

# Crime 2007/08

## Offences Against the Person

The broad offence group 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 61% of Offences Against the Person (Figure 1) while Homicide (Murder) accounts for less than 1%. Thus, Assault offences tend to dominate Offences Against the Person, while Homicide (Murder) will have little effect on the overall total.

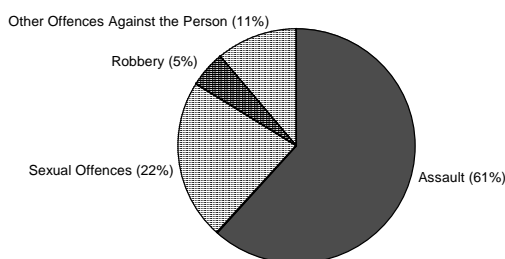


Figure 1: Offences Against the Person (%) - 2007/08\*

Overall, the number of Offences Against the Person decreased by 3% in Queensland from 2006/07 to 2007/08. A total of 31702 offences were reported to police in 2007/08, 995 less than the revised figure from the previous financial year. Taking into account the growth of the Queensland population, the rate of Offences Against the Person decreased by 5% from 782 to 742 offences per 100000 persons.

Of the 31702 Offences Against the Person reported to police during the 2007/08 financial year, 22774 (72%) were cleared by the end of June 2008 compared with 74% cleared the previous year. An additional 2955 offences reported in previous time periods were also cleared during 2007/08.

As with previous years, North Queensland (Far Northern and Northern Regions) recorded the highest rates of Offences Against the Person, while Metropolitan South Region recorded the lowest. Far Northern, Northern and South Eastern Regions were the only regions exhibiting increases of 5%, 2% and 2% respectively.

Fifteen to nineteen year old females were most likely to have been victims of Offences Against the Person in 2007/08 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 Offences Against the Person. From the age of twenty years, males were more likely than females to be victims. For 45% of victims of solved offences, the offenders were known to them.

More males were proceeded against for Offences Against the Person compared with females. While only 20% of offenders were female, 18% were male aged fifteen to nineteen years. The likelihood of offending peaked in the fifteen to nineteen year age group for both males and females and decreased with increasing age.

Of those who were found to have committed Offences Against the Person, approximately 61% were proceeded against through an arrest with a further 25% proceeded against through the service of a Notice to Appear.

## 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 remained constant in Queensland for 2007/08 compared with 2006/07. Of the 51 Homicides reported to police in 2007/08, 47 (92%) were cleared in the same period. An additional 2 offences were cleared from previous periods.

Northern Region recorded the highest rate in the State (although this was small). Metropolitan North and Central Regions recorded the least amounts of Homicide (Murder) offences this financial year. Northern and North Coast Regions were the only two areas recording rate increases for the current period.

This year, 59% of the victims of Homicide (Murder) were male. The highest rate of Homicide (Murder) offences occurred for males in the zero to four year age group which exhibited a rate of 4 offences per 100000 resident persons. In 64% of solved cases, the offender was known to the victim.

Males were significantly more likely than females to commit Homicide (Murder) (91%). In 2007/08, males aged twenty-five to twenty-nine years were most likely

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

to offend. In 95% of cases, the offender was proceeded against through an arrest.

## 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 30% during 2007/08, mostly as a result of a decrease in Driving Causing Death (22 offences).

Factoring in the increase of the Queensland estimated resident population, Other Homicide offences decreased by 31% to a rate of 2 offences per 100000 persons. Of the 87 offences reported to police in 2007/08, 79 (91%) were cleared in the same period. Additionally, 9 offences were cleared from previous periods.

Six of the eight regions recorded decreases in the rate of Other Homicide offences, the largest of which occurred in Far Northern Region. There were two regions that recorded increases, North Coast and Metropolitan North Regions, of 14% and 27% respectively. As a result of the increase recorded in North Coast Region, the area recorded the highest rate in the State.

Just under two-thirds (61%) of the victims of Other Homicide were male with a high proportion aged twenty to fifty-four years. For every age group, except for those aged less than ten years, males were more likely to be victims than females. In 56% of the solved cases, the offender was known to the victim.

Males were significantly more likely than females to commit Other Homicide offences (84% of offenders were male). In 2007/08, males aged twenty to twenty-four years were most likely to offend. Seventy-nine percent of offenders were proceeded against through an arrest, while 15% were issued with a Notice to Appear.

## Assault

Assaults comprise approximately 61% of total Offences Against the Person. As such, they tend to dominate this broad offence group. The number of Assaults in Queensland decreased by 1% from 2006/07 to 2007/08. This equates to a rate of 452 offences per 100000 persons in 2007/08.

