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**NATIONAL CRIME
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-
AN UPDATE
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The South Australian Perspective

by

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This Information Bulletin describes the findings, as they pertain to South Australia, of the fifth report of the National Crime Statistics Unit within the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The Bulletin details the number of crimes reported to police between January and December 1997 for a selected range of offence categories and places South Australian crime trends within the Australian context. Comparisons with data published in previous reports are also included.

INTRODUCTION

The Australian Bureau of Statistics formed a National Crime Statistics Unit in 1990. The key function of this Unit is to produce uniform national statistics on crimes reported to police. To this end, it has established a set of uniform offence classifications and counting rules designed to remove the past difficulties in comparing rates of reported crime between states.

This Information Bulletin outlines the findings of the fifth publication by the National Crime Statistics Unit (ABS, 1998: Cat No 4510.0). It reports on the number of victims per offence category recorded by police between January and December 1997. Some earlier figures from 1993 to 1996 have also been provided in the Bulletin for comparative purposes.

A METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

It should be stressed that the statistics relate only to the number of victims who actually report an offence to police, not to all incidents that occur. Nor do the data represent discrete victims. A person who has been the subject of multiple offences - such as kidnapping, rape and murder - will be counted three times, once in each of these offence categories.

While every effort is made to ensure that these national statistics are uniform and comparable, some inevitable differences remain. Responsibility for deciding how a particular crime will be recorded is still vested in individual police jurisdictions and for some crimes, a high level of discretion exists in how to classify particular offences. For example, the perceived intent needs to be judged before deciding whether an incident is defined as a serious *assault* or an *attempted murder*. This discretion will inevitably result in some inconsistency from one police officer to another that, by its very nature, is extremely difficult if not impossible to eliminate. Thus, while the data provide the most accurate basis for state-by-state comparison, some inconsistencies may still exist.

Offences covered by the report include only those for which nationally comparable definitions have been developed. These are:

- total murder and attempted murder
 - *murder*
 - *attempted murder*
- total manslaughter and driving causing death
 - *manslaughter*
 - *driving causing death*
- assault
- *sexual assault*
- kidnapping/abduction
- total robbery
 - *armed robbery*
 - *unarmed robbery*
- blackmail/extortion
- total unlawful entry with intent
 - *unlawful entry with intent involving the taking of property*
 - *unlawful entry with intent - other*
- motor vehicle theft
- other theft.
 - *armed robbery*
 - *unarmed robbery*
- blackmail/extortion
- total unlawful entry with intent
 - *unlawful entry with intent involving the taking of property*

- *unlawful entry with intent - other*
- motor vehicle theft
- other theft.

The 1997 report also includes an additional piece of information not previously included in these reports: namely *outcome of police investigation* for assault, sexual assault, kidnapping/abduction, robbery, blackmail/extortion, unlawful entry with intent, motor vehicle theft and other theft.

1. PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA BETWEEN 1996 AND 1997

In South Australia, the following changes in the number of recorded offences per 100,000 population were observed.

Compared with 1996, six major offence groups recorded decreases in 1997, as follows:

- Driving causing death down by 40.6%* (from 1.70 to 1.01 per 100,000 population)
- Sexual assault down by 10.6% (from 92.11 to 82.31)
- Unarmed robbery down by 14.9% (from 67.42 to 57.37)
- Unlawful entry with intent down by 7.4% (from 2,033.58 to 1883.02)
 - UEWI - property down by 6.2% (from 1,638.20 to 1,536.49)
 - UEWI - other down by 12.4% (from 395.37 to 346.53)
- Motor vehicle theft down by 5.0% (from 573.09 to 544.67)
- Other theft down by 4.5% (from 3,334.87 to 3,185.28)

Increases were observed in six groups, as detailed below. (However, it should be noted that in four of these groups - delineated by * - the actual rates involved were very small. Hence any slight shifts may result in substantial percentage changes from one year to the next.)

- Murder up 9.2%* (from 1.42 to 1.55 per 100,000 population)
- Attempted murder up 17.4%* (from 1.90 to 2.23)
- Assault up 3.1% (from 899.68 to 927.69)
- Kidnapping/abduction up 2.5%* (from 2.44 to 2.50)
- Armed robbery up 9.6% (from 23.06 to 25.27)
- Blackmail/extortion up 56.8%* (from 0.95 to 1.49).

Manslaughter remained constant at 0.2 reported offences per 100,000 population.

Because the 1997 report is the fifth in the series, it is now possible to undertake some longitudinal comparisons in reported crime trends between South Australia and Australia. These are detailed in Section 4 of this briefing paper.

2. COMPARISON OF SOUTH AUSTRALIAN CRIME RATES IN 1997 WITH NATIONAL AVERAGE

Table 1 compares South Australian crime rates with those recorded for Australia as a whole.

Table 1
South Australian crime rates per 100,000 population compared with other States

Offence	SA rate per 100,000 population	Australian rate per 100,000 population	Rank order of SA in 1997*	Rank order of SA in 1996*	State/Territory with highest rate in 1997	
Murder/attempted murder	3.78	3.45	3	4	NT	6.41
murder	1.55	1.74	5	5	NT	4.28
attempted murder	2.23	1.72	2	4	Qld	3.32
Manslaughter and driving causing death	1.22	n.a.	n.a.	2	n.a.	
manslaughter	0.20	0.21	5	6	NT	1.07
driving causing death	1.01	n.a.	n.a.	3	n.a.	
Assault	927.69	668.78	2	2	NT	1,368.55
Sexual assault	82.31	76.29	4	3	NT	133.06
Kidnapping/abduction	2.50	3.01	4	3	NSW	4.32
Robbery (total)	82.65	114.72	3	3	NSW	200.34
armed robbery	25.27	48.64	6	5	NSW	79.34
unarmed robbery	57.37	66.08	3	2	NSW	121.00
Blackmail/extortion	1.49	1.90	5	4	WA	3.45
Unlawful entry with intent	1,883.02	2,254.69	6	6	WA	3,145.27
UEWI involving the taking of property	1,536.49	1,774.58	6	5	Tas	2,335.58
UEWI - other	346.53	480.11	8	7	WA	903.83
Motor vehicle theft	544.67	703.67	4	6	NSW	871.98
Other theft	3,185.28	2,856.35	3	4	WA	4,204.31

*A ranking of one indicates the highest rate of reported offending.

In 1997 South Australia was below the national average for:

- murder (10.9% lower than the national average)
- kidnapping/abduction (16.9% lower)
- armed robbery (48.0% lower)

- unarmed robbery (13.2% lower)
- blackmail/extortion (21.6% lower)
- unlawful entry with intent involving the taking of property (13.4% lower)
- unlawful entry with intent - other (27.8% lower)
- motor vehicle theft (22.6% lower)

South Australia was above the national average for:

- attempted murder (29.7% higher than the national average)
- assault (38.7% higher)
- sexual assault (7.9% higher)
- other theft (11.5% higher)

South Australia's rate for *manslaughter* (0.2 per 100,00 population) was the same as the national average. The national rate for *driving causing death* was not available in 1997.

The total *murder/attempted murder* rate in South Australia, which in 1993 was much greater than that of Australia as a whole, was only slightly higher than the Australian rate in 1997.

Improvements:

- In 1997, South Australia's rate for *unarmed robbery* was well below the national rate (13.2%). By contrast, in 1996, South Australia's rate for this offence was 23.5% above the national rate.
- The number of offences for which the South Australian rate is higher than the national rate has been steadily declining each year:
 - in 1994, South Australia had a higher rate than that of Australia for all offence categories with the exception of *driving causing death* and *motor vehicle theft*
 - in 1995, South Australia was above the Australian rate for 8 out of 14 discrete offence categories
 - in 1996, South Australia was above the Australian rate for 5 out of 14.
 - In 1997, South Australia was above the Australian rate for 4 out of 14.

3. COMPARISON OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Table 1 also shows South Australia's crime rate ranking compared with other states and territories for 1996 and 1997.

In 1997 South Australia's ranking vis-a-vis other states improved for the following:

- sexual assault (ranked 4th compared with 3rd in 1996)
- kidnapping/abduction (now 4th compared with 3rd last year)
- armed robbery (ranked 6th compared with 5th in 1996)
- unarmed robbery (now 3rd compared with 2nd last year)
- blackmail/extortion (ranked 5th compared with 4th in 1996)
- unlawful entry with intent involving the taking of property (ranked 6th in 1997 compared with 5th in the previous year)
- unlawful entry with intent - other (now 8th compared with 7th in 1996).

