

# Crime 2000/2001

## 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 60% of Offences Against the Person while Homicides account for approximately 1% (Figure 1). Thus, Assault offences tend to dominate person offences while Homicide will have little effect on the overall total.

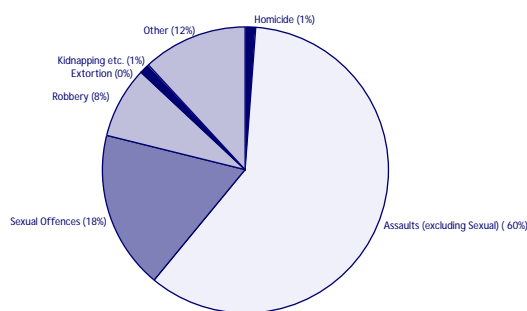


Figure 1: Offences Against the Person (%) - 2000/01

Overall, the number of Offences Against the Person increased by 6% in Queensland from 1999/00 to 2000/01. A total of 31,454 offences were reported to police in 2000/01, 1,863 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 5% to 867 offences per 100,000 persons.

Of the 31,454 Offences Against the Person reported to police during the 2000/01 financial year, 19,833 (63%) were cleared by the end of June 2001. An additional 2,839 offences reported in previous time periods were also cleared during 2000/01.

With the exception of South Eastern Region, all regions recorded an increase in person offences. The largest increases occurred in Central and Southern Regions. As with previous years, the northern part of the State experienced the highest rates of person offences.

Fifteen to nineteen-year-old females were most likely to have been victims of person offences in 2000/01 followed closely by twenty-five to twenty-nine-year-old males. In the younger age groups (0 to 19 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, males were more likely than females to be victims.

Males were significantly more likely to be proceeded against for person offences compared with females. While only 16% of offenders were female, 15% 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 59% were proceeded against through an arrest with a further 32% proceeded against through the service of a court notice. In approximately 55% of cases the victim was known to the offender.

## Homicide

Following decreases over the previous two financial years, Homicide offences have again decreased (by 12%) in 2000/01. In fact, the rate of Homicide offences for the period under review is the lowest experienced by Queensland since the late 1970's (see Annual Crime Trends: page 34).

Factoring in the increase in the Queensland population, Homicide offences have decreased by 13% to a rate of 6 offences per 100,000 persons. The reduction in Homicide is attributable to a 19% drop in Murder (70 to 57 offences) and a 59% drop in Driving Causing Death offences (49 to 20).

Of the 217 offences reported to police in 2000/01, 190 (88%) were cleared in the same period. This represents a 14% increase in the clear-up of Homicide offences. An additional 41 offences were cleared from previous periods.

Both Far Northern and Northern Regions experience

marked decreases (of 54% and 53% respectively) in the rate of Homicide offences reported in 2000/01. Metropolitan North Region, which experienced a 15% increase, reported the highest rate in 2000/01. Southern and Central Regions also reported increases for the year under review.

Over half (59%) of the victims of Homicide were male with a high proportion (21%) of male victims aged twenty to twenty-nine years. At every age group except the forty to forty-four year age group, males were more likely to be victims than females.

Males were significantly more likely than females to commit Homicide offences. In 2000/01, males aged twenty to twenty-four years were most likely to offend. While 84% of offenders were proceeded against through an arrest, for 64% of offenders the victim was known to them.

## Assault

As stated previously, Assaults comprise approximately 60% of total Offences Against the Person and, as such, tend to dominate this broad offence division. The number of Assaults in Queensland increased by 6% from 1999/00 to 2000/01. This equates to a rate of 517 offences per 100,000 persons. The overall increase in Assault is attributable to a 7% rise in Serious Assault and a 3% rise in Other Assault. Of the 18,734 offences reported to police in 2000/01, 12,628 (67%) were cleared in the same period with a further 1,635 offences cleared from previous periods.

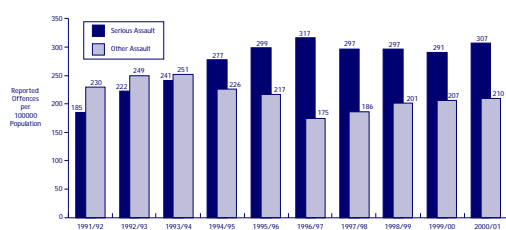


Figure 2: Reported Assaults, Queensland

Since 1994/95, the trend for Other Assault to be reported at a higher rate than Serious Assault has reversed. Recent years have seen much higher rates of Serious Assault (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 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.

