

CRIME AND SAFETY

**NEW
SOUTH
WALES**

EMBARGO: 11.30AM (CANBERRA TIME) MON 27 NOV 2006

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For further information about these and related statistics, contact the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070 or Michael Clarke on Sydney (02) 9268 4660.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

This publication contains results from the April 2006 survey of Crime and Safety which collected information from approximately 9,600 persons aged 15 years and over across New South Wales (NSW). The survey covers only selected types of household and personal crimes. Household crimes include break and enter, attempted break and enter and motor vehicle theft. Personal crimes include robbery, assault and sexual assault. The terms used to describe the various types of offences in this publication may not necessarily correspond with legal or police definitions. Victims are counted once only for each type of offence, regardless of the number of incidents occurring. See the Glossary for the definitions of terms as used in this survey. Unless otherwise specified, differences between data items noted in the Summary of Findings are statistically significant. See Technical Note (paragraph 15) for further details.

ROUNDING

As estimates have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between totals and the sums of the component items. Published percentages are calculated prior to rounding, and therefore some discrepancy may occur between these percentages and those that may be calculated from the rounded figures.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABS Australian Bureau of Statistics
MPS Monthly Population Survey
NSW New South Wales
RSE relative standard error
SE standard error

Ian Ewing
Regional Director, New South Wales

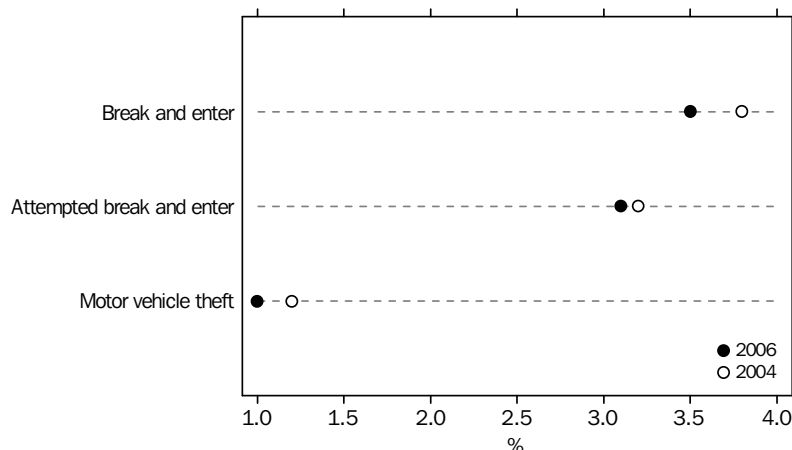
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

HOUSEHOLD CRIME

A total of 181,100 households (6.8% of all households in NSW) were victims of household crime in the 12 months to April 2006, which was similar to the 2004 figure (7.4%). However, these victimisation rates were lower than the 2003 rate of 9.4%, which was lower than the 2001 rate of 11.4%.

The victimisation rates for break and enter (3.5%), attempted break and enter (3.1%) and motor vehicle theft (1.0%) also remained similar to their corresponding 2004 victimisation rates.

VICTIMISATION RATES FOR HOUSEHOLD CRIME—2006 and 2004



As in 2004, the household victimisation rates for Sydney and the Balance of NSW remained about the same (7.0% and 6.7% respectively).

In 2006, the household victimisation rates for different household types generally did not differ. The sole exception was lone parent households, whose victimisation rate of 10.8% was higher than that for households comprising couples with children (7.0%), persons living alone (6.2%) and couple only households (5.5%).

PERSONAL CRIME

There were 226,700 usual residents aged 15 years and over in NSW who were victims of personal crime in the 12 months to April 2006, a victimisation rate of 4.2%. This was similar to the 2004 and 2003 rates (both 4.5%). The victimisation rates for robbery (0.7%), assault (3.5%) and sexual assault (0.2%) remained relatively unchanged compared to their corresponding 2004 victimisation rates.

As with household crime, the personal crime victimisation rates were similar for both Sydney and the Balance of NSW, at 4.0% and 4.6% respectively. Persons not in the labour force had a lower victimisation rate (2.7%) than both employed persons (4.9%) and unemployed persons (7.0%). The victimisation rate for persons not in the labour force was lower than in 2004 (3.9%). The apparent difference between victimisation rates for employed and unemployed persons was not statistically significant.