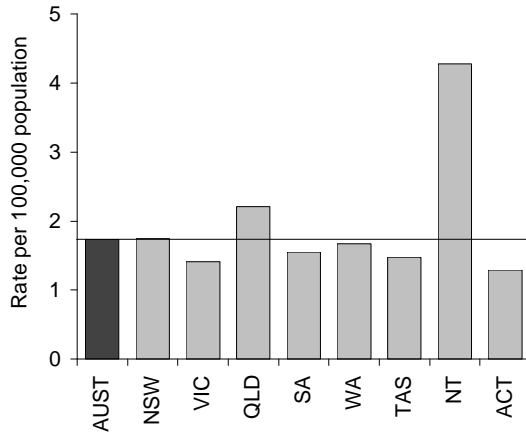
South Australia's ranking compared with other states worsened for:

- attempted murder (now 2nd compared with 4th last year)
- manslaughter (now 5th compared with 6th in 1996)
- motor vehicle theft (4th in 1997 compared with 6th in 1996).
- other theft (ranked 3rd in 1997 compared with 4th last year).

Figures 1.1 to 1.14 provide a more graphic illustration of the level of reported crime in South Australia compared with other jurisdictions and the national average. Note that in these graphs the horizontal line represents the national average.

Murder, attempted murder and manslaughter

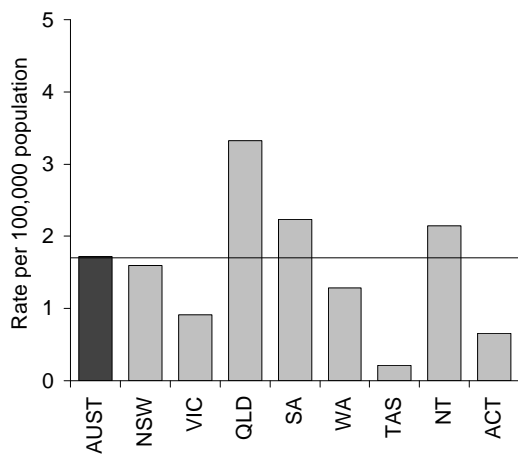
Figure 1.1
Victims of murder by state/territory, 1997



The number of extremely violent crimes against the person recorded in Australia in 1997 was relatively small. In total, 322 murders, 318 *attempted murders* and 38 *manslaughter* incidents came to police notice during the year.

However, there were some obvious differences from one state to another. As depicted in Figure 1.1, the Northern Territory recorded a *murder* rate of 4.28 compared with 2.21 for Queensland and 1.29 in the ACT. In 1997 South Australia recorded the fifth highest rate for *murder*.

Figure 1.2
Victims of attempted murder by state/territory, 1997

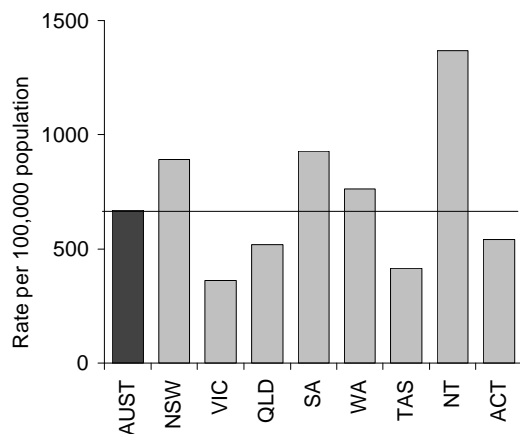


South Australia recorded the second highest rate for *attempted murder* (2.23 per 100,000 offences, following Queensland's rate of 3.32). Both these states and the Northern Territory recorded *attempted murder* rates above the national average of 1.72 per 100,000 population. The lowest rate was recorded in Tasmania (0.65).

However, as indicated previously, the number of victims involved in these offence categories is very small and so should be interpreted with caution. This is particularly true of *manslaughter*, with 38 victims throughout Australia in 1997.

Assault

Figure 1.3
Victims of assault by state/territory, 1997

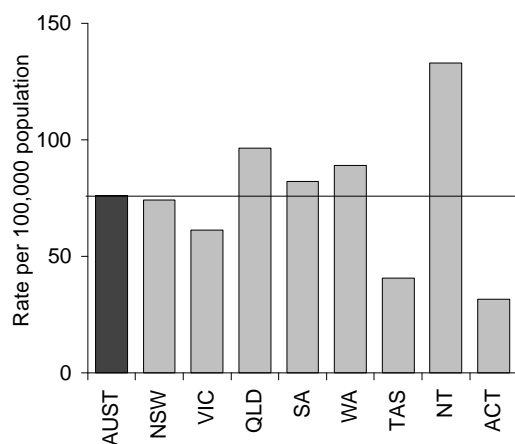


South Australia's rate for *assault* was above the Australian rate in 1997. As shown in Table 1 and Figure 1.3, this state recorded a rate of 927.69, which was second only to the Northern Territory, with a rate of 1,368.55 per 100,000 population.

South Australia's rate of *assault* was more than double that of the rates recorded in Victoria (361.16) and Tasmania (415.42 per 100,000 population).

Sexual Assault

Figure 1.4
Victims of sexual assault by state/territory, 1997

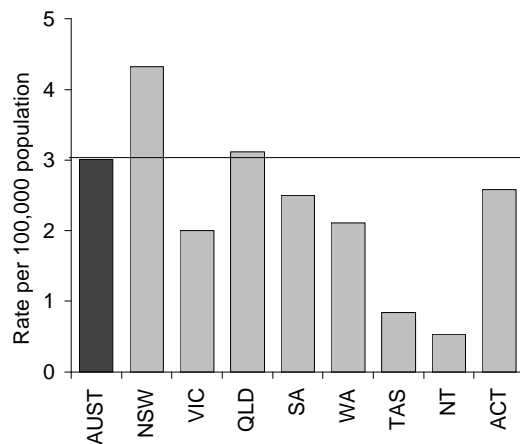


South Australia's rate of *sexual assault* (82.31 per 100,000 population) was also above the national average (76.29).

As shown in Figure 1.4, the reported *sexual assault* rate in South Australia was fourth highest, behind the Northern Territory (133.06 per 100,000 population), Queensland (96.58) and Western Australia (88.98). The lowest rates of *sexual assault* in 1997 were recorded by the ACT (31.63) and Tasmania (40.76).

Kidnapping/abduction

Figure 1.5
Victims of kidnapping/abduction by state/territory, 1997



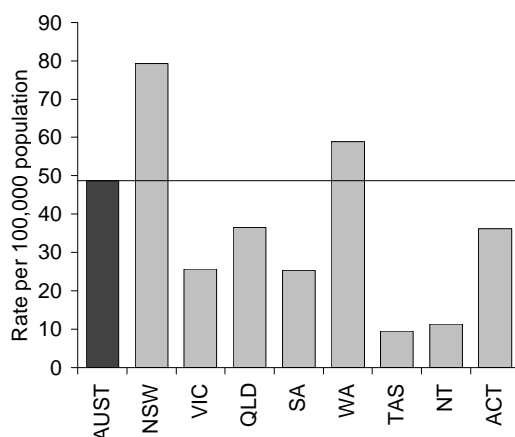
The reported *kidnapping/abduction* rate in South Australia in 1997 was 2.50 per 100,000 population. This was 16.9% lower than the national rate of 3.01.

In relation to the other Australian states and territories, South Australia had the fourth highest rate of *kidnapping/abduction*, following New South Wales (4.32 per 100,000 population), Queensland (3.12) and the ACT (2.58).

However, as with *murder, attempted murder* and *manslaughter offences*, it should be noted that the actual number of *kidnapping/abduction* victims is extremely small.

Robbery

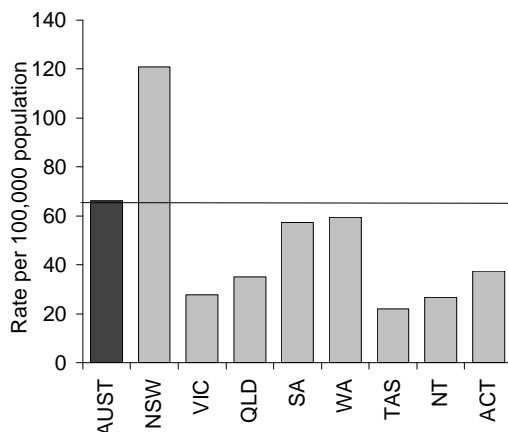
Figure 1.6
Victims of armed robbery by state/territory, 1997



In 1997 South Australia recorded a *total robbery* rate of 82.65 per 100,000 population, which was the third highest rate in Australia. However, a different picture emerges when total robbery offences are broken down into *armed* and *unarmed robbery*, as shown in Figures 1.6 and 1.7 respectively.

In relation to *armed robbery*, South Australia had the sixth highest rate (25.27 per 100,000 population). Only two jurisdictions had a lower *armed robbery* rate in 1997 – the Northern Territory (11.22) and Tasmania (9.50).