Far Northern and Northern Regions experienced the highest rates of Assault with both reporting an increase, of 9% and 3% respectively. Metropolitan South Region recorded the lowest rate at 338 offences per 100,000 population. The State recorded a 4% increase in the rate of Assault, with every region contributing to this increase.

At every age group males were more likely than females to be victims of Assault. Males aged twenty-five to twenty-nine 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 (80% of offenders were male) and this was the case for every age group. Males aged fifteen to nineteen years were most likely to offend. Of those persons proceeded against, 53% were arrested and 38% were served with a court notice; 45% 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 2000/01 increased by 5% from the number reported in the previous financial year. This equates to a rate of 160 offences reported per 100,000 persons. This increase is largely attributable to a 20% increase in Rape and Attempted Rape (although definitional changes to the Criminal Code have partially contributed to this increase). Of those offences reported in 2000/01, 3,977 (68%) were cleared with a further 696 cleared from previous time periods.

Far Northern Region recorded both the largest increase in Sexual Offences (16%) and the highest rate. South Eastern Region reported the largest decrease (15%) while Metropolitan South Region recorded the lowest rate.

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. In fact, females in this age bracket comprise more than one-third of victims.

In total, only 40 females committed Sexual Offences in 2000/01. Thus, 98% 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 youngest and older age groups with males aged forty-five to forty-nine most likely to be proceeded against for a sexual offence. For those proceeded against, 69% were arrested and 21% were served with a court notice. For 88% of offenders the victim was known to them although the relationship was not stated for 7% so this figure may be higher.

### Robbery

An increase of 9% in the number of Armed Robberies reported to police in 2000/01 coupled with a 12% increase in Unarmed Robbery lead to an overall 10% increase in the number of Robbery offences reported in the year under review. A total of 2,492 offences were reported to police which equates to a rate of 69 offences per 100,000 persons. Of these, 940 (38%) were cleared in the period in which they were reported with an additional 133 offences cleared from previous periods.

Rates of Robbery have been increasing steadily since the late 1980's. Since 1997/98 Armed Robbery has been more prevalent than Unarmed Robbery and this year is no exception (Figure 3). Previously, Unarmed Robbery was reported at a higher rate than Armed Robbery.

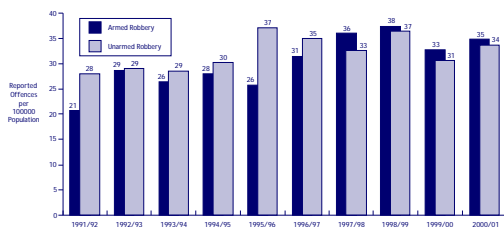


Figure 3: Reported Robbery Offences, Queensland

Robbery offences tend to occur more frequently in the south-east corner of the State and 2000/01 was no exception. Metropolitan North Region recorded the

highest rate in the State (113 offences per 100,000 persons) although this figure remained unchanged from the previous year. Metropolitan South Region experienced a substantive increase (38%) in Robbery while Far Northern Region recorded a sizeable decrease (17%).

Under the age of forty years, males were more likely than females to be victims of Robbery with males aged fifteen to nineteen years most likely to be victims. After the age of forty victimisation rates were similar for males and females.

Males were significantly more likely than females to commit Robbery offences (88% of offenders were male) and 62% of offenders were aged between ten and twenty-four years. Of those proceeded against for Robbery offences 86% were arrested. A large proportion of offences (30%) were committed against a company or an organisation. For over half of the offences, however, 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, remained unchanged from 1999/00 to 2000/01 with 70 offences reported in both years. Of these, 46% were cleared in the same period.

