



OFFICE OF
CRIME STATISTICS
AND RESEARCH

OCSAR NEWS

Volume 2, Issue 4

August 2005

Contact us:

Justice Strategy Division
Attorney-General's Dept.
GPO Box 464
Adelaide, SA 5001
DX 336

Ph (08) 8207 1731
Fax (08) 8204 9575

Email: info@ocsar.sa.gov.au
Web: www.ocsar.sa.gov.au

Inside this issue:

Criminal Justice 2
Data Quality
Committee

Indigenous Drug 2
Dependence -
Analysis of
DUMA data

Release of the 3
Crime and Justice
2004 Police
Report

Overview of 4
Family Violence
Courts in South
Australia

Staff 4
Developments



Government
of South Australia

Director's Report

Research undertaken by OCSAR has indicated that, within any cohort of young people, there is a small group who begin offending at a very young age and who not only go on to commit numerous offences as a juvenile but who once they turn the age of 18 continue to offend and move into the adult system. The ability to interrupt the criminal life trajectories of these young people through successful interventions is one of the key challenges facing the juvenile justice system and the wider community.

In recognition of the importance of this topic, the Office of Crime Statistics and Research, in conjunction with the Australian Institute of Criminology, is convening a one day conference in Adelaide on 27th October, 2005 which aims to develop a better understanding of chronic offenders and what works in responding to their particular needs.

This conference will bring together some of the key researchers in Australia, including

- Dr Anna Stewart and Michael Livingstone from Griffith University, Queensland;
- Dr Toni Makkai, Director of the Australian Institute of Criminology;
- Dr Anna Ferrante from the Crime Research Centre, University of Western Australia,
- Dr Mark Halsey, from the Department of Criminology,

University of Melbourne; and

- Dr Andrew Day, University of South Australia.

These speakers will be joined by several presenters from the Office of Crime Statistics and Research, including Jayne Marshall (Senior Researcher) and Grace Skrzypiec (Senior Research and Statistical Officer) who will provide South Australian-specific information on chronic young offenders.

The aim of the conference is to promote wide-ranging discussion on such issues as:

- Who are the chronic young offenders and how do their patterns of offending differ from those of other young offenders;
- What factors contribute to chronic offending;
- What 'works' either to prevent young people from becoming chronic offenders in the first instance, or to reduce offending amongst those who are already persistent offenders; and
- How can modelling the juvenile justice system aid in more effective policy and practice development in this area.

In addition to the key-note speakers, each session during the day will have a lengthy period set aside for discussion and audience input, with this discussion being led by a panel of practitioners and policy makers working with young offenders. A series of poster displays will also be set up

which will highlight the range of program and service initiatives currently available or being planned for young offenders.

The conference will be held at the Adelaide Wine Centre, with a cost of \$70.00 (inc. GST) per registrant, which will cover morning and afternoon tea and lunch.

If you are interested in attending or would like further information on the conference, please contact Tina Conroy on 8207 1731 or conroy.tina@saugov.sa.gov.au.

If you or your agency would be interested in providing a poster display containing information on programs that you are currently running (or planning to run) for young offenders that you would like to share with other conference participants, Tina Conroy would also be keen to hear from you.

We hope you are able to join us in what promises to be a challenging and thought-provoking conference.

Joy Wundersitz

Conference
Flyer
with further
details
out soon

Criminal Justice Data Quality Committee

The Criminal Justice Data Quality Committee (CJDQC) was established in July 2003, following recommendations made by Des Semple and Associates, who had conducted a review of the Office to ensure that it was able to service the Government's and Justice Portfolio's future statistical monitoring, research and evaluation requirements.

The Semple Review recommended that a Data Quality Committee be created to identify data quality issues that can be corrected at source where appropriate and to provide advice on law and offence codes, as required.

