

Crime 2001/2002

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 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.

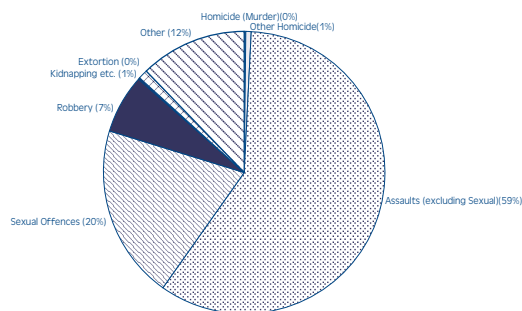


Figure 1: Offences Against the Person (%) - 2001/02

Overall, the number of Offences Against the Person increased by 3% in Queensland from 2000/01 to 2001/02. A total of 32,584 offences were reported to police in 2001/02, 994 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 1% to 881 offences per 100,000 persons.

Of the 32,584 Offences Against the Person reported to police during the 2001/02 financial year, 21,343 (66%) were cleared by the end of June 2002. An additional 3,242 offences reported in previous time periods were also cleared during 2001/02.

Half of the regions recorded decreases in the rate of person offences and half recorded increases. The largest increase occurred in Central Region (11%). As with previous years, the northern part of the State (Far Northern and Northern Regions) experienced the highest rates of person offences.

Fifteen to nineteen-year-old females were most likely to have been victims of person offences in 2001/02 followed by fifteen to nineteen 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 17% 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 61% were proceeded against through an arrest with a further 35% proceeded against through the service of a court notice. In approximately 55% of cases the victim was known to the offender.

Homicide (Murder)

Homicide (Murder) is presented as a separate offence type for the first time in the current publication. It should be noted that this is a small volume offence category and, as such, is subject to sizeable fluctuations from one year to the next.

Homicide offences increased by 5% in Queensland in 2001/02; this equates to three more offences occurring in the State. Of the 64 Homicides reported to police in 2001/02, 56 (88%) were cleared in the same period. An additional 11 offences were cleared from previous periods.

Both Far Northern and Northern Regions experienced increases (of 5 and 4 offences respectively) in the number of Homicides reported in 2001/02. These regions also recorded the highest rate in the State. North Coast and Metropolitan South Regions recorded both the largest decrease and the lowest rate.

Approximately 64% of the victims of Homicide were male. The highest rate of Homicide offences occurred in the zero to four age group.

Males were significantly more likely than females to commit Homicide. In 2001/02, males aged twenty to thirty-four years were most likely to offend. In 72% of cases the offender was known to the victim and most Homicides were cleared through an arrest.

Other Homicide

Other Homicide is used for the first time in the current publication. The number of Other Homicide offences increased by 13% during 2001/02 largely as a result of increases in Manslaughter (12 to 16 offences) and Driving Causing Death (31 to 41 offences).

Factoring in the increase of the Queensland population, Other Homicide offences increased by 11% to a rate of 5 offences per 100,000 persons. Of the 197 offences reported to police in 2001/02, 184 (93%) were cleared in the same period. An additional 25 offences were cleared from previous periods.

Far Northern, Northern and Central Regions all recorded increases in the rate of Other Homicide offences. Far Northern and Central Regions experienced the highest rate while South Eastern Region experienced the lowest.

Nearly three-quarters (70%) of the victims of Other Homicide were male with a high proportion (30%) of male victims aged fifteen to twenty-nine years. At every age group except the zero to four and fifty-five and over age groups, males were more likely to be victims than females.

Males were significantly more likely than females to commit Other Homicide offences. In 2001/02, males aged fifteen to twenty-four years were most likely to offend. While 81% of offenders were proceeded against through an arrest, for 63% 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 3% from 2000/01 to 2001/02. This equates to a rate of 519 offences per 100,000 persons. The overall increase in Assault is attributable to a 5% rise in Serious Assault and a 1% rise in Other Assault. Of the 19,216 offences reported to police in 2001/02, 13,082 (68%) were cleared in the same period with a further 1,794 offences cleared from previous periods.

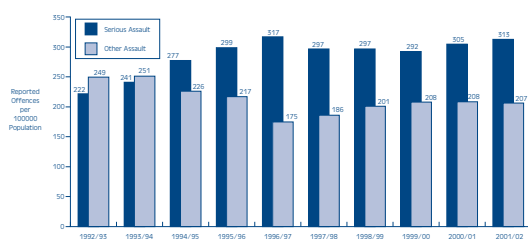


Figure 2: Reported Assaults, Queensland

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 although neither regions experienced an increase. Metropolitan South Region recorded the lowest rate at 335 offences per 100,000 population.

