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Crime and Justice in South Australia, 2007

Offences Recorded by Police,
The Victims and
Alleged Perpetrators

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PREFACE

Crime and Justice in South Australia is published annually by the Office of Crime Statistics and Research as a three volume set. Statistics in this report deal exclusively with information on police-related activities for the period 1 January to 31 December 2007 and incorporate 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;
- 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.

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INTRODUCTION

This report, covering the period 1 January to 31 December 2007, contains statistics that cover five main areas:

- The number of incident reports filed by police;
- The number of offences recorded by police;
- The number of recorded 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 group to another. An Australian Bureau of Statistics 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 are likely to 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”¹ (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 road 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

¹ The term “victimless crime” is used to describe an act that is illegal but has no victim or complainer. For example, some driving offences would be considered victimless.

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 and/or victims to report the incident to police, 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 expansion in the use of red light and speed cameras, the number of recorded offences involving ‘drive unregistered/uninsured’ has jumped dramatically 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 2007 Statistics

Police Incident Reports

- In 2007, 194,653 incident reports were submitted by police. This was 1.3% lower than the preceding year.
- The overwhelming majority (77.5%) of incident reports submitted in 2007 involved one offence only. The average number of recorded offences per report was 1.31.

Offences recorded by police

- In 2007, there were 255,649 offences recorded by police which represents a 2.9% decline compared with the previous year.
- *Offences against property* dominated, accounting for over five in ten recorded offences (52.4%). In contrast, *sexual offences*, *drug offences* and *robbery and extortion* each constituted 1.1% or less. This offence profile was similar to that observed in previous years.
- The number of *property offences*, *drug offences*, selected *driving offences* and *other offences* all decreased in 2007. In contrast, *sexual offences*, *robbery offences*, *offences against the person* and *offences against good order* all recorded increases.
- The number of *offences against the person*, (*excluding sexual offences*) recorded by police increased in 2007 (by 3.2%).
- In 2007, the number of *sexual offences* increased by 8.6% (2,424 compared with 2,232 in 2006). 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.
- The total number of *robbery offences* recorded by police in 2007 increased by 5.7%. Within this group, *armed robberies* increased by 17.9% while *unarmed robberies* decreased by 2.4%.
- The number of recorded *property offences* decreased by 5.3% in 2007. This downward trend applied to all sub-groups:
 - Serious criminal trespass decreased by 11.7%;
 - Fraud and misappropriation decreased by 7.8%;
 - Larceny and receiving decreased by 5.0%; and
 - Property damage and environmental offences decreased by 1.8%.
- The total number of selected *driving offences* decreased by 2.7% in 2007. This included:
 - a 7.1% increase in drink driving and related offences;
 - a 4.5% increase in dangerous, reckless or negligent driving offences;
 - a 6.3% decrease in driving licence offences;
 - a 3.0% decrease in motor vehicle registration offences; and
 - a 27.7% decrease in traffic offences.

It should be noted though, that the number of *driving offences* recorded by police 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*.

- The number of *drug offences* recorded by police in 2007 decreased by 7.2%. All of the drug offence sub-groups recorded decreases:
 - Possess and/or use drugs decreased by 11.7%;
 - Possess drug implement(s) decreased by 6.2%;
 - Fraudulent prescription offences decreased by 23.3%;
 - Produce or manufacture drugs decreased by 3.8%; and
 - Possess for sale/sell drugs decreased by 5.3%.

As with *driving offences*, however, the number of such offences recorded by police 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 2.8% in 2007. Again, however, there were variations within this broad grouping, with *indecent/offensive language* down by 6.0%, while most other sub-groups increased. The largest percentage increases in recorded offences were in *disorderly behaviour* (7.9%), *graffiti and related offences* (7.5%) and *trespassing* (6.9%).

Location of offences recorded by police

- In 2007, the Northern Statistical Division recorded the highest rate of *offences against the person* (22.7 per 1,000 population). This was considerably higher than any other statistical division, with the next highest rate recorded for Eyre (15.7), followed by Adelaide (15.3) and then Murray Lands (15.1). The lowest rate of 6.9 recorded offences per 1,000 population was recorded for the Yorke and Lower North.
- The highest rate of *serious criminal trespass* in 2007 was recorded by the Adelaide Statistical Division (19.9 recorded offences per 1,000 dwellings). The Murray Lands was second highest (12.6), with the rates in other Divisions ranging between 5.5 (in Yorke and Lower North) and 11.2 (in the Northern Statistical Division).
- When these broader statistical divisions are broken down into the smaller spatial units of Local Government Areas, it was found that:
 - In 2007, Adelaide (C) recorded the highest rate of offending per 1,000 population (946.6). This was followed by Coober Pedy (DC) (603.3), Ceduna (DC) (476.2), Anangu Pitjantjara (AC) (365.3), and Port Augusta (C) (358.8).
 - Adelaide (C) had by far the highest rate of offences against the person (123.6 per 1,000 population). The LGA with the second highest rate was Anangu Pitjantjara (AC) (90.2), followed by Ceduna (DC) (55.3), Coober Pedy (DC) (48.0), and Port Augusta (C) (33.0).
 - The highest rate for serious criminal trespass was recorded in the LGA of Playford (C) (38.0 per 1,000 dwelling). This was followed Ceduna (DC) (37.8), Prospect (C) (36.1), Anangu Pitjantjara (AC) (31.0), Walkerville (M) (30.9), and Port Adelaide Enfield (C) (30.6).

Clearance status of offences² recorded by police

- During 2007, of the 255,649 offences recorded by police, 125,492 (49.1%) were cleared by the end of the same year, while, conversely, 50.9% remained uncleared.
- However, the clear up level varied depending on the type of offence involved, with the lowest recorded for *property offences* (16.6% cleared by the end of the year), followed by *robbery and extortion* (34.9%). Over one half (62.3%) of the *sexual offences* recorded by police in 2007 were cleared, as were more than two thirds (70.1%) 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 alleged perpetrator.
- Across all of these offence groups, clear up levels were either similar to or marginally higher than those recorded in 2006.
- In addition to the 125,492 offences which were both recorded and cleared in 2007, a further 3,999 offences recorded by police in earlier years were also cleared in 2007. This gives a total of 129,491 recorded offences cleared over the twelve month period.
- Of these 129,491 recorded offences cleared, the majority (89.3%) were cleared by way of the apprehension or cautioning of a suspect. A very small proportion of recorded offences (1.7%) were designated as cleared on the grounds that they were unfounded, while 8.3% 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, two thirds (66.0%) of *sexual offences* and just over one half (58.4%) of *offences against the person* were cleared in this way. For these last two offence groups, the proportion cleared as a result of the victim requesting that no further action be taken was relatively high (39.1% in the case of *offences against the person* and 25.8% of *sexual offences*).

Victims of offences recorded by police

In this section, only recorded offences which involved a ‘personal’ victim were counted. This included all *offences against the person*, all *sexual offences* and all *robberies* directed against an individual³.

- In 2007 there were 22,786 recorded victimisations directed against a person.
- Of those 22,783 victimisations where the sex of the victim was recorded, over one half (51.3%) involved males, while conversely, 48.7% 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 2007.
- Persons in the mid age groups of 18 – 24 and 25 – 34 years accounted for the highest proportion of ‘personal’ victimisations recorded by police in 2007 (23.1% and 23.2% respectively), while the very young and the elderly accounted for relatively small proportions.

² See Appendix for definition of ‘Clearance status of recorded offences’.

³ 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.

- 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 almost one third (31.7%) of all such victimisations recorded in 2007 while those aged 60 and over accounted for only 2.5%.
- While the age profiles of male and female victims of *against the person (excluding sexual) offences* were generally similar, this was not the case for *robbery and extortion* or *sexual offences*. Male *robbery and extortion* victims were generally younger than 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 group, there was another peak at 45 – 59, followed by a sharp decline for those 60 and over.

The information detailed above relates to the total number of alleged offences involving a personal victim. However, the same victim may be subject to more than one alleged 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 2007.

The results indicate that over this twelve month period:

- 19,520 persons were subject to at least one alleged ‘personal’ offence;
- Nine in ten (90.1%) of these 19,520 persons were victimised once only during the 12 month period, indicating that the level of repeat victimisation was low.

Recorded offences cleared by way of an apprehension

- There were 115,711 separate offences listed on police apprehension reports lodged in 2007. This figure was lower (by 0.6%) than the 116,361 offences cleared in this way in 2006.
- Overall, more than eight in ten (80.3%) of these recorded offences were accounted for by males, although this varied from 64.0% for *fraud and misappropriation* to 98.1% for *sexual offences*.
- Of the 115,679 offences listed in those apprehension reports filed in 2007 where the age of the alleged offender was recorded, relatively few involved older individuals. In contrast, persons in the 20 – 44 year age group were apprehended in relation to two thirds of the recorded offences cleared by apprehension during the year.
- Overall, 13.1% of recorded offences cleared by apprehension in 2007 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 4.3% of all *fraud and misappropriation* charges but 40.2% of all *larceny/illegal use of a motor vehicle*.
- Information on Aboriginal appearance⁴ was available for 110,906 or 95.8% of the 115,711 recorded offences cleared by apprehension in 2007. Of these, 14,473 (13.0%) 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 25.3% of all *robbery and extortion* offences, 21.4% of *serious criminal trespass offences* but only 3.4% of all *drug offences*.

⁴**Note:** The term “Aboriginal” refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The term “Aboriginal appearance” is used to describe the alleged offender as “Aboriginal” or “non-Aboriginal” and is based on the opinion of the apprehending officer as to the appearance of the apprehended person.

- The 115,711 recorded offences cleared by apprehension in 2007 were contained in 62,684 separate apprehension reports. On average then, each apprehension report lodged by police during this twelve month period contained 1.85 recorded offences.
- Over the same time period, a total of 40,583 discrete individuals were apprehended, giving an average of 1.54 apprehensions and 2.85 recorded offences per person in 2007.
- Males accounted for the majority of apprehension reports lodged (79.3%) and the majority of discrete individuals apprehended during 2007 (77.8%).
- Persons of Aboriginal appearance constituted 13.4% of all apprehensions and 9.6% of all persons apprehended where information on a person's Aboriginal appearance was recorded. Given that persons of Aboriginal descent constitute only 1.6% 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 40,583 discrete individuals apprehended in 2007, almost three quarters (73.9%) were apprehended only once during the 12 month period. However, there was a small group (932 or 2.3% of the total) who were apprehended on six or more occasions, with 113 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 2007 compared with non-Aboriginal persons (47.0% had two or more apprehensions compared with 26.0% of non-Aboriginal persons).
- In 2007, 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, 11.0% of persons apprehended in 2007 were responsible for 39.4% of all alleged offences cleared by apprehension.

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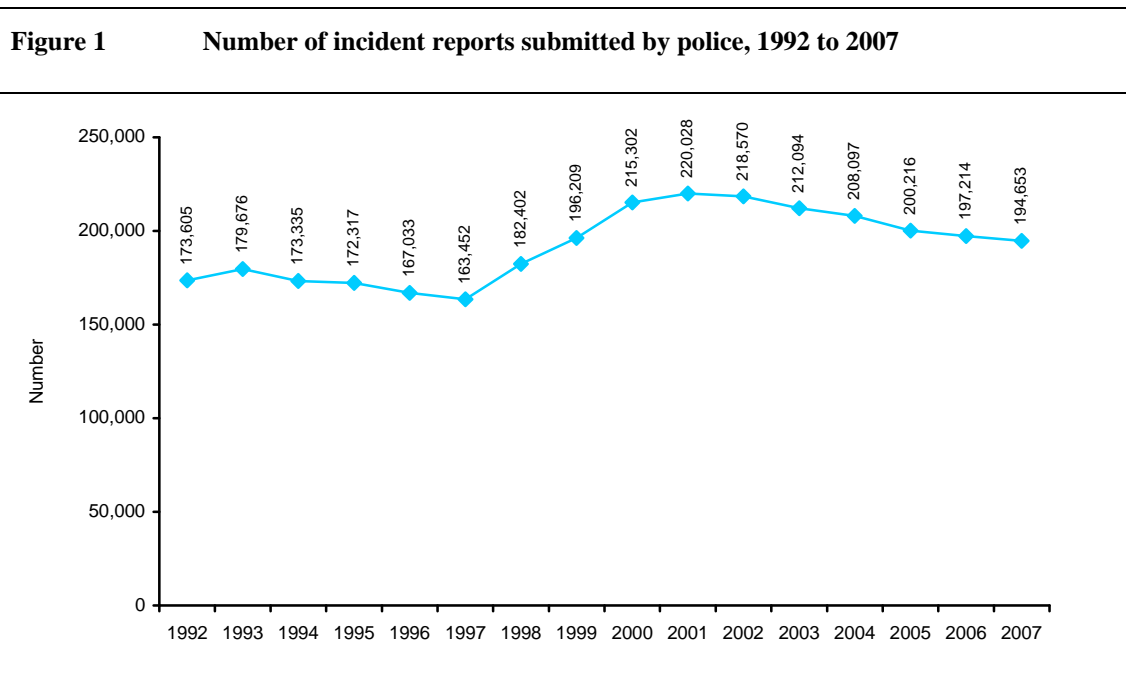
OVERVIEW

1.1 POLICE INCIDENT REPORTS

The number of incident reports filed by police in each of the years 1992 to 2007 is presented in Figure 1⁵. As shown:

In 2007 there were 194,653 incidents recorded by police that resulted in the filing of a police incident report. This was 1.3% 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 recorded each year.



The 194,653 incident reports submitted in 2007 contained 255,649 recorded offences, representing an average of 1.31 offences per report.

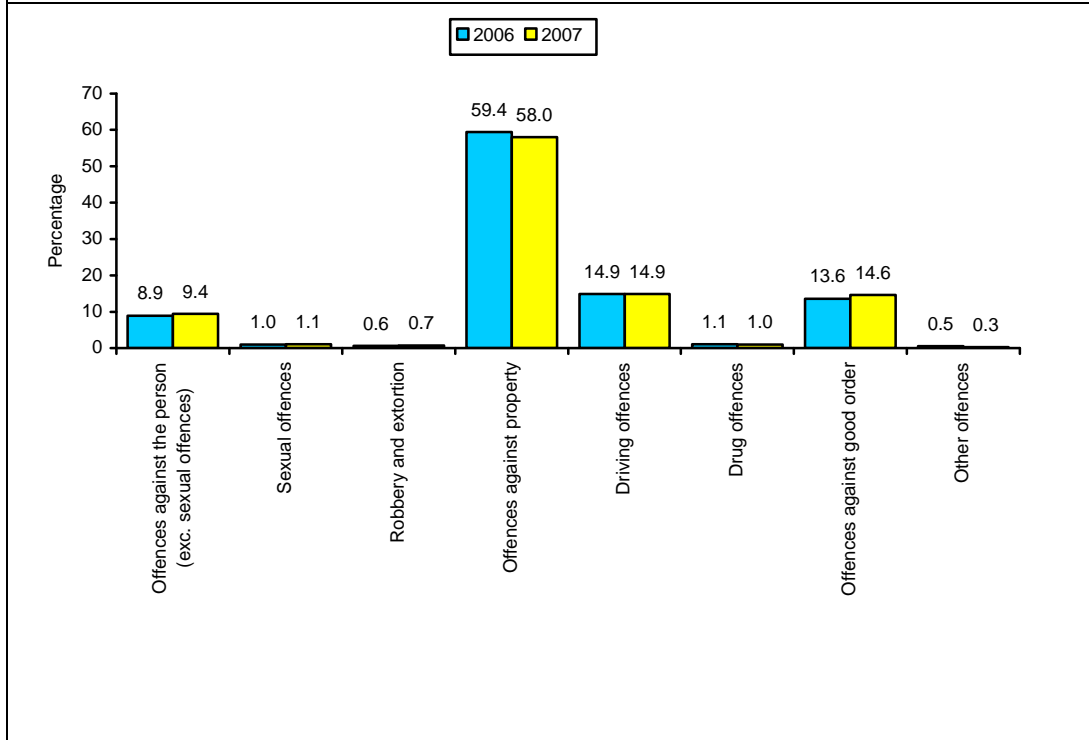
The overwhelming majority (77.5%) of incident reports submitted in 2007 involved one recorded offence only, while only 0.3% contained six or more offences.

A profile of the major or most serious offence recorded per incident report is detailed in Figure 2. Given that the majority of incident reports contained one recorded 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 recorded was defined as the offence that had the highest level JANCO. It should be kept in mind that the graph represents the *percentage* of all recorded offences that each offence group represents, not the absolute number of each recorded offence.

⁵ 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 2007 compared with 2006



In 2007, in the majority of incident reports the most serious offence recorded was an *offence against property* (58.0%).

Of the remaining offence groups, *driving offences*, *offences against good order* and *offences against the person (excluding sexual offences)* were the most prominent (14.9%, 14.6% and 9.4% respectively).

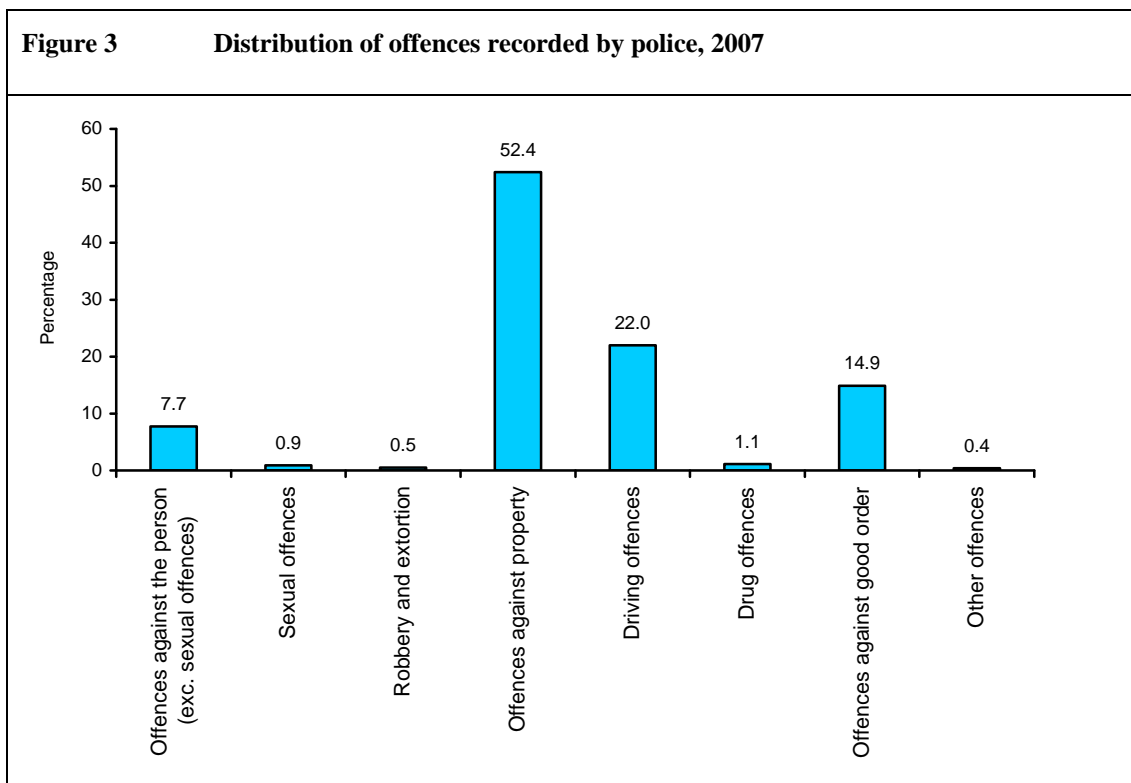
At the other end of the scale, very few incident reports involved either an *other offence* (0.3%) or a *robbery/extortion offence* (0.7%).

Figure 2 indicates that in broad terms, the pattern of recorded offending has remained generally stable between 2007 and 2006.

1.2 OFFENCES RECORDED BY POLICE

In the previous section, information was presented on the number of incident reports submitted by police in 2007. The following section details all offences and offence counts recorded, irrespective of whether they arose from the same or different incidents⁶. In 2007, a total of 255,649 offences were recorded by police.

As shown in Figure 3, *offences against property* dominated the 2007 offence profile, accounting for over half of all offences recorded by police in this 12 month period.



As shown in Table 1, the 2007 offence profile was very similar to that observed in 2006.

Table 1 Profile of offences recorded by police, 2006 and 2007.

Offence group	2006		2007	
	No.	%	No.	%
Offences against the person	19,057	7.2	19,670	7.7
Sexual offences	2,232	0.8	2,424	0.9
Robbery and extortion	1,256	0.5	1,327	0.5
Offences against property	141,589	53.8	134,039	52.4
Driving offences	57,889	22.0	56,348	22.0
Drug offences	2,974	1.1	2,759	1.1
Offences against good order	37,030	14.1	38,054	14.9
Other offences	1,342	0.5	1,028	0.4
Total	263,369	100.0	255,649	100.0

⁶ 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.

