

WOMEN'S SAFETY AUSTRALIA: USER GUIDE 1996

W. McLennan
Australian Statistician

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND TO THE SURVEY

The Women's Safety Survey was conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) from February to April 1996. The survey provides information on women's safety at home and in the community and, in particular, on the nature and extent of violence against women in Australia. It collected information about experiences of physical and sexual violence which could have led to prosecution as a crime under State and Territory laws. Key findings from the survey are presented in *Women's Safety, Australia, 1996* (ABS catalogue number 4128.0).

While limited in focus to women's experience of violence (those aged 18 years and over) as opposed to that of children and men or other specific groups known to be at risk of violence, the survey did collect information about experiences of violence in which a male or female perpetrator was involved. As well as examining incidents of violence against women, the survey collected information on abuse, harassment, and women's feelings of safety within the home and the community.

The survey was funded by the Office of the Status of Women (OSW) and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services, both of which have responsibility for developing and implementing policies relating to women.

A Survey Reference Group, comprising experts in the field of crime and violence against women, provided the ABS with advice on the information to be collected and on some aspects of survey methodology. Members of the group included representatives from State and Commonwealth health departments, crime research agencies, women's services providers, women's health research organisations, academics and OSW.

METHODOLOGY

The ABS was responsible for the development and conduct of the survey. As for all ABS surveys, extensive testing was carried out to ensure that the survey would collect objective and high quality data.

The survey was conducted under the authority of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. Women were advised they were not obliged to participate. A response rate of 78% was achieved, with about 6,300 women completing the survey questionnaire nationally.

Standard ABS interviewing techniques were used and due to the sensitive nature of the information being collected, special procedures were introduced to ensure the safety of the women participating and the reliability of the data provided. It was a requirement of the survey that all interviews were conducted in private, ensuring that other members of the household were not aware of the survey content or the responses given.

Only female interviewers from the ABS panel of household survey interviewers were used, and in addition to the standard training on survey content and procedures, special training was provided to enable interviewers to deal with issues associated with violence against women.

USING THIS PUBLICATION

Appropriate use and interpretation of the Women's Safety Survey results relies on a knowledge of what information was collected, how it was collected and how the information was used to produce final estimates. This User Guide covers these topics in four chapters: survey content; survey methodology; data processing; and interpretation of results. Appendix 1 includes a comprehensive list of the data items available from the survey and Appendix 2 contains a copy of the survey questionnaire.

CHAPTER 2

SURVEY CONTENT

INFORMATION COLLECTED

The content of the survey was determined through consultation with key users, who were represented on a Survey Reference Group. Interview questions and response categories were refined through field tests to ensure they could be clearly understood by respondents and that they would produce statistically valid results.

Further information about the content of the survey can be obtained by referring to the list of available data items in Appendix 1 (p. 24) and by reference to the survey questionnaire in Appendix 2 (p. 39). However, as many data items available from the survey are derived from responses to a number of survey questions, the questionnaire alone does not provide a guide to how published data items were obtained. The definitions used in the survey, as set out in the Glossary (p. 91), are based on both the questionnaire and the interviewers instructions.

Physical and sexual violence

All women were asked if they had experienced physical or sexual violence by each type of perpetrator (current partner, previous partner, boyfriend or date, other known man or woman and stranger). If they had, they were asked when the last incident by each type of perpetrator occurred. More detailed information was then collected about the last incident of physical violence and/or sexual assault by a man and/or a woman, irrespective of how the perpetrator was known to them (see measures used, p. 6). The information collected included:

- location (male and female perpetrator);
- injuries sustained and consultation with doctor (male and female perpetrator);
- police contact (male perpetrator);
- advice sought from professionals, help sought from service providers and discussion with family and friends (male perpetrator);
- reasons for not contacting the police or service providers (male perpetrator);
- time off work and change in day-to-day activities during the 12 months after the incident (male and female perpetrator);
- fear for personal safety as a result of the incident (male and female perpetrator); and
- involvement of alcohol (male perpetrator).

Male partner violence

Additional information was collected from women who experienced violence by a male partner. If a woman experienced violence by both a current and a previous partner, this information was collected about both partners. For women who experienced violence by more than one previous partner, it was collected about the last partner who was violent. Information collected included:

- frequency of violence;
- violence during pregnancy and separation;
- children witnessing violence;

- patterns of separation; and
- whether living in fear due to the violence.