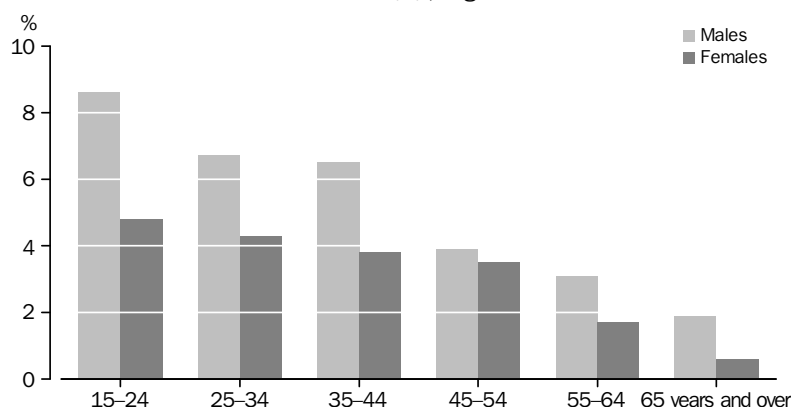
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

PERSONAL CRIME *continued*

Overall, males were more likely to be victims of personal crime than females. There were 140,300 male victims, a victimisation rate of 5.3%, and 86,400 female victims, a victimisation rate of 3.2%. In particular, the victimisation rates for males was higher than for females for 15-24 year olds and 35-44 year olds. The differences between the sexes for all the other age groupings were not statistically significant.

Although victimisation rates showed a general decline with increasing age, decreases in victimisation rates between adjacent age groups only occurred between 35-44 and 45-54 year olds for males and between 45-54 and 55-64 year olds for females. Other apparent differences were not statistically significant.

VICTIMS OF PERSONAL CRIME(a), Age and sex—2006



(a) Robbery, assault or sexual assault.

Of the 189,700 victims of assault, just under half (45%) stated that they knew their offender(s). Of the victims who knew their offender, 31% stated that the offender was a family member or a friend.

MULTIPLE VICTIMS

Of those households which experienced household crime, 29% were victims on more than one occasion within the 12 month reference period. For the individual household offence types, attempted break and enter had the highest proportion of multiple victims (30%), followed by break and enter (19%) and motor vehicle theft (4%).

Of those persons who were victims of personal crime, 46% experienced more than one incident in the 12 month reference period. The proportion of multiple victims was higher for victims of assault at 50%, compared to 21% for victims of robbery.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

REPORTING TO POLICE

The reporting of incidents to the police varied according to the type of offence. For household crime, the proportion of victims reporting the most recent incident to police was considerably higher for break and enter (72%) than for attempted break and enter (22%).

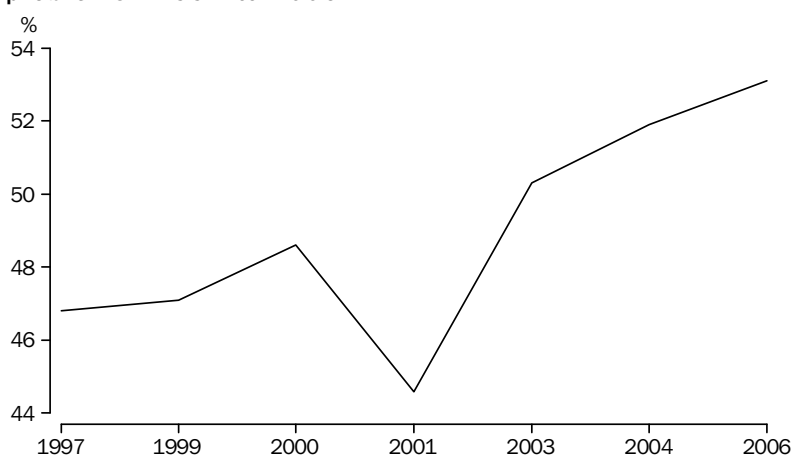
For personal crime, the most recent incident was reported to the police by 41% of robbery victims, compared to 33% of assault victims. However, the difference between these two reporting rates was not statistically significant.

