



OFFICE OF  
CRIME STATISTICS  
AND RESEARCH

# OCSAR NEWS

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## Welcome!

Last year the Office of Crime Statistics and Research celebrated its 25th Anniversary. This provided us with the opportunity to reflect on how the role of the Office has changed over the past two and a half decades. Although set up by State Cabinet in 1978 to monitor and report on crime trends, this now represents only one aspect of our work. As you will see from the articles in this and subsequent newsletters, our role has expanded to encompass a substantial research and evaluation program aimed at meeting the current and anticipated needs of the Justice Portfolio, our other stakeholders in Government and the South Australian community.

The aim of this Newsletter, which will be produced bi-monthly, is to keep you up-to-date with developments in the



**Joy Wundersitz, Director,  
Office of Crime Statistics and  
Research**

Office, including progress on our key projects such as the evaluation of the Drug Court, the National CARS project, and juvenile offending; details on upcoming publications; staff profiles; information about our seminar series on crime and criminal justice issues; and items of interest on our web-

site.

Your feedback on this Newsletter, including any suggestions for information that you would like to see included, is welcome.

## Evaluating the Police Drug Diversion Initiative

The Police Drug Diversion Initiative commenced in September 2001 with the aim of diverting individuals apprehended for simple drug possession away from the courts and into health treatment. To date there have been over 3,500 diversions across the state. Almost two-thirds of these are young people under 18 years and the majority of these are diverted for possession of cannabis. Since inception, 93% of young persons have complied with their diversion and had their offences expiated without record.

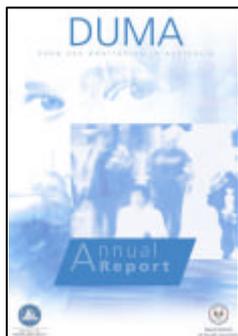
An evaluation of the Initiative commenced in October 2001. An interim report in early 2003

focused largely on a range of process issues which were still being bedded down. It included results of interviews with a wide range of stakeholders, the results of a survey from over 700 police and analysis of a range of other data.

More recently we have completed a briefing paper to the State Reference Group on Drugs, looking at the extent of contact with the criminal justice system of those diverted. Perhaps not surprisingly, adults were more likely than young people to have had prior contact with the criminal justice system. Notably there was some evidence that drug

charges decreased in the post diversion period and that amongst adults particularly there were some overall decreases in offending post-diversion.

In the coming months we will continue to interview individuals who have been diverted, in an effort to learn more about their views of the Initiative, as well as re-interviewing assessment and treatment workers and conducting a follow-up survey with police. We expect the evaluation to be completed in mid 2005, with regular briefing papers being provided to the Reference Group up until that point.



The inaugural South Australian DUMA Annual Statistical Report has been released and is available from the OCSAR website

## DUMA Annual Statistical Reports

OCSAR has recently released a number of new reports from the DUMA project, including South Australia's inaugural annual statistical report for the 2002/03 financial year and a quarterly report for the period January-March 2004. This report also includes an analysis of the DUMA weapons addendum.

Drug Use Monitoring Australia (DUMA) is a project run by the Australian Institute of Criminology and the SA Attorney General's Department. The project involves drug testing recently detained

individuals and conducting extensive interviews with them to obtain data relating to drug use and associated issues at seven sites across Australia. DUMA has been operating in South Australia since the second quarter of 2002 at both the Adelaide City Watchhouse and Elizabeth Police Station Cells.

The 2002/03 annual statistical report comprises four volumes. The first two volumes include a detailed analysis of the results for the Adelaide City Watchhouse and the Elizabeth Police Station Cells,

while the third volume draws comparisons between these two sites and also between other sites around Australia. The fourth volume of this annual report includes an analysis of the addendums that are run each quarter as part of the DUMA program. During 2002/03, the four addendums were Drug dealing, Weapons, Violence in the home and Drug driving.