The Committee includes representatives from the appropriate business units from each of the key criminal justice agencies – namely AGD, SAPOL, DCS, CAA, ODPP, JTS and DFC (CYFS). Joy Wundersitz,

Director of OCSAR, is the Chairperson of the Committee. The Committee, via its Chairperson, reports to the OCSAR Advisory Committee.

The Terms of Reference for the CJDQC, as endorsed by the OCSAR Advisory Committee, are:

- To identify, monitor and resolve data quality issues which impact on the ability to conduct statistical research and analysis across the Justice agencies.
- To facilitate the sharing of information about quality data issues including the identification of:
 - unavailable data (not collected),
 - missing data (meant to be collected but not recorded),
 - inaccessible data (collected, but not easily retrievable or analysable),
 - inconsistent data or
 - incorrect data
- timeliness
- To encourage the development and implementation of uniform definitions, counting rules and values wherever possible.
- To promote the dissemination of data dictionaries, data definitions, counting rules, and collection procedures across the Justice community to ensure increased understanding and more accurate interpretation of justice related data.
- To encourage (and facilitate where possible), intra and inter-agency auditing of justice related datasets.

In undertaking its duties it is noted that:

- The Committee aims to ensure balanced decision making in relation to the conflicting requirements between operational and analytical needs;
- It is not the Committee's role to address data quality issues in relation to

individual records but to address relevant data quality issues in general;

- The Committee is only focused on client data and not other agency datasets such as financial or HR data; and
- The Committee is only focused on criminal activity data. Non criminal activity data such as data from the civil courts and data from emergency services are out of scope.

For further information on the Criminal Justice Data Quality Committee go to the OCSAR website www.ocsar.sa.gov.au

Indigenous Drug Dependence - Analysis of DUMA data

As reported in the last OCSAR newsletter, Russell Brewer, a visiting criminology student from Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, Canada, has been using the DUMA data to explore drug abuse and dependence amongst Indigenous police detainees.

This paper will soon be released and posted on the OCSAR website. It is also anticipated that the findings will be presented in an OCSAR seminar later this year. Some of the key findings from this research are as follows:

- Using a six-item questionnaire to measure

levels of dependence, a slightly higher percentage of Indigenous detainees were regarded as being drug dependent compared to non-Indigenous detainees (53.4% compared to 50.1%);

- Indigenous detainees were significantly more likely to report that they were dependent upon cannabis compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts (28.7% compared to 23.1%);
- Conversely, Indigenous detainees were slightly less likely to report that they were dependent upon amphetamines

(13.6% compared to 14.2%) and heroin (5.5% compared to 7.9%);

- Indigenous female detainees were far more likely to be identified as being drug dependent than both Indigenous and non-Indigenous male detainees and non-Indigenous female detainees;
- The likelihood of being classified as drug dependent decreased with age amongst Indigenous detainees;
- Those Indigenous detainees whose first arrest occurred at a younger age were more likely to be identified as

drug dependent than those whose first arrest came at an older age; and

- Drug dependent respondents were more likely to report receiving an income from criminal activity

The paper also looks at the policy implications including drug diversions and treatment programs, education, family support and drug use enforcement.

For further information on this paper please contact Nick Turner, Senior Research and Statistical Officer on ph 8226 4156