There were no significant differences in reporting rates for any individual household or personal offence types compared to 2004.

PERCEPTION OF CRIME/PUBLIC NUISANCE

In 2006, an estimated 53% of persons did not think there were any crime or public nuisance problems in their neighbourhood. This was an increase on the 52% of persons who did not perceive any problems in 2004. The percentage of persons who did not perceive any problems from crime or public nuisance in their neighbourhoods has been increasing every survey year since 2001.

PERCEPTION OF CRIME/PUBLIC NUISANCE PROBLEMS: **No perceived problems**—1997 to 2006



The main perceived crime or public nuisance problems reported were dangerous/noisy driving and housebreaking/burglaries/theft from homes, with 9.3% and 9.1% of persons respectively identifying one of these as the main problem in their neighbourhood. The next most common perceived problem was vandalism/graffiti/damage to property (8.6%), followed by louts/youth gangs (6.7%).

VICTIMS AND NON-VICTIMS OF CRIME, Type of offence

Type of offence	2006		VICTIMISATION RATE(a)			
	Victims	Non-victims	2001	2003	2004	2006
	'000	'000	%	%	%	%
Households						
Break and enter	92.3	2 553.4	6.3	5.1	(b)3.8	3.5
Attempted break and enter	81.1	2 564.6	(c)4.4	(d)3.9	(b)3.2	3.1
Break and enter or attempted break and enter(e)	157.1	2 488.6	9.6	8.2	(b)6.3	5.9
Motor vehicle theft	26.2	2 619.4	2.4	(d)1.5	(b)1.2	1.0
Total households(e)	181.1	2 464.6	11.4	9.4	(b) 7.4	6.8
Persons						
Robbery	38.8	5 350.0	(c)1.0	(d)(b)0.8	(b)0.7	0.7
Assault	189.7	5 199.0	(d)4.2	(d)(b)3.5	(b)3.8	3.5
Sexual assault(f)	*6.4	2 580.0	(c)(d)(b)0.5	*(d)(b)0.5	*(b)0.4	*0.2
Total persons(e)	226.7	5 162.1	5.1	(d)(b) 4.5	(b) 4.5	4.2

* estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

(a) Proportion of total households/persons.

(b) Difference from 2006 rate is not statistically significant. See Technical Note.

(c) Difference from 2003 rate is not statistically significant. See Technical Note.

(d) Difference from 2004 rate is not statistically significant. See Technical Note.

(e) Figures for individual offence types do not sum to totals, as a household or person could be a victim of more than one type of offence.

(f) Sexual assault questions were asked only of females aged 18 years and over.

VICTIMS AND NON-VICTIMS OF HOUSEHOLD CRIME(a), Selected characteristics

Selected characteristics	2006			VICTIMISATION RATE(b)	
	Victims	Non-victims	Total	2004	2006
	'000	'000	'000	%	%
Major statistical region					
Sydney	113.2	1 512.4	1 625.6	(c) 7.4	7.0
Balance of NSW	67.8	952.2	1 020.1	(c) 7.5	6.7
Household Type					
Couple with child(ren)	56.6	756.5	813.0	(c) 6.3	7.0
Couple only	35.1	598.1	633.2	(c) 5.9	5.5
Lone parent	25.7	211.5	237.1	(c) 11.4	10.8
Person living alone	41.5	632.0	673.6	(c) 7.8	6.2
Other	22.2	266.5	288.7	(c) 9.7	7.7
Total	181.1	2 464.6	2 645.7	(c) 7.4	6.8

(a) Break and enter, attempted break and enter, or motor vehicle theft.

(b) Proportion of total households.

(c) Difference from 2006 rate is not statistically significant. See Technical Note.

