried out as a by-product of detected speeding and red light violations.

The influence potentially exerted by these factors on recorded crime trends in this State therefore need to be borne in mind when interpreting the statistics contained in this report.

Characteristics of victims and apprehended persons

Similar interpretative issues also apply to Sections 5 and 6 of this report, which detail the characteristics of victims who report a crime to police and the characteristics of alleged perpetrators apprehended by police. For example, given that for offences such as *sexual assault*, many victims choose not to report the matter to police, it may be that those who do report such incidents differ in some ways from those who decide not to do so. Similarly, for certain categories of crime such as *property damage*, *serious criminal trespass* and *vehicle theft*, the number of crimes reported to police which are actually 'cleared' by the apprehension of a suspect is relatively low. As a result, those persons who are apprehended may not be representative of all those who actually commit these offences.

In summary, official crime statistics should be interpreted with extreme care. To facilitate this, readers are urged to consult the detailed explanatory notes contained in the Appendix.

Summary of 2006 Statistics

Police Incident Reports

- In 2006, 197,214 incident reports were submitted by police. This was 1.5% lower than the preceding year.
- The overwhelming majority (76.4%) of incident reports submitted in 2006 involved one offence only. The average number of offences per report was 1.34.

Offences recorded by police

- In 2006, there were 263,369 offences recorded by police which represents a 3.4% decline over the previous year.
- *Offences against property* dominated, accounting for over five in ten offences recorded (53.8%). In contrast, *sexual offences, drug offences* and *robbery and extortion* each constituted than 1% or less. This offence profile was similar to that observed in previous years.
- The number of *sexual offences*, *property offences*, other offences and selected *driving offences* all decreased in 2006. In contrast, *offences against good order*, *offences against the person, robbery offences,* and *drug offences* all recorded increases.
- The number of *offences against the person, (excluding sexual offences)* recorded by police increased in 2006 (by 4.2%). Within this broad category, the combined categories of *assault* increased (by 7.1%), however *homicide related offences* and *other offences against the person* decreased by 27.2% and 11.7% respectively.
- In 2006, the number of *sexual offences* declined slightly (2,232 compared with 2,372 in 2005). This followed a fairly substantial increase of 10.3% in 2003 which coincided with the establishment of a Paedophile Task Force (in May 2003) as well as new legislation (in June 2003) to abolish the time limit for the prosecution of certain sexual offences. Within this broad category, the number of recorded *other sexual offences* decreased (by 10.0%) while all other sub-categories recorded decreases ranging between 1.6% and 14.1%, with the exception of *unlawful sexual intercourse*, which increased by 20.9%)
- The total number of *robbery* offences recorded by police in 2006 increased by 1.4%. Within this category, *armed robberies* remained constant while *unarmed robberies* increased by 2.6%.
- The number of recorded *offences against property* decreased by 3.3% in 2006. This downward trend applied to most subcategories. This included:
    - a 4.3% decrease in serious criminal trespass - dwellings;
    - a 17.0% decrease in serious criminal trespass - shop,
    - a 0.2% decrease in serious criminal trespass - other buildings;
    - a 10.8% decrease in larceny/illegal use of motor vehicle;
    - a 9.7% decrease in interfere with motor vehicle; and
    - a 2.1% decrease in *damage property* offences.

Increases occurred in the following categories:

- a 1.4% increase in *larceny from shop*;
- an 11.0% increase in receiving/unlawful possession, and
- a 23.5% increase in fraud and misappropriation.

- The total number of selected *driving offences* decreased by 10.7% in 2006. This included:
  - a 1.0% decrease in drink driving offences;
  - an 18.8% decrease in dangerous, reckless or negligent driving, offences,
  - a 4.3% decrease in driving licence offences,
  - a 14.7% decrease in motor vehicle registration offences; and
  - a 14.7% decrease in *traffic offences*.

  It should be noted though, that the number of *driving offences* recorded is heavily reliant on police enforcement practices. For example, the number of random breath tests conducted impacts significantly on the number of *drink driving offences* detected by police while the increase over recent years in the number of *driving licence offences* and *motor vehicle registration offences* can largely be attributed to the increased use of red light and speed cameras.

- The number of *drug offences* recorded by police in 2006 increased by 8.2%, following a 16.0% decrease in 2005. All but one of the drug offence sub-categories recorded increases. This included:
  - a 20.4% increase in possess and/or use drugs;
  - a 16.0% increase in possess drug implement;
  - a 111.7% increase in *fraudulent prescription* offences,
  - a 1.1% decrease in produce or manufacture drugs; and
  - a 2.5% increase in possess for sale/sell drugs.

  As with *driving offences,* however, the number of such offences recorded in any given year is heavily dependent on police enforcement practices and legislative change. In particular, the comparatively low number of *possess and/or use drugs* offences now being recorded could be attributable to the introduction in late 2001 of the Police Drug Diversion Initiative. Changes in recent years to the number of cannabis plants covered by the Cannabis Expiation Notice Scheme also impacts on the number of individuals who are charged with a *produce drug offence*.

- *Offences against good order* increased by 5.3% in 2005. The latest figure is the highest recorded since 1992. Again, however, there were variations within this broad grouping, with *indecent/offensive language* down by 6.5%, while most other categories increased. The largest percentage increases were in offences *against court order* (13.2%), *disorderly behaviour* (11.5%) and *unlawful possession of weapons* (10.0%).

Location of offences recorded

- In 2006, the Northern Statistical Division recorded the highest rate of *offences against the person* (24.6 per 1,000 population). This was considerably higher than any other statistical division, with the next highest rate recorded for Eyre (16.9), followed by Adelaide (14.7)

and then Murray Lands (13.9). The lowest rate of 7.7 offences per 1,000 population was recorded for the Outer Adelaide Division.

- The highest rate of *serious criminal trespass* in 2006 was recorded by the Adelaide Statistical Division (22.5 offences per 1,000 dwellings). The Northern Division was second highest (16.7), with the rates in other Divisions ranging between 5.9 (in Yorke and Lower North) and 12.6 (in Murray Lands).
- When these broader statistical divisions are broken down into the smaller spatial units of Local Government Areas, it was found that:
  - In 2006, the LGA of Adelaide recorded the highest rate of offending per 1,000 population (1,060.9). This was followed by Coober Pedy (581.2), Ceduna (527.0), Unincorporated South Australia (407.1) and Port Augusta (377.1).
  - The LGA of Adelaide had by far the highest rate of offences against the person (129.0 per 1,000 population). The LGA with the second highest rate was Coober Pedy (68.1), followed by Ceduna (62.1), Unincorporated South Australia (58.2), and Port Augusta (39.9).
  - The highest rate for serious criminal trespass was also recorded in the LGA of Prospect (40.8 per 1,000 dwelling). This was followed by Port Adelaide Enfield (37.7), Playford (35.5), Unincorporated SA (32.4) and Walkerville (31.6).

Clearance status of offences recorded by police

- During 2006, of the 263,369 offences recorded by police, 125,809 (47.8%) were cleared by the end of the same year while conversely, 52.2% remained uncleared.
- However, the clear up level varied depending on the type of offence involved, with the lowest recorded for *property offences* (15.9% cleared by the end of the year), followed by *robbery and extortion* (33.0%). Over one half (56.5%) of the *sexual offences* recorded by police in 2006 were cleared, as were more than two thirds of *offences against the person, excluding sexual offences*. However, the highest clear up levels (over 98%) were recorded for *driving* and *drug offences* – a finding which is to be expected given that police normally detect these offences at the time of their commission and apprehension of the perpetrator.
- Across all of these categories, clear up levels were either similar to or marginally higher than those recorded in 2005.
- In addition to the 125,809 offences which were both reported and cleared in 2006, a further 4,465 offences reported to police in earlier years were also cleared in 2006. This gives a total of 130,274 offences cleared over the twelve month period.
- Of these 130,274 offences cleared, the majority (90.2%) were cleared by way of the apprehension or cautioning of a suspect. A very small proportion of offences (1.1%) were designated as cleared on the grounds that they were unfounded, while 8.0% were cleared by the victim requesting that no further action be taken.
- Again, however, the method of clearance varied depending on the type of offence involved. As expected, virtually all *driving* and *drug offences* were cleared by way of the apprehension of a suspect. In contrast, just over two thirds (67.1%) of *sexual offences* and just over one half (58.0%) of *offences against the person* were cleared in this way. For these last two categories,

the proportion cleared as a result of the victim requesting that no further action be taken was relatively high (40.1% in the case of *offences against the person* and 28.2% of *sexual offences*).

Victims of offences recorded by police

In this section, only offences which involved a 'personal' victim were counted. This included all *offences against the person*, all *sexual offences* and all *robberies* directed against an individual[1].

- In 2006 there were 21,794 recorded victimisations directed against a person.
- Of those 21,794 victimisations where the sex of the victim was recorded, one half (52.2%) involved males, while conversely, 47.8% involved females. This fairly even distribution of victims between males and females is in direct contrast to the male/female breakdown for alleged offenders, with males accounting for the overwhelming majority of persons apprehended by police in 2006.
- Persons in the mid age ranges of 18-24 and 25-34 years accounted for the highest proportion of 'personal' victimisations recorded by police in 2006 (23.4% and 23.2% respectively), while the very young and the elderly accounted for relatively small proportions.
- However, the age profiles of victims varied depending on the type of offence involved. For *sexual offences*, for example, young people aged less than 18 years accounted for over four in ten (44.3%) of all such victimisations recorded in 2006 while those aged 60 and over accounted for only 2.4%.
- While the age profiles of male and female victims of *against person* and *sexual offences* were generally similar, this was not the case for *robbery and extortion*. For male victims, from the age of 24 onwards as age increased so the proportion of victims decreased. In contrast, while the highest proportion of female victimisations also occurred in the 18-24 year age category, there was another peak in the 45-59 age group, after which the percentage fell off steeply.

The information detailed above relates to the total number of offences involving a personal victim. However, the same victim may be subject to more than one offence and more than one incident during the course of the year. Another way of analysing the data then, is to focus on the discrete number of victims who came to police attention in 2006.

The results indicate that over this twelve month period:

- 18,757 persons were subject to at least one 'personal' offence;
- Almost nine in ten of these 18,757 persons were victimised once only during the 12 month period, indicating that the level of repeat victimisation was low.

[1] In previous years, *larceny from the person* victimisations were also included. However following the introduction of the *Criminal Law Consolidation (Offences of Dishonesty) Amendment Act 2002* on 5 July 2003, *Larceny from the Person* under section 155 of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act was repealed and no longer exists as a separate offence.

Offences cleared by way of an apprehension

- There were 116,361 separate offences listed on police apprehension reports lodged in 2006. This figure was lower (by 3.4%) than the 120,449 offences cleared in this way in 2005.
- Overall, more than eight in ten of these offences were accounted for by males, although this varied from 58.3% for *fraud and misappropriation* to 95.4% for *sexual offences*.
- Of the 116,314 offences listed in those apprehension reports filed in 2006 where the age of the alleged offender was recorded, relatively few involved older individuals. In contrast, persons in the 20 to 44 year age group were apprehended in relation to two-thirds the offences cleared by apprehension during the year.
- Overall, 12.7% of charges laid in 2006 involved juveniles (aged 10 – 17 years inclusive). The level of juvenile involvement varied, however, according to the type of charge. To illustrate, this age group accounted for only 8.8% of all *fraud and misappropriation* charges but 34.4% of all *larceny/illegal use of a motor vehicle*.
- Information on racial appearance was available for 110,320 or 94.8% of the 116,361 cleared by apprehension in 2006. Of these, 14,202 (12.9%) involved persons considered by police to be of Aboriginal appearance. Again, however, this varied depending on the type of charge involved, with this group accounting for 31.4% of all charges involving *other offences*, and 22.3% of *offences against the person* but only 3.7% of all *drug* charges.
- The 116,361 offences cleared by apprehension in 2006 were contained in 62,038 separate apprehension reports. On average then, each apprehension report lodged by police during this twelve month period contained 1.88 charges.
- Over the same time period, a total of 39,622 discrete individuals were apprehended, giving an average of 1.57 apprehensions and 2.94 offences per person in 2006.
- Males accounted for the majority of apprehension reports lodged (80.3%) and the majority of discrete individuals apprehended during 2006 (79.8%).
- Persons of Aboriginal appearance constituted 14.1% of all apprehensions and 11.8% of all persons apprehended where information on a person's racial appearance was recorded. Given that persons of Aboriginal descent constitute only 1.5% of the State's population aged 10 years and over, this indicates that their level of contact with the criminal justice system was considerably higher than expected on a per capita basis.
- Of the 39,622 discrete individuals apprehended in 2006, almost three quarters (73.6%) were apprehended only once during the 12 month period. However, there was a small group (1,011 or 2.6%) who were apprehended on six or more occasions, with 128 of these persons recording 11 or more apprehensions.
- A higher proportion of persons identified by police as Aboriginal were apprehended on more than one occasion in 2006 compared with non-Aboriginal persons (46.0% had two or more apprehensions compared with 27.0% of non-Aboriginal persons).
- In 2006, as in previous years, a small proportion of individuals were responsible for a high proportion of all charges laid during the twelve month period. In fact, 11.7% of persons apprehended in 2006 were responsible for 41.2% of all offences cleared by apprehension.

1 OVERVIEW

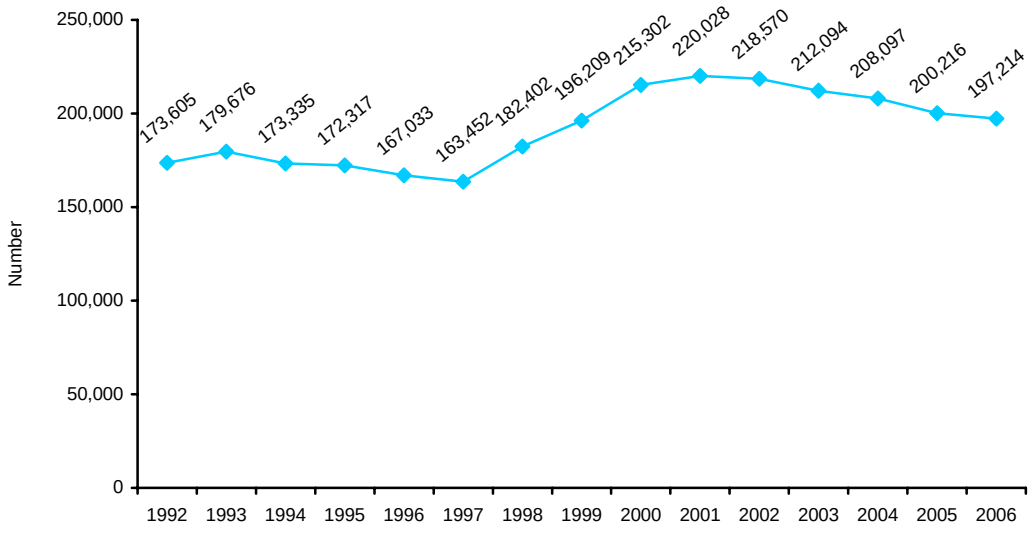
1.1 POLICE INCIDENT REPORTS

The number of incident reports filed by police in each of the years 1992 to 2006 is presented in Figure 1[1]. As shown:

In 2006 there were 197,214 incidents reported to police that resulted in the filing of a police incident report. This was 1.5% lower than the number filed the previous year.

The number of incident reports submitted by police increased between 1997 and 2001. However, since 2002 there has been a slight decline.

Figure 1 Number of incident reports submitted by police, 1992 to 2006



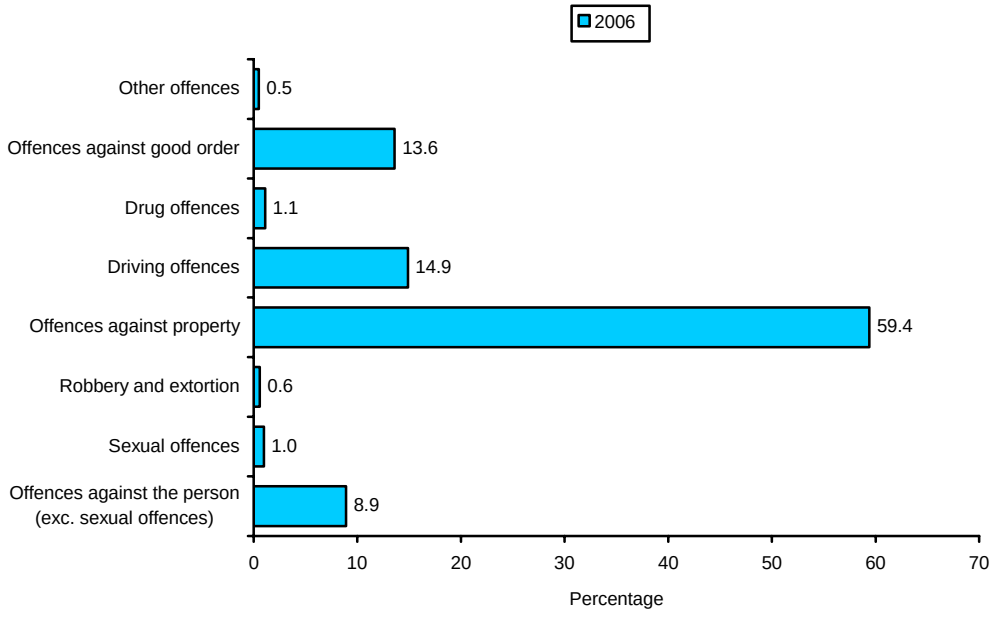
The 197,214 incident reports submitted in 2006 contained 263,369 offences, representing an average of 1.34 offences per report.

The overwhelming majority (76.4%) of incident reports submitted in 2006 involved one offence only, while only 0.3% contained six or more offences.

A profile of the major or most serious offence listed per incident report is detailed in Figure 2. Given that the majority of incident reports contained one offence only, that offence would constitute the major offence. However, for the small proportion of reports that contained more than one offence, the major or most serious offence was defined as the offence that had the highest level JANCO. For comparative purposes, data from 1999 to 2006 are also included in Figure 2. It should be kept in mind that the graph represents the *percentage* of all offences that each offence type represents, not the absolute number of each offence.

[1] Computerised records are not available prior to 1992 and so it is not possible to make comparisons over a longer time period.

Figure 2 Major offence recorded per incident report, 1999 - 2006



In 2006, in the majority of incident reports the most serious offence listed was an *offence against property* (59.4%).

Of the remaining offence categories, *driving offences, offences against good order* and *offences against the person (excluding sexual offences)* were the most prominent (14.9%, 13.6% and 8.9% respectively).

At the other end of the scale, very few incident reports involved either an *other offence* (0.5%) or a *robbery/extortion* (0.6%) offence.

Figure 2 indicates that in broad terms, the pattern of recorded offending has remained generally stable over time. Whilst the types of offences making up the bulk of offences has remained the same, there are discernible changes within the major groups, with a downward trend in the major category of offences against property, and upward trends in the proportions of driving offences and offences against good order.

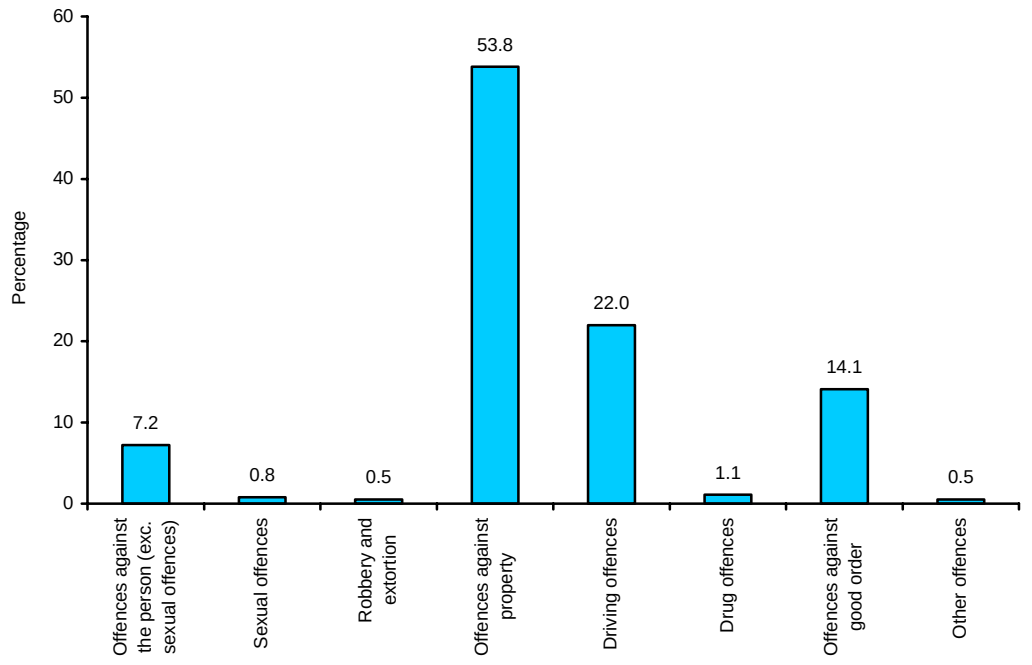
The increases in the percentages of driving offences and offences against good order are due to the fact that the absolute number of offences against property has been falling to a greater extent than these two. These changes have occurred against a background of falling offences levels overall, which has changed the base against which percentages have been calculated each year. Consequently some groups whose absolute numbers have fallen made up an increasing percentage of the total because their numbers did not fall by as much as those of other offences.

1.2 OFFENCES RECORDED BY POLICE

In the previous section, information was presented on the number of incident reports submitted by police in 2006. The following section details all offences and all offence counts recorded, irrespective of whether they arose from the same or different incidents[2]. In 2006, a total of 263,369 offences were recorded.

As shown in Figure 3, *offences against property* dominated the 2006 offence profile, accounting for over half of all offences recorded by police in this twelve-month period.