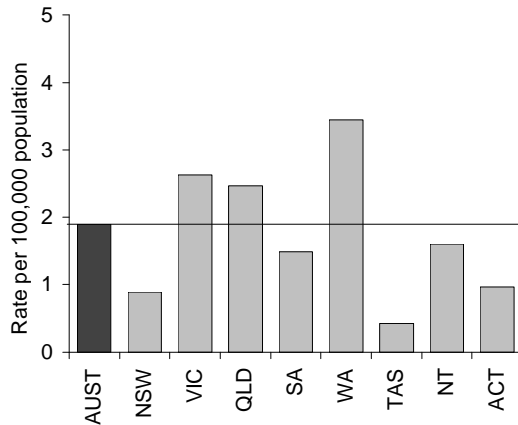
Figure 1.7
Victims of unarmed robbery by state/territory, 1997



In contrast to *armed robbery*, South Australia's *unarmed robbery* rate of 57.37 was the third highest in Australia after New South Wales (121.00) and Western Australia (59.28). The lowest rates of *unarmed robbery*, which were less than half the South Australian rate, were recorded by Tasmania (21.96) and the Northern Territory (26.72).

Blackmail/extortion

Figure 1.8
Victims of blackmail/extortion by state/territory, 1997



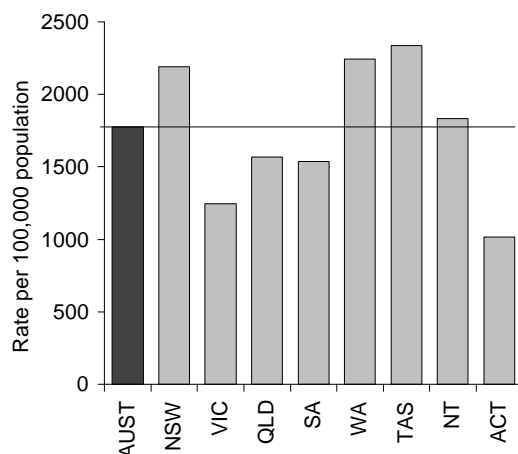
As with *murder, attempted murder* and *manslaughter*, the actual number of *blackmail/extortion* victims in Australia is very small, with 353 reported in 1997.

Figure 1.8 shows that South Australia recorded the fifth highest rate of *blackmail/extortion* in Australia last year (1.49 per 100,000 population). The highest rates were recorded by Western Australia (3.45), Victoria (2.63) and Queensland (2.47). Tasmania had the lowest rate of 0.42 per 100,000 population.

Unlawful entry with intent

Unlawful entry with intent (UEWI) is the unlawful entry of a structure with the intent to commit an offence such as theft, property damage or any offence against an individual. This category therefore incorporates burglary, break and enter and some stealing offences. There are two categories of UEWI: *UEWI involving the taking of property* and *UEWI - other*. *UEWI other* is defined as the unlawful entry of a structure that does not result in the taking of property from that structure.

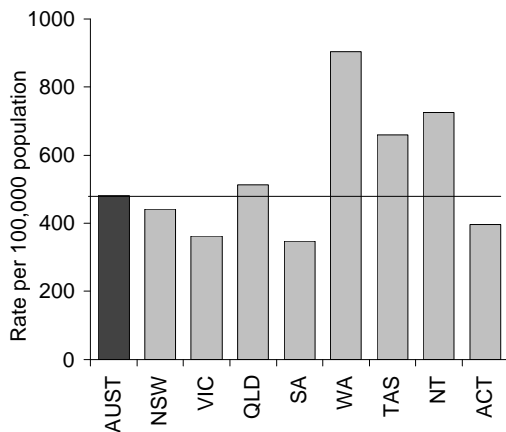
Figure 1.9
Victims of UEWI-property taken- by state/territory,



South Australia's rate of *unlawful entry with intent involving the taking of property* was 1536.49 per 100,000 population in 1997. As shown in Figure 1.9, this was ranked sixth in Australia. Only the rates recorded by the ACT (1,017.77) and Victoria (1,245.58) were lower than the South Australian rate.

The highest rates of *unlawful entry with intent (property taken)* were recorded in Tasmania (2,335.58), Western Australia (2,241.44) and New South Wales (2,190.45).

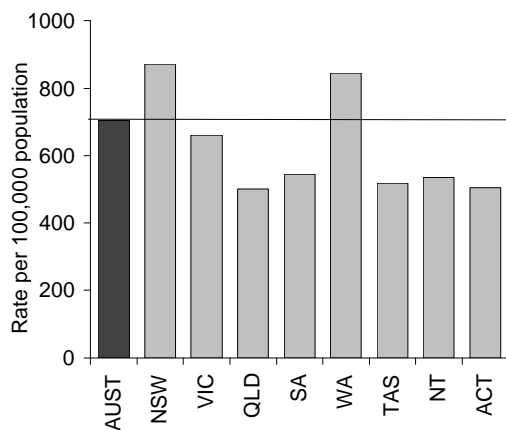
Figure 1.10
Victims of UEWI - other by state/territory, 1997



In 1997 South Australia's rate of *unlawful entry with intent - other* was 346.53 per 100,000 population. This was the lowest rate recorded in Australia, and was less than half the rates recorded by Western Australia (903.83) and the Northern Territory (726.23).

Motor vehicle theft

Figure 1.11
Victims of motor vehicle theft by state/territory, 1997

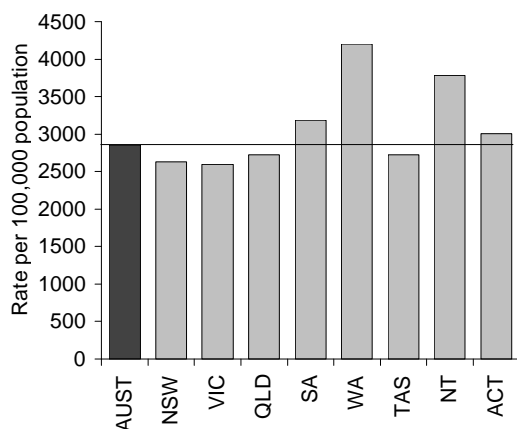


In 1997 South Australia recorded the fourth highest rate of *motor vehicle theft* in Australia (544.67 per 100,000 population).

The highest rates of *motor vehicle theft* were in New South Wales (871.98) and Western Australia (844.71), while Queensland had the lowest rate (500.08).

Other theft

Figure 1.12
Victims of 'other' theft by state/territory, 1997



Other theft is the taking of another person's property permanently and illegally, but without force, threat of force, use of coercive measures, deceit or having gained unlawful entry to any structure.

In 1997 the reported rate for *other theft* in South Australia was 3,185.28 per 100,000 population. This state was ranked in third position behind Western Australia (4,204.31) and the Northern Territory (3,781.82). Victoria recorded the lowest rate of *other theft*, which at 2,596.44 per 100,000 population was 18.5% lower than the South Australian rate.

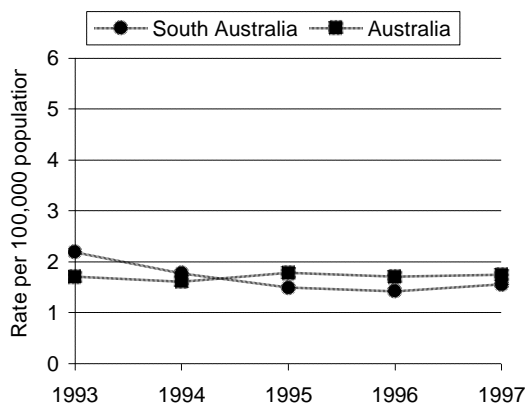
4. COMPARISON ACROSS TIME

Now that five years of nationally comparable data are available, it is possible to analyse longitudinal trends in crime rates. The following section compares South Australian rates with Australian rates from 1993 to 1997. Two sets of information are presented. Figures 2 to 18 depict *rates* of victimisation per 100,000 population, while Tables 2 to 11 show changes in the absolute *number* of victims.

Murder/Attempted murder

Figures 2 to 4 show *murder* and *attempted murder* rates per 100,000 population for South Australia and Australia from 1993 to 1997. It should be noted that actual rates for these offences are very small. Hence any slight shift in numbers may result in substantial percentage changes from year to year.

Figure 2
Murder 1993-1997



As shown in Figure 2, between 1993 and 1996, the *murder* rate in South Australia decreased (from 2.19 per 100,000 population in 1993 to 1.42 in 1996). There was a marginal increase in this rate to 1.55 in 1997. Nationally, the *murder* rate has remained relatively stable (1.70 per 100,000 population in 1993 and 1.74 in 1997). As a result, the South Australian *murder* rate is now slightly below that of the national rate.