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

Of the *offences against the person (excluding sexual offences)* recorded by police in 2007 the highest proportion involved *other assault* (87.7%)⁷. In 2007 there were 14 *murders* and 42 *attempted murders* recorded.

Indecent assault and *rape* each accounted for approximately one third of the 2,424 *sexual offences* recorded in 2007 (32.1% and 28.5% respectively). Just under one quarter involved *incest* and *other sexual offences* (24.2%), while *unlawful sexual intercourse* accounted for 15.2%.

Unarmed robbery accounted for 52.3% of the 1,268 *robbery offences* recorded in 2007. Of the 605 *armed robberies* recorded, only 20.2% involved the use of firearm. This represents 9.6% of all *robberies* recorded in 2007. Robberies of financial institutions (banks, credit unions etc) made up just 0.6% of all *robbery offences* recorded during the year.

Larceny and receiving accounted for 54.0% of the 134,039 *property offences* recorded in 2007. Within this group, *theft of or illegal interference to a motor vehicle* accounted for 15.9% while *larceny from a motor vehicle* constituted 19.8%.

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 group were counted. In 2007, in addition to the 20,646 *criminal trespass* offences recorded, there was still a very small number (96) related to *break and enter* which would have occurred prior to the legislative change but have only recently been brought to police attention. In total then, there were 20,742 offences in this broad group, which represents 15.5% of all *property offences* recorded.

Fraud and misappropriation offences accounted for only 2.9% of all *property offences* recorded in 2007. *False pretence* offences were the most dominant in this group, accounting for 2,815 or 2.1% of all *property offences* recorded.

Of the 37,012 *damage property and environmental* offences recorded in 2007, only 7.5% involved arson or the use of explosives. Of the 34,189 *property damage (not arson)* offences, 21.6% involved damage to dwellings, while 32.7% involved damage to motor vehicles.

Of the 56,348 *driving offences*⁸ recorded in 2007, almost half (45.9%) involved *motor vehicle registration offences*. A further 21.9% involved *driving licence offences*, while 13.8% related to *exceeding the prescribed concentration of alcohol* and 5.7% involved *dangerous, reckless or negligent driving*.

Just under half of the 2,759 *drug offences* recorded in 2007 involved *produce or manufacture drugs* (43.1%) while approximately one quarter (25.4%) involved *possess for sale/sell drugs*. Only a relatively small proportion (17.0%) of drug offences recorded 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 61.9% of the total 2,759 *drug offences* recorded. In contrast, opiates were involved in only 1.2% of these offences, while amphetamines accounted for 20.3%.

Of the 38,054 *offences against good order* recorded, the most prominent were *offences against a court or court order* (28.1%, most of which were breaches of bail, parole and other court orders), *graffiti and related offences* (14.6%), *disorderly behaviour* (13.5%), *resist/hinder police* (13.1%), and *unlawful possession of weapons* (8.8%).

A more detailed insight into the extent of change between 2006 and 2007 within each of the major offence groups is provided in Table 2. It should be noted, though, that the number of offences in some groups are relatively low, with the result that any slight variation in absolute numbers will produce large percentage differences. As only some offences within each group have been included, the numbers will not necessarily sum to the total.

⁷ Due to legislative changes during 2006, the groups 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 'other major assault' and 'other assault' groups. Within the existing assault groups, 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 groups 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 group 'assault occasioning'.

⁸ This figure excludes all traffic infringement notices.

Shifts between 2006 and 2007

Table 2 Number of offences recorded by police, 2006 compared with 2007			
Offence group	2006	2007	Percentage change
Offences against the person - total	19,057	19,670	+3.2%
Homicide*	67	88	+31.3%
Assaults	16,655**	17,267**	+3.7%
Other offences against the person	2,335	2,315	-0.9%
Sexual offences - total†	2,232	2,424	+8.6%
Rape*	688	691	+0.4%
Indecent assault*	711	778	+9.4%
Unlawful sexual intercourse*	283	369	+30.4%
Other sexual offences*	550	586	+6.5%
Robbery and Extortion - total	1,256	1,327	+5.7%
Robbery - total	1,192	1,268	+6.4%
Armed Robbery*	513	605	+17.9%
- with firearm*	80	122	+52.5%
- with other weapon*	433	483	+11.5%
Unarmed robbery*	679	663	-2.4%
- robbery with violence*	370	393	+6.2%
- robbery without violence*	309	270	-12.6%
Extortion*	64	59	-7.8%
Property offences - total	141,589	134,039	-5.3%
Serious criminal trespass*	23,481	20,742	-11.7%
Fraud and misappropriation	4,194	3,868	-7.8%
Larceny and receiving	76,213	72,417	-5.0%
Property damage and environmental offences	37,701	37,012	-1.8%
Selected driving offences - total	57,889	56,348	-2.7%
Drink driving and related offences	8,603	9,210	+7.1%
Dangerous, reckless, negligent driving	3,061	3,199	+4.5%
Driving licence offences	13,184	12,357	-6.3%
Motor vehicle registration offences	26,703	25,891	-3.0%
Traffic offences	5,500	3,974	-27.7%
Parking and other vehicle offences*	838	552	-34.1%
Drug offences - total	2,974	2,759	-7.2%
Possess and/or use drugs*	532	470	-11.7%
Possess drug implement*	145	136	-6.2%
Fraudulent prescription offences*	163	125	-23.3%
Produce or manufacture drugs	1,236	1,189	-3.8%
Possess for sale/sell drugs*	739	700	-5.3%
Other drug offences	159	138	-13.2%
Against good order - total	37,030	38,054	+2.8%
Against a court or court order	10,687	10,675	-0.1%
Resist/hinder police	4,833	4,982	+3.1%
Unlawful possession of weapons	3,207	3,366	+5.0%
Trespassing	2,330	2,490	+6.9%
Indecent/offensive language*	503	473	-6.0%
Disorderly behaviour	4,769	5,147	+7.9%
Graffiti and related offences	5,183	5,571	+7.5%
Other offences against good order	5,518	5,350	-3.0%
Other offences	1,342	1,028	-23.4%
Total	263,369	255,649	-2.9%

*Numbers in these groups 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 2007.

† 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, '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 'other major assault' and 'other assault' groups. Within the existing assault groups, 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 'other major assault' and 'other minor assault' are the only active groups since the change. The effect has been to increase the numbers in 'other assault' and (in a full year's operation) would empty the group 'assault occasioning'. For these reasons, all types of assault have been combined for the purposes of broad comparison in this table.

There were 255,649 offences recorded by police in 2007 compared with 263,369 in 2006, representing a decrease of 2.9%.

As shown, four broad offence groups – *Offences against the person, sexual offences, robbery and extortion, and offences against good order* - recorded increases in 2007, with *sexual offences* recording the greatest proportional increase (8.6%, or 192 offences). All other groups declined, with the largest percentage change being in the *other offences* group (a 23.4% decrease, corresponding to 314 fewer offences). In absolute terms the largest fall was in the property offences group, which declined by 7,550 offences.

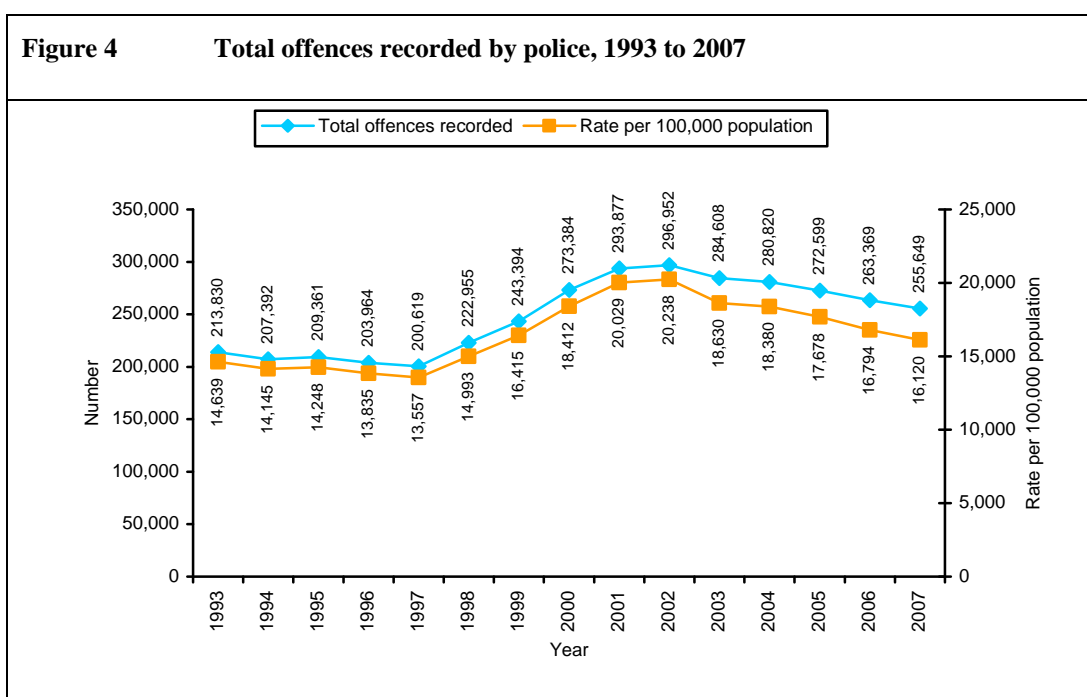
To provide a more accurate picture of longitudinal trends, the following section locates these recent shifts within a broader time frame.

Longitudinal trends

Figure 4 depicts longitudinal trends in both the number of offences recorded by police and the rate of recorded offences per 100,000 population for the period 1993⁹ to 2007.

Over the period depicted the trend for both the number of recorded 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 in subsequent years. Yet despite these recent declines, the 2007 figure is still markedly higher than that recorded in 1997. In fact, the number of offences recorded in 2007 was 27.4% higher than in 1997, and the rate per 100,000 was 18.9% higher.



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.

⁹ 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.

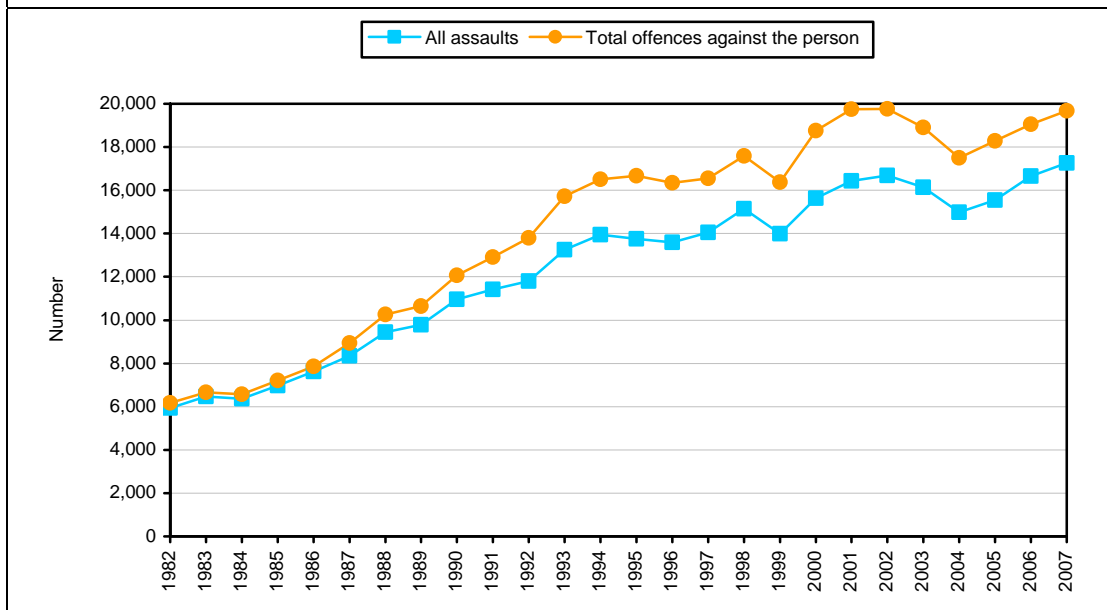
In the following section, longitudinal trends in selected offence groups are depicted¹⁰.

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, 2006 and 2007.

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

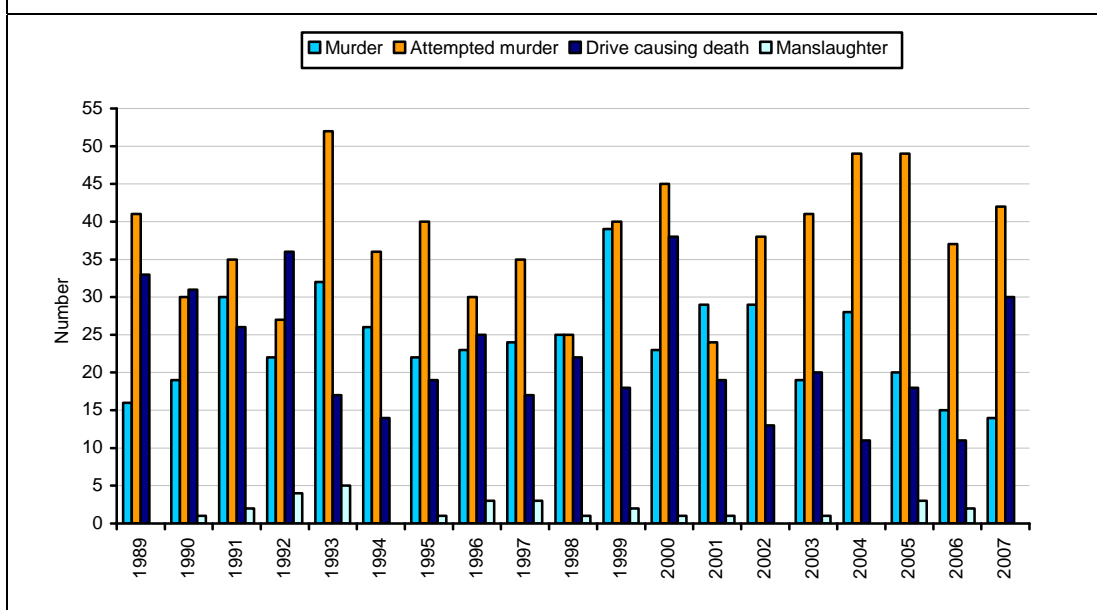
Figure 5 Selected offences against the person (excluding sexual offences) recorded by police, 1982 to 2007



As indicated in Figure 6, the numbers of *murders, attempted murders, manslaughter, and cause death by dangerous driving* offences recorded by police have fluctuated considerably from one year to another over the period 1989 to 2007, but overall have remained relatively low. Because of the small numbers, no longitudinal trends can be identified.

¹⁰ 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 6 Number of murder, attempted murder, manslaughter and drive causing death offences recorded by police, 1989 to 2007



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 recorded by 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* recorded 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, and then increasing again in 2007.

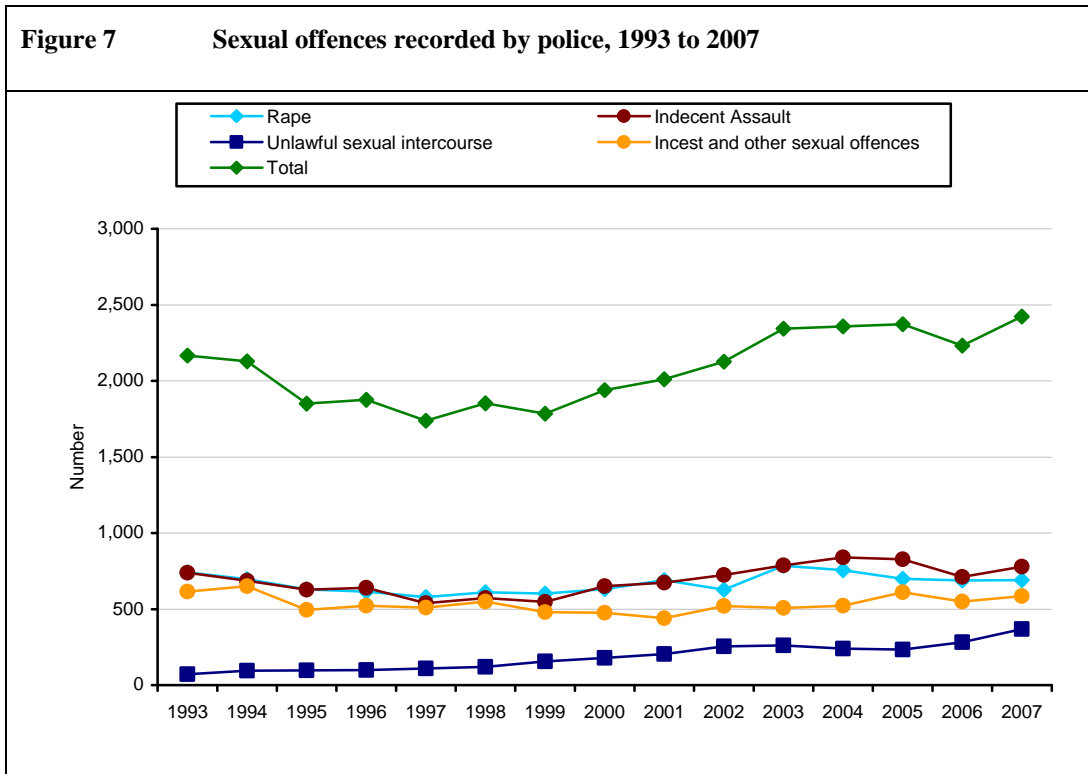
After a general upward trend between 1997 and 2003, the number of *rape* offences recorded declined for the next three years, before rising slightly in 2007. The most recent figure is higher than 8 out of the 15 years plotted in the figure.

The number of *Indecent assault* offences recorded also increased between 1997 and 2004. The figures then decreased in 2005 and 2006, and increased slightly in 2007.

Despite some fluctuations, the number of *incest and other sexual offences* recorded remained relatively stable between 1995 and 2004. However, an increase in 2005 and 2007 (partly offset by a smaller drop in 2006) means that levels of this offence are now higher than at any point since 1994. To some extent the movements in this group have been mirrored by opposite changes in the *unlawful sexual intercourse* group, 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 2007 and are still higher than a decade ago. Overall, however, numbers in this group are relatively low.

Figure 7 Sexual offences recorded by police, 1993 to 2007



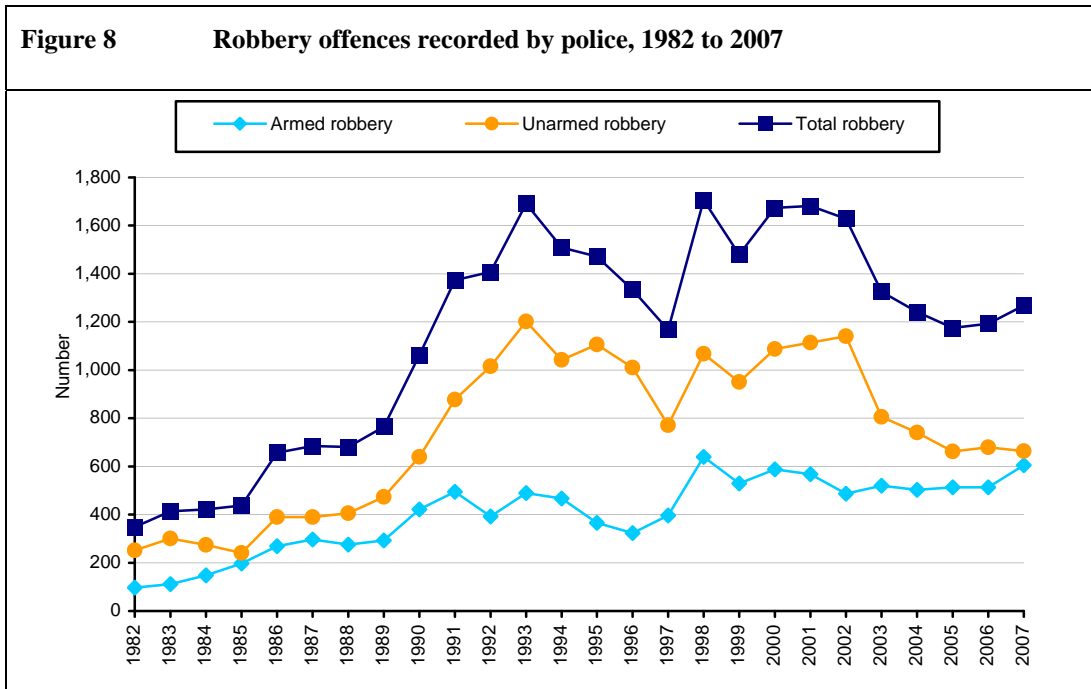
Note: Counting rules for sexual offences were changed in 1993 to conform to national standards. Figures for 1992 were recalculated in accordance with the new rules. As a result, data can only be compared accurately with figures from 1992 onwards.

