



Report

Recorded Crime in South Australia's Metropolitan Local Government Areas

Crime Mapper 2007-2011

NATASHA ROSE & MICHELLE SCED

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

GPO Box 464, Adelaide
South Australia 5001

ocsar@agd.sa.gov.au
www.ocsar.sa.gov.au

Introduction

This report provides an analysis of recorded crime data published in *Crime Mapper 2007-2011*. The report is intended to provide a high level summary of recorded crime in South Australia's metropolitan Local Government Areas (LGA).

Due to the volume of data contained within *Crime Mapper 2007-2011* it is not possible to provide detailed trend and comparison analyses for each LGA at all offence levels. For the purposes of this report, analyses have been limited to the following:

- LGA recorded crime trend analyses for the eight major offence categories and total recorded offences; and
- LGA rate to metropolitan rate comparisons for the eight major offence categories and total recorded offences.

Crime Mapper

Crime Mapper is an online application that provides the geographic distribution of recorded crime across South Australia. Two units of measurement are reported:

1. Number of offences - provides a count of all offences listed on all incident reports recorded by South Australia Police¹.
2. Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population - provides the number of offences as a rate per 1,000 population residing in each given location.

Offences are categorised as follows:

- Offences against the person (homicide; major assault; other);
- Sexual offences (rape; indecent assault; unlawful sexual intercourse; other);
- Robbery & extortion offences (armed robbery; unarmed robbery; extortion);
- Offences against property (serious criminal trespass/break & enter; fraud & misappropriation; receiving/illegal possession of stolen goods; larceny/illegal use of a motor vehicle; other larceny; larceny from shops; larceny from a motor vehicle; arson/explosives; property damage & environmental offences);
- Offences against good order;
- Drug offences (possess/use drugs; sell/trade drugs; produce/manufacture drugs; possess implement for drug use; other);
- Driving offences (driving under the influence of alcohol/drugs; dangerous driving; driving licence offences; traffic offences; motor vehicle registration offences; other); or
- Other offences.

Recorded crime statistics are provided for the following geographic areas:

- South Australia;
- Metropolitan South Australia;
- Regional South Australia; and
- South Australian Local Government Areas.

When using *Crime Mapper* it is important to understand that the statistics it contains may not provide an accurate measure of the true prevalence or incidence of crime in a community. *Crime Mapper* statistics represent only those offences reported to police or which come to the attention of police. They can, therefore, be influenced by a number of factors, including victim reporting rates, the identification or detection of offences by police (in the case of 'victimless' crimes) and police interpretation and decision as to whether a crime has occurred. In addition, *Crime Mapper* does not include offences that are dealt with by way of expiation (e.g., speeding, littering, etc.).

¹ Although *Crime Mapper* statistics are based on data sourced from South Australia Police (SAPOL), there may be slight differences between the offence counts published by SAPOL and those that appear in *Crime Mapper*. This is due to the use of different counting rules and the different classification of some offence types. Therefore, while the two sources of crime data are complimentary, they are not comparable.

Metropolitan LGA recorded crime trends

By reporting the number of recorded offences each year, *Crime Mapper* enables the identification of recorded crime trends (i.e., changes in crime over time) for the different geographic locations. The following analysis provides a brief description of the direction (and size) of recorded crime trends for all South Australian metropolitan LGAs between 2007, 2010 and 2011. However, the use of offence numbers (as opposed to offence rates) does have limitations. For example, increases or decreases in population size or composition may account for increases or decreases in offence numbers. Also, due to differing residential population sizes, the number of offences recorded cannot be used to compare crime in different local government areas.

2011 versus 2010

As shown in Table 1, the number of total recorded offences decreased in just over half of the metropolitan LGAs (10 out of 19, or 53% of metropolitan LGAs) between 2010 and 2011. Reductions ranged from 8.7% in Gawler to 0.05% in Tea Tree Gully. Nine metropolitan LGAs experienced an increase in the number of total offences recorded between 2010 and 2011:

- Adelaide Hills (up 7.6%, or 130 offences);
- Charles Sturt (up 4.4%, or 612 offences);
- West Torrens (up 4.1%, or 268 offences);
- Playford (up 3.8%, or 616 offences);
- Onkaparinga (up 3.1%, or 532 offences);
- Marion (up 3.1%, or 279 offences);
- Mitcham (up 2.2%, or 97 offences);
- Unley (up 0.7%, or 20 offences); and
- Port Adelaide Enfield (up 0.1%, or 19 offences).