Figure 3
Attempted murder 1993-1997

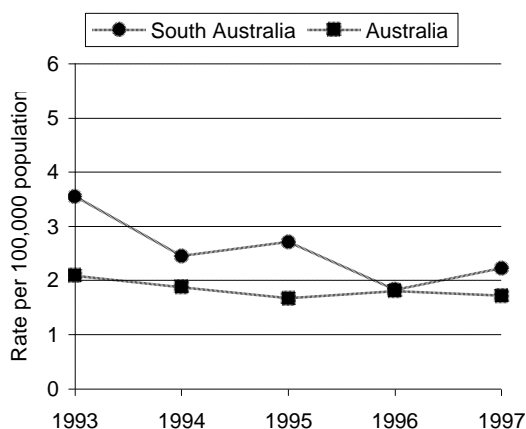
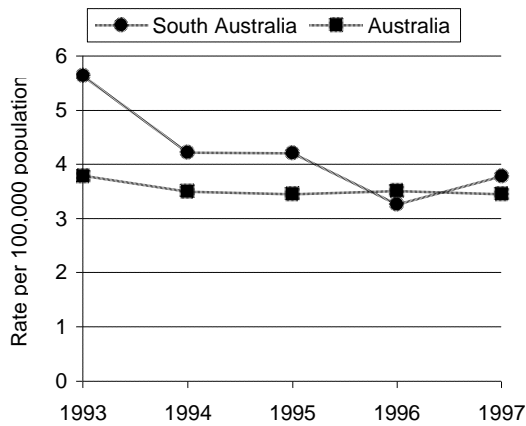


Figure 3 illustrates that the South Australian trend in *attempted murder* has contrasted sharply with the national trend since 1993. *Attempted murder* rates in South Australia decreased substantially in 1994 and 1996, with a slight increase between 1994 and 1995 and a more substantial increase between 1996 and 1997. In contrast, the Australian *attempted murder* rate decreased slightly between 1993 and 1995 and increased marginally between 1995 and 1996. This was followed by a slight decrease in 1997. As a result, the South Australian *attempted murder* rate in 1997 was 29.7% higher than the Australian rate.

Figure 4
Total murder/attempted murder 1993 -1997



As indicated in Figure 4, the total *murder/attempted murder* rate in South Australia, which in 1993 was much greater than that of Australia as a whole, was only slightly higher than the Australian rate in 1997. This decrease appears to be mostly the result of substantial decreases in rates of *attempted murder* in South Australia between 1993 and 1996.

Whereas Figures 2 - 4 focused on *rates* of victimisation per 100,000 population, Table 2 details changes in the actual *number* of victims in the 1993 -1997 period.

Table 2
Murder/attempted murder - number of victims and percentage change, 1993 - 1997

	Number of victims					% change			
	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993	since 1996	since 1995	since 1994	since 1993
Murder									
Aust.	322	311	325	288	300	+3.5	-0.9	+11.8	+7.3
SA	23	21	22	26	32	+9.5	+4.5	-11.5	-28.1
Attempted									
Aust.	318	331	299	336	369	-3.9	+6.4	-5.4	-13.8
SA	33	27	40	36	52	+22.2	-17.5	-8.3	-36.5
Total									
Aust.	640	642	624	624	669	-0.3	+2.6	+2.6	-4.3
SA	56	48	62	62	84	+16.7	-9.7	-9.7	-33.3

As shown, the total number of *murders/attempted murders* increased by 16.7% in South Australia between 1996 and 1997, due, for the most part, to a large increase (22.2%) in *attempted murders*. However, due to decreases in earlier years, the 1997 figure is still 33.3% less than in 1993. This contrasts with the national trend, where total *murder/attempted murder* numbers in 1997 were marginally lower than the numbers recorded in 1996 and only 4.3% less than those recorded in 1993.

The number of *murders* in South Australia increased from 21 in 1996 to 23 in 1997 (up 9.5%). However, due to decreases in South Australian *murder* figures in 1994, 1995 and 1996, 1997 figures are still 28.1% lower than in 1993, 11.5% lower than in 1994 and 4.5% lower than in

1995. In contrast, 1997 figures for Australia as a whole are 11.8% higher than in 1994 and 7.3% higher than in 1993.

The number of *attempted murders* in South Australia increased by 22.2% between 1996 and 1997. In contrast, *attempted murders* Australia-wide decreased by 3.9%. Since 1993, the number of *attempted murders* in South Australia has decreased by over one-third, compared with a more moderate decrease of 13.8% at the national level.

Manslaughter and driving causing death

Figures 5 and 6 show rates of *manslaughter* and *driving causing death* for South Australia and Australia from 1993 to 1997. As with *murder*, caution should be used when interpreting these figures since actual numbers are very small.

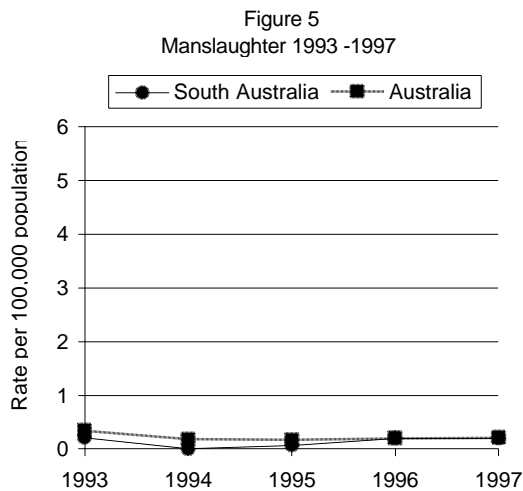
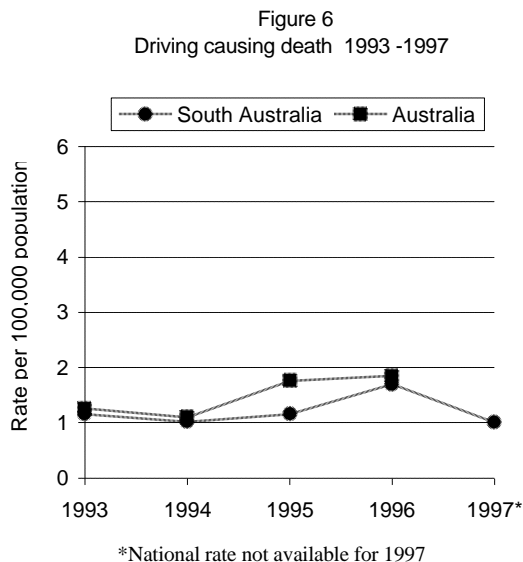


Figure 5 indicates that the rate of *manslaughter* is very low and relatively stable both in South Australia and nationally (0.20 per 100,000 population in 1997).



As illustrated in Figure 6, for both South Australia and Australia, the rate of *driving causing death* increased between 1995 and 1996. South Australian rates decreased in 1997 to 1.01 per 100,000 population. National rates are not available for 1997.

Table 3 shows the number of *manslaughter* and *driving causing death* victims from 1993 to 1997 and the percentage change since 1993. Three *manslaughter* victims were recorded in South Australia in 1997, compared with three in 1996, one in 1995, zero in 1994 and five in 1993. Nationally, *manslaughter* figures increased by six to 37 persons between 1995 and 1996, and by one in 1997.

For both South Australia and Australia, the number of *driving causing death* victims increased each year between 1993 and 1996. In contrast, between 1996 and 1997, South Australia recorded a 40.0% decrease (from 25 to 15). However, because of the very small numbers involved, high percentage shifts result from relatively minor changes in absolute numbers.

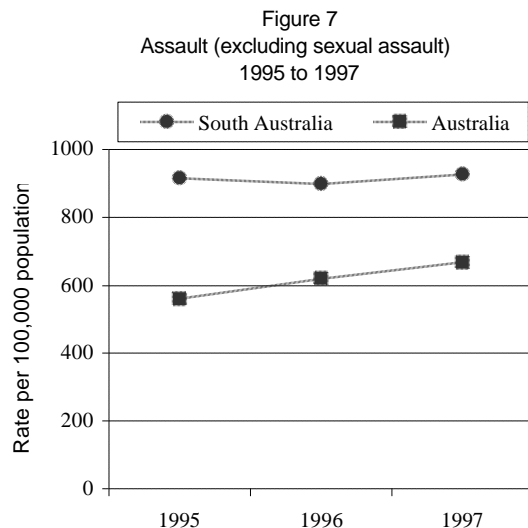
Table 3
Manslaughter and driving causing death
number of victims and percentage change 1993 - 1997

	Number of victims					% change			
	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993	since 1996	since 1995	since 1994	since 1993
Manslaughter									
Aust.	38	37	31	32	37	+2.7	+22.5	+18.8	+2.7
SA	3	3	1	0	5	*	*	*	*
Driving causing death									
Aust.	n.a.	339	318	197	222	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
SA	15	25	17	15	17	-40.0	-11.8	0	-11.8
Total									
Aust.	n.a.	376	349	229	259	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
SA	18	28	18	15	22	-35.7	0	+20.0	-18.2

*Numbers are too small to provide meaningful percentage shifts

Assault (excluding sexual assault)

National *assault (excluding sexual assault)* data are only available from 1995 onwards.