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 (79% 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, 55% were arrested and 35% were served with a court notice; 44% 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 2001/02 increased by 7% from the number reported in the previous financial year. This equates to a rate of 176 offences reported per 100,000 persons. This increase is attributable to a 9% increase in Other Sexual Offences despite being offset by a 1% decrease in Rape and Attempted Rape offences. Of those offences reported in 2001/02, 4,876 (75%) were cleared with a further 917 cleared from previous time periods.

While North Coast Region recorded the largest increase, Far Northern Region recorded the highest rate of Sexual Offences. Southern Region reported the largest

decrease 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 (82% 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 68 females committed Sexual Offences in 2001/02. Thus, 97% 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 thirty to thirty-four most likely to be proceeded against for a sexual offence. For those proceeded against, 73% were arrested and 16% were served with a court notice. For 82% of offenders the victim was known to them although the relationship was not stated for 8% so this figure may be higher.

Robbery

A decrease of 17% in the number of Armed Robberies reported to police in 2001/02 coupled with a 6% decrease in Unarmed Robbery lead to an overall 11% decrease in the number of Robbery offences reported in the year under review. A total of 2,205 offences were reported to police which equates to a rate of 60 offences per 100,000 persons. Of these, 833 (38%) were cleared in the period in which they were reported with an additional 107 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. This year, however, has seen a reversal of this trend with Unarmed Robbery rates higher than Armed Robbery rates (Figure 3).

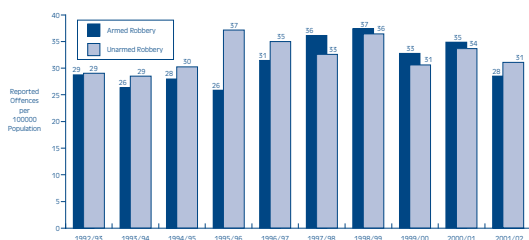


Figure 3: Reported Robbery Offences, Queensland

Robbery offences tend to occur more frequently in the south-east corner of the State and 2001/02 was no exception. Metropolitan North Region recorded the highest rate in the State (99 offences per 100,000

persons) despite a 13% decrease from the previous year. Metropolitan South Region experienced a substantive decrease (25%) in Robbery. In fact, all regions except Far Northern experienced a decrease in Robbery.

At every age except those aged fifty-five years or more, 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 significantly more likely than females to commit Robbery offences (87% of offenders were male) and 66% of offenders were aged between fifteen and twenty-nine years. Of those proceeded against for Robbery offences 84% were arrested. A large proportion of offences (24%) were committed against a company or an organisation. For over half of the offences (61%), 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, decreased by 13% from 2000/01 to 2001/02 (from 69 to 60 offences). Of these, 55% were cleared in the same period.

Kidnapping, Abduction, Deprivation of Liberty etc offences decreased by 1% from 356 offences reported in 2000/01 to 352 offences recorded in 2001/02. Approximately 67% of these were cleared in the 2001/02 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 2001/02, Other Offences Against the Person increased by 7% from 3,722 to 3,986 offences. Of these, 51% were cleared in the same period with this clearance rate higher by 2% from that reported previously. In addition, 360 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 2001/02, 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 24% of offences with Other Property Damage and Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicles accounting for 18% and 6% 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 decreased by 7% from 314,318 offences reported in 2000/01 to 292,662 offences reported in 2001/02. Factoring in the growth of the Queensland population, property offences were reported at a rate of 7,910 offences per 100,000 persons, a decrease of 9% from the previous year. Of all property offences reported in 2001/02, 25% were cleared in the same period with a further 12,995 offences cleared from previous periods.

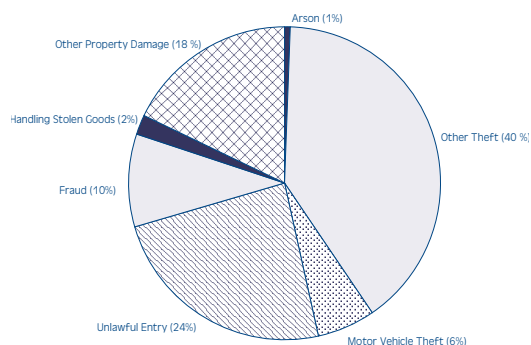


Figure 4: Offences Against Property (%) - 2001/02

The only region to record an increase in property crime was Far Northern (6%). All other regions recorded decreases, the largest of which was a 17% reduction in Southern Region. Metropolitan North Region recorded the highest rate at 10,017 offences per 100,000 persons, despite the fact that this region experienced a 10% drop in the rate reported for 2001/02.