As mentioned previously, an increase in offences recorded does not necessarily indicate an increase in offences occurring in the community. The number of offences recorded can be influenced by an increase in victims' willingness to report offences to police or greater police pro-activity.

Table 1. Difference and percentage change in total recorded offences for metropolitan LGAs, 2011 versus 2010.

	Number of total recorded offences		Difference	% change
	2010	2011		
Adelaide	13,612	13,129	- 483	- 3.5
Adelaide Hills	1,704	1,834	+ 130	+ 7.6
Burnside	2,360	2,282	- 78	- 3.3
Campbelltown	3,277	3,066	- 211	- 6.4
Charles Sturt	14,002	14,614	+ 612	+ 4.4
Gawler	2,766	2,525	- 241	- 8.7
Holdfast Bay	4,186	3,907	- 279	- 6.7
Marion	9,131	9,410	+ 279	+ 3.1
Mitcham	4,344	4,441	+ 97	+ 2.2
Norwood Payneham St Peters	3,853	3,649	- 204	- 5.3
Onkaparinga	17,114	17,646	+ 532	+ 3.1
Playford	16,079	16,695	+ 616	+ 3.8
Port Adelaide Enfield	19,367	19,386	+ 19	+ 0.1
Prospect	2,469	2,327	- 142	- 5.8
Salisbury	19,277	17,816	- 1,461	- 7.6
Tea Tree Gully	8,073	8,069	- 4	- 0.05
Unley	3,067	3,087	+ 20	+ 0.7
Walkerville	730	712	- 18	- 2.5
West Torrens	6,458	6,726	+ 268	+ 4.1

Source: Calculated from statistics reported in *Crime Mapper 2007-2011*.

According to offence category, *Offences against good order* were shown to have decreased in more than two-thirds of the metropolitan LGAs (13 out of 19, or 68%) between 2010 and 2011. Reductions ranged from 324 offences (down 9.6%) in Salisbury to 26 offences (down 28.0%) in Walkerville. The remaining six (32% of metropolitan LGAs) experienced increases in *Offences against good order* ranging from an additional 10 offences (up 3.6%) in the Adelaide Hills to 120 offences (up 7.6%) in Marion.

Similarly, 12 out of 19, or 63%, of metropolitan LGAs experienced decreases in *Sexual offences* between 2010 and 2011 - ranging from 43 less offences (down 24.4%) in Playford to two offences (down 8.7%) in Gawler. Six² metropolitan LGAs showed increases, varying between one extra offence (up 5.9%) in Burnside to 40 offences (up 40.0%) in Charles Sturt.

In contrast, more than half of the metropolitan LGAs (11, or 58%) experienced an increase in *Offences against the person* in 2011 when compared to 2010. Increases ranged from eight offences (up 3.0%) in Norwood, Payneham and St Peters to 130 offences (up 19.5%) in Marion. The remaining eight metropolitan LGAs showed a decline, from 72 offences (down 15.1%) in West Torrens to nine less offences (down 3.2%) in Campbelltown.

Ten out of 19 metropolitan LGAs, or 53%, recorded increases in *Drug offences* between 2010 and 2011. These increases ranged from one offence (up 2.1%) in Holdfast Bay to 91 offences (up 22.6%) in Onkaparinga. Eight³ (42%) of metropolitan LGAs recorded decreases - from 259 offences (down 29.8%) in Salisbury to one less offence (down 0.3%) in Charles Sturt.

5-year recorded crime trends

Recorded crime decreased in all metropolitan LGAs over the five-year period, 2007 to 2011. As shown in Table 2, reductions ranged from 35.1% in Gawler to 13.6% in Playford.

Table 2. Difference and percentage change in total recorded offences for metropolitan LGAs, 2011 versus 2007.

