

---

*Issue no. 15*

*September 2000*

## **Robbery in a Dwelling incidents: tracking from report to apprehension**

by

**Nichole Hunter**

**Analysis of 1997 and 1998**

**Police Apprehension Reports**

Data extraction by Carol Castle

---

*This Bulletin expands upon previous analyses of Police Incident Reports relating to robbery in a dwelling offences recorded in 1997 and 1998. The current Bulletin tracks robbery incidents reported in 1997 and 1998 through to the next stage in the criminal justice system. More specifically, it examines incidents that subsequently resulted in an apprehension. It describes the characteristics of incidents where apprehensions were made and, where appropriate, draws comparisons with incidents for which there were no apprehensions. It also provides information on the alleged offenders apprehended by police.*

---

## INTRODUCTION

This Bulletin expands upon previous analyses of Police Incident Reports relating to *robbery in a dwelling* offences recorded in 1997 and 1998. Earlier research (Marshall, 1999; Hunter and Marshall, 2000) examined the nature of these incidents and provided a summary of the incident characteristics. The current Bulletin tracks robbery incidents reported in 1997 and 1998 through to the next stage in the criminal justice system. More specifically, it examines incidents that subsequently resulted in an apprehension. It describes the characteristics of incidents where apprehensions were made and, where appropriate, draws comparisons with incidents for which there were no apprehensions. It also provides information on the alleged offenders apprehended by police.

## METHODOLOGY

The first phase of this research involved analysing *robbery in a dwelling* incidents<sup>1</sup> recorded by police during 1997 and 1998. The initial extraction of victim reports<sup>2</sup> from the police database was based upon the following criteria:

- the report included a robbery offence (either armed or unarmed) where the victim was an individual;
- the location was recorded as a dwelling, flat, house or unit; and
- the incident was recorded by police during 1997 or 1998.

From the narratives contained in the victim reports it was then possible to identify which of those reports related to the one incident. Because the police complete a separate report for each victim involved in an incident, the number of victim reports filed was greater than the total number of incidents.

Each victim report may contain more than one offence or more than one count of the same offence. For example, in a *robbery in a dwelling* incident the occupant of the premises could be the victim of both a robbery and assault. In these circumstances the victim report may record an offence of robbery and one of assault. If the victim had been assaulted several times by the same perpetrator, the report may record more than one count of assault.

For this Bulletin, each of the victim reports filed by the police in 1997 and 1998 that included at least one *robbery in a dwelling* offence were 'tracked' to identify the clearance status of the incident as at the end of October 1999 (the time of data extraction). An incident was considered to be cleared by way of a police apprehension if any individual was arrested or reported in relation to that incident. For those victim reports that were cleared by way of an apprehension, the resulting apprehension reports were then accessed and relevant data analysed. It should be noted that while *robbery in a dwelling* incidents were reported in 1997 and 1998 the alleged offenders were not necessarily apprehended during these same years.

Police complete an Apprehension Report each time a person is arrested or reported. If two people are apprehended for the same incident, then two apprehension reports are filed. As with a victim report, an apprehension report may contain more than one offence, as well as multiple counts of the same offence. Moreover, the offences listed in the one apprehension report may relate to several different incidents. For example, on one occasion, an offender may break into a dwelling and rob the occupant. He may, some months later, steal a car from

---

1 Throughout this Bulletin the term 'incident' refers to the criminal event.

2 'Victim report' refers to the report lodged by police (usually known as the 'Police Incident Report') when an incident is reported to them. A separate report is filed for each victim involved in the criminal incident.

---

a totally different victim. If, at the time of apprehending the person, police have evidence to link him to both incidents, one Apprehension Report will be filed listing one *robbery in a dwelling* and one *motor vehicle theft*. For this Bulletin, offences listed relate to the specific *robbery in a dwelling* incidents examined rather than to all charges contained on an individual Apprehension Report. In other words, all charges relating to *robbery in a dwelling* incidents were counted, while charges contained on the same apprehension report stemming from criminal incidents not involving a *robbery in a dwelling* offence were not included in this study.

Finally, it should be stressed that offences recorded by police are not an accurate measure of the actual incidence of crime, because much crime is not reported to the police. Further, it cannot be assumed that individuals apprehended are representative of all perpetrators involved in *robbery in a dwelling* incidents. Because not all offences are reported, and not all reported offences lead to an apprehension, an unknown number of perpetrators are never 'caught'. Moreover, of those who are apprehended, it cannot be supposed that all these individuals would subsequently be prosecuted or found guilty of an offence in court.

### **CLEARANCE STATUS AND METHOD OF CLEARANCE OF INCIDENTS**

As shown in Table 1, of the 104 incidents reported in 1997, police made apprehensions in relation to 50 incidents (48.1%). In comparison, police apprehended alleged offenders in relation to 44 of the 132 *robbery in a dwelling* incidents reported during 1998 (33.3%). Overall then, while the number of *robbery in a dwelling* incidents reported increased from 1997 to 1998, the number of incidents cleared by the police by way of an apprehension declined.

The higher percentage of 1997 incidents cleared by way of an apprehension compared with 1998 incidents could be due to more time having elapsed between the date when information were extracted for this study (October 1999) and the time of the incident. Alternatively, this disparity could be linked to the nature of the offences, with more incidents reported in 1997 involving offenders known to the victim as opposed to incidents reported in 1998. According to victim reports, 70.5% of the 132 incidents reported in 1998 involved offenders who were strangers to the victim compared with 56.7% of the 104 incidents reported in 1997. (The characteristics of *robbery in a dwelling* incidents cleared compared with those not cleared will be explored further in later sections of this Bulletin.)

Incidents were also cleared by way of a 'no further action' (NFA) request by the victim. More NFA requests were made in relation to incidents reported in 1998 than in 1997. According to victim reports, 11 incidents reported in 1998 were cleared because the victim requested no further action, compared with only three incidents reported in 1997.

Of the remaining incidents (51 in 1997 and 77 in 1998) some were not cleared because enquiries were exhausted at that time and the incident was listed as 'filed after investigation'. Other incidents were simply listed as 'not cleared', a default category assigned to a victim report at the time of entry when awaiting reclassification to a more appropriate clear-up status. As indicated in Table 1, a small number of incidents were also not cleared for 'unknown' reasons.

**Table 1**  
**Clearance status of robbery in a dwelling incidents recorded by police in 1997 and 1998**

Clearance status	1997		1998	
	No. of incidents	% of incidents	No. of incidents	% of incidents
<b>Cleared</b>				
Arrest/report	50	48.1	44	33.3
No further action	3	2.9	11	8.3
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>51.0</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>41.7</b>
<b>Not cleared</b>				
Filed after investigation	42	40.4	62	47.0
Not cleared	6	5.8	13	9.8
Unknown*	3	2.9	2	1.5
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>49.0</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>58.3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Information on clearance status was missing in relation to one incident reported in 1997. However, as no apprehension report resulted it was assumed that this incident was 'not cleared'. According to the victim reports, two incidents reported in 1997 and two incidents reported in 1998 were listed as resulting in an report/arrest, but no corresponding apprehension report was found, suggesting that, for whatever reason, the status had changed after the victim report was initially filed. These incidents have all been included as 'not cleared' by 'unknown' method.

The following section explores characteristics of *robbery in a dwelling* incidents which resulted in an apprehension compared with those where no apprehension resulted and those where the victim requested no further action. (see Appendix 1 for a chart detailing the movement of recorded incidents through the criminal justice system.)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF ROBBERY IN A DWELLING INCIDENTS

### Number of victims per incident

The 50 incidents recorded in 1997 that resulted in apprehensions involved 53 victims. In comparison, 55 victims were involved in the 44 incidents reported in 1998 that, by October 1999 had been cleared by way of an apprehension. Thus, in both years, the average number of victims involved in reported incidents for which there was an apprehension was slightly over one (1.1 in 1997 and 1.2 in 1998).

A high proportion of apprehensions pertaining to incidents recorded in 1997 involved one victim only (90.0%). In comparison, in 1998, 81.8% of reported incidents where an apprehension was made involved one victim. When compared with the number of victims involved in uncleared incidents, no differences were evident for the 1997 incidents. However, as Table 2 shows, a higher percentage of the 1998 incidents cleared via apprehension involved multiple victims than was the case for uncleared incidents (18.2% compared with 6.5%). This may mean that, at least in terms of the 1998 incidents, police found it 'easier' to apprehend a suspect when there were multiple victims rather than just one victim involved.

