

OFFICE OF CRIME
STATISTICS AND RESEARCH
GPO BOX 464 ADELAIDE
SOUTH AUSTRALIA 5001
PH: (08) 8207 1731
FAX: (08) 8204 9575
www.oscar.sa.gov.au

Magistrates Court Statistics, 2003.

TINA CONROY

This Bulletin is the first in a series of Information Bulletins and provides a descriptive summary of the statistics contained in the publication *Crime and Justice in South Australia 2003, Adult Courts and Corrections*¹. Future bulletins will contain the following information:

- Higher courts; and
- Correctional Services.

Magistrates Courts of South Australia

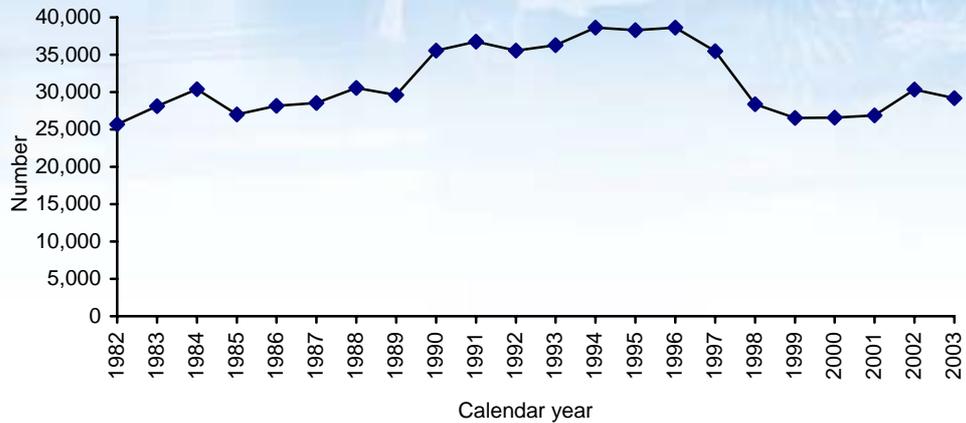
Overview

During 2003, 29,206 cases involving offences that fall within the Office of Crime Statistics and Research collection boundaries were finalised in the Magistrates Court. This figure is 3.7% lower than the 30,359 finalised cases in 2002.

As indicated in Figure 1, although the number of matters disposed of in the Magistrates Court generally increased between 1982 and 1996, from then until 1999 there was a general downward trend, after which time numbers stabilised. The number of matters finalised and remains substantially lower than the peak recorded in 1996 (n=38,652).

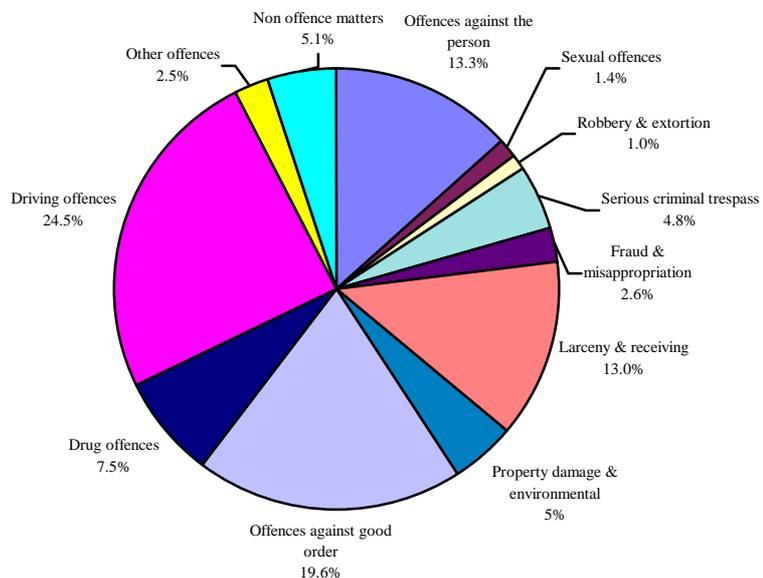
¹ "Crime and Justice in South Australia, 2003: Adult Courts and Corrections" can be downloaded from 'publications' page of the OCSAR website: www.oscar.sa.gov.au

Figure 1 Number of cases finalised by the Magistrates Court, 1982 to 2003



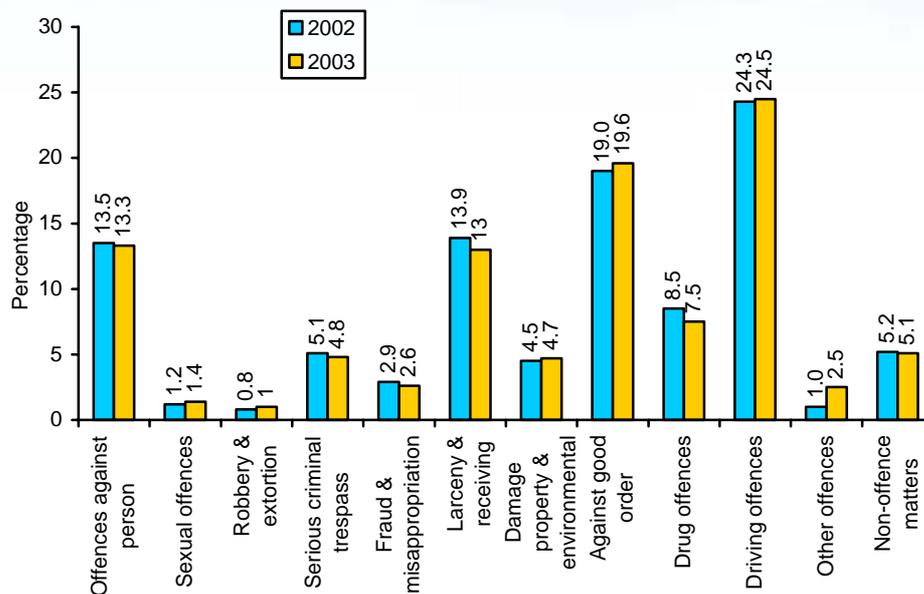
As indicated in Figure 2, *driving offences* constituted the major charge in just under one quarter (24.5%) of all cases finalised in 2003, while *offences against good order* featured in a further 19.6% of cases, *offences against the person* in 13.3% and *larceny and receiving* in 13.0%. At the other end of the scale, there were relatively few cases in which *sexual offences* or *robbery and extortion* constituted the major offence charged (1.4% and 1.0% respectively). In addition, 5.1% of cases involved *non-offence* matters. As in previous years, these consisted almost entirely of restraining orders.

