

# Crime 2005/2006

## Offences Against the Person

The broad offence division of Offences Against the Person is comprised of a number of different offence categories with the volume of offences reported differing significantly across categories. For example, Assaults account for 59% of Offences Against the Person while Homicide (Murder) accounts for less than 1% (Figure 1). Thus, Assault offences tend to dominate person offences while Homicide (Murder) will have little effect on the overall total.

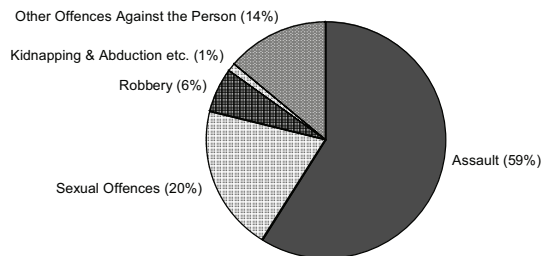


Figure 1: Offences Against the Person (%) - 2005/06\*

Overall, the number of Offences Against the Person increased by 5% in Queensland from 2004/05 to 2005/06. A total of 33470 offences were reported to police in 2005/06, 1617 more than the revised figure from the previous financial year. Taking into account the growth of the Queensland population, the rate of person offences increased by 3% from 803 to 828 offences per 100000 persons.

Of the 33470 Offences Against the Person reported to police during the 2005/06 financial year, 24728 (74%) were cleared by the end of June 2006. An additional 3650 offences reported in previous time periods were also cleared during 2005/06.

As with previous years, North Queensland (Far Northern and Northern Regions) experienced the highest rates of person offences, while Metropolitan South Region experienced the lowest. Northern and Southern Regions were the only regions exhibiting decreases (each recording a drop of less than 1%).

Fifteen to nineteen-year-old females were most likely to have been victims of person offences in 2005/06 followed by ten to fourteen year old females. In the

younger age groups (zero to nineteen years), females were more likely than males to be victims of person offences with this trend reversed in the older age groups. From the age of twenty years, males were more likely than females to be victims.

More males were proceeded against for person offences compared with females. While only 21% of offenders were female, 17% were male aged fifteen to nineteen years. The likelihood of offending peaked in the fifteen to nineteen age group for both males and females and decreased sharply with increasing age.

Of those who were found to have committed person offences, approximately 52% were proceeded against through an arrest with a further 27% proceeded against through the service of a Notice to Appear. For 58% of offenders the victim was known to them.

## Homicide (Murder)

Homicide (Murder) is a small volume offence category and, as such, is subject to sizeable fluctuations from one year to the next and from region to region.

The number of Homicide (Murder) offences increased by three offences in Queensland for 2005/06 compared to 2004/05. Of the 55 Homicides reported to police in 2005/06, 52 (95%) were cleared in the same period. An additional 4 offences were cleared from previous periods.

Central Region recorded the highest increase in the State (although this was small), while Northern Region experienced the highest rate of Homicide (Murder) offences.

This year, 57% of the victims of Homicide (Murder) were male. The highest rate of Homicide (Murder) offences occurred for males in the thirty-five to thirty-nine year age group which exhibited a rate of 4 offences per 100000 resident persons.

Males were significantly more likely than females to commit Homicide (Murder) (92%). In 2005/06, males aged fifteen to twenty-four years and thirty-five to thirty-nine years were most likely to offend. In 69% of cases the offender was known to the victim and of those persons proceeded against for Homicide (Murder), most (86%) were arrested.

\* Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Therefore, although the percentages are correct, they may not add to 100%.

## Other Homicide

As with Homicide (Murder), Other Homicide is a low-volume offence category. Therefore, it is subject to marked fluctuations from year to year and from area to area. The number of Other Homicide offences decreased by 16% during 2005/06 largely as a result of decreases in Attempted Murder (27 offences) and Manslaughter (excluding by driving) (5 offences).

Factoring in the increase of the Queensland resident population, Other Homicide offences decreased by 17% to a rate of 3 offences per 100,000 persons. Of the 122 offences reported to police in 2005/06, 113 (93%) were cleared in the same period. Additionally, 16 offences were cleared from previous periods.

Six of the eight regions recorded decreases in Other Homicide offences, the largest of which occurred in Central Region. Both North Coast and South Eastern Regions recorded increases of 21% and 47% respectively. Although Northern Region experienced a decrease of 37%, it recorded the highest rate in the State for the third consecutive year.