Robbery

The relatively low number of *robberies* recorded by police 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 2007 rose slightly, as in 2006, after several successive years of declining. This increase was produced by a slight increase in the number of recorded *armed robberies*, whilst *unarmed robbery* numbers remained relatively unchanged.

Figure 8 Robbery offences recorded by police, 1982 to 2007



Note: The total robbery figure excludes extortion offences.

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 person* (for

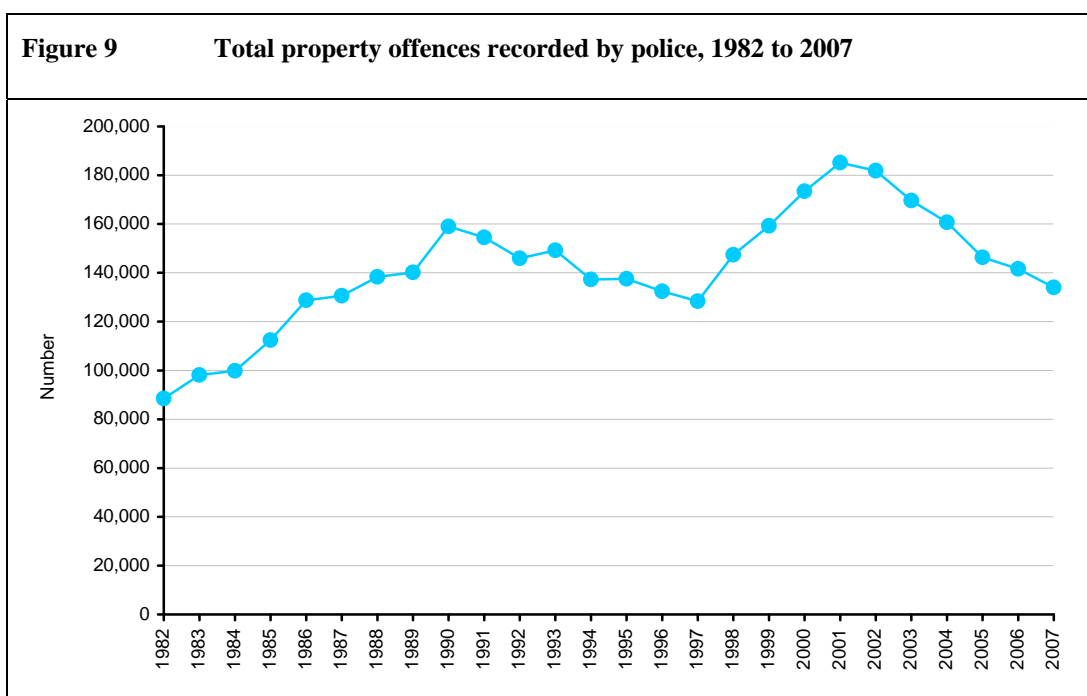
example a bag-snatch) to be misidentified as a robbery (see http://www.ocsar.sa.gov.au/docs/technical_papers/Rob1.pdf). It is likely that many of the fluctuations in the numbers of recorded *unarmed robbery offences* prior to the amendment of the legislation were due to variations in the extent of misidentification 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 recorded *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 (134,039 in 2007).

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 2007.



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 record 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 dependant 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 types:

- 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 by police in 2007 were classified as *criminal trespass offences*. However, there was a small number of *break and enter offences* which, while recorded in 2007, 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* group, 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* group; 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* group.

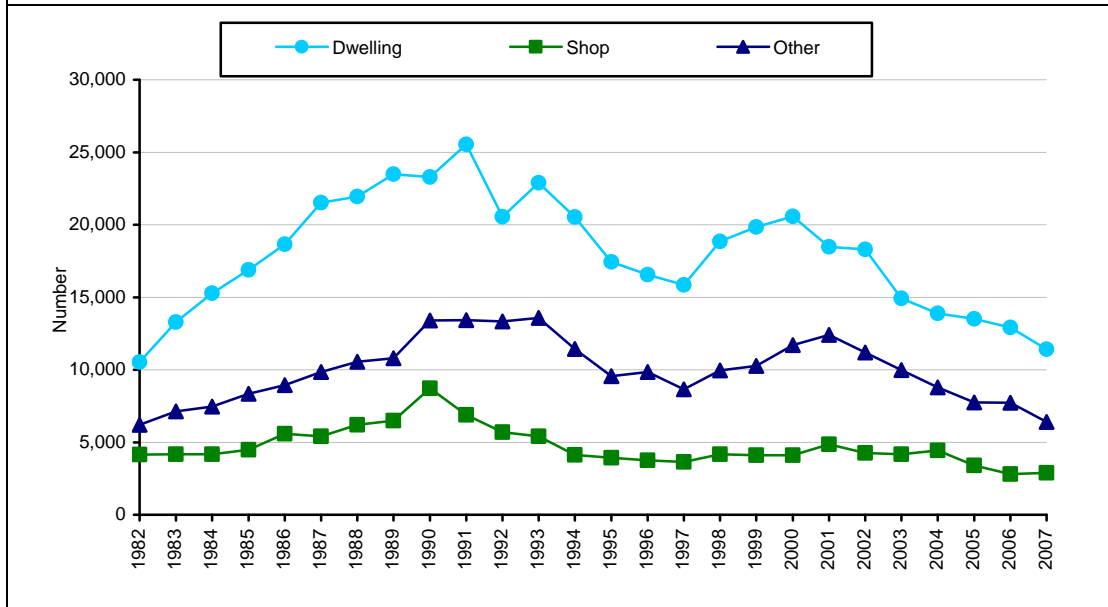
While the new offence groupings are not entirely comparable with the old groupings, the procedure detailed above allows longitudinal comparisons to be drawn.

As shown in Figure 10, *serious criminal trespass - dwelling* offences recorded by police increased sharply between 1982 and 1991, but since then have, despite annual fluctuations, shown a general downward trend. As a result, the 2007 figure is comparable with numbers recorded during the early 1980s.

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

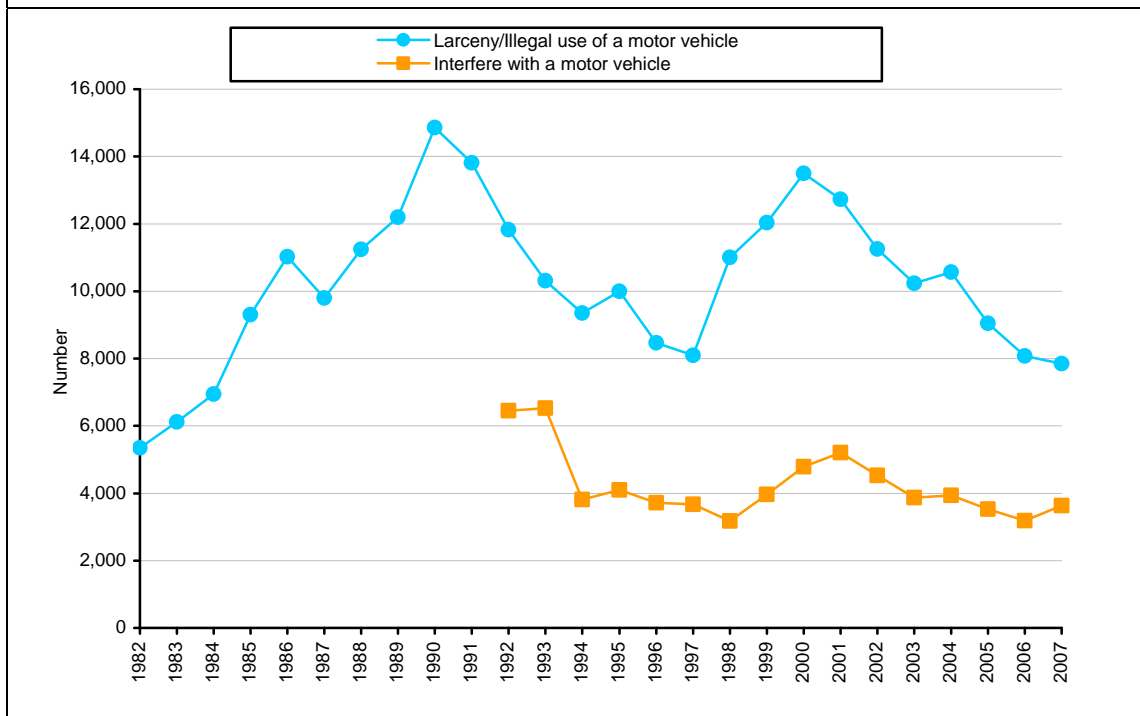
Figure 10 Serious criminal trespass offences recorded by police, 1982 to 2007



Vehicle offences

As shown in Figure 11, the number of *larceny/illegal use of a motor vehicle* offences recorded by police 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 2007 being similar to those recorded 10 years earlier.

Figure 11 Larceny/illegal use of a motor vehicle and interfere with a motor vehicle offences recorded by police, 1982 to 2007



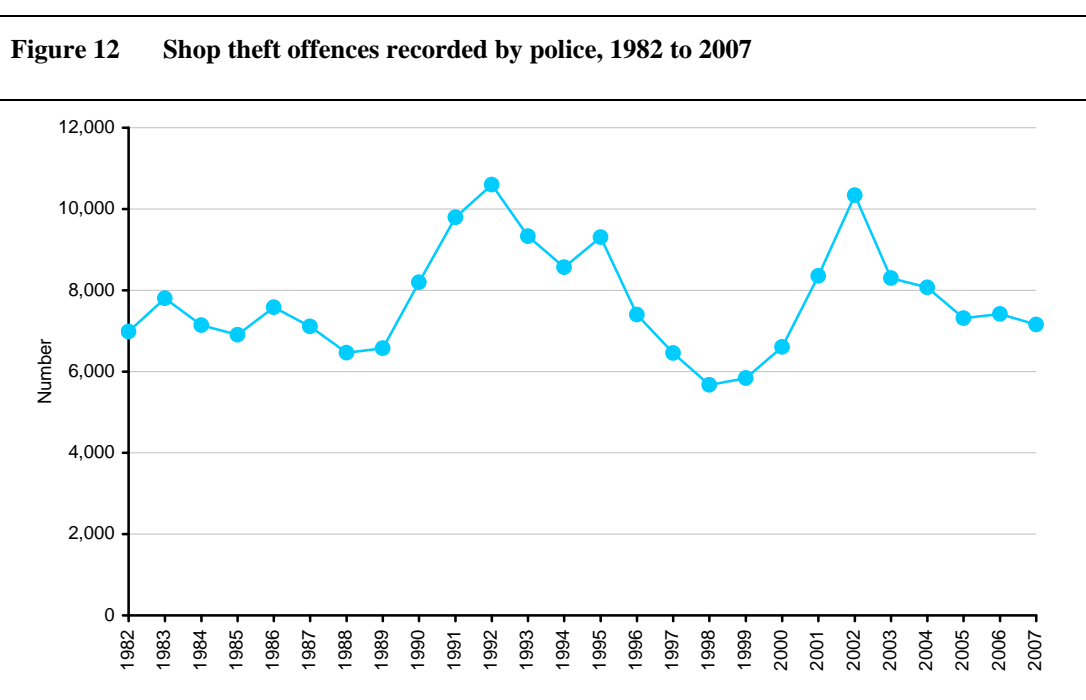
Data for *interfere with a motor vehicle* offences were not available prior to 1992. Since 1992, the trend in number of recorded *interfere with a motor vehicle* offences has followed the same general pattern as that of *larceny/illegal use of a motor vehicle*.

Shop theft

After peaking in 1992, the number of *shop theft* offences recorded by police 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* group, were now re-coded to the *shop theft* group.

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.



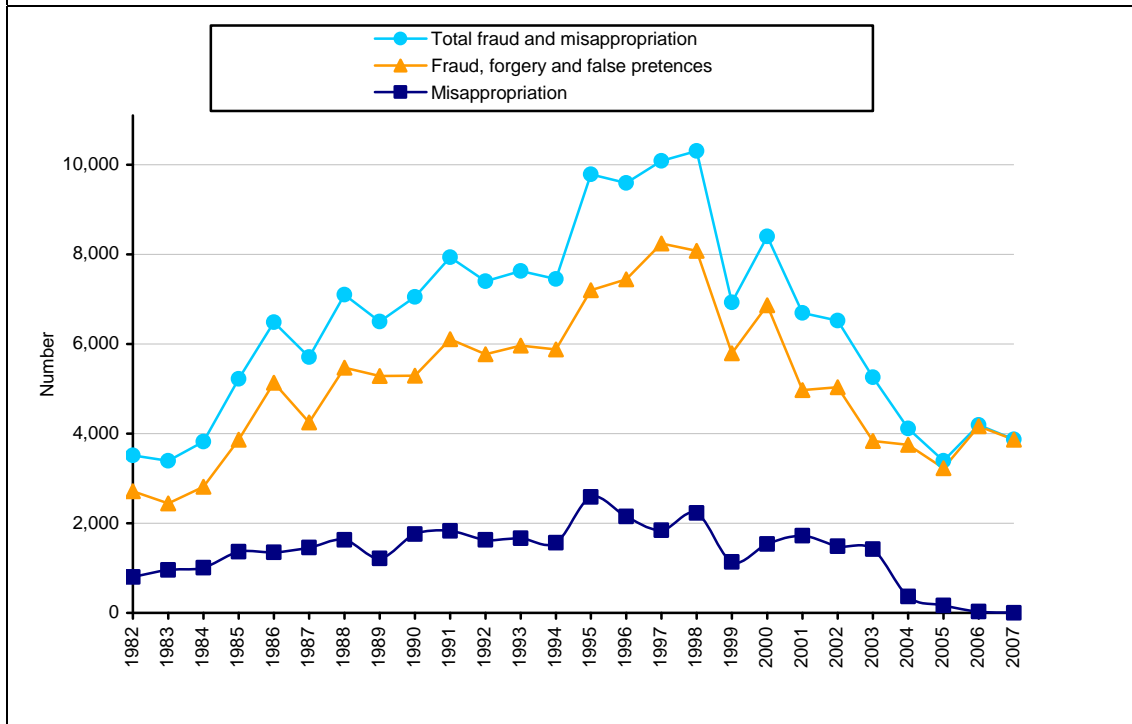
Fraud and misappropriation

As indicated in Figure 13, until 1998 there was a pronounced upward trend in the number of *fraud and misappropriation* offences recorded by police. However, since then numbers have declined substantially. The 2007 figure of 3,868 offences is similar to that recorded during the mid 1980s.

The trend for the sub-group of *fraud, forgery and false pretences* is generally similar to that of the total *fraud and misappropriation* group. 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*. In 2007 *fraud, forgery and false pretences* offences declined to bring figures in line with those recorded at the start of the period of increase in the mid 1980's.

Misappropriation offences account for only a very small proportion of total *fraud and misappropriation* offences recorded (0.03% of the 2007 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. The 2007 figure of just one *misappropriation* offence recorded is the lowest recorded over the 25 years depicted.

Figure 13 Fraud and misappropriation offences recorded by police, 1982 to 2007



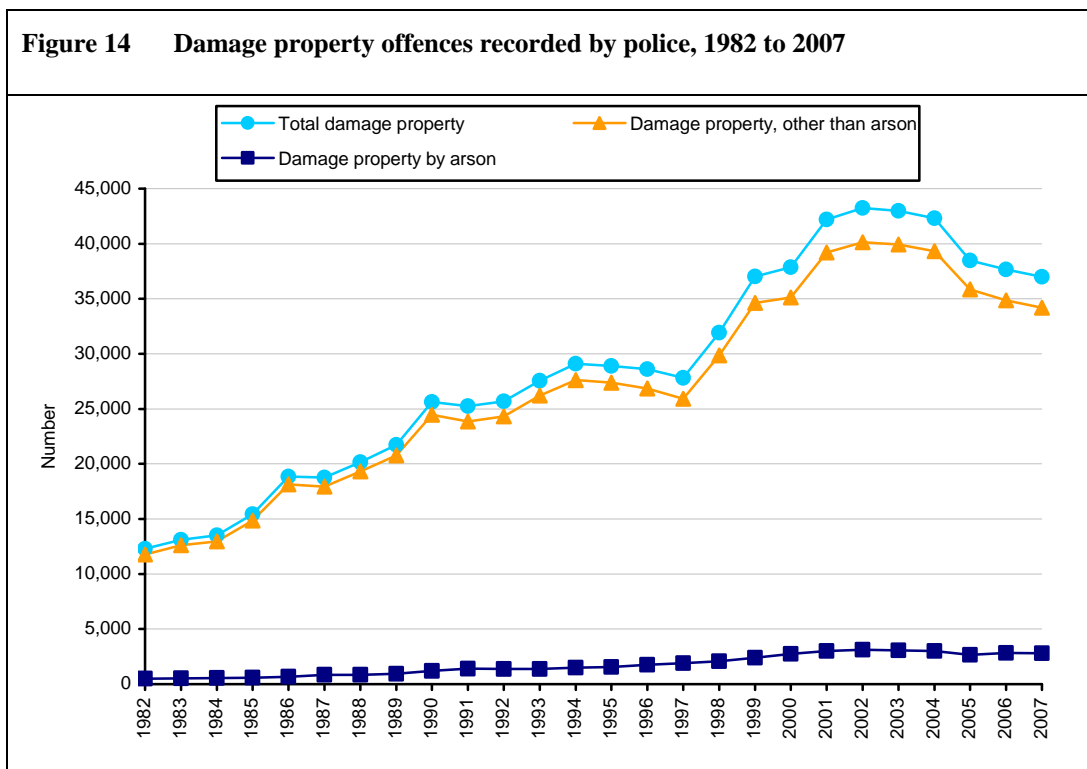
Damage property

Figure 14 depicts longitudinal trends in the number of *damage property* offences recorded by police. Overall, there was a steady increase in this group until 2002. The fairly strong increase observed between 1999 and 2000 can be partly attributed to the fact that, beginning in late 1999, any criminal damage due to a ‘break in’ started to be recorded, whereas previously only the primary offence of *break and enter* had been recorded on the incident report. Since 2002 numbers have gradually declined, with a more pronounced decline in 2005. The downward trend continued in 2006 and again in 2007.

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*, recorded *damage property by arson* offences have 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* group depicted, numbers remain very small.

Figure 14 Damage property offences recorded by police, 1982 to 2007

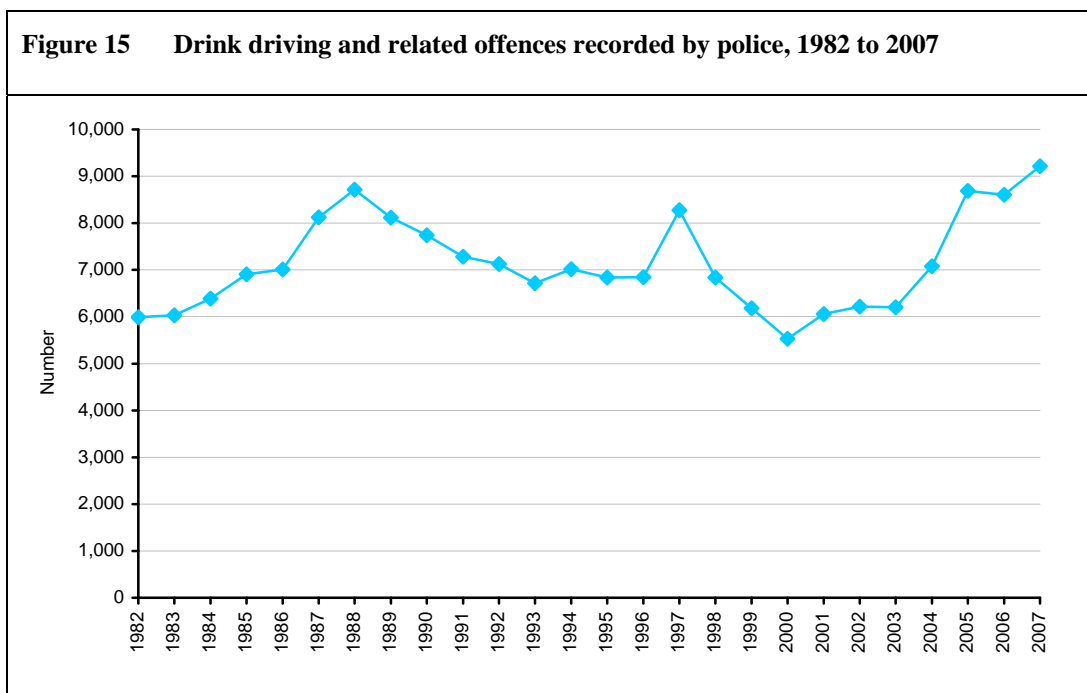


Drink driving and related offences

Figure 15 illustrates the number of *drink driving and related offences* recorded by police from 1982 to 2007. This group includes *driving under the influence, exceed the prescribed concentration of alcohol and refusing to give breath/blood sample*. With the exception of 1997, numbers generally declined from 1988 to 2000, but have trended upward since then, with fairly strong increases observed in 2004 and 2005. After a minor decline in 2006, recorded *drink driving and related offences* increased in 2007 to the highest levels for the period depicted.