The overall decrease in the rate of Assaults is attributable to decreases in Serious Assault and Serious Assault (Other). Of the 19327 assaults reported to police in 2007/08, 14443 (75%) were cleared in the same period with a further 1370 offences cleared from previous periods.

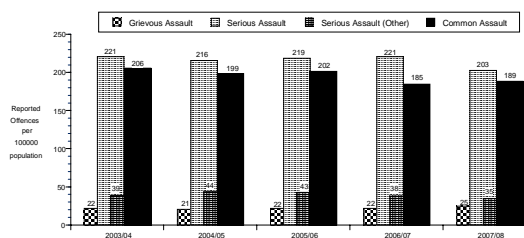


Figure 2: Reported Assaults, Queensland, 2003/04 to 2007/08

Higher rates of Serious Assault were seen between 2003/04 and 2006/07 (Figure 2). A possible explanation for this is a broadening of the definition of Serious Assault to include, for example, assault of a person aged sixty years or more, assault on physically impaired people 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. Metropolitan North Region recorded the largest increase in the rate of Assault, while North Coast Region recorded the largest decrease.

For all age groups, males were more likely than females to be victims of Assault. Males aged fifteen to thirty-four were most likely to be victims. From age thirty-five, the rate of victimisation for males decreased steadily. The age of victimisation for females peaked at the fifteen to nineteen year age cohort. From this age, victimisation decreased respectively for each age group. For 43% of victims of solved offences, the offender was known to them.

Across all age groups, males were also more likely to commit offences of Assault (76% of offenders were male). Males aged fifteen to nineteen years were most likely to offend. Of those people proceeded against, 57% were arrested and 30% were served with a Notice to Appear.

## 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 2007/08 increased by 4% from the number reported in the previous financial year. The number reported equates to a rate of 162 offences reported per 100000 persons. The increase in the rate is attributable to an increase in Rape and Attempted Rape Offences (21%). Of those offences reported in 2007/08, 5160 (74%) were cleared, with an additional 1181 offences cleared from previous periods.

Far Northern Region recorded a 22% increase in the rate of Sexual Offences, resulting in the region recording the highest rate in the State. Central Region recorded the largest decrease, while Northern Region recorded the largest increase (77%), making this region the second highest in the State.

The Sexual Offence category is the only offence category for which there are more female victims than male (85% 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 49% of total victims. For 59% of victims of solved offences, the offender was known to them. In 27% of solved cases, the offender was a family member.

In total, 98 females committed Sexual Offences in 2007/08. Thus, 96% of offenders were male. The age distribution of male offenders is unique for this offence type in that the distribution is almost uniform across all age groups with the exception of fifteen to nineteen year olds. The number of offenders is only slightly lower in the older age groups, with males aged fifty years and over representing 20% of all sexual offenders. For those proceeded against, 68% were arrested and 13% were served with a Notice to Appear.

## Robbery

A decrease of 10% in the number of Unarmed Robberies reported to police in 2007/08 led to an overall 5% decrease in the number of Robbery offences reported in the year under review. A total of 1738 offences were reported to police which equates to a rate of 41 offences per 100000 persons. Of these, 897 (52%) were cleared in the period in which they were reported, with an additional 80 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 six years, however, have seen a reversal of this trend with Unarmed Robbery rates higher than Armed Robbery rates (Figure 3). Although Armed Robbery has remained constant over the past two years, Unarmed Robbery has exhibited a decrease of 12%.

Robbery offences tend to occur more frequently in the south-east corner of the State as was the case in 2007/08. Metropolitan South Region recorded the highest rate of Robbery in the State. A 22% decrease in Central Region attributed to this area experiencing the lowest rate in the State.

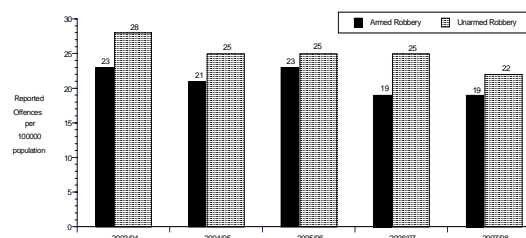


Figure 3: Reported Robbery Offences, Queensland, 2003/04 to 2007/08

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. For the majority of victims of solved Robbery offences, the offender was unknown to them. This was so in 78% of cases.

Males were significantly more likely than females to commit Robbery offences (87% of offenders were male) and 76% of total offenders were aged between fifteen and twenty-nine years. Of those proceeded against for Robbery offences, 87% were arrested and 7% issued with a Notice to Appear.