Figure 2 Cases finalised in the Magistrates Court by the major charge per case: 2003



Overall, this offence profile is similar to that observed in 2002. As shown in Figure 3, in both 2002 and 2003, four offence categories dominated: namely *driving offences*, *offences against good order*, *larceny/receiving* and *offences against the person*. Conversely, the proportion of cases involving *sexual offences* and *robbery and extortion* has remained consistently low.

Figure 3 Cases finalised in the Magistrates Court by major charge: 2002 and 2003



Longitudinal trends in the actual number of offences per category are detailed in Figures 4 to 13, which plot the major charge recorded per case from 1992 (when data relevant to all twelve categories listed above were first published) to 2003.

As indicated in Figure 4, between 1992 and 1996, Magistrate Court cases involving an *offence against the person* have displayed a cyclic pattern of small increases for 3-4 years and then declining over the next 3-4 years to the original 1992 level. If this pattern holds it suggests that 2002 was the most recent peak and 2003 is the start of a possible downward trend. Nevertheless, the 2003 figure (n=3,879) was below the number recorded in the peak year of 1996 (4,483).

Figure 4 Cases finalised in the Magistrate Court where the major charge was an *offence against the person, excluding sexual offences*: 1992 to 2003

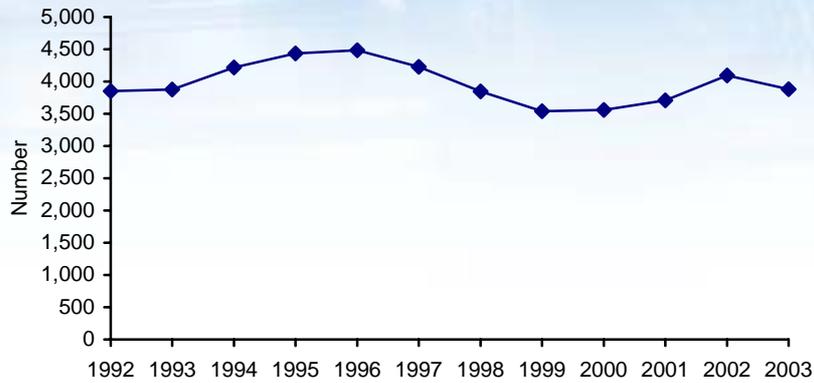
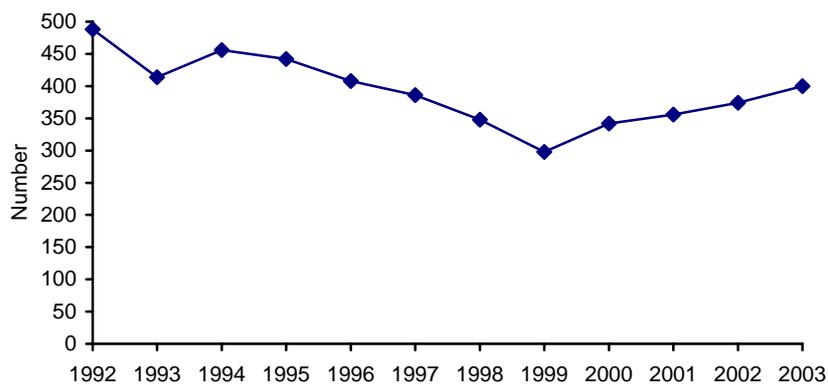


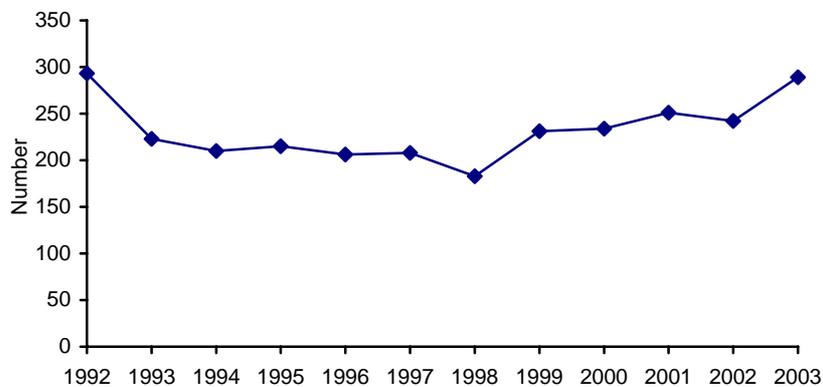
Figure 5 shows that the number of cases where the major charge was a *sexual offence* generally declined between 1992 and 1999. However, this trend was reversed in 2000, with further increases recorded to 2003. In spite of this, the number of cases recorded in 2003 (n=400) was 18.0% lower than the 488 recorded in 1992.

Figure 5 Cases finalised in the Magistrates Court where the major charge was a *sexual offence*: 1992 to 2003



After initially decreasing, the number of cases involving a major charge of *robbery and extortion* remained relatively stable between 1993 and 1998 (refer Figure 6). Then from 1998 to the 2001 an upward trend was evident followed by a slight decrease in 2002. The 2003 figure is the second highest recorded (289 compared with 293 in 1992). Overall, the number of cases involving a *robbery and extortion offence* has remained relatively low throughout this period.