Just under two-thirds (66%) of the victims of Other Homicide were male with a high proportion aged fifteen to thirty-nine years. For every age group, males were more likely to be victims than females.

Males were significantly more likely than females to commit Other Homicide offences (82% of offenders were male). In 2005/06, males aged fifteen to nineteen years were most likely to offend. 69% of offenders were proceeded against through an arrest and for 62% of offenders the victim was known to them.

## Assault

As stated previously, Assaults comprise approximately 59% of total Offences Against the Person. As such, they tend to dominate this broad offence division. The number of Assaults in Queensland increased by 4% from 2004/05 to 2005/06. This equates to a rate of 491 offences per 100,000 persons.

The overall increase in the rate of Assaults is attributable to increases in three of the four sub-categories of Assault. Of the 19,835 offences reported to police in 2005/06, 15,583 (79%) were cleared in the same period with a further 2,022 offences cleared from previous periods.

Recent years have seen higher rates of Serious Assault (Figure 2). A possible explanation for this is a

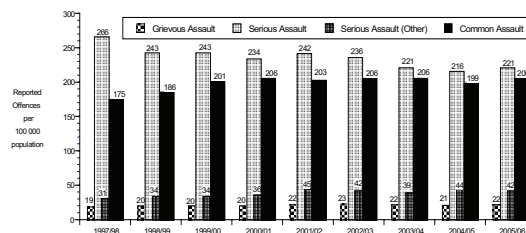


Figure 2: Reported Assaults, Queensland, 1997/98 to 2005/06

broadening of the definition of Serious Assault to include, for example, assault of a person aged sixty years or more, assault on physically impaired persons and assaulting a police officer in the execution of duty.

The seasonal influence on the occurrence of Assaults can be seen clearly in monthly crime trends (see page 19). These offences peak around December of each year and fall to a low around July.

As with previous years, Far Northern and Northern Regions experienced the highest rates of Assault in the State while Metropolitan South Region experienced the lowest. Far Northern Region recorded the largest increase while Southern Region recorded the largest decrease.

For every age group, males were more likely than females to be victims of Assault. Males aged fifteen to thirty-four were most likely to be victims. From this age, the rate of victimisation decreased steadily with increasing age.

Males were also more likely to commit offences of Assault and this was the case for every age group (77% of offenders were male). Males aged fifteen to nineteen years were most likely to offend. Of those persons proceeded against, 50% were arrested and 34% were served with a Notice to Appear while 42% of offenders did not know the victim.

## Sexual Offences

Sexual offences are particularly affected by an unpredictable variability in the reported rates due to the fact that offences occurring decades ago are still being reported to police. As offences are counted against the period in which they are reported rather than when they occurred, increases in crime statistics do not always equate to an increase in victimisation.

The number of Sexual Offences reported to police in 2005/06 increased by 21% from the number reported in the previous financial year. The number reported equates to a rate of 162 offences reported per 100,000 persons. This increase in the rate is attributable to an

increase in Rape & Attempted Rape Offences (7%) and a 26% increase in Other Sexual Offences. Of those offences reported in 2005/06, 4820 (73%) were cleared with an additional 867 offences cleared from previous periods.

Far Northern Region exhibited a 15% increase in offences, hence, recording the highest rate in the State. Northern Region recorded the only decrease. Despite recording a 13% increase, Metropolitan South Region recorded the lowest rate for 2005/06.

The Sexual Offence category is the only offence category for which there are more female victims than male (83% of victims were female). Females aged between ten and nineteen years were most likely to be victims of Sexual Offences. Females in this age group comprise 48% of total victims.

In total, 192 females committed Sexual Offences in 2005/06. Thus, 94% of offenders were male. The age distribution of male offenders is unique for this offence type in that the distribution is almost uniform across age groups. The number of offenders is only slightly lower in the older age groups, with males aged fifteen to nineteen most likely to be proceeded against for a sexual offence. For those proceeded against, 59% were arrested and 15% were served with a Notice to Appear. For 82% of offenders the victim was known to them. This figure may be higher given that 8% of all relationships were not stated.

## Robbery

An increase of 15% in the number of Armed Robberies reported to police in 2005/06 coupled with a 4% increase in Unarmed Robbery lead to an overall 9% increase in the number of Robbery offences reported in the year under review. A total of 1980 offences were reported to police which equates to a rate of 49 offences per 100000 persons. Of these, 981 (50%) were cleared in the period in which they were reported with an additional 121 offences cleared from previous periods.