Overall, property offences were more likely to be committed by males (78% 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, 44% were arrested, 41% were served with a court notice and 13% were cautioned.

Unlawful Entry with Intent

The number of Unlawful Entry offences decreased by a substantive 9%. This equates to an 11% reduction in the rate once the growth of the Queensland population

is taken into account. Of the 70,008 offences reported to police in 2001/02, 13% were cleared in the same period with a further 2,766 offences cleared from previous periods.

Unlawful Entry of Dwellings decreased by 11%; Unlawful Entry of Shops also decreased by 5% while Unlawful Entry of Other Premises fell by 8%.

All regions except Far Northern (which increased by 1%) recorded a decrease in Unlawful Entry offences. The largest decrease (26%) occurred in Southern Region; Metropolitan South also recorded a substantive decrease (16%). Central Region experienced the lowest rate while Northern Region experienced the highest.

Most Unlawful Entry offences were committed by young males. In fact, 91% of offenders were male and 69% were male aged under twenty-five years. Of all offenders proceeded against for Unlawful Entry offences 61% were arrested, 10% cautioned and 26% served with a court notice.

Arson

Arson offences decreased by 1% from 2000/01 to 2001/02. The rate of offences decreased by 3% to 45 offences per 100,000 persons. Of the 1,657 offences reported in 2001/02, 246 (15%) were cleared in the same period. An additional 36 offences were cleared from previous periods.

Far Northern Region experienced a sizeable increase in Arson offences (64%), although this region still recorded the equal lowest rate in the State; Metropolitan North also recorded the lowest rate. South Eastern Region experienced the highest rate in the State; North Coast Region recorded the largest decrease.

Approximately 90% 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 63% of offenders were arrested, 18% cautioned and 15% served with a court notice.

Other Property Damage

Other Property Damage offences decreased by 18% from 63,977 to 52,348 offences. This equates to a rate of 1,415 offences for every 100,000 persons. Of those offences reported to police in 2001/02, 10,934 (21%) were cleared with an additional 1,752 offences cleared from previous time periods.

Metropolitan North Region recorded the highest rate of Other Property Damage offences despite a 24% decrease from 2000/01 to 2001/02. Southern Region recorded the lowest rate while Metropolitan South Region recorded the largest decrease (29%). Far Northern Region experienced the only increase (7%).

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 16% of offenders were aged thirty years or more. In total, 47% of offenders were arrested for this offence type, 13% were cautioned and 37% were served with a court notice.

Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle

Following increases reported in the last two Annual Statistical Reviews, the current publication documents a substantial decrease (15%) in Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle offences. This reduction is equivalent to 3,000 fewer offences over the 2001/02 financial year compared to 2000/01.

In 2001/02, 17,643 Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle offences were reported to police. Of these, 3,981 (23%) were cleared with an additional 786 offences cleared from previous periods (note: for recovery rates see Explanatory Notes). In 2001/02, Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle offences were reported at a rate of 477 offences for every 100,000 persons.

All regions except Far Northern (which increased by 1%) recorded a decrease in Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle offences. The largest decrease was experienced by Metropolitan South Region (26%). Rates of Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle were highest in the south-east corner of the State with the highest rate reported by South Eastern Region (750 per 100,000 population). Central Region recorded the lowest rate at 209 offences per 100,000 persons.

Males aged fifteen to nineteen years were most likely to offend (41% of offenders were in this group). Including females in this age group, 47% of offenders overall were aged fifteen to nineteen years. Approximately 63% of offenders were arrested and 28% were served with a court notice.

Other Theft (excluding Unlawful Entry)

Other Theft (Stealing) offences rose by 1% from 2000/01 to 2001/02. 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 2001/02, 116,882 offences were reported to police of which 21% were cleared. A further 3,382 were cleared from previous periods.

While Stealing from Vehicles was down by 3%, Steal from Dwellings, Shops and Other Premises were all up by 3%, 2% and 2% respectively. Approximately 76% of Shop Stealing offences were cleared and this was the highest clearance rate for the Other Theft sub-categories.

Far Northern Region experienced the largest increase (8%) while Southern Region recorded the largest decrease (11%). Metropolitan North Region recorded the highest rate in the State (4,120 offences per 100,000 persons) followed closely by South Eastern Region. Southern Region experienced the lowest rate at 2,204 offences per 100,000 population.

