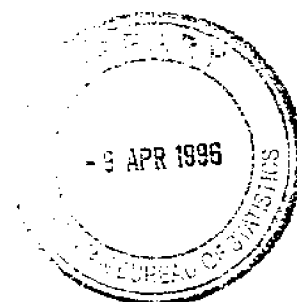


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October 1995

Crime and Safety Western Australia October 1995



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**CRIME AND SAFETY
WESTERN AUSTRALIA
OCTOBER 1995**

Peter Kelly
Deputy Commonwealth Statistician

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• for further information about statistics in this publication, and the availability of related unpublished statistics, contact Garth Cruden on (09) 360 5234.	
• for information about other ABS statistics and services, please refer to the last page of this publication.	

NOTES

The WA Crime and Safety Survey covered only selected types of household and personal crimes. Household crimes covered in the survey were break and enter, attempted break and enter and motor vehicle theft. Personal crimes covered in the survey were robbery, assault and sexual assault.

The terms used to describe various types of offences in this publication may not necessarily correspond with the legal or police definitions. Victims are counted once only for each type of offence, regardless of the number of incidents of that type. Explanatory and Technical Notes for these data can be found on pages 7 to 13.

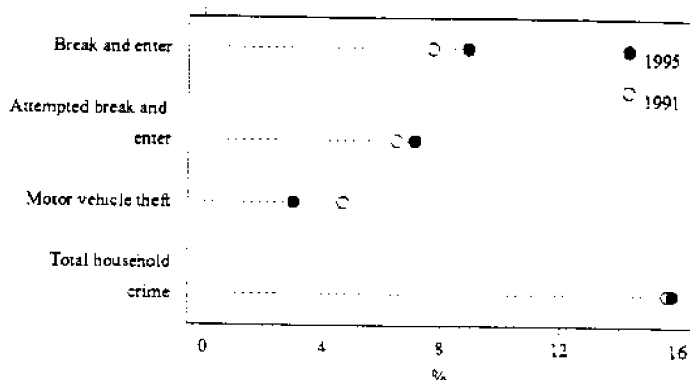
P.C. Kelly
Deputy Commonwealth Statistician

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

HOUSEHOLD CRIME

Of the 636 400 households in WA 100 900 households (15.8%) experienced at least one household crime during the 12 months to October 1995, compared with the 15.6% victimisation rate recorded for the 12 months to October 1991.

VICTIMS OF HOUSEHOLD CRIME, 12 MONTHS TO OCTOBER 1995



The victimisation rate for household crime was higher for Perth (17.5%) than for the balance of WA (11.0%).

The victimisation rate for household crime varies according to household type. 'One parent' households and 'Other' households had the highest victimisation rate (25.5% and 19.5% respectively). 'Couple only' households experienced the lowest victimisation rate (11.3%).

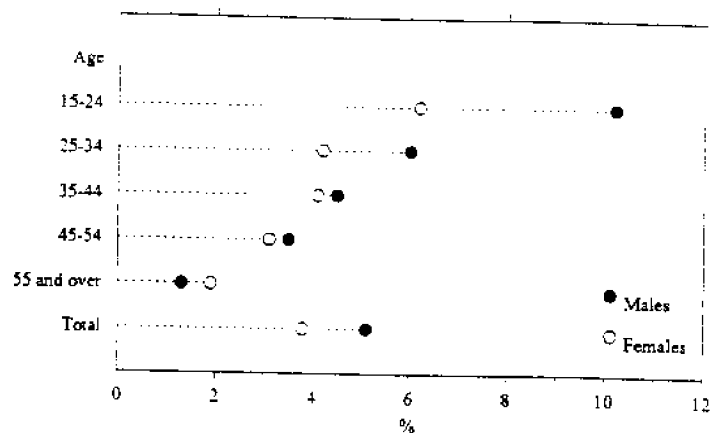
A total of 86 600 households experienced an occurrence of break and enter or attempted break and enter. The overall victimisation rate for these types of crime was 13.6% in 1995 and 14.2% in 1991.

PERSONAL CRIME

Of the estimated 1 293 300 persons aged 15 or over 57 600 (4.5%) were victims of at least one personal crime during the 12 months to October 1995. This compares with the victimisation rate of 6.3% recorded for the corresponding period in 1991.