For some of the incidents involving multiple victims, the data files indicated that an apprehension had been made in relation to offences committed against one of the victims, but not in relation to offences committed against the other victims. For the purposes of this analysis, these incidents (three incidents in 1997 and two in 1998) have been classified in the 'apprehension made' category and the total number of victims recorded equated to the number of victims involved. For example, in one incident reported in 1998 that involved six victims, apprehensions were apparently made in relation to two victims, but not in relation to the other four. This incident was listed in the 'cleared by apprehension' column and the number of victims counted was six.

It should also be noted that there could be other occupants inside the premises at the time of an incident for whom the police did not complete a victim report and who are therefore not counted in these data. This could include friends or family members who were in other rooms or who were considered to be peripheral to, and not direct victims of, the robbery incident.

**Table 2**  
**Number of victims per incident by clearance status**

No. of victims	'Cleared'		'Not cleared'	Total
	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a police apprehension	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a NFA request	No. & % of incidents which were not cleared	No. & % of incidents recorded by police
<b>1997</b>				
One	45 90.0%	3 **	46 90.2%	94 90.4%
Two	5 10.0%	0 **	4 7.8%	9 8.7%
Three or more	0 0%	0 **	1 2.0%	1 1.0%
Total	50 100.0%	3 **	51 100.0%	104 100.0%
<b>1998</b>				
One	36 81.8%	10 **	72 93.5%	118 89.4%
Two	6 13.6%	1 **	4 5.2%	11 8.3%
Three or more	2 4.5%	0 **	1 1.3%	3 2.3%
Total	44 100.0%	11 **	77 100.0%	132 100.0%

\*\* Numbers too small to justify the calculation of percentages.

### **Characteristics of victims involved in robbery in a dwelling incidents**

As shown in Table 3, the majority of robbery in a dwelling incidents cleared by way of an apprehension in both 1997 and 1998 involved male victims, as did the majority of incidents that were 'not cleared'.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, although the numbers were small, of the 15 victims who made a no further action request in 1997 and 1998, nine (60%) were male. In relation to the 1997 incidents, a similar proportion of victims involved in both 'cleared by apprehension' and uncleared incidents were male (63.6% and 61.4% respectively). However, in 1998, males accounted for a higher percentage of victims in the 'cleared' than the 'uncleared' incidents (75.0% compared with 65.9% respectively).

<sup>3</sup> The profile of victims presented in this section relates only to those incidents recorded by the police. It is not known how representative victims in these incidents would be of all victims of robbery in a dwelling, given that at least some incidents would not be reported to the police.

**Table 3**  
**Sex of victims by clearance status of incident**

Sex	'Cleared'		'Not cleared'	Total
	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a police apprehension	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a NFA request	No. & % of incidents which were not cleared	No. & % of incidents recorded by police
<b>1997</b>				
Male	35 63.6%	1 **	35 61.4%	71 61.7%
Female	20 36.4%	2 **	22 38.6%	44 38.3%
Total	55 100.0%	3 **	57 100.0%	115 100.0%
<b>1998</b>				
Male	45 75.0%	8 **	56 65.9%	109 69.4%
Female	15 25.0%	4 **	29 34.1%	48 30.6%
Total	60 100.0%	12 **	85 100.0%	157 100.0%

\*\* Numbers too small to justify the calculation of percentages.

As shown in Table 4 and Figure 1, with the exception of the 65 years and over age group, the ages of victims in incidents cleared by the police via an apprehension generally reflected the ages of victims in incidents that were not cleared. The majority of victims involved in both 'cleared by apprehension' and 'uncleared' incidents fell within the 18-24 and 25-34 year age group, with victim numbers declining after the age of 35. As noted, however, the one exception was the 65 and over age group. For the 65 and over age group, despite constituting 12.2% and 14.6% of victims in all *robbery in a dwelling* incidents recorded in 1997 and 1998 respectively, they represented none of the victims in 1997 incidents cleared by way of a police apprehension and only 6.7% of victims in 1998 incidents cleared in this manner. In other words, incidents where the victims were 65 years or more were markedly less likely to result in an apprehension than were incidents involving younger victims.

In Table 4 and Figure 1 data for 1997 and 1998 have been combined because the numbers within each age category were too small to analyse each year separately.

**Table 4**  
**Ages of victims by clearance status of incident\***

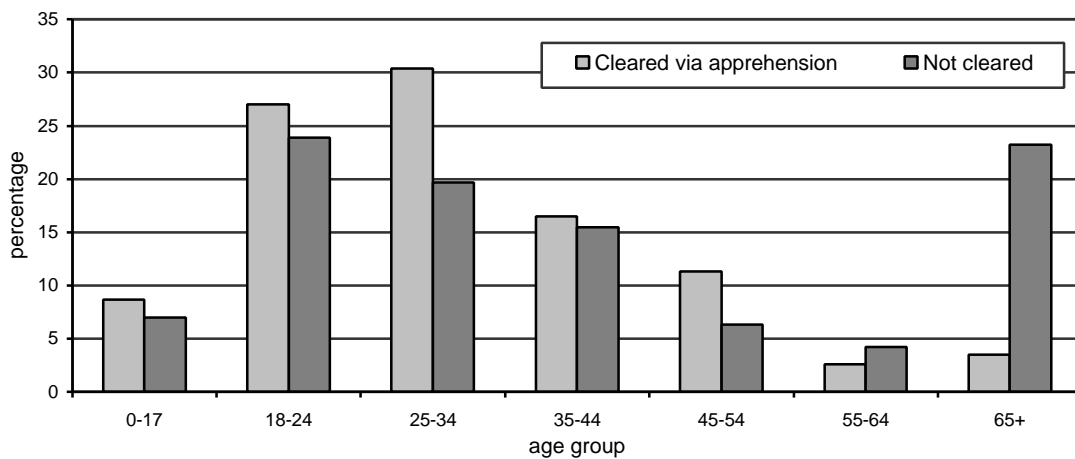
Age group (yrs)***	'Cleared'		'Not cleared'	Total
	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a police apprehension	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a NFA request	No. & % of incidents which were not cleared	No. & % of incidents recorded by police
0-17	10 8.7%	0 **	10 7.0%	20 7.3%
18-24	31 27.0%	3 **	34 23.9%	68 25.0%
25-34	35 30.4%	5 **	28 19.7%	68 25.0%
35-44	19 16.5%	6 **	22 15.5%	47 17.3%
45-54	13 11.3%	0 **	9 6.3%	22 8.1%
55-64	3 2.6%	1 **	6 4.2%	10 3.7%
65 and over	4 3.5%	0 **	33 23.2%	37 13.6%
Total	115 100.0%	15 **	142 100.0%	272 100.0%

\* In this table 1997 and 1998 data have been combined.

\*\* Numbers too small to justify the calculation of percentages.

\*\*\* The age of the victim is measured at the time the offence was reported and therefore does not necessarily equate to the age of the victim when the offence occurred.

**Figure 1**  
**Percentage of victims in each age group by clearance status of incident\***



\* The ages of victims in incidents cleared by way of a no further action have not been graphed due to the small numbers involved in this category (three victims in 1997 and 12 in 1998).

---

### Number of alleged offenders per incident

The 50 *robbery in a dwelling* incidents recorded in 1997 which were cleared by way of a police apprehension involved a total of 94 offenders, giving an average of 1.9 offenders per incident. In comparison, 81 offenders were apprehended in relation to 44 incidents reported in 1998, an average of 1.8 offenders per incident.

No person was apprehended for more than one *robbery in a dwelling* incident in either of the 12-month periods examined. However, two people apprehended for the 1997 incidents were also apprehended for 1998 incidents. In total then, for the two-year period there were 173 discrete offenders. However, it should be stressed that any of these individuals could have committed other *robbery in a dwelling* offences for which they were not apprehended. Similarly, the apprehension report narratives suggest that some of the alleged offenders were involved in incidents which did not entail a *robbery in a dwelling*. Again, these other matters were not included here.

As shown in Table 5, over one half of all incidents recorded in 1997 and 1998 where an apprehension was made involved more than one alleged offender. The highest number of individuals apprehended in relation to a single incident was four. This applied to four of the 50 incidents in 1997 and four of the 44 incidents in 1998.