Figure 3 Distribution of offences recorded by police, 2006



[2] The exception to this rule is sexual offences. From 1993 the way in which sexual offences were calculated was changed to bring South Australia into line with other jurisdictions. From 1993 one offence was recorded for each victim regardless of the number of counts listed in the incident report.

As shown in Table 1, the 2006 offence profile was very similar to that observed in previous years.

Table 1 Profile of offences reported to police, 2005 and 2006.

Offence group	2005		2006	
	No.	%	No.	%
Offences against the person	18,284	6.7	19,057	7.2
Sexual offences	2,372	0.9	2,232	0.8
Robbery and extortion	1,218	0.4	1,256	0.5
Offences against property	146,413	53.7	141,589	53.8
Driving offences	64,812	23.8	57,889	22.0
Drug offences	2,749	1.0	2,974	1.1
Offences against good order	35,157	12.9	37,030	14.1
Other offences	1,594	0.6	1,342	0.5
Total	**272,599**	**100.0**	**263,369**	**100.0**

Breaking down these broad offence categories into more detailed sub-categories indicates that:

Of the *offences against the person* (*excluding sexual offences)* recorded in 2006 the highest proportion of offences in this category involved *other assault* (82.8%)[3]. In 2006 there were 15 *murders* and 37 *attempted murders* recorded by police.

Indecent assault and r*ape* each accounted for approximately one third of the 2,232 *sexual offences* reported to police in 2006 (31.9% and 30.8% respectively). Just under one-quarter of *sexual offences* involved *incest* or *other sexual offences,* while *unlawful sexual intercourse* accounted for 12.7%.

Unarmed robbery accounted for 57.0% of the 1,192 *robbery* offences recorded by police in 2006. Of the 513 *armed robberies*, only 15.6% involved the use of firearm. This represents 6.7% of all *robberies* recorded in 2006. Robberies of financial institutions (banks, credit unions etc) made up just 1.3% of all *robbery* offences during the year.

Larceny and receiving accounted for 53.8% of the 141,589 *property offences* recorded in 2006. Within this category, *theft of or illegal interference to a motor vehicle* accounted for 14.8% while *larceny from a motor vehicle* constituted 18.8%.

Legislative changes introduced on 25 December 1999 replaced *break/enter* offences with a range of *criminal trespass* offences. This legislative change impacted on how offences within this category were counted. In 2006, in addition to the 23,294 *criminal trespass* offences recorded, there was still a very small number of offences (187) related to *break and enter* offences which would have occurred prior to the legislative change but have only recently been brought to police attention. In total then, there were 23,481 offences in this broad category, which represents 16.6% of all *property offences* recorded

Fraud and misappropriation offences accounted for only 3.0% of all *property offences* recorded in 2006. *False pretence* offences were the most dominant in this group, accounting for 2,687 or 1.9% of all *property offences*.

Of the 37,701 *damage property and environmental* offences recorded in 2006, only 7.5% involved arson or the use of explosives. Of the 34,859 *property damage (not arson)* offences, 20.2% involved damage to dwellings, while 32.4% involved damage to motor vehicles.

Of the 57,889 *driving offences*[4] recorded in 2006, almost half (46.1%) involved *motor vehicle registration offences*. A further 22.8% involved *driving licence offences*, while 12.5% related to *exceeding the prescribed concentration* of alcohol and 5.3% involved *dangerous, reckless or negligent driving.*

[3] Due to legislative changes during 2006, the categories of 'assault occasioning' and 'other assault' are no longer comparable to previous years. The offences in these groups have been replaced by more general classes of offences which now belong in the categories 'other major assault' and 'other assault'. Within the existing assault categories, the constituent offences have been replaced by the more general offences of 'cause harm', and 'cause serious harm', both of which have aggravated and non-aggravated versions. In consequence the only active categories since the change are 'other major assault' and 'other minor assault'. The effect has been to increase the numbers in 'other assault' and (in a full year's operation) would empty the category 'assault occasioning'.

[4] This figure excludes all traffic infringement notices.

Just under half of the 2,974 *drug offences* recorded in 2006 involved *produce or manufacture drugs* (41.6%) while approximately one quarter (24.8%) involved *possess for sale or sell drugs*. Only a relatively small proportion (17.9%) of *drug offences* involved simple possession or use. This is due to the fact that the majority of such offences detected by police result in either a Cannabis Expiation Notice or diversion to the Police Drug Diversion Initiative, and so are not counted in these figures.

Cannabis accounted for 60.6% of the total 2,974 *drug offences*. In contrast, opiates were involved in only 2.3% of these offences, while amphetamines accounted for 19.6%.

Of the 37,030 *offences against good order*, the most prominent were *offences against a court or court order* (28.9%, most of which were breaches of bail, parole and other court orders), *graffiti and related offences* (14.0%), *resist/hinder police* (13.1%), *disorderly behaviour* (12.9%), and *unlawful possession of weapons* (8.7%).

Shifts between 2005 and 2006

Table 2 Number of offences recorded by police, 2005 compared with 2006

Offence	2005	2006	Percentage change
Offences against the person - total	**18,284**	**19,057**	**4.2%**
Homicide	92	67	-27.2%
Assaults	15,547	16,655**	+7.1%
Other offences against the person	2,645	2,335	-11.7%
Sexual offences - total+	**2,372**	**2,232**	!Zero Divide
Rape*	699	688	-1.6%
Indecent assault*	828	711	-14.1%
Unlawful sexual intercourse*	234	283	20.9%
Other sexual offences*	611	550	-10.0%
Robbery and Extortion - total	**1,218**	**1,265**	**3.9%**
Robbery - total	1,175	1,192	1.4%
Armed Robbery*	513	513	0.0%
- with firearm*	71	80	12.7%
- with other weapon*	442	433	-2.0%
Unarmed robbery*	662	679	2.6%
- robbery with violence*	312	370	18.6%
- robbery without violence*	350	309	-11.7%
Extortion*	43	64	+48.8%
Property offences - Total	**146,413**	**141,589**	**-3.3%**
Serious criminal trespass*	24,684	23,481	-4.9%
Fraud and misappropriation	3,395	4,194	+23.5%
Larceny and receiving	79,801	76,213	-4.5%
Property damage and environmental offences	38,533	37,701	-2.2%
Selected driving offences - total	**64,812**	**57,889**	**-10.7%**
Drink driving and related offences	8,688	8,603	-1.0%
Dangerous, reckless, negligent driving	3,768	3,061	-18.8%
Driving licence offences	13,771	13,184	-4.3%
Motor vehicle registration offences	31,289	26,703	-14.7%
Traffic offences	6,451	5,500	-14.7%
Parking and other vehicle offences*	845	838	-0.8%
Drug offences - total	**2,749**	**2,974**	**8.2%**
Possess and/or use drugs*	442	532	20.4%
Possess drug implement*	125	145	16.0%
Fraudulent prescription offences	77	163	111.7%
Produce or manufacture drugs*	1,250	1,236	-1.1%
Possess for sale/sell drugs*	721	739	2.5%
Other drug offences	134	159	18.7%
Against good order - total	**35,157**	**37,030**	**5.3%**
Against a court or court order	9,443	10,687	13.2%
Resist/hinder police	4,722	4,833	2.4%
Unlawful possession of weapons	2,915	3,207	10.0%
Trespassing	2,321	2,330	0.4%
Indecent/offensive language*	538	503	-6.5%
Disorderly behaviour	4,279	4,769	11.5%
Graffiti and related offences	5,048	5,183	2.7%
Other offences against good order	5,891	5,518	-6.3%
Other offences	**1,594**	**1,342**	**-15.8%**
Total	**272,599**	**263,369**	!Zero Divide

*Numbers in these categories are relatively small. Hence, small numerical changes may produce large percentage shifts.

The total includes a small number of break/enter offences that occurred prior to the introduction of serious criminal trespass offences in December 1999, but were not recorded until 2005.

+ In June 2003 the Criminal Law Consolidation Act was amended to abolish the time limit for the prosecution of certain sexual offences.

** Due to legislative changes during 2006, the categories of 'assault occasioning' and 'other assault' are no longer comparable to previous years. The offences in these groups have been replaced by more general classes of offences which now belong in the categories 'other major assault' and 'other assault'. Within the existing assault categories, the constituent offences have been replaced by the more general offences of 'cause harm', and 'cause serious harm', both of which have aggravated and non-aggravated versions. In consequence the only active categories since the change are 'other major assault' and 'other minor assault'. The effect has been to increase the numbers in 'other assault' and (in a full year's operation) would empty the category 'assault occasioning'. For these reasons, all types of assault have been combined for the purposes of broad comparison in this table.

There were 263,369 offences recorded in 2006 compared with 272,599 in 2005, representing a decrease of 3.4%.

A more detailed insight into the extent of change between 2005 and 2006 within each of the major offence types is provided in Table 2. It should be noted, though, that the number of offences in some categories is relatively low, with the result that any slight variation in absolute numbers will produce large percentage differences. As only some offences within each category have been included, the numbers will not necessarily sum to the total.

As shown, four broad offence categories - *drug offences*, *offences against good order, robbery and extortion* and *offences against the person* - recorded increases in 2006, with *drug offences* recording the greatest increase (8.2%, or 225 offences). All other categories declined, with the largest percentage change being in the *other offences group* (a 15.8% decrease, corresponding to 252 fewer offences). In absolute terms the largest fall was in the driving offences group, which declined by 6,913 offences.

To provide a more accurate picture of longitudinal trends, the following section locates these recent shifts within a broader time frame.

Longitudinal trends

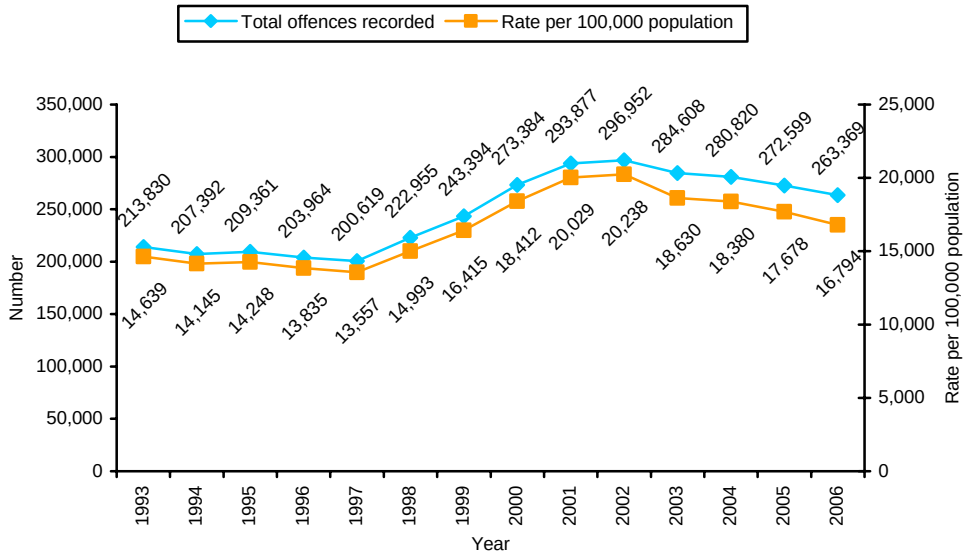
Figure 4 depicts longitudinal trends in both the number of offences recorded and the rate of offences per 100,000 population for the period 1993[4] to 2006.

Over the period depicted the trend for both the number of offences and rates per 100,000 population were very similar.

The total number of offences recorded by police in South Australia increased sharply from 1997 to 2002, before decreasing slightly in subsequent years. Yet despite these recent declines, the 2006 figure is still markedly higher than that recorded in 1997. In fact, the number of offences recorded in 2006 was 31.3% higher than in 1997, and the rate per 100,000 was 23.9% higher.

[4] It is not possible to provide figures prior to this because of changes to the way in which *sexual offences* were counted. These changes came into effect in 1993 and were designed to bring this State's counting rules for *sexual offences* into line with national standards introduced at that time by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Figure 4 Total offences recorded by police, 1993 to 2006



Note: Part of the increase in 1999 is attributable to a change in police recording practices for *traffic, motor vehicle* and *driving licence offences* that came in half way through that year. This also impacted upon the number of *driving offences* recorded in subsequent years.

In the following section, longitudinal trends in selected offence categories are depicted.[5]

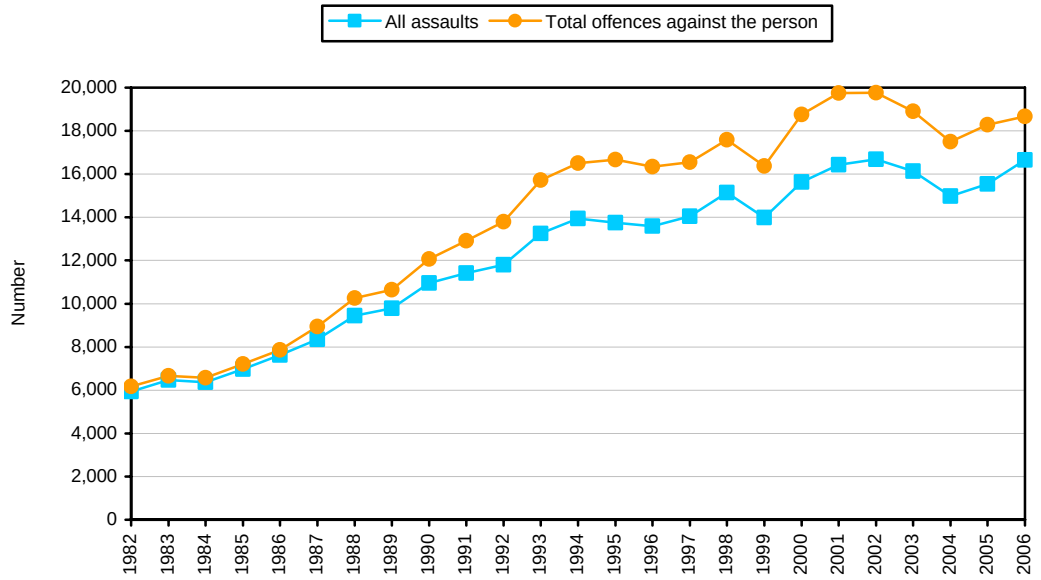
Offences against the person (excluding sexual offences)

As shown in Figure 5, the total number of *offences against the person*, (*excluding sexual offences)* recorded by police increased steadily from the early 1980s until 2002. There was a downward turn in 2003 and 2004 followed by a slight increase in 2005 and 2006.

The overall trend for this category is overwhelmingly the result of the trend in all categories of *assault*, which make up the majority of offences in this category.

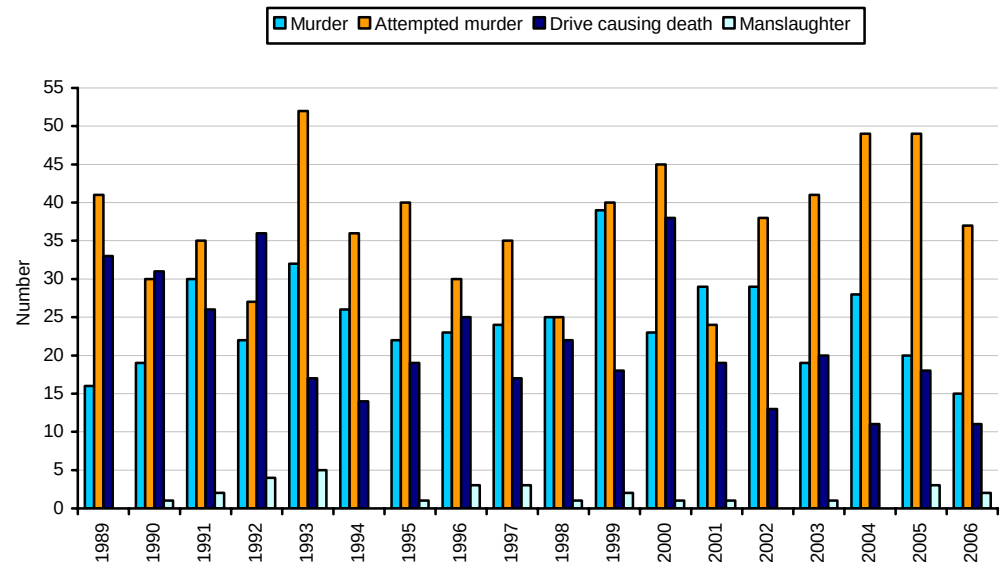
[5] In interpreting these graphs over the time frame depicted, it should be noted that since 1992 the *Crime and Justice* report has used JANCO – the South Australian justice agencies' refinement of the Australian National Classification of Offences – to categorise offences. These changes mean that care should be taken when comparing figures before and after 1992. It should also be noted that offences dealt with by way of expiation notices, such as traffic infringement notices and cannabis expiation notices, are not included in this report.

Figure 5 **Selected *offences against the person* (excluding sexual offences), 1982 to 2006**



As indicated in Figure 6, the numbers of recorded *murders*, *attempted murders, manslaughter* and *cause death by dangerous driving* offences have fluctuated considerably from one year to another over the period 1989 to 2006 but overall, have remained relatively low. Because of the small numbers, no longitudinal trends can be identified.

Figure 6 **Number of *murder*, *attempted murder, manslaughter* and *drive causing death* offences recorded by police, 1989 to 2006**



Sexual offences

In outlining longitudinal trends for sexual offences, it should be stressed that, given the relatively high level of under-reporting of this offence by victims, the numbers reported to police do not provide an accurate reflection of the actual extent of this type of offending. As a result, trends in recorded sexual offending, as depicted here, may be due to a range of factors, including shifts in the willingness of victims to notify police.

As shown in Figure 7, during the 1990s, the number of *sexual offences* declined (from 2,166 in 1993 to 1,786 in 1999). However, from 2000 there was a reversal of this trend, with numbers reaching a plateau between 2003 and 2005, before declining slightly in 2006.

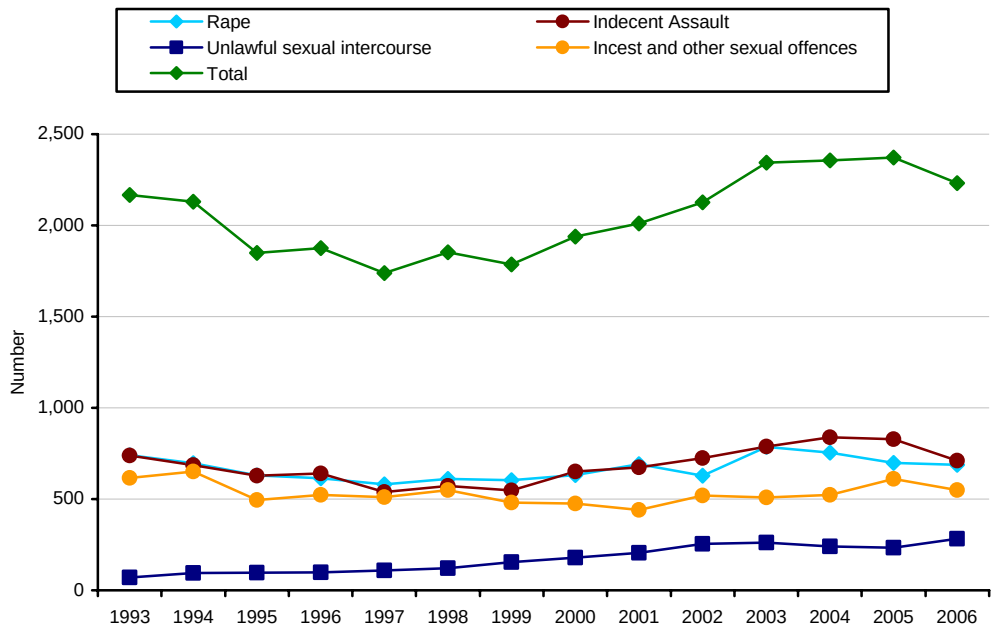
After a general upward trend between 1997 and 2003, the number of *rape* offences declined for the next three years. However, the most recent figures are still higher than 7 out of the 14 years plotted in the figure.

Indecent assault offences also increased between 1997 and 2004. The figures then decreased in 2005 and 2006, but remain higher than those between 1993 and 2001.

Despite some fluctuations, the number of *incest and other sexual offences* remained relatively stable between 1995 and 2004. However, an increase in 2005 (partly offset by a smaller drop in 2006) means that levels are now higher than at any point since 1994. To some extent the movements in this category have been mirrored by opposite changes in the unlawful sexual intercourse category, and may in part reflect changes in charging policy in circumstances where either offence could be applied.

The number of *unlawful sexual intercourse* offences recorded by police increased steadily from 1993 until 2003. As a result, despite slight decreases in 2004 and 2005, numbers increased again in 2006 and are still higher than a decade ago. Overall, however, numbers in this category are relatively low.