Crime and Justice 2004 - Police Report



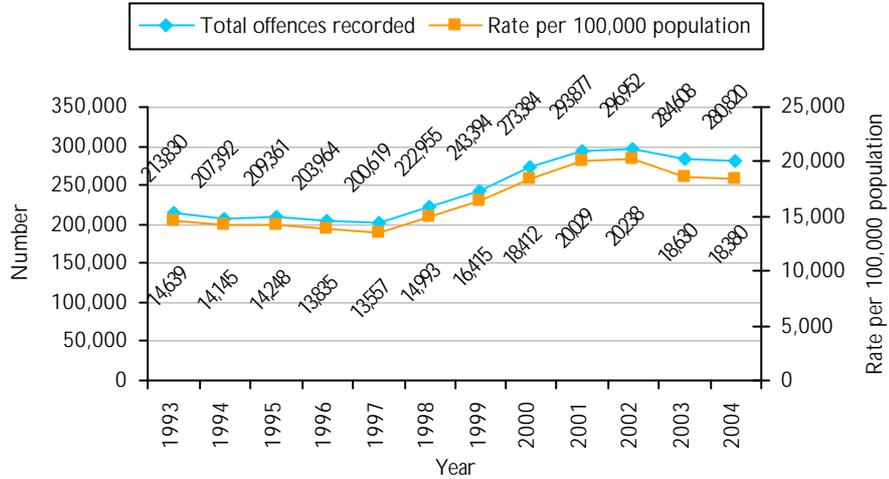
The first volume of OCSAR's three volume 'Crime and Justice in South Australia, 2004' series has been released. This volume covers *Offences Reported to Police, the Victims and Alleged Perpetrators during 2004*. The report, which can be down-loaded from our website, includes statistics on the following issues:

- The number of Police Incident Reports lodged per year;
- The number of offences reported or becoming known to police;
- The clearance status of offences;
- Age and sex profiles of victims of offences recorded by police;
- The number of offences cleared by way of an apprehension; and
- The number of persons apprehended.

Key findings from the report

- Overall, 280,820 offences were recorded by police during 2004 (1.3% fewer than 2003).
- Decreases were recorded in the number of offences against the person (-7.4%), robbery offences (-7.4%), property offences (-5.2%) and other offences (-18.3%), while the number of sexual offences remained constant. In contrast, increases were recorded for against good order offences (+3.3%), selected driving offences (+10.5%) and drug offences (+4.1%).
- It should be noted that the offence categories that recorded increases throughout 2004 were predominately those that are heavily reliant on police enforcement practices. i.e. drug and driving related

Figure 1: Total offences recorded by police, 1993, 2004



offences. For example, the number of random breath tests conducted impacts significantly on the number of drink driving offences, while increases in driving licence and registration offences are related to the increased use of red light and speed cameras.

- A total of 117,036 charges were laid by police (1.6% higher than in 2003) on 61,494 separate apprehension reports against 37,942 discrete individuals. This equates to an average of 1.56 apprehensions and 2.98 charges per person in 2004.
- Males accounted for the majority of apprehension reports lodged (80.3%) and the majority of discrete individuals apprehended during 2004 (78.5%).
- Persons of Aboriginal appearance constituted 13.5% of all apprehensions and 9.7% of all persons apprehended, where information on a person's racial appearance was recorded.
- Individuals aged 10-17 years accounted for 12.9%

of all apprehensions and 11.1% of all persons apprehended.

- A small proportion of individuals were responsible for a high proportion of all charges laid during the twelve month period. In fact, 11.8% of persons

apprehended in 2004 were responsible for 41.4% of all charges laid by police.

For further information on the Crime and Justice series please contact Tina Conroy, Information Officer, ph (08) 8207 1731.

Selected Offences	2004 Percentage change
Offences against the person, excl. sexual offence	-7.4%
Sexual Offences	+0.6%
Rape	-3.9%
Indecent assault	+6.5%
Unlawful sexual intercourse	-8.0%
Incest and other sexual offences	+2.8%
Robbery offences	-7.4%
Offences against property	-5.2%
Serious criminal trespass dwelling offences	-7.0%
Theft/illegal use of a motor vehicle	+3.3%
Theft from a shop	-2.8%
Fraud and misappropriation	-21.8%
Drug offences	+4.1%
Possess drug implement offences	+14.3%
Possess for sale/sell drug offences	+3.3%
Possess and/or use drug offences	+17.4%
Selected Driving offences	+10.5%
Drink driving, related offences	+14.2%
Dangerous, reckless or negligent driving	-4.3%
Driving licence offences	+32.2%
Motor vehicle registration offences	+4.1%
Offences against good order	+3.3%
Other offences	-18.3%
Total	-1.3%

A Statistical Overview of Family Violence Courts in South Australia

Background

South Australia currently has two Family Violence Courts (FVCs); one in the Elizabeth Magistrates Court and the other in the Adelaide Magistrates Court. These courts were established in 1997 and 1999 respectively as part of an inter-agency, collaborative approach to addressing family violence and ensuring the safety of victims of family violence.