Rates of Robbery have been increasing steadily since the late 1980's. From 1997/98 to 2000/01, Armed Robbery was more prevalent than Unarmed Robbery. The last five years, however, have seen a reversal of this trend with Unarmed Robbery rates higher than Armed Robbery rates (Figure 3).

Robbery offences tend to occur more frequently in the south-east corner of the State and 2005/06 was no exception. Metropolitan North Region recorded the highest rate in the State. A 7% decrease in Central Region attributed to this area again experiencing the lowest rate in the State.

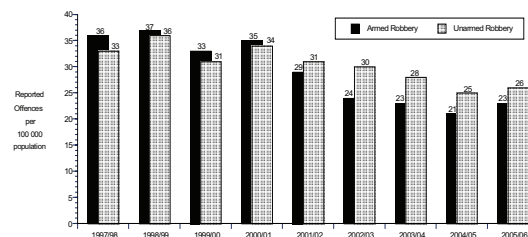


Figure 3: Reported Robbery Offences, Queensland, 1997/98 to 2005/06

For every age group males were more likely than females to be victims of Robbery with males aged fifteen to nineteen years most likely to be victims. Males were victim to Robbery in 73% of all cases reported to police.

Males were significantly more likely than females to commit Robbery offences (86% of offenders were male) and 75% of total offenders were aged between fifteen and twenty-nine years. Of those proceeded against for Robbery offences 81% were arrested. A large proportion of offences (9%) were committed against a company or an organisation. However, for just over three quarters of offences (78%), the victim was a person and was unknown to the offender.

## Extortion, Kidnapping/Abduction and Other Offences Against the Person

Extortion, the lowest in volume of the Offences Against the Person categories, increased by 48% from 2004/05 to 2005/06 (from 50 to 74 offences). Of these, 50% were cleared in the same period.

Kidnapping, Abduction, Deprivation of Liberty etc. offences decreased by 19% from 354 offences reported in 2004/05 to 286 offences reported in 2005/06. Approximately 71% of these were cleared in the 2005/06 financial year with a further 54 offences cleared from previous years.

Other Offences Against the Person include offences such as Driving Causing Grievous Bodily Harm, Stalking, Illtreatment of Children, Defamation/Libel, Armed to Cause Fear, Endangering Lives on transport and Other Offences Endangering Life, *n.e.c.*

In 2005/06, Other Offences Against the Person decreased by 8% from 4954 to 4560 offences. Of these, 64% were cleared in the same period with this clearance rate being similar to that recorded previously. In addition, 561 offences reported in previous periods were also cleared.

## Offences Against Property

The offence division of Offences Against Property is comprised of a number of offence categories. As with Offences Against the Person, the contribution of each category to the total differs significantly (Figure 4). In 2005/06, Other Theft (excl. Unlawful Entry) accounted for 40% of total Offences Against Property and was the highest in volume of the property offence categories. Unlawful Entry accounted for 22% of offences with Other Property Damage and Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicles accounting for 20% and 5% respectively. As such, this broad offence division tends to be dominated by Other Theft (excl. Unlawful Entry) and Unlawful Entry with offence categories such as Arson having little effect.

The number of reported Offences Against Property decreased by 2% from 238720 offences reported in 2004/05 to 232838 offences reported in 2005/06. Factoring in the growth of the Queensland population, property offences were reported at a rate of 5761 offences per 100000 persons, a decrease of 4% from the previous year. Of all property offences reported in 2005/06, 31% were cleared in the same period with a further 12353 offences cleared from previous periods.

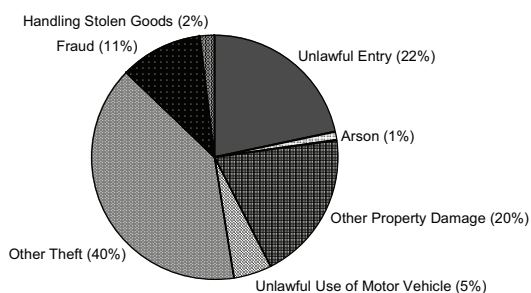


Figure 4: Offences Against Property (%) - 2005/06\*

Most regions recorded decreases in property crime during 2005/06, except Northern Region which recorded a 3% increase. Although South Eastern Region recorded the highest rate of property offences in the State, it also exhibited one of the largest decreases (5%) from the previous period. Far Northern Region recorded the largest decrease (11%) while Central Region recorded the lowest rate (4393 offences per 100000 persons).