Victimisation rates varied according to age and sex. Higher victimisation rates occurred among males (5.1%) than among females (3.8%). Younger people experienced higher victimisation rates than older people, with the highest rate being among 15–24 year olds (8.2%) and decreasing to 1.6% among those aged 55 and over.

VICTIMS OF PERSONAL CRIME, 12 MONTHS TO OCTOBER 1995



MULTIPLE VICTIMS

Of the 100 900 households that were victims of household crime, 33 000 (32.7%) experienced more than one occurrence within the 12 month reference period.

Among victims of personal crime, 18 900 (32.9%) experienced multiple occurrences within the 12 month reference period.

REPORTING TO POLICE

Reporting to the police varied widely according to the nature of the crime. For household crimes, rates of reporting the most recent incident to police ranged from 93.7% for motor vehicle theft to 31.2% for attempted break and enter.

Among victims of personal crime, 60.5% of robbery victims reported the most recent incident to police. By comparison, 40.9% of victims of assault reported the most recent incident to police.

PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME/PUBLIC NUISANCE

Over half (57.4%) of all persons aged 15 years and over felt that their neighbourhood had a crime or public nuisance problem.

The main crime/public nuisance problem was perceived to be housebreaking/burglaries/theft from homes, reported as the main problem by 32.0% of persons.

1

VICTIMS¹ AND NON-VICTIMS OF CRIME IN THE 12 MONTHS TO OCTOBER 1995: TYPE OF OFFENCE

Type of offence	1995 ²		Victimisation rate ³	
	Victims '000s	Non-victims '000s	1991 %	1995 %
Households—				
Break and enter	56.9	579.5	7.7	8.9
Attempted break and enter	45.3	591.1	6.5	7.1
Break and enter or attempted break and enter	86.6	549.8	14.2	13.6
Motor vehicle theft	19.1	617.3	4.7	3.0
Total households	100.9	535.5	15.6	15.8
Persons—				
Robbery	24.1	1 269.2	1.7	1.9
Assault	34.3	1 259.1	3.9	2.6
Sexual assault ⁴	* 4.0	610.4	*0.6	*0.7
Total persons	57.6	1 235.8	4.4	4.5

¹ Refers to households or persons who were victims of any of the types of offence specified.

² Because an individual household or person could be a victim of two or more types of offence, figures given for individual offence types do not sum to the totals in these columns.

³ Proportion of all households/persons.

⁴ Sexual assault questions were asked only of females aged 18 years and over.

2

VICTIMS¹ AND NON-VICTIMS OF HOUSEHOLD CRIME IN THE 12 MONTHS TO OCTOBER 1995: SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS, WA

Selected characteristics	1995			Victimisation rate ²	
	Victims '000s	Non-victims '000s	Total '000s	1991 %	1995 %
Major statistical region—					
Perth	83.3	393.0	476.3	16.6	17.5
Balance of Western Australia	17.6	142.6	160.1	12.9	11.0
Household type—					
Couple with child(ren)	34.5	191.0	225.5	15.7	15.3
Couple only	17.8	139.3	157.0	10.9	11.3
One parent household	13.6	39.7	53.3	23.4	25.5
Person living alone	21.8	111.1	132.9	16.9	16.4
Other households	13.2	54.5	67.6	19.2	19.5
Whether a member of Neighbourhood (or Rural) Watch—					
Member	22.3	99.7	122.0	na	18.3
Not a member	67.7	378.9	446.5	na	15.2
Don't know	10.9	57.0	67.9	na	16.0
Total households	100.9	535.5	636.4	15.6	15.8

¹ Break and enter, attempted break and enter or motor vehicle theft.

² Proportion of all households.