*All DUMA reports produced by OCSAR are available from our website. For further information please contact Nick Turner, ph (08) 8226 4156.*

## The Magistrates Court Diversion Program - a Justice Success Story

OCSAR has just released a report detailing the key findings from its evaluation of the Magistrates Court Diversion Program (MCDP).

The program, which commenced operation in the Adelaide Magistrates Court in August 1999, aims to ensure that people with a mental impairment who come before the courts have access to appropriate interventions that will assist in addressing their offending behaviour.

Participants who are accepted onto the program have their cases adjourned while an individualised intervention and treatment plan (generally of four to six months in duration) is developed to address their mental impairment issues.

The research involved a collaborative team: Carol Castle extracted the data; Helen McRostie liaised with the Magistrates Court and treatment agencies; Grace Skrzypiec carried out the quantitative analyses and Joy Wundersitz edited the final

report.

The evaluation found evidence of a reduction in the levels of recorded offending amongst MCDP clients after completing the program. This suggests that the program is successful in helping to address the causes of offending amongst this group of offenders.

The evaluation found that:

- There was a statistically significant reduction in the number of participants who were apprehended for offending within one year of completing the program, with about two thirds not re-offending in this time.
- This reduction in the frequency of recorded offending applied even amongst those participants who were classified as serious offenders before entering the program. Of this group, 70% did not offend in the 12 months following program completion.
- Of the small group who

did offend after program completion, there was some indication that the number of offences committed post-program was lower than the number committed pre-program.

The evaluation also found that the likelihood of post-program offending varied according to the individual's type of mental impairment. For example, those with an intellectual disability as their primary diagnosis had a greater likelihood of offending post-program than did those with a bipolar disorder. These findings point to the need for individualised intervention and treatment plans.

The full evaluation report, entitled *Magistrates Court Diversion Program; an Analysis of Post-Program Offending*, is available on the OCSAR website at [www.ocsar.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocsar.sa.gov.au)

*For further information regarding this evaluation, contact Grace Skrzypiec on ph 8207 2047*

***“70% (of the most serious offenders) did not offend in the 12 months following program completion”***

## International Award for Auto Theft Research Team

Earlier this year OCSAR's Comprehensive Auto-theft Research System (CARS) Project won an award for 'Outstanding Achievement in the Reduction of Auto Theft'.

The award was presented to the Office of Crime Statistics and Research by the International Association of Auto Theft Investigators at a recent vehicle theft conference in Brisbane. OCSAR established CARS for South Australia in 1995 and, since 1999, has received external funding from the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council to extend the state system to a national database.

In presenting the award, the International Association of Auto Theft Investigators described CARS as 'a world-class initiative, a simple but unique idea that has been exceptionally well executed'.

The National CARS Project integrates information from police, insurance companies, registration authorities and vehicle manufacturers into a powerful database that is used by researchers and policy-



Paul Thomas (CARS Director), Rob Potter (CARS Senior Research Officer) and Graham Bath (CARS Manager), receiving their award on behalf of the CARS project team from IAATI's International President, Craig Petterd, in Brisbane, March 2004.

makers to monitor vehicle theft trends and evaluate the effectiveness of theft reduction strategies. Along with regular statistical and research reports, CARS data are available via an interactive web-based tool that allows users to extract and map vehicle thefts. The project regularly receives interest and acclaim from across the globe.

Paul Thomas, Director of the National CARS Project, said

"This is an excellent example of how industry and government can work together to share information and develop effective theft reduction strategies. The success of these strategies has been evident in the statistics, with a 32% reduction in vehicle theft across Australia during the past 12 months".

For further information on the CARS Project please contact Paul Thomas, ph (08) 8207 1669.