Figure 7 ***Sexual offences*, 1993 to 2006**



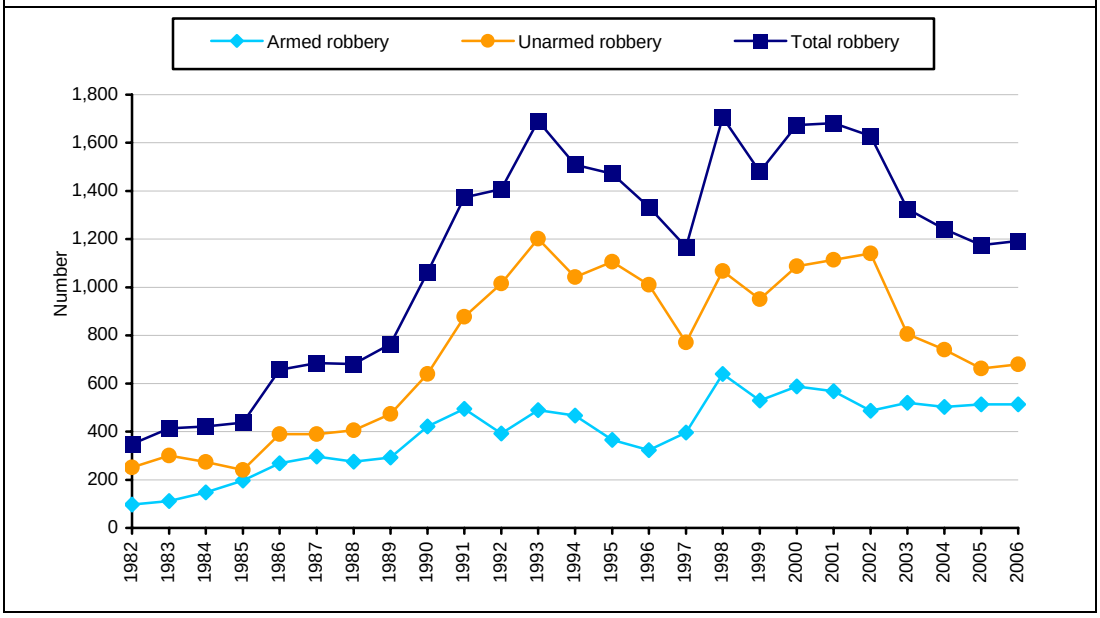
Note: Counting rules for sexual offences were changed in 1993 to conform with national standards. Figures for 1992 were recalculated in accordance with the new rules. As a result, 2003 data can only be compared accurately with figures from 1992 onwards.

Robbery

The relatively low number of *robberies* recorded each year means that small numerical shifts can produce seemingly large fluctuations over time.

As shown in Figure 8, the number of *robbery offences* recorded by police in 2006 rose slightly after several successive years of declining. It was produced by a slight increase in the number of *unarmed robberies*, whilst *armed robbery* numbers remained unchanged.

Figure 8 ***Robbery offences*, 1982 to 2006**



NB: the total robbery figure excludes extortion offences

Because the category of *other* (ie unarmed) *robbery* annually accounts for approximately two thirds of the *total robbery* offences, longitudinal trends in this category generally parallel those for *total robberies,* with the number recorded in 2006 being the second lowest it has been since its peak in 1993.

Prior to the amendments to the *Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935* which for the first time defined the elements of the offence of robbery, it was very common for simple *larceny from the p*erson (for example a bag-snatch) to be mis-identified as a robbery (see http://www.ocsar.sa.gov.au/docs/technical_papers/Rob1.pdf). It is likely that many of the fluctuations in the numbers of unarmed robbery offences prior to the amendment of the legislation were due to variations in the extent of mis-identification of the offence and in the extent to which such misidentifications were subsequently corrected in the police data. The amending legislation took effect on 15 May 2003, and the data on unarmed robbery for that year showed an immediate drop, followed by further reductions as full years of operation took effect. The offence of *larceny from the person* was repealed at the same time.

Despite marked fluctuations, the number of *armed robberies* generally increased during the 1980s and 1990s, reaching a peak in 1998. Since then, numbers have shown a very slight downward trend and then remained relatively constant since 2003.

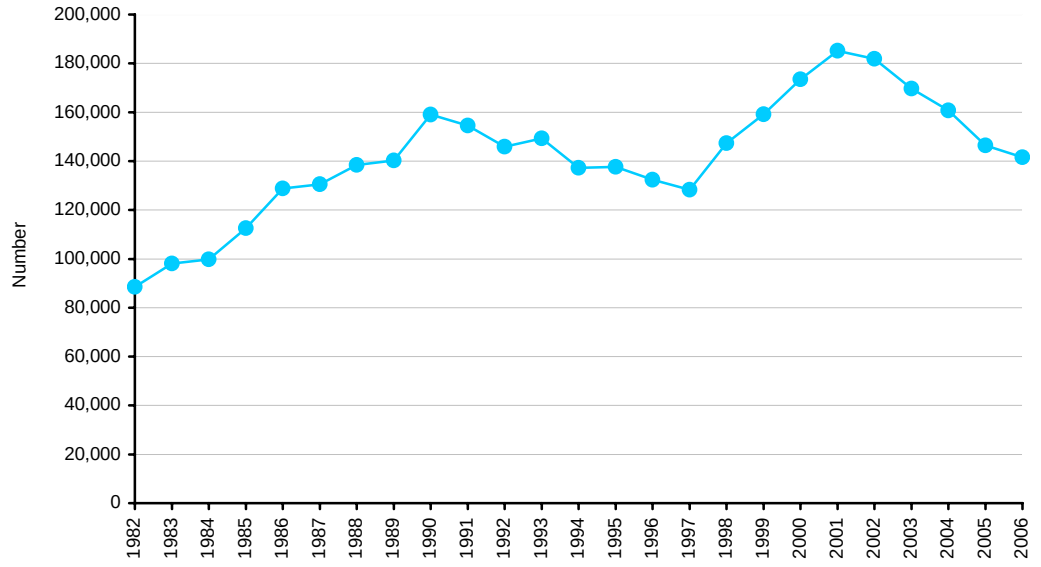
Property offences

In contrast to *sexual offences* and *robbery offences*, the number of *property offences* recorded by police each year is comparatively large (141,589 in 2006).

As Figure 9 indicates, there have been two periods of increase, from 1982 to 1990, and again from 1997 and 2001. As a result, the 2001 figure was the highest recorded over the period graphed.

However, since then, there has been a decrease in the number of these offences recorded, which continued in 2006.

Figure 9 Total *property offences*, 1982 to 2006



It should also be noted that the number of *property offences* recorded since 1999 have been affected by a change in police recording practices resulting from the introduction of new legislation relating to *serious criminal trespass* offences (see below). Prior to December 1999, if a person broke into a house, stole some property and also caused damage, police generally recorded this as one offence only – namely *break/enter dwelling*. However, after the passage of the new legislation, police now enter all associated offences, as well as the *criminal trespass*. This means that, while the number of actual incidents may remain the same, the number of offences recorded for those incidents are inflated. The offences most likely to increase because of this change in recording practices are *larceny* and *property damage*, which are often associated with, or attendant upon, a break in.

Serious Criminal Trespass

Determining longitudinal trends for *serious criminal trespass* offences is somewhat problematic because of the passage of the *Criminal Law Consolidation (Serious Criminal Trespass) Amendment Act*. This piece of legislation, which came into effect on 25 December 1999, replaced *break and enter offences* with a range of *criminal trespass offences*. More specifically, it introduced three new offence categories:

- serious criminal trespass - non residential building;
- serious criminal trespass – place of residence; and
- criminal trespass – place of residence.

The two *serious criminal trespass* offences have been further sub-divided into *aggravated* and *non-aggravated*, depending on whether an offensive weapon is used or whether there are multiple offenders. A third aggravating factor applies to *serious criminal trespass – place of residence*: namely, whether another person is lawfully present in the dwelling at the time of the trespass, and the offender either knows of the other's presence or is reckless about whether anyone is in the place *(Criminal Law Consolidation (Serious Criminal*

Trespass) Amendment Act; s170(2)(c)). This criterion was specifically included to identify incidents of home invasion. The legislation also extends the definition of place of residence to include not only houses and flats, but any structure in which police consider the victim to be living at the time of the incident, such as a car or caravan.

Because these legislative changes came into effect several years ago, the majority of offences recorded in 2006 were classified as *criminal trespass offences*. However, there was a small number of *break and enter offences* which, while reported to police in 2006, had occurred prior to the legislative change. To allow longitudinal comparisons, the following procedure has been followed:

- all *non-aggravated* and *aggravated serious criminal trespass* offences that occurred within a place of residence have been combined with the *burglary and break and enter dwelling* category, together with all *criminal trespass-dwelling* offences;
- all *non-aggravated* and *aggravated serious criminal trespass* offences that occurred in a shop have been combined with the *break and enter shop* category; and
- all *non-aggravated* and *aggravated serious criminal trespass* offences that occurred in other locations (including schools) have been combined with the *other break and enter* category.

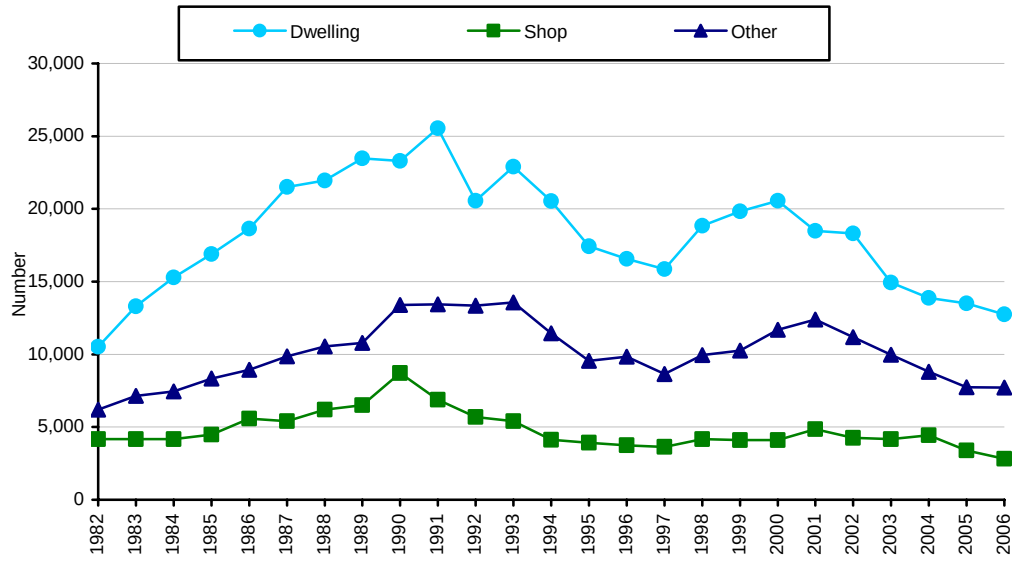
While the new offence groupings are not entirely comparable with the old groupings, the procedure detailed above allows longitudinal comparisons to be drawn.

As shown in Figure 10, *serious criminal trespass - dwelling* offences increased sharply between 1982 and 1991, but since then have, despite annual fluctuations, shown a general downward trend. As a result, the 2006 figure is comparable with numbers recorded during the early 1980s.

Serious criminal trespass - 'other' offences have also fluctuated over the two decades depicted, with a general downward trend occurring since 2001. The most recent numbers are now generally comparable with those recorded in the late 1980s.

After peaking in 1990, the number of *serious criminal trespass - shop* offences initially declined before levelling off in the mid 1990s. They have remained relatively stable since then, although a downward movements in 2005 and 2006 mean that the most recent figure for *serious criminal trespass - shop* is the lowest recorded over the 25 years depicted.

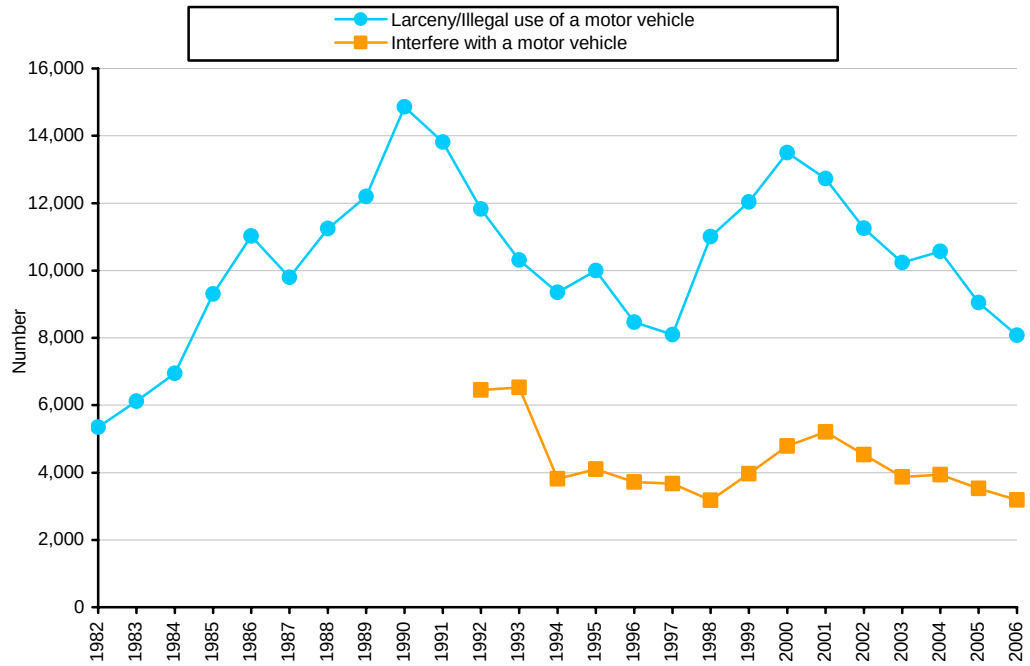
Figure 10 ***Serious criminal trespass*, 1982 to 2006**



Vehicle offences

As shown in Figure 11, the number of *larceny/illegal use of a motor vehicle* offences increased steeply between 1982 and 1990, followed by a period of decrease. A second, albeit less pronounced, upswing occurred between 1998 and 2000. Since then, numbers have again declined, with the number recorded in 2006 being similar to those recorded 10 years earlier.

Figure 11 **Larceny/illegal use of a motor vehicle and interfere with a motor vehicle, 1982 to 2006**



Data for *interfere with a motor vehicle* offences were not available prior to 1992. Since 1992, the trend in number of *interfere with a motor vehicle* offences has followed the same general pattern as that of *larceny/illegal use of a motor vehicle*.

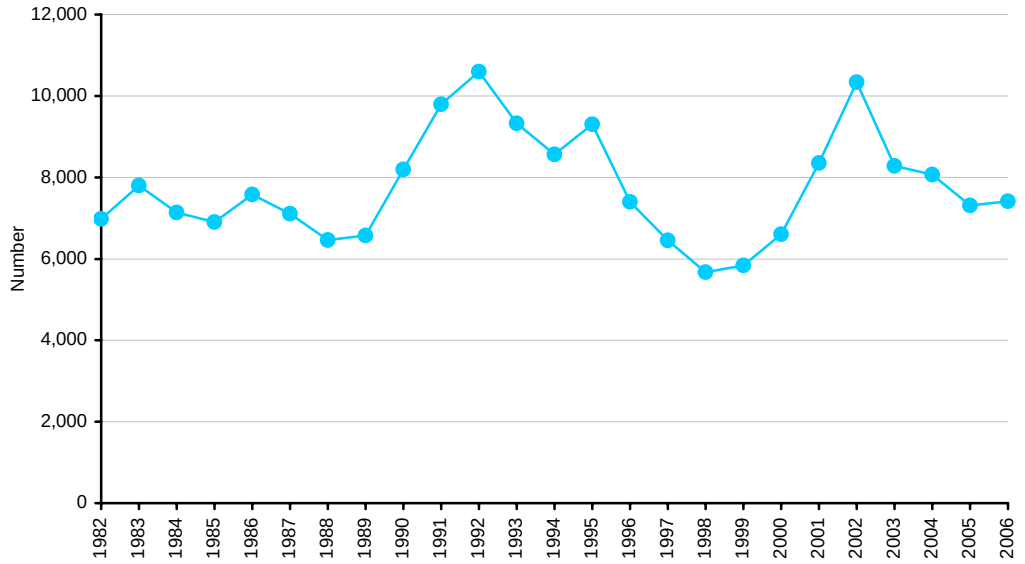
Shop theft

After peaking in 1992, the number of *shop theft* offences declined until 1998, before increasing again. Particularly strong increases occurred in 2001 and 2002 before a decrease in subsequent years (see Figure 12). In interpreting these trends, several factors are relevant. The first involved changes in SAPOL recording practices associated with the introduction, in late 1999, of the legislation relating to *serious criminal trespass*, which meant that if a shop was broken into and goods stolen, not only was the offence of *serious criminal trespass* recorded, but so was the associated offence of *shop theft*. A second coding change also occurred as a result of that legislation. *Offences against service stations*, which had previously been classified within the *other theft* category, were now re-coded to the *shop theft* category.

A third change occurred in November 2001, when Shop Theft Infringement Notices (STINs) were introduced as an alternative to prosecution for theft of goods up to the value of $150. One of the aims of introducing STINs was to streamline the way in which *shop theft* could be dealt with, and so increase the willingness of shop retailers to report these offences to police.

In combination, these three changes may partially explain the increases in shop thefts recorded in 2001 and 2002.

Figure 12 Shop theft, 1982 to 2006



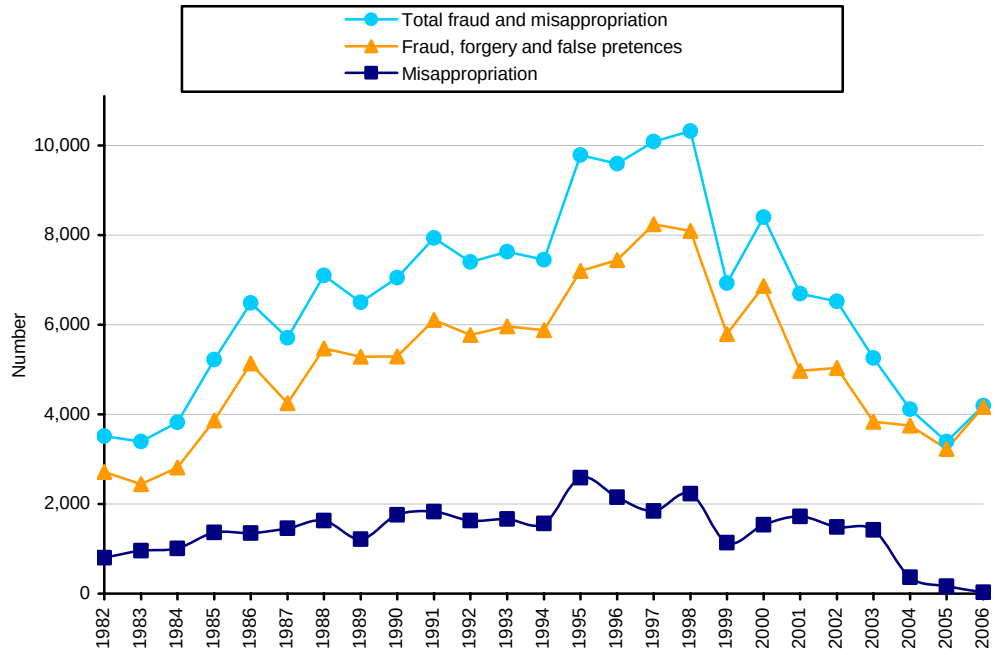
Fraud and misappropriation

As indicated in Figure 13, until 1998 there was a pronounced upward trend in the number of recorded *fraud and misappropriation* offences. However, since then numbers have declined substantially. Despite a 23.5% increase in 2006, the most recent figure is similar to that recorded during the mid 1980s.

The trend for the sub-category of *fraud, forgery and false pretences* is generally similar to that of the total *fraud and misappropriation* category. Whilst the trend has been steadily downward since 2002, there was an increase in 2006, largely due to a rise in *counterfeiting* offences (from 42 in 2005 to 692 in 2006), but also due to smaller increases in *other fraud* and in *false pretences, other*.

Misappropriation offences account for only a relatively small proportion of total *fraud and misappropriation* matters (0.7% of the 2006 total). While an overall increase was recorded between 1982 and 1995, numbers have generally trended downward since then, with a particularly strong decrease recorded in 2004, and a further, albeit less pronounced decrease in 2005 and 2006. As a result, the most recent figure (30) is the lowest recorded over the 25 years depicted.

Figure 13 Fraud and misappropriation, 1982 to 2006



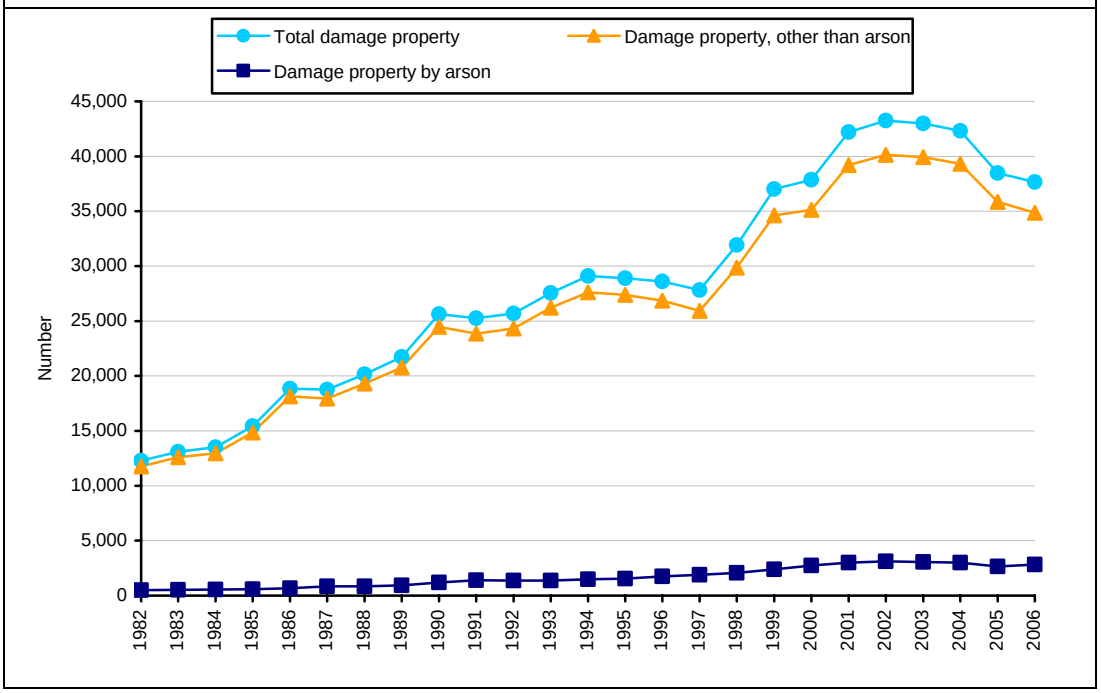
Damage property

Figure 14 depicts longitudinal trends in the number of *damage property* offences recorded by police. Overall, there was a steady increase in this category until 2002, after which numbers declined marginally to 2004, followed by a more pronounced decline in 2005. The fairly strong increase observed between 1999 and 2000 could be partly attributed to the fact that, beginning in late 1999, any criminal damage attendant upon a 'break in' started to be recorded, whereas previously only the primary offence of *break and enter* had been entered on the incident report.