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 recorded by police, 1982 to 2007



Selected drug offences

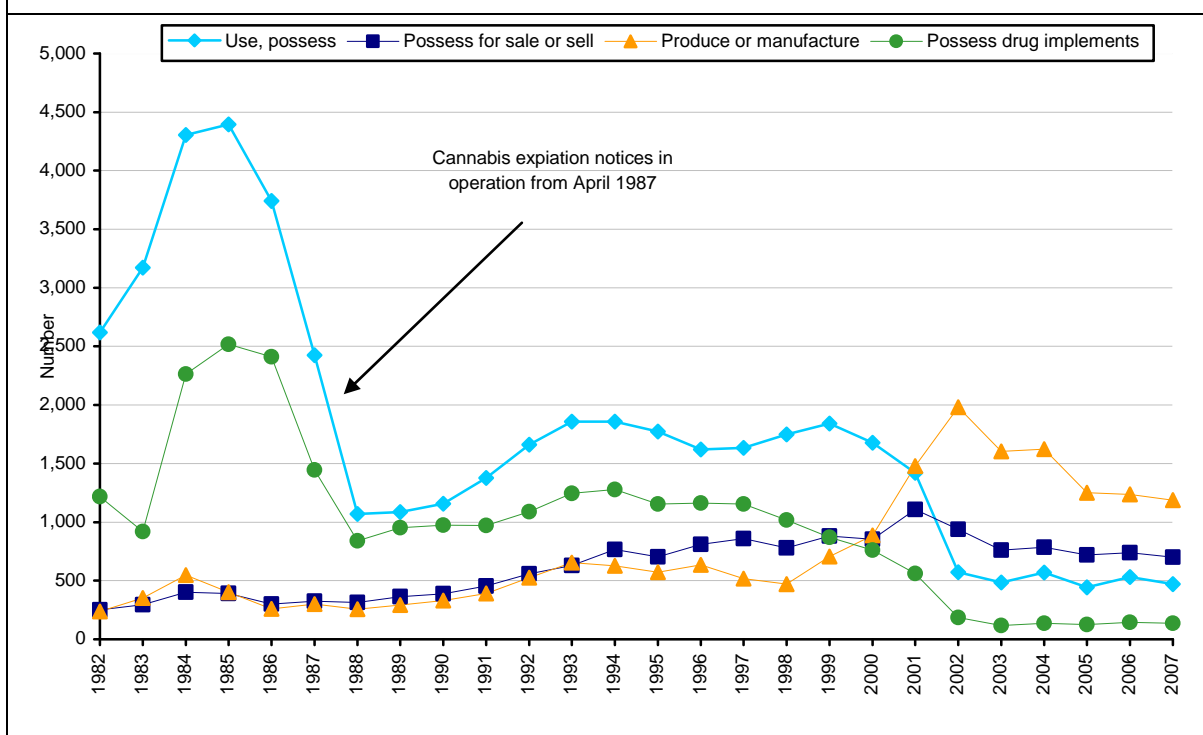
Longitudinal trends in the number of selected *drug offences* recorded by police are quite different from those of other offences, largely because of the impact in 1987 of the introduction of Cannabis Expiation Notices and more recently, by the introduction of the Police Drug Diversion Initiative. Moreover, 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 recorded *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 last three years, numbers are now higher than at any time prior to 2001. One contributor to this is the fact that, on 29 November 2001, the number of cannabis plants that a person could possess and still be eligible for a Cannabis Expiation Notice (CEN) 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* recorded 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 recorded by police, 1982 to 2007

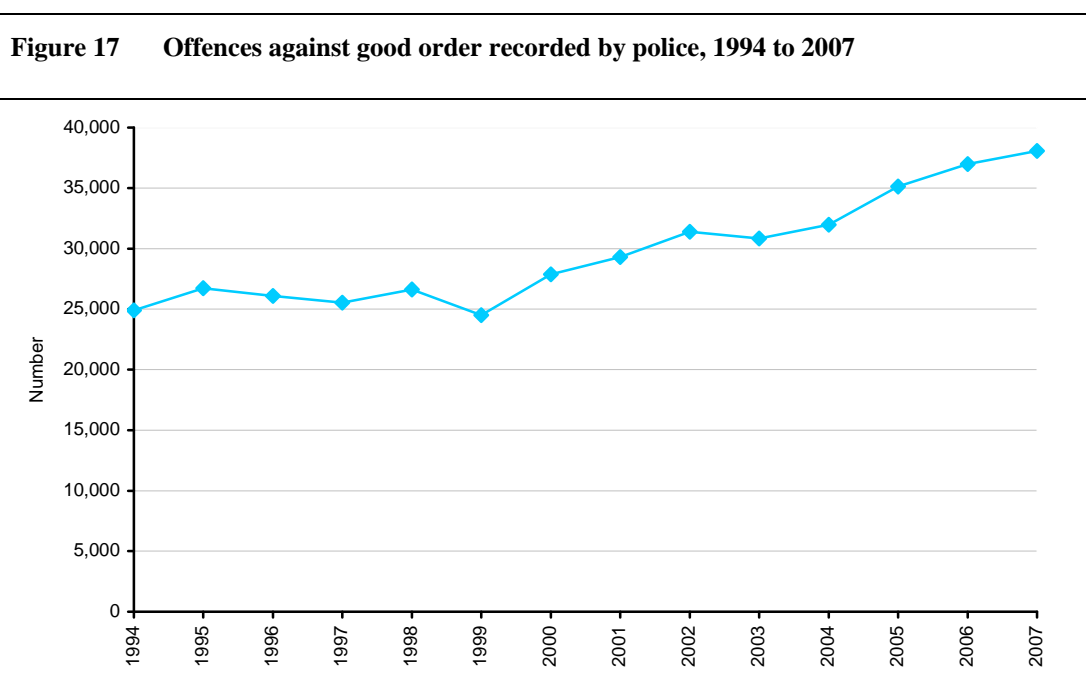


Offences against good order

As shown (Figure 17), the number of *offences against good order* recorded by police have generally increased since 1994, with the 2007 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 experienced recorded increases of 3,458 and 2,640 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. 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.



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 offence groups *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. These figures are not updated by the ABS between censuses, and accordingly as time since the last census increases, the accuracy of the rates derived from the census will decrease.

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 (e.g. *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 2007, the Northern Statistical Division recorded the highest rate of *offences against the person* (22.7 per 1,000 population). This was considerably higher than any other statistical division, with the next highest rate recorded for Eyre (15.7), followed by Adelaide (15.3) and then Murray Lands (15.1). The lowest rate of 6.9 offences per 1,000 population was recorded for the Yorke and Lower North.
- The highest rate of *serious criminal trespass* in 2007 was recorded by the Adelaide Statistical Division (19.9 offences per 1,000 dwellings). The Murray Lands was second highest (12.6), with the rates in other statistical divisions ranging between 5.5 (in Yorke and Lower North) and 11.2 (in the Northern Statistical Division).

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

- Adelaide (C) had by far the highest recorded rate of *offences against the person* (123.6 per 1,000 population). The LGA with the second highest rate was Anangu Pitjantjara (AC) (90.2), followed by Ceduna (DC) (55.3), Coober Pedy (DC) (48.0), and Port Augusta (C) (33.0).
- The highest rate for *serious criminal trespass* was recorded in Playford (C) (38.0 per 1,000 dwelling). This was followed by Ceduna (DC) (37.8), Prospect (C) (36.1), Anangu Pitjantjara (AC) (31.0), Walkerville (M) (30.9), and Port Adelaide Enfield (C) (30.6).

One final locational analysis presented in this report relates to the key locations for vehicle theft within Metropolitan Adelaide (Table 3.22). This showed that:

- The area recording the greatest number of vehicle thefts in 2007 was Elizabeth City Centre with 99 recorded thefts. This was followed by Mawson Lakes (86), Adelaide Parklands (82), Tea Tree Plaza Shopping Centre (60), Parabanks Shopping Centre, Salisbury (51), and Marion Shopping Centre (49).

1.3 CLEARANCE STATUS OF OFFENCES

Clearance status of offences recorded by police in 2007

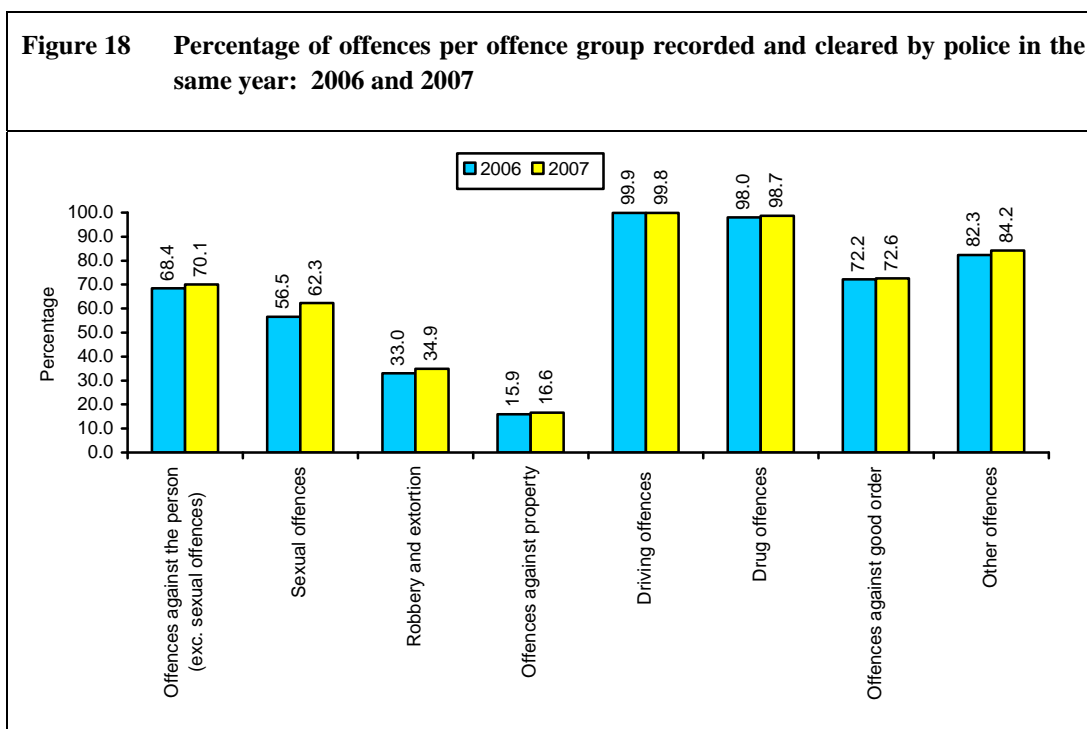
During 2007, of the 255,649 offences recorded by police, 125,492 (49.1%) were cleared by the end of the same year, while, conversely, 50.9% remained uncleared.

The proportion of offences cleared in 2007 was marginally higher than in 2006, when 47.8% of the 263,369 offences recorded that year were also cleared that year.

As in 2006, the clear up level for offences recorded in 2007 varied considerably depending on the type of offence involved.

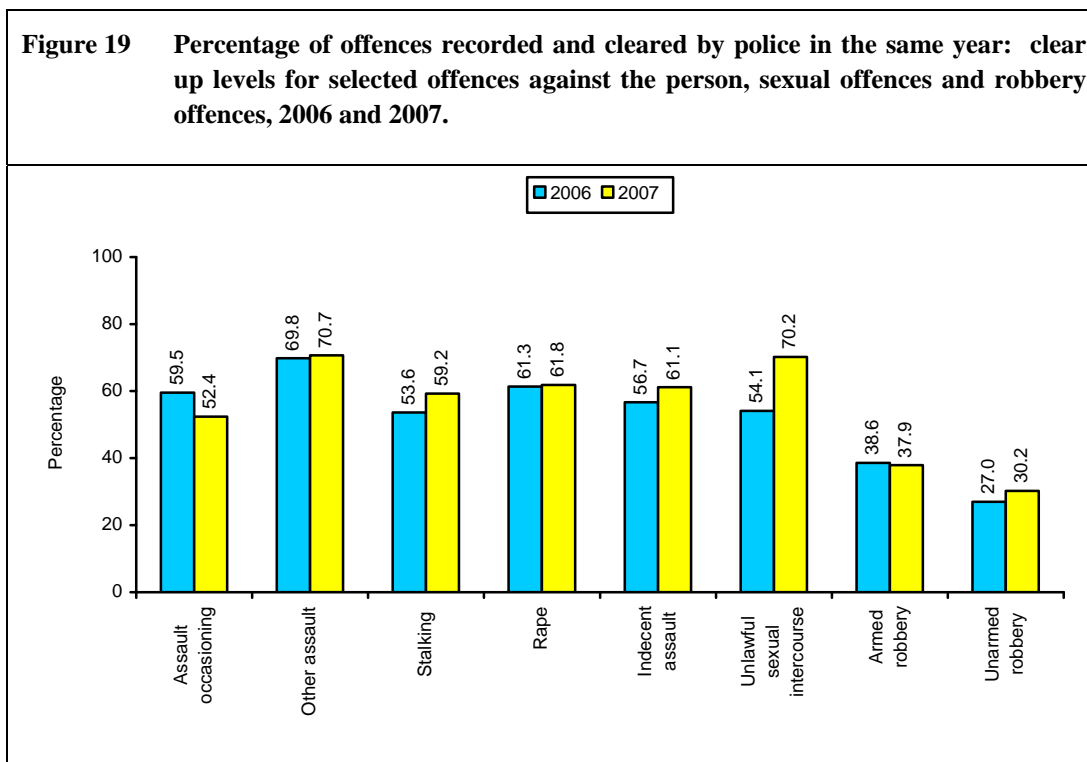
As shown in Figure 18, the lowest clear up level was recorded for *property offences* (16.6% cleared by the end of the year), followed by *robbery and extortion* (34.9%). Over one half (62.3%) of the *sexual offences* recorded by police in 2007 were cleared, as were more than two thirds (70.1%) of *offences against the person, excluding sexual offences*. 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 alleged perpetrator.

Figure 18 Percentage of offences per offence group recorded and cleared by police in the same year: 2006 and 2007



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*.



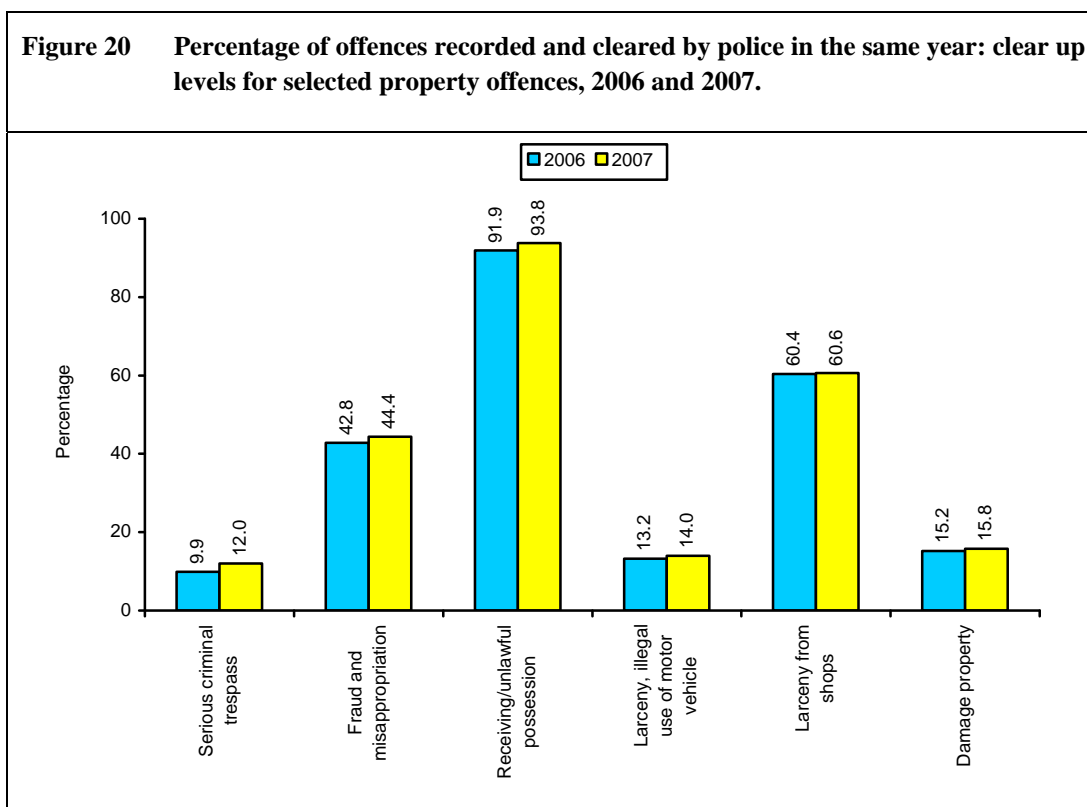
The clear up rate for *other assault* in 2007 was higher than that for *assault occasioning actual or grievous bodily harm*, while the clear up level for *rape* was slightly higher than that for *indecent assault*. Overall, these rates were considerably higher than those recorded for either *armed* or *unarmed robbery*.

With the exception of *assault occasioning* and *armed robbery*, the clear up rates for the offences depicted were higher in 2007 than 2006.

While the numbers are too small to graph, all of the 14 *murders* recorded by police in 2007 were cleared at the end of the year. Of the 42 *attempted murders*, 32 were cleared by the end of the year. Of the 30 *drive causing death* offences recorded in 2007, 26 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 2006 and 2007.



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 2007 than in 2006 for all *property offences* depicted.

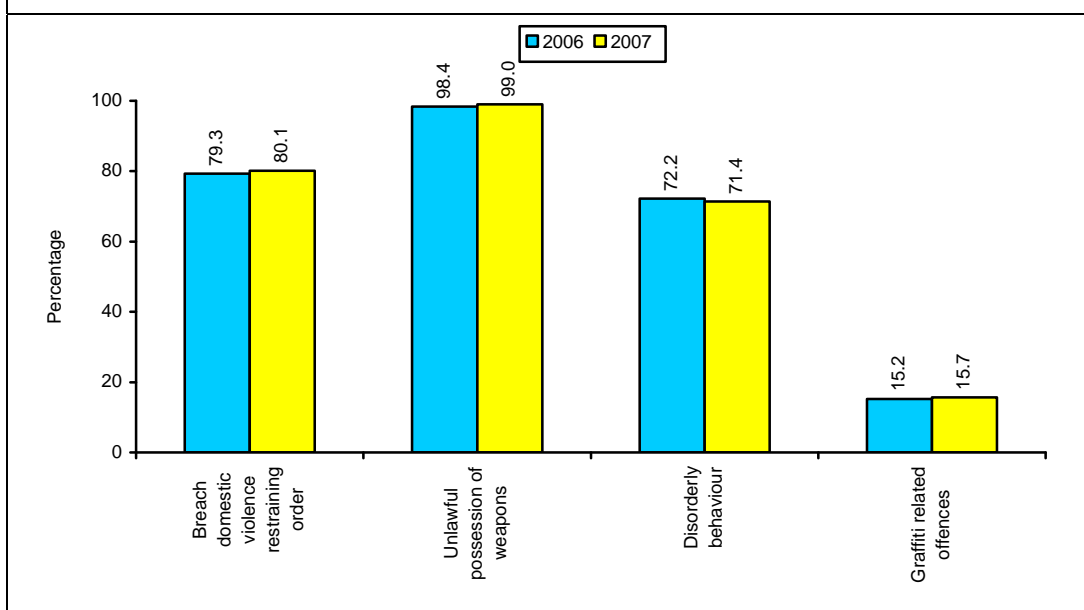
Offences against good order

Figure 21 shows the clear up level for selected *offences against good order* in 2006 and 2007.

In 2007, within the broad *offences against good order* group, clear up levels varied from a low of 15.7% for *graffiti and related offences* to 98.6% for *unlawful possession of weapons*.

The clear up rate increased slightly for the groups depicted with the exception of *disorderly behaviour* which declined slightly between 2006 and 2007.

Figure 21 Percentage of offences recorded and cleared by police in the same year: clear up levels for selected offences against good order, 2006 and 2007.



Total offences cleared by police in 2007

As noted earlier, of those 255,649 offences recorded by police in 2007, 125,492 had been cleared by the end of the year. In addition, a further 3,999 offences were cleared which had been recorded by police prior to 2007. This gives a total of 129,491 offences cleared during the 12 month period.