As shown in Figure 7, in contrast to the steadily rising national rate of *assault*, South Australia's rate decreased in 1996 before increasing 1997. However, the rate of *assault* in South Australia is still much higher than the national average (927.69 per 100,000 population compared to 668.78).

As shown in Table 4, the number of *assault* victims recorded Australia-wide increased by 9.2% in 1997, while South Australia recorded a more moderate increase of 3.6%. Since 1995 the number of *assaults* in Australia has risen by 22.4%, compared with 2.0% in South Australia.

Table 4
Assault (excluding sexual assault)
number of victims and percentage change 1995 - 1997

	Number of victims			% change	
	1997	1996	1995	since 1996	since 1995
Aust.	123,940	113,535	101,267	+9.2	+22.4
SA	13,728	13,253	13,457	+3.6	+2.0

Sexual assault

As shown in Figure 8, the longitudinal trend in the *sexual assault* rate in South Australia is different from the national trend. Since 1993 the *sexual assault* rate has decreased in South Australia (from 107.5 per 100,000 population to 82.3). In contrast, it has increased at the national level between 1993 and 1997 (from 71.1 to 76.3 per 100,000 population) with most of that increase occurring between 1995 and 1996 (from 71.8 to 78.6). As a result, the difference between the South Australian and the Australian rates has diminished. Nevertheless, the South Australian rate is still 7.9% higher than the national rate.

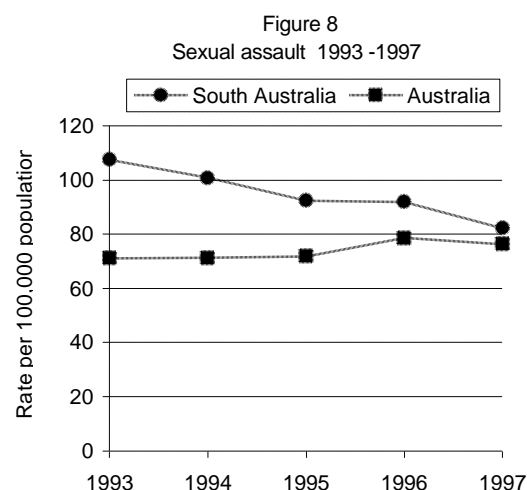


Table 5 indicates that the number of reported *sexual assaults* in South Australia decreased by 10.1% in 1997. As a result, 1997 figures were 10.3% lower than in 1995, 17.6% lower than in 1994 and 22.6% lower than in 1993. National *sexual assault* figures also decreased in 1997 (by 1.8%). However, in contrast to South Australia, Australian figures were 9.1% higher in 1997 than in 1995, 11.1% higher than in 1994 and 12.6% higher than in 1993.

Table 5
Sexual assault - number of victims and percentage change 1993 - 1997

	Number of victims					% change			
	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993	since 1996	since 1995	since 1994	since 1993
Aust.	14,138	14,394	12,962	12,722	12,555	-1.8	+9.1	+11.1	+12.6
SA	1,218	1,355	1,358	1,481	1,573	-10.1	-10.3	-17.6	-22.6

Kidnapping/Abduction

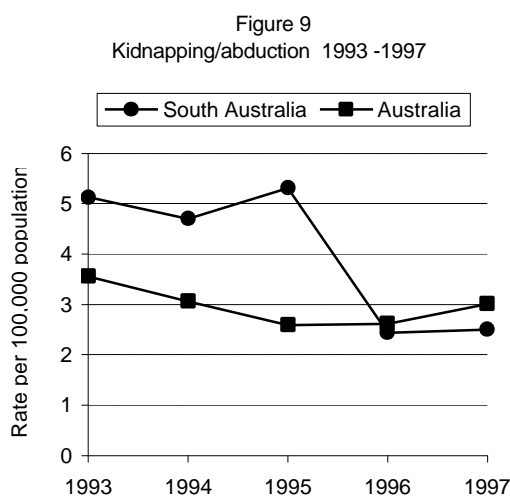


Figure 9 shows that South Australian kidnapping/abduction rates were higher than the Australian rate between 1993 and 1995. After a sharp decrease in 1996 (from 5.31 per 100,000 to 2.41) the rate stabilised in 1997 at 2.50. The Australian kidnapping/abduction rate increased in 1997. As a result, the South Australian rate is currently lower than the Australian rate.

As indicated in Table 6, the number of kidnapping/abduction victims in South Australia stabilised in 1997 compared with an increase of 16.3% nationally. However, both national and South Australian figures in 1997 were well below those recorded in 1993 (-11.3% and -50.1% respectively).

Table 6
Kidnapping/abduction - number of victims and percentage change 1993 - 1997

	Number of victims					% change			
	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993	since 1996	since 1995	since 1994	since 1993
Aust.	557	479	467	546	628	+16.3	+19.3	+2.0	-11.3
SA	37	36	78	69	75	+2.8	-52.6	-46.4	-50.1

Robbery

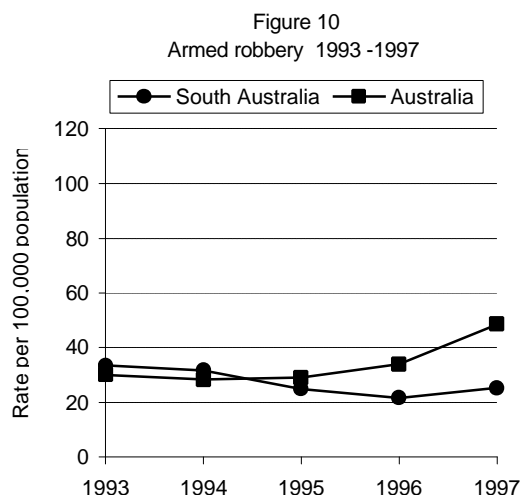
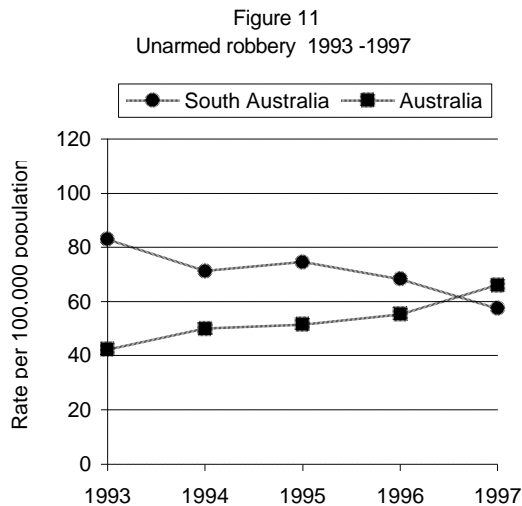


Figure 10 shows that between 1993 and 1996 the armed robbery rate in South Australia steadily decreased from 33.50 per 100,000 population to 21.64. In contrast, the national rate increased from 30.15 to 33.96. While both the South Australian and Australian rates of armed robbery increased in 1997, the rate of increase was much greater for Australia as a whole. As a result, the South Australian rate of 25.27 per 100,000 population is nearly half the Australian rate of 48.64.



As shown in Figure 11, the *unarmed robbery* rate in South Australia was higher than the national rate between 1993 and 1996. However, the South Australian rate has been generally decreasing since 1993 (from 82.92 per 100,000 population to 57.37 in 1997), while the national rate has been increasing since 1994. As a result, for the first time since these figures were published, the South Australian rate is now lower than the Australian rate (by 13.2%).

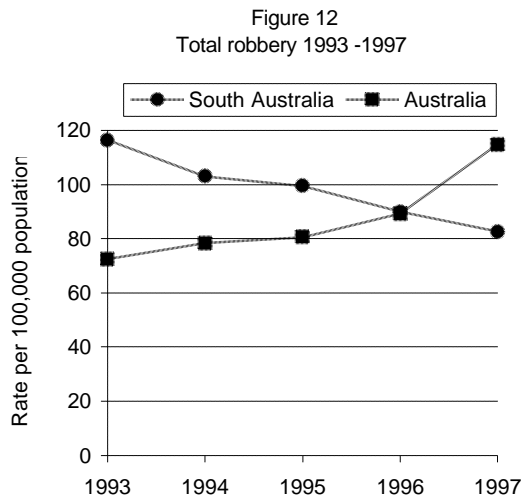


Figure 12 shows the *total robbery* rate per 100,000 population between 1993 and 1997. Overall, the decreases in *unarmed* and *armed robbery* rates in South Australia over this period, coupled with increases in the national rates over the same period, means that the South Australian *total robbery* rate is now 28.0% lower than the Australian rate. This is in sharp contrast to 1993, when the South Australian rate was 60.7% higher than the rate for Australia as a whole.

As shown in Table 7, in 1997 the number of *armed robbery* victims in South Australia increased by 17.2% from 319 to 374. However, due to steady decreases between 1993 and 1996, the 1997 figure is still 23.7% lower than that in 1993. In contrast, national figures have increased each year since 1993, with 1997 figures 45.0% higher than in 1996. The number of *armed robbery* victims in Australia is now 69.3% higher than in 1993.