An almost identical pattern was observed for *damage property, other than arson* – a finding that is inevitable given that this sub-group accounts for the overwhelming majority of all *damage property* matters.

As was the case with other property offences, *damage property by arson* has also trended upwards between 1982 and 2002, with a slight decline since then. However, it should be noted that, compared with the other *property damage* category depicted, numbers remain very small.

Figure 14 Damage property, 1982 to 2006

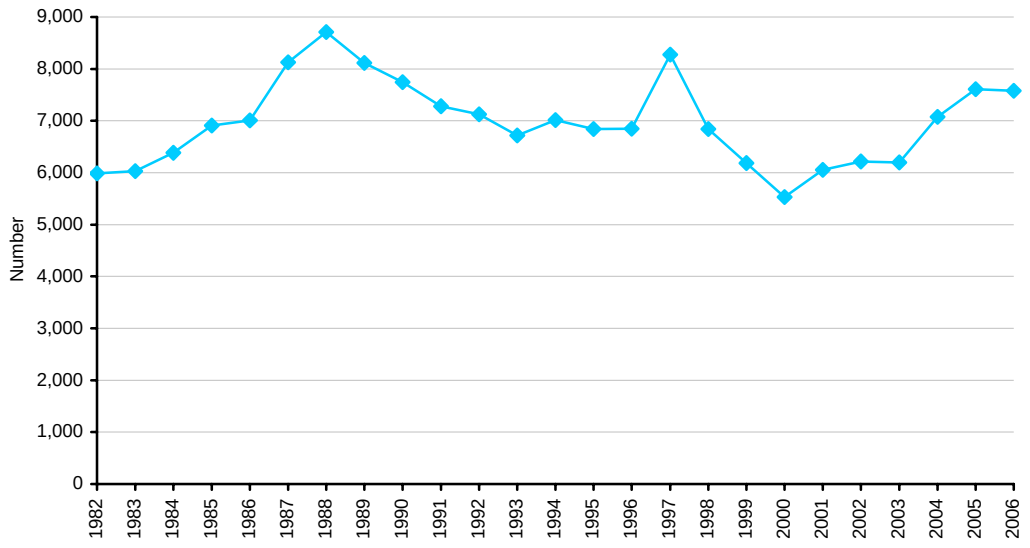


Drink driving and related offences

Figure 15 illustrates the number of recorded *drink driving and related offences* from 1982 to 2006. This category includes *driving under the influence*, *exceed the prescribed concentration of alcohol* and *refusing to give breath/blood sample*. With the exception of 1996, numbers generally declined from 1988 to 2000, but have trended upward since then, with fairly strong increases observed in 2004 and 2005, before declining very slightly in 2006.

It should be noted that the number of *drink driving offences* recorded is heavily reliant on police enforcement practices, such as the number of random breath tests conducted.

Figure 15 Drink driving and related offences, 1982 to 2006



Selected drug offences

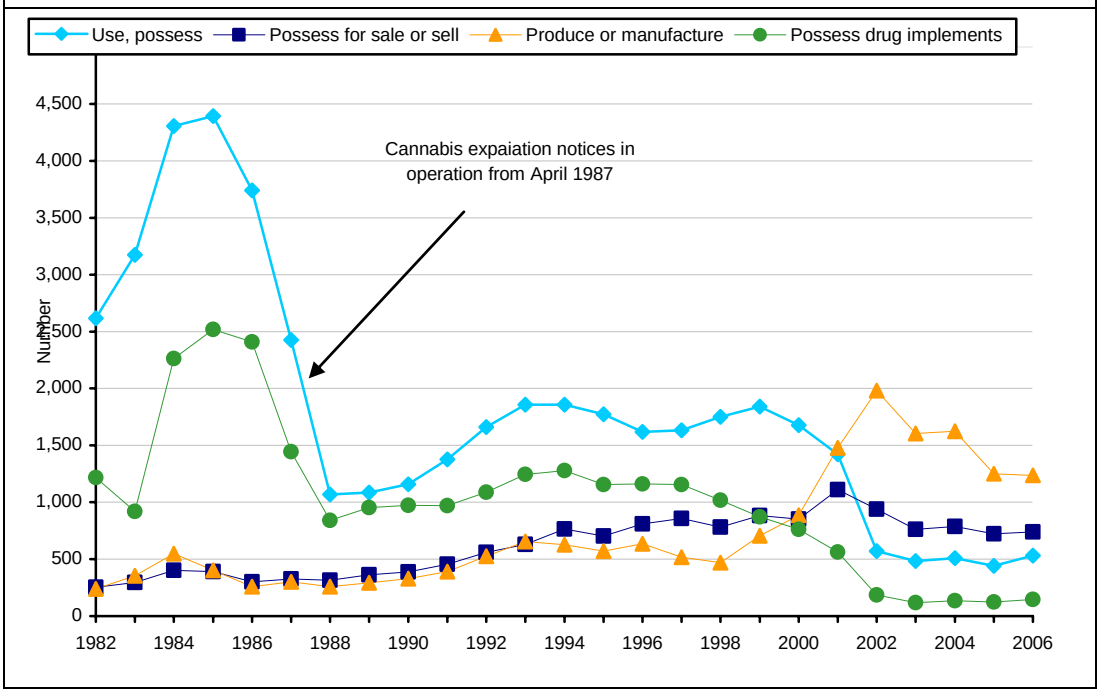
Longitudinal trends in the number of selected *drug offences* coming to police attention are quite different from those of other offences, largely because of the impact in 1987 of the introduction of Cannabis Expiation Notices and more recently, by the introduction of the Police Drug Diversion Initiative. Moreover, because *drug offences* are essentially victimless crimes, their detection rests predominantly with police. Hence, as with *driving offences,* the number of *drug offences* recorded in any given year is heavily reliant on police enforcement practices and in particular, on whether and how many special operations are launched which target drug offenders.

As shown in Figure 16, the number of *use/possess for use* offences, which had remained relatively stable from 1992 to 2001, decreased substantially in 2002 and has remained low since then. This decrease is attributable to the introduction of the Police Drug Diversion Initiative, which commenced operation in September/October 2001. Under this scheme, adults and juveniles detected in possession of small amounts of illicit drugs are no longer apprehended by police but instead are diverted to assessment and treatment programs. While this Initiative impacts directly on the number of persons apprehended for a *possess drug offence*, it also affects the number of offences recorded because, under SAPOL recording practices for victimless crimes such as *drug offences*, the lodgement of an Apprehension Report automatically generates a corresponding Incident Report.

After a period of relative stability in the mid 1990s, the number of recorded *produce or manufacture drug* offences increased substantially between 1998 and 2002. Hence, despite declines in the three subsequent years, numbers are now higher than at any time prior to 2001. One contributor to this is the fact that, on 29th November 2001, the number of cannabis plants that a person could possess and still be eligible for a Cannabis Expiation Notice was reduced from three to one. This change meant that persons detected with two or three plants who would previously have received a CEN were henceforth charged with *produce or manufacture drugs*.

Despite annual fluctuations, the number of *possess for sale or sell drug* offences increased steadily from the early 1980s until 2001, after which a slight downward trend was observed. Numbers have now returned to the levels recorded in the mid 1990s.

Figure 16 Selected drug offences, 1982 to 2006



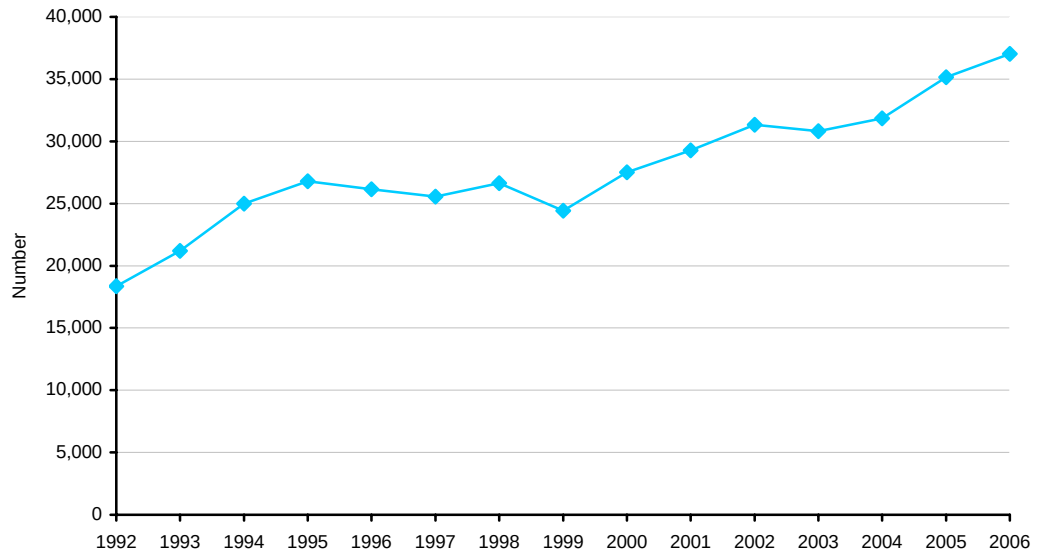
Offences against good order

Data for total *offences against good order* (depicted in Figure 17) were not available for the years prior to 1992. As shown, since 1992, there has been an overall increase in these offences, with the 2006 figure the highest recorded in the period depicted.

Whilst a number of offences within this overall group have steadily declined, several offences steadily increased by amounts which outweighed the decreases. The largest of these was *breach court order* (parole, bail etc), which rose by over 7,000 since 1998. The next largest were *graffiti and related offences* and *disorderly behaviour*, which increased by 3,070 and 2,262 respectively over the same interval. It is possible that publicity for anti-graffiti crime prevention programmes led to an increase in the reporting of offences of this type.

In part, these increases may be attributable to pro-active policing practices, rather than to an actual rise in this type of crime in the community. As one of its targets, SAPOL has set a 5% reduction in the number of *offences against the person* and *against property*. However, no reduction target is applied to *public order offences*. In fact, an increase in the number of these offences detected by SAPOL is regarded as a positive outcome under a problem solving policing model.

Figure 17 Offences against good order, 1992 to 2006



Location of recorded offences

The number and rate of recorded crime occurring in South Australian Local Government Areas (LGAs) and Statistical Divisions is provided in Tables 3.21a and 3.21b of this report.

While rates provide a crude basis for comparison between areas that have different numbers of people, dwellings and businesses, it is important to recognise the limitations of such a listing.

In these tables, rates for *offences against the person* (which here includes the three categories of *offences against the person, sexual offences* and *robbery and extortion*) are calculated by dividing the number of such offences recorded in each LGA/Statistical Division by the estimated resident population of that LGA/Statistical Division as published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (3218.0 *Regional Population Growth, Australia 1996 to 2006*, released July 2007). Because the personal offence rate is based on the location of the offence rather than the address of the victim, it therefore includes offences involving residents and non-residents of the region. As a result, the rate does not indicate the average risk for persons actually living within each LGA/Statistical Division. For example, the Adelaide LGA exhibits high rates of both personal and property crime. The city attracts thousands of non-residents who come there for work, shopping and entertainment. Hence, many of the crimes that occur in the Adelaide LGA involve victims who reside in other areas. Because of this, one should be wary of interpreting the crime rate in Adelaide as an indicator of victimisation for those actually living in the city. It is also possible that one's personal risk of victimisation within the city (like most other areas) varies depending on the nature of the activity one engages in while there.

For *serious criminal trespass*, the rate is calculated according to the number of dwellings in each LGA/Statistical Division as at the 2006 Census. Because these figures are not updated by the ABS between censuses, as the time elapsed since the last census increases, so the accuracy of the rates derived from them decreases.

The total crime rate is presented as a rate per 1,000 population. However, readers should be aware that both personal and property offences are included. In these situations there is no obviously suitable denominator to generate a total crime rate. Some crimes are directed at dwellings, others at shops, others at individuals and still others at specific types of property (eg *larceny of a motor vehicle*).

Finally, particular care should be taken when examining country rates, as some LGAs have small populations and few offences.

While acknowledging these limitations, the key points to emerge from this analysis are:

In 2006, the Northern Statistical Division recorded the highest rate of offences against the person (24.6 per 1,000 population). This was considerably higher than any other statistical division, with the next highest rate recorded for Eyre (16.9), followed by Adelaide (14.7) and then Murray Lands (13.9). The lowest rate of 7.7 offences per 1,000 population was recorded for the Outer Adelaide Division.

The highest rate of serious criminal trespass in 2006 was recorded by the Adelaide Statistical Division (22.5 offences per 1,000 dwellings). The Northern Division was second highest (16.7), with the rates in other Divisions ranging between 5.9 (in Yorke and Lower North) and 12.6 (in Murray Lands).

When these broad statistical divisions are broken down into the smaller spatial units of Local Government Areas it was found that:

The LGA of Adelaide had by far the highest rate of offences against the person (129.0 per 1,000 population). The LGA with the second highest rate was Coober Pedy (68.1), followed by Ceduna (62.1), Unincorporated South Australia (58.2), and Port Augusta (39.9).

The highest rate for serious criminal trespass was also recorded in the LGA of Prospect (40.8 per 1,000 dwelling). This was followed by Port Adelaide Enfield (37.7), Playford (35.5), Unincorporated SA (32.4) and Walkerville (31.6).

One final locational analysis presented in this report relates to the key locations for vehicle theft within Metropolitan Adelaide. This showed that:

The area recording the greatest number of vehicle thefts in 2006 was Adelaide Parklands, with 116 recorded thefts. This was followed by the area bounded by North Terrace/King William Street, Grenfell Street/Frome Road (89 thefts), then Tea Tree Plaza Shopping Centre (85 thefts), and Elizabeth City Centre (84 thefts).

1.3 CLEARANCE STATUS OF OFFENCES

Clearance status of offences recorded by police in 2006

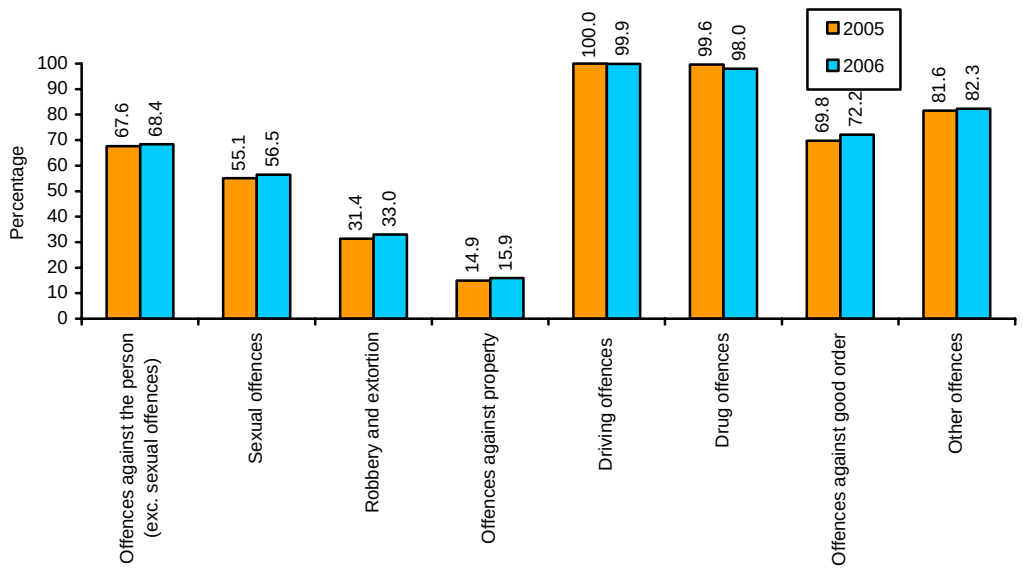
- During 2006, of the 263,369 offences recorded by police, 125,809 (47.8%) were cleared by the end of the same year while conversely, 52.2% remained uncleared.

- The proportion of offences cleared in 2006 was marginally higher than in 2005, when 47.4% of the 272,599 offences recorded that year were also cleared that year.

- As in 2005, the clear up level for offences recorded in 2006 varied considerably depending on the type of offence involved.

- As shown in Figure 18, the lowest clear up level was recorded for *property offences* (15.9% cleared by the end of the year), followed by *robbery and extortion* (33.0%). Over one half (56.5%) of the *sexual offences* recorded by police in 2006 were cleared, as were more than two thirds of *offences against the person, excluding sexual offences*. However, the highest clear up levels (over 98%) were recorded for *driving* and *drug offences* – a finding which is to be expected given that police normally detect these offences at the time of their commission and apprehension of the perpetrator.

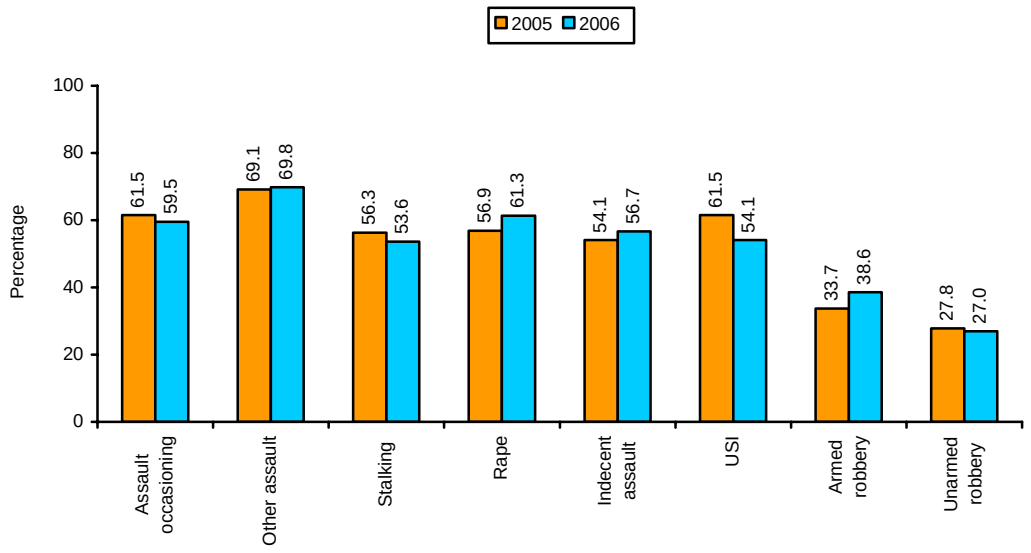
Figure 18 **Percentage of offences per offence group recorded and cleared in the same year: 2005 and 2006**



Offences against the person, sexual offences and robbery

Figure 19 details the clear up levels for a selected range of *against person*, *sexual* and *robbery offences*.

Figure 19 **Percentage of offences recorded and cleared in the same year: clear up levels for selected *offences against the person*, *sexual offences* and *robbery offences*, 2005 and 2006.**



The clear up rate for *other assault* in 2006 was higher than that for *assault occasioning actual or grievous bodily harm*, while the clear up level for *rape* was slightly higher than that for *indecent assault*. Overall, these rates were considerably higher than those recorded for either *armed* or *unarmed robbery*.

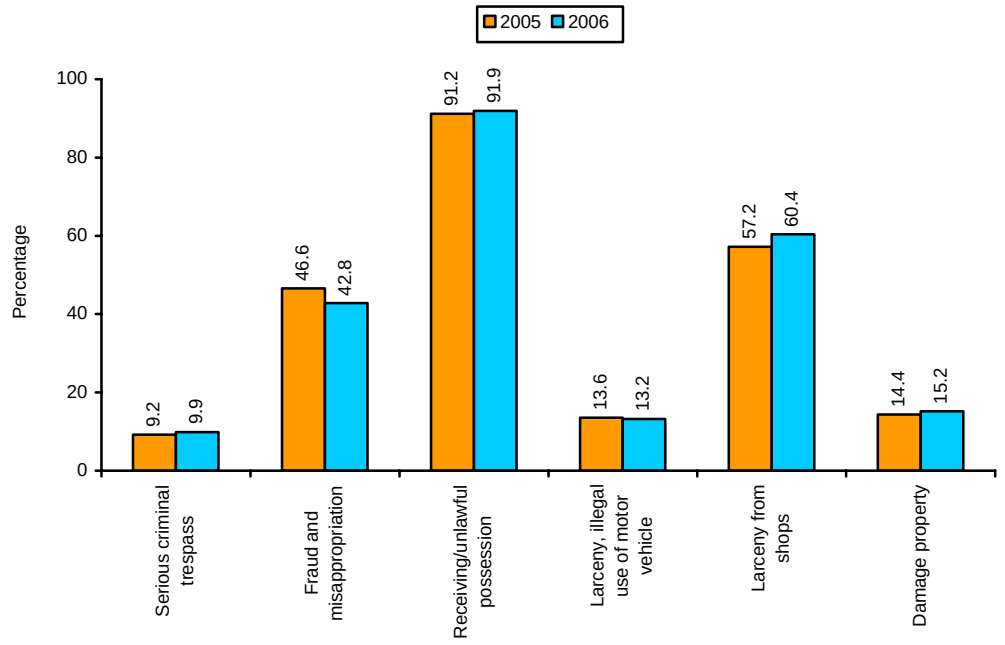
For all the offences depicted, clear up levels were slightly higher in 2006 than in 2005.

While the numbers are too small to graph, of the 15 *murders* recorded by police in 2006, 13 were cleared while two remained uncleared at the end of the year. Of the 37 *attempted murders*, 32 were cleared by the end of the year. Of the 11 *drive causing death* offences reported in 2006, 10 were cleared at the end of the 12 month period.