VICTIMS AND NON-VICTIMS OF PERSONAL CRIME(a), Sex by age

Age group (years)	2006			VICTIMISATION RATE(b)	
	Victims	Non-victims	Total	2004	2006
	'000	'000	'000	%	%
MALES					
15-24	39.8	421.7	461.5	(c) 9.6	8.6
25-34	31.8	444.0	475.8	(c) 8.0	6.7
35-44	31.9	459.9	491.8	(c) 5.7	6.5
45-54	17.9	441.6	459.5	(c) 3.6	3.9
55-64	11.5	360.1	371.6	(c) 3.6	3.1
65 and over	* 7.4	395.5	403.0	* (c) 1.3	* 1.8
Total males	140.3	2 522.8	2 663.1	(c) 5.5	5.3
FEMALES					
15-24	21.4	421.7	443.1	(c) 4.2	4.8
25-34	20.6	457.2	477.8	(c) 5.8	4.3
35-44	19.0	476.4	495.4	(c) 4.1	3.8
45-54	16.4	449.4	465.8	(c) 3.0	3.5
55-64	* 6.1	363.6	369.7	* (c) 2.0	* 1.6
65 and over	* 2.9	470.9	473.9	* (c) 0.7	* 0.6
Total females	86.4	2 639.3	2 725.7	(c) 3.4	3.2
PERSONS					
15-24	61.2	843.3	904.6	(c) 6.9	6.8
25-34	52.4	901.3	953.6	(c) 6.9	5.5
35-44	50.9	936.3	987.2	(c) 4.9	5.2
45-54	34.2	891.0	925.2	(c) 3.3	3.7
55-64	17.6	723.7	741.3	(c) 2.8	2.4
65 and over	* 10.4	866.5	876.9	* (c) 1.0	* 1.2
Total persons	226.7	5 162.1	5 388.8	(c) 4.5	4.2

* estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

(a) Robbery, assault or sexual assault.

(b) Proportion of total persons.

(c) Difference from 2006 rate is not statistically significant. See Technical Note.

VICTIMS AND NON-VICTIMS OF PERSONAL CRIME(a), Selected characteristics

Selected characteristics	2006			VICTIMISATION RATE(b)	
	Victims	Non-victims	Total	2004	2006
	'000	'000	'000	%	%
Major statistical region					
Sydney	135.2	3 268.7	3 403.8	(c)4.5	4.0
Balance of NSW	91.5	1 893.4	1 985.0	(c)4.4	4.6
Labour force status					
Employed	162.7	3 154.4	3 317.0	(c)4.6	4.9
Unemployed	13.7	180.2	193.8	(c)7.6	7.0
Not in the labour force	50.4	1 827.5	1 877.9	3.9	2.7
Total	226.7	5 162.1	5 388.8	(c)4.5	4.2

(a) Robbery, assault or sexual assault.

(b) Proportion of total persons.

(c) Difference from 2006 rate is not statistically significant. See Technical Note.

VICTIMS OF CRIME, Number of incidents experienced by type of offence

Type of offence	One	Two	Three or more	Total	One	Two	Three or more
	'000	'000	'000	'000	%	%	%
Households							
Break and enter	74.8	13.0	*4.5	92.3	81.0	14.1	*4.9
Attempted break and enter	56.6	17.7	*6.8	81.1	69.8	21.8	*8.4
Break and enter or attempted break and enter(a)	106.5	37.3	13.3	157.1	67.8	23.7	8.5
Motor vehicle theft	25.2	np	np	26.2	96.0	np	np
Total household victims(a)	127.7	40.0	13.3	181.1	70.5	22.1	7.3
Persons							
Robbery	30.7	**2.5	*5.6	38.8	79.3	**6.4	*14.4
Assault	94.8	39.7	55.3	189.7	50.0	20.9	29.1
Sexual assault(b)	*4.1	np	np	*6.4	*63.7	np	np
Total person victims(a)	123.2	43.0	60.6	226.7	54.3	19.0	26.7

* estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

** estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use

np not available for publication but included in totals where applicable, unless otherwise indicated

(a) Figures for individual offence types do not sum to totals, as a household or person could be a victim of more than one type of offence.

(b) Sexual assault questions were asked only of females aged 18 years and over.