**Table 5**  
**Number of alleged offenders apprehended per incident**

No. of alleged offenders	1997		1998	
	No. of incidents	% of incidents	No. of incidents	% of incidents
One	24	48.0	21	47.7
Two	12	24.0	13	29.5
Three	10	20.0	6	13.6
Four	4	8.0	4	9.1
Total	50	100.0	44	100.0

### Characteristics of alleged offenders involved in *robbery in a dwelling* incidents

The following section outlines the characteristics of persons for whom the police completed an apprehension report alleging involvement in *robbery in a dwelling* incident during 1997 or 1998.<sup>4</sup> As noted earlier, 94 offenders were apprehended for 50 incidents reported in 1997 and 81 offenders were apprehended for 44 incidents reported in 1998, with two persons apprehended for both a 1997 incident and a 1998 incident. In the following tables these two individuals are counted twice, once in 1997 and once in 1998.

As indicated in Table 6, the majority of offenders apprehended in relation to *robbery in a dwelling* incidents recorded during 1997 and 1998 were male (84.0% and 85.2% respectively).

---

<sup>4</sup> A report is also filed when a warrant is issued and then a separate Apprehension Report is completed when the offender is subsequently apprehended. One individual allegedly involved in an incident reported in 1997 was the subject of a warrant/summons, but at the time of this study had not been apprehended. This person has nevertheless been included as an 'alleged offender' because (s)he was the subject of a report relating to an incident examined.



**Table 6**  
**Sex of alleged offenders**

Sex	1997		1998	
	No. of offenders	% of offenders	No. of offenders	% of offenders
Male	79	84.0	69	85.2
Female	15	16.0	12	14.8
Total	94	100.0	81	100.0

As shown in Table 7, Aboriginals constituted 11.0% of persons apprehended for 1997 incidents but almost one quarter of apprehensions for 1998 incidents (23.7%). Given that Aboriginals constituted 1.3% of all persons aged 10 years and over resident in South Australia in 1998, these findings indicate that Aboriginal persons were over-represented in their rate of apprehension for *robbery in a dwelling* incidents. The reasons for this over-representation cannot be ascertained, nor can the reasons for the dramatic increase in Aboriginal apprehensions between 1997 and 1998. While it may mean their level of involvement in this type of criminal behaviour is proportionately greater than that of non-Aboriginals, it may also be that they are easier to identify and apprehend. In this context, it is interesting to note that in 1997, when almost half of the 104 reported *robbery in a dwelling* incidents were cleared by apprehension, 11.0% of those apprehended were Aboriginals. However, in 1998, when only one third (44 of 132) such incidents led to an apprehension, almost one quarter of those apprehended were Aboriginal. In other words, as the clear-up level declined, the ratio of Aboriginal to non-Aboriginal persons apprehended increased (1 Aboriginal to 8.1 non-Aboriginals in 1997: 1 Aboriginal to 3.2 non-Aboriginals in 1998). At the time of apprehension police assess the race of an alleged offender based on the person's physical appearance.

**Table 7**  
**Racial appearance of alleged offenders\***

Racial Appearance	1997		1998	
	No. of offenders	% of offenders	No. of offenders	% of offenders
Aboriginal	9	11.0	18	23.7
Non-Aboriginal	73	89.0	58	76.3
Total**	82	100.0	76	100.0

\* Racial appearance is based upon the perceptions of the police officer at the time of apprehension.

\*\* This information was missing for five individuals in 1998 and 12 individuals in 1997.

Table 8 details the age of alleged offenders at the time of their apprehension. As shown, the percentages of alleged offenders in each age group are similar for both years. Over half the offenders apprehended for *robbery in a dwelling* incidents reported during 1997 and 1998 were under the age of 24 (approximately 58% in both years), while only about 10% were aged 35 years and over.

Breaking the age groups down into adult and juvenile indicates that approximately 19% of alleged offenders in each year were juveniles (13 males and five females for 1997 incidents and 13 males and three females for 1998 incidents). This is a similar proportion to the number of juveniles charged in relation to all types of offences in 1998, as detailed in the report *Crime and Justice in South Australia, 1998: Offences Reported to Police, the Victims and Alleged Perpetrators* (Office of Crime Statistics, 1999: 235). According to that report, 17.6% of individuals apprehended by the police at least once in 1998 were aged 10-17, while 55.1% were aged 18-34 and only 2.2% were aged 60 years or over. However, it should be noted that

the number of juveniles apprehended does not necessarily reflect the number of offences committed by juveniles, just how often they are caught by the police.

**Table 8**  
**Age range of alleged offenders\***

Age range (yrs)	1997		1998	
	No. of offenders	% of offenders	No. of offenders	% of offenders
10-17	18	19.1	16	19.8
18-24	37	39.4	31	38.3
25-34	29	30.9	26	32.1
35-44	9	9.6	8	9.9
45 or over	1	1.1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Age is calculated at the time of apprehension.

### Comparison between victims and alleged offenders involved in incidents

Less than one half (43.6%) of the 94 incidents recorded in 1997 and 1998 which resulted in an apprehension involved only one victim and one offender. In contrast, 40 incidents involved one victim only but multiple offenders (including 18 incidents involving three or more offenders and one victim). As Table 9 shows, generally incidents involving multiple victims also involved more than one offender (9 of the 13 incidents).

**Table 9**  
**Number of victims by number of alleged offenders\***

No. of victims	Number of alleged offenders			Total
	One	Two	Three or more	
One	41 43.6%	22 23.4%	18 19.1%	81 86.2%
Two	4 4.3%	2 2.1%	5 5.3%	11 11.7%
Three or more	0 0%	1 1.1%	1 1.1%	2 2.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b> <b>47.9%</b>	<b>25</b> <b>26.6%</b>	<b>24</b> <b>25.5%</b>	<b>94</b> <b>100.0%</b>

\* Due to small numbers 1997 and 1998 data have been combined in this table.

Of all incidents recorded in 1997 and 1998 where apprehensions were made, the majority (50 of the 94 incidents or 53.2%) involved male victims and male perpetrators only. The next largest combination involved male perpetrators and female victims (19 incidents). In only four incidents were the perpetrators solely female, and of these, two involved male victims and two involved female victims. Overall, female perpetrators were more likely to offend in the company of men. Of the 20 incidents involving a female offender, 16 had at least one male as a co-offender.

**Table 10**  
**Sex of victim(s) by sex of offender(s)\***

Sex of victim(s)	Sex of alleged offender(s)			Total
	Female	Male	Combination of female & male	
Female	2 2.1%	19 20.2%	7 7.4%	28 29.8%
Male	2 2.1%	50 53.2%	8 8.5%	60 63.8%
Combination of female & male	0 0%	5 5.3%	1 1.1%	6 6.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b> <b>4.3%</b>	<b>74</b> <b>78.7%</b>	<b>16</b> <b>17.0%</b>	<b>94</b> <b>100.0%</b>

\* Due to small numbers 1997 and 1998 data have been combined in this table.

A comparison between the age of offenders and victims involved in incidents cleared via apprehension reveals no clear pattern, with victims frequently from different age groups than alleged perpetrators involved in the same incident. In fact, in less than one quarter of the cases (21 out of 94 or 22.3%) did the victim's and offender's age coincide. In nine incidents, the offender was older than the victim, while in two thirds of the incidents (34 out of 94 or 65.7%) the offender was younger than the victim. Also of interest is the fact that twenty-seven of the 94 incidents involved multiple offenders who fell within different age groups. Where alleged offenders were from different age groups, seven incidents involved a combination of juvenile and adult perpetrators. The most common combinations of age groups for offenders were 18-24 years and 25-34 years (11 incidents) and 10-17 years and 18-24 years (six incidents). Of the seven incidents involving victims from different age groups, only two incidents involved a combination of juvenile and adult victims.

**Table 11**  
**Age range of victims by age range of offenders\***

Victim age range (years)	Offender age range (years)							Comb. age gps.**	Total
	10-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+		
0-17	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	8
18-24	3	7	3	1	0	0	0	5	19
25-34	4	7	8	2	0	0	0	6	27
35-44	0	2	7	2	1	0	0	5	17
45-54	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	4	10
55-64	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
65+	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	4
Combination of age groups**	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	4	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>94</b>

\* Due to limited numbers 1997 and 1998 data have been combined in this table.