Property offences

Figure 20 shows the clear up levels for a range of selected *property offences* in 2005 and 2006.

Figure 20 **Percentage of offences recorded and cleared in the same year: clear up levels for selected *property offences,* 2005 and 2006.**



Clear up levels varied considerably depending on the type of *property offence* involved. *Serious criminal trespass* offences had the lowest clear up level, followed closely by *larceny, illegal use of a motor vehicle* and *damage property*.

At the other end of the scale, virtually all *receiving/unlawful possession* offences were cleared while over half of *shop larcenies* were cleared. Again, the high clear up rate for *receiving/unlawful possession* is to be expected, given that these offences are often only detected when the alleged offender is caught by police.

Clear up levels were higher in 2006 than in 2005 for four of the six offences depicted. The exceptions were *fraud and misappropriation* and *larceny/illegal use of motor vehicle.*

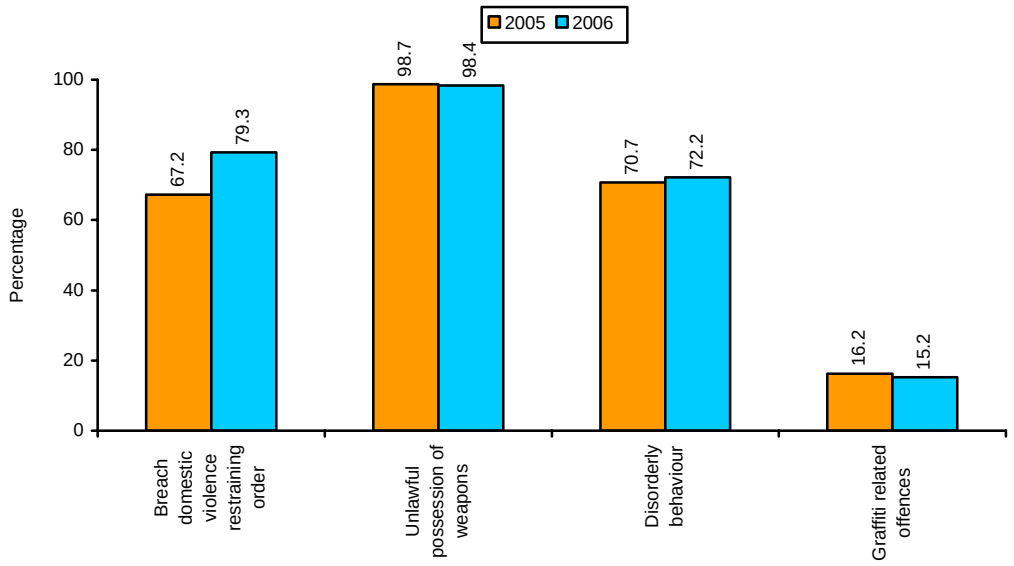
Offences against good order

Figure 21 shows the clear up level for selected *offences against good order* in 2005 and 2006.

In 2006, within the broad *offences against good order* category, clear up levels varied from a low of 15.2% for *graffiti and related offences* to 98.4% for *unlawful possession of weapons.*

The clear up rate for two of the categories depicted - namely, *unlawful possession of weapons* and *graffiti-related offences* - declined slightly between 2005 and 2006.

Figure 21 **Percentage of offences recorded and cleared in the same year: clear up levels for selected *offences against good order,* 2005 and 2006.**



Total offences cleared in 2006

As noted earlier, of those 263,369 offences recorded by police in 2006, 125,809 had been cleared by the end of the year. In addition, a further 4,465 offences were cleared which had been recorded by police prior to 2006. This gives a total of 130,274 offences cleared during the 12 month period.

For each of the key offence categories, the majority of offences cleared in 2006 were actually recorded in the same year. Overall, only a very small proportion of clearances involved offences reported in previous years, although the proportion did vary slightly depending on the type of offence involved. For example, of the 13,863 *offences against the person* cleared in 2006, only 6.0% were recorded prior to 2006, while for *sexual offences, robbery offences* and *property offences*, the proportion was 18.3%, 9.8% and 10.2% respectively. Of the 57,821 *driving offences* cleared in 2006, only seven involved an offence recorded in a previous year.

Method of clearance

Of the 130,274 offences cleared in 2006, the majority (117,501 or 90.2%) were cleared by way of the apprehension or cautioning of a suspect.

A further 160 (0.1%) (all involving larceny from shop offences) were cleared by the issuance of a Shop Infringement Notice. These Notices were introduced by the Shop Theft (Alternative Enforcement) Act, 2000, which came into force on 11th November 2001. Under the legislation, in certain circumstances, a police officer may issue a Shop Theft Infringement Notice instead of charging an alleged offender with larceny.

A very small proportion of offences (1.1%) were designated as cleared on the grounds that they were unfounded: ie following exhaustive inquiries, the police found no evidence that an offence had been committed.

For 10,465 (8.0% of all offences cleared), the victim requested that the police take no further action.

Finally, 0.5% were cleared by some 'other' method. 'Other' included the following categories:

- The accused or the complainant had died;
- The suspect had diplomatic immunity; or
- The offence had lapsed due to the limitation of time set out in legislation.

As shown in Figure 22, for *driving* and *drug* offences, almost all were cleared by way of the apprehension or cautioning of a suspect.

In contrast, only 58.0% of *against person* offences were cleared by this method, as were 67.1% of *sexual offences*. In addition, for these two categories, the proportion which were cleared as a result of the victim requesting that no further action be taken was relatively high (40.1% of *offences against the person* and 28.2% of *sexual offences* compared with only 13.9% of *property offences).*

These findings accord with anecdotal evidence that in a higher proportion of personal and sexual offences the offender is known (and is often related) to the victim, thereby increasing the likelihood that the victim will not pursue the matter.

Figure 22 Method of clearance for all offences cleared in 2006 by offence group

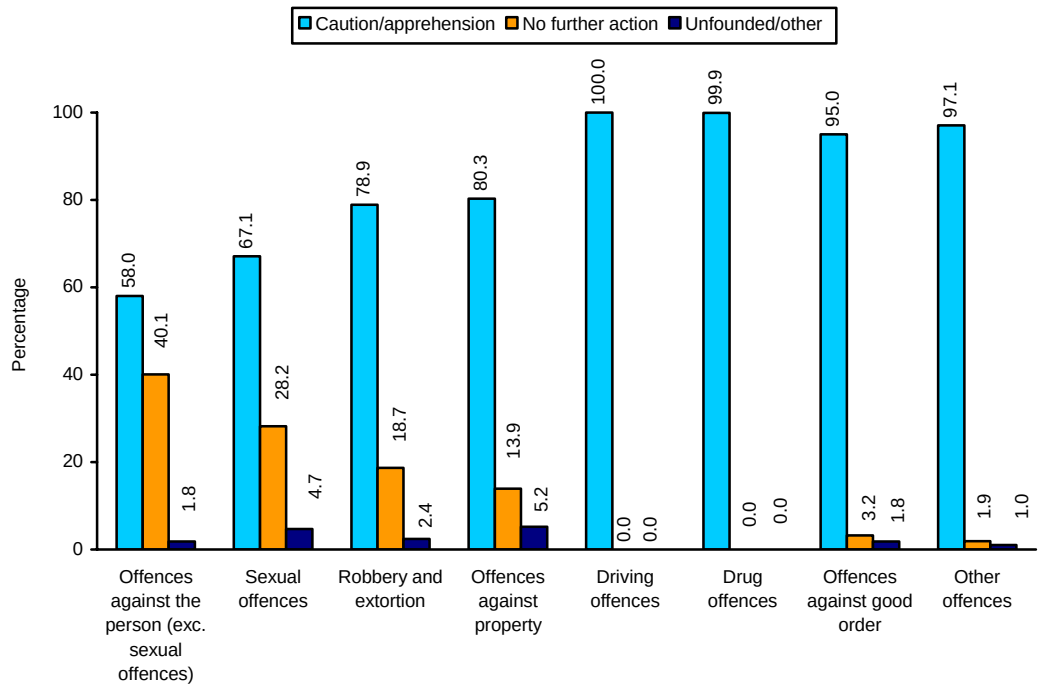
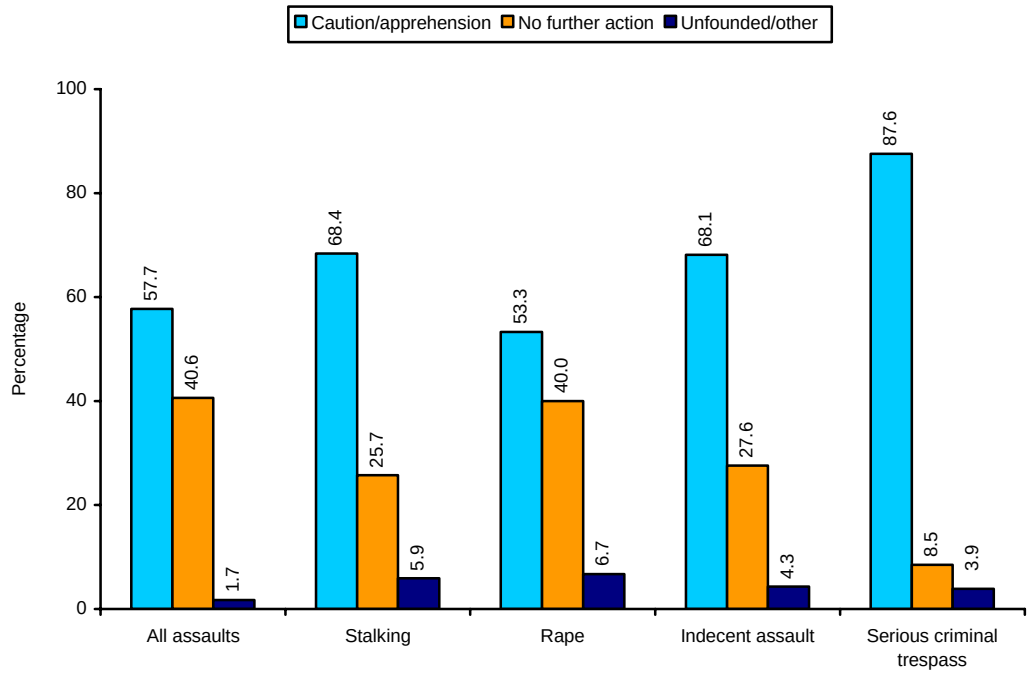


Figure 23 provides a further breakdown of clearance methods for selected *against person* and *sexual offences*. A comparatively high proportion of *assaults* and *rapes* cleared in 2006 involved the victim requesting that no further action be taken (40.6% and 40.0% respectively, compared with 23.7% of *stalking* offences.

For comparative purposes, the method of clearance for one property offence - *serious criminal trespass* – has also been included. As shown, the proportion cleared by way of apprehension in 2006 was extremely high (87.6%) while the proportion where the victim requested no further action be taken (8.5%) was very much lower than the other offence types depicted.

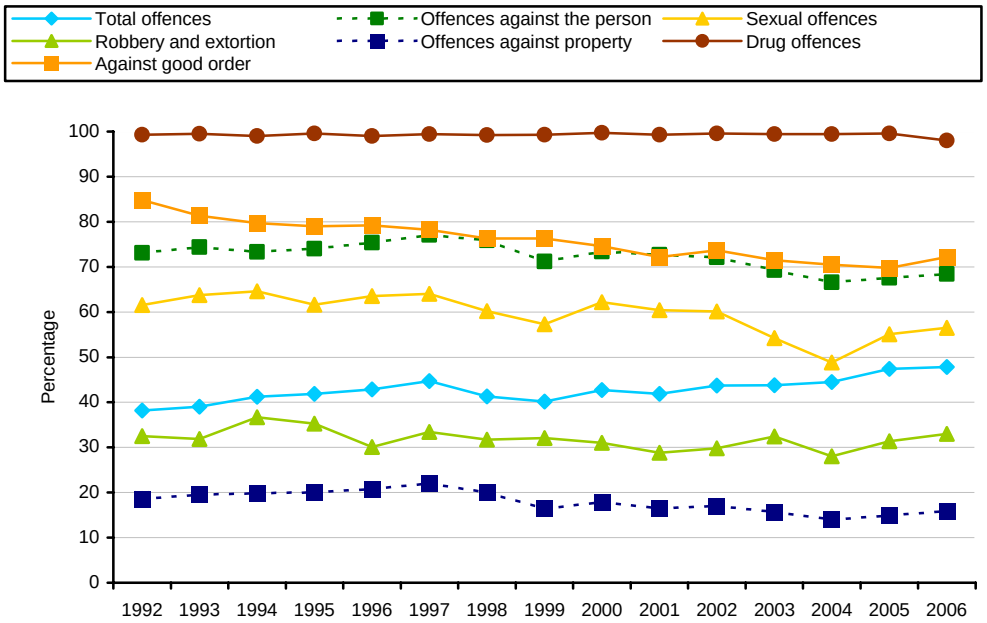
Figure 23 **Method of clearance for selected against person and sexual offences cleared in 2006**



Longitudinal trends in level of clearance

The clearance data discussed in the previous section relate primarily to offences recorded in the 2006 calendar year, since relatively few offences cleared were originally recorded in a previous year. Given that police would have had relatively little time to clear offences recorded during the same year, particularly those recorded late in the year, it is likely that this would impact on the percentage of offences cleared in 2006. To place the most recent data into a broader context and to identify whether the level of clearance for the major offence categories has changed over time, the ensuing discussion provides details on the clearance status, as at 31 December 2006, of all offences recorded in the years 1992 to 2006 and cleared in the year of reporting, excluding clearances of offences originally reported in previous years. This keeps the time for a clearance to occur constant for each year.

Figure 24 Percentage of offences cleared as at 31 December 2006 by year of report



Note: driving offences have not been included because in each of the years depicted, the level of clearance equalled or exceeded 99.9%.

Differences in the percentage of offences cleared per year varied considerably depending on the type of offence involved. *Drug offences* recorded the highest clearance levels of those in Figure 24 (although *driving offences* had the highest overall level at 99.9%) while *offences against property* had the lowest proportion cleared. These differences remained consistent over time.

In terms of longitudinal trends, for some offence categories 2006 clearance levels were generally similar to those recorded in 1992 – a finding which suggests that the majority of matters are cleared within a relatively short space of time. (For example, for *offences against the person*, 73.1% of those recorded to police in 1992 had been cleared by 31 December of that year compared with 72.7% of those recorded in 2001, and 68.4% of those recorded in 2006.)

A similar finding applied to *robbery and extortion*, with 32.5% of such offences recorded in 1992 being cleared by the end of December 1992 compared with a slightly higher figure of 33.2% of those recorded in 2006.

Of the seven offence groups depicted, the 'drop off' in the clearance level for matters recorded in 2006 compared with earlier years was most pronounced for *against good order* offences where clearance levels dropped from 84.8% in 1992 to 72.2% in 2006.

Overall, though, there has been an increase in clearance levels for total offences, from 38.2 in 1992 to 47.8% in 2006.

1.4 VICTIMS OF OFFENCES RECORDED BY POLICE

Section 5 of this report provides information on victims of those offences recorded by police during 2006. The offence categories selected for inclusion cover all *offences against the person*, all *sexual offences* and all *robbery and extortion* offences directed against an individual[6]. Those *robbery and extortion offences* perpetrated against a corporation have been excluded, as have all *drug* and *driving offences* because these do not generally involve a victim. *Offences against property* have also been omitted because of potential biases arising from how the information is reported to police. In the case of a house break, for example, if the property is jointly owned by a husband and wife, then both are victims. However, police only record the details of one of these individuals – usually the one who actually reports the offence. If house breaks are usually reported by the male, then the data will show a potentially misleading preponderance of males as victims of this particular type of offence.

It should also be stressed that Tables 5.1 to 5.3 in Section 5 contain several sets of figures, each based on different counting rules. The reader is advised to consult the Appendix for a full explanation of these rules. However, a brief description is provided below.

Total victimisations. In the body of each table, victims are counted once for each different offence group recorded per incident report. To illustrate: if, in the one incident report filed by police, the victim claimed that they had been assaulted twice and stalked once, that victim would be counted once under assault and once under stalking. However, if they filed an assault report in January and another in April, they would be counted twice under the assault category because these related to two separate incidents.

Discrete victims per offence group. In the far right hand column of each table, victims are counted once per offence group, irrespective of how many incident reports each person filed during the course of the year. For example, in Table 5.1a of Section 5 there were 13,860 discrete victims of *other assault*. This means that during 2006, 13,860 individuals reported being the victims of at least one *other assault*. If, over the course of the year, the same individual was subjected to multiple assaults on different occasions, they were still only counted once in this column, but would be counted once per incident under the 'total victimisations' column. However, if they were subjected on the first occasion to an *assault* and on the second occasion to *stalking*, they would be counted separately under each of these offence types.

Discrete victims per age group. The bottom row of each table details the total number of victims per age group. To illustrate, in Table 5.1a of Section 5, there were 263 victims aged 0–9 years who, during 2006, were subject to at least one *offence against the person*. If the victim experienced more than one such offence during the course of the year and fell within the 0 – 9 year age bracket on each of those occasions, that person was counted only once in this age group, but would be counted once per incident under the 'total victimisations' row for that age. However, if, over the course of these incidents, the person moved into the next age grouping of 10 – 13 years, they would be counted again in that next age bracket.

Discrete individuals. Finally, in the bottom right hand corner of each table is a single figure which details the total number of discrete individuals who, during the course of the year, were victimised at least once, irrespective of their age or the category of offence involved. In Table 5.1a for example, there were 16,320 discrete individuals who, during 2006, experienced at least one *offence against the person*. This applied irrespective of how many different types of *against person* offences they experienced or whether their age changed from one incident to another.

[6] In previous years, *larceny from the person* victimisations were also included. However following the introduction of the *Criminal Law Consolidation (Offences of Dishonesty) Amendment Act 2002* on 5 July 2003, *Larceny from the Person* under section 155 of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act was repealed and no longer exists as a separate offence.

Total victimisations recorded

This section details the number of victimisations per offence type recorded in 2006. It does not relate to individuals.

In 2006 there 21,794 recorded victimisations directed against a person.

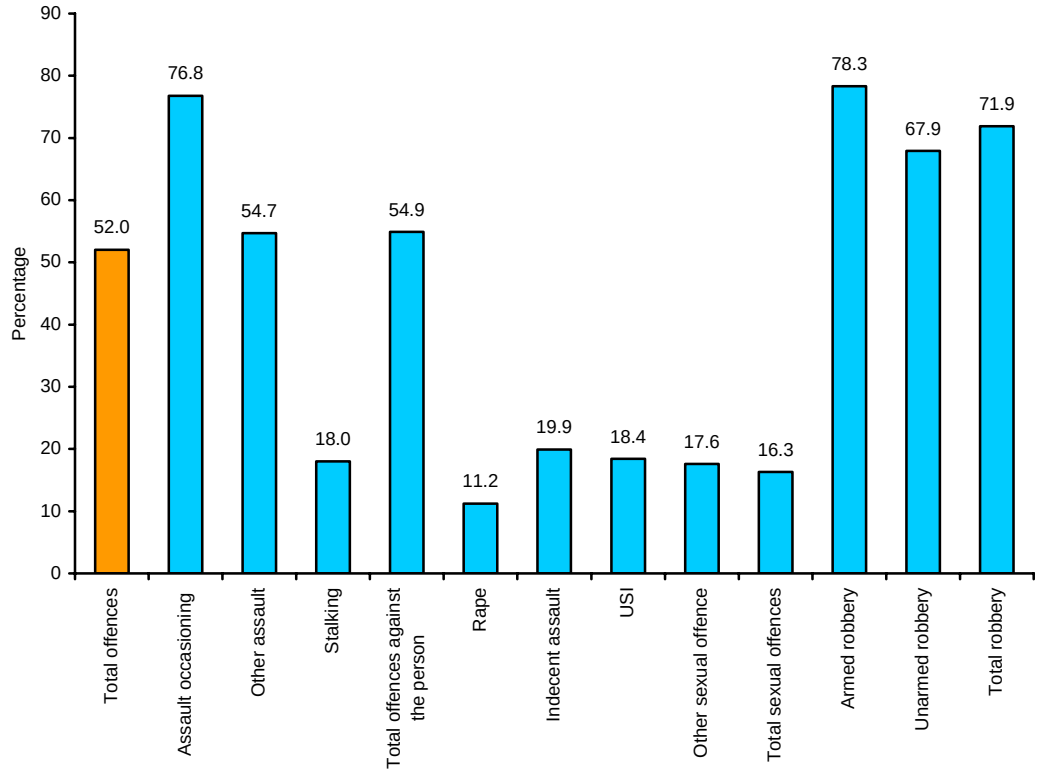
Of those 21,794 victimisations, 52.2% involved males while conversely, 47.8% involved females. The fact that there was a fairly even distribution of males and females amongst the victims is in direct contrast to the finding (as described in the next section) that males accounted for the overwhelming majority of persons apprehended in 2006 for allegedly committing offences.

As shown in Figure 25, males were markedly over-represented as victims in the categories of *assault occasioning grievous or actual bodily harm* and of *robbery*.

In contrast, males were under-represented as victims of *stalking* and all forms of *sexual assault*.

Of the 15 *murders* recorded by police in 2006, just under half of the victims were male (n=6). Males were also the victims of 34 of the 36 *attempted murders* recorded and 6 of the 9 victims of *drive causing death*.

Figure 25 Offences involving 'personal' victims recorded by police: males as a proportion of all victimisations per offence type, 2006.