*"a world class initiative, a simple but unique idea that has been exceptionally well executed"*

## Recent and Upcoming Releases

The following reports have recently been released by OCSAR:

- Magistrates Court Diversion Program: An Analysis of Post-Program Offending. (160 pages)
- Evaluation Findings: Magistrates Court Diversion Program: An Analysis of Post-Program Offending. (18 pages)

Over the coming months OCSAR expects to release the following publications:

- Crime and Justice in South Australia, Volume 1 - Offences reported to Police, the victims and alleged perpetrators. (Anticipated release date: August 2004)
- Crime and Justice in South Australia, 2003, Volume 3 - Adult Courts and Corrections (Anticipated release date September 2004)
- DUMA in South Australia: Quarterly report: Oct-Dec 2003. (Anticipated release date: August 2004)
- CARS Quarterly Statistical reports, April - June, 2004 (Anticipated release date: August 2004)

**OCSAR publications are available from our website:**

**[ocsar.sa.gov.au](http://ocsar.sa.gov.au)**

## OCSAR's Seminar Program

September 17<sup>th</sup>

**Grace Skrzypiec**

Findings from the evaluation of the Mental Impairment Diversion Program  
10.00 am  
Level 1, Chesser House,  
Grenfell Street

October

Half day **Drugs Seminar** presenting findings from a number of OCSAR's drug-related evaluations, including DUMA, DATS, PDDI and the Drug Court. The seminar will ask:  
What are the implications from these findings for future policy development?  
(Date and venue to be advised)

For further information on these or future seminars please contact Tina Conroy, ph (08) 8207 1731

We're on the web!  
[www.ocsar.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocsar.sa.gov.au)

## A Crime and Justice Makeover

OCSAR is currently reviewing its flagship publication - *Crime and Justice in South Australia*.

One change will be a move to a financial year reporting period, commencing with the 2003/04 report.

We will also be looking at presenting the information on an interactive CD-Rom that will allow greater flexibility in accessing the information.

As part of the planning process for this major task, OCSAR is reviewing both the content of the reports and the counting rules currently used.

If you have any views on how we could improve *Crime and Justice in South Australia*,

please contact Paul Thomas ph. (08) 8207 1669

In the meantime, the 2003 calendar year reports in the existing format will be released over the next few months.



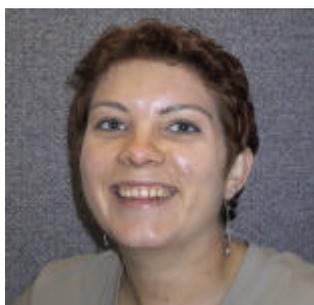
The 2003 Crime and Justice reports will be the last in this current format.

## From CARS to a bicycle - OCSAR says 'sayonara' to Kristin

*After almost eight years of analyzing stolen vehicle data with the CARS project Kristin Zeman is trading in her life with CARS for a bicycle in Japan.*

Kristin commenced with OCSAR in 1996 and since then she has proved to be a valuable member of the CARS team that has helped develop the project from a small South Australian project to an internationally acknowledged project that has attracted over \$2 million dollars in funding.

In her role as Data Analyst / Administrator, Kristin was responsible for the often thankless but vitally important task of data cleansing and



**Kristin Zeman, heading to Japan to teach English.**

processing of data from all Australian police services, registration authorities and insurers.

After finishing her university studies Kristin has decided it is time for a change of scenery and is moving to Japan to

teach English.

Based in Takebe, a small town approximately 700 kms west of Tokyo, Kristin will work with children and young adults at six local schools. While the position comes with free rent, she will unfortunately be trading in her car and using a bicycle as her means of transport.

Kristin is the second longest serving member of the CARS team and her detailed knowledge will be truly missed.

We wish Kristin well for her future and look forward to receiving postcards!

Sayonara Kristin.

## In the Next Issue of OCSAR NEWS

In our next issue of *OCSAR NEWS* learn more about OCSAR's Evaluation Service and how it may be able to assist you and your organisation. The Evaluation Service was launched only 7 months ago and to date has

assisted over 8 initiatives.

The next issue will also feature highlights from our Crime and Justice Report and full details of our exciting new web based tool 'Crime Mapper'.

This application allows users to produce thematic maps and detailed crime and demographic profiles of various regions.

Look out for your next issue in **October**.