## Other Offences Against the Person

The category of Other Offences Against the Person includes offences such as Kidnapping and Abduction, Deprivation of Liberty, Extortion, Stalking and Life Endangering Acts.

In 2007/08, Other Offences Against the Person decreased by 21% from 4543 to 3567 offences. When taking into account the growth of Queensland's population, the rate decreased by 23%. Of the 3567 reported Other Offences Against the Person, 60% were cleared in the same period. In addition, 313 offences reported in previous periods were also cleared.

Females represented 54% of victims of total Other Offences Against the Person. People most likely to be victims of Other Offences Against the Person were female and aged between ten and nineteen years. For 45% of victims of solved offences, the offender was known to them.

## Offences Against Property

The offence group 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 2007/08, Other Theft (excl. Unlawful Entry) accounted for 39% of total Offences Against Property and was the highest in volume of the property offence categories. Unlawful Entry with Intent accounted for 22% of offences, with Other Property Damage and Fraud accounting for 21% and 9% respectively. As such, this broad offence group tends to be dominated by Other Theft (excl. Unlawful Entry) and Unlawful Entry with Intent, with offence categories such as Arson having little effect.

The number of reported Offences Against Property decreased by 9% from 222941 offences reported in 2006/07 to 203075 offences reported in 2007/08. Factoring in the growth of the Queensland population, Offences Against Property were reported at a rate of 4753 offences per 100000 persons in 2007/08, a decrease of 11% from the previous year. Of all Offences Against Property reported in 2007/08, 31% were cleared in the same period with a further 9276 offences cleared from previous periods.

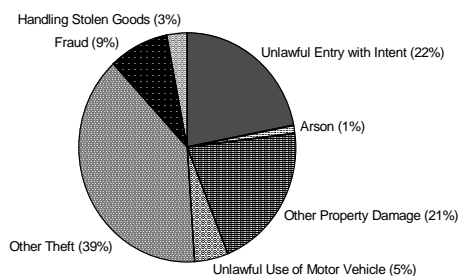


Figure 4: Offences Against Property (%) - 2007/08\*

All regions recorded decreases in property crime during 2007/08. Metropolitan North Region recorded the highest rate of Offences Against Property in the State, while Northern Region recorded the largest decrease (18%). North Coast Region recorded the lowest rate (3821 offences per 100000 persons).

Overall, Offences Against Property were more likely to be committed by males (76% of offenders were male). Over one quarter (28%) of offenders proceeded against for Offences Against Property were male aged between fifteen and nineteen years. Of the total people proceeded against for Offences Against Property, 39% were arrested, 43% were served with a Notice to Appear and 14% were cautioned.

## Unlawful Entry with Intent

The number of Unlawful Entry with Intent offences decreased by 6%. This equates to an 8% reduction in the rate once the growth of the Queensland population is taken into account. Of the 45388 offences reported to police in 2007/08, 20% were cleared in the same period with a further 2136 offences cleared from previous periods.

The number of Unlawful Entry of Dwellings decreased by 1%, the number of Unlawful Entry of Shops decreased by 12% and Unlawful Entry of Other Premises decreased by 11%.

All regions recorded a decrease in Unlawful Entry with Intent offences. Despite Northern Region exhibiting the largest decrease of 16% in Unlawful Entry with Intent offences, the region recorded the highest rate in the State (1401 offences per 100000 persons). Central Region recorded a substantive decrease of 13% contributing to this Region recording the lowest rate.

Most Unlawful Entry with Intent offences were committed by young males. In fact, 90% of offenders were male and approximately 62% were male aged under twenty-five years. Of all offenders proceeded against for Unlawful Entry with Intent offences, 57% were arrested, 11% cautioned and 28% served with a Notice to Appear.

## Arson

Arson is the lowest in volume of the Offences Against Property categories and, as such, exerts very little influence on the Offences Against Property total. Arson offences decreased by 8% from 2006/07 to 2007/08. The rate of offences decreased by 10%, from 33 to 30 offences per 100000 persons. Of the 1277 offences reported in 2007/08, 250 (20%) were cleared in the same period. An additional 38 offences were cleared from previous periods.

Southern Region was the only area that remained constant from one period to the next. The majority of regions experienced increases, the largest of which was recorded in Northern Region (34%). Similar to previous years, South Eastern Region recorded the highest rate. Metropolitan North Region recorded the lowest rate of Arson offences (19 offences per 100000 persons).