\*\* Where there are multiple individuals from different age groups incidents have been classified as involving persons of a 'combination of age groups'.

## Relationship between victims and alleged offenders

The relationship between victim and offender, as outlined in Table 12, has been derived from information entered in the original victim report.

**Table 12**  
**Relationship between the victims and alleged offenders by clearance status of incident\***

Relationship	'Cleared'	'Not cleared'		Total
	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a police apprehension	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a NFA request	No. & % of incidents which were not cleared	No. & % of incidents recorded by police
<b>1997</b>				
Stranger	15 30.0%	0 **	44 86.3%	59 56.7%
Acquaintance	18 36.0%	1 **	2 3.9%	21 20.2%
Friend/n'bour/housemate	6 12.0%	0 **	0 0%	6 5.8%
Close relation	5 10.0%	1 **	0 0%	6 5.8%
Combination	3 6.0%	0 **	0 0%	3 2.9%
Other	2 4.0%	0 **	2 3.9%	4 3.8%
Unknown	1 2.0%	1 **	3 5.9%	5 4.8%
Total	50 100.0%	3 **	51 100.0%	104 100.0%
<b>1998</b>				
Stranger	22 50.0%	3 **	67 87.0%	92 69.7%
Acquaintance	10 22.7%	4 **	5 6.5%	19 14.4%
Friend/n'bour/housemate	4 9.1%	2 **	0 0%	6 4.5%
Close relation	3 6.8%	2 **	2 2.6%	7 5.3%
Combination	3 6.8%	0 **	1 1.3%	4 3.0%
Other	2 4.5%	0 **	2 2.6%	4 3.0%
Unknown	0 0%	0 **	0 0%	0 0%
Total	44 100.0%	11 **	77 100.0%	132 100.0%

\*\* Numbers too small to justify the calculation of percentages.

As shown, in almost 60% of incidents recorded in 1997 where an apprehension was made, the perpetrator was known to the victim, either as an acquaintance (36.0%), friend/neighbour/housemate (12.0%) or 'close relation' (10.0%). In contrast, only one in three such incidents involved a stranger as the perpetrator. In 1998, the situation was somewhat different; a much higher proportion of incidents resulting in an apprehension

---

involved a stranger, while a lower percentage involved an acquaintance. In fact in 1998, half the incidents where an apprehension resulted were described as involving a stranger as the perpetrator.

Not surprisingly, a much higher proportion of 'not cleared' incidents involved a stranger (86.3% in 1997 and 87.0% in 1998) than was the case for those incidents cleared by way of an apprehension (30.0% in 1997 and 50.0% in 1998).

That more apprehensions were made in relation to incidents involving acquaintances, friend/neighbours/housemates and other close relatives than strangers, is illustrated more clearly in Table 13. Of all incidents involving strangers, approximately three-quarters (74.6% in 1997 and 72.8% in 1998) were not cleared, while only one quarter resulted in an apprehension. In contrast, in 1997 of those 33 incidents where the offender(s) were all known to the victim, almost 9 in 10 resulted in an apprehension. Although the figure was lower in 1998 (with apprehensions occurring in just over half of such incidents) it was still high compared with the apprehension level for strangers (23.9%).

In three incidents reported in 1997 and 11 incidents reported in 1998 the complainant signed a form requesting 'no further action'. Of these 14 incidents only three involved alleged perpetrators who were strangers to the victim.

Seven incidents (three in 1997 and four in 1998) involved multiple perpetrators where the victim knew some of the alleged offenders but others were strangers. In a further nine incidents in 1997 and four incidents in 1998 the relationship between victim and perpetrator was either unknown or 'other'.

**Table 13**  
**Clearance status of incidents by relationship between victims and alleged offenders**

Clearance status of incident	Stranger	Relationship between victim and perpetrator			Total
		Known to the victim	Combination of stranger & known	Other/ unknown	
<b>1997</b>					
Cleared					
App.	15 25.4%	29 **	3 **	3 **	50 48.1%
NFA	0 0%	2 **	0 **	1 **	3 2.9%
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>15</b> <b>25.4%</b>	<b>31</b> <b>**</b>	<b>3</b> <b>**</b>	<b>4</b> <b>**</b>	<b>53</b> <b>51.0%</b>
Not cleared	44 74.6%	2 **	0 **	5 **	51 49.0%
Total	59 100.0%	33 **	3 **	9 **	104 100.0%
<b>1998</b>					
Cleared					
App.	22 23.9%	17 **	3 **	2 **	44 33.3%
NFA	3 3.3%	8 **	0 **	0 **	11 8.3%
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>25</b> <b>27.2%</b>	<b>25</b> <b>**</b>	<b>3</b> <b>**</b>	<b>2</b> <b>**</b>	<b>55</b> <b>41.7%</b>
Not cleared	67 72.8%	7 **	1 **	2 **	77 58.3%
Total	92 100.0%	32 **	4 **	4 **	132 100.0%

\*\* Numbers too small to justify calculating percentages.

### CHARGES LAID BY POLICE

As indicated earlier, more than one charge may result from a single *robbery in a dwelling* incident. For the purposes of the ensuing analysis, all charges from each robbery incident have been included. However, if the apprehension report also contained charges that stemmed from a non-*robbery in a dwelling* incident, these were not counted. Whether some offenders faced multiple counts of the same offence could not be determined on the basis of the data available in this study.

#### *Number of charges per offender*

Over 50% of offenders allegedly involved in *robbery in a dwelling* incidents recorded during 1997 and 1998 faced only one charge, while approximately one third faced two charges (see Table 14). The highest number of charges recorded against one individual was six. This was for an incident reported in 1998. It should be noted that the number of victims involved in an incident influences the number of charges per offender. For example, the individual charged with six offences was allegedly involved in an incident where there were six victims.

**Table 14**  
**Number of charges per alleged offender**

No. of charges	1997		1998	
	No. of offenders	% of offenders	No. of offenders	% of offenders
One	49	52.7	45	55.6
Two	31	33.3	24	29.6
Three	11	11.8	8	9.9
Four	2	2.2	3	3.7
Five	0	0	0	0
Six	0	0	1	1.2
Total*	93	100.0	81	100.0

\* One individual allegedly involved in an incident recorded in 1997 faced no charges. Instead, the police report pertained to the issuance of a warrant/summons. He therefore is not counted in this table. A further four people were the subject of warrants/summons or restraining orders, and had also been subsequently apprehended and charged in relation to *robbery in a dwelling* incidents. These four individuals are included in this table.

### *Offence combinations*

Because of the criteria used to select the original sample of *robbery in a dwelling* incidents, each victim report inevitably included at least one robbery offence. In 1998, the 132 reported incidents involved 157 robbery offences (recorded against 157 victims). Of these, 80 (51.0%) were listed as *armed robbery* offences (14 with a firearm and 66 with another weapon), and 77 (49.0%) were *unarmed robberies* (55 with violence and 22 with no violence). In 1997, the 104 incidents involved 115 robbery offences (recorded against 115 victims) of which 43 (37.4%) were *armed robberies* and 72 (62.6%) were *unarmed robberies*. Yet, despite all incidents recorded in 1997 and 1998 being considered to be robberies at the time that the victim report was completed, Table 15 illustrates, that a number of the individuals apprehended in relation to these incidents were charged with offence combinations which did not include a robbery. It should be stressed, however, that this does not necessarily mean these individuals were charged with less serious offences. As will become evident in later discussions, in some instances individuals were charged with more serious crimes (for example, attempted murder).

In 1997, of the 93 suspects apprehended for a criminal offence relating to a *robbery in a dwelling* incident 72 alleged offenders faced at least one robbery charge. Of the 72 individuals charged with robbery, 37 had no other charges. The remaining 35 alleged offenders were charged with other types of offences as well as robbery.

In 1998 of the 81 offenders apprehended, 14 (17.3%) did not face any robbery charges. Of the remaining 67 offenders who were charged with robbery, 43 (53.1%) faced solely robbery charges, while 24 offenders (29.6%) were charged with other offence types as well as robbery. So, although police originally recorded all of the incidents examined as robbery offences on the victim reports, this was not always what was charged (on the Apprehension Report). In total, 21 individuals in 1997 and 14 in 1998 did not face any robbery charges and were instead charged with other offence types.