For each of the key offence groups, the majority of offences cleared in 2007 were actually recorded in the same year. Overall, only a very small proportion of clearances involved offences recorded in previous years, although the proportion did vary slightly depending on the type of offence involved. For example, of the 14,622 *offences against the person* cleared in 2007, only 5.7% were recorded prior to 2007, while for *sexual offences*, *robbery offences* and *property offences*, the proportion was 15.5%, 6.5% and 9.7% respectively. Of the 56,233 *driving offences* cleared in 2007, only 19 involved an offence recorded in a previous year.

Method of clearance

Of the 129,491 offences cleared in 2007, the majority (115,643 or 89.3%) were cleared by way of the apprehension or cautioning of a suspect.

A further 150 (0.1%) (148 involving *larceny from shop offences* and 2 involving *larceny not otherwise specified*) 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 11 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 recorded offences (1.7%) were designated as cleared on the grounds that they were unfounded: i.e. following exhaustive inquiries, the police found no evidence that an offence had been committed.

For 10,756 (8.3% of all offences cleared), the victim requested that the police take no further action.

Finally, 0.6% were cleared by some 'other' method. 'Other' included the following:

- 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 58.4% of recorded *against the person* offences were cleared by this method, as were 66.0% of *sexual offences*. In addition, for these two groups, the proportion which were cleared as a result of the victim requesting that no further action be taken was relatively high (39.1% of *offences against the person* and 25.8% of *sexual offences* compared with only 14.3% of *property offences*).

Anecdotally, these findings suggest 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 recorded offences cleared by police in 2007 by offence group

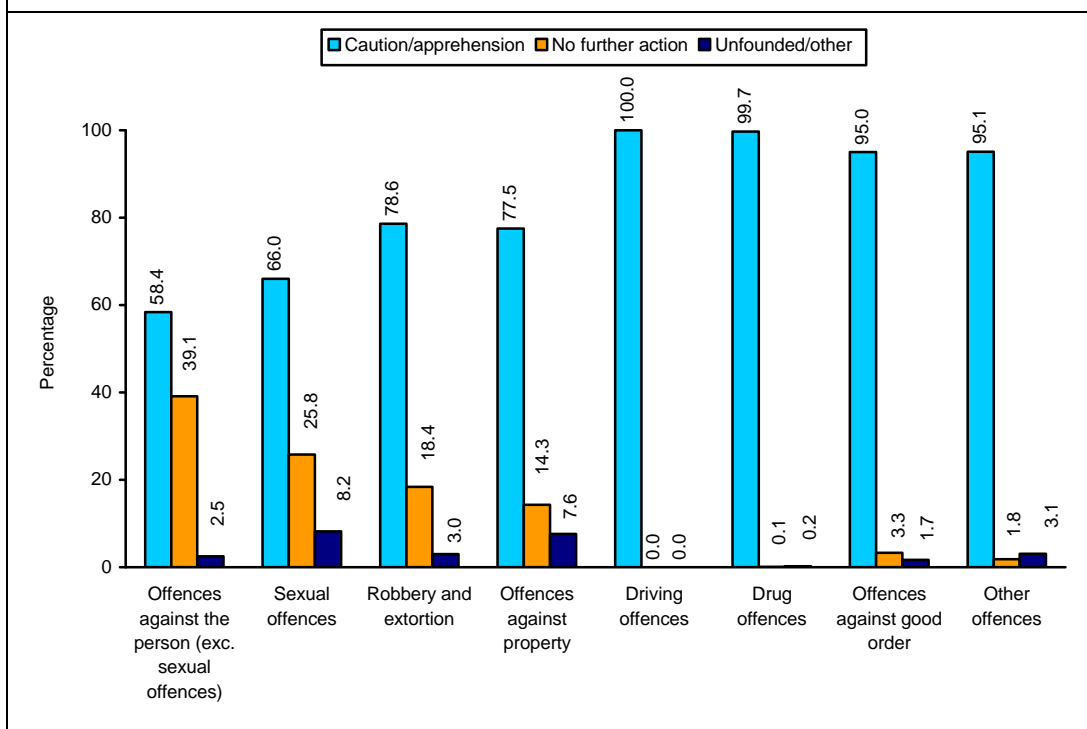
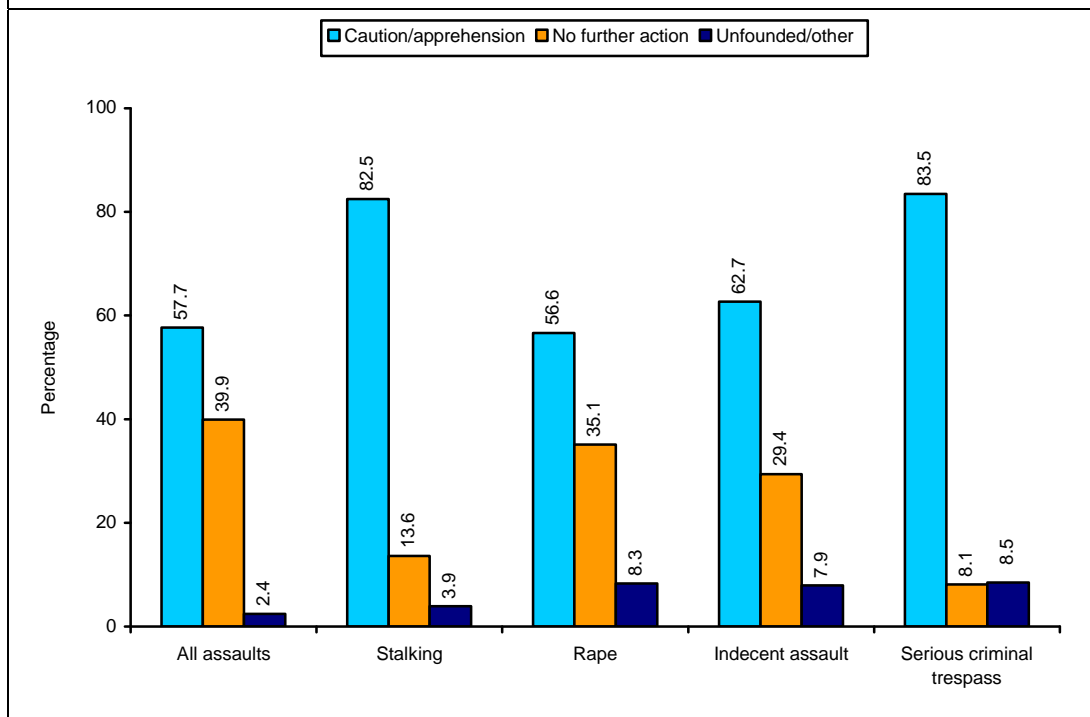


Figure 23 provides a further breakdown of clearance methods for selected *against the person* and *sexual offences*. A comparatively high proportion of *assaults* and *rapes* cleared in 2007 involved the victim requesting that no further action be taken (39.9% and 35.1% respectively, compared with 13.6% 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 2007 was extremely high (83.5%) while the proportion where the victim requested no further action be taken (8.1%) was very much lower than the other offence groups depicted.

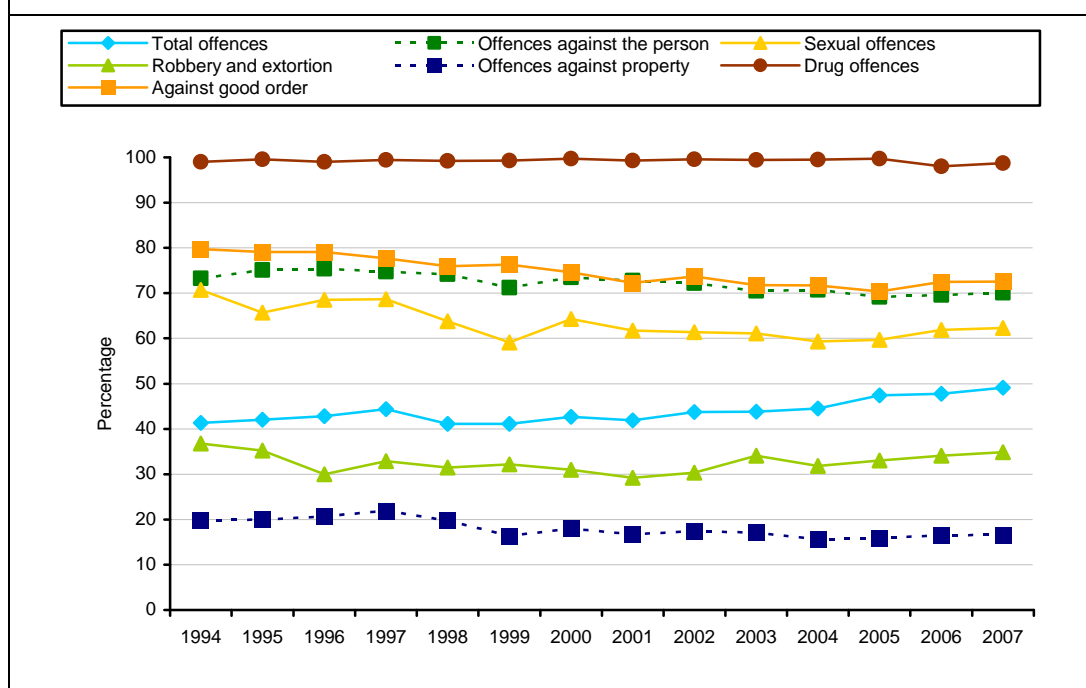
Figure 23 Method of clearance for selected against the person and sexual offences recorded and cleared by police in 2007



Longitudinal trends in level of clearance

The clearance data discussed in the previous section relate primarily to offences recorded by police in the 2007 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 2007. To place the most recent data into a broader context and to identify whether the level of clearance for the major offence groups has changed over time, the ensuing discussion provides details on the clearance status, as at 31 December 2007, of all offences recorded in the years 1994 to 2007 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 recorded offences cleared by police as at 31 December 2007 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 99.8%) while *offences against property* had the lowest proportion cleared. These differences remained consistent over time.

In terms of longitudinal trends, for some offence groups 2007 clearance levels were generally similar to those recorded in 1994 – 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*, 73.3% of those recorded to police in 1994 had been cleared by 31 December of that year compared with 72.8% of those recorded in 2001, and 70.1% of those recorded in 2007.)

A similar finding applied to *robbery and extortion*, with 36.8% of such offences recorded by police in 1994 being cleared by the end of December 1994 compared with a slightly lower figure of 34.9% of those recorded in 2007.

Of the seven offence groups depicted, the ‘drop off’ in the clearance level for matters recorded in 2007 compared with earlier years was most pronounced for *against good order* (from 79.7% in 1994 to 72.6% in 2007) and *sexual offences* (70.7% in 1994 to 62.3% in 2007).

Overall, though, there has been an increase in clearance levels for total offences, from 41.4% in 1994 to 49.1% in 2007.

1.4 VICTIMS OF OFFENCES RECORDED BY POLICE

Section 5 of this report provides information on victims of those offences recorded by police during 2007. The offence groups selected for inclusion cover all *offences against the person*, all *sexual offences* and all *robbery and extortion* offences directed against an individual¹¹. 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 recorded by 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 a male residing in the house, 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 group 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 15,326 discrete victims of *other assault*. This means that during 2007, 15,326 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 groups.
- **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 266 victims aged 0–9 years who, during 2007, 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 group 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 group.
- **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 offence involved. In Table 5.1a for example, there were 16,977 discrete individuals who, during 2007, experienced at least one *offence against the person*. This applied irrespective of how many different *against the person* offences they experienced or whether their age changed from one incident to another.

¹¹ 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 by police

This section details the number of victimisations per offence group recorded by police in 2007. It does not relate to individuals.

In 2007 there 22,786 recorded victimisations directed against a person.

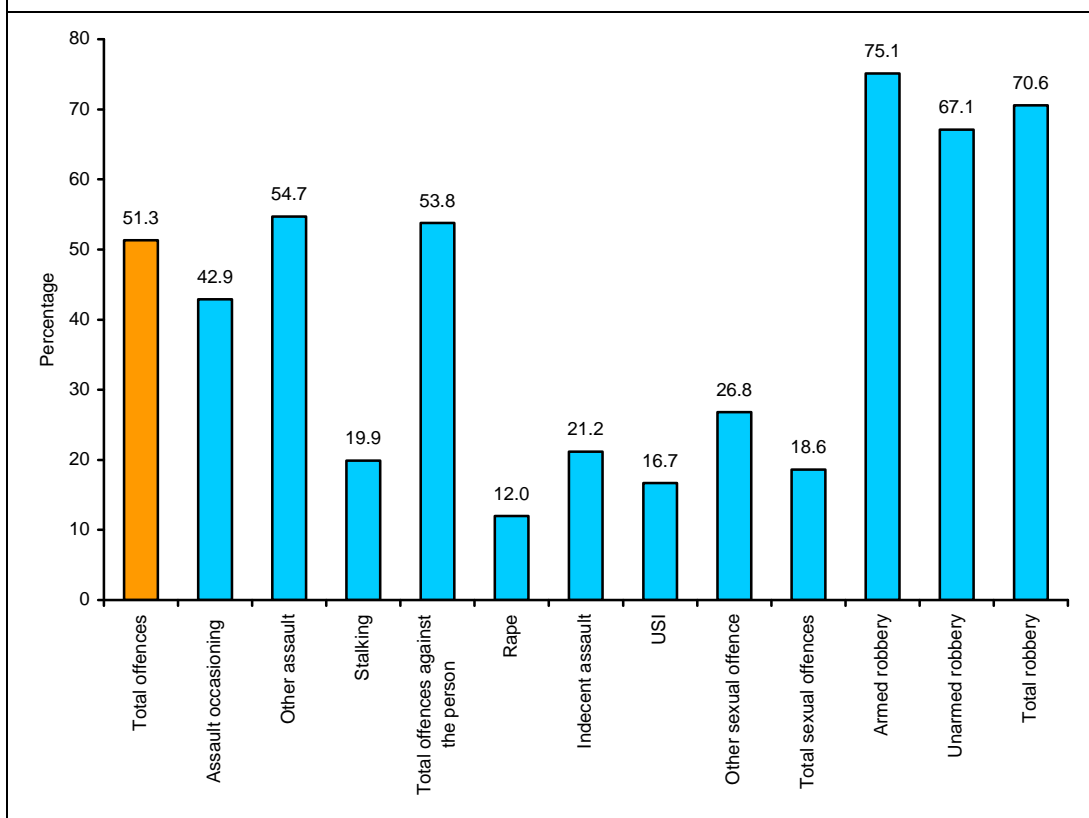
Of the 22,783 victimisations where the gender of the victim was known, 51.3% involved males and 48.7% involved females. The fact that there was a fairly even distribution of males and females amongst the victims is in direct contrast to the finding (as described in the next section) that males accounted for the overwhelming majority of persons apprehended in 2007 for allegedly committing offences.

As shown in Figure 25, males were markedly over-represented as victims in the *other assault* and *robbery* groups.

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

Of the 14 *murders* recorded by police in 2007, over two thirds of the victims were male (n=10). Males were also the victims of 37 of the 41 *attempted murders* recorded and 16 of the 23 victims of *drive causing death*.

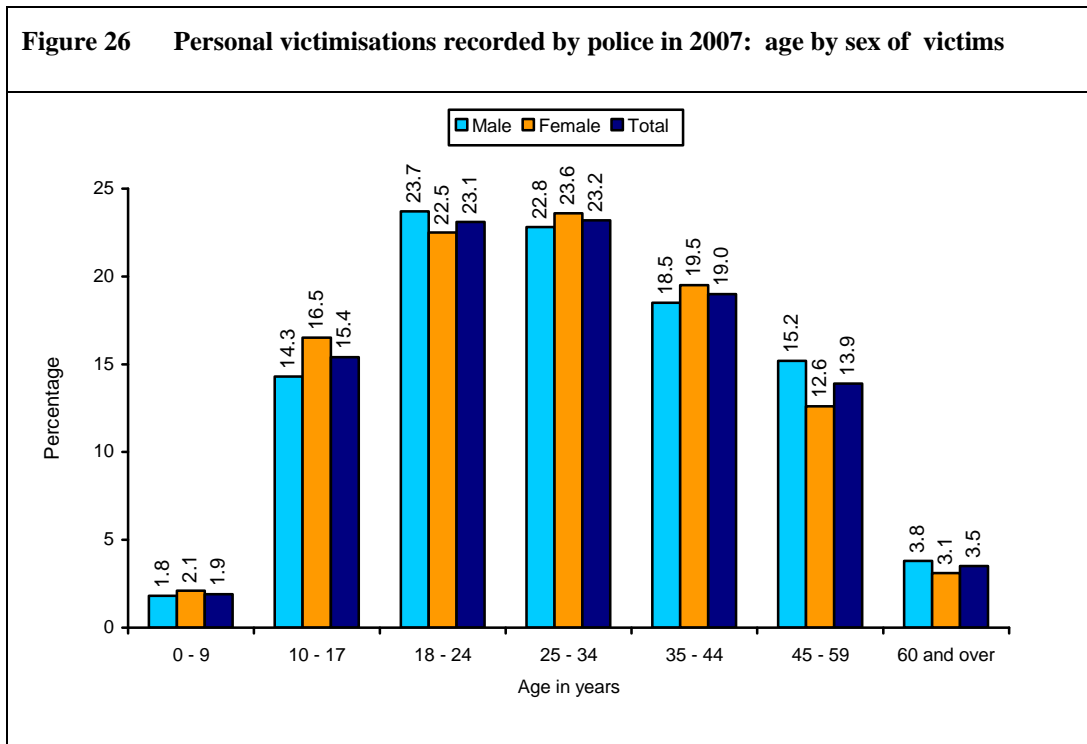
Figure 25 Offences involving 'personal' victims recorded by police: males as a proportion of all victimisations per offence group, 2007.



Offence groups with relatively small numbers have been excluded.

Age profiles

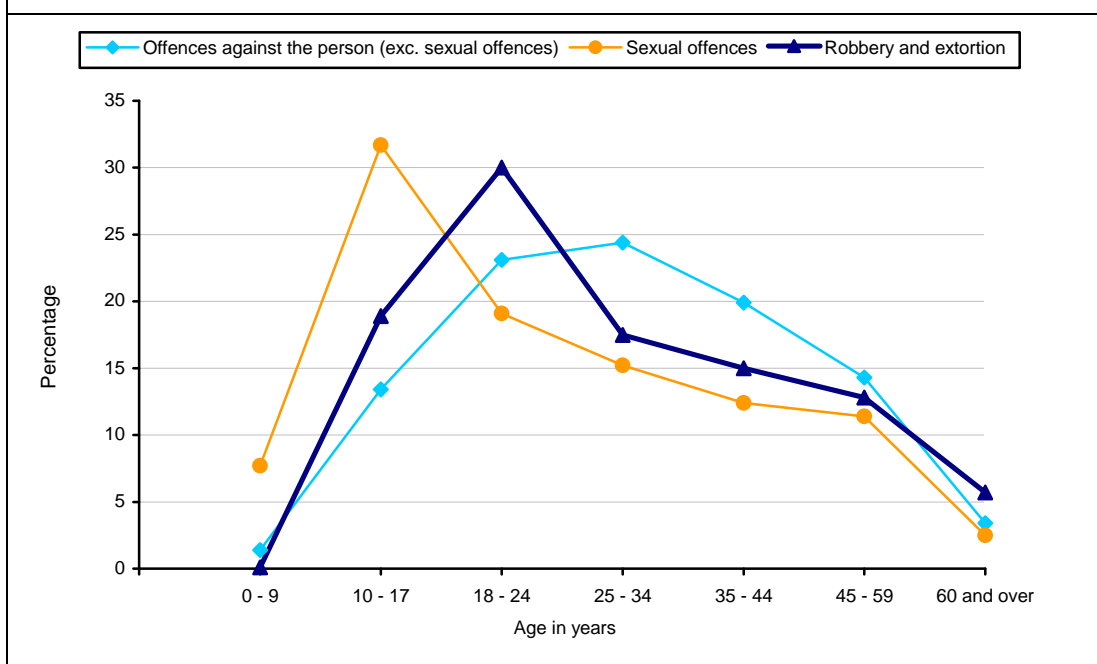
The following section reports on the age profiles of victims involved in 'personal' victimisations recorded by police in 2007. As above, this section relates to victimisations, not discrete individuals. For example, a 30 year old victim who experienced an *assault*, a *rape* and a *robbery* during the year would be counted three times within the 25 – 34 year age group.



As shown in Figure 26, persons in the mid-age groups of 18 – 24 years and 25 – 34 years accounted for the highest proportion of 'personal' victimisations recorded by police in 2007, 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 26 also indicates a similar age profile for both male and female victims.