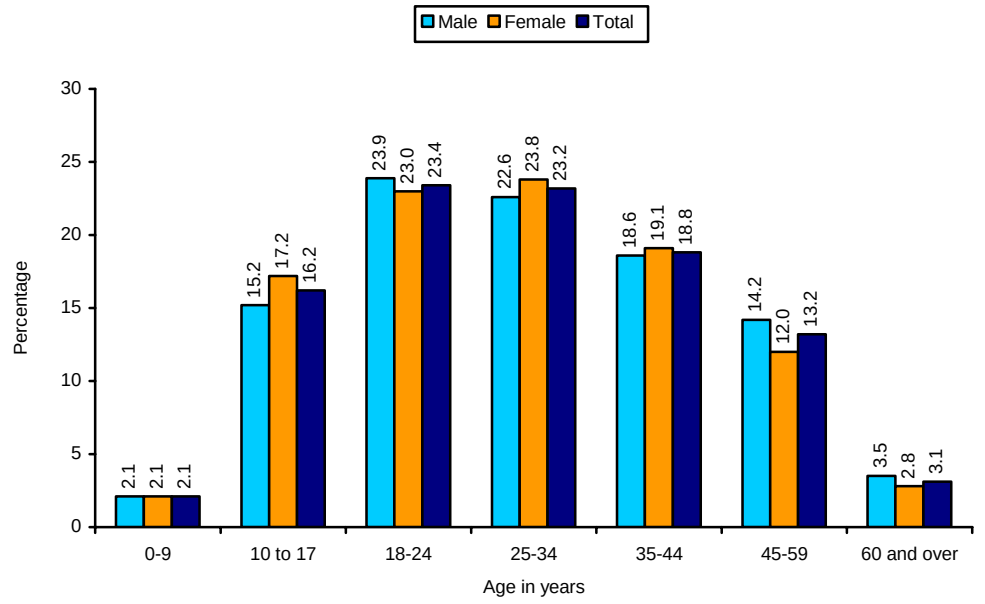
Offence types with relatively small numbers have been excluded.

Age profiles

The following section reports on the age profiles of victims involved in 'personal' victimisations recorded by police in 2006. As above, this section relates to victimisations, not discrete individuals.

For example, a 30 year old victim who experienced an *assault*, a *rape* and a *robbery* during the year would be counted three times within the 25-34 year age group.

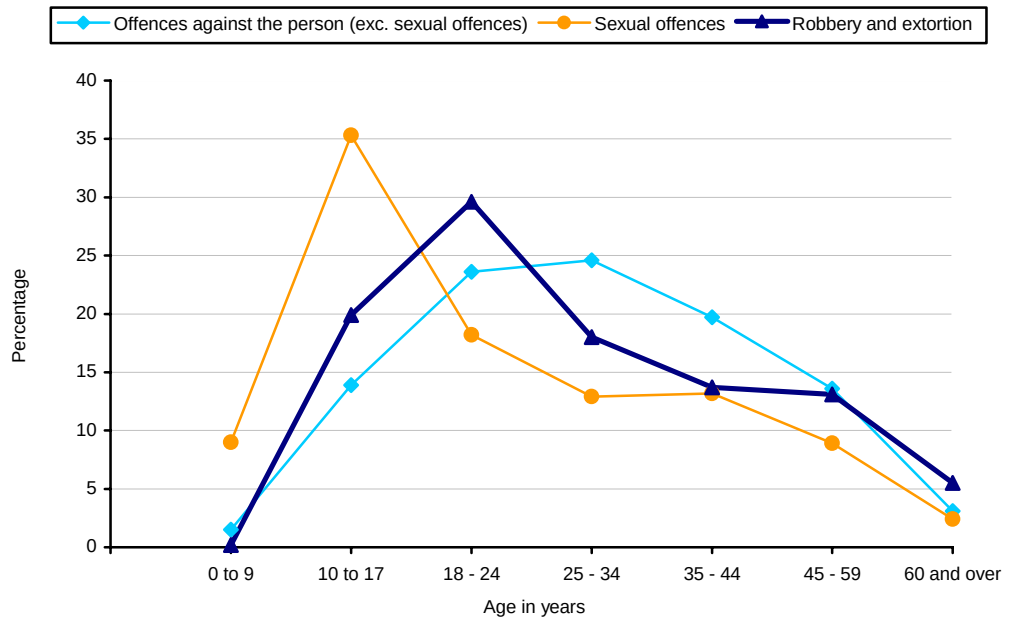
Figure 26 Personal victimisations recorded by police in 2006: age by sex of victims



As shown in Figure 26, persons in the mid age ranges of 18 – 24 years and 25 – 34 years accounted for the highest proportion of 'personal' victimisations recorded by police in 2005, while the very young and the elderly accounted for relatively small proportions. These findings run counter to a common perception within the community that the elderly are more likely to be the victims of crime than other age groups. Figure 27 also indicates a similar age profile for both male and female victims.

The age profiles of victims varied considerably depending on the type of offence involved. As indicated in Figure 27, the age profile for victims of offences against the person, excluding sexual offences closely mirrors the pattern for total offences described above. For the against person offence category, the highest proportion of victims was in the mid-age range of 25 - 34 years, with only a very small proportion aged 0 – 9 or 60 years and over.

Figure 27 **Personal victimisations recorded by police in 2006: age profile of victims by offence type**



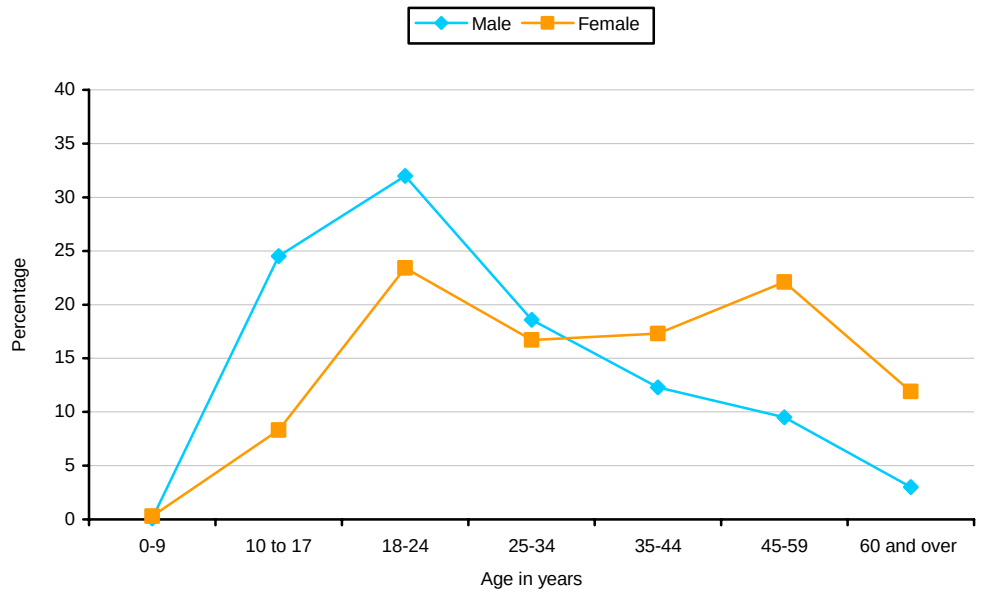
For *sexual offences*, the peak age was 10 – 17 years, with persons in this category accounting for 35.3% of *sexual offence* victimisations recorded by police in 2006 where age was recorded. A further 18.2% were aged 18-24 years. In total, almost two thirds of all recorded *sexual offence* victims were people aged less than 24 years. In contrast, the older age groups of 60 years and over accounted for 2.4% of all *sexual offence* victims.

The age profile of persons subjected to a *robbery and extortion* was highest for the 18-24 age group followed by the 10 – 17 year age group. After the age of 24, as age increased so the likelihood of being the victim of a *robbery and extortion* decreased.

When male and female age profiles were compared within specific offence categories, some differences were found for *robbery and extortion*, but not for *offences against the person* or *sexual offences*.

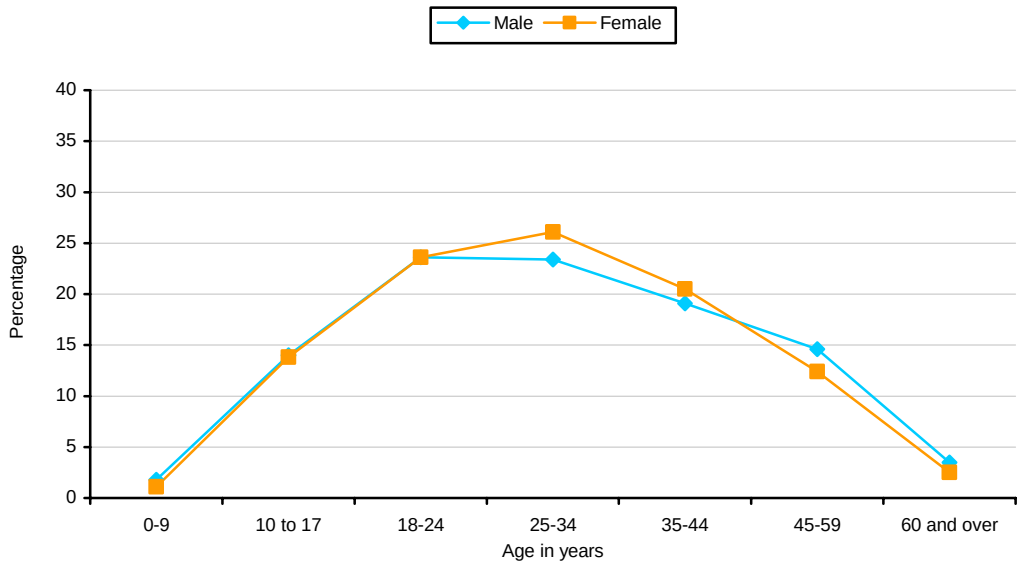
As shown in Figure 28, male *robbery and extortion* victims were generally younger that female victims. For male victims, from the age of 24 onwards as age increased so the proportion of victims decreased. In contrast, while the highest proportion of female victimisations also occurred in the 18-24 year age category, there was another at 45-59, followed by a sharp decline for those 60 and over.

Figure 28 ***Robbery and extortion*** **victimisations recorded by police in 2006: age profile of victims by sex**



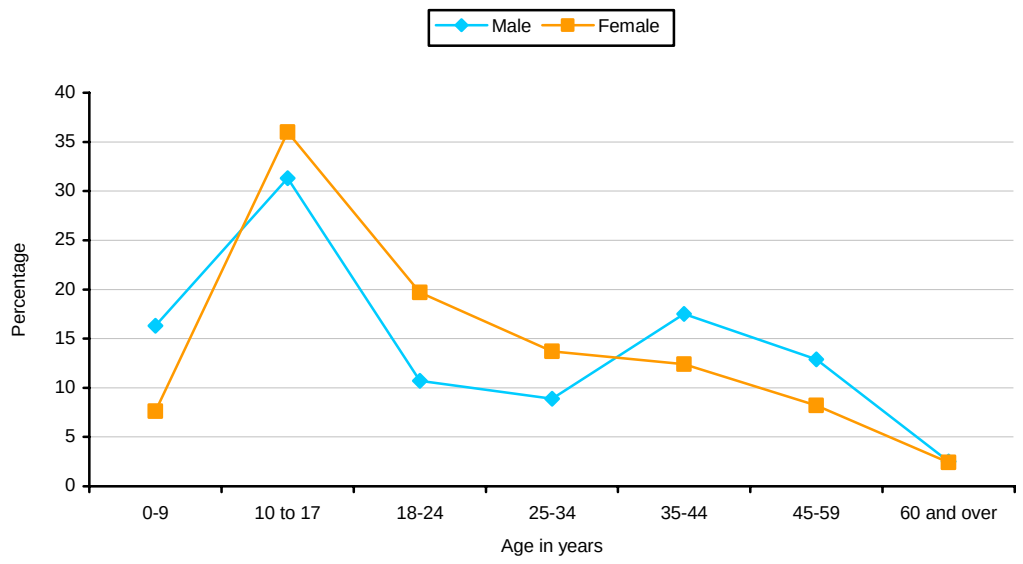
As depicted in Figure 29, the age profile for male victims of an *offence against the person, excluding sexual offences* was very similar to that of female victims, with the peak victimisation age for both being the 25-34 year age category.

Figure 29 ***Offences against the person*** **victimisations recorded by police in 2006: age profile of victims by sex**



As shown in Figure 30, the age profile of male victims of a *sexual offence* was somewhat similar to female victims, although a higher proportion of male victims fell within the youngest age group of 0 – 9 years and the older age groups of 45-59. Conversely, there was a lower proportion of males in the age categories between 10 and 24 years.

Figure 30 ***Sexual offence*** **victimisations recorded by police in 2006: age profile of victims by sex**



Discrete individuals and the extent of re-victimisation

The information provided in the preceding sections do not relate to the number of discrete individuals victimised during 2006. In determining the age profiles outlined above, for example, a victim who was subjected to more than one sexual offence during the year and who changed age brackets from one victimisation to another was counted separately in each age group. In the ensuing section, details are provided on both discrete individuals as well as the level of re-victimisation during the twelve month period.

In 2006 there were 18,757 individuals who, during the course of the year, were subject to at least one 'personal' offence. This figure was 1.6% higher than the 18,468 victims recorded in 2005.

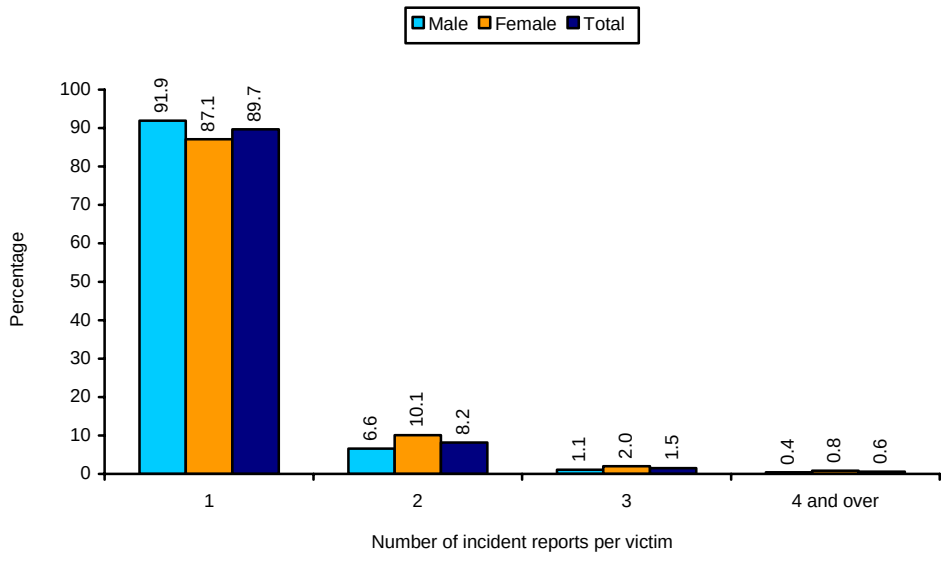
Of the 18,757 individuals, 10,105 (53.9%) were male while 8,652 (46.1%) were female.

As indicated in Figure 31, almost nine in ten victims (89.7%) were the subject of only one incident report during the course of the 12 months. Conversely, only a small proportion (10.1%) were listed as the victims in two or more incident reports.

Overall then, the level of repeat victimisation was extremely low. However, there were 12 individuals who were the subject of six or more incident reports during 2006.

There were only minor differences between males and females in terms of the number of incident reports lodged, with a slightly higher proportion of male than female victims being the subject of more than one report (12.9% compared with 8.1% respectively). The latter figures are almost identical to the corresponding figures for 2005.

Figure 31 Number of incident reports per victim by sex, 2006



1.5 APPREHENSIONS

An apprehension report is usually lodged by police when an alleged perpetrator is cautioned, arrested or reported.

In the following analysis of apprehension data, several different units of analysis are used. In the first section below, information is presented on all offences recorded. However, unlike the counting rules used in the tables contained in Section 3 and 4 of this report, this does not include multiple counts of the same offence. For example, if an alleged offender has been charged on the apprehension report with three counts of *assault* - which generally indicates the one victim and the one incident - only one *assault* is recorded. However, if the offender has been charged with three separate *assault* offences as part of the one apprehension report, then all are counted because this usually indicates three different victims and three different incidents.

In the second section below, information is presented on the number of actual apprehensions and the number of discrete individuals involved in those apprehensions. This is relevant given that there can be more than one offence per apprehension report, and the same person may be apprehended on more than one occasion during the course of a single year.

Offences cleared in 2006 by means of an apprehension: characteristics of persons apprehended

Age and Gender

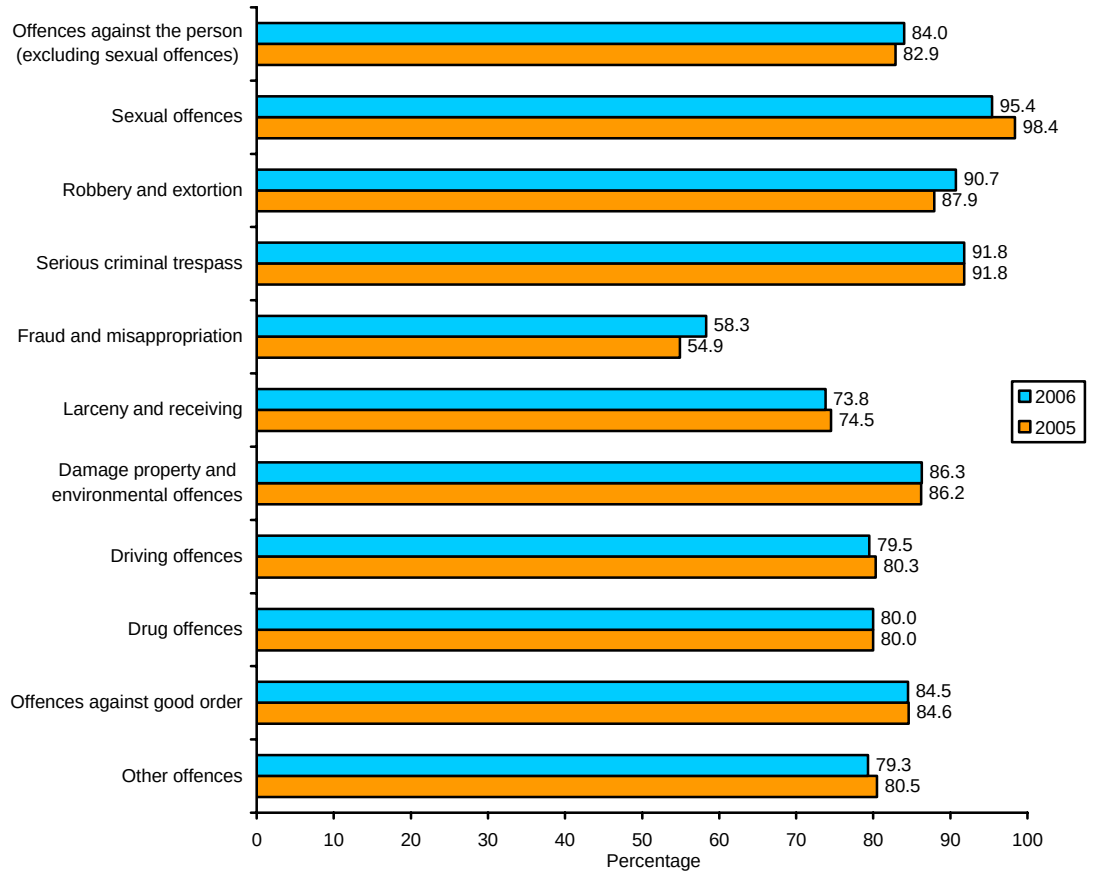
There were 116,361 separate offences cleared by police apprehension reports lodged in 2006. This figure was lower (by 3.4%) than the 120,449 offences cleared in this way in 2005.

As was the case in previous years, overall more than eight in 10 of those offences (80.8%) for which information on the sex of the alleged offender was recorded involved males. However, this percentage varied depending on the type of offence involved (see Figure 32), from a low of 58.3% for *fraud and misappropriation* to a high of 95.4% for *sexual offences.*

While only a minority of offences were cleared by apprehensions of females, this group accounted for 26.2% of all *larceny and receiving* offences cleared in 2006 (including 42.4% of all *larcenies from shops*) and 41.7% of all *fraud and misappropriation* offences.

Figure 32 also indicates that the proportion of males involved in offences cleared by apprehension remained relatively stable between 2005 and 2006 for all offence groups.

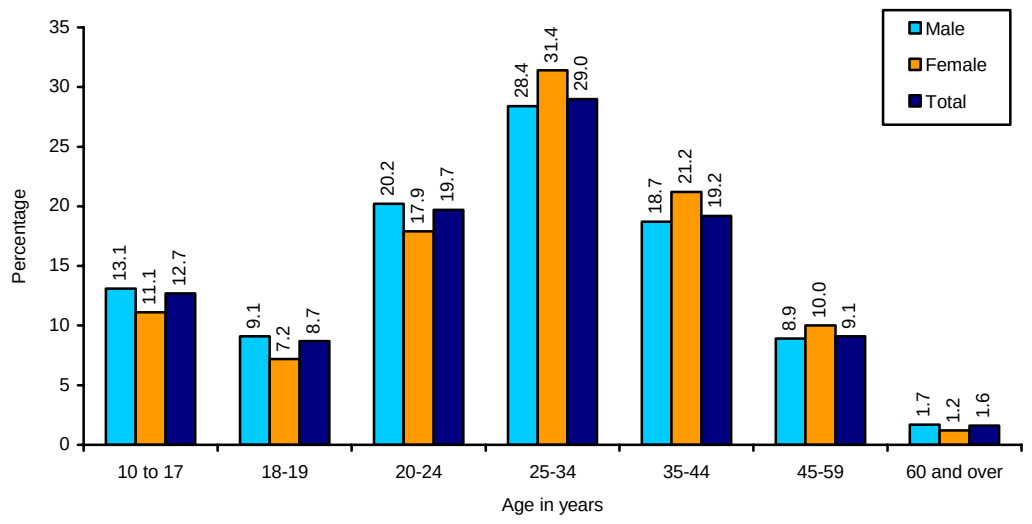
Figure 32 **Offences cleared by apprehension in 2005 and 2006: proportion per offence type involving males**



Of the 116,314 offences listed in those apprehension reports filed in 2006 where the age of the alleged offender was recorded, relatively few involved older individuals aged 45 and over (see Figure 33). In contrast, almost one in three of all offences were allegedly committed by persons in the 25 - 34 year age group, while those aged 20 to 24 and 35 to 44 accounted for a further 19.7% and 19.2% of offences respectively.