3

VICTIMS AND NON-VICTIMS OF PERSONAL CRIME¹ IN THE 12 MONTHS TO OCTOBER 1995: SEX BY AGE, WA

Age	1995			Victimisation rate ²	
	Victims '000s	Non-victims '000s	Total '000s	1991 %	1995 %
MALES					
15-24 years	13.0	115.1	128.1	11.7	10.2
25-34 years	7.8	122.0	129.7	7.1	6.0
35-44 years	6.0	127.1	133.2	5.6	4.5
45-54 years	* 3.9	105.0	108.8	5.8	*3.5
55 years and over	* 1.9	141.5	143.4	*2.0	*1.3
Total males	32.6	610.6	643.2	6.5	5.1
FEMALES					
15-24 years	7.8	117.4	125.1	14.0	6.2
25-34 years	5.6	127.8	133.4	6.5	4.2
35-44 years	5.6	129.3	134.9	5.3	4.1
45-54 years	* 3.2	100.7	103.9	*2.7	*3.1
55 years and over	* 2.9	150.0	152.8	*1.2	*1.9
Total females	25.0	625.2	650.1	6.1	3.8
PERSONS					
15-24 years	20.8	232.5	253.3	12.8	8.2
25-34 years	13.3	249.8	263.1	6.8	5.1
35-44 years	11.6	256.4	268.0	5.5	4.3
45-54 years	7.1	205.7	212.8	4.3	3.3
55 years and over	*4.8	291.5	296.2	*1.7	*1.6
Total persons	57.6	1 235.8	1 293.3	6.3	4.5

¹ Robbery, assault or sexual assault.² Proportion of all persons.

4

VICTIMS AND NON-VICTIMS OF PERSONAL CRIME¹ IN THE 12 MONTHS TO OCTOBER 1995: SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS, WA

Selected characteristics	1995			Victimisation rate ²	
	Victims	Non-victims	Total	1991	1995
	'000s	'000s	'000s	%	%
Major statistical region—					
Perth	44.1	922.7	966.8	6.3	4.6
Balance of Western Australia	13.5	313.1	326.6	6.5	4.1
Labour force status—					
Employed	39.6	773.0	812.6	6.9	4.9
Unemployed	* 3.8	53.4	57.2	11.2	6.6
Not in the labour force	14.2	409.4	423.5	4.4	3.3
Total persons	57.6	1 235.8	1 293.3	6.3	4.5

¹ Robbery, assault or sexual assault.

² Proportion of all persons.

5

VICTIMS OF CRIME¹ IN THE 12 MONTHS TO OCTOBER 1995 : NUMBER OF INCIDENTS EXPERIENCED BY TYPE OF OFFENCE, WA

Type of offence	One	Two or more	Total victims	One %	Two or more %
Households —					
Break and enter	45.5	11.3	56.9	80.1	19.9
Attempted break and enter	32.5	12.9	45.3	71.6	28.4
Break and enter or attempted break and enter ²	58.7	27.9	86.6	67.8	32.2
Motor vehicle theft	16.7	*2.4	19.1	87.4	12.6
Total household victims²	67.9	33.0	100.9	67.3	32.7
Persons—					
Robbery	17.9	6.3	24.1	74.0	26.1
Assault	23.3	10.9	34.3	68.1	31.8
Sexual assault ³	* 2.4	*1.6	* 4.0	*59.6	*40.5
Total personal victims²	38.6	18.9	57.6	67.1	32.9

¹ Refers to households or persons who were victims of any of the types of offence specified.

² Because an individual household or person could be a victim of two or more types of offence, figures given for individual offence types do not sum to the totals in this row.

³ Sexual assault questions were asked only of females aged 18 years and over.

6

VICTIMS OF CRIME¹ IN THE 12 MONTHS TO OCTOBER 1995: WHETHER TOLD POLICE ABOUT LAST INCIDENT BY TYPE OF OFFENCE, WA

Type of offence	1995		Police told ²	
	Police told '000s	Police not told '000s	1991 %	1995 %
Household victims—				
Break and enter	45.7	11.2	72.6	80.3
Attempted break and enter	14.1	31.2	27.2	31.2
Motor vehicle theft	17.9	* 1.2	na	*93.7
Person victims—				
Robbery	14.6	9.5	62.7	60.5
Assault	14.0	20.3	24.2	40.9
Sexual assault ³	np	np	na	np

¹ Refers to households or persons who were victims of any of the types of offence specified.

² Proportion of all households/persons.

³ Sexual assault questions were asked only of females aged 18 years and over.