Based on similar models developed in Duluth (USA) and subsequently Hamilton (NZ), the Family Violence Courts hear cases involving allegations of violence between partners in heterosexual and same sex relationships, as well as matters involving parents, children and siblings, where the defendant is an adult. They also hear applications for and amendments to Restraining Orders and Summary Protection Orders.

Both Family Violence Courts operate in conjunction with Violence Intervention Programs (VIPs). However, while the Family Violence Courts have been established to deal with all

family violence related matters before the Magistrates Court, the Violence Intervention Programs respond specifically to male violence towards women in heterosexual relationships.

Violence Intervention Programs are an inter-agency initiative aimed at reducing domestic violence through integrated interventions, placing priority on the safety of women and children. They offer specialised services to men who are in contact with criminal justice agencies for matters related to domestic violence in heterosexual relationships. They also provide services to the female current or ex- partners of the men and any children that are part of the family. While VIPs receive referrals from a number of sources, priority is given to those received from the Family Violence Courts.

The OCSAR study

As part of its 2005/06 workplan OCSAR will undertake a statistical overview of the Family Violence Courts. While scoping of this project is currently

underway, it is anticipated that it will be conducted in two parts, as detailed below.

Part 1 will provide data on the number of cases heard in the Family Violence Courts since 1 July 2002 (when OCSAR first began collecting the cause lists), the characteristics of defendants, their offences profiles, the duration from first court hearing to finalisation and case outcomes/penalties. If possible, similar analysis will be undertaken for those defendants referred/ accepted to a Violence Intervention Program.

Part two of this project will assess re-apprehension levels amongst those defendants processed through the Family Violence Courts (and if possible, the Violence Intervention Programs) to determine whether these are different from their pre-court apprehension profiles.

For further information about this project please contact Nichole Hunter, A/Manager, Research on 8207 1513

The next issue of OCSAR NEWS will be released in October 2005

Staff Developments

As part of our regular program of staff development, **Lynne Sampson**, Codes Project Officer with OCSAR has been undertaking studies in Justice Administration at the Adelaide Institute of TAFE since 2003. In May 2004 she graduated from the *Certificate IV in Justice Studies*.

Next semester Lynne will complete the *Diploma of Justice Administration* by studying the subjects *Crime Reduction Strategies* and *Alternate Dispute Resolution*. She then plans to continue her studies in 2006 towards the *Bachelor of Social Science (Justice Administration)* at the University of South Australia, Magill Campus.

Lynne has received top marks for her studies so far with Distinctions for the topics *Fundamentals of Sociology, Evidence, Apply Theories of Criminology in the Justice Sector, Business Law 1, Court Principles and Practices, Occupational Health & Safety Generic Fundamentals B* and *Court Administration*. She has also received Credits for the subjects *Australian Politics* and *Contemporary Social Issues* and was granted Recognition of Prior Learning for the subjects *Introduction to Computing* and *Justice Delivery Systems*.

Kevin Harkin joined OCSAR in May 2005 as a Senior Evaluation Officer. Kevin will

be responsible for evaluating the adult and youth pilots of the Court Assessment and Referral Drug Scheme (CARDS). Prior to joining OCSAR, Kevin worked in the UK as a Research Consultant and Lecturer in Criminology and Information Technology. He has worked with various agencies including the Police, Prisons, Probation and National Health Trust on projects including community based crime reduction programs, evaluation of community based diversion programs, burglary research, community based drugs research/evaluation and child protection research.