This year, 87% of offenders were male compared to 85% recorded in the previous year. Fifteen to nineteen year old males were most likely to be proceeded against for Arson. Approximately 70% of offenders were arrested, 8% cautioned and 12% 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 decreased by 9% from 46672 to 42483 offences. This equates to a rate of 994 offences for every 100000 persons. Of those offences reported to police in 2007/08, 11822 (28%) were cleared during this period, with an additional 1199 offences cleared from previous time periods.

Despite Northern Region exhibiting one of the largest decreases, it again recorded the highest rate of 1198 offences per 100000 persons. The largest decrease was recorded by Metropolitan South Region (26%). This region also recorded the lowest rate of Other Property Damage offences.

As with most offence types, fifteen to nineteen year old males were most likely to be proceeded against for Other Property Damage offences. Only 13% of offenders were female and only 15% of offenders were aged thirty years or more. In total, 35% of offenders were arrested for this offence type, 18% were cautioned and 39% were served with a Notice to Appear.

## Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle

Following a significant decrease reported in the 2006/07 Annual Statistical Review, the current publication again documents a sizeable decrease (11%) in the number of Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle offences. This reduction is equivalent to 1242 fewer offences reported during 2007/08.

In 2007/08, 9965 Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle offences were reported to police. Of these, 2821 (28%) were cleared during this period, with an additional 538 offences cleared from previous periods (note: for recovery rates see Glossary, page 151). In 2007/08, Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle offences were reported at a rate of 233 offences for every 100000 persons.

Rates of Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicles are traditionally higher in the south-eastern corner of the State. This trend is again displayed in the 2007/08 figures despite significant decreases in all of the regions in this area. Central and Southern Regions were the only regions to record increases of 7% and 0.4% respectively. Metropolitan North Region experienced the largest decrease while South Eastern Region recorded the highest rate in the State. Central Region recorded the lowest rate of 144 offences per 100000 persons.

Males aged fifteen to nineteen years were most likely to commit Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle offences (45% of

male offenders were in this group). Forty-four percent of all offenders were aged fifteen to nineteen years. Approximately 60% of offenders were arrested and 27% were served with a Notice to Appear.

## Other Theft (excluding Unlawful Entry)

Other Theft (excluding Unlawful Entry) offences decreased by 9% from 2006/07 to 2007/08. This category is the highest in volume of the Offences Against Property categories and thus exerts a significant influence on property crime as a total. In 2007/08, 79121 Other Theft offences were reported to police, of which 27% were cleared during this period. A further 2411 were cleared from previous periods.

Most sub-categories of Other Theft offences exhibited decreases: Steal from Vehicles (9%), Other Stealing (13%) and Stealing from Dwellings (8%). Approximately 75% of Shop Stealing offences were cleared, making this the highest clearance rate within the Other Theft sub-categories. Shop Stealing was the only sub-category to exhibit an increase in 2007/08 (2%).

The highest rates of Other Theft occurred in South Eastern and Metropolitan North Regions despite the fact that these regions recorded decreases of 15% and 9% respectively. Northern and North Coast Regions exhibited the largest decreases of 16% each. This resulted in North Coast Region recording the lowest rate of Other Theft (excluding Unlawful Entry) offences during 2007/08 (1545 offences per 100000 persons).

The proportion of female offenders for Other Theft was higher than for most other offence types at 36%, or just over one third. For both males and females, those in the fifteen to nineteen year age group were most likely to commit Other Theft offences. Arrest rates are low for this offence type at 28%, while 49% were served with a Notice to Appear and 20% (mostly juvenile) were cautioned. Ninety-eight percent of offenders cautioned were juvenile (i.e. aged between ten and sixteen years).

## Fraud

Queensland recorded a decrease in all sub-categories of Fraud offences during the current period: Fraud by Credit Card offences (23%), Fraud by Computer (11%) and Fraud by Cheque (14%). This resulted in an overall decrease of 17% in total Fraud offences. Identity Fraud has been presented separately for the first time in the current publication. Previously, this figure was included in the total for Other Fraud. Hence, totals for these two sub-categories cannot be compared with previous data.

Of the 19091 offences reported in 2007/08, 12185 (64%) were cleared in the same period with a further 2774 offences cleared from previous periods.

A substantive decrease (25%) in North Coast Region resulted in this region recording the lowest rate in the State.

Metropolitan North Region recorded the highest rate of Fraud offences despite recording a 24% decrease. Central and Southern were the only regions to record increases in Fraud offences (3% and 8% respectively), whilst South Eastern Region recorded the largest decrease (35%).