7

PERSONS: PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME OR PUBLIC NUISANCE PROBLEMS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD, WA

Crime or public nuisance problem	Perceived to be a problem ¹		Perceived to be the main problem	
	Number '000s	Proportion ² %	Number '000	Proportion ² %
Housebreaking/burglaries/theft from homes	586.0	45.3	414.0	32.0
Car theft	354.0	27.4	40.1	3.1
Other theft	144.4	11.2	12.6	1.0
Louts/youth gangs	231.4	17.9	50.6	3.9
Prowlers/vandalers	136.7	10.6	15.1	1.2
Vandalism/graffiti	349.3	27.0	60.0	4.6
Dangerous/noisy driving	380.3	29.4	84.1	6.5
Illegal drugs	174.2	13.5	39.0	3.0
Sexual assault	44.4	3.4	* 2.9	*0.2
Other assault	51.2	4.0	* 1.5	*0.1
Problems with neighbours/domestic problems	79.4	6.1	15.4	1.2
Other	18.9	1.5	7.2	0.6
No perceived problem	550.9	42.6	550.9	42.6
All persons	1 293.3	100.0	1 293.3	100.0

¹ A person could nominate more than one perceived problem. As a consequence, figures in these columns do not sum to the total shown for all persons.

² Of all persons.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication contains results from a Crime and Safety survey which was conducted throughout WA in October 1995 as a supplement to the ABS Monthly Population Survey (MPS). The survey was conducted at the request of the Ministry of Justice and the Office of Attorney General.

2 Information was collected from individuals and households about their experience of selected crimes, reporting behaviour, individual's perception of crime problems in their neighbourhood and household's membership of Neighbourhood or Rural Watch programs.

3 The survey was conducted using all the private dwellings included in the MPS, with the exception of private dwellings containing only visitors. The MPS was conducted during the two weeks commencing Monday, 9 October 1995.

4 For WA, information was sought from approximately 7,000 persons, of whom about 5,900 (84.0%) responded. Data pertaining to households were sought from approximately 3,400 households and about 2,900 (84.3%) replied.

SCOPE

5 Examination of successive waves of responses did not indicate any serious problem of non-response bias. Special estimation procedures and imputation were employed to reduce the effect of non-response.

6 The survey was conducted for all persons aged 15 years and over who were usual residents of private dwellings, except:

- (a) members of the permanent defence forces;
- (b) certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from censuses and surveys;
- (c) overseas residents in Australia; and
- (d) members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependants) stationed in Australia.

7 Residents of other non-private dwellings such as hospitals, motels and jails (included in the MPS) were excluded from this survey.

COVERAGE

8 In the survey, coverage rules were applied which aimed to ensure that each person was associated with only one dwelling, and hence had only one chance of selection in the survey.

9 Crime and Safety questionnaires were delivered to the selected households by MPS interviewers for completion by respondents and return by mail. One questionnaire per household contained questions relating to the household as a whole. In addition, all persons in scope (refer paragraph 6) were provided with a questionnaire relating to their personal experiences of crime. All females aged 18 years or over were provided with an additional questionnaire relating to their personal experiences of sexual assault only.

COMPARISONS WITH POLICE STATISTICS

10 It should be emphasised that the responses obtained in this survey are based on the respondent's perception of their having been the victim of an offence. The terms used summarise the wording of the questions asked of the respondent, and may not necessarily correspond with the legal or police definitions which are used for each offence.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

11 The ABS produces a wide range of publications of social and demographic statistics. Other ABS publications which relate to this survey topic include:

Crime and safety, New South Wales, April 1995 (4509.1)

Crime and Safety, Victoria, April 1995 (4509.2)

Crime and Safety, Queensland, April 1995 (4509.3)

RELATED PUBLICATIONS
(Continued)

Crime and Safety, South Australia, April 1995 (4509.4)
Crime and Safety, Australia, April 1993 (4509.0)
National Crime Statistics, January-December 1994 (4510.0)
Crime Victims, Western Australia, October 1991 (4506.5)
Crime and Crime Prevention Survey, Victoria, July 1987, Preliminary
 (4507.2)
Crime Victims Survey, Victoria 1986 (4506.2)
Crime Victims Survey, Australia, 1983, Preliminary (4505.0)
Victims of Crime, Australia, 1983 (4506.0)

SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

na	not available
np	not available for publication but included in totals where applicable
*	estimate is subject to a relative standard error between 25% and 50%.
--	not applicable (due to non-comparability)
—	nil occurrences or rounded to zero