In terms of offence combinations, over half of the alleged offenders were charged with only one type of offence (55.9% or 52 individuals apprehended for incidents reported in 1997 and 63.0% or 51 alleged offenders in 1998). Of the alleged offenders charged with only one offence type, for 37 of the 53 in 1997 and 43 of the 51 in 1998 the type of offence involved was robbery. Over one third (37.6%) of alleged offenders in 1997 and approximately three in ten (29.6%) in 1998 were charged with two offence types. Six persons in 1997 and five persons in 1998 were charged with offences from three different offence types. The greatest number of

---

offence types recorded for an alleged offender was four. In this 1998 incident the four offence types involved were robbery and extortion, offences against the person, burglary, break and enter and larceny and receiving.

One 'offence type' does not mean that the offender was charged with only one offence. In fact, they may have faced several offences, all of the same 'type'. For example, assault, sexual assault and kidnap/abduction are all different offences, but each is categorised as the same offence type, namely as an 'offence against the person'. Hence, the figures presented in Table 15 have a different meaning from those presented in later tables (such as Table 16).



**Table 15**  
**Offence combinations charged\***

Offence type	1997*		1998	
	No. of offenders	% of offenders	No. of offenders	% of offenders
<b>One offence type</b>				
Robbery	37	39.8	43	53.1
Extortion	1	1.1	0	0
Offences against the person	5	5.4	1	1.2
Burglary, break & enter	4	4.3	4	4.9
Larceny and receiving	2	2.2	2	2.5
Property damage	0	0	1	1.2
Offences against good order	3	3.2	0	0
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>55.9</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>63.0</b>
<b>Two offence types</b>				
Robbery				
+ Against the person	12	12.9	10	12.3
+ Extortion	1	1.1	0	0
+ Burglary, break & enter	5	5.4	7	8.6
+ Larceny and receiving	5	5.4	2	2.5
+ Property damage	5	5.4	0	0
+ Good order	0	0	1	1.2
+ Missing/unknown**	3	3.2	0	0
Against the person				
+ Extortion	1	1.1	0	0
+ Larceny and receiving	1	1.1	0	0
+ Property damage	0	0	1	1.2
Burglary, break and enter				
+ Larceny and receiving	0	0	2	2.5
+ Missing/unknown**	2	2.2	0	0
Larceny and receiving				
+ Property damage	0	0	1	1.2
+ Good order	1	1.1	0	0
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>37.6</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>29.6</b>
<b>Three offence types</b>				
Robbery				
+ Against the person			+ Burglary, break & enter	0
+ Against the person			+ Larceny and receiving	2
+ Against the person			+ Property damage	2
+ Against the person			+ Good order	1
Against the person				
+ Burglary, break & enter			+ Missing/unknown**	1
+ Larceny and receiving			+ Property damage	0
Burglary, break and enter				
+ Larceny & receiving			+ Property damage	0
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6.2</b>
<b>Four offence types</b>				
Robbery				
+ Against the person			+ Burglary, break & enter	
			+ Larceny and receiving	0
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.2</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* In 1997 one alleged offender was the subject of a summons/warrant, but at the time of this study had not been apprehended and charged. He has therefore been omitted from this table.

\*\* Information on offence type was missing for six offences and thus these have been listed as 'missing/unknown'. This categorisation impacts upon the number of offence types. For example, where two offence types are listed, such as 'robbery' and 'missing/unknown', it is possible that some of the unknown offences could be robbery offences and therefore of the same offence type.

---

### *Offences charged*

While the above discussion related to combinations of offence types, here we look in more detail at all charges laid. It should again be emphasised that charge information relates specifically to the *robbery in a dwelling* incidents examined. It does not include any offences listed on the Apprehension Reports that stemmed from non-robbery incidents.

Incidents reported in 1997 resulted in slightly fewer charges per incident (including fewer robbery charges) and fewer charges per offender, compared with incidents reported in 1998. The 94 offenders allegedly involved in the 50 incidents reported in 1997 that were cleared via an apprehension were charged with 146 offences. On average this equated to 2.9 charges per cleared incident and 1.6 charges per alleged offender. Of the 146 charges, 54.8% (n=80) were robbery charges (an average of 1.6 robbery charges per 'cleared' incident and 0.85 per offender).<sup>5</sup>

The 81 offenders apprehended in relation to the 44 incidents reported in 1998 that were cleared by way of an apprehension were charged with 135 offences. Thus, there was an average of 3.1 charges per 'cleared' incident and 1.7 charges per alleged offender. Robbery charges made up 79 of the 135 charges (58.5%), giving an average of 1.8 robbery charges per 'cleared' incident and 0.98 per offender.<sup>6</sup>

As shown in Table 16, of the 80 robbery charges stemming from incidents reported in 1997, only one in five were *armed robberies* (21.2%). In comparison, nearly half the robbery charges resulting from incidents reported in 1998 were *armed robberies* (45.6%). The main reason for this increase was the much higher proportion of *robbery with a weapon other than a firearm* offences recorded in 1998. This offence accounted for only nine of the 80 robbery charges in 1997 (11.3%) compared with 26 of the 79 (32.9%) listed against the 1998 incidents.

Apart from robbery charges, the most common offence recorded in both years was *burglary, break and enter*, constituting 8.2% of charges in 1997 and 11.9% of charges in 1998. Although the numbers are small, a range of serious offences against the person charges were also laid, including attempted murder, threaten life or injury and rape. It seems then that, in at least some of the cases, police opted to lay these more serious charges either as well as, or instead of, robbery charges.

One final point of interest to emerge from Table 16 is the comparatively high number of *kidnap/abduction* charges laid in 1997. According to the report narratives, the nature of these incidents varied. For example in a 1998 incident, the victim met the alleged offenders in a car park and they all then went back to the victim's house. There the alleged offenders bound and robbed the victim, later taking him to a redi-teller to withdraw money, before dumping him.

---

<sup>5</sup> In 1997 there were also three non-offence matters, two relating to the issuance of a warrant/summons and one relating to the issuance of a restraining order.

<sup>6</sup> In 1998 there were two non-offence matters, namely issuance of a warrant/summons and issuance of a restraining order.

**Table 16**  
**Type of offences charged**

Charge	1997*		1998	
	Number	%	Number	%
Attempted murder	0	0	2	1.5
Assault occasioning ABH/GBH	4	2.7	3	2.2
Other assault	4	2.7	9	6.7
Rape/sexual assault	0	0	1	0.7
Kidnap/abduction	15	10.3	2	1.5
Threaten life or injury	3	2.1	4	3.0
Act likely to endanger life/harm	3	2.1	0	0
Extortion	3	2.1	0	0
Robbery with firearm	8	5.5	10	7.4
Robbery with offensive weapon	9	6.2	26	19.3
Unarmed robbery with violence	24	16.4	16	11.9
Unarmed robbery - no violence	39	26.7	27	20.0
Burglary, break and enter	12	8.2	16	11.9
Receiving/unlawful possession	1	0.7	3	2.2
Illegal use/interference with a motor vehicle	6	4.1	7	5.2
Larceny	4	2.7	3	2.2
Damage property	6	4.1	5	3.7
Trespass	1	0.7	0	0
Breach of D.V. restraining order	1	0.7	1	0.7
Found with intent to commit crime	3	2.1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* The type of charge was unknown for six offences recorded in 1997.

### ***Robbery charges***

Table 17 examines robbery charges in further detail, recording the number of alleged offenders charged with robbery and the number of charges these offenders faced. In 1997, of the 72 alleged offenders charged with robbery, 64 individuals faced one robbery charge and eight offenders faced two robbery charges. In 1998, 67 alleged offenders were charged with 79 robbery charges. Of the 67 offenders, 59 had one robbery charge, seven individuals faced two robbery charges and one person faced six robbery charges (this incident involved six victims).