Figure 6 Cases finalised in the Magistrates Court where the major charge was *robbery and extortion*: 1992 to 2003



Considering longitudinal trends for burglary, break and enter/serious criminal trespass offences is somewhat problematic due to 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 (other than the offence of sacrilege) with criminal trespass offences. Because these legislative changes came into effect in the last week of 1999, the majority of offences recorded in 2000 and nearly all of those recorded in the subsequent years were classified as criminal trespass offences. However, in all four years there were some break and enter offences that, while reported in 2000, 2001, 2002 or 2003, had occurred prior to the legislative change. Although these offences were all grouped together in the 2000 report the category retained the name burglary, break and enter offences. However, in the 2001, 2002 and 2003 reports, to more accurately reflect the nature of the offences within this category, the name has been changed to serious criminal trespass offences.

The number of cases involving *serious criminal trespass offences* as the major charge generally declined during the period 1992 to 1998. However, since then, an upward trend has occurred, with increases in 1999 and 2000, followed by a further increase of 18.8% in 2001 (to 1,478). Another, albeit lesser, increase was recorded in 2002 followed by a decrease in 2003. The 2003 figure is the 10.0% lower than the highest recorded figure during the period (1,397 compared with 1,553 in 2002).

Figure 7 Cases finalised in the Magistrates Court where the major charge was *serious criminal trespass*: 1992 to 2003

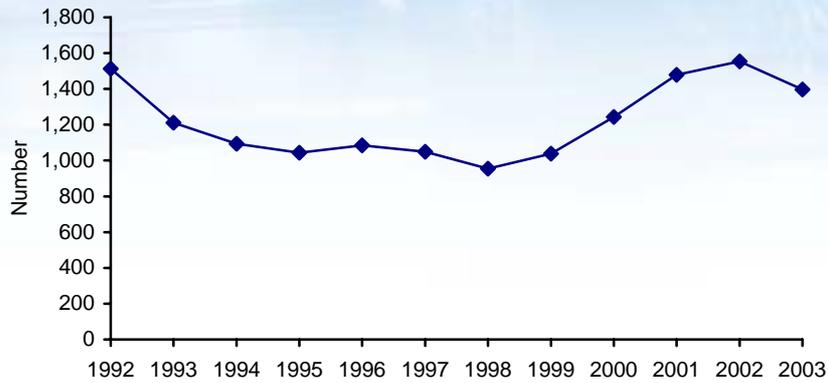
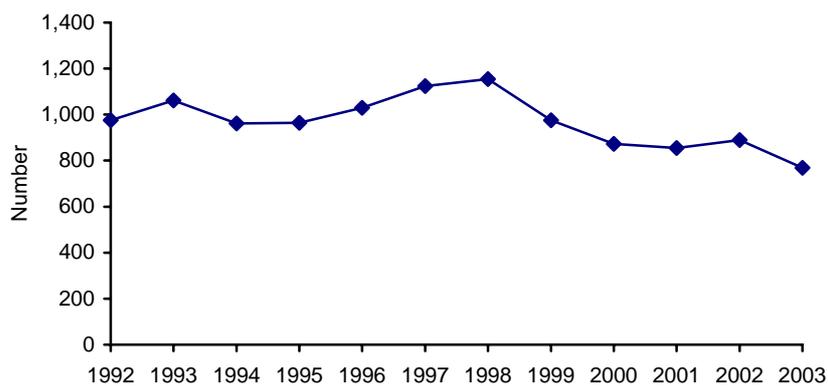


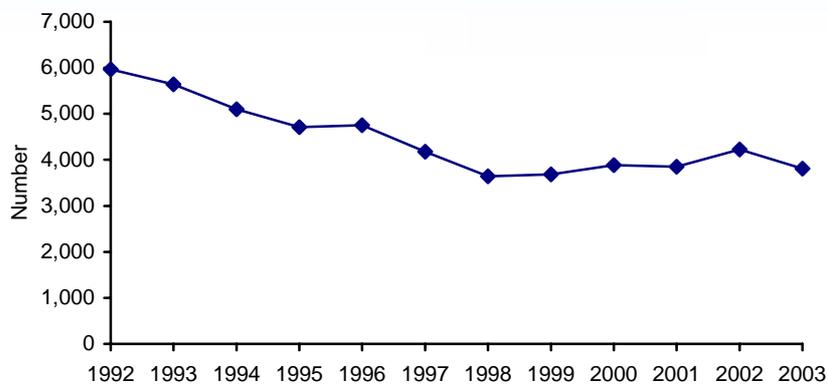
Figure 8 indicates that in 2003 the number of cases where the major charge was *fraud and misappropriation* was the lowest recorded during the period depicted (n=768), and represents a continuation of the decline in these offences since 1998.

Figure 8 Cases finalised in the Magistrates Court where the major charge was *fraud and misappropriation*: 1992 to 2003



As indicated in Figure 9, the number of cases in which *larceny and receiving*² was listed as the major charge declined from 5,969 in 1992 to 3,686 in 1999, after which time numbers stabilised. In 2003, a further decrease was recorded and the current figure is now well below the numbers recorded in the early 1990s.

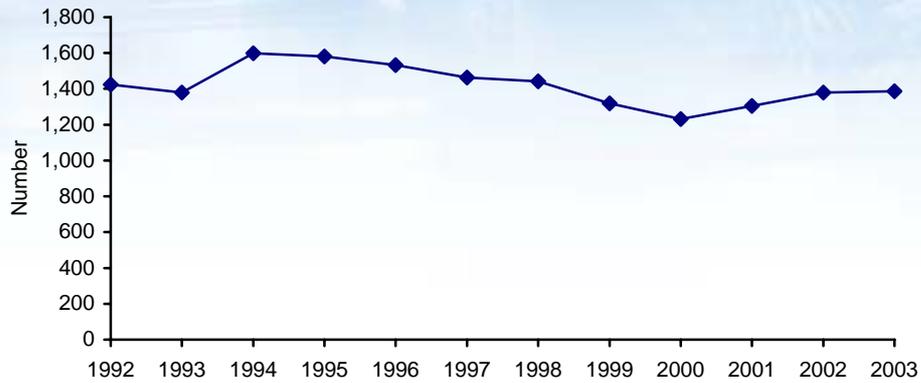
Figure 9 Cases finalised in the Magistrates Court where the major charge was *larceny and receiving* 1992 to 2003



Damage property and environmental offences feature as the major charge in a relatively small proportion of finalised Magistrates Court cases. As indicated in Figure 10, these cases had been steadily declining between 1994 and 2000. This trend was reversed with increases recorded in 2001 and 2002. The 2003 figure of 3,810 represents a further marginal increase, but is below the 1993 peak of 5,640.