Figure 33 shows that overall, there were very few age differences between males and females apprehended in 2006. For both groups, those aged 25 - 34 years dominated. Similarly, relatively few males or females apprehended by police were aged 45 years and over.

Figure 33 Offences cleared by apprehension in 2006: age of alleged offenders by sex

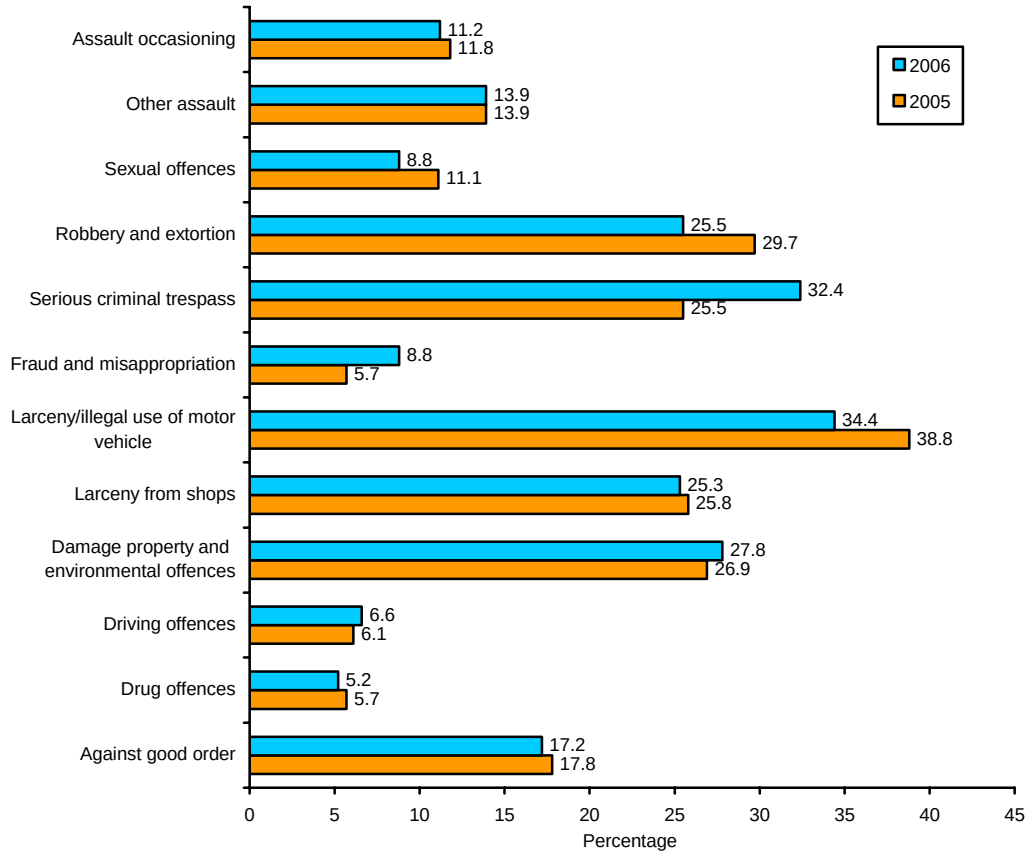


The proportion of offences involving juveniles aged 10 to 17 years varied depending on the type of offence involved. At one end of the scale, juveniles constituted only 8.8% of all *fraud and misappropriation* offences covered by apprehensions in 2006, 5.2% of all *drug* offences[7] and 6.6% of all *driving offences*. At the other end of the scale, they were involved in 34.4% of all *larceny/illegal use of a motor vehicle* offences. This age group also accounted for 27.8% of all *damage property and environmental* offences and 25.5% of all *robbery and extortion* offences (see Figure 34).

It should be stressed, however, that these data do not necessarily indicate that juveniles actually committed more or fewer offences within these categories than other age groups. It simply means that they were apprehended more or less often by police for such offences. Because of their comparative immaturity, they may simply have been more visible to police and so more vulnerable to apprehension.

[7] With the introduction of the Police Illicit Drug Initiative in late 2001, juveniles detected for *possess/use drugs* are now dealt with by way of a diversion to a brief assessment/intervention without a formal apprehension report being lodged. Youths dealt with under PDDI are therefore not counted in these figures.

Figure 34 **Juveniles as a proportion of all offences cleared by apprehension: 2006 compared with 2005**



Racial appearance

Information on racial appearance was available for 110,320 or 94.8% of the 116,361 offences cleared by apprehension in 2006[8].

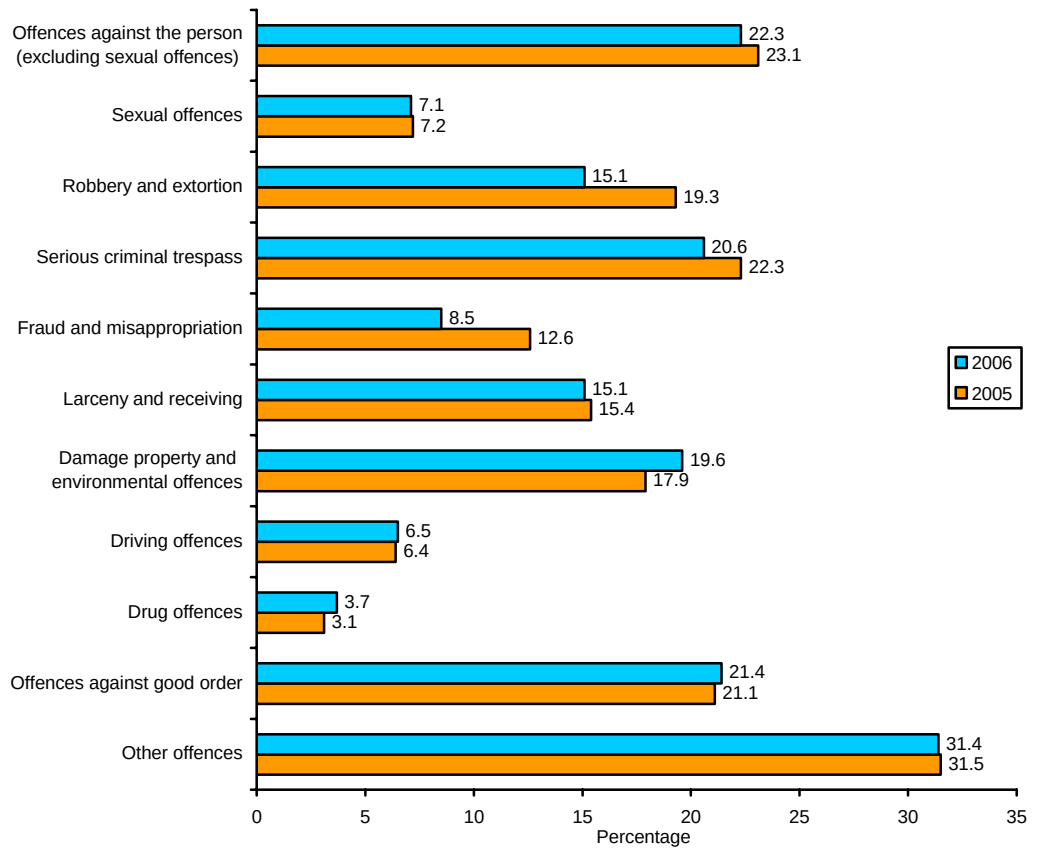
Of these 110,320 offences, 14,202 (12.9%) involved persons considered by police to be of Aboriginal appearance. This points to a significant over-representation of Aboriginal persons within the South Australian criminal justice system, given that according to the most recent census, Indigenous persons constituted only 1.5% of all persons aged 10 years and over resident in this State.

The extent of Aboriginal involvement varied considerably depending on the type of offence. As indicated in Figure 35, for those offences where information on the racial identity of the alleged offender was recorded, persons identified by police as of Aboriginal appearance accounted for 31.4% of all offences involving an *other offence*, and 22.3% of *offences against the person* but only 3.7% of all *drug offences*.

[8] It should be noted that these data do not include persons dealt with by way of expiation notices, such as CENs and Traffic Infringement Notices. Nor do they include those who, rather than being charged with a drug offence, are diverted to the Police Drug Diversion Initiative. It is well documented that Aboriginal persons are under-represented in these 'diversionary' options.

Figure 35 also shows that the proportion of offences involving persons identified by police as Aboriginal was relatively similar to those recorded for most offence types in the previous year.

Figure 35 Offences cleared by apprehension in 2005 and 2006: proportion per offence category involving persons of Aboriginal appearance



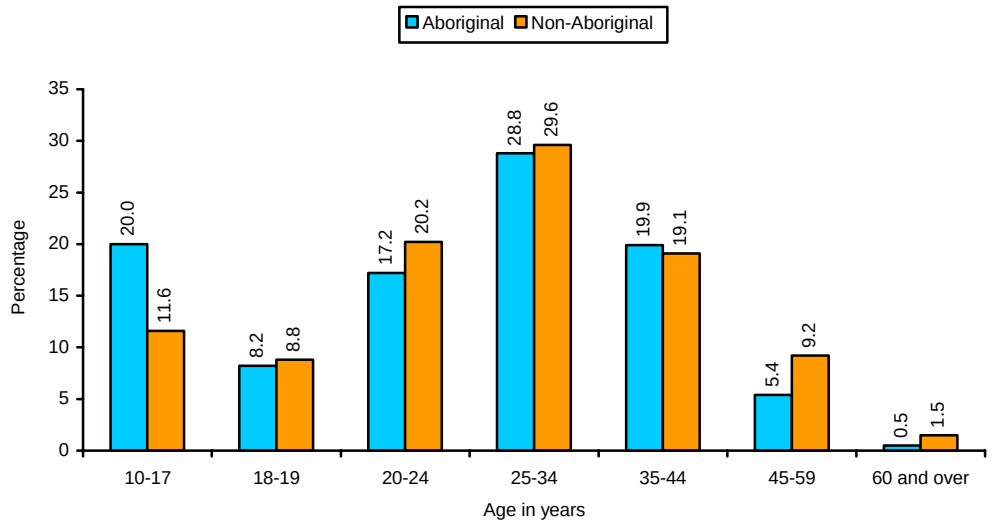
One offence category where Aboriginal persons have always been over-represented is that of *offences against good order*. In 2006 persons of Aboriginal appearance accounted for 21.4% of all such offences recorded where relevant information was obtained. However, this varied depending on the type of *good order* offence involved. At one end of the scale, persons of Aboriginal appearance who were apprehended for *graffiti* offences accounted for only 9.1% of offences recorded. At the other end of the scale, this group accounted for 30.9% of all *disorderly/offensive behaviour* offences, 24.4% of *offences against a court or court order*, and 21.1% of all *loitering* offences where information on racial appearance was available.

In interpreting these figures though, it should be stressed that they do not necessarily reflect the proportion of offences within each category that were actually committed by Aboriginal persons. They simply indicate the proportion who were apprehended by police. Given the low clear up rate for many offences (see earlier discussion) it may be that, because of their greater visibility, persons of Aboriginal appearance are simply more vulnerable to detection than other Australians.

A comparison of the age profiles of persons apprehended in 2006 indicates some Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal differences (see Figure 36). In particular, for those apprehensions where information on racial appearance was recorded, a much higher proportion of apprehensions of Aboriginal persons involved individuals aged 10 - 17 years. In contrast, a slightly lower proportion of offences alleged

against Aborigines in 2006 involved persons aged 20 to 25, 25 to 34 years and 45 years and over when compared with non-Aborigines.

Figure 36 Offences cleared by apprehension in 2006: age by racial appearance of persons apprehended.



Relationship between offences recorded, apprehension reports filed and discrete persons apprehended

As noted earlier, there were 116,361 offences cleared by means of an apprehension in 2006. These were contained within 62,038 apprehension reports. This means that, on average, each apprehension report lodged by police during this twelve month period contained 1.88 offences.

Over the same time period, a total of 39,622 discrete individuals were apprehended. On average then, each person was apprehended 1.57 times, with an average of 2.94 offences recorded per individual over the twelve month period.

As indicated in Figure 37, between 2005 and 2006 the number of offences cleared by means of an apprehension decreased (by 3.4%), the number of apprehension reports decreased (by 1.3%) and the number of individuals apprehended by police also decreased (by 2.4%). The decline in offences cleared by apprehension mirrors the decline in overall number of offences recorded. Despite a slight decline in apprehension reports and individuals apprehended, there has been a general upward trend since 2000.

- This upward trend over the past six years is also reflected in a slight increase in the average number of offences per individual. In 2006, there were 2.94 offences per individual compared with 2.88 in 2000.
- The average number of offences per apprehension report was marginally higher in 2006 compared with 2000 (1.88 compared with 1.86), as was the average number of apprehension reports per individual (1.57 in 2006 compared with 1.55 in 2000).

Figure 37 **Number of apprehension reports and discrete individuals apprehended: 2006 compared previous years**

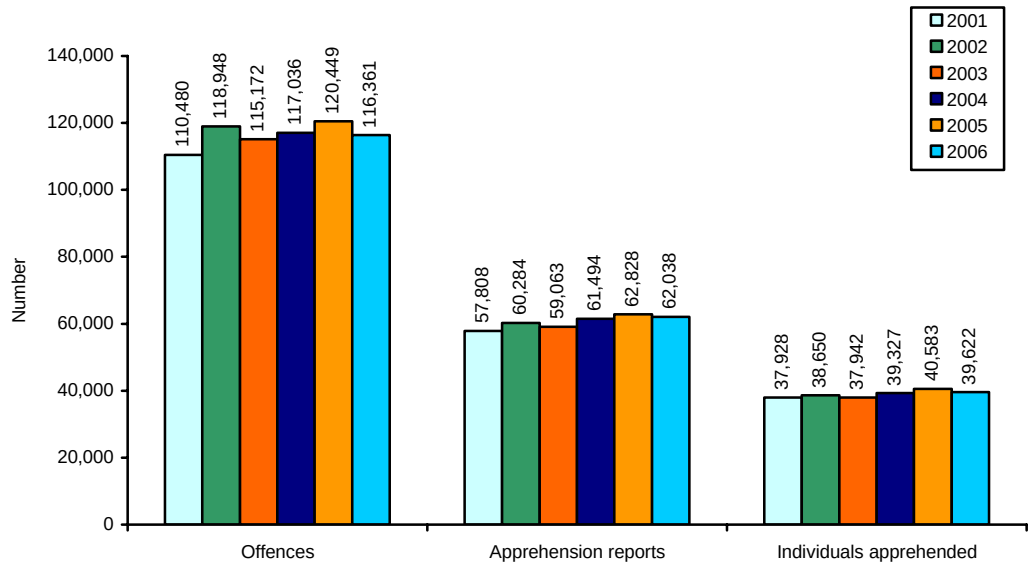
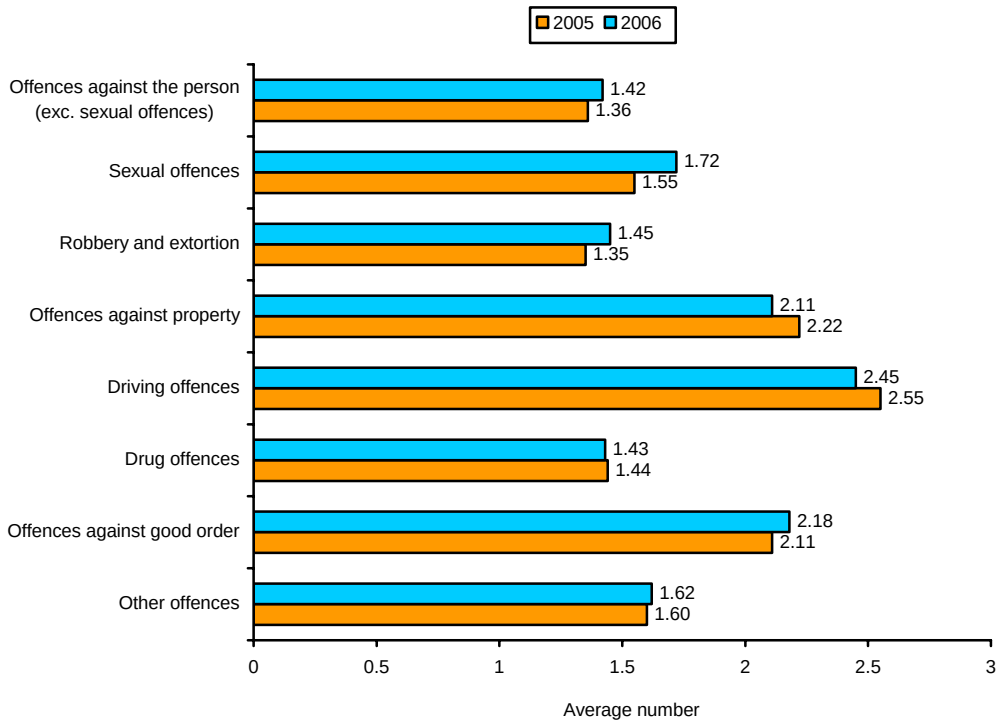


Figure 38 shows the average number of offences per alleged offender for selected offence groups. (In preparing this graph, it should be noted that if, over a twelve month period, the one person is apprehended for different types of offences - for example, for an *offence against property* and for a *drug offence* - he/she will be counted once in each discrete offence grouping.)

Figure 38 Average number of offences per individual per offence group: 2005 compared with 2006



As shown, the average number of offences recorded varied slightly depending on the type of offence involved. Those persons apprehended in 2006 for a *property offence* faced an average of 2.11 such offences during the year. For individuals apprehended for a *driving offence,* the average was 2.45. At the other end of the scale, persons apprehended for an *offence against the person* faced an average of 1.42 such offences, while for those apprehended for a *sexual offence*, the average number was 1.72.

For most offence categories the average number of offences per individual was similar to that recorded in 2005.

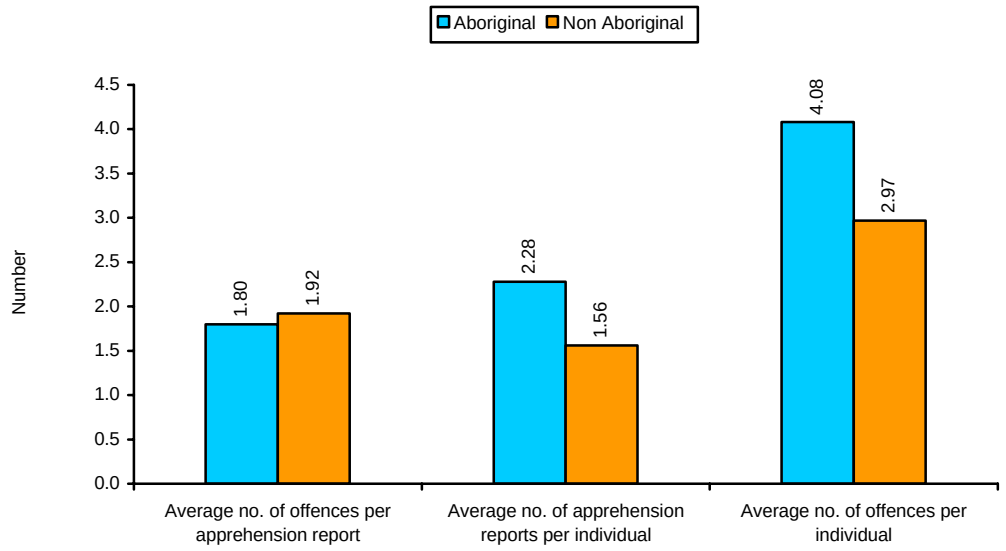
Males accounted for the majority of apprehension reports lodged (79.6% of the 62,008 reports where information on the sex of the offender was recorded). Males also accounted for 78.1% of those 39,597 discrete individuals apprehended where relevant data were available.

On average, the number of offences per apprehension report was higher for males than females (1.91 and 1.76 respectively). The same applied in relation to the average number of apprehension reports per individual (1.60 compared with 1.46 for females) and the average number of offences per individual (3.05 for males compared with 2.57 for females.)

As noted earlier, persons of Aboriginal appearance accounted for 12.9% of the 110,320 offences involved in apprehensions in 2006 where relevant information was available. They also accounted for 13.6% of the 58,143 apprehensions and 9.7% of the 35,850 persons apprehended where information on racial appearance was recorded.

As shown in Figure 39, when compared with non-Aboriginals, the average number of apprehension reports per individual in 2006, was higher for persons of Aboriginal appearance, as was the average number of offences per individual. In contrast, the average number of offences per apprehension report was slightly lower.