GLOSSARY

Household	A group of residents of a dwelling who share common facilities and meals or who consider themselves to be a household. It is possible for a dwelling to contain more than one household, for example, where regular provision is made for groups to take meals separately and where persons consider their households to be separate.
Neighbourhood (or Rural) Watch	A community-based crime prevention program mainly aimed at preventing break and enter offences.
Offence	Indicates crimes which persons or households reported had been committed against them.
Break and enter offence	An incident where the respondent's home had been broken into. The respondent's home was defined to include their garage or shed, but break and enter offences relating to their car or garden were excluded.
Attempted break and enter offence	An incident where an attempt was made to break into the respondent's home.
Motor vehicle theft	An incident where a registered motor vehicle was stolen from any member of the household. It included privately owned motor vehicles as well as business/company vehicles used exclusively by any members of the household.
Robbery	An incident where someone had stolen something from a respondent by threatening or attacking them.
Assault	An incident other than a robbery where the respondent was threatened with force or attacked.
Sexual assault	An incident which was of a sexual nature involving physical contact, including rape, attempted rape, indecent assault, and assault with intent to sexually assault. Sexual harassment (that did not lead to an assault) was excluded. Only females aged 18 years and over were asked sexual assault questions.
Victim	A person or a household reporting at least one of the offences listed above. Victims were counted once only for each type of offence, regardless of the number of incidents of that type.
Crime or public nuisance problems	Anything perceived by the respondent to be problems arising from crime or people creating a public nuisance.
Neighbourhood	Respondents were asked about crime problems in their neighbourhood. The precise definition of this term was left to the respondent.

TECHNICAL NOTES ON DATA RELIABILITY

ESTIMATION PROCEDURE

1 Estimates derived from this survey were obtained in two stages. In the first stage, adjustment of non-response was carried out based on the demographic composition of the Monthly Population Survey sample, as well as on analysis of the effect of reminder action on the responses obtained.

2 The second stage was a complex ratio estimation procedure, which ensured that the survey estimates conformed to an independently estimated distribution of the population by age, sex and part of state, rather than to the age, sex and part of state distribution among respondents.

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

3 Estimates in this publication are subject to non-sampling and sampling errors.

NON-SAMPLING ERRORS

4 Non-sampling errors may arise as a result of errors in the reporting, recording or processing of the data and can occur even if there is a complete enumeration of the population. Non-sampling errors can be introduced through: inadequacies in the questionnaire; non-response; inaccurate reporting by respondents; errors in the application of survey procedures; incorrect recording of answers; and errors in data entry and processing.

5 It is difficult to measure the size of the non-sampling errors and the extent of these errors could vary considerably in significance from survey to survey and from question to question. However, every effort is made in the design of the survey and development of survey procedures to minimise the effect of these errors.

SAMPLING ERRORS

6 Sampling error is the error which occurs by chance because the data were only obtained from a sample, not the entire population.

ESTIMATES OF SAMPLING ERROR

7 One measure of the variability of estimates which occurs as a result of surveying only a sample of the population is the *standard error* (table below).

8 There are about two chances in three (67%) that a survey estimate is within one standard error of the figure that would have been obtained if all persons had been included in the survey. There are about nineteen chances in twenty (95%) that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

9 Table A shows standard errors for estimates of total number of persons and total number of households. Linear interpolation should be used to calculate the standard error of estimates falling between the sizes of estimates listed in the table. For example, the estimated number of households which were victims of a Break and Enter was 56 900 (from Table 1). From table A, we can see that this estimate will have a standard error somewhere between 1 920 and 1 970. We find the difference between our estimate and the closest corresponding figure from Table A ($56\,900 - 50\,000 = 6\,900$) and divide this with the difference between the estimate figures that fall on either side of our estimate ($50\,000 - 100\,000 = 50\,000$). This is then multiplied by the difference between the standard errors for the estimate figure (as above) that fall on either side of our estimate ($1\,970 - 1\,920 = 50$).

$$(56\,000 - 50\,000) / (100\,000 - 50\,000) \times (1\,970 - 1\,920) = 6.9$$

We now add this 6.9 to the standard error 1 920, to get the standard error for our estimate, to arrive at 1 926.9. Although this calculated figure has one decimal point, it must be remembered that the original standard errors are estimated and rounded. It is preferable to round our new estimate to the nearest ten, to avoid implying a higher level of accuracy than really exists. Our estimated standard error is now 1 930. There are 2 chances in 3 (66.6%) that the number that would have been produced had all households in WA been included in the survey lies between 54 970 and 58 830 (ie $56\,900 \pm 1\,930$). There are about 19 in 20 (95%) that the number lies between 53 040 and 60 760 (ie $56\,900 \pm (2 \times 1\,930)$).