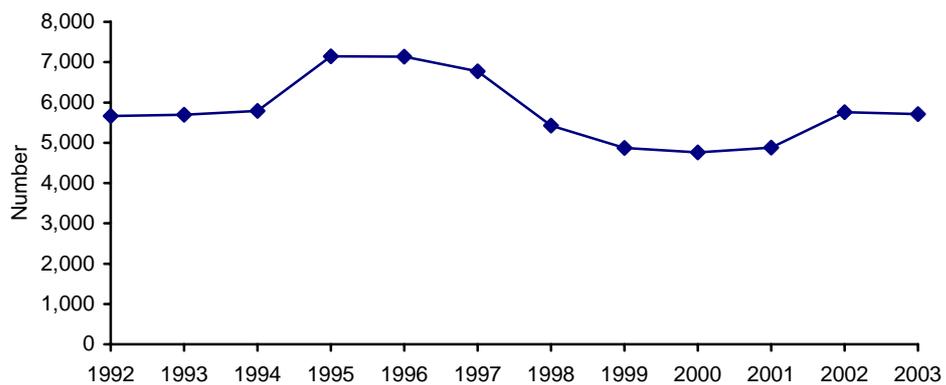
² Due to problems in coding the offence categories of *larceny from shops* and *other larceny* in 1998 care should be taken when comparing *larceny and receiving* figures from that year with those of other years.

Figure 10 Cases finalised in the Magistrates Court where the major charge was a *damage property and environmental offence*: 1992 to 2003



As Figure 11 indicates, the number of cases involving a major charge of an *offence against good order* declined between 1996 and 2000. A slight increase of 2.5% was recorded in 2001 (n=4,877), followed by a larger increase of 18.0% in 2002 (n=5,756). The number of cases recorded in 2003 remained stable from 2002.

Figure 11 Cases finalised in the Magistrates Court where the major charge was an *offence against good order*: 1992 to 2003

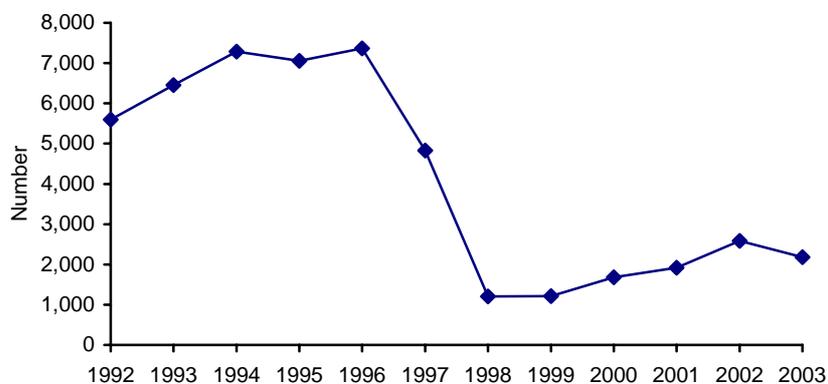


As Figure 12 indicates, cases with a major charge of a *drug offence* experienced a dramatic drop in both 1997 and in 1998. This decline can be attributed to the changes introduced by the *Expiation of Offences Act 1996*, which came into operation in February 1997. Whereas previously expiation fee defaulters had their matters forwarded to court for prosecution, under the new legislation they received an automatic conviction without the requirement to appear in court. This resulted in a substantial decrease in the number of cases involving drug charges heard by the courts.

There was an increase in the number of cases recorded in 2000 (n=1,682), followed by further increases from 2001 to 2002, followed by a slight decrease in 2003. In part, these increases could be the result of further changes to the Cannabis Expiation Notice (CEN) scheme. In recent years the number of cannabis plants that a person could possess and still be eligible for a CEN has been reduced from ten to three and then on 29th November 2001, further reduced to one. This latest change meant that adults detected with two or three plants who would previously have received a CEN were henceforth charged. This change could have impacted upon the number of adults appearing in court charged with these offences after this time.

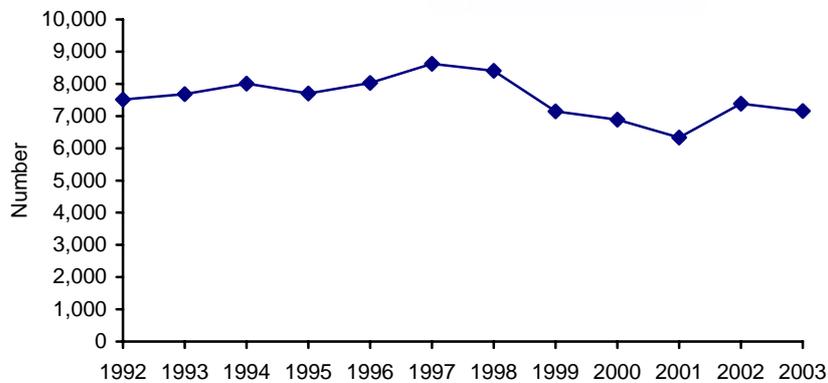
Another initiative that could impact upon the number of drug offences appearing in the courts is the Police Illicit Drug Diversion Initiative, which commenced operation in September/October 2001. Under this scheme, adults and juveniles detected in possession of small amounts of illicit drugs, are not apprehended by police but instead are given educational material or diverted to assessment and treatment programs. Hence, this initiative impacts directly on the number of persons apprehended for a drug offence and consequently the number appearing in court charged with these offences.

Figure 12 Cases finalised in the Magistrates Court where the major charge was a *drug offence* 1992 to 2003



As shown in Figure 13, cases where *driving offences* were listed as the major charge peaked at 8,620 cases in 1997 and then declined until 2001. In fact, the number of cases involving this major charge recorded in 2001 was the lowest recorded during the period depicted (n=6,355). However, in 2002 there was an increase in the number of cases recorded followed by a slight decrease in 2003.