During field testing, women who had experienced violence by a male partner were uncomfortable answering the question about where the violence had taken place, as most violence occurred in their home and the question seemed self evident to them. As a result, information about the location of violence was not collected if the last incident was by a male partner the woman was living with at the time of the incident.

The fear that women may experience after a violent incident by a partner they are living with could be different to the fear experienced after an incident perpetrated by someone who she is not intimately involved with, or who she does not know. To reflect this, women who experienced violence by a male partner were asked if they lived in fear due to the violence. As well as fear for their personal safety, this incorporates the fear a woman may have experienced as a result of living with the perpetrator of that violence, such as, fear of leaving the house, fear of men in general and fear for her children's safety.

Stalking by a man

All women were asked whether they had been stalked by a man. Information collected about the last incident of stalking included:

- the nature of the stalking e.g. type of stalking activity, when it began, whether it had stopped, how the perpetrator was known to them;
- police contact;
- reasons for not contacting the police;
- time off work and change in day-to-day activities during the 12 months after the incident; and
- fear for personal safety as a result of the stalking.

General safety and harassment

All women were asked about their feelings of safety when alone in selected situations, such as using and waiting for public transport after dark, walking in their local area after dark and when home in the evening or night.

They were also asked about their experience of various forms of harassment including whether they had received an obscene telephone call, experienced a man indecently exposing himself, received unwanted comments about her body or sex life from a man, or experienced unwanted sexual touching by a man.

Experience of emotional abuse

This information was only collected from women who were currently married or in a de facto relationship with a man.

The questions sought to determine if a woman had experienced manipulation, isolation or intimidation by a current male partner. Time constraints did not allow for the inclusion of a detailed definition of each type of abuse in the questionnaire but definitions were provided in the interviewer's instructions to assist respondents who had difficulty interpreting the questions.

Experience of child abuse

All women were asked if they had experienced physical or sexual abuse before the age of 15.

The purpose of including questions about women's experience of physical and sexual abuse when a child was not to measure the extent of child abuse (in order to do this a separate survey would be required). The aim of including these questions was to provide background information about women's experiences and to allow for investigation of the relationship between childhood abuse and experiences of violence as an adult.

Care should be taken when using these items as they were not collected using detailed questioning. The experience of physical abuse as a child is particularly difficult to measure, given changes in what is generally perceived as acceptable behaviour toward children, particularly in relation to discipline. For example, while caning was practiced at schools in the past, this is no longer an acceptable practice. In order to minimise the level of interpretation by respondents, a definition of physical abuse was included in the survey question. However, in the end, the response given by women would reflect their interpretation of the question and what constitutes physical abuse.

Socio-demographic information

This information was collected about the woman and where applicable, her male partner. The latter was provided by the respondent. Information collected included:

- educational attainment;
- employment status;
- income; and
- birthplace (including birthplace of the woman's mother and father).

SURVEY DEFINITIONS

In developing the concepts and definitions used in the survey, the ABS was conscious that there are no generally agreed or accepted standards for defining what constitutes violence. Assistance was therefore sought from a Survey Reference Group, which included members with legal and crime research backgrounds. The definitions used were based on actions which would be considered offences under State and Territory criminal law. For example, physical violence was defined as the occurrence, attempt or threat of physical assault, where physical assault was the use of physical force with the intent to harm or frighten. The definitions of violence are set out in more detail in the Glossary (p. 91). While, inevitably, the incidents of violence reported by women reflected their perceptions of the concepts and definitions used, the incidents reported were judged as significant by the respondent.

Consideration was given as to whether unwanted sexual touching and/or emotional abuse should be included in the definition of violence. It was decided to exclude them from the definition of violence because of the high degree of subjectivity associated with measuring these concepts, and because although some forms of unwanted sexual touching may in fact constitute a criminal offence, many would not. In this way the definition of sexual violence was limited to more serious incidents.

In defining physical and sexual violence, threats and attempts of assault were treated differently. For physical violence, threats and attempts were combined and physical assault was collected separately (by a range of types of assault). For sexual violence,

sexual assault included attempts, while information about threats was collected separately. As a result, detailed information collected about the last incident differs for physical and sexual violence. The last incident of physical violence includes attempts, threats and actual physical assaults. However, for sexual violence, detailed information is collected only for sexual assault. For threats of sexual assault, the only additional information (other than when the last incident by each perpetrator type occurred) collected is fear for personal safety as a result of the last incident.

Physical violence was classified according to a range of types of violence, such as kicking, biting, punching, shooting and stabbing and threats or attempts to physically hurt. A similar approach could have been taken for sexual violence, however, it was not considered feasible to ask women to discuss the specific sexual actions they had experienced.