The proportion of female offenders for Other Theft was higher than for most offence types at 31%, 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 31%; while 45% were served with a court notice, 22% (mostly juvenile) were cautioned.

Fraud

Decreases in Fraud by Cheque and Credit Card (by 27% and 2% respectively) were offset by a 3% increase in Other Fraud and by the introduction of a new Fraud sub-category, by Computer. The result was an overall decrease of 2% in total Fraud offences.

Of the 28,075 offences reported in 2001/02, 17,993 (64%) were cleared in the same period with a further 4,160 offences cleared from previous periods.

Five of the eight regions recorded a reduction in Fraud offences with Central recording the largest decrease at 24%. Far Northern Region experienced the largest increase (16%). While Southern Region recorded the lowest rate of Fraud offences, Metropolitan North Region recorded the highest (despite a 15% decrease).

Fraud is unique in that the age of those proceeded against tends to be older when compared with other offence types and 2001/02 was no exception. Those in the twenty to twenty-nine year age groups were most likely to offend for males and females. In addition, rates are still relatively high in older age groups. Arrest rates and notices served were 43% and 52% respectively.

Handling Stolen Goods

Decreases in two sub-categories 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 6% respectively. Of the total 5,969 offences reported to police in 2001/02, 5,762 (97%) were cleared with a further 113 offences cleared from previous periods.

Despite recording a 12% decrease in Handling Stolen Goods offences, Metropolitan North Region still recorded the highest rate in the State (241 per 100,000 population). Central Region recorded the lowest rate while Far Northern Region experienced the largest decrease (19%). Both Northern and South Eastern Regions recorded sizeable increases of 15% and 9% respectively.

As with most offence categories, males were more likely to commit Handling Stolen Goods offences (76% 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 108,379 offences recorded in 2000/01 to 111,388 offences recorded in 2001/02. This equates to a rate of 3,011 offences per 100,000 persons.

The largest increase in total Other Offences occurred in North Coast and Central Regions (9%). Far Northern region experienced the highest rate in the State, while Metropolitan South Region recorded the lowest rate in addition to experiencing very little change in reported rates from 2000/01 to 2001/02.

Drug Offences

In total, 32,458 Drug Offences were detected by police in 2001/02, 2,815 less (8%) than were detected in 2000/01. This overall decrease is attributable to decreases in all Drug Offence sub-categories except Produce Dangerous Drugs, the largest of which was a 38% decrease in Trafficking.

All regions except Central recorded decreases in Drug Offences, the largest of which was an 18% decrease in South Eastern Region. South Eastern Region experienced the lowest rate followed closely by Metropolitan South Region. Far Northern Region recorded the highest rate in the State despite a 9% decrease.

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 2001/02 financial year saw a 14% increase in Breach of Domestic Violence Protection Orders. A total of 6,862 offences were reported to police; this equates to a rate of 185 offences per 100,000 persons.

All regions except Northern and Metropolitan North experienced increases in Breach of Domestic Violence Protection Orders. Northern Region recorded no change while Metropolitan North Regions recorded a 15% decrease. The largest increase occurred in Metropolitan South Region (28%) although Central and North Coast Regions both recorded sizeable increases of 23% and 26% 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 increased by 6% from 4,461 offences reported in 2000/01 to 4,922 offences reported in 2001/02. The overall increase is attributable to increases in all weapons sub-categories except Possess and/or Use Other Weapons and Unlawful Possession of Firearm - other. The largest increase was a 22% rise in Weapons Act Offences - Other.

Southern Region recorded the largest decrease in Weapons offences (25%) while South Eastern Region

recorded the largest increase (55%). 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 8% from 2000/01 to 2001/02. A total of 25,607 offences were detected by police which equates to a rate of 692 offences for every 100,000 persons. An increase in the sub-category of Resist, Hinder, Obstruct Police (6%), the highest in volume of the Good Order sub-categories, contributed to the overall increase.

All regions except Southern (which experienced a 13% decrease) recorded increases in Good Order offences, the largest of which was a 22% increase in North Coast Region. Far Northern Region experienced a rate almost two-and-a-half times higher than the State average. Despite a 3% increase, Metropolitan South Region experienced the lowest rate at 310 offences per 100,000 persons.

Traffic and Related Offences

Traffic and Related Offences rose by 6% from 29,474 to 31,351 offences. All sub-categories exhibited increases except Interfere with Mechanism.

Only two regions, Northern and South Eastern, experienced a decrease in Traffic and Related Offences. The largest increase occurred in Metropolitan North Region. Metropolitan South 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.