Figure 13 Cases finalised in the Magistrates Court where the major charge was a *driving offence* 1992 to 2003



Outcomes

Of the 29,206 cases heard in the Magistrates Court in 2003, 984 were committed to the District or Supreme Court for trial or sentence. While this was 2.3% lower than the 1,008 cases committed in 2002, this figure was 45.1% lower than the 1,791 committals recorded in 1992 when legislative changes were introduced to ensure that matters were heard at the lowest, most appropriate jurisdictional level.

In comparison to the previous year, a slightly higher proportion of cases were committed for trial or sentence (3.4% compared with 3.3% in 2002).

As expected, the percentage of cases committed to a higher court for trial or sentence in 2003 varied considerably according to the seriousness of the major charge. For example, 49.1% of all *robbery and extortion* cases had this outcome (which is higher than the 40.9% recorded in 2002), as did 32.5% of cases involving *sexual offences* (compared with 28.3% in 2002). In contrast, only 0.2% of *larceny and receiving* and 0.5% of *offences against good order* cases resulted in a committal to the District or Supreme Court, as did 0.6% of cases involving *property damage and environmental offences*. It should also be noted that in 35 of the 984 cases which, in 2003, resulted in committal to a higher court for the major charge, a finding of guilt for a lesser or other offence was also recorded in the Magistrates Court.

Just over half (53.3%) of the cases dealt with at the Magistrates Court level resulted in a conviction for the major charge, either with or without penalty. This was slightly higher than the figure of 51.8% recorded in 2002. As in previous years, however, the likelihood of conviction varied depending on the nature of the major charge - from 1.7% of cases involving *robbery and extortion* to 87.1% of cases in which a *driving offence* was listed as the major charge. Over half the cases (51.6%) that involved *fraud and misappropriation offences* and a similar proportion of cases involving *offences against good order* (59.0%) also resulted in a conviction for the major charge.

In 3,514 cases (12.0% of the total), there was a finding of guilt for the major charge but no conviction was recorded. Fourteen cases resulted in an acquittal for the major charge while in 38 cases an outcome of 'not guilty: mentally incompetent' was recorded. In just over one quarter of cases (26.6%) the major charge was either withdrawn (4,681) or dismissed (3,096), with the major charge withdrawn in 29 cases after completion of the mental health diversion program. It should be noted though, that in 1,529 (19.5%) of the 7,858 cases where the major charge resulted in either an acquittal, dismissal, withdrawal or finding of 'not guilty: mentally incompetent', the defendant was found guilty of a lesser or other charge. In total then, of the 29,206 cases that were finalised in the Magistrates Court in 2003, 20,649 (70.7%) resulted in a finding of guilt to at least one charge. In a further 22 cases some other outcome (such as the death of the defendant) was recorded.

The proportion of cases resulting in the dismissal or withdrawal of the major charge varied from one offence category to another. (Cases where the major charge was withdrawn after completion of the mental health diversion program have not been included in this analysis). It was relatively high for *offences against the person, excluding sexual offences* (53.7%), of all offences within this category), *serious criminal trespass* (50.0%), *robbery and extortion* (48.4%) and *sexual offences* (43.7%), but was comparatively low for *offences against good order* (18.5%) and *driving offences* (12.1%).

In relation to those cases where the major charge was dismissed or withdrawn, the proportion that resulted in a finding of guilt to a lesser or other charge also varied depending on the nature of the major charge. For example, of the 698 cases where the major charge dismissed or withdrawn was a *serious criminal trespass*, 210 (30.1%) resulted in a finding of guilt for another offence compared with only 13 (7.4%) of the 175 cases where the major charge dismissed or withdrawn was a *sexual offence*.

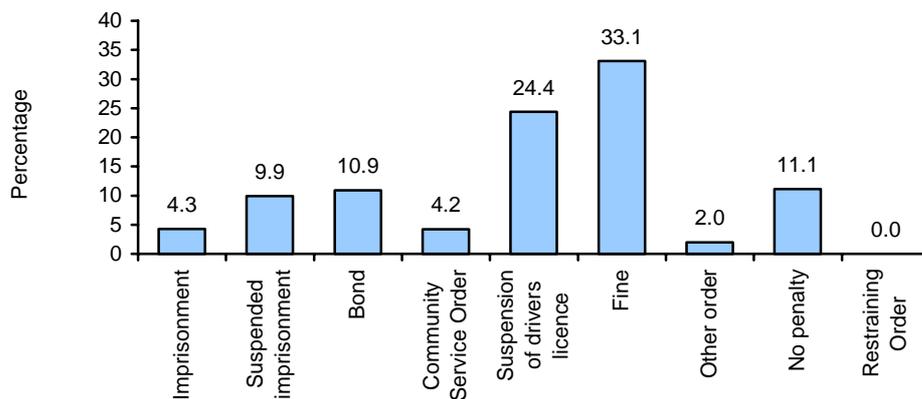
Of the 1,502 applications for *restraining domestic violence* or *paedophile restraining orders* finalised in 2003, 939 (62.5%) resulted in the issuance of that order, 23 (1.6%) were varied, while 306 (24.9%) were either revoked or cancelled, withdrawn, dismissed or refused.

Penalties

Tables 2.14 to 2.25 in the *Crime and Justice, 2003, Adult Courts and Corrections* report detail the major penalty imposed for the most serious charge per case for which there was a finding of guilt. It should be stressed that these tables do not include all penalties imposed per case. For example, in cases where several charges are proved, each charge may receive a different penalty. One charge may receive a fine, while another in that same case may result in imprisonment. Only the most serious (in this example, the imprisonment) is counted here. The same applies to cases in which there is a finding of guilt to only one charge but that charge attracts multiple penalties (such as a community service order and a driver's licence disqualification). Again, for the purposes of these tables, only the most serious penalty (in this case, a community service order) is counted. In effect then, the data detail the single, most serious penalty imposed in those cases where there was a finding of guilt to at least one charge.