Unarmed robbery has also decreased in South Australia. The number of victims in 1997 was 15.7% lower than in 1996 and 30.0% lower than in 1993. In contrast, the number of *unarmed robbery* victims Australia-wide increased by 20.9% in 1996 and is now 64.0% higher than the number recorded in 1993.

Table 7
Robbery - number of victims and percentage change 1993 - 1997

	Number of victims					% change			
	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993	since 1996	since 1995	since 1994	since 1993
Armed									
Aust.	9,015	6,217	5,255	5,046	5,324	+45.0	+71.6	+73.4	+69.3
SA	374	319	366	467	490	+17.2	+2.2	-19.9	-23.7
Unarmed									
Aust.	12,246	10,129	9,303	8,922	7,465	+20.9	+31.6	+37.3	+64.0
SA	849	1,007	1,096	1,048	1,213	-15.7	-22.5	-19.0	-30.0
Total									
Aust.	21,261	16,346	14,558	13,968	12,789	+32.3	+46.0	+52.2	+66.2
SA	1,223	1,326	1,462	1,515	1,703	-7.8	-16.3	-19.3	-28.2

Blackmail/extortion

Figure 13
Blackmail/extortion 1993 -1997

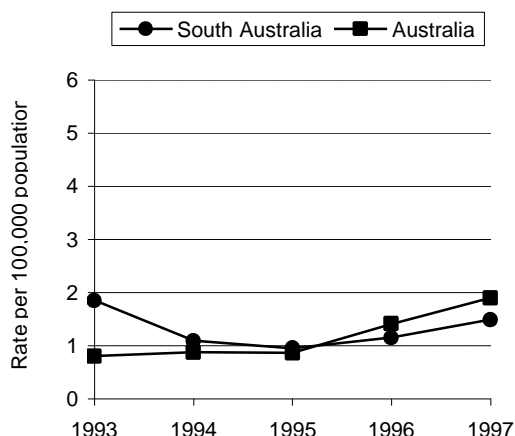


Figure 13 shows that the rate of *blackmail/extortion* decreased in South Australia between 1993 and 1995, while it remained relatively stable for Australia as a whole. However, since 1995 the rate of *blackmail/extortion* has increased for both South Australia and Australia to 1.5 and 1.9 per 100,000 population respectively.

As shown in Table 8, the number of *blackmail/extortion* victims in South Australia is very small and caution should be used when interpreting percentage changes over time. Overall the number of reported *blackmail/extortion* victims dropped from 27 in 1993 to 17 in 1996 then rose by 29.4% to 22 in 1997. For Australia as a whole there were sharp increases in reported *blackmail/extortion* in 1996 (66.5%) and 1997 (36.8%). As a result, Australia-wide *blackmail/extortion* figures in 1997 are 148.6% greater than in 1993.

Table 8
Blackmail/extortion - number of victims and percentage change 1993 - 1996

	Number of victims					% change			
	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993	since 1996	since 1995	since 1994	since 1993
Aust.	353	258	155	156	142	+36.8	+127.7	+126.3	+148.6
SA	22	17	14	16	27	+29.4	+57.1	+37.5	-18.5

Unlawful entry with intent

While data on all UEWI offences has been available since 1993, figures for the two UEWI sub-categories have only been published since 1995.

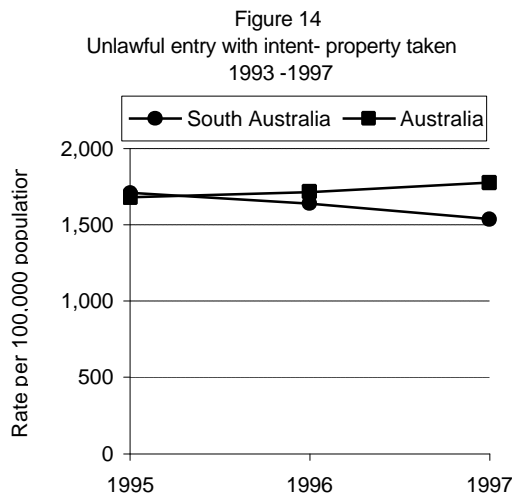


Figure 14 shows that in 1995, the South Australian and Australian rates of *UEWI - property taken* were very similar (1,708.10 and 1,678.03 offences per 100,000 population respectively). However, in 1996 and 1997 the South Australian rate declined while the Australian rate increased slightly. As a result, the South Australian rate of 1,536.49 is now 13.4% lower than the Australian rate of 1,774.58.

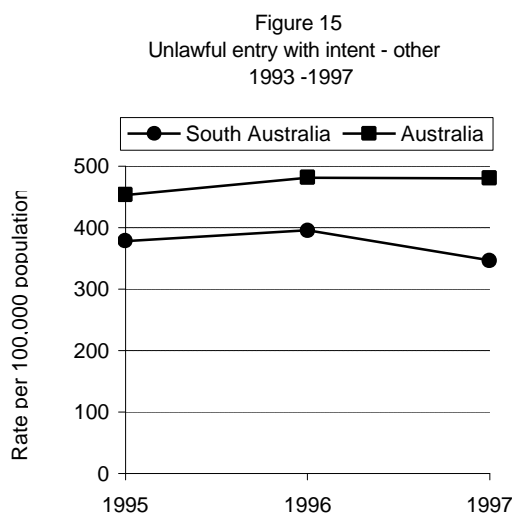
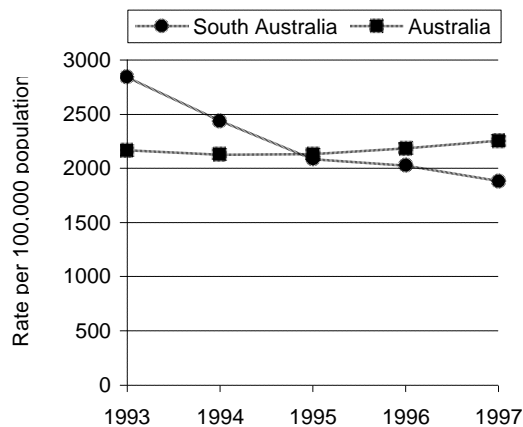


Figure 15 shows that *UEWI-other* increased slightly for both South Australia and Australia in 1996. However, in 1997 the South Australian rate decreased to 346.53 per 100,000 population, while the Australian rate increased marginally to 480.11. As a result, the South Australian rate is now 27.8% lower than the Australian rate.

Figure 16
Total Unlawful entry with intent
1993 -1997



As shown in Figure 16, there was a substantial drop in the rate of *unlawful entry with intent* in South Australia between 1993 and 1995, with smaller decreases recorded in 1996 and 1997. In contrast, the national rate increased in 1996 and 1997. The South Australian rate is now 16.5% lower than the Australian rate compared with 31.3% higher in 1993.

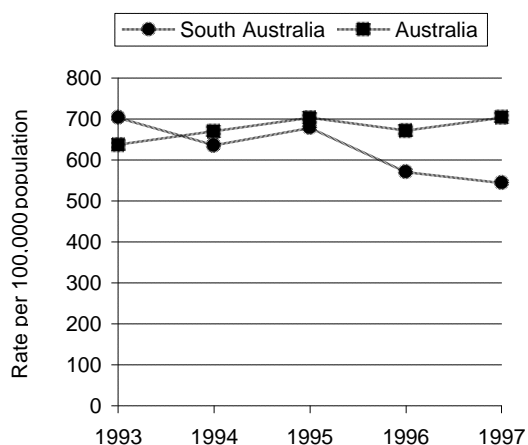
As indicated in Table 9, between 1996 and 1997 South Australia recorded a 6.5% decrease in the total number of *unlawful entry with intent* victims compared with an increase of 4.3% nationally. Overall, South Australian figures are now 33.0% lower than those recorded in 1993, while the national numbers are up 9.2%. A similar pattern is evident for *unlawful entry with intent involving the taking of property*, with a 5.6% decrease recorded in South Australia in 1997, compared with a 5.5% increase nationally. For *other UEWI* offences there was a 11.5% decrease in South Australia in 1997, compared with a slight increase of 1.2% for Australia as a whole.