MEASURES USED

Due to constraints on the length of the interview and the load on respondents, it was not possible to collect detailed information about each incident of violence experienced. Instead, detailed information was collected about the last incident of both physical violence and sexual assault. Using the last incident was a method of selecting a sample of incidents. Various approaches can be used to measure patterns of violence. For example, women could be asked to provide information about the most serious incident experienced. However, women may have different perceptions of what constitutes the most serious incident, based for example, on whether they were injured, if the incident involved an assault rather than a threat, or depending on who perpetrated the incident. In order to overcome this subjectivity, women who experienced violence were asked to focus on the most recent incident and provide more detailed information about that incident. If the last incident occurred more than 20 years ago, detailed information was not collected due to difficulties associated with recalling the incident.

A different method of selecting the last incident was used for male and female perpetrators. While information was collected on the last incident of both physical violence and sexual assault by male perpetrators, such information was collected only for the last incident of either physical violence or sexual assault by female perpetrators. Testing showed that the level of sexual violence perpetrated by women was small (the survey results support this) and due to the size constraints of the overall questionnaire, it was not practical to include a set of information which would not allow for detailed analysis.

While information was collected about women's experience of violence by each type of perpetrator, the survey did not collect the actual number of violent incidents women experienced. It also cannot provide information about repeat victimisation, that is, the number of incidents a woman experienced by the same perpetrator. Women who experienced violence by a male partner were asked if they had experienced violence on more than once occasion, however, this question was not asked of women who reported incidents by a boyfriend or date or another man who they knew (such as a family member or friend).

In *Women's Safety, Australia* (4128.0) most results are expressed as percentages or prevalence rates. Percentages indicate the distribution of events or characteristics among the population of interest, such as, the proportion of women who experienced violence in various locations. It is possible that women may be present in more than one category

of the distribution. This occurs when women have experienced violence by more than one type of perpetrator, or when data items allow for more than one response category. The data item listing in Appendix 1 (p. 24) indicates items where more than one response can be given, for example, type of physical violence experienced. In these cases, the components when added, will be greater than 100%.

Prevalence rates measure the number of women per 100 in the relevant population who experienced a violent incident, or who reported the incident to the police. They indicate the likelihood a group of women had of experiencing certain types of violence or reporting incidents to the police within a selected reference period. There are two main reference periods reported in the publication, the 12 months prior to the survey and since the age of 15. The former is used to measure current levels of violence in Australia, while the latter shows women's experience of violence as an adult.

It is important to note that some prevalence rates are based on information about the last incident of violence experienced by women. For example, if a woman experienced more than one incident of physical violence, information about the type of physical violence and whether the incident was reported to the police was only collected in relation to the last incident. As a result, the rates will not reflect the total prevalence of different events, and in general will understate the occurrence of particular events.

When interpreting the results presented in *Women's Safety, Australia* (4128.0), reference should be made to the title of each table to determine the reference period and whether the data relates to experiences of violence since the age of 15 or the last incident.

CHAPTER 3

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

SAMPLE DESIGN

Decisions on the appropriate sample size, distribution and method of selection are dependent on a number of considerations. These include the aims and content of the survey, the level of disaggregation and accuracy at which the survey estimates are required and the costs and operational constraints of conducting the survey.

The aim of the Women's Safety Survey was to provide national estimates of the nature and extent of violence experienced by women. In meeting this aim, a balance had to be maintained between obtaining a sample size which allowed for the level of analysis required, the overall cost of the survey and the fact that this was the first time the survey had been conducted. Due to the need for specific training and support for interviewers enumerating the survey, the size of the sample selected in rural and remote areas was reduced. The use of differential weighting ensured that the sample was fully representative of the Australian population. Approximately 6,300 women, in both metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas, were interviewed. In general, the survey does not support reliable estimates for the States and Territories.

SAMPLE SELECTION

The sample was drawn using multistage area sampling techniques. Each State and Territory of Australia was divided into geographic regions and then into smaller areas, known as collector's districts (CDs), the basic unit of enumeration in the population census. CDs were divided into strata according to their geographic region (metropolitan and non-metropolitan) and the required number of CDs were randomly selected.

In metropolitan areas, CDs were randomly selected from each stratum. The probability of selection was proportional to a size measure which was based on the number of dwellings within the stratum. Within each selected CD, a cluster of households were selected. The number of CDs to be selected was determined by the sample allocated to the metropolitan area in each State and Territory.