Figure 39 **Average number of offences per apprehension, report apprehension reports per individual and offences per individual apprehended; comparison between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals, 2006**

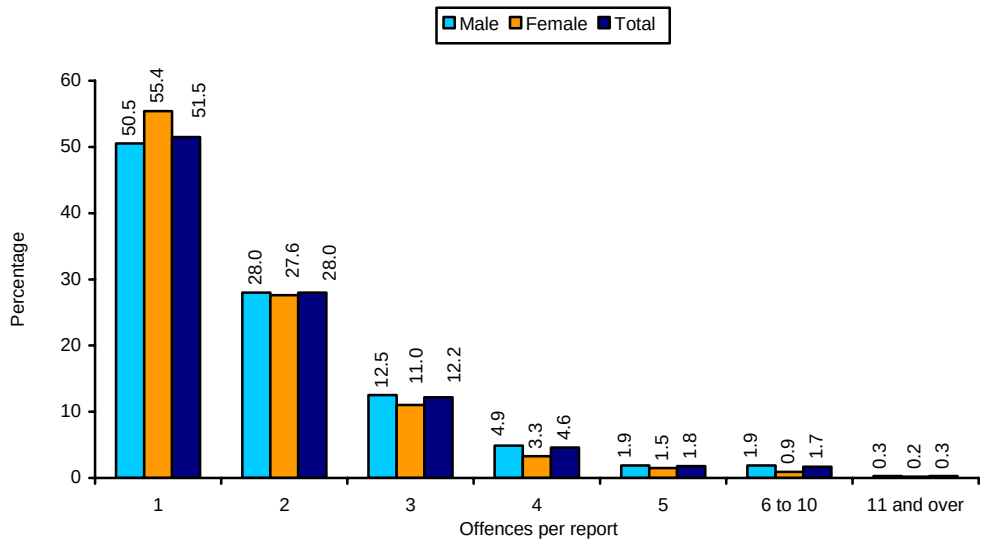


Apprehension reports: some further details

An alternative way of considering the relationship between offences laid and apprehension reports is by looking at the actual number of offences per report rather than the average number of offences.

As indicated in Figure 40, almost one half of all apprehension reports submitted by police in 2006 involved one offence only. At the other end of the scale, very few of these reports listed six or more offences. This pattern held true for both males and females, although the proportion of reports involving one offence only was higher for females than males.

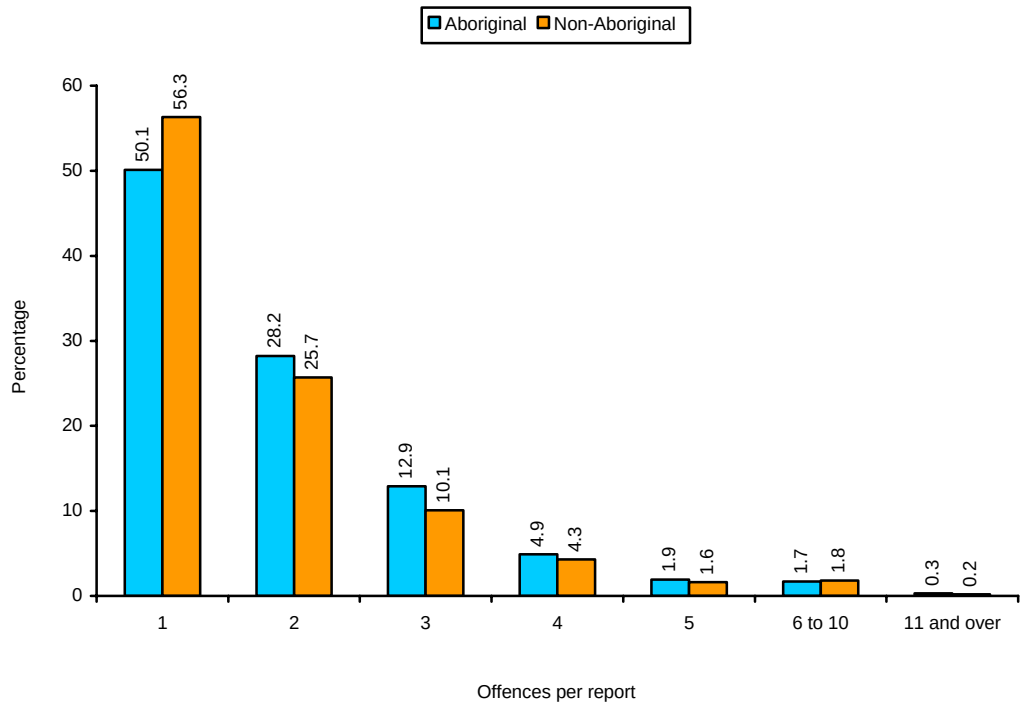
Figure 40 **Apprehension reports filed by police in 2006: number of offences per report by sex**



As shown in Figure 41, the proportion of apprehension reports involving one offence only was higher for Aboriginals than non-Aboriginals. Conversely, the proportion of reports involving two or three offences was slightly lower for Aboriginals. For reports with four or more offences there were marginal or no Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal differences.

Tables 6.29 and 6.30 in Section 6 of this report also provide details on the age, sex and racial appearance of those persons listed on all apprehension reports. However, because these profiles are similar to those provided for offences cleared via an apprehension, no further analysis is presented here.

Figure 41 **Apprehension reports filed by police in 2006: number of offences per report by racial appearance**



Individuals apprehended by police: some further details

Tables 6.33 to 6.41 in Section 6 of this report focus on the number of discrete individuals apprehended by police in 2006. In these tables, each individual is counted once only, irrespective of the number of times they were apprehended during the course of the year or how many offences they were apprehended for. The tables detail their age, sex and racial appearance, as well as providing more information on the number of times each individual was apprehended and the total number of offences for which each person was apprehended over the twelve month period.

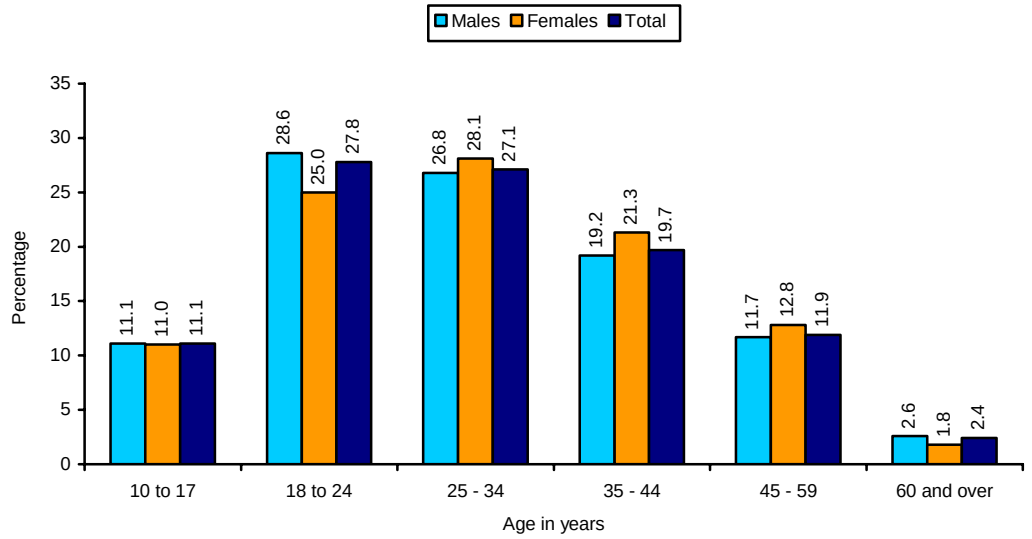
Age, sex and racial appearance of persons apprehended

There were 39,622 distinct individuals apprehended at least once by police during 2006. Information on the sex of 25 of these persons was not available. Of the remaining 39,597 the majority (78.1%) were male.

As indicated in Figure 42, where age was known, the majority of individuals apprehended were either aged 18 - 24 years or 25 - 34 years. Very few were aged 60 and over.

Figure 42 also indicates close similarities in the age profile of males and females apprehended in 2006. For both groups, the 18 - 24 and 25 - 34 year age categories dominated, although a slightly lower proportion of females were aged 18 - 24 years and a slightly higher proportion aged 35 - 44 years.

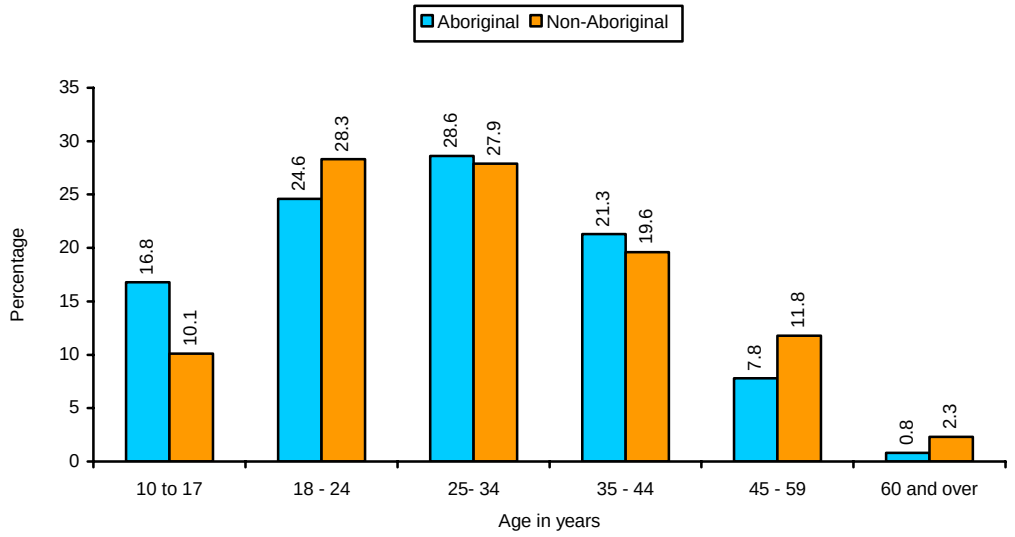
Figure 42 Discrete individuals apprehended by police in 2006: age by sex



Of the 39,622 individuals apprehended in 2006, information on racial appearance was not recorded for 3,772 (or 9.5%). As noted earlier, persons of Aboriginal appearance accounted for 9.7% of the remainder. Given that persons of Aboriginal descent constitute only 1.5% of South Australia's population aged 10 years and over, this indicates that their level of contact with the criminal justice system was 6.5 times higher than would be expected on a per capita basis.

While the age profiles of the two groups were broadly similar, Aboriginal persons apprehended by police in 2006 tended to be slightly younger than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. As shown in Figure 43, a higher proportion of Aboriginal persons apprehended in 2006 were aged 10 - 17 years compared with non-Aboriginals, while the reverse was true for apprehended individuals aged 45 and over.

Figure 43 Discrete individuals apprehended by police in 2006: age by racial appearance



Number of apprehensions per individual

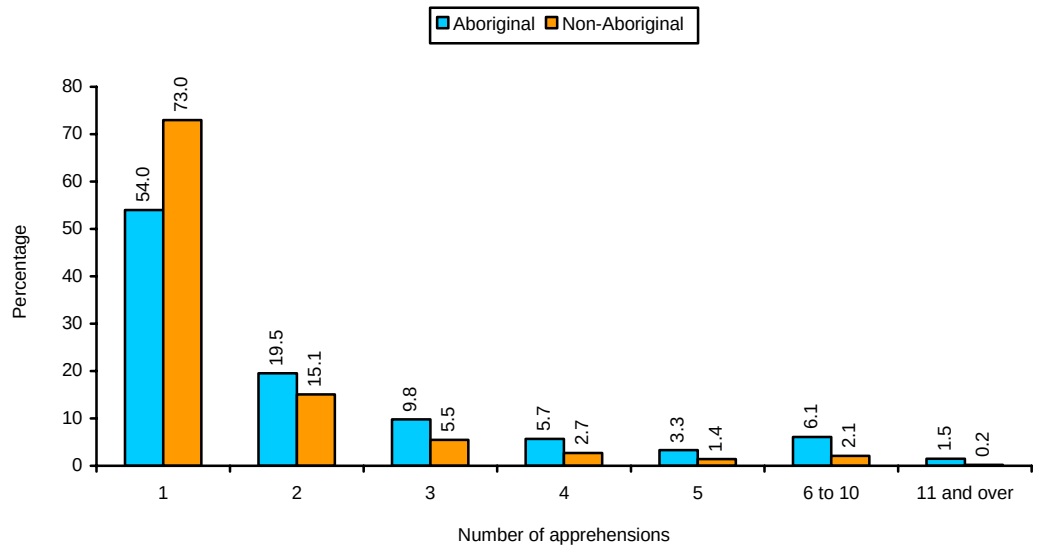
Of the 39,622 persons apprehended in 2006, almost three quarters (73.6%) were apprehended on one occasion only during the twelve month period while a further 14.4% were apprehended on only two occasions.

A small group of individuals (1,011 or 2.6% of the total) were apprehended on six or more occasions, with 128 of these persons recording 11 or more apprehensions.

Although the majority of both sexes were apprehended only once, males tended to be apprehended slightly more often than females, with 72.2% of males apprehended once, compared to 78.3% of females.

There were, however, some clear Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal differences in the number of apprehensions per individual. As indicated in Figure 44, almost half of the Aboriginals (46.0%) had multiple apprehensions during 2006 compared to just over a quarter of non-Aboriginals (27.0%).

Figure 44 **Discrete individuals apprehended by police in 2006: number of apprehensions per individual by racial appearance**



While the majority of individuals were apprehended only once irrespective of age, younger individuals were more likely to experience multiple apprehensions than were older persons. This pattern held true for both males and females.

While this finding also applied to persons of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal appearance, the proportion per age group who experienced one apprehension only was noticeably lower for Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal persons, as shown in Figure 45.

Number of offences per individual

Characteristics of the number of apprehensions and offences by individuals are set out in Table 6.40a.

Of the 39,622 distinct individuals apprehended by police in 2006, 16,058 or 40.5% were apprehended for one offence only, while a further 25.5% had two allegations laid against them. Only a small proportion (11.7%) were apprehended for six or more offences.

At the most extreme end of the scale, there were 600 persons apprehended for more than 15 offences. As would be expected, only a very small number of these individuals (23 or 3.8% of the 600) were apprehended on only one occasion. In contrast, 427 persons (71.2% of the 600), accumulated these offences during the course of six or more apprehensions.

There were some minor sex differences in the number of offences per individual, with a slightly higher proportion of females facing one offence allegation only (46.2% compared with 38.9% of males). These results are set out in Tables 6.40b and 6.40c.

The number of offences alleged per individual also varied according to racial appearance. As shown in Figure 45 a lower proportion of apprehended Aboriginal persons was apprehended once only during the year. The other feature of the graph is the increasing tendency for older age groups to have only one offence, and for the gap between the two groups to close with increasing age.

In Figure 46 it can be seen that a lower percentage of apprehended persons of Aboriginal appearance had only one offences alleged against them during the course of the year than was the case for apprehended non-Aboriginals. At the other end of the scale a much higher proportion of people of

Aboriginal appearance were apprehended for six or more offences compared with people of non-Aboriginal appearance.

Figure 45 **Discrete individuals apprehended by police in 2006: proportion per age group experiencing one apprehension only by racial appearance**

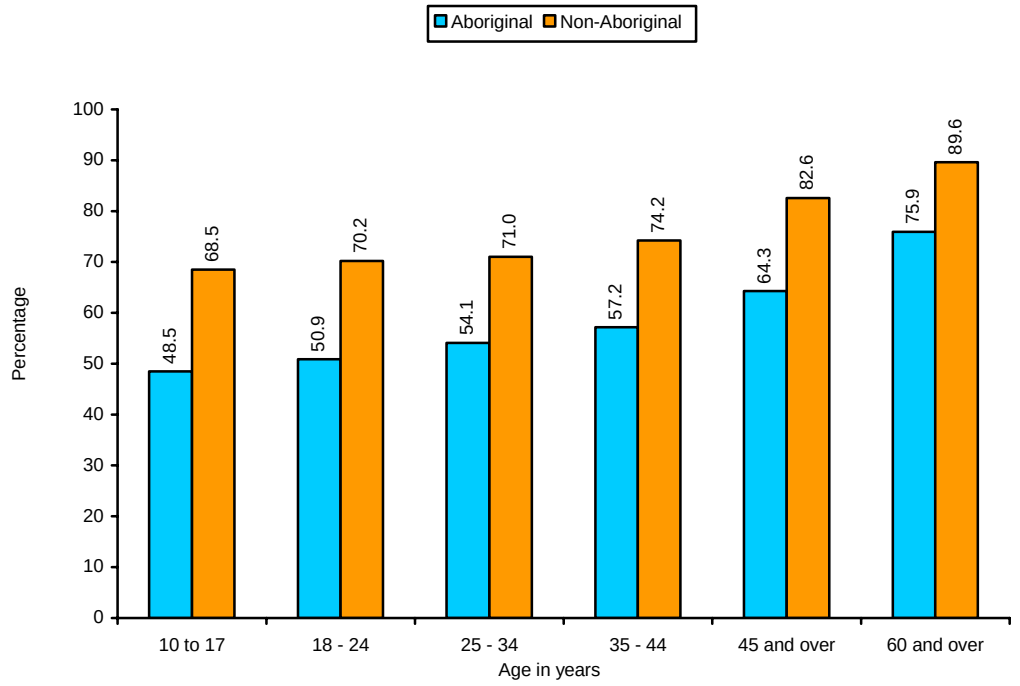
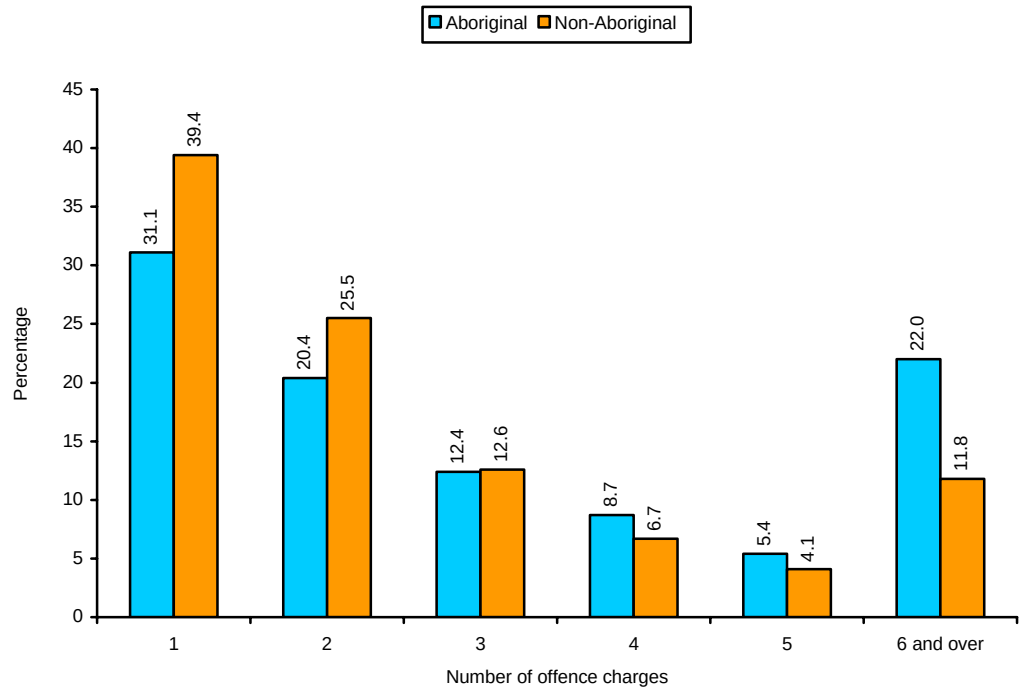


Figure 46 **Discrete individual apprehended by police in 2006: number of offences by racial appearance**



While very few individuals were apprehended in relation to more than five offences, a significant finding emerges when the data are analysed in a different way. As indicated in Table 2, there were 16,058 individuals who, during the course of the year, were apprehended for one offence only; i.e. in total, they accounted for 16,058 offences. This means that 40.5% of all individuals apprehended in 2006 accounted for 13.8% of all offences recorded in relation to those apprehensions.

However, at the other end of the scale, the 4,621 individuals who were apprehended in relation to six or more offences accounted for 47,934 of the offences entailed by those apprehensions. In other words, 11.7% of persons apprehended in 2006 were responsible for 41.2% of all offences covered by those apprehension reports.

These results clearly indicate that in 2006, as in previous years, a comparatively small group of individuals accounted for a disproportionately large proportion of all offences for which apprehension were made by police during this twelve month period.

Table 2 Proportion of individuals compared with proportion of offences accounted for by those individuals, 2006

16,058 persons @ 1 offence each = 16,058 offences	40.5% of all individuals apprehended accounted for 13.8% of all offences
10,088 persons @ 2 offences each = 20,176 offences	25.5% of individuals apprehended accounted for 17.3% of all offences
4,767 persons @ 3 offences each = 14,301 offences	12.0% of individuals apprehended accounted for 12.3% of all offences
2,548 persons @ 4 offences each = 10,192 offences	6.4% of individuals apprehended accounted for 8.8% of all offences
1,540 persons @ 5 offences each = 7,700 offences	3.9% of individuals apprehended accounted for 6.6% of all offences
4,621 persons @ 6 + offences each = 47,934 offences	11.7% of individuals apprehended accounted for 41.2% of all offences

A similarly small proportion of individuals within both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal group accounted for a similarly high proportion of all offences. More specifically, the most prolifically offending 22.0% of all Aboriginal persons apprehended in 2006 accounted for 53.5% of all offences accounted for by the apprehensions of this group by police, while the most offending 11.8% of all non-Aboriginals apprehended accounted for 41.0% of all non-Aboriginal offences (see Table 3).

Table 3	**Proportion of individuals compared with proportion of offences accounted for by those individuals in 2006: an Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal comparison**	
Number of offences per individual	**Aboriginal persons apprehended**	**Non-Aboriginal persons apprehended**
1	31.1% of individuals apprehended accounted for 8.5% of all allegations	39.4% of individuals apprehended accounted for 13.3% of all allegations
2	20.4% of individuals apprehended accounted for 11.1% of all allegations	25.5% of individuals apprehended accounted for 17.2% of all allegations
3	12.4% of individuals apprehended accounted for 10.1% of all allegations	12.6% of individuals apprehended accounted for 12.7% of all allegations
4	8.7% of individuals apprehended accounted for 9.5% of all allegations	6.7% of individuals apprehended accounted for 9.0% of all allegations
5	5.4% of individuals apprehended accounted for 7.3% of all allegations	4.1% of individuals apprehended accounted for 6.9% of all allegations
6+	22.0% of individuals apprehended accounted for 53.5% of all allegations	11.8% of individuals apprehended accounted for 41.0% of all allegations