Table 9
Unlawful entry with intent - number of victims and percentage change 1993 - 1996

	Number of victims					% change			
	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993	since 1996	since 1995	since 1994	since 1993
Total									
Aust.	417,845	399,735	384,908	379,505	382,245	+4.3	+8.6	+10.1	+9.2
SA	27,865	29,886	30,660	35,822	41,579	-6.8	-9.1	-22.2	-33.0
Taking of property									
Aust.	328,869	311,776	303,058	n/a	n/a	+5.5	+8.5	-	-
SA	22,737	24,093	25,099	n/a	n/a	-5.6	-9.4	-	-
Other									
Aust.	88,976	87,959	81,850	n/a	n/a	+1.2	+8.7	-	-
SA	5,128	5,793	5,561	n/a	n/a	-11.5	-7.8	-	-

Motor Vehicle Theft

Figure 17
Motor vehicle theft 1993 -1997



As indicated in Figure 17, after an increase in the *motor vehicle theft* rate between 1994 and 1995, the rate dropped sharply in South Australia between 1995 and 1996 (from 678.78 per 100,000 population to 571.63). This was followed by a further decrease in 1997 to 544.7. After increasing steadily between 1993 and 1995, the national *motor vehicle theft* rate also dropped between 1995 and 1996. However, in contrast to South Australia, the Australian rate of *motor vehicle theft* increased to 703.67 in 1997.

The number of reported *motor vehicle thefts* in South Australia decreased (by 4.3%) between 1995 and 1996, as shown in Table 10 below. Moreover, the 1997 figures are 21.7% lower than those recorded in 1993. In contrast, national *motor vehicle theft* figures increased by 6.1% in 1997 and are now 15.8% higher than in 1993.

Table 10
Motor vehicle theft - number of victims and percentage change 1993 - 1997

	Number of victims					% change			
	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993	since 1996	since 1995	since 1994	since 1993
Aust.	130,406	122,931	126,939	119,469	112,578	+6.1	+2.7	+9.2	+15.8
SA	8,060	8,428	9,974	9,350	10,292	-4.3	-19.2	-13.8	-21.7

Other theft

Other theft figures are only available since 1995.

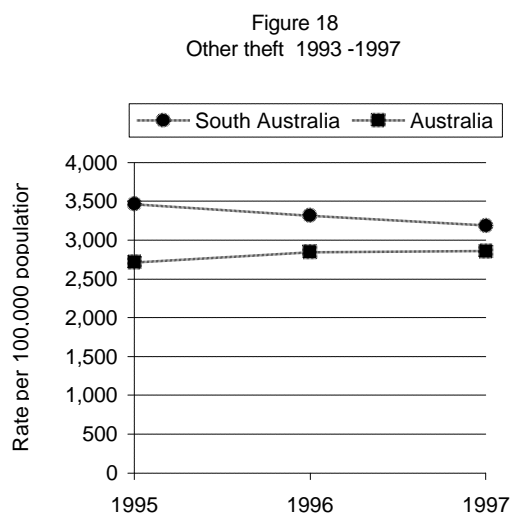


Figure 18 shows that since 1995 the rate of *other theft* in South Australia has declined, from 3,462.5 per 100,000 population to 3,185.3 in 1997. In contrast, the national rate has increased. However, South Australia's rate of *other theft* is still 11.5% higher than that of Australia.

Table 11 shows that the number of victims of *other theft* declined by 3.5% in South Australia in 1997 compared with a slight increase of 1.6% nationally. As a result, South Australian *other theft* figures are 7.4% lower than those recorded in 1995, while Australian *other theft* has increased by 8.0%.

Table 11
'Other theft' - number of victims and percentage change 1995 - 1997

	Number of victims			% change	
	1997	1996	1995	since 1996	since 1995
Aust.	529,345	520,795	490,084	+1.6	+8.0
SA	47,136	48,853	50,878	-3.5	-7.4

5. THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SITUATION IN 1997

Sex and age of victims

- Of the 23 *murder* victims in South Australia in 1997, 60.9% (14) were male. Thirteen of the victims were aged between 20 and 44 years, seven were 45 years or more and three were under 20.
- A high proportion (72.7%) of the 33 reported *attempted murder* victims were male. Two-thirds were aged between 20 and 44 years.
- Just over half (56.5%) of South Australian *assault* victims in 1997 were male. The highest number of victims was in the 25 to 34 years age group (28.8%), followed by the 35-44 years group (18.6%). A considerable number of *assault* victims were aged between 15 and 19 (16.6%). Only 1.7% of *assault* victims were aged over 65 years.
- In contrast to *assault* victims, the majority (83.0%) of *sexual assault* victims in 1997 were female. *Sexual assault* victims were also more likely to be younger than *assault* victims. Approximately 40.0% were less than 14 years, while 62.6% were aged under 20 years. The age groups with the highest number of *sexual assault* victims were 15 to 19 years (21.7%) and 10 to 14 years (21.4%).
- There were 37 *kidnapping/abduction* victims in South Australia in 1997. Of these, seven were males and 30 (81.1%) were females. A high proportion (78.4%) of the 37 victims were aged under 20 years.
- In 1997, 67.3% of armed robberies and 96.9% of *unarmed* robberies involved persons (as distinct from a corporation). Where a robbery involved an individual victim, the majority were male (69.8% and 64.9% for armed and *unarmed robbery* respectively). *Armed robbery* victims in 1997 were likely to be young, with 21.0% aged between 15 and 19 years and a further 15.9% aged between 20 and 24. Over half (57.5%) of *armed robbery* victims were aged between 15 and 34 years, while less than 10% were over 55 years. A similar pattern was also evident for *unarmed robbery*, with 29.2% of victims in the 15 to 19 year age group, 55.4% of victims aged between 15 and 34 years and 12.2% aged over 55.
- Of the 17 blackmail and extortion victims in South Australia in 1997, 12 were male and five were female. The majority (14 or 82.3%) were aged between 20 and 54 years.

Relationship between victim and offender

- In 13 of the 23 *murders* reported to police in South Australia in 1997, the victim knew the offender. In three cases, the offender was a family member, while nine cases involved a non-family member. Just under one half (15) of the 33 *attempted murder* victims in South Australia knew the offender, including eight who were family members.
- Over half (60.2%) of *assault* victims who reported the matter to police in 1997 knew their assailant. In 19.6% of cases the offender was a family member while 40.6% involved non-family members.
- Nearly three-quarters (73.2%) of *sexual assault* victims knew the offender, including 25.0% who were family members and 48.3% who were non-family members.

- In contrast to *assault* and *sexual assault*, the majority of *kidnapping/abduction* victims (28 of 37) did not know the offender. Of the eight victims who did know the offender, two were family members.
- Twelve of the 17 *blackmail/extortion* victims in South Australia in 1997 did not know the offender. Of the five that did know the offender, four were non-family members.

Location of offence

- A residential location was the setting for 43.5% of the 23 *murders* and 45.5% of the 33 *attempted murders* recorded in South Australia in 1997. Just under one-third (30.4%) of *murders* occurred in a community location (eg a street or footpath), compared with 39.4% of *attempted murders*.
- The location of *assaults* in 1997 is very similar to that of *attempted murders*. Approximately 45% of *assaults* occurred in a residential location, while 24.9% occurred on a street or footpath.
- In contrast to *assaults*, a clear majority (70.7%) of *sexual assaults* occurred in a residential location, including 57.0% in a private dwelling. Only 7.1% occurred on a street or footpath. This is consistent with the previous finding that in a very high proportion of *sexual assaults*, the victim knew their assailant.
- Of the *armed robberies* reported to police in 1997, a high proportion (46.8%) involved a retail outlet, while 22.5% occurred on a street or footpath. A further 11.8% occurred in a residential location, including 8.8% in a private dwelling.
- Most reported *unarmed robberies* in South Australia occurred on the street or footpath (47.1%) or in a car park (9.8%). Only 8.2% occurred in a private dwelling and 9.3% in the retail sector.
- Private dwellings were the main target for *unlawful entry with intent* offences in South Australia. Where property was taken, 54.3% of these offences occurred within a private dwelling. A similar figure was recorded for *UEWI - other*, where 49.6% of offences involved a private dwelling.
- In the majority of *motor vehicle thefts* in South Australia in 1997, the vehicle was taken from either a street/footpath (44.4%) or outbuilding/residential land (24.3%).
- For *other thefts*, 22.1% occurred from an outbuilding/residential land, 20.3% involved a retail outlet and 16.7% occurred in a 'conveyance in transit'.

Weapons

- The majority of *murders* in South Australia in 1997 involved the use of a weapon (18 out of 23 or 78.3%). A firearm was used in nine *murders* (39.1%).
- A weapon was used in 23 of the 33 *attempted murders* recorded by police in South Australia in 1997. Of these, seven involved a firearm (21.2% of all *attempted murders*) and 16 (48.5%) involved another type of weapon.

- In contrast to *murder* and *attempted murder* offences, almost all *assault* offences did not involve the use of a weapon (92.0%). Of the 8.0% of *assault* offences where a weapon was used, 7.5% involved a weapon other than a firearm.
- As with *assault*, the majority of *sexual assaults* did not involve the use of a weapon (98.7%). Of the 1,218 *sexual assault* offences recorded in 1997, three involved the use of a firearm and thirteen involved a weapon other than a firearm.
- No weapons were used during the *kidnapping/abduction* offences recorded in South Australia in 1997.
- By definition, all *armed robbery* offences involved the use of a weapon. While 24.1% of armed robberies involved a firearm, just under three-quarters (74.1%) involved the use of a weapon other than a firearm. The weapon involved was not specified in 1.9% of offences.