In non-metropolitan areas, an additional stage of selection was introduced to optimise the efficiency of the sample. As in the metropolitan area, a sample of CDs was initially selected with probability proportional to a size measure based on the number of dwellings. From this selection, adjacent CDs were paired. The probability of a CD pair being selected was inversely proportional to the cost of enumerating each CD (which was determined by the CDs' distance from major towns). The required CD sample in the non-metropolitan area of each State and Territory was determined, and CD pairs were selected to meet that requirement.

In both metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas, once a CD (or pair of CDs) was selected, a block of dwellings within each CD was randomly selected. From within that block, private dwellings were randomly selected using systematic sampling. Within each dwelling, one woman was selected from a list of all women who was in scope (see p. 9). If there were two or more females in scope in the dwelling, the woman whose next birthday was closest to the date of the interview was selected as the respondent.

Dwellings selected in the sample were divided into workloads. Each workload averaged 40 dwellings and was completed over a two week period. Each interviewer was responsible for approximately two workloads. The survey was enumerated over a three month period from February to April 1996.

SCOPE AND COVERAGE

Interviews were conducted with one woman aged 18 years or over who was a usual resident of the selected household. Women excluded from the survey were:

- certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from census and surveys;
- overseas residents in Australia;
- members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependants) stationed in Australia; and
- residents of special dwellings, such as hospitals, retirement villages, refuges etc.

The Women's Safety Survey cannot provide reliable information about the levels of violence experienced by Indigenous women because the number of Indigenous women in the sample was small.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Two questionnaires were developed for the 1996 Women's Safety Survey, a household form and a personal questionnaire.

The household form collected, from any responsible adult within the household, basic demographic data, such as sex, age, birthplace and details of the relationship between individuals in the household. The details provided on this form allowed the interviewer to determine if there were any women in scope and if so, to then select the woman to be interviewed.

The personal questionnaire was designed and thoroughly tested according to standard ABS procedures (Appendix 2 contains a copy of the questionnaire). Factors taken into consideration included: the length and wording of questions; the suitability of response categories; the sensitivity of the subjects and issues to be covered; the ability of women to recall events which occurred in the past; minimising and simplifying instructions; the logical sequence of the form; the physical design of the form; and the length of interviews. Careful consideration was also given to the structure of the questionnaire, so that more sensitive topics were progressively introduced.

The Statistics Canada 1993 Violence Against Women Survey provided a starting point for the development of the personal questionnaire and special survey procedures. Further input on the content of the survey came from members of the Survey Reference Group. Information was recorded in the questionnaire in a number of different ways.

- *Predetermined response categories.* This approach was used for recording answers where a limited range of responses were expected, or where the focus of interest was on a particular type of group of responses. Response categories were listed in the questionnaire and were expected to cover all given responses.
- *Responses for coding.* This method was only used for questions related to country of birth. Responses were recorded by the interviewer for subsequent coding by office staff.

- *Running prompt.* In these questions, predetermined response categories were read out to the respondent.
- *Response cards.* Printed lists covering the range of possible answers to the question were handed to the respondent who was asked to select the most relevant response.
- *Open-ended questions.* These questions were placed at the end of each section and allowed women to raise issues which had not been covered in the preceding questions. They were not coded in the survey processing.

As with all ABS surveys, the questionnaires were tested using experienced ABS interviewers and applying the procedures and methods planned for the final survey. A pilot test was conducted in Melbourne in April 1995 and a dress rehearsal was conducted in Adelaide in September 1995. In addition, to gain insight into the types of violence women experience, to ensure the questions adequately covered their experiences and to gauge their response to the survey, two focus groups were held with women who had experienced violence.

The broad aims of the testing program were to assess respondent reactions to the survey content and understanding of the issues addressed, to determine if the questionnaire design (including response categories) was appropriate and to assess the suitability and comprehensiveness of survey procedures and documentation. As a result of the testing, the questionnaire was progressively improved and the methodology and survey procedures refined.

To ensure consistency of approach, interviewers were instructed to ask the interview questions precisely as they appeared in the questionnaire.

SURVEY INTERVIEWERS

Interviewers for the survey were chosen from the panel of ABS interviewers used for household surveys. Only female interviewers were selected as it was considered that women would be more likely to provide details of their experiences of physical and sexual violence to a female interviewer than a male interviewer.

Senior and more experienced interviewers were selected for the task. Interviewers were provided with an information paper which explained the content of the survey and some of the difficulties they