VICTIMS OF CRIME, Whether police told about most recent incident by type of offence

Type of offence	2006		POLICE TOLD(a)			
	Police told	Police not told	2001	2003	2004	2006
	'000	'000	%	%	%	%
Households						
Break and enter	66.0	26.3	(b)(c)(d) 73.1	(c)(d) 72.2	(d) 66.7	71.5
Attempted break and enter	18.0	63.1	(b)(c)(d) 32.2	(c)(d) 28.1	(d) 25.1	22.2
Motor vehicle theft	np	np	(b)(c)(d) 95.3	(c)(d) 93.8	(d) 90.5	np
Persons						
Robbery	16.0	22.8	(b)(c)(d) 38.6	(c)(d) 52.9	(d) 38.0	41.2
Assault	62.2	127.5	(c)(d) 29.8	(c)(d) 39.0	(d) 36.0	32.8
Sexual Assault(e)	np	np	*(b) 16.1	**21.0	np	np

* estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

** estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use

np not available for publication but included in totals where applicable, unless otherwise indicated

(a) Proportion of total household/person victims.

(b) Difference from 2003 rate is not statistically significant. See Technical Note.

(c) Difference from 2004 rate is not statistically significant. See Technical Note.

(d) Difference from 2006 rate is not statistically significant. See Technical Note.

(e) Sexual assault question were asked only of females aged 18 years and over.

VICTIMS OF ASSAULT, Whether offender known in most recent incident

<i>Whether offender known</i>	<i>'000</i>	<i>%</i>
.....		
Offender known		
Family member(a)	17.4	9.2
Friend(b)	*9.3	*4.9
Work/study colleague	*9.1	*4.8
Acquaintance	14.8	7.8
Neighbour	12.3	6.5
Other(c)	25.4	13.4
<i>Total offender known(d)</i>	<i>86.2</i>	<i>45.4</i>
Offender not known(e)	103.6	54.6
Total assault victims	189.7	100.0

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- * estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution
- (a) Includes ex-partner.
- (b) Includes (ex)girlfriend/(ex)boyfriend and other known person.
- (c) Includes offenders not known personally (e.g. recognised by role/uniform or known through professional association).
- (d) Figures for individual categories do not sum to totals in this row, as an individual could be assaulted by more than one person in the most recent assault.
- (e) Includes where respondent answered 'Don't know'.

PERSONS, Whether perceived a crime or public nuisance problem in their neighbourhood

Whether perceived crime or public nuisance problems	2006 '000	1997 %	1999 %	2000 %	2001 %	2003 %	2004 %	2006 %
Perceived problem(s)	2 527.7	(a) 53.2	52.9	51.4	55.4	49.7	48.1	46.9
No perceived problem(s)	2 861.1	(a) 46.8	47.1	48.6	44.6	50.3	51.9	53.1
Total persons	5 388.8	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Difference from 1999 rate is not statistically significant. See Technical Note.

PERSONS WHO PERCEIVED A CRIME OR PUBLIC NUISANCE PROBLEM, Type of problem

	Perceived to be a problem (a) (b)		Perceived to be the main problem (b)	
	'000	%	'000	%
Perceived problem(s)				
Dangerous/noisy driving	1 553.8	28.8	499.8	9.3
Housebreaking/burglaries/theft from homes	1 250.8	23.2	491.0	9.1
Vandalism/graffiti/damage to property	1 434.5	26.6	460.9	8.6
Louts/youth gangs	1 179.5	21.9	363.5	6.7
Drunkenness	1 014.0	18.8	231.5	4.3
Illegal drugs	758.5	14.1	160.9	3.0
Car theft	727.2	13.5	95.0	1.8
Problems with neighbours/domestic problems	427.4	7.9	80.5	1.5
Prowlers/loiterers	443.9	8.2	47.7	0.9
Other theft	485.1	9.0	42.2	0.8
Other assault	285.0	5.3	17.9	0.3
Sexual assault	159.8	3.0	9.9	0.2
Other	67.7	1.3	26.7	0.5
Total	2 527.7	46.9

NUMBER ('000)

Total persons	5 388.8	. .
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. . not applicable

(a) Figures in these columns do not sum to the total for all persons, as a person could nominate more than one problem.