10 The standard error can also be expressed as a percentage of the estimate and this is known as the *relative standard error* (RSE). The RSE is determined by dividing the standard error of an estimate $SE(x)$ by the estimate x and expressing it as a percentage. That is—

$$RSE(x) = \frac{100SE(x)}{x} \%$$

(where x is the estimate). For example, the RSE for the number of households which were victims of Break and Enter is:

$$(1\,930 / 56\,900) \times 100\% = 3.4\%$$

The relative standard error is a useful measure in that it provides an immediate indication of the percentage errors likely to have occurred due to sampling.

11 Proportions and percentages formed from the ratio of two estimates are also subject to sampling error. The size of the error depends on the accuracy of both the numerator and the denominator. The formula for the relative standard error of a proportion or percentage is—

$$RSE(x/y) = \sqrt{[RSE(x)]^2 + [RSE(y)]^2}$$

Note: this formulae only applies in those situations where x is a subset of y . This is the case for all percentages in this publication.

12 For example, the percentage of households that were victims of a Break and Enter in the 12 months to October 1995 was 8.9% (from Table 1). Here, interpolating from table A, the numerator (56 000) has a standard error of 1 930 (see previous example, point 9). Similarly, the denominator (636 000) has a standard error of 1 660. Therefore, the Relative standard error for the percentage would be:

$$RSE(8.9\%) = \sqrt{[1,930/56,000]^2 + [1660/636,400]^2} = 3.4\%$$

In general, for the estimates in this publication, the RSE of estimates of percentages are either equal to or slightly less than the RSE for the corresponding numerator estimates.

13 For all tables in this publication, only estimates with relative standard errors of 25% or less, and percentages based on such estimates, are considered sufficiently reliable for most purposes. However, estimates and percentages with relative standard errors between 25% and 50% have been included, preceded by the symbol * to indicate that they are subject to high standard errors and should be used with caution. Those users who require more detailed data and who are prepared to take the necessary precautions, can be provided with data with a higher standard error, upon request (please see overleaf).

TABLE A STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATES OF PERSONS AND HOUSEHOLDS, OCTOBER 1995

Size of estimate (number of households or persons)	Standard error	Relative standard error
	Number	%
300	220	73.3
400	270	67.5
500	320	64.0
600	360	60.0
700	400	57.1
800	440	55.0
900	470	52.2
1 000	500	50.0
1 500	630	42.0
2 000	730	36.5
2 500	820	32.8
3 000	890	29.7
3 500	960	27.4
4 000	1 010	25.2
4 500	1 060	23.6
10 000	1 400	14.0
20 000	1 670	8.4
30 000	1 800	6.0
50 000	1 920	3.8
100 000	1 970	2.0
500 000	1 660	0.3

DO YOU NEED ADDITIONAL DATA? The Crime and Safety Survey provides information on the incidence of selected categories of crime and crime reporting behaviour, for persons aged 15 years and over for the 12 months to October 1995. In addition, females aged 18 years and over were asked to provide information on their personal experience of sexual assaults.

A customised data service is available to meet special data requirements.

Information collected in the survey includes:

- Whether a member of neighbourhood (or Rural) watch
- Perceived crime or public nuisance problems
- Types of offences:

For break and enter, attempted break and enter, motor vehicle theft, robbery, assault and sexual assault:

- number of incidents in the last 12 months
- number of incidents reported to the police, and
- the main reason why the incident was not reported to the police.

For break and enter:

- description of items stolen.

For motor vehicle theft:

- location of incident,
- type of registered owner, and
- whether covered by comprehensive insurance.

For robbery, assault and sexual assault:

- location of last incident,
- whether a weapon was used, and
- whether the offender was known to the victim.

For assault and sexual assault:

- occurrence of physical injury

Data can be classified by the following variables:

- Age
- Sex
- Marital status
- Household type
- Country of birth Year of arrival in Australia
- Whether studying
- Metropolitan/Ex-metropolitan region
- Labour force status
- Status of worker

To discuss your data requirements or for further information, please contact Garth Cruden on (09) 360 5234

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