Kidnapping, Abduction, Deprivation of Liberty etc offences, experienced an increase (10%) from 329 offences in 1999/00 to 361 offences recorded in 2000/01. Approximately 65% of these were cleared in the 2000/01 financial year with a further 22 cases 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 2000/01, Other Offences Against the Person increased by 10% from 3,407 to 3,764 offences. Of these, 49% were cleared in the same period with this clearance rate higher by 3% from that reported previously. In addition, 304 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 2000/01, Other Theft (excl. Unlawful Entry) accounted for 36% of total Offences Against Property and was the highest in volume of the primary offence categories. Unlawful Entry accounted for 25% of offences with Other Property Damage and Motor Vehicle Theft accounting for 20% and 7% respectively. As such, this broad offence division tends to be dominated by Other Theft and Unlawful Entry with offence categories such as Arson having little effect.

The number of reported Offences Against Property rose by 3% from 303,973 offences reported in 1999/00 to 312,599 offences reported in 2000/01. Factoring in the growth of the Queensland population, property offences were reported at a rate of 8,621 offences per 100,000 persons, an increase of 1% from the previous year. Of all property offences reported in 2000/01, 23% were cleared in the same period with a further 11,543 offences cleared from previous periods.

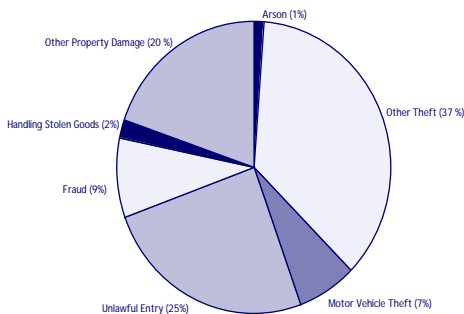


Figure 4: Offences Against Property (%) - 2000/01

Southern Region recorded the largest increase in total Offences Against Property (6%) with Central Region recording the second highest (5%). Northern Region experienced the largest decrease (3%). Metropolitan North Region recorded the highest rate at 10,956 offences per 100,000 persons, although this region experienced virtually no change in the rate reported for 1999/00.

Overall, property offences were more likely to be committed by males (79% of offenders were male).

Nearly one-third (28%) of offenders proceeded against for property offences were male aged between fifteen and nineteen years. Of the total persons proceeded against for property offences, 43% were arrested, 42% were served with a court notice and 12% were cautioned.

## Unlawful Entry

While the number of reported Unlawful Entry offences increased by 2% from 1999/00 to 2000/01, the rate of offences remained unchanged over the two periods at 2,129 offences per 100,000 persons. Of the 77,189 offences reported to police in 2000/01, 13% were cleared in the same period with a further 2,113 offences cleared from previous periods.

Although Unlawful Entry of Dwellings decreased by 3%, Unlawful Entry of Shops and Other Premises rose by 12% and 8% respectively.

North Coast, South Eastern and Metropolitan North Regions all experienced decreases in Unlawful Entry of 5%, 3% and 7% respectively. The largest increase was recorded by Southern Region (10%) while Northern Region recorded the highest rate in the State at 2,571 offences per 100,000 persons. The lowest rate was recorded by Central Region.

Most Unlawful Entry offences were committed by young males. In fact, 91% of offenders were male and 65% were male aged under twenty-five years. Of all offenders proceeded against for Unlawful Entry offences 58% were arrested, 10% cautioned and 29% served with a court notice.

## Arson

Arson offences neither increased nor decreased from 1999/00 to 2000/01. Furthermore, the rate of offences remained steady at 47 offences per 100,000 persons. Of the 1,690 offences reported in 2000/01, 177 (10%) were cleared in the same period. An additional 49 offences were cleared from previous periods.

Far Northern Region experienced a sizeable decrease in Arson offences (42%) which resulted in this region recording the lowest rate in the State. In addition to recording the largest increase (10%), South Eastern Region also recorded the highest rate at 74 offences per 100,000 persons.

Approximately 91% of offenders were male. Fifteen to nineteen-year-old males were most likely to be proceeded against for Arson followed by ten to fourteen-year-olds. Approximately 62% of offenders were arrested, 12% cautioned and 18% served with a court notice.

### **Other Property Damage**

Other Property Damage offences increased by 2% from 62,411 to 63,946 offences. This equates to a rate of 1,764 offences for every 100,000 persons. Of those offences reported to police in 2000/01, 11,538 (18%) were cleared with an additional 1,840 offences cleared from previous time periods.

Metropolitan North Region recorded the highest rate of Other Property Damage offences despite a 2% decrease from 1999/00 to 2000/01. Far Northern Region recorded the lowest rate while Northern Region recorded the largest decrease (13%). Central Region experienced the largest increase (8%).