**Table 17**  
**Type of robbery charge by number of offenders and number of charges**

Type of robbery charge	Number of offenders	Number of charges	Number of robbery charges per offender
<b>1997</b>			
Robbery with firearm	6	8	4 offenders with 1 charge 2 offenders with 2 charges
Robbery with offensive weapon	9	9	9 offenders with 1 charge
Unarmed robbery with violence	24	24	24 offenders with 1 charge
Unarmed robbery - no violence	33	39	27 offenders with 1 charge 6 offenders with 2 charges
<i>Total</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>64 offenders with 1 charge 8 offenders with 2 charges</i>
<b>1998</b>			
Robbery with firearm	5	10	4 offenders with 1 charge 1 offender with 6 charges
Robbery with offensive weapon	25	26	24 offenders with 1 charge 1 offender with 2 charges
Unarmed robbery with violence	15	16	14 offenders with 1 charge 1 offender with 2 charges
Unarmed robbery - no violence	22	27	17 offenders with 1 charge 5 offenders with 2 charges
<i>Total</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>79</i>	<i>59 offenders with 1 charge 7 offenders with 2 charges 1 offender with 6 charges</i>

As shown in Table 18, males accounted for the majority of all robbery charges in both years. However, it is worth noting that, although the numbers are small, females accounted for a higher proportion of unarmed than armed robberies in 1997 and 1998. Only one female faced an armed robbery charge in 1997 arising from a *robbery in a dwelling* incident, as did four females in 1998.

**Table 18**  
**Sex of alleged offender by type of robbery charge**

Sex	1997			1998		
	Armed robbery	Unarmed robbery	Total	Armed robbery	Unarmed robbery	Total
Male	16 **	52 82.5%	68 85.0%	32 **	34 79.1%	66 83.5%
Female	1 **	11 17.5%	12 15.0%	4 **	9 20.9%	13 16.5%
Total	17 **	63 100.0%	80 100.0%	36 **	43 100.0%	79 100.0%

\*\* Numbers too small to justify the calculation of percentages

A more detailed breakdown of the type of robbery charges laid against males and females is provided in Table 19. While it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions because of the small numbers involved, of note here is the shift, between 1997 and 1998, in the relative distribution of armed and unarmed robberies charged against males. In particular, in 1997, *robbery with a weapon other than a firearm* accounted for only 13.2% of robbery charges laid against male

suspects. In 1998, this increased to 34.8%. Conversely, each of the two unarmed robbery categories recorded a decrease.

**Table 19**  
**Robbery charges by sex of alleged offender**

Type of robbery charge*	1997		1998	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Robbery with firearm	1 **	7 10.3%	1 **	9 13.6%
Robbery with offensive weapon	0 **	9 13.2%	3 **	23 34.8%
Unarmed robbery with violence	5 **	19 27.2%	5 **	11 16.7%
Unarmed robbery - no violence	6 **	33 48.5%	4 **	23 34.8%
Total	12 **	68 100.0%	13 **	66 100.0%

\* These categories are mutually exclusive. In other words, each individual was charged with only one type of robbery offence.

\*\* Numbers too small to justify the calculation of percentages.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF ROBBERY IN A DWELLING INCIDENTS

### Incident location

The majority of *robbery in a dwelling* incidents recorded during 1997 and 1998 where apprehensions were made occurred in a house (64.0% in 1997 and 88.6% in 1998). Overall, there seemed to be no relationship between location and whether an apprehension resulted or not. In 1997, a higher proportion of incidents cleared by apprehension occurred in a flat compared with those that were not cleared (36.0% compared with 17.6% respectively). However in 1998, the reverse situation applied, with 11.4% of cleared incidents occurring in a flat compared with 22.1% of uncleared incidents.

**Table 20**  
**Type of dwelling by clearance status of incident**

	'Cleared'		'Not cleared'	Total
	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a police apprehension	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a NFA request	No. & % of incidents which were not cleared	No. & % of incidents recorded by police
<b>1997</b>				
Flat	18 36.0%	1 **	9 17.6%	28 26.9%
House	32 64.0%	2 **	42 82.4%	76 73.1%
Other	0 0%	0 **	0 0%	0 0%
Total	50 100.0%	3 **	51 100.0%	104 100.0%
<b>1998</b>				
Flat	5 11.4%	2 **	17 22.1%	24 18.2%
House	39 88.6%	8 **	59 76.6%	106 80.3%
Other	0 0%	1 **	1 1.3%	2 1.5%
Total	44 100.0%	11 **	77 100.0%	132 100.0%

\*\* Numbers too small to justify the calculation of percentages.

The small number of recorded incidents that occurred outside the metropolitan area means no reliable comparisons can be drawn between incidents where an apprehension was made compared with those where no apprehension resulted. In both 1997 and 1998 the majority of the incidents occurred in the metropolitan area (90.1% in 1997 and 85.5% in 1998). Similarly, the majority of incidents where an apprehension resulted also occurred in the metropolitan area. Nevertheless, there is some indication that the likelihood of an apprehension was slightly higher for country-based than for city-based incidents. As Table 21 indicates, country-based incidents accounted for a higher proportion of incidents cleared by apprehension than uncleared incidents (14.3% compared with 6.1% in 1997; 25.6% compared with 6.5% in 1998).

**Table 21**  
**Geographical location of offences by incident clearance status**

Location	'Cleared'		'Not cleared'	Total
	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a police apprehension	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a NFA request	No. & % of incidents which were not cleared	No. & % of incidents recorded by police
<b>1997</b>				
Metropolitan	42 85.7%	3 **	46 93.9%	91 90.1%
Not metropolitan	7 14.3%	0 **	3 6.1%	10 9.9%
Total*	49 100.0%	3 **	49 100.0%	101 100.0%
<b>1998</b>				
Metropolitan	32 74.4%	8 **	72 93.5%	112 85.5%
Not metropolitan	11 25.6%	3 **	5 6.5%	19 14.5%
Total*	43 100.0%	11 **	77 100.0%	131 100.0%

\* This information was missing in relation to three incidents in 1997, one incident where an apprehension resulted and two incidents where no apprehension resulted. Information was also missing in relation to one incident recorded in 1998 where an apprehension was made.

\*\* Numbers too small to justify the calculation of percentages.

This is illustrated more clearly in Table 22. Of the 203 metropolitan incidents recorded in 1997 and 1998, only one third were cleared by way of an apprehension, whereas of the 29 country-based incidents, almost two thirds resulted in an apprehension. Again, it should be stressed that the number of incidents recorded in non-metropolitan areas is too small to draw any conclusions from these data.

**Table 22**  
**Clearance status of incident by geographical location\***

Clearance status	Metropolitan	Country
<i>Cleared</i>		
Apprehension made	74 36.5%	18 62.1%
No further action	11 5.4%	3 10.3%
<i>Not cleared</i>		
	118 58.1%	8 27.6%
Total	203 100.0%	29 100.0%

\* In this table 1997 and 1998 data have been combined.

### Involvement of weapons

Overall, in 1997, proportionally fewer *robbery in a dwelling* incidents cleared by way of an apprehension involved the use of a weapon than was the case in 1998 (56.8% compared with 40.0% respectively.) The same finding applied to incidents that were not cleared. Overall, there is no evidence of a strong correlation between the presence of a weapon and the likelihood that the perpetrators will be caught. Although, in both years a higher proportion of incidents cleared via an apprehension involved a weapon than did uncleared incidents (40.0% compared with 35.3% in 1997 and 57.8% compared with 48.1% in 1998), the differences are too small to indicate a meaningful relationship.

**Table 23**  
**Involvement of any weapon by incident clearance status**

	'Cleared'		'Not cleared'	Total
	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a police apprehension	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a NFA request	No. & % of incidents which were not cleared	No. & % of incidents recorded by police
<b>1997</b>				
Weapon	20 40.0%	1 **	18 35.3%	39 37.5%
No weapon	30 60.0%	2 **	33 64.7%	65 62.5%
Total	50 100.0%	3 **	51 100.0%	104 100.0%
<b>1998</b>				
Weapon	25 56.8%	4 **	37 48.1%	66 50.0%
No weapon	19 43.2%	7 **	40 51.9%	66 50.0%
Total	44 100.0%	11 **	77 100.0%	132 100.0%

\*\* Numbers too small to justify the calculation of percentages.

Table 24 details, for those incidents that involved at least one weapon, the type of weapon involved. The categories are not mutually exclusive, as more than one weapon type could be involved in a single incident. Also it is not possible to determine whether in one incident one offender was carrying multiple weapons, or multiple offenders were each carrying one weapon.

Breaking down the incidents into those where an apprehension was made, those where no apprehension resulted, and those where there was a no further action request by the victim leaves small numbers in each category, making conclusions difficult. However, the breakdown of type of weapon used in those incidents that were cleared by way of an apprehension is broadly similar to the type of weapon used in those incidents that were not cleared. The most commonly used weapon involved in 1997 and 1998 incidents cleared via apprehension and 'not cleared' was a knife, followed by a club/bat/bar.