In 2003, there were 20,649 cases finalised in the Magistrates Court that resulted in a finding of guilt to at least one charge. As shown in Figure 14, a fine was listed as the most serious penalty in 33.1% of these cases, followed by a driver's licence suspension (24.4% of cases). Only 4.3% of cases resulted in direct imprisonment, while 9.9% received suspended imprisonment. In a further 4.2% of cases, the major penalty imposed was a community service order, while 10.9% received a good behaviour bond. In 11.1% of cases, no penalty was imposed. In 2003, there were only 10 cases (0.0% of the total) where a restraining order constituted the major penalty.

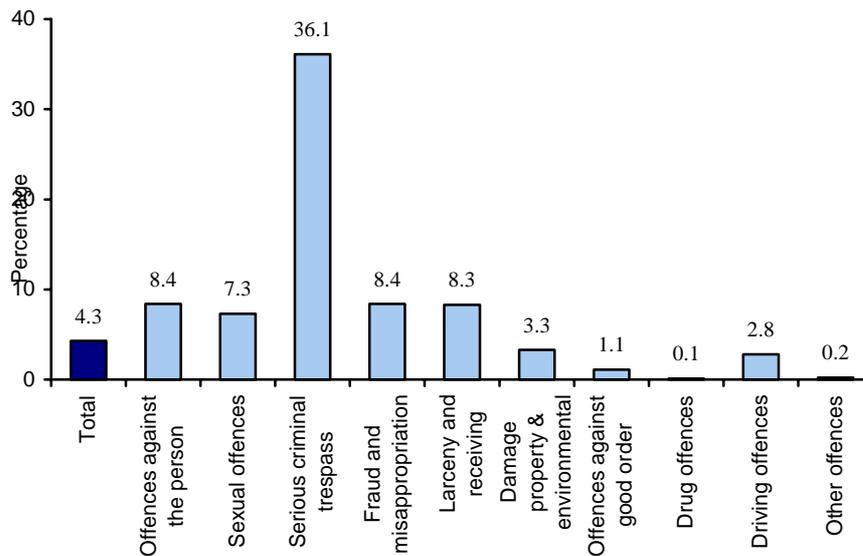
Figure 14 Major penalty imposed for the most serious charge proved per case: 2003



The number of cases resulting in imprisonment was lower in 2003 than 2002 (890 compared with 942 respectively) The average length of the prison term was slightly higher in 2003 than in the previous year (33 weeks compared with 30 respectively), and higher than the 2001 figure (n=28).

The likelihood of a prison term varied depending on the nature of the major charge for which a finding of guilt was recorded. As Figure 15 indicates, persons found guilty of the major charge of *serious criminal trespass* were proportionately more likely to receive imprisonment than those charged with other offences. Of the 479 cases finalised in 2003 in which the major charge proved was *serious criminal trespass*, 36.1% resulted in imprisonment. This was followed by cases involving *fraud and misappropriation*, and *offences against the person, excluding sexual offences* (with 8.4% ending in imprisonment), *larceny and receiving* as the most serious charge proved (with 8.3% of cases resulting in prison) and *sexual offence* (7.3%). One of the six cases involving *robbery and extortion* also resulted in imprisonment. In contrast, only 0.1% of cases involving a *drug offence* and 1.1% of cases involving an *offence against good order* as the most serious charge proved involved a custodial sentence.

Figure 15 Major penalty imposed for the most serious charge proved, 2003: proportion of cases within each major charge category resulting in imprisonment

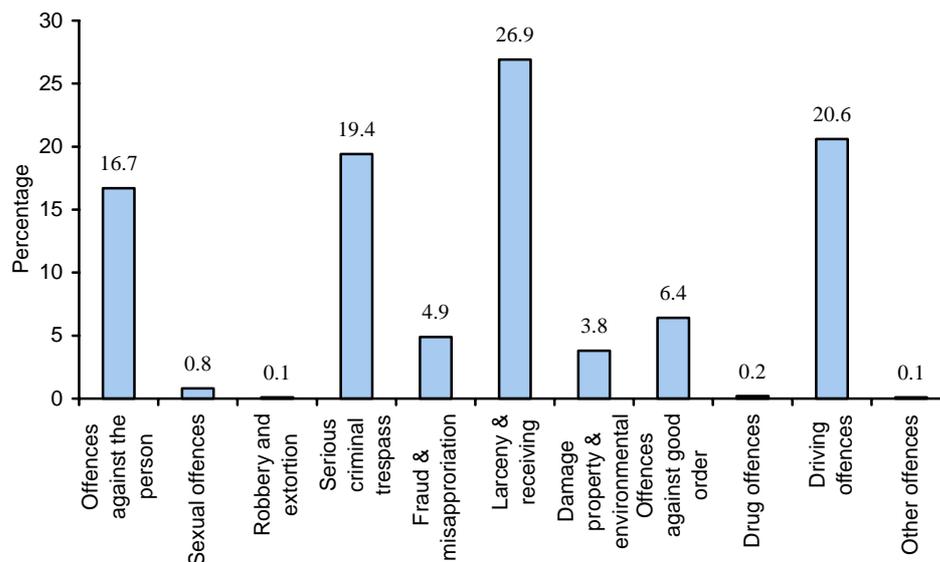


The *robbery and extortion* category has been omitted because the numbers are too small to calculate meaningful percentages.

The above discussion described the proportion of cases within each major offence category that had a custodial sentence. Information relating to imprisonment is presented somewhat differently in Figure 16. This focuses only on those 890 cases that actually resulted in imprisonment, and identifies the proportion of all imprisonments accounted for by the different offence types. As shown, *larceny and receiving* accounted for the largest proportion of imprisonments (26.9%). This was followed by *driving offences* (20.6%), *serious criminal trespass* (19.4%) and *offences against the person, excluding sexual offences* (16.7%). In contrast, *drug offences* accounted for only 0.2%.