As with most offence types, fifteen to nineteen-year-old males were most likely to be proceeded against for Other Property Damage offences. Only 11% of offenders were female and only 14% of offenders were aged thirty years or more. In total, 48% of offenders were arrested for this offence type, 13% were cautioned and 36% were served with a court notice.

### **Motor Vehicle Theft**

From 1995/96 to 1997/98, Motor Vehicle Theft was decreasing sharply in Queensland. The last two Annual Statistical Reviews, however, reported increases which effectively halted this downward trend. In 2000/01, Queensland again experienced an increase (3%) which brings the crime rate for this offence close to the high rates experienced prior to the downward trend.

In 2000/01, 20,653 Motor Vehicle Theft offences were reported to police. Of these, 4,250 (21%) were cleared with an additional 720 offences cleared from previous periods (note: for recovery rates see Explanatory Notes). In 2000/01, Motor Vehicle Theft offences were reported at a rate of 570 offences for every 100,000 persons.

The rate of Motor Vehicle Theft for Central Region remained unchanged from 1999/00 to 2000/01 while Northern Region recorded a 19% decrease and North Coast Region experienced a 13% increase. Rates of Motor Vehicle Theft were highest in the south-east corner of the State with the highest rate reported by South Eastern Region (838 per 100,000 population). Central Region recorded the lowest rate at 221 offences per 100,000 persons.

Males aged fifteen to nineteen years were most likely to offend (43% of offenders were in this group). Including females in this age group, 49% of offenders overall were aged fifteen to nineteen years. Approximately 59% of offenders were arrested and 32% were served with a court notice.

### **Other Theft (excluding Unlawful Entry)**

Other Theft (Stealing) offences rose by 7% from 1999/00 to 2000/01. This category is the highest in volume of the property offence categories and, thus, this increase has a significant impact on property offences as a total. In 2000/01, 116,053 offences were reported to police of which 20% were cleared. A further 3,093 were cleared from previous periods.

While Stealing from Dwellings was down by 2%, Steal from Shops, Vehicles and Other were all up by 15%, 2% and 11% respectively. Approximately 73% of Shop Stealing offences were cleared which was the highest clearance rate for the Other Theft sub-categories.

South Eastern Region experienced the largest increase (9%) while Northern Region recorded the only decrease (4%). The metropolitan regions of Brisbane both recorded increases (of 6% and 7%) with Metropolitan North Region also recording the highest rate in the State (4,122 offences per 100,000 persons). Southern Region experienced the lowest rate at 2,464 offences per 100,000 population.

The proportion of female offenders for Other Theft was higher than for most offence types at 30%, 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 30%; while 45% were served with a court notice, 22% (mostly juvenile) were cautioned.

## Fraud

Decreases in Fraud by Cheque and Other Fraud (by 1% and 15% respectively) were offset by a 3% increase in Fraud by Credit Card. The result was an overall decrease of 8% in total Fraud offences.

Of the 26,963 offences reported in 2000/01, 17,646 (72%) were cleared in the same period with a further 3,598 offences cleared from previous periods.

In 1999/00, one offender caused Fraud offences in Metropolitan South Region to increase by 33%. In the year under review, Metropolitan South figures have returned to normal with a 31% decrease. North Coast Region also experienced a substantive decrease (29%) while Far Northern, Northern and Central Regions all recorded sizeable increases (24%, 16% and 20% respectively). Despite experiencing an unchanged rate from the previous financial year, Metropolitan North recorded the highest rate in the State with Far Northern Region recording the lowest.

Fraud is unique in that the age of those proceeded against tends to be older when compared with other offence types and 2000/01 was no exception. Those in the twenty-five to twenty-nine year age group were most likely to offend for males while those in the twenty to twenty-four year age group were more likely to offend for females. In addition, rates are still relatively high in older age groups. Arrest rates and notices served were slightly lower than notices served at 42% and 53% respectively.

## Handling Stolen Goods

Decreases in all sub-categories except Possess, Receive, Dispose of Tainted Property (which increased by 16%) resulted in an overall decrease of 3% in Handling Stolen Goods offences. Possess Property Suspected Stolen and Receiving Stolen Property recorded sizeable decreases of 13% and 19% respectively. Of the total 6,105 offences reported to police in 2000/01, 5,864 (96%) were cleared with a further 130 offences cleared from previous periods.