**Table 24**  
**Weapon type by incident clearance status**

	'Cleared'		'Not cleared'	Total
	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a police apprehension	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a NFA request	No. & % of incidents which were not cleared	No. & % of incidents recorded by police
<b>1997</b>				
Firearm	4 **	0 **	5 **	9 **
Knife	9 **	1 **	6 **	16 **
Tool	1 **	0 **	1 **	2 **
Club/bat/bar	6 **	0 **	6 **	12 **
Other weapon	2 **	0 **	3 **	5 **
Unknown	0 **	0 **	3 **	3 **
<i>Total no. of incidents*</i>	20	1	18	39
<b>1998</b>				
Firearm	3 **	0 **	5 **	8 **
Knife	10 **	2 **	16 **	28 **
Tool	4 **	0 **	4 **	8 **
Club/bat/bar	9 **	2 **	11 **	22 **
Other weapon	3 **	0 **	6 **	9 **
Unknown	0 **	0 **	0 **	0 **
<i>Total no. of incidents</i>	25	4	37	66

\*\* Numbers too small to justify the calculation of percentages.

\*The sum of the number of firearms recorded is greater than the number of incidents because more than one weapon may be involved per incident.

The small numbers involved also make it difficult to discern any pattern in the number of weapon types used. In 1997, it seems that incidents where an apprehension was made generally involved one type of weapon, while incidents where no apprehension resulted more often involved two or three weapon types (see Table 25). However, this difference was not evident in 1998, with a single weapon type being involved in 22 of the 25 incidents cleared by apprehension and 32 of the 37 of those not cleared. All 'no further action' incidents where a weapon was carried (one incident in 1997 and four in 1998) involved only one type of weapon.

**Table 25**  
**Number of weapon types used by clearance status of incident**

	‘Cleared’ No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a police apprehension	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a NFA request	‘Not cleared’ No. & % of incidents which were not cleared	Total No. & % of incidents recorded by police
<b>1997</b>				
One	18 **	1 **	13 **	32 **
Two	2 **	0 **	4 **	6 **
Three	0 **	0 **	1 **	1 **
<i>Total</i>	20 **	1 **	18 **	39 **
<b>1998</b>				
One	22 **	4 **	32 **	58 87.9%
Two	2 **	0 **	5 **	7 10.6%
Three	1 **	0 **	0 **	1 1.5%
<i>Total</i>	25 **	4 **	37 **	66 100.0%

\*\* Numbers too small to justify the calculation of percentages.

### **Time, day and month of offence**

In the following section, where there were a number of offence dates, the date of the first offence has been used to calculate time intervals. If an apprehension was made in relation to some of the offences in an incident, but not in relation to other offences in the same incident, the incident has been included in the ‘apprehension made’ category.

The time of the day when incidents occurred was examined according to the clearance status of the incident. Overall, the majority of both cleared and uncleared incidents fell within the 6pm to 3am time slot. Given the small numbers recorded in each time period it is doubtful that any slight differences observed between cleared and uncleared incidents have any real significance.

Only minor differences emerged between cleared and uncleared incidents when examining the day of the week that incidents occurred. In both categories incidents were fairly evenly spread across the week.

Similarly, there was no clear pattern in relation to the month of occurrence for incidents that resulted in an apprehension and those that were not cleared. Over the two 12 month periods examined the number of incidents occurring in each month was relatively small and reasonably evenly spread across the time period.

In summary, analysis of time of the day, day of the week and month of occurrence of incidents was undertaken, although, no patterns emerged from the comparison of cleared and uncleared incidents. Overall, there seemed to be no relationship between when a *robbery in a dwelling* offence took place and the likelihood of police catching the perpetrator.

---

### **Time elapsed between an offence occurring, its report to the police and apprehension of an alleged offender**

The time that elapsed between an offence being committed and it being recorded by the police has been measured on the basis of incidents. It should be noted however, that in a small number of incidents co-victims reported the same incident on different days. This could be due to a number of reasons, such as one victim being unavailable when the police were obtaining statements at the time of the incident or being initially reluctant to report the offence. The following incident reported in 1998 is an example of this type of scenario. In this incident there were two reported victims (a husband and wife), resulting in two victim reports. On both victim reports the same offence date was entered. One victim report indicated that the offence was reported on the day of the incident while the other victim was listed as reporting the matter five days later. A similar example, which also related to an incident reported in 1998, involved six victims, three of whom reported the offence on the day it allegedly occurred, two victims who reported the offence approximately one week later and the sixth who reported the matter the following week. In calculating the time lapse between date of offence and date of report for these and other similar incidents, the first report date was used.

Table 26 indicates the number of days that elapsed between the time an incident was allegedly committed and the time it was first reported to the police. In 1997, almost two thirds (64.4%) of all incidents were reported on the day that they occurred. In four of these incidents an offender was also apprehended on the same day. A further 26.0% of incidents were reported the following day and all but three incidents were reported within a week of them occurring. In 1997 the longest time that elapsed between an offence occurring and its report was 15 days.

In comparison to incidents reported in 1997, in 1998 a slightly higher percentage of incidents were reported to police on the day that they occurred. In seven in ten cases (70.5%) recorded in 1998, the incident was reported to the police on the day it occurred (in eight of these incidents alleged offenders were also apprehended on the same day). Only six incidents recorded in 1998 were not reported within a week of them having occurred. Four of these were reported more than one month after they occurred, including one incident that was reported over a year after it allegedly took place. In this case, the victim and alleged offender had been sharing a house, the victim alleging he was subject to continued abuse over an extended period of time. Although, according to the victim report narrative, the offender faced numerous charges relating to his conduct over this period, there was only one robbery incident that fitted the criteria to warrant inclusion in this study. It seems that the victim reported the behaviour to police over a year after the robbery incident took place, after which the police quickly apprehended the alleged offender. This lengthy time lag between an incident occurring and it being reported did not apply to any of the incidents recorded in 1997.

Because the majority of incidents were reported on the day of occurrence, comparisons between time taken to report and the likelihood of police apprehending a suspect are difficult. Nevertheless, Table 26 indicates that no such relationship existed. In both years, the majority of incidents cleared by way of an apprehension were reported on the day they occurred (60.0% in 1997 and 70.5% in 1998) as were the majority of uncleared incidents (68.6% in 1997 and 72.7% in 1998).

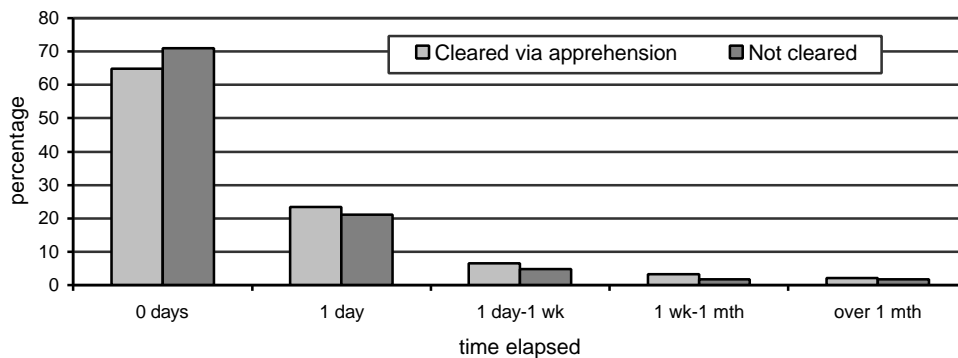
**Table 26**  
**Time elapsed between an incident occurring and it being reported by clearance status\***

Time elapsed	'Cleared'		'Not cleared'	Total
	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a police apprehension	No. & % of incidents cleared by way of a NFA request	No. & % of incidents which were not cleared	No. & % of incidents recorded by police
<b>1997</b>				
0 days	30 60.0%	2 **	35 68.6%	67 64.4%
1 day	15 30.0%	0 **	12 23.5%	27 26.0%
2 day - 1 week	4 8.0%	1 **	2 3.9%	7 6.7%
1 week - 1 month	1 2.0%	0 **	2 3.9%	3 2.9%
More than 1 month	0 0%	0 **	0 0%	0 0%
<i>Total</i>	50 100.0%	3 **	51 100.0%	104 100.0%
<b>1998</b>				
0 days	31 70.5%	6 **	56 72.7%	93 70.5%
1 day	7 15.9%	5 **	15 19.5%	27 20.5%
2 day - 1 week	2 4.5%	0 **	4 5.2%	6 4.5%
1 week - 1 month	2 4.5%	0 **	0 0%	2 0.8%
More than 1 month	2 4.5%	0 **	2 2.6%	4 1.5%
<i>Total</i>	44 100.0%	12 **	77 100.0%	132 100.0%

\* Report date has been measured according to the date any victim involved in the incident first reported it.