	Number of total recorded offences		Difference	% change
	2007	2011		
Adelaide	17,515	13,129	- 4,386	- 25.0
Adelaide Hills	2,443	1,834	- 609	- 24.9
Burnside	3,359	2,282	- 1,077	- 32.1
Campbelltown	4,354	3,066	- 1,288	- 29.6
Charles Sturt	18,649	14,614	- 4,035	- 21.6
Gawler	3,888	2,525	- 1,363	- 35.1
Holdfast Bay	5,835	3,907	- 1,928	- 33.0
Marion	11,688	9,410	- 2,278	- 19.5
Mitcham	5,771	4,441	- 1,330	- 23.0
Norwood Payneham St Peters	5,548	3,649	- 1,899	- 34.2
Onkaparinga	21,194	17,646	- 3,548	- 16.7
Playford	19,330	16,695	- 2,635	- 13.6
Port Adelaide Enfield	25,531	19,386	- 6,145	- 24.1
Prospect	3,315	2,327	- 988	- 29.8
Salisbury	21,564	17,816	- 3,748	- 17.4
Tea Tree Gully	11,506	8,069	- 3,437	- 29.9
Unley	4,141	3,087	- 1,054	- 25.5
Walkerville	951	712	- 239	- 25.1
West Torrens	8,954	6,726	- 2,228	- 24.9

Source: Calculated from statistics reported in *Crime Mapper 2007-2011*.

All metropolitan LGAs recorded decreases in both *Property* and *Driving offences* over the 5-year period while increases were recorded for all metropolitan LGAs in *Drug offences* (see tables 3 and 4, respectively).

The decrease in recorded *Driving offences* can largely be attributed to legislative change. Changes to the *Motor Vehicles Regulations 1996*, which made offences relating to driving unregistered and uninsured

² One metropolitan LGA experienced no change in the number of recorded *Sexual offences*.

³ One metropolitan LGA experienced no change in the number of recorded *Drug offences*.

expiable, came into operation on 1 June 2009 (expiable offences are not counted in *Crime Mapper*). Consequently, recorded motor vehicle registration offences decreased from 25,891 in 2007 to 3,601 in 2011 state-wide (a reduction of 22,290 recorded offences) accounting for almost three quarters of the observed decrease in driving offences across South Australia.

The decrease in recorded *Property offences* is more difficult to explain. According to research undertaken in New South Wales, property crime rates are influenced by a range of factors including drug use, the criminal justice response to property crime, and economic factors. Declining trends in property crime are therefore proposed to be associated with a decrease in the rate of drug use, an increase in the number of people seeking drug treatment, an increase in the imprisonment rate for property offences, a fall in long-term unemployment and an increase in average weekly earnings (Moffatt, Weatherburn & Donnelly, 2005).

Although increases in *Drug offences* were experienced in all metropolitan LGAs, the number of offences recorded in this offence category is likely due to pro-active policing rather than an increase in the number of drug offences committed. During the five-year period, SAPOL regularly undertook specialised policing operations targeting drug-related crimes, particularly the sale of controlled drugs (SAPOL 2007; 2012).

Table 3. Difference and percentage change in recorded *Property* and *Driving offences* for metropolitan LGAs, 2011 versus 2007.

	Property offences				Driving offences			
	2007	2011	Difference	% change	2007	2011	Difference	% change
Adelaide	8,176	5,934	- 2,242	- 27.4	3,034	1,304	- 1,730	- 57.0
Adelaide Hills	1,315	1,043	- 272	- 20.7	562	280	- 282	- 50.2
Burnside	2,290	1,583	- 707	- 30.9	520	249	- 271	- 52.1
Campbelltown	2,570	1,808	- 762	- 29.6	786	331	- 455	- 57.9
Charles Sturt	10,667	8,964	- 1,703	- 16.0	3,948	1,596	- 2,352	- 59.6
Gawler	1,933	1,358	- 575	- 29.7	868	388	- 480	- 55.3
Holdfast Bay	3,575	2,296	- 1,279	- 35.8	939	448	- 491	- 52.3
Marion	7,056	5,621	- 1,435	- 20.3	1,895	925	- 970	- 51.2
Mitcham	3,838	2,942	- 896	- 23.3	892	440	- 452	- 50.7
Norwood Payneham St Peters	3,243	2,247	- 996	- 30.7	1,212	546	- 666	- 55.0
Onkaparinga	9,970	9,652	- 318	- 3.2	5,174	1,937	- 3,237	- 62.6
Playford	10,065	8,974	- 1,091	- 10.8	4,295	2,057	- 2,238	- 52.1
Port Adelaide Enfield	13,103	10,455	- 2,648	- 20.2	5,975	2,663	- 3,312	- 55.4
Prospect	2,305	1,413	- 892	- 38.7	443	305	- 138	- 31.2
Salisbury	11,775	9,763	- 2,012	- 17.1	4,636	2,190	- 2,446	- 52.8
Tea Tree Gully	6,845	4,680	- 2,165	- 31.6	1,885	818	- 1,067	- 56.6
Unley	2,964	2,298	- 666	- 22.5	464	241	- 223	- 48.1
Walkerville	674	508	- 166	- 24.6	128	77	- 51	- 39.8
West Torrens	5,431	4,081	- 1,350	- 24.9	2,057	921	- 1,136	- 55.2