The age profiles of victims varied considerably depending on the 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 the person, excluding sexual* offence group, the highest proportion of victims was in the mid-age group 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 2007: age profile of victims by offence group



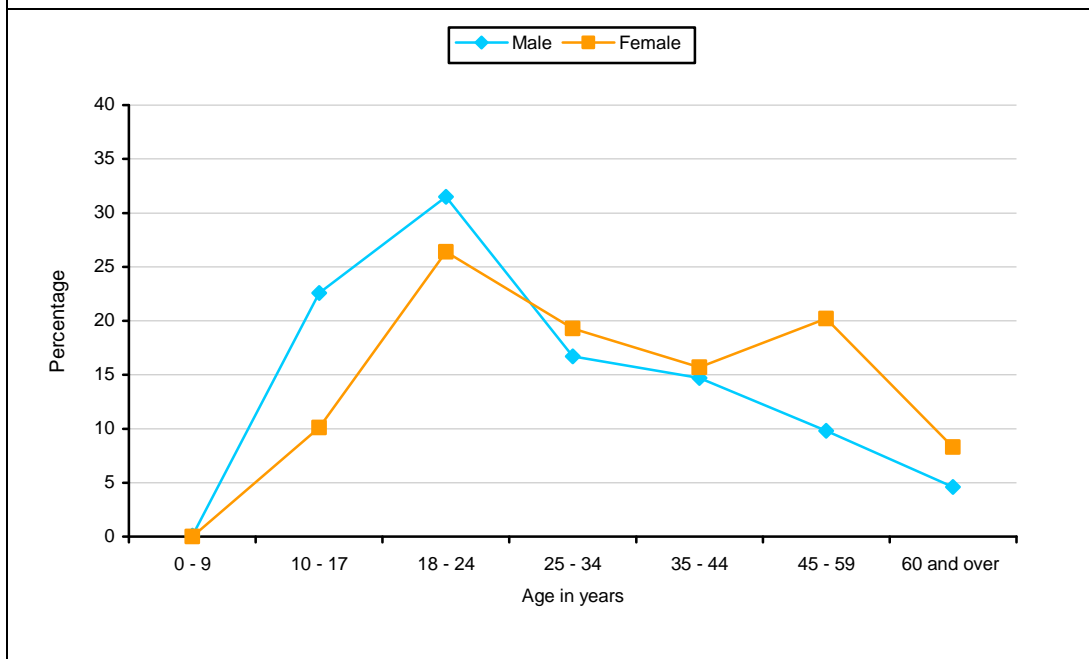
For *sexual offences*, the peak age was 10 – 17 years, with persons in this group accounting for 31.7% of *sexual offence* victimisations recorded by police in 2007 where age was recorded. A further 19.1% were aged 18 – 24 years. In total, more than half of all recorded *sexual offence* victims were people aged 24 years or less. In contrast, the older age groups of 60 years and over accounted for 2.5% of all *sexual offence* victims.

The age profile of persons subjected to a *robbery and extortion offence* 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 groups, some differences were found for *robbery and extortion* and *sexual offences* but not for *offences against the person (excl. sexual)*.

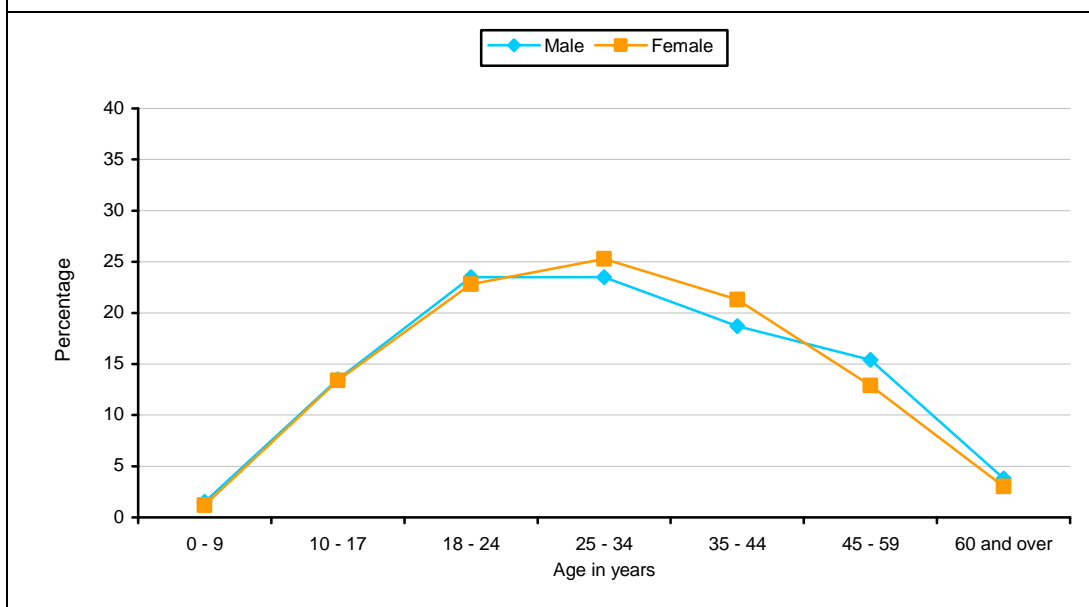
As shown in Figure 28, male *robbery and extortion* victims were generally younger than female victims. For male victims, from the age of 24 onwards as age increased so the proportion of victims decreased. In contrast, while the highest proportion of female victimisations also occurred in the 18 – 24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

Figure 28 Robbery and extortion victimisations recorded by police in 2007: age profile of victims by sex



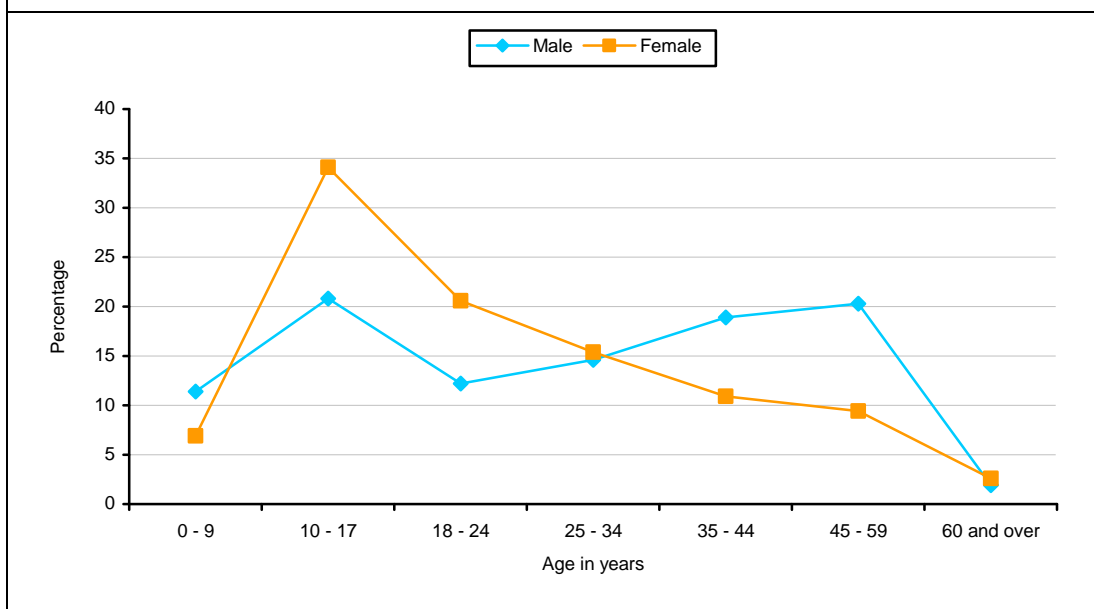
As depicted in Figure 29, the age profile for male victims of an *offence against the person, excluding sexual offences* was very similar to that of female victims, with the peak victimisation age for both being the 25 – 34 year age group.

Figure 29 Offences against the person (excl. sex) victimisations recorded by police in 2007: age profile of victims by sex



As shown in Figure 30, the age profile of male victims of a *sexual offence* was somewhat different to female victims, with a higher proportion of male victims falling within the youngest age group of 0 – 9 years and the older age groups of 35 – 59. Conversely, there was a lower proportion of males in the age groups between 10 and 24 years.

Figure 30 Sexual offence victimisations recorded by police in 2007: 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 2007. 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 groups 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 12 month period.

In 2007 there were 19,520 individuals who, during the course of the year, were recorded as being subject to at least one ‘personal’ offence. This figure was 4.1% higher than the 18,757 victims recorded in 2006.

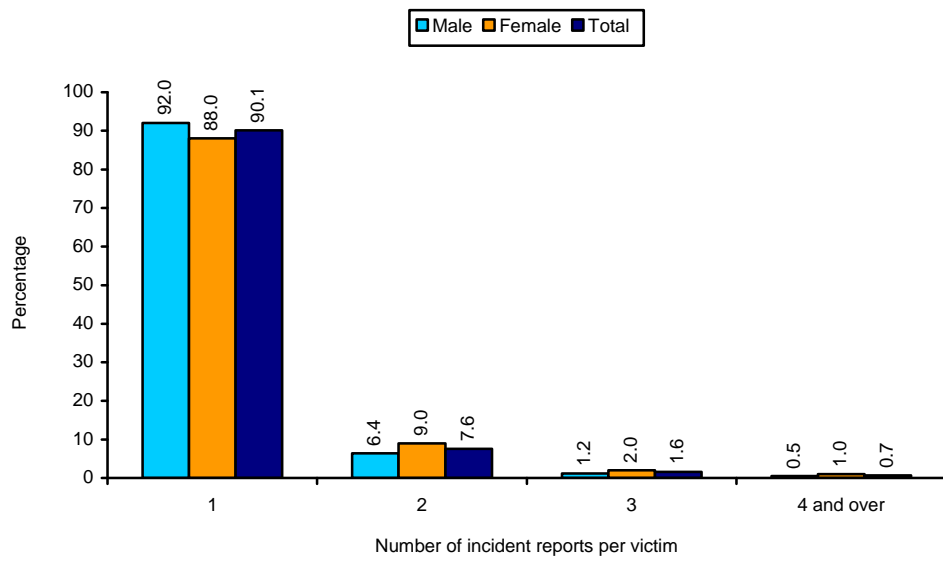
Of the 19,520 individuals, 10,329 (52.9%) were male, 9,188 (47.1%) were female and 3 were of unknown gender.

As indicated in Figure 31, nine in ten victims (90.1%) were the subject of only one incident report during the course of the 12 months. Conversely, only a small proportion (9.9%) were listed as the victims in two or more incident reports.

Overall then, the level of repeat victimisation was extremely low. However, there were 20 individuals who were the subject of six or more incident reports during 2007.

There were only minor differences between males and females in terms of the number of incident reports lodged, with a slightly higher proportion of female than male victims being the subject of more than one report (12.0% compared with 8.0% respectively).

Figure 31 Number of incident reports per victim by sex, 2007



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.

Recorded offences cleared in 2007 by means of an apprehension: characteristics of persons apprehended

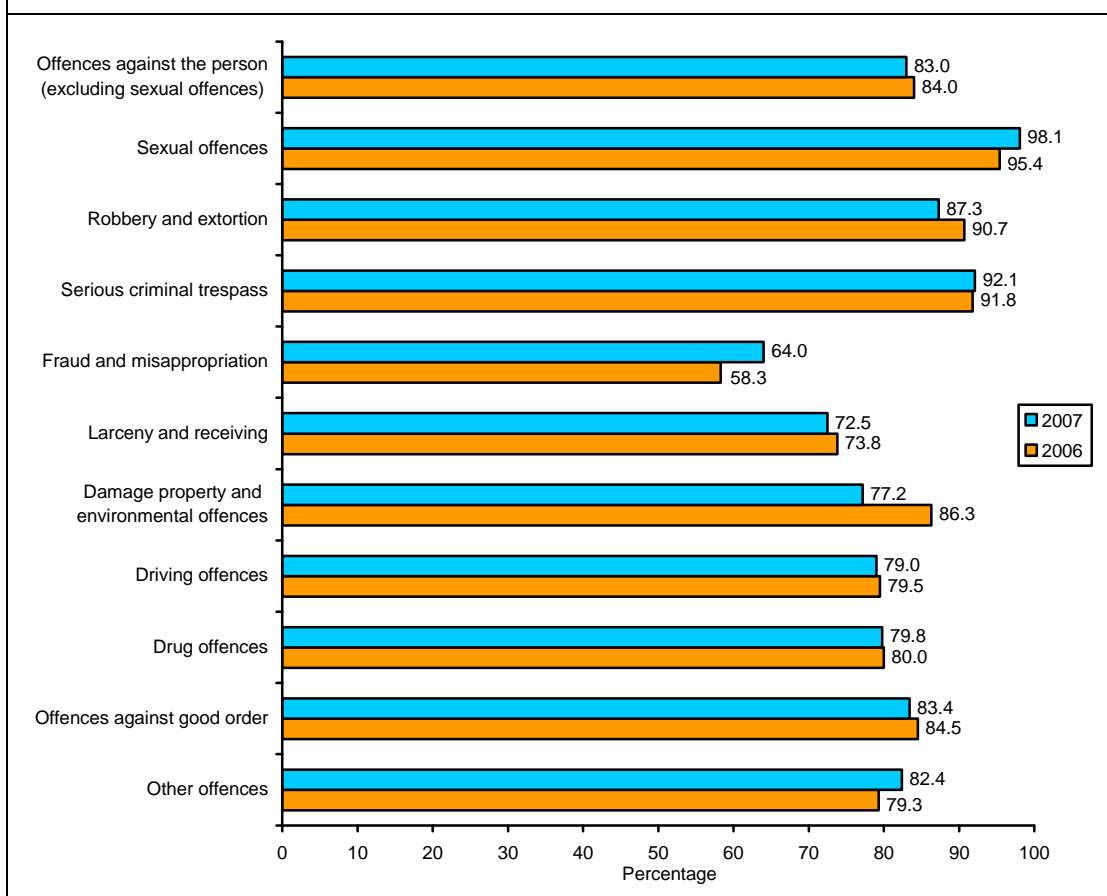
Age and Gender

There were 115,711 separate offences cleared by police apprehension reports lodged in 2007. This figure was lower (by 0.6%) than the 116,361 offences cleared in this way in 2006.

As was the case in previous years, overall more than eight in 10 of the recorded offences (80.3%) which contained information on the sex of the alleged offender involved males. However, this percentage varied depending on the offence involved (see Figure 32), from a low of 64.0% for *fraud and misappropriation* to a high of 98.1% for *sexual offences*.

While only a minority of recorded offences were cleared by apprehensions of females, this group accounted for 27.5% of all *larceny and receiving* offences cleared in 2007 (including 42.2% of all *larcenies from shops*) and 36.0% of all *fraud and misappropriation* offences.

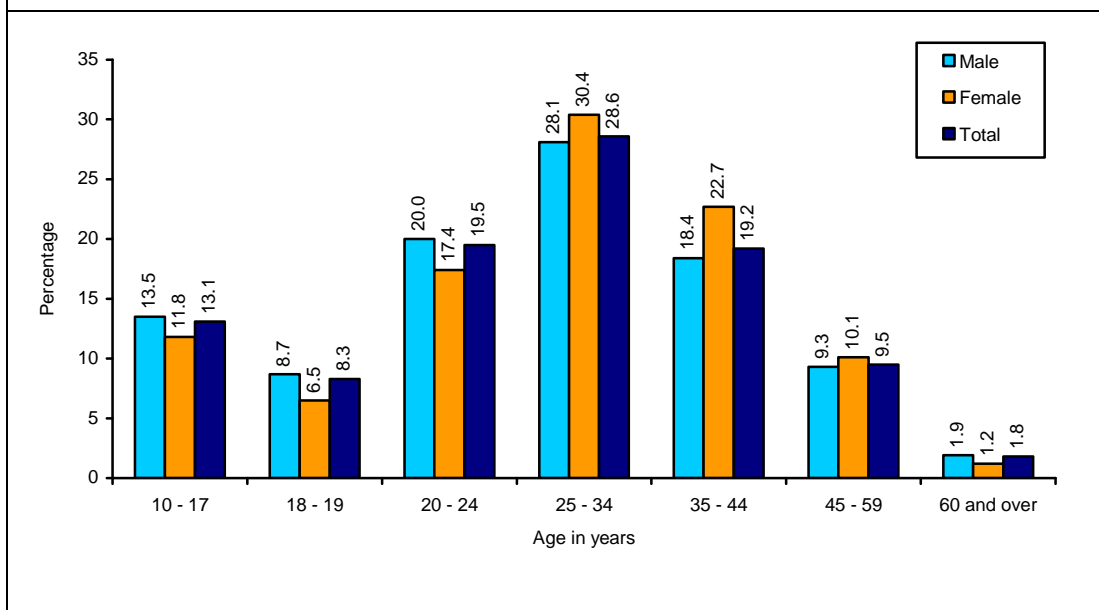
Figure 32 Recorded offences cleared by apprehension in 2006 and 2007: proportion per offence group involving males



Of the 115,679 offences listed in those apprehension reports filed in 2007 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 were allegedly committed by persons in the 25 - 34 year age group, while those aged 20 - 24 and 35 - 44 accounted for a further 19.5% and 19.2% respectively.

Figure 33 shows that overall, there were very few age differences between males and females apprehended in 2007. For both sexes, those aged 25 - 34 years dominated. Similarly, relatively few males or females apprehended by police were aged 45 years and over.

Figure 33 Recorded offences cleared by apprehension in 2007: age of alleged offenders by sex

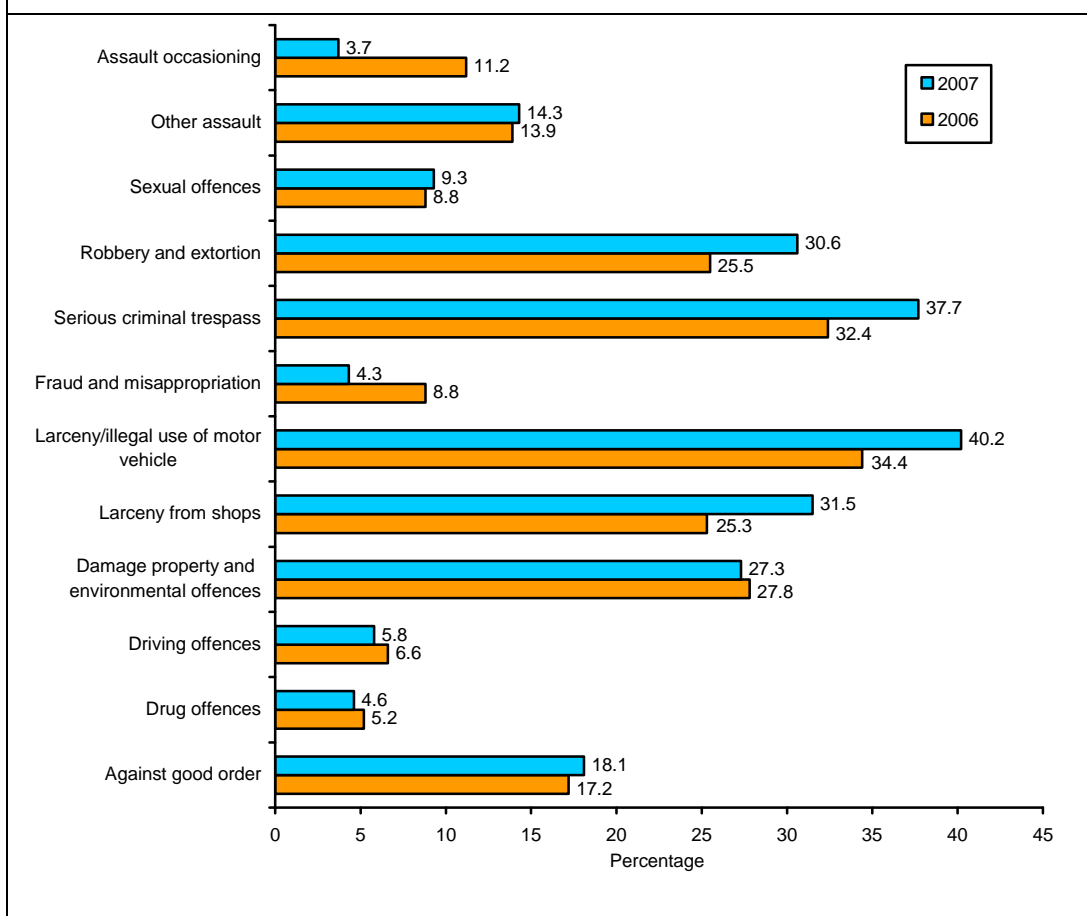


The proportion of recorded offences involving juveniles aged 10 - 17 years varied depending on the offence involved. At one end of the scale, juveniles constituted only 4.3% of all *fraud and misappropriation* offences covered by apprehensions in 2007, 4.6% of all *drug offences*¹² and 5.8% of all *driving offences*. At the other end of the scale, they were involved in 40.2% of all *larceny/illegal use of a motor vehicle* offences. This age group also accounted for 37.7% of all *serious criminal trespass* offences, 31.5% of all *larceny from shops* offences, 30.6% of all *robbery and extortion* offences and 27.3% of all *damage property and environmental* 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 offence groups 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.