Historically, fraud was unique in that the age of those proceeded against tended to be older when compared with other offence types, though this trend appears to have shifted over recent years. A relatively higher proportion of females commit Fraud offences compared with other offence types. Approximately 35% of offenders were female. Males aged twenty-five to twenty-nine years and females aged twenty to twenty-four years were most likely to commit Fraud offences. Thirty-four percent of offenders were arrested, while 60% were issued with a Notice to Appear.

## Handling Stolen Goods

Increases in three of the four sub-categories of Handling Stolen Goods offences resulted in an overall decrease of 4%. Of the total 5750 offences reported to police in 2007/08, 5329 (93%) were cleared in the same period, with a further 180 offences cleared from previous periods.

Metropolitan North Region recorded the highest rate of Handling Stolen Goods offences while North Coast Region recorded the lowest rate. Most regions recorded decreases of Handling Stolen Goods offences with Northern Region exhibiting the largest. Central and Metropolitan North Regions recorded increases (14% and 45% respectively).

As with most offence categories, males were most likely to commit Handling Stolen Goods offences (74% 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 (57%) although 35% 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 Offences 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, the number of Other Offences increased by 5% statewide from 159846 offences recorded in 2006/07 to 167539 offences recorded in 2007/08. This equates to a rate of 3921 offences per 100000 persons in 2007/08.

Six of the eight regions recorded increases in total Other Offences, the largest of which occurred in Central Region (8%). Rates are traditionally higher in the northern part of the State. This trend was again repeated in 2007/08. Metropolitan South Region again experienced the lowest rate while Far Northern Region exhibited the highest. Northern and North Coast Regions experienced decreases in Other Offences (2% and 1% respectively).

## Drug Offences

Increases in most sub-categories of Drug Offences contributed to an overall increase of 3%. Other Drug Offences was the only sub-category that recorded a decrease in the current period. When taking into account the growth of Queensland's population, Drug Offences exhibited an increase of 1%.

Far Northern Region recorded the highest rate of Drug Offences in the State. The largest increase was exhibited by Southern Region (11%). The largest decrease (8%) was recorded by Northern Region.

## 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 2007/08 financial year saw a 7% decrease in the number of Breach of Domestic Violence Protection Orders. A total of 8283 offences were reported to police, equating to a rate of 194 offences per 100000 persons.

Metropolitan South Region recorded the lowest rate of Breach of Domestic Violence Protection Order offences in the State, while the northern regions again recorded the highest. Metropolitan South Region recorded the largest decrease (22%). Far Northern Region recorded the highest rate at 457 offences per 100000 persons.

## Weapons Act Offences

The number of Weapons Act Offences decreased by 5% from 4079 offences reported in 2006/07 to 3895 offences reported in 2007/08. The overall decrease is attributable to decreases in three of the five weapons sub-categories. The largest decreases were a 44% fall in “Bomb, possession and/or use of” and a 22% fall in Weapons Act Offences - Other sub-categories.

Six of the eight regions recorded decreases in Weapons Act Offences during the 2007/08 financial year. Metropolitan North Region experienced one of the largest decreases (23%) contributing to this region recording the lowest rate in the State. The higher rates of Weapon Act Offences are generally recorded in the northern regions. During 2007/08, Far Northern Region recorded the highest rate of 190 offences per 100000 persons having experienced a 30% increase in offences.

## Good Order Offences

Good Order Offences increased by 16% from 2006/07 to 2007/08. A total of 48911 offences were detected by police which equates to a rate of 1145 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 offences, being the largest sub-category, had the most impact on the outcome.

All regions recorded increases in Good Order Offences in the current period under review. The largest increase occurred in South Eastern Region (38%). Higher rates

are generally seen in the northern regions and this occurred again in 2007/08. Similarly, the lowest rate traditionally occurs in Metropolitan South Region and the current year was consistent.

## Traffic and Related Offences

Traffic and Related Offences decreased by 5% from 43113 to 40796 offences. Most sub-categories exhibited decreases of which the largest was a 10% decrease in Intefere with Mechanism of a Motor Vehicle. Drink Driving is the largest in volume of the sub-categories and, as such, exerts the greatest influence on the Traffic and Related Offences total. This sub-category increased by 8%.

Southern Region recorded the largest decrease attributing to the region recording the lowest rate. Far Northern Region recorded a 3% increase contributing to the region recording the highest rate of 1606 offences per 100000 persons.

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 135-137.

Due to the implementation of the new administrative system QPRIME, the recording methodology applied to Disqualified Driving has been changed. Hence, caution should be exercised when comparing the 2007/08 figure for Disqualified Driving and total Traffic and Related Offences with previous years.