Source: Calculated from statistics reported in *Crime Mapper 2007-2011*.

Table 4. Difference and percentage change in recorded *Drug offences* for metropolitan LGAs, 2011 versus 2007.

	Drug offences			
	2007	2011	Difference	% change
Adelaide	164	195	+ 31	+ 18.9
Adelaide Hills	36	47	+ 11	+ 30.6
Burnside	24	64	+ 40	+ 166.7
Campbelltown	57	119	+ 62	+ 108.8
Charles Sturt	198	394	+ 196	+ 99.0
Gawler	16	50	+ 34	+ 212.5
Holdfast Bay	46	48	+ 2	+ 4.3
Marion	110	198	+ 88	+ 80.0
Mitcham	34	66	+ 32	+ 94.1
Norwood Payneham St Peters	43	67	+ 24	+ 55.8
Onkaparinga	257	493	+ 236	+ 91.8
Playford	182	452	+ 270	+ 148.4
Port Adelaide Enfield	284	507	+ 223	+ 78.5
Prospect	61	74	+ 13	+ 21.3
Salisbury	235	609	+ 374	+ 159.1
Tea Tree Gully	124	218	+ 94	+ 75.8
Unley	21	26	+ 5	+ 23.8
Walkerville	2	21	+ 19	+ 950.0
West Torrens	95	190	+ 95	+ 100.0

Source: Calculated from statistics reported in *Crime Mapper 2007-2011*.

LGA to metropolitan ratio comparisons

Using rates per 1,000 residents, it is possible to identify LGA 'hot spots' for particular offence types. This is done by calculating each LGA's 'ratio to metropolitan rate' for each offence type. The 'ratio to metropolitan rate' compares the LGA offence rate per 1,000 residents for a particular offence type to the corresponding metropolitan South Australia rate per 1,000 residents. A ratio of one indicates parity with the metro SA rate. Ratios of more than double the metropolitan rate are considered to be high whilst ratios of half or less of the metropolitan rate are considered to be low.⁴

In 2011 Adelaide was the only LGA to have a rate more than double the metropolitan rate for all major offence categories. However, this is not necessarily a true reflection of the actual rate of crime in Adelaide since the residential population used to calculate the rate is much lower than the population using the area for work and entertainment.

In total, seven metropolitan LGAs were found to have a low 'ratio to metropolitan SA rate' (i.e., half or less the metropolitan rate) for at least one major offence category. These are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Metropolitan LGAs with a low ratio to metropolitan SA rate by major offence category, 2011.

	Against person (excl sexual)	Sexual	Robbery & Extortion	Property	Good order	Drug	Driving	Other
Adelaide Hills	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
Burnside	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Campbelltown	●				●		●	●
Holdfast Bay						●		●
Mitcham	●				●	●	●	
Unley	●	●			●	●	●	●
Walkerville	●	●	●		●			●

Source: Calculated from statistics reported in *Crime Mapper 2007-2011*.

⁴ In accordance with BOCSAR 2012.

References

- BOCSAR (2012). *Explanatory notes for using and interpreting crime hotspot and rate maps*. Sydney: Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR). Viewed 15 March 2013, <http://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Lawlink/bocsar/ll_bocsar.nsf/pages/bocsar_lga_crimemaps_explanatorynotes>
- Moffatt, S., Weatherburn, D., & Donnelly, N. (2005). *What caused the recent drop in property crime?* Crime and Justice Bulletin No. 85. Sydney: NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.
- SAPOL (2012). *South Australia Police Annual Report 2011-2012*. Adelaide: South Australia Police.
- SAPOL (2007). *South Australia Police Annual Report 2006-2007*. Adelaide: South Australia Police.