(b) Percentages (%) are calculated as a proportion of total persons.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

- 1** This publication summarises results from the 2006 New South Wales (NSW) Crime and Safety Survey.
- 2** The survey was conducted during the two weeks commencing Monday 10 April 2006 as a supplement to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Monthly Population Survey (MPS). It was conducted and funded at the request of NSW Police and the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.
- 3** Information was sought from approximately 12,200 persons, of whom about 9,600 (79%) responded. Data pertaining to households was sought from approximately 6,000 households and about 4,800 (79%) replied.
- 4** Examination of successive waves of responses did not indicate any significant non-response bias. Estimation procedures were employed to reduce the effect of non-response.
- 5** For details of the design, scope and coverage of the MPS, reader should refer to *Information Paper: Labour Force Survey Sample Design, 2002* (cat. no. 6269.0), and any recent edition of the monthly ABS publication, *Labour Force, Australia* (cat. no. 6202.0).

SCOPE

- 6** The survey was conducted using seven-eighths of the full sample of private dwellings in the MPS. It excluded:
 - persons aged less than 15 years
 - members of the permanent defence forces
 - certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from censuses and surveys
 - overseas residents in Australia
 - members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependents) stationed in Australia
 - private dwellings containing visitors only
 - residents of non-private dwellings such as hospitals, motels and prisons.
- 7** The survey was conducted in both urban and rural areas throughout NSW, but excluded persons living in very remote parts of NSW who would have otherwise been within the scope of the survey. The exclusion of these persons had only a minor impact on any aggregate estimates.

COVERAGE

- 8** Coverage rules were applied to ensure that each person was associated with only one dwelling, and hence had only one chance of selection in the survey.

DATA COLLECTION

- 9** Crime and safety questionnaires were mailed out to households who were included in the MPS. The questionnaires were completed by household members and returned to the ABS by mail. Each household received:
 - one questionnaire containing questions relating to the household as a whole
 - a questionnaire for each person aged 15 years or over relating to their personal experiences of crime
 - a questionnaire for each female aged 18 years or over relating to their personal experiences of sexual assault only.
- 10** There were two rounds of mail-out reminders for non-responding households, followed by a telephone follow-up interview for a proportion of the remaining non-responding households.

COMPARISON WITH OTHER ABS SURVEYS

- 11** There are different crime statistics collections and these can yield differing results. Caution should be taken in comparisons across other ABS surveys that address crime and justice issues. An *Information Paper: Measuring Crime Victimisation, Australia: The Impact of Different Collection Methodologies, Australia* (cat. no. 4522.0.55.001) is available. This paper aims to increase community understanding of the nature of crime measurement in Australia, and why the findings from different data sources may differ.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

COMPARISON WITH POLICE STATISTICS

12 The terms used for the offences (such as robbery, assault) may not necessarily correspond with the legal or police definitions which are used for each offence. This is because responses obtained in this survey are based on the respondent's perception of their having been the victim of an offence. The definitions of these terms which are used in this survey are based on the wording of the questions asked of the respondent, and can be found in the Glossary of this publication.

BREAK IN TIME SERIES

13 Additional questions about robbery incidents were included in the 1999 and subsequent NSW Crime and Safety Surveys. This has made it possible to collect robbery data that aligns more closely with data collected from the 1998, 2002 and 2005 National Crime and Safety Surveys. This change has caused a break in the time series for robbery estimates published from the NSW Crime and Safety Surveys conducted in 1997 and earlier years. The definition of robbery for the statistics included in this publication can be found in the Glossary. Comparisons with results from the 1998, 2002 and 2005 National Crime and Safety Surveys for all offences should be undertaken with caution. Differences in question wording and processing procedures mean that survey estimates are not directly comparable.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

14 ABS publications draw extensively on information provided freely by individuals, businesses, government and other organisations. Their continued cooperation is very much appreciated, for without it the wide range of statistics published by the ABS would not be available. Information received by the ABS is treated in strict confidence as required by the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

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

Australian Standard Offence Classification, 1997, cat. no. 1234.0
Crime and Safety, Australia, April 2005, cat. no. 4509.0
Crime and Safety, New South Wales, April 2004, cat. no. 4509.1
Crime and Safety, Queensland, April 1995, cat. no. 4509.3
Crime and Safety, South Australia, October 2000, cat. no. 4509.4
Crime and Safety, Victoria, April 1995, cat. no. 4509.2
General Social Survey, Australia, 2002, cat. no. 4159.0
Information Paper: National Information Development Plan for Crime and Justice, 2005, cat. no. 4520.0
Personal Safety, Australia, 2005, cat. no. 4906.0
Recorded Crime - Victims, Australia, 2005, cat. no. 4510.0
Western Australian Statistical Indicators, March 2001, cat. no. 1367.5.