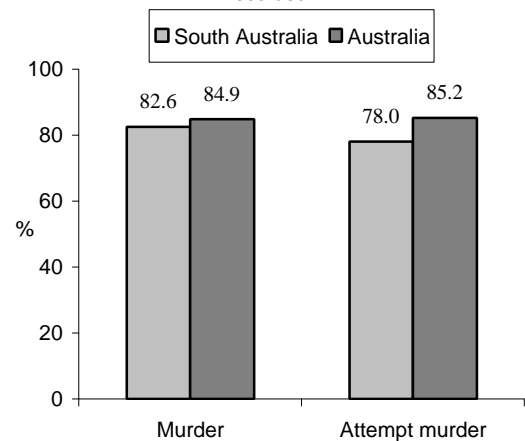
6. OUTCOME OF INVESTIGATIONS

The National Crime Statistics collection was expanded in 1997 to include information on the outcome of police investigations. This indicates the stage that an investigation has reached after a period of 30 and 90 days has elapsed since the incident was recorded by police.

Figures 19 to 23 show the percentage of offences finalised in South Australia 90 days after the incident was reported and compares this with the finalisation figure for Australia as a whole. It should be noted that some offences are finalised without any proceedings being initiated against an offender. For example, after investigation it may be considered that a reported crime has no foundation, or the original complaint is withdrawn by a victim. Alternatively, an offence may be confirmed but due to the circumstances of the alleged offender, such as incompetence, diplomatic immunity or age, the case is finalised without proceeding against him/her.

As shown in Figure 19, the majority of *murder* and *attempted murder* investigations were finalised in South Australia within 90 days from the time the incident was recorded by police (82.6% and 78.0% respectively). However, this was slightly lower than the national average for *murder* (84.9%) and 7.2% lower than the national average for *attempted murder* (85.2%).

Figure 19
Outcome of investigations - percentage of murder and attempt murder offences finalised 90 days after incident recorded



As indicated in Figure 20, 73.8% of *assault* and 62.9% of *sexual assault* offences were finalised in South Australia within 90 days of reporting the incident. The percentage finalised in South Australia was higher than that for Australia by 13.8% for *assault* and by 13.4% for *sexual assault*.

Approximately one-third (32.4%) of *kidnapping/ abduction* offences reported in South Australia in 1997 were finalised within 90 days, compared with a national figure of 36.6%.

For both *armed* and *unarmed robbery*, the percentage of offences finalised within 90 days in South Australia was higher than the national average. Just under one-third of *armed robbery* offences in South Australia were finalised within 90 days, compared with 24.9% for Australia as whole. For *unarmed robbery*, 26.0% of offences in South Australia were finalised within 90 days, compared with 18.1% nationally.

In contrast to offences against the person and robbery, a relatively small percentage of UEWI offences were finalised 90 days after the incident was reported. For *UEWI – property taken* offences, the percentage of cases finalised in South Australia was marginally higher than that for Australia as a whole (8.9% compared with 8.2%). For *UEWI – other* offences, the percentage of cases finalised in South Australia was lower than the national figure (6.8% compared with 9.7%).

Figure 20
Outcome of investigations - percentage of assault, sexual assault and kidnapping/abduction offences finalised 90 days after incident recorded

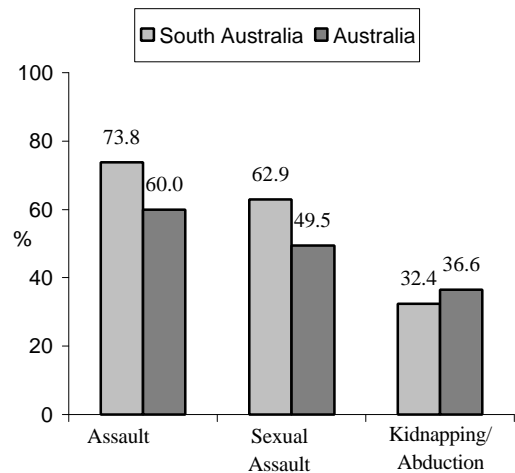


Figure 21
Outcome of investigations - percentage of robbery offences finalised 90 days after incident recorded

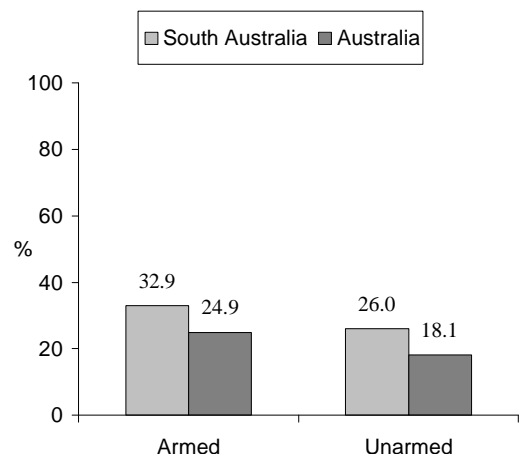


Figure 22
Outcome of investigations - percentage of UEWI offences finalised 90 days after incident recorded

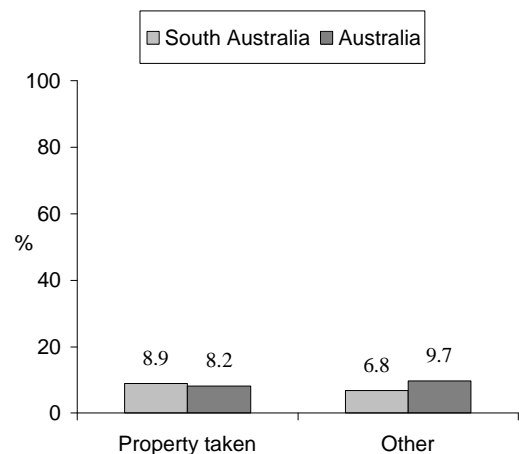


Figure 23
Outcome of investigations
percentage of motor vehicle theft and 'other' theft
offences finalised 90 days after incident recorded



As indicated in Figure 23, the percentage of *motor vehicle theft* offences finalised in South Australia (11.6%) was marginally higher than the national figure (10.0%). The same was true for *other theft* (16.0% compared with 15.4% for South Australia and Australia respectively).

7. CONCLUSIONS

The 1997 National Crime Statistics released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics contain both positive and negative outcomes for South Australia. On the positive side, South Australia was below the national rate for the categories of *murder, kidnapping/abduction, armed robbery, unarmed robbery, blackmail/extortion, unlawful entry with intent* and *motor vehicle theft*. South Australia also recorded a decrease in 1997 in the number of reported victims of *driving causing death, sexual assault, unarmed robbery, unlawful entry with intent, motor vehicle theft* and *other theft*.

Other positive results include a continuing reduction in the rates of *sexual assault, armed robbery, unarmed robbery* and *unlawful entry with intent*. These reductions are contrary to increases observed at the national level.

On the negative side, this state was above the national rate for *attempted murder, assault, sexual assault* and *other theft*. When compared with the other seven states and territories, South Australia also had the second highest ranking in two of these categories – namely *attempted murder* and *assault*. Moreover, when the number of victims for each offence was compared with that reported in 1996, South Australia recorded an increase in six of the thirteen major offence groups: *murder, attempted murder, assault, kidnapping/abduction, armed robbery* and *blackmail/extortion*.

However, when crime rates are analysed over a five year period, it is evident that South Australia has actually recorded decreases in all offence categories except *assault*. But even with *assault*, the increase recorded since 1993 is small compared with a much higher increase nationally.

As noted at the beginning of the Bulletin, it should be stressed that these statistics detail only those offences coming to police notice, rather than to all criminal incidents that occur in the community. Hence, while changes noted here may be due to changes in the actual incidents of crime, they may also reflect shifts in reporting levels or police practices.

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- No. 1 Sexual Offending in South Australia. April 1996
- No. 2 National Crime Statistics 1995 - The South Australian Perspective. July 1996
- No. 3 Reported Crime Trends in South Australia. February 1997
- No. 4 Robbery in South Australia. June 1997
- No. 5 Selected Offence Profiles. December 1997
- No. 6 Restraining Orders and Stalking Offences in 1995 and 1996. February 1998
- No. 7 National Crime Statistics - An Update 1997 - The South Australian Perspective. July 1998.

ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

- No. 1 Comparison of Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal cases finalised in the Magistrates Court of South Australia, 1995. July 1997 (\$10.00)

DRINK DRIVING

- No. 1 Offences finalised in the Magistrates Court of South Australia, 1995. November 1997 (\$10.00)

OTHER REPORTS:

- The South Australian Juvenile Justice System - A review of its operation. June 1996 (\$25)