Despite recording a 5% decrease in Handling Stolen Goods offences, Metropolitan North Region still recorded the highest rate in the State (273 per 100,000 population). North Coast Region recorded the lowest rate while Central Region experienced the largest decrease (34%). Both Far Northern and Northern Regions recorded sizeable increases of 27% and 16%

respectively.

As with most offence categories, males were more likely to commit Handling Stolen Goods offences (79% of offenders were male) and those in the fifteen to nineteen year age group were most likely to offend for both males and females. Offenders were more likely to be served with a court notice (53%) although 40% 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 reported to police 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 changing priorities 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 3% statewide from 104,855 offences recorded in 1999/00 to 108,146 offences recorded in 2000/01. This equates to a rate of 2,983 offences per 100,000 persons.

The largest increase in total Other Offences occurred in Far Northern Region (11%); this region also experienced the highest rate in the State. Metropolitan South Region recorded the lowest rate in addition to experiencing no change in reported rates from 1999/00 to 2000/01.

## Drug Offences

In total, 35,160 Drug Offences were detected by police in 2000/01, 1,111 less (3%) than were detected in 1999/00. This overall decrease is attributable to decreases in all Drug Offence sub-categories, the largest of which was a 29% decrease in Trafficking.

All regions except Far Northern and Northern recorded decreases in Drug Offences, the largest of which was a 13% decrease in Southern Region. Far Northern and Northern recorded increases of 2% and 5% respectively with Far Northern also recording the highest rate in the State. South Eastern Region experienced the lowest rate followed closely by Metropolitan South Region which recorded little

change in its rates over the two financial years.

### **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 2000/01 financial year saw a 15% increase in Breach of Domestic Violence Protection Orders. A total of 6,065 offences were reported to police; this equates to a rate of 167 offences per 100,000 persons.

All regions except North Coast experienced increases in Breach of Domestic Violence Protection Orders. North Coast recorded a 3% decrease. The largest increase occurred in Metropolitan North Region (34%) although Far Northern and Northern Regions both recorded sizeable increases of 24% and 22% respectively. Far Northern Region recorded the highest rate in the State. In fact, the rate recorded in Far Northern Region was three times higher than the State average.

### **Weapons Act Offences**

Weapons Act offences decreased by 16% from 5,512 offences reported in 1999/00 to 4,625 offences reported in 2000/01. The overall decrease is attributable to decreases in all weapons sub-categories except Possess and/or Use Other Weapons. The largest decrease was a 33% fall in Weapons Act Offences - Other.

North Coast Region recorded the largest decrease in Weapons offences (49%) after two offenders were charged with multiple offences in 1999/00. In fact, all regions except Metropolitan South (which experienced a 4% increase) recorded decreases. Far Northern Region continues to experience the highest rate in the State while Metropolitan South Region continues to record the lowest.

### **Good Order Offences**

Good Order Offences increased by 12% from 1999/00 to 2000/01. A total of 23,756 offences were detected by police which equates to a rate of 655 offences for every 100,000 persons. Increases in all Good Order sub-categories contributed to the overall increase, the largest of which was a rise in Disorderly Conduct

(20%), Resist, Hinder, Obstruct Police (13%) and Fare Evasion (7%).

All regions except Metropolitan North (which experienced a 7% decrease) recorded increases in Good Order offences, the largest of which was a 33% increase in Far Northern Region. The increase experienced by this region resulted in a rate almost two-and-a-half times higher than the State average. Despite a 16% increase, Metropolitan South Region experienced the lowest rate at 303 offences per 100,000 persons.

### **Traffic and Related Offences**

Traffic and Related Offences rose by 9% from 26,833 to 29,337 offences. All sub-categories exhibited increases, the most significant of which was a 25% increase in Disqualified Driving offences.

The only region to experience a decrease in Traffic and Related Offences was Northern Region whose rates remained virtually unchanged from the previous financial year. The largest increase occurred in Metropolitan South Region although this region continues to record the lowest rates in the State. Far Northern Region recorded the highest rate with Northern Region a close second.

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 page 131.