16 Current publications and other products released by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products* (cat. no. 1101.0). The Catalogue is available from the ABS website <<http://www.abs.gov.au>>. The ABS also issues a daily Release Advice on the web site which details products to be released in the week ahead.

APPENDIX DATA AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

DATA AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

In addition to the statistics provided in this publication, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) can produce upon request customised tables to meet special data requirements. Inquiries should be made to the contact person shown on the front of this publication. Information collected in the survey included:

- Types of offences:
 - For break and enter, attempted break and enter, motor vehicle theft, robbery, assault and sexual assault:
 - whether an incident occurred in the last 12 months
 - number of incidents in the last 12 months
 - number of incidents reported to the police
 - whether the most recent incident was reported to police
 - the main reason why the most recent incident was not reported to the police.
 - For break and enter and attempted break and enter:
 - where the most recent incident occurred (previous or current address).
 - For break and enter:
 - what the offender did in the most recent incident.
 - For robbery, assault and sexual assault:
 - location of the most recent incident
 - whether a weapon was used
 - occurrence of physical injury
 - number of offenders
 - whether the offender(s) were known to the victim
 - how the offender(s) were known to the victim.
 - For robbery:
 - what happened in the most recent incident
 - whether anything was stolen in the most recent incident
 - what was stolen in the most recent incident.
- Perceived crime or public nuisance problems.

Data can be classified by the following variables:

- Age
- Sex
- Marital status
- Labour force status
- Household type
- Country of birth
- Year of arrival in Australia
- Labour force region.

TECHNICAL NOTE SAMPLING VARIABILITY

ESTIMATION PROCEDURE

1 Estimates derived from this survey were obtained in two stages. In the first stage the effects of non-response were investigated by analysing the demographic composition of the Monthly Population Survey sample and response patterns to the Crime and Safety Survey after reminder action had been undertaken. This information was used to determine the appropriate adjustment procedure for non-response.

2 The second stage was a complex ratio estimation procedure. This procedure ensured that the survey estimates for persons conformed to independent estimates of the population, commonly referred to as 'benchmarks', rather than to the distribution of demographic characteristics among the survey respondents. These benchmarks consist of population estimates by age, sex, and part of state. A similar procedure also ensured that household estimates conformed to independent estimates of households by number of adults, number of children in the household and part of state.

3 Since the 2004 Crime and Safety Survey, the process for producing household benchmarks has been revised. A paper describing these changes in detail is currently being developed and is due for release in early 2007 (cat. no. 3107.0.55.007).

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

Non-sampling errors

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

5 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.

6 It is difficult to measure the size of the non-sampling errors. The extent of these errors could vary considerably from survey to survey and from question to question. Every effort is made to minimise reporting error by the careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of staff, and efficient data processing procedures.

Sampling errors

7 Sampling errors are the errors which occur by chance because the data was obtained from a sample, rather than from the entire population.

ESTIMATES OF SAMPLING ERRORS

8 One measure of the variability of estimates which occurs as a result of surveying only a sample of the population is the standard error (see table on page 18).

9 There are about 2 chances in 3 (67%) that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the number that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included, and about 19 chances in 20 (95%) that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

10 Linear interpolation is used to calculate the standard error of estimates falling between the sizes of estimates listed in the table.

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

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

12 An example of the calculation and use of standard errors for estimates of households follows. Table 1 shows that the estimated number of households in NSW that have been a victim of motor vehicle theft is 26,200. Since the estimate is between 20,000 and 30,000 the standard error (as shown in the table on page 18) will be between 3,650 and 4,316 and can be approximated as 4,100 (by linear interpolation). Thus there are about 2 chances in 3 that the value that would have been obtained, had all dwellings

ESTIMATES OF SAMPLING ERRORS *continued*

been included in the survey, lies between 22,100 and 30,300. Similarly, there are about 19 chances in 20 that the value lies between 18,000 and 34,400.