¹² 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 recorded offences cleared by apprehension: 2007 compared with 2006



Aboriginal appearance

Information on Aboriginal appearance¹³ was available for 110,906 or 95.8% of the 115,711 recorded offences cleared by apprehension in 2007¹⁴.

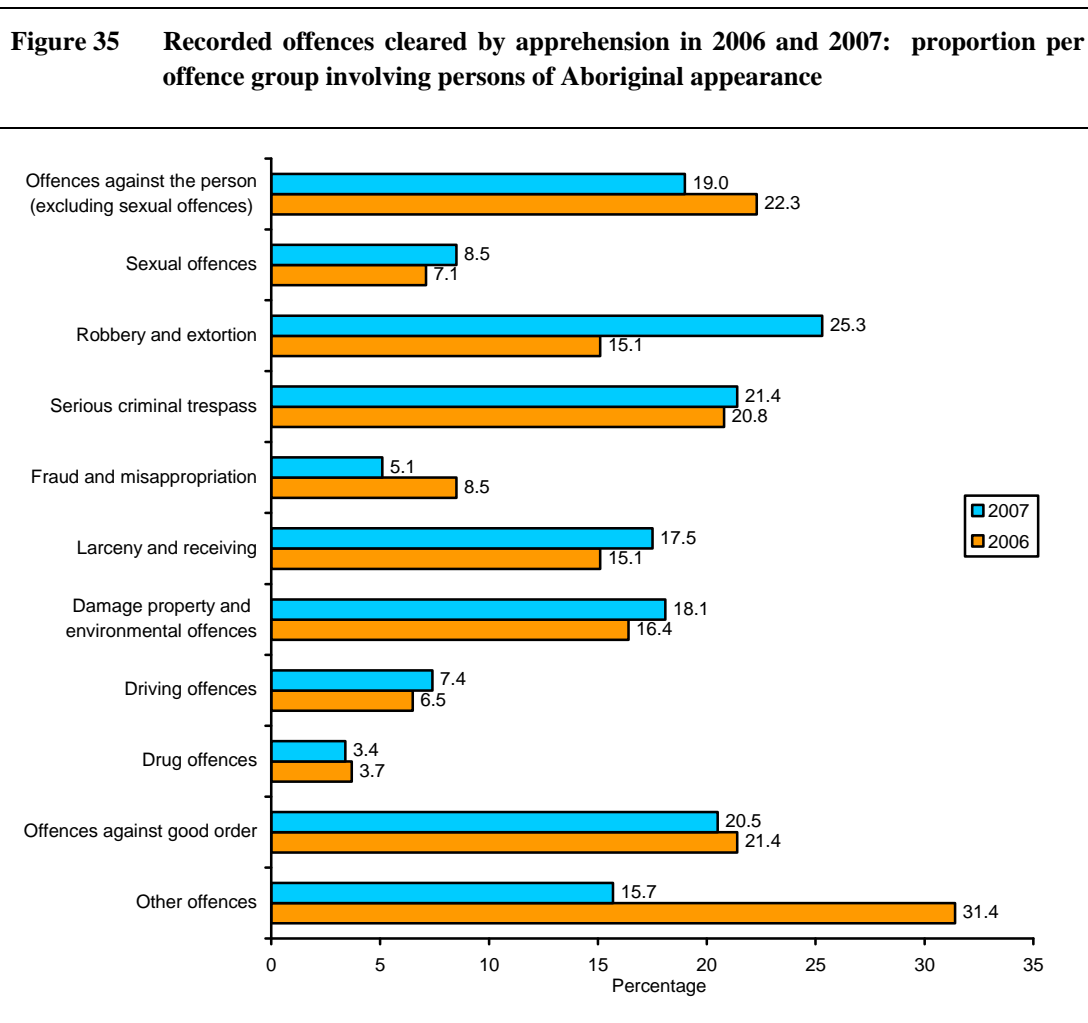
Of these 110,906 offences, 14,473 (13.0%) involved persons considered by police to be of Aboriginal appearance. This points to a significant over-representation of Aboriginal persons within the South Australian criminal justice system, given that according to the 2006 census, Aboriginal persons constituted only 1.6% of all persons aged 10 years and over resident in this State.

The extent of Aboriginal involvement varied considerably depending on the offence. As indicated in Figure 35, for those offences where information on the Aboriginal identity of the alleged offender was recorded, persons identified by police as of Aboriginal appearance accounted for 25.3% of all *robbery and extortion* offences, 21.4% of *serious criminal trespass* offences but only 3.4% of all *drug* offences.

¹³ With effect from 3 July 2007, SAPOL introduced the standard Australian Bureau of Statistics questions on Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) identification and this information is now being collected in relation to accused persons. As the data on ATSI identification is incomplete for 2007 these tables present information based on Aboriginal appearance only.

¹⁴ It should be noted that these data do not include persons dealt with by way of expiation notices, such as CENs and Traffic Infraction 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 groups in the previous year with the exception of *robbery and extortion* offences and *other* offences.



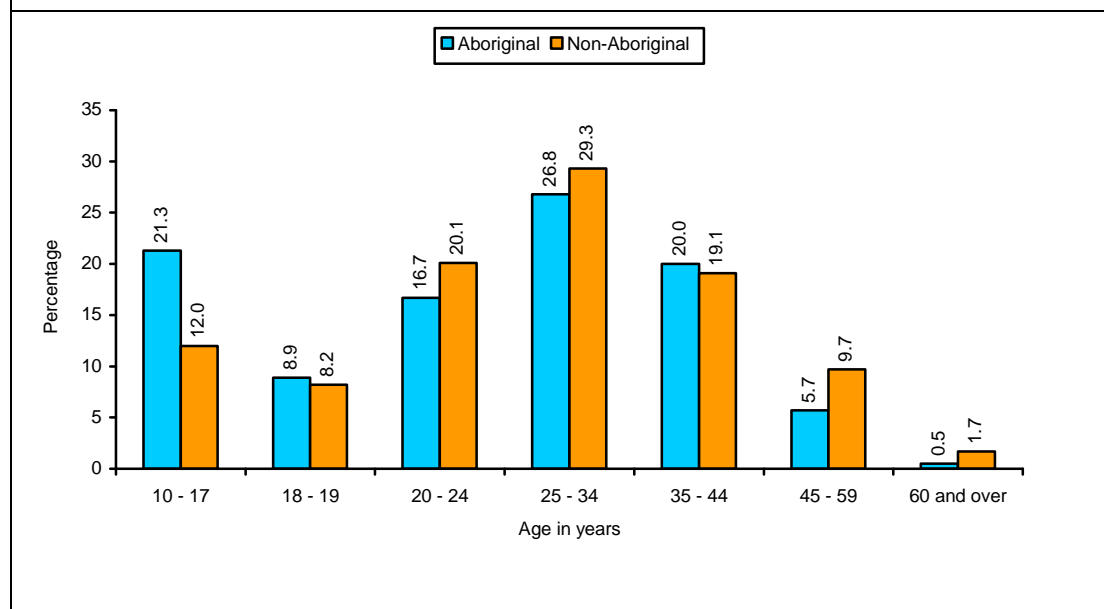
The increase in the proportion of persons of Aboriginal appearance apprehended under the offence group of *robbery and extortion* can be attributed to both an increase in the number of Aboriginal persons apprehended and a decrease in the number of non-Aboriginal persons apprehended when compared with the previous year.

One offence group where Aboriginal persons have always been statistically over-represented is that of *offences against good order*. In 2007 persons of Aboriginal appearance accounted for 20.5% of all such recorded offences where relevant information was obtained. However, this varied depending on the type of *good order* offence involved. For example, persons of Aboriginal appearance who were apprehended for *graffiti* offences accounted for only 8.7% of all *graffiti* offences, however, Aboriginal persons were apprehended for 28.0% of all *disorderly/offensive behaviour* offences, 24.5% of *offences against a court or court order*, and 19.5% of all *loitering* offences where information on Aboriginal appearance was available.

In interpreting these figures though, it should be stressed that they do not necessarily reflect the proportion of recorded offences within each group 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 recorded 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 2007 indicates some Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal differences (see Figure 36). In particular, for those apprehensions where information on Aboriginal 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 Aboriginal persons in 2007 involved persons aged 20 - 24, 25 - 34 years and 45 years and over when compared with non-Aboriginal persons.

Figure 36 Recorded offences cleared by apprehension in 2007: age by Aboriginal appearance of persons apprehended.



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

As noted earlier, there were 115,711 recorded offences cleared by means of an apprehension in 2007. These were contained within 62,684 apprehension reports. This means that, on average, each apprehension report lodged by police during this 12 month period contained 1.85 offences.

Over the same time period, a total of 40,583 discrete individuals were apprehended. On average then, each person was apprehended 1.54 times, with an average of 2.85 offences recorded per individual over the 12 month period.

As indicated in Figure 37, between 2006 and 2007 the number of recorded offences cleared by means of an apprehension decreased marginally (by 0.6%), the number of apprehension reports increased marginally (by 1.0%) and the number of individuals apprehended by police increased (by 2.4%).

Figure 37 Number of apprehension reports and discrete individuals apprehended: 2007 compared with previous years

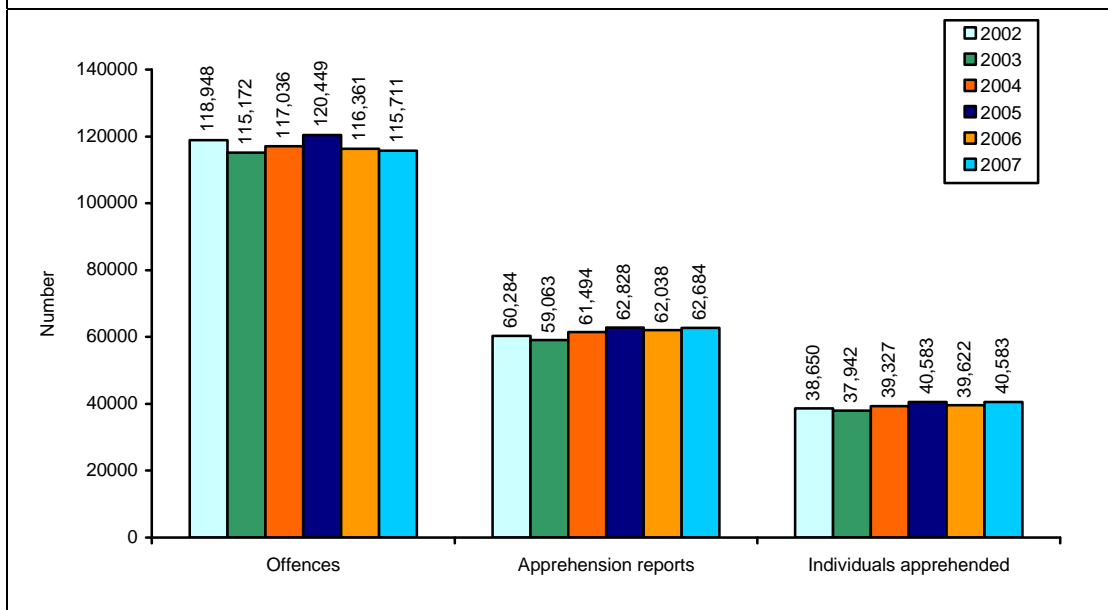
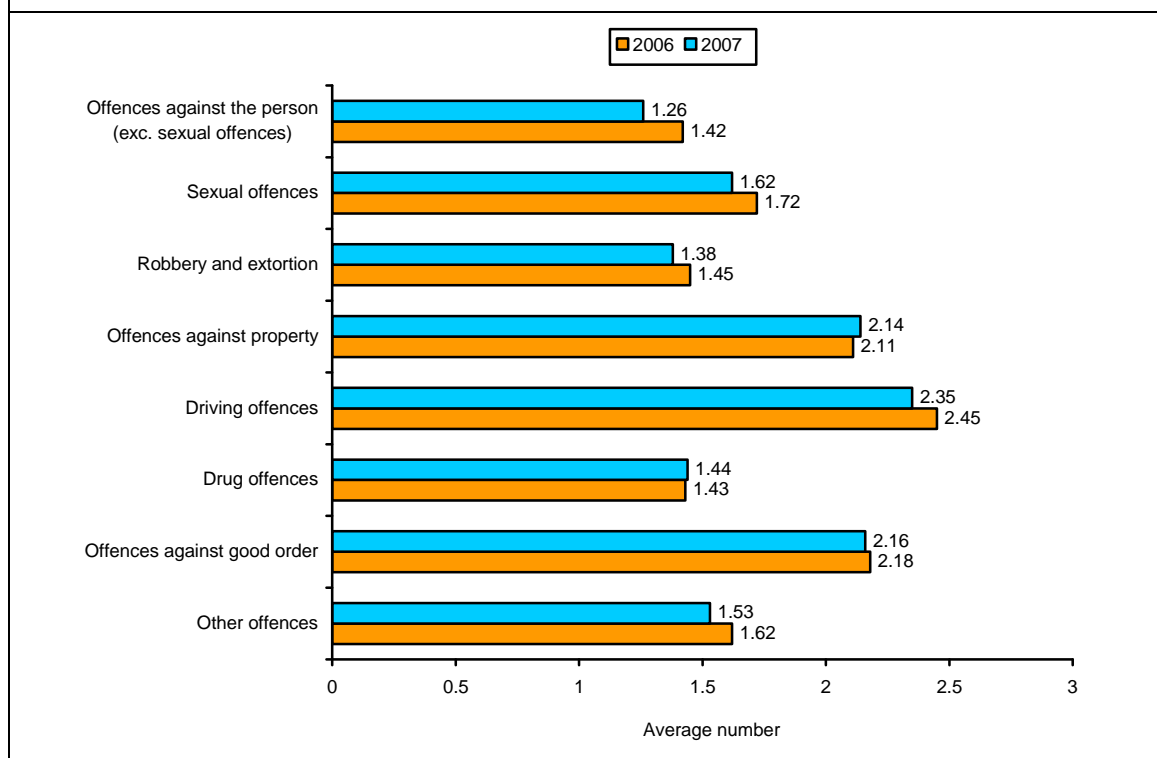


Figure 38 shows the average number of recorded offences per alleged offender for selected offence groups. (In preparing this graph, it should be noted that if, over a 12 month period, the one person is apprehended for different types of offences - for example, for an *offence against property* and for a *drug offence* - he/she will be counted once in each discrete offence grouping.)

Figure 38 Average number of recorded offences per individual per offence group: 2006 compared with 2007



As shown, the average number of offences recorded varied slightly depending on the offence involved. Those persons apprehended in 2007 for a *property offence* faced an average of 2.14 such offences during the year. For individuals apprehended for a *driving offence*, the average was 2.35. At the other end of the scale, persons apprehended for an *offence against the person* faced an average of 1.26 such offences, while for those apprehended for a *sexual offence*, the average number was 1.62.

For all offence groups except *property offences* and *drug offences* the average number of recorded offences per individual was lower than that recorded in 2006.

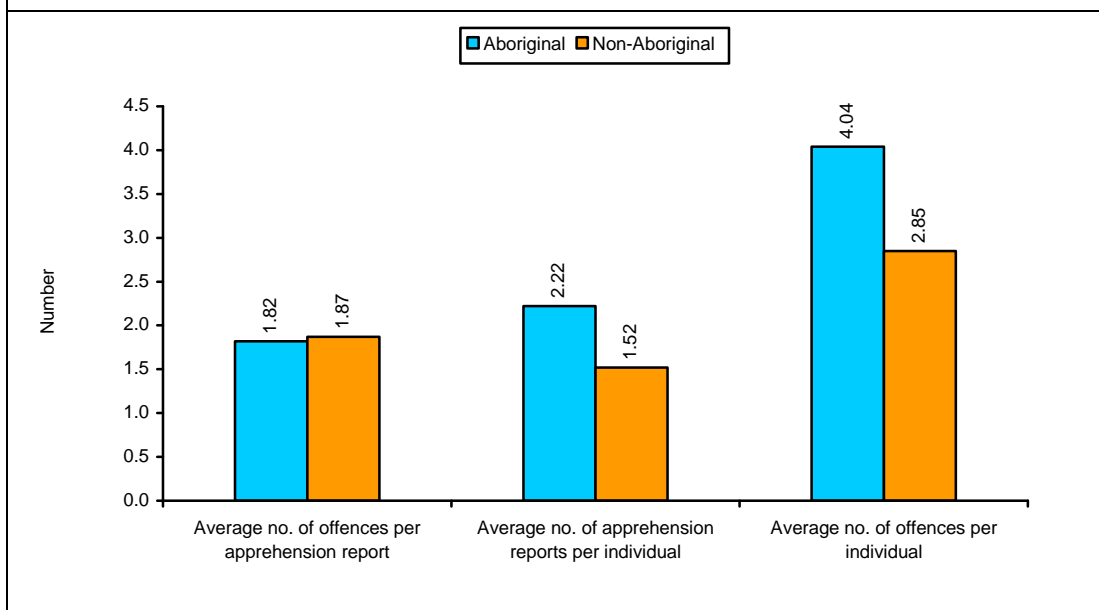
Males accounted for the majority of apprehension reports lodged (79.3% of the 62,662 reports where information on the sex of the offender was recorded). Males also accounted for 77.8% of those 40,566 discrete individuals apprehended where relevant data were available.

On average, the number of recorded offences per apprehension report was higher for males than females (1.87 and 1.76 respectively). The same applied in relation to the average number of apprehension reports per individual (1.57 compared with 1.44 for females) and the average number of recorded offences per individual (2.94 for males compared with 2.54 for females.)

As noted earlier, persons of Aboriginal appearance accounted for 13.0% of the 110,906 offences involved in apprehensions in 2007 where relevant information was available. They also accounted for 13.4% of the 59,470 apprehensions and 9.6% of the 37,456 persons apprehended where information on Aboriginal appearance was recorded.

As shown in Figure 39, when compared with non-Aboriginal persons, the average number of apprehension reports per individual in 2007, was higher for persons of Aboriginal appearance, as was the average number of recorded offences per individual. In contrast, the average number of recorded offences per apprehension report was slightly lower.

Figure 39 Average number of recorded offences per apprehension report, apprehension reports per individual and recorded offences per individual apprehended; comparison between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal persons, 2007

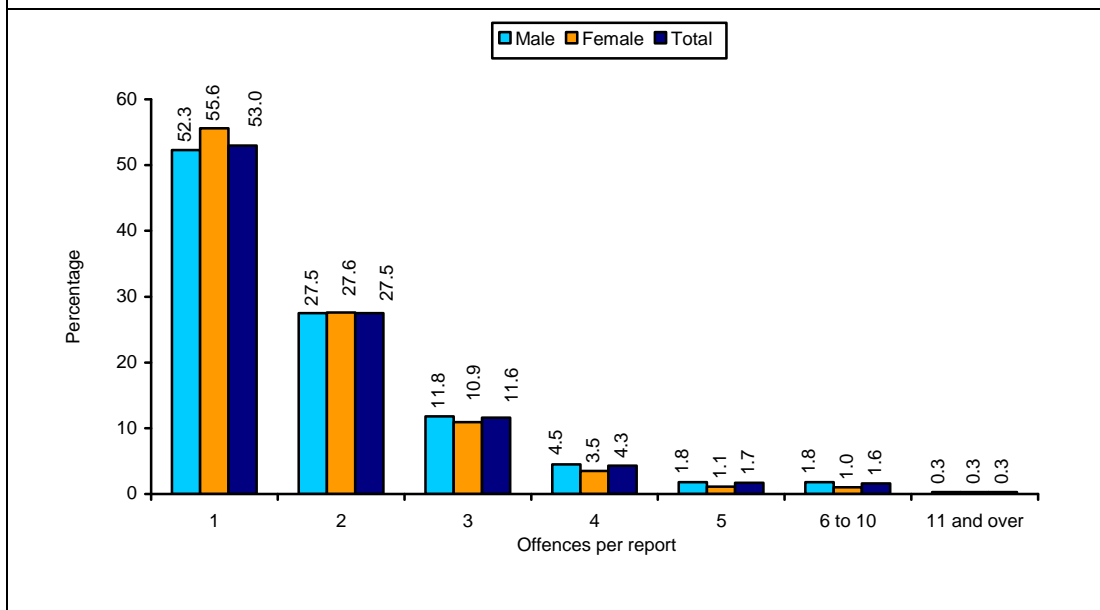


Apprehension reports: some further details

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

As indicated in Figure 40, more than one half of all apprehension reports submitted by police in 2007 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.