Overall, property offences were more likely to be committed by males (77% of offenders were male). Over one-quarter (26%) of offenders proceeded against for property offences were male aged between fifteen and nineteen years. Of the total persons proceeded against for property offences, 36% were arrested, 48% were served with a Notice to Appear and 11% were cautioned.

## Unlawful Entry with Intent

The number of Unlawful Entry offences decreased by a substantive 5%. This equates to a 7% reduction in the rate once the growth of the Queensland population is taken into account. Of the 50159 offences reported to police in 2005/06, 19% were cleared in the same period with a further 2464 offences cleared from previous periods.

The number of Unlawful Entry of Dwellings decreased by 2%, the number of Unlawful Entry of Shops decreased by 4%, while Unlawful Entry of Other Premises fell by 11%.

Most regions recorded a decrease in Unlawful Entry offences. The largest decrease (13%) occurred in North Coast Region. Metropolitan South Region also recorded a substantive decrease of 11%. Central Region again experienced the lowest rate. Northern Region was the only area to record an increase contributing to it again experiencing the highest rate.

Most Unlawful Entry offences were committed by young males. In fact, 90% of offenders were male and nearly 63% were male aged under twenty-five years. Of all offenders proceeded against for Unlawful Entry offences, 52% were arrested, 10% cautioned and 34% served with a Notice to Appear.

## Arson

Arson is the lowest in volume of the property offence categories and, as such, exerts very little influence on the Offences Against Property total. Arson offences increased by 2% from 2004/05 to 2005/06. The rate of offences remained constant (37 offences per 100000 persons). Of the 1506 offences reported in 2005/06, 270 (18%) were cleared in the same period. An additional 37 offences were cleared from previous periods.

Five of the eight regions recorded increases in Arson offences. The largest of which was seen in Far Northern Region (33%). Metropolitan North and Central Regions recorded the lowest rates in the State while South Eastern Region again recorded the highest (58 reported offences per 100000 persons).

This year, 88% of offenders were male compared to 93% recorded in the previous year. Fifteen to nineteen year old males were most likely to be proceeded against for Arson followed by ten to fourteen and twenty to twenty-four year olds. Approximately 59% of offenders were arrested, 10% cautioned and 23% served with a Notice to Appear.

\* Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Therefore, although the percentages are correct, they do not add to 100%.

## Other Property Damage

Other Property Damage offences increased by 4% from 43582 to 45521 offences. This equates to a rate of 1126 offences for every 100000 persons. Of those offences reported to police in 2005/06, 12305 (27%) were cleared with an additional 1664 offences cleared from previous time periods.

All regions except Metropolitan North and South Eastern recorded increases in Other Property Damage offences with the decreases being 0.2% and 4% respectively. Northern Region experienced the largest increase in Other Property Damage offences (8%) and continues to exhibit the highest rate in the State. Central Region experienced the lowest rate at 1035 offences per 100000 persons.

As with most offence types, fifteen to nineteen year old males were most likely to be proceeded against for Other Property Damage offences. Only 12% of offenders were female and only 15% of offenders were aged thirty years or more. In total, 38% of offenders were arrested for this offence type, 15% were cautioned and 41% were served with a Notice to Appear.

## Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle

Following a significant decrease reported in the last Annual Statistical Review, the current publication again documents a sizeable decrease (11%) in Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle offences. This reduction is equivalent to 1494 fewer offences reported during 2005/06 and over 4500 fewer offences reported over the last four years.

In 2005/06, 11905 Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle offences were reported to police. Of these, 3331 (28%) were cleared with an additional 648 offences cleared from previous periods (note: for recovery rates see Explanatory Notes). In 2005/06, Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle offences were reported at a rate of 295 offences for every 100000 persons.

Rates of Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicles are traditionally higher in the south-eastern corner of the State and 2005/06 was no exception despite significant decreases in all of the regions in this area. Far Northern and Northern were the only regions to record increases in the current period (5% and 6% respectively). North Coast Region experienced the largest decrease while South Eastern Region exhibited the highest rate in the State. Central Region recorded the lowest rate at 136 offences per 100000 persons.