The low proportion of imprisonments which involved *robbery and extortion* (0.1%) is due to two factors: first, the relatively small number of such cases which come before the Magistrates Court in the first place (6 in 2003 compared with, for example, 6,580 *driving* cases) and second, the fact that, as a major indictable offence, a high proportion of proven *robbery* matters are referred to a higher court for trial or sentence (142 out of 289 compared with none of the 7,159 *driving* matters). These would therefore not appear in penalty data for the Magistrates Court. In effect then, only those robberies considered to be comparatively less serious in nature (and therefore not warranting imprisonment) would be finalised at this level.

Figure 16 Cases where imprisonment was the most serious penalty imposed by the major charge convicted, 2004



The average length of imprisonment was highest for those cases where the major charge proved was a *sexual offence* (average imprisonment of 100 weeks compared with 61 weeks in 2002). Even though the number of *fraud and misappropriation* cases that resulted in imprisonment was small (44), the average length of imprisonment in these situations was relatively high (44 weeks), with a maximum of 303 weeks.

As in previous years, fines constituted the most frequent penalty imposed in those cases where the major charge proved was a *drug offence*, accounting for 89.0% of all such cases. Over two-thirds (67.2%) of cases involving *other offences* also resulted in a fine. At the other end of the scale, fines were the major penalty imposed in only 8.6% of *driving* matters and 1.3% of *serious criminal trespass* cases. Overall, the average amount of fine imposed was \$239 while the maximum was \$6,000 (for an *other offence*).

Tables 2.26 and 2.27 in Section 2 of the report provide a detailed breakdown of the penalties imposed in those cases where the major charge proved was *exceeding the prescribed concentration of alcohol* (PCA). The *Road Traffic Act* sets different penalties for first, second and subsequent offenders. This distinction is based on whether the defendant was convicted for a PCA or related offence within a five-year period immediately preceding the commission of the offence under consideration. Penalties also vary according to the blood alcohol level recorded. Both factors have been taken into account in these two tables. The first table provides details on those offenders with no prior relevant convictions within the past five years, while the second relates to offenders who have had at least one relevant previous conviction in the last five years. It should be noted that these tables vary from Tables 2.14 - 2.25 in Section 2 of the report in that they include the three most serious penalties imposed per PCA conviction, rather than only the most serious.

In 2003, a total of 2,930 convictions were recorded for offenders with no prior convictions for a drink driving offence within the past five years. This figure was 11.0% lower than the 3,295 convictions recorded in 2002. For offenders who have had at least one previous drink driving conviction in the last five years the figure was lower, with 464 convictions in 2003 (compared with 531 convictions in 2002).

As in previous years, the overwhelming majority of PCA cases resulted in a fine. This applied not only to those offenders who had no prior drink driving convictions (97.7%) but also to those with a prior PCA conviction (95.9%). However, for those with a prior record, the average fine was higher than for those with no priors (\$916 compared with \$619 respectively). As was the case in 2002, a high proportion in both groups also received a licence disqualification (97.7% of those with no priors and 98.3% of those with priors). However, there were marked differences between the two groups in terms of the length of that disqualification. Offenders with no prior PCA convictions averaged 8.3 months licence disqualification compared with 19.3 months for those with a prior PCA conviction.

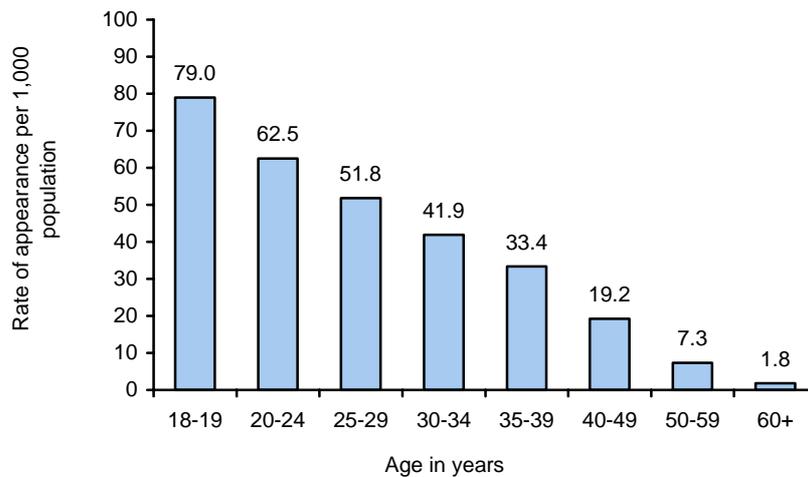
Background of defendants

Males accounted for the overwhelming majority (82.8%) of the 29,053 cases finalised in 2003 where information on the sex of the defendant was available. As in previous years, the level of female participation varied depending on the major charge involved. Of those cases where relevant information was recorded, females accounted for only 1.5% of cases in which *sexual offences* constituted the most serious charge, while at the other end of the scale, this group accounted for 37.1% and 29.3% respectively of all cases involving *fraud and misappropriation* and *larceny and receiving*.

Defendants aged between 20 and 29 years were involved in 38.4% of all cases finalised by the Magistrates Court in 2003 where information on age was available. Another 11.5% were 18 or 19 years of age, while a further 28.2% fell within the 30 to 39 year age bracket. Very few cases (6.7%) involved older defendants aged 50 years and over.

The actual rate of appearance per age group is depicted in Figure 17. This shows that as age increased, so the likelihood of coming before the Magistrates Court decreased. To illustrate, the rate of appearance for those aged 18 and 19 was 79.0 per 1,000 age specific population, but this dropped to 1.8 per 1,000 for those aged 60 years and over. The average age of all defendants was 31.5 years, although this varied from 37.1 years for cases involving an *other offence* to 25.1 years for those cases involving a *robbery and extortion* offence. Overall, there was little difference in the age profiles of female and male defendants, with an average age of 32.3 years compared with 31.3 years respectively.

Figure 17 Cases finalised in the Magistrates Court, 2003: rate per 1,000 age specific adult population.