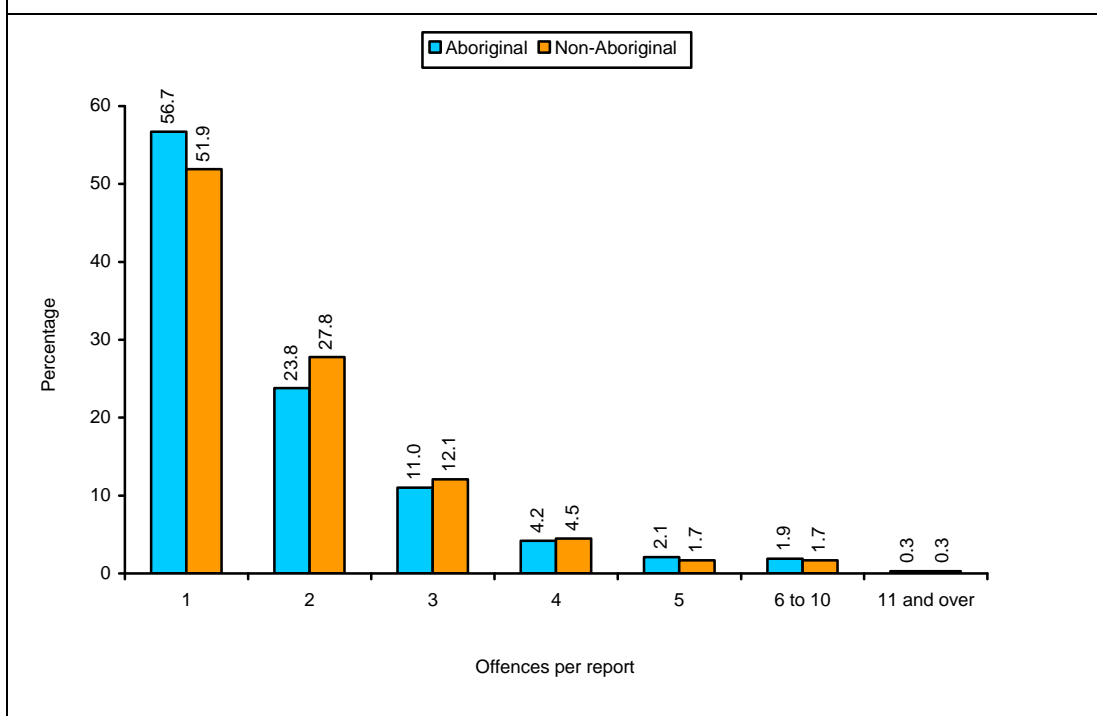
Figure 40 Apprehension reports filed by police in 2007: number of recorded offences per report by sex



As shown in Figure 41, the proportion of apprehension reports involving one offence only was higher for Aboriginal persons than non-Aboriginal persons. Conversely, the proportion of reports involving two or three offences was slightly lower for Aboriginal persons. 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 Aboriginal appearance of those persons listed on all apprehension reports. However, because these profiles are similar to those provided for recorded offences cleared via an apprehension, no further analysis is presented here.

Figure 41 Apprehension reports filed by police in 2007: number of recorded offences per report by Aboriginal 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 2007. 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 alleged offences they were apprehended for. The tables detail their age, sex and Aboriginal 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 12 month period.

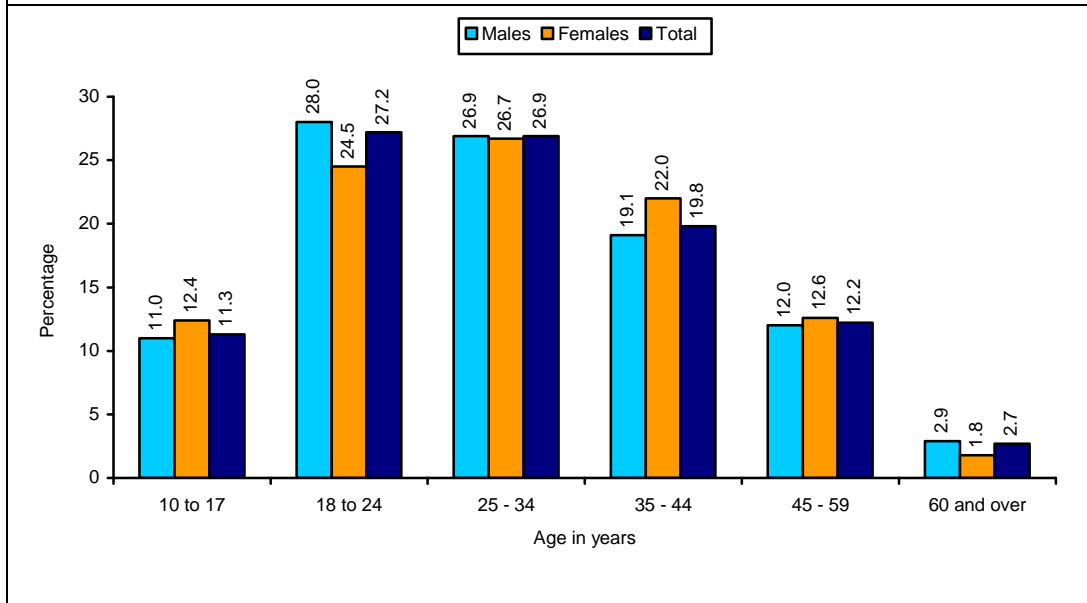
Age, sex and Aboriginal appearance of persons apprehended

There were 40,583 distinct individuals apprehended at least once by police during 2007. Information on the sex of 17 of these persons was not available. Of the remaining 40,566 the majority (77.8%) 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 2007. For both groups, the 18 - 24 and 25 - 34 year age groups dominated, although a slightly lower proportion of females were aged 18 - 24 years and a slightly higher proportion aged 10 - 17 and 35 - 44 years.

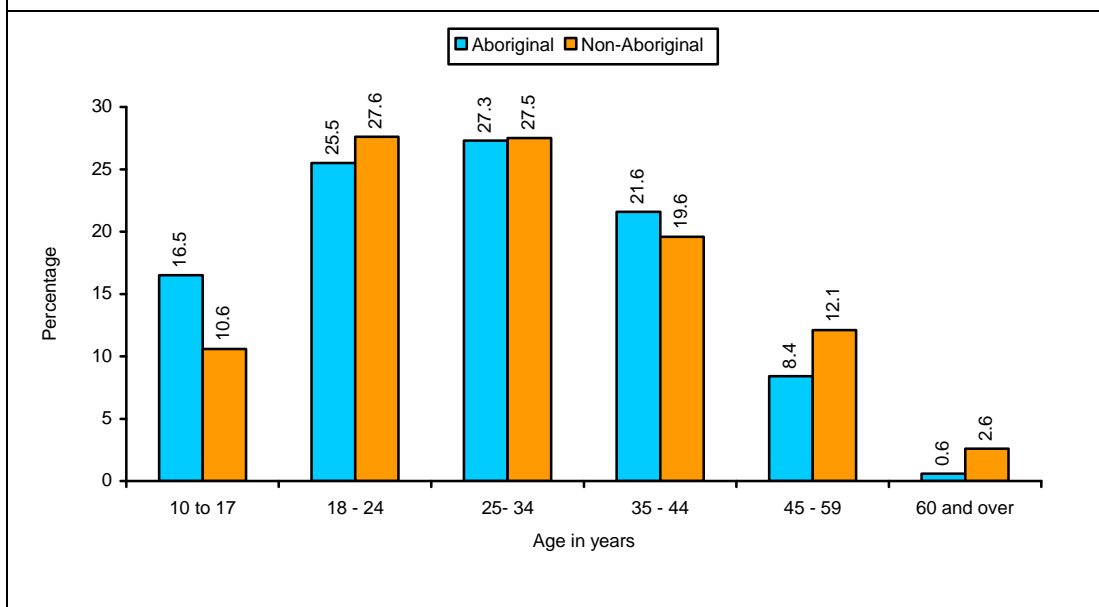
Figure 42 Discrete individuals apprehended by police in 2007: age by sex



Of the 40,583 individuals apprehended in 2007, information on Aboriginal appearance was not recorded for 3,127 (or 7.7%). As noted earlier, persons of Aboriginal appearance accounted for 9.6% of the remainder. Given that Aboriginal persons constitute only 1.6% of South Australia’s population aged 10 years and over, this indicates that their level of contact with the criminal justice system was 6 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 2007 tended to be slightly younger than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. As shown in Figure 43, a higher proportion of Aboriginal persons apprehended in 2007 were aged 10 - 17 years compared with non-Aboriginal persons, while the reverse was true for apprehended individuals aged 45 and over.

Figure 43 Discrete individuals apprehended by police in 2007: age by Aboriginal appearance



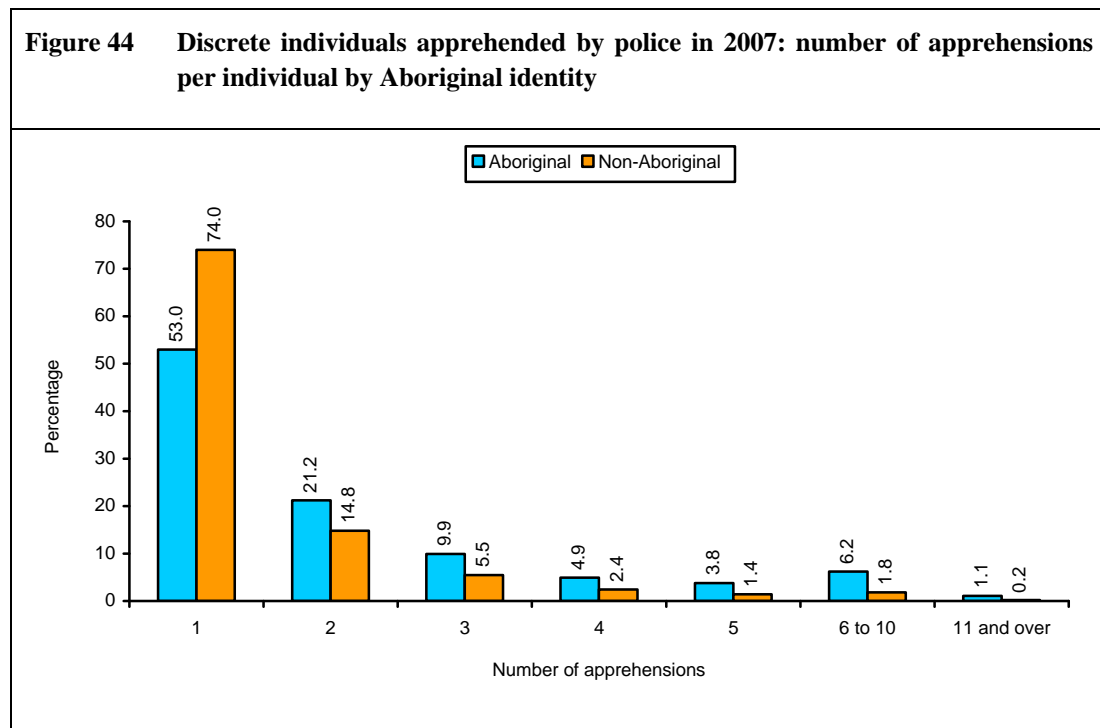
Number of apprehensions per individual

Of the 40,583 individuals apprehended in 2007, almost three quarters (73.9%) were apprehended on one occasion only during the 12 month period while a further 14.4% were apprehended on only two occasions.

A small group of individuals (932 or 2.3% of the total) were apprehended on six or more occasions, with 113 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 72.5% of males apprehended once, compared to 78.8% 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 persons identified as Aboriginal (47.0%) had multiple apprehensions during 2007 compared to just over a quarter of non-Aboriginal persons (26.0%).



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 recorded offences per individual

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

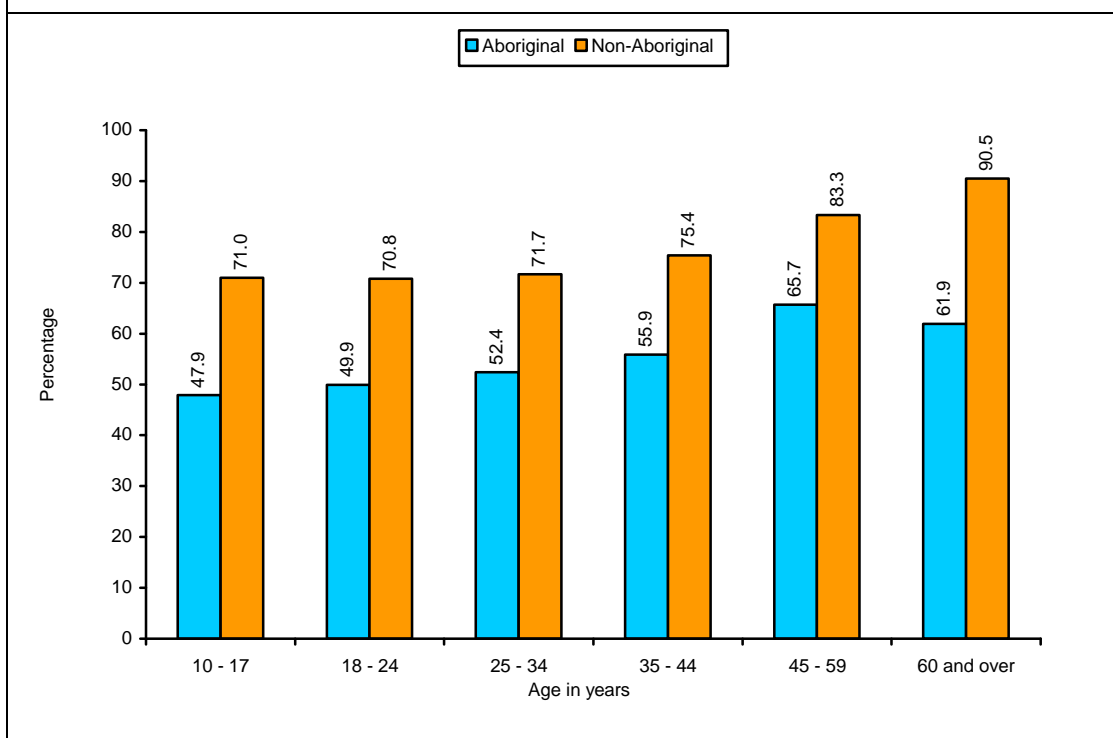
Of the 40,583 distinct individuals apprehended by police in 2007, 16,725 or 41.2% were apprehended for one offence only, while a further 25.7% had two allegations laid against them. Only a small proportion (11.0%) were apprehended for six or more offences.

At the most extreme end of the scale, there were 563 persons apprehended for more than 15 alleged offences. As would be expected, only a very small number of these individuals (30 or 5.3% of the 563) were apprehended on only one occasion. In contrast, 393 persons (69.8% of the 563), accumulated these offences during the course of six or more apprehensions.

There were some minor sex differences in the number of recorded offences per individual, with a slightly higher proportion of females facing one offence allegation only (46.2% compared with 39.8% 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 Aboriginal appearance. As shown in Figure 45 a lower proportion of apprehended Aboriginal persons were apprehended once only during the year. The other feature of the graph is the increasing tendency for older age groups to have only one offence¹⁵.

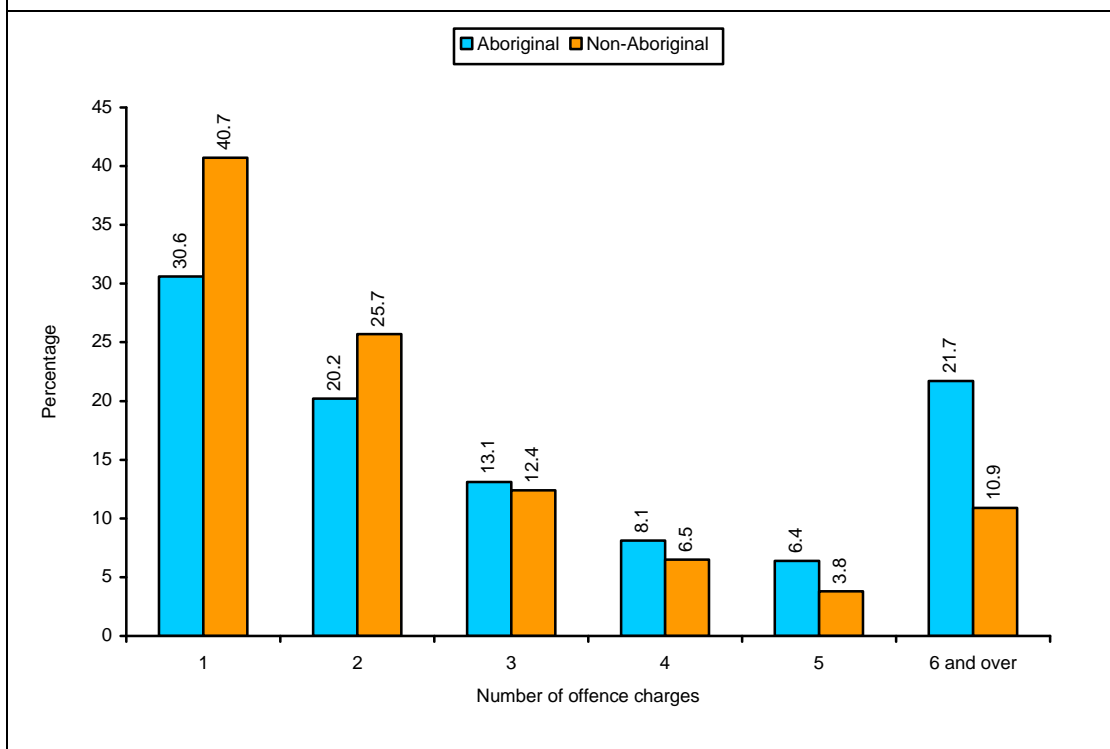
Figure 45 Discrete individuals apprehended by police in 2007: proportion per age group experiencing one apprehension only by Aboriginal identity



¹⁵ The reduction in the proportion of individuals identified as Aboriginal in the 60 and over age group with one apprehension is due to small numbers of individuals in this age group being apprehended.

In Figure 46 it can be seen that a lower percentage of apprehended persons identified as Aboriginal had only one offence alleged against them during the course of the year than was the case for apprehended non-Aboriginal persons. 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 46 Discrete individuals apprehended by police in 2007: number of recorded offences by Aboriginal identity



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 3, there were 16,725 individuals who, during the course of the year, were apprehended for one alleged offence only; i.e. in total, they accounted for 16,725 recorded offences. This means that 41.2% of all individuals apprehended in 2007 accounted for 14.5% of all alleged offences recorded in relation to those apprehensions.

However, at the other end of the scale, the 4,471 individuals who were apprehended in relation to six or more alleged offences accounted for 45,609 of the offences entailed by those apprehensions. In other words, 11.0% of persons apprehended in 2007 were responsible for 39.4% of all recorded offences covered by those apprehension reports.

These results clearly indicate that in 2007, as in previous years, a comparatively small group of individuals accounted for a disproportionately large proportion of all recorded offences for which apprehensions were made by police during this 12 month period.

Table 3 Proportion of individuals compared with proportion of recorded offences accounted for by those individuals, 2007	
16,725 persons @ 1 offence each = 16,725 offences	41.2% of all individuals apprehended accounted for 14.5% of all recorded offences
10,430 persons @ 2 offences each = 20,860 offences	25.7% of individuals apprehended accounted for 18.0% of all recorded offences
4,857 persons @ 3 offences each = 14,571 offences	12.0% of individuals apprehended accounted for 12.6% of all recorded offences
2,554 persons @ 4 offences each = 10,216 offences	6.3% of individuals apprehended accounted for 8.8% of all recorded offences
1,546 persons @ 5 offences each = 7,730 offences	3.8% of individuals apprehended accounted for 6.7% of all recorded offences
4,471 persons @ 6 + offences each = 45,609 offences	11.0% of individuals apprehended accounted for 39.4% of all recorded offences

A similarly small proportion of individuals within both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups accounted for a similarly high proportion of all recorded offences. More specifically, of the persons of Aboriginal appearance apprehended in 2007, 21.7% accounted for 56.8% of the alleged offences in these apprehensions, while 10.9% of all non-Aboriginal persons apprehended accounted for 38.7% of all non-Aboriginal alleged offences (see Table 4).

Table 4 Proportion of individuals compared with proportion of recorded offences accounted for by those individuals in 2007: an Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal comparison		
Number of offences per individual	Aboriginal persons apprehended	Non-Aboriginal persons apprehended
1	30.6% of individuals apprehended accounted for 7.6% of all allegations	40.7% of individuals apprehended accounted for 14.3% of all allegations
2	20.2% of individuals apprehended accounted for 10.0% of all allegations	25.7% of individuals apprehended accounted for 18.0% of all allegations
3	13.1% of individuals apprehended accounted for 9.7% of all allegations	12.4% of individuals apprehended accounted for 13.1% of all allegations
4	8.1% of individuals apprehended accounted for 8.0% of all allegations	6.5% of individuals apprehended accounted for 9.2% of all allegations
5	6.4% of individuals apprehended accounted for 7.9% of all allegations	3.8% of individuals apprehended accounted for 6.8% of all allegations
6+	21.7% of individuals apprehended accounted for 56.8% of all allegations	10.9% of individuals apprehended accounted for 38.7% of all allegations