Males aged fifteen to nineteen years were most likely to offend (44% of male offenders were in this group). Including females in this age group, 43% of all offenders were aged fifteen to nineteen years. Approximately 53% of offenders were arrested and 36% were served with a Notice to Appear.

## Other Theft (excluding Unlawful Entry)

Other Theft (excluding Unlawful Entry) offences fell by 2% from 2004/05 to 2005/06. This category is the highest in volume of the property offence categories and thus exerts a significant influence on property offences as a total. In 2005/06, 93101 offences were reported to police of which 27% were cleared. A further 3467 were cleared from previous periods.

Most sub-categories of Other Theft offences exhibited decreases: Steal from Vehicles were down by 2% and Steal from Shops and Other Premises were down by 1% and 4% respectively. Stealing from Dwellings increased by 2% this year. Approximately 76% of Shop Stealing offences were cleared and this was the highest clearance rate for the Other Theft sub-categories.

As with previous years, the highest rates of Other Theft occurred in South Eastern and Metropolitan North Regions despite the fact that these regions recorded decreases of 2% and 5% respectively. Metropolitan South exhibited the largest decrease (9%). Central Region also recorded a large decrease of 6% resulting in this region recording the lowest rate (1721 offences per 100000 persons).

The proportion of female offenders for Other Theft was higher than for most offence types at 32%, or just under one-third. For both males and females, those in the fifteen to nineteen year age group were most likely to offend. Arrest rates are low for this offence type at 27%, while 53% were served with a Notice to Appear and 16% (mostly juvenile) were cautioned.

## Fraud

Although Queensland recorded an increase in Fraud by Computer offences (76%), decreases in Fraud by Credit Card (16%), Fraud by Cheque (12%) and Other Fraud (4%) resulted in an overall decrease of 3% in total Fraud offences.

Of the 25015 offences reported in 2005/06, 16407 (66%) were cleared in the same period with a further 3975 offences cleared from previous periods.

A substantive decrease (56%) in Far Northern Region resulted in this region recording one of the lowest rates in the State. The high rate for 2004/05 in this region was due to police proceeding against two offenders for more than 890 offences.

Metropolitan North Region recorded the highest rate of Fraud offences. A sizeable decrease in Southern Region (38%) resulted in this region experiencing the lowest rate in the State. Metropolitan North and South were the only regions to exhibit increases of which Metropolitan South recorded the largest (50%).

Fraud is unique in that the age of those proceeded against tends to be older when compared with other offence types and 2005/06 was no exception. A relatively higher proportion of females commit Fraud offences compared with other offence types. Approximately 41% of offenders were female. Both males and females aged twenty to twenty-nine years were most likely to offend. Twenty-eight percent of offenders were arrested, while 64% were issued with a Notice to Appear.

## Handling Stolen Goods

Decreases in most sub-categories of Handling Stolen Goods offences resulted in an overall decrease of 8%. Of the total 5631 offences reported to police in 2005/06, 5436 (97%) were cleared with a further 98 offences cleared from previous periods.

Metropolitan North Region again recorded the highest rate of Handling Stolen Goods offences while Central Region recorded the lowest rate. Most regions recorded decreases with Far Northern Region exhibiting the largest. Northern and Metropolitan South Regions recorded increases (22% and 1% respectively).

As with most offence categories, males were most likely to commit Handling Stolen Goods offences (76% of offenders were male) and males in the fifteen to nineteen year age group were most likely to offend. Offenders were more likely to be served with a Notice to Appear (62%) although 32% were arrested.

## Other Offences

Other Offences is a broad collection of disparate offence categories. These categories are distinct from Offences Against the Person and Property in that they are generally offences detected by police rather than being reported by the public. Drug Offences, Traffic Offences and Prostitution are examples of this. Trends and patterns in the levels of Other Offences are therefore often indicative of specific initiatives of the

Police Service rather than being indicative of the level of crime actually occurring. As such, increases are often seen as a positive improvement of police detection rates.

As a total, Other Offences increased by 8% statewide from 146575 offences recorded in 2004/05 to 158573 offences recorded in 2005/06. This equates to a rate of 3924 offences per 100000 persons.