\*\* Numbers too small to justify the calculation of percentages.

**Figure 2**  
**Time elapsed between an incident occurring and its report to the police by clearance status\***



---

\* No further action request incidents have not been included in this graph as the percentages were too small.

\*\* In this figure 1997 and 1998 data have been combined.

The following section looks at the time elapsed between an incident being reported and apprehension of the alleged offender. Obviously this time period can only be measured for incidents where an apprehension was made. As the data were extracted in October 1999 it is possible that some apprehensions were made after that time, which are not captured here.

Once an incident was reported, the time until the apprehension of an alleged offender has been measured in terms of individuals apprehended rather than incidents. This is because different offenders involved in the same incident are likely to have been apprehended on different dates. For example, in one incident reported in 1998 there were four alleged offenders involved, two of whom were apprehended in December 1998 while the other two were apprehended in January 1999. In another case the two alleged offenders were also apprehended on different days but only one day apart.

The length of time that elapsed between an offence being committed and the date an offender was apprehended has not been examined in detail, because any delay could be due to the time taken by the victim to report the offence. In some cases there were lengthy delays between offence date and apprehension date only because the victim delayed making a report to the police.

Table 27 indicates the time elapsed between the date an incident was first reported and the date when an alleged offender was apprehended. For incidents recorded in 1997, 12.8% of offenders were apprehended on the day the incident was reported while half (50.0%) were caught in the first week. At the other end of the spectrum, some alleged offenders were apprehended up to six months after the incident was reported. For example, in one case, involving one victim and one alleged offender, it took 202 days before an apprehension was made, although the victim had reported the offence on the day it occurred. This offender was allegedly responsible for a number of burglaries and rapes occurring over a period of some years (including the robbery incident that was part of this study). Another case, again involving one victim and one offender, saw 191 days elapse between the time of report and the time of apprehension. Again, this offender was allegedly involved in other offences. The most recent of these, an incident not included in this study because it was not a *robbery in a dwelling*, occurred a few days prior to his apprehension. The police apprehended this individual because he was observed in a stolen vehicle. He was then found to be in possession of an item reported as stolen by the victim of the *robbery in a dwelling* incident. He was subsequently charged in relation to this and other matters.

Of the incidents recorded in 1998, approximately one quarter of alleged offenders were apprehended on the same day as the incident was reported, although, as noted earlier, this is not necessarily the same date as the incident occurred. Over half (65.4%) of the alleged offenders were apprehended within a week of the incident being reported to the police. As distinct from incidents recorded in 1997, no offenders were apprehended more than six months after the incident was reported. The longest time that elapsed between the report of an incident and the time when at least one offender was apprehended in relation to 1998 incidents was 96 days. This case involved one victim and two alleged offenders (both of whom were known to the victim). The robbery incident occurred in early 1998 (although there were other incidents which allegedly took place over the next few months), but was not reported until the middle of that year. On the day the incident was reported a restraint order was issued in relation to one of the offenders, and both were arrested later that year.

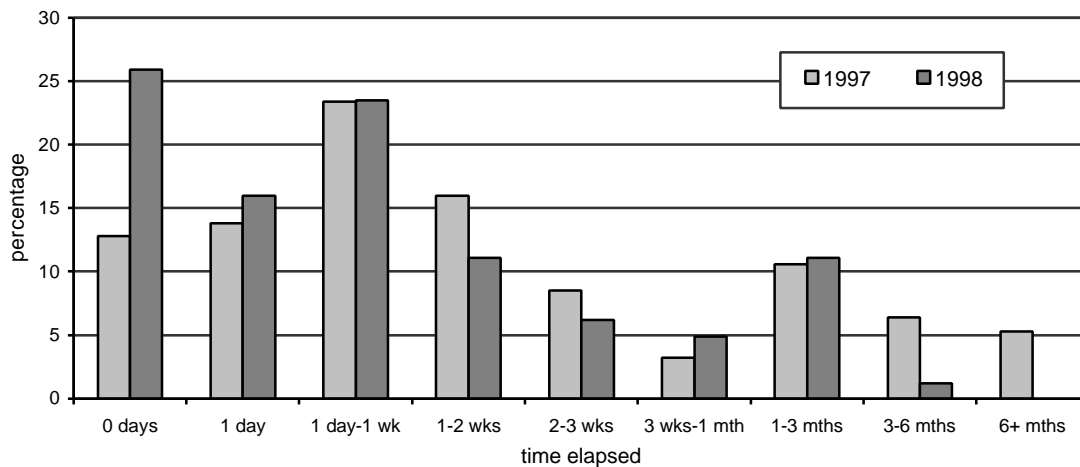
Another case where there was a relatively lengthy delay between time of report and apprehension of at least one offender involved an incident that occurred in the latter half of 1998. The victim reported the offence on the day it occurred, but the alleged offender was not

apprehended until early 1999. The case narrative indicates the victim was an elderly woman who was robbed in her home by an unknown person. While the victim was unable to identify the intruder, the police, upon attending the house, located a fingerprint at the scene. The print was later identified as belonging to the accused in the matter who was then arrested and subsequently charged.

**Table 27**  
**Length of time between the date an incident was first reported and apprehension of an alleged offender**

Time elapsed	1997		1998	
	No. of offenders	% of offenders	No. of offenders	% of offenders
0 days	12	12.8	21	25.9
1 day	13	13.8	13	16.0
2 day - 1 week	22	23.4	19	23.5
1 - 2 weeks	15	16.0	9	11.1
2 - 3 weeks	8	8.5	5	6.2
3 weeks - 1 month	3	3.2	4	4.9
1 - 3 months	10	10.6	9	11.1
3 - 6 months	6	6.4	1	1.2
More than 6 months	5	5.3	0	0
Total	94	100.0	81	100.0

**Figure 3**  
**Time elapsed between report of an incident and apprehension of an alleged offender**



If the time elapsed between report and apprehension is measured in terms of incidents rather than individuals, taking first report to first apprehension date, we find that for incidents cleared, once the incident was reported to the police an apprehension was generally made relatively quickly. In just under half the cleared incidents recorded in 1997 (21 out of 50) and over half recorded in 1998 (27 out of the 44) less than a week elapsed between the reporting of the incident and the apprehension of at least one alleged offender.

---

## CONCLUSION

This Bulletin analyses apprehension data stemming from *robbery in a dwelling* incidents recorded by police in 1997 and 1998. It considers the nature of the incidents that resulted in an apprehension and compares these incidents with those where no apprehension resulted. It also examines the characteristics of the individuals apprehended by the police in relation to these incidents.

Overall, these data indicate there was an increase in the number of *robbery in a dwelling* incidents recorded from 1997 to 1998 (104 to 132). However, as at October 1999, fewer incidents had been cleared by way of an apprehension (50 incidents in 1997 and 44 in 1998). In the next stage of this ongoing research, the Office of Crime Statistics will look at those cases that proceeded to court and the outcomes and penalties received.

---

## REFERENCES

Hunter, N. and Marshall, J. (2000) *Information Bulletin 12: Robbery in a Dwelling or Home Invasion?* Office of Crime Statistics: Adelaide, South Australia.

Marshall, J. (1999) *Information Bulletin 11: Home Invasion in South Australia.* Office of Crime Statistics: Adelaide, South Australia.

Office of Crime Statistics (1999) *Crime and Justice in South Australia, 1998: Offences Reported to Police, the Victims and Alleged Perpetrators.* Office of Crime Statistics: Adelaide, South Australia.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are extended to Joy Wundersitz, Director, Office of Crime Statistics for her assistance and advice throughout this research project. The work of Carol Castle, Database Manager, Office of Crime Statistics, in extracting data for this project is also acknowledged. Finally, thanks are extended to Jayne Marshall, Senior Research Officer, Office of Crime Statistics for her constructive comments on an earlier draft of this bulletin.



**Appendix 1**

**Movement of robbery in a dwelling incidents recorded in 1997 and 1998 through the criminal justice system**