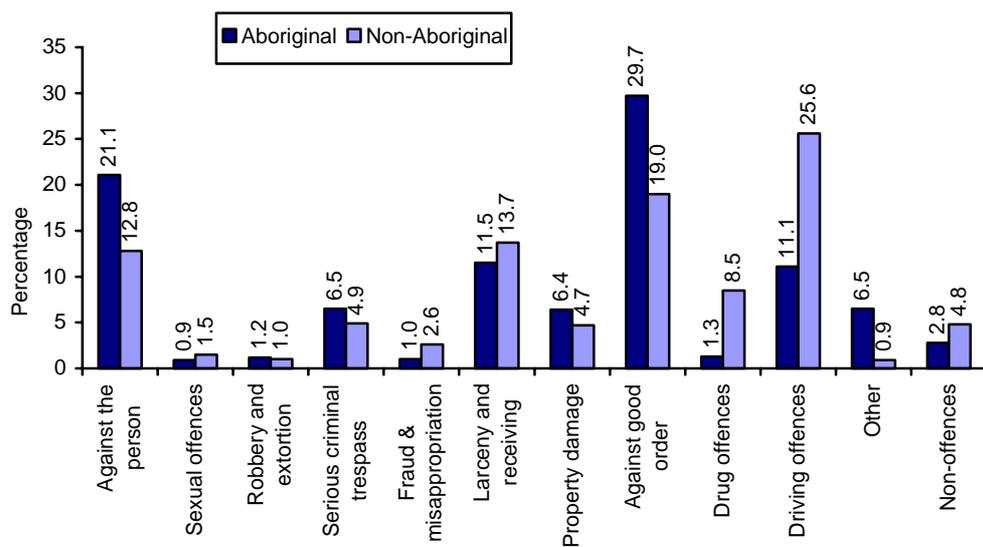
The report also details the racial appearance of defendants involved in cases finalised in 2003. In interpreting the information presented here, it should be stressed that racial appearance is determined by police officers at the point of apprehension and is based either on the officer's judgement of the physical appearance of the individual (in report-based cases) or by direct questioning (in arrest-based cases). The data may not be totally reliable. Nevertheless, these data currently provide the only indicator of the extent of Aboriginal involvement in the court system.

In 2003, Aboriginal defendants appeared before the Magistrates Court at a rate of 260.3 per 1,000 adult Aboriginal persons in the population. This is 11.6 times greater than the rate of 22.5 per 1,000 adult population recorded for persons of non-Aboriginal appearance.

The absolute number of Aboriginal cases dealt with in 2003 was similar to that recorded in 2002 (3,366 compared with (3,373 respectively). Similarly, the rate of appearance per 1,000 Aboriginal adult population remained stable (260.3 per 1,000 adult population in 2003 compared with 263.2 in 2002).

As indicated in Figure 18, there were some variations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal defendants in terms of the major charge involved. A higher proportion of Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal cases involved *offences against the person, excluding sexual offences* and *offences against good order*. Conversely, a lower proportion comprised *drug offences* and *driving offences*.

Figure 18 Cases finalised in the Magistrates Court, 2003: racial appearance by major offence charged



As was the case in 2002, seven out of 10 defendants (70.6%) for whom histories were available had at least one previous conviction, with an average of 13.6 prior convictions per defendant³. The proportion of defendants with prior convictions was highest amongst those charged with *serious criminal trespass* (with 84.5% having at least one prior conviction), followed by *robbery and extortion* (81.6% with priors). Not surprisingly, those charged with *serious criminal trespass* or *robbery and extortion* also had the highest **average** number of prior convictions (26.6 and 19.2 per defendant, respectively).

Even for those offence categories at the other end of the spectrum, the proportion of defendants with prior convictions was still relatively high. The proportion with a prior conviction was lowest for cases involving *other offences* or *fraud and misappropriation*. Yet even for these offences, 55.2% and 60.5% respectively, had a prior criminal conviction, with an average of 9.1 and 11.6 convictions per defendant.

One in five cases (20.2%) finalised in the Magistrates Court in 2003 involved defendants who had previously been sentenced to a period of imprisonment. This figure varied, however, from 41.5% of defendants involved in cases where *serious criminal trespass* was the major charge, to 9.1% of cases involving *other offences*.

Table 2.31 in Section 2 of the report details the bail status of the defendant at the time of his/her final court appearance. In the majority of cases (58.5%), bail was not required: In other words, the defendant was not subject to any conditions imposed by the court. In a further 32.7% of cases, the defendant was on bail at the time of the final appearance, while in 8.6% of cases the defendant was in custody. However, the proportion in custody varied depending on the number of court hearings required to finalise the case. Of the 8,958 cases where the matter was dealt with at the first hearing, only six defendants were held in custody at the time (0.1%). This compares with 2,300 (or 12.0%) of the 19,182 defendants whose cases took two or more hearings to finalise, and 217 (or 22.0%) of the 984 defendants who were committed to a higher court for trial or sentence.

Whether or not a defendant was legally represented also varied depending on the number of hearings required to finalise a matter. In those cases where the matter was resolved at the first appearance, only three in ten (33.8%) had legal representation. This rose to three quarters (76.9%) of those whose cases took more than one hearing to finalise and 94.8% of those who were committed to a higher court for trial or sentence. However, some caution should be exercised when using these figures because of the relatively high proportion of cases (20.4%) where information relating to legal representation was missing.

Relatively few defendants (516 or 1.8%) in the 29,206 cases actually finalised in the Magistrates Court pleaded of 'not guilty' to the major charge at their final appearance. By contrast, of the 984 cases committed for trial or sentence to a higher court, over three quarters (80.6%) were pleading 'not guilty' at the time of their committal.

³ Note that, in determining the number of prior convictions, all offences are counted, regardless of the number of finalised court appearances involved. This means that if a defendant, at a previous finalised court appearance, was convicted at the one hearing of three *sexual assaults* and two *larcenies*, this would be counted as five prior convictions in Table 2.30. The number of prior convictions would therefore be the same as for an individual who had had five separate finalised court appearances, with one offence of *sexual assault* being finalised at the first, another *sexual assault* at the second and so on.

Copies of the full report "Crime and Justice in South Australia, 2003: Adult Courts and Corrections" can be downloaded from the publications page of the OCSAR website - www.ocsar.sa.gov.au