Most of the eight regions recorded increases in total Other Offences, the largest of which occurred in Northern Region (15%). Rates are traditionally higher in the northern part of the State and 2005/06 was no exception. Metropolitan South Region again experienced the lowest rate while Far Northern Region exhibited the highest. South Eastern Region was the only area to experience a decrease this year (4%).

## Drug Offences

Sizeable increases in the two major sub-categories of Drug Offences resulted in a 7% increase in the total. Possess Dangerous Drugs and Other Drug Offences are the largest in volume of the sub-categories and, as such, exert the greatest influence on the Drug Offence total. These sub-categories increased by 3% and 6% respectively.

Far Northern Region again recorded one of the highest rates in the State despite the fact that this region recorded the largest decrease in the State. South Eastern and Metropolitan South Regions were the only other regions to record decreases (6% and 3% respectively). South Eastern Region recorded the lowest rate while North Coast Region recorded the largest increase (22%).

## Breach of Domestic Violence Protection Orders

Breach of Domestic Violence Protection Orders are a breach of a court order and, as such, are classed as "Regina" offences; hence, the inclusion under Other Offences and not Offences Against the Person.

The 2005/06 financial year saw a 2% increase in Breach of Domestic Violence Protection Orders. A total of 9529 offences were reported to police, equating to a rate of 236 offences per 100000 persons. It should be noted that the *Domestic and Family Protection Act 1989* was expanded in March 2003 to include intimate personal, familial and informal carer relationships. This has impacted on the number of reported Breaches of Domestic Violence Protection Orders reported during the last three years.

While Metropolitan North Region recorded the lowest rate of offences in the State, the northern regions again recorded the highest. Far Northern Region recorded the largest increase (12%) resulting in this area recording the highest rate in the State, while South Eastern Region exhibited the highest decrease.

## Weapons Act Offences

The number of Weapons Act offences increased by 3% from 4038 offences reported in 2004/05 to 4144 offences reported in 2005/06. The overall increase is attributable to increases in three of the five weapons sub-categories. The largest increase was a 12% rise in the Weapons Act Offences - Other category which is one of the largest sub-categories of the Weapons Act Offences groupings.

Three of the eight Regions recorded decreases in Weapons Act Offences during the 2005/06 financial year. The largest decrease occurred in Southern Region (20%). The higher rates are generally seen in the northern regions and 2005/06 was no exception. Similarly, the lowest rate usually occurs in Metropolitan South Region and the current year was consistent.

## Good Order Offences

Good Order Offences increased by 11% from 2004/05 to 2005/06. A total of 36079 offences were detected by police which equates to a rate of 893 offences for every 100000 persons. An increase in Resist, hinder etc., Disobey Move-on Directions and Public Nuisance offences contributed to the overall increase. Public nuisance type offences, being the largest group of offences had the most impact on the outcome.

Only two regions, South Eastern and Southern recorded decreases. The largest increases occurred in Northern and Metropolitan North Regions (26% and 27% respectively). Higher rates are generally seen in the northern regions and this occurred again in 2005/06. Similarly, the lowest rate traditionally occurred in Metropolitan South and the current year was consistent.

On 1 April 2004, amendments were made to the *Vagrants, Gaming and Other Offences Act, 1931*, section 7AA. The offence of "Public Nuisance" was created to replace the offences of Indecent Behaviour, Language Offences and Disorderly Conduct. This Act was repealed on 20 March, 2005 and was replaced by the *Summary Offences Act, 2005*.

The sub-category of "Disobey Move-on Direction" has been presented for the first time in the current publication. Previously, this figure was included in the total for "Resist, Hinder, etc".

## Traffic and Related Offences

Traffic and Related Offences increased by 5% from 42619 to 44701 offences. Most sub-categories exhibited increases of which the largest was a 9% increase in Disqualified Driving. Drink Driving is the largest in volume of the sub-categories and, as such, exerts the greatest influence on the Traffic Offence total. This sub-category increased by 3%.

As well as recording the largest increase in Traffic and Related Offences, Central Region recorded one of the highest rates in the State (1283 offences per 100000 persons). Six of the eight regions recorded increases. The highest rates were recorded in Far Northern and Northern Regions.

Please note that the Traffic and Related Offences category referred to above includes Dangerous Operation of a Vehicle, Drink Driving, Disqualified Driving and Interfere with the Mechanism of a Motor Vehicle only. For information on Speed and Red Light Camera Notices or Random Breath Tests please refer to the Traffic section on pages 135-138.