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

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

14 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 a larger RSE have been included, preceded by * (RSE between 25% and 50%) or ** (RSE greater than 50%) to indicate that they are subject to high standard errors and should be used with caution.

STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATES OF HOUSEHOLDS AND PERSONS—APRIL 2006

Size of estimate	Standard error	Relative standard error
(households and persons)	no.	%
1 000	732	73.2
1 500	944	63.0
2 000	1 124	56.2
2 500	1 281	51.2
3 000	1 422	47.4
3 500	1 550	44.3
4 000	1 668	41.7
5 000	1 880	37.6
8 000	2 391	29.9
10 000	2 665	26.7
20 000	3 650	18.2
30 000	4 316	14.4
50 000	5 243	10.5
100 000	6 625	6.6
200 000	8 086	4.0
300 000	8 941	3.0
500 000	9 978	2.0
1 000 000	11 238	1.1
2 000 000	12 225	0.6
3 000 000	12 637	0.4
4 000 000	12 846	0.3

STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE TESTING

15 Where differences between data items have been noted in the Summary of Findings, they are statistically significant unless otherwise specified. In this publication a statistically significant difference is one where there are 19 chances in 20 that the difference noted reflects a true difference between population groups of interest rather than being the result of sampling variability.

16 In tables 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8 of this publication, apparent changes in results between the 2006 survey and previous NSW Crime and Safety surveys have been tested to determine whether the changes are statistically significant. That is, to determine whether it is likely that the differences observed in sample estimates indicate real differences in the population. In these tables, cells which have not changed significantly over time are indicated. In other tables, which do not show the results of significance testing, users should take account of RSEs when comparing estimates for different populations.

GLOSSARY

Assault	An incident, other than a robbery, where the respondent was physically attacked or threatened with force or violence.
Attempted break and enter	An incident where an attempt was made to break into the respondent's home, garage or shed.
Break and enter	An incident where the respondent's home was broken into. The respondent's home was also defined to include their garage or shed. Break and enter offences relating to their car or garden were excluded.
Crime or public nuisance problems	Anything perceived by the respondent to be a problem arising from crime or people creating a public nuisance.
Family member	Includes Partner, Parent, Sibling, Child of victim, Other family member, Ex-partner and Family member (not further specified).
Friend	Includes Girlfriend/boyfriend, Ex-girlfriend/ex-boyfriend, Other friend and Other known person (not further specified).
Household	A group of persons resident in a private dwelling who share common facilities and meals and 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.
Household crime	Specifically, a break and enter, attempted break and enter or motor vehicle theft, in which a household is considered to be the victim of the crime.
Incident	A single occurrence of a crime event, such as a break and enter, an attempted break and enter, the theft of a motor vehicle, or an act of robbery, assault or sexual assault.
Motor vehicle theft	An incident where a motor vehicle was stolen from any member of the household. It includes privately owned motor vehicles as well as business/company vehicles used exclusively by any members of the household. A motor vehicle includes cars, motorbikes and trucks. Caravans, trailers and floats were excluded.
Neighbourhood	The definition of this term was left to the interpretation of the respondent.
Offence	A crime committed against either a person or a household.
Personal crime	Specifically, a robbery, assault or sexual assault, in which an individual is considered to be the victim of the crime.
Robbery	An incident where someone stole (or tried to steal) property from the respondent by physically attacking them or threatening them with force or violence.
Sexual assault	An incident of a sexual nature involving physical contact, including rape, attempted rape, indecent assault, and assault with the intent to sexually assault. Sexual harassment (that did not lead to an sexual assault) was excluded. Only females aged 18 years and over were specifically asked questions about sexual assault in a separate questionnaire.
Victim	A household or person reporting at least one of the offences surveyed. Victims were counted once only for each type of offence, regardless of the number of incidents of that type.
Victimisation rate	The total number of victims of an offence in a given population expressed as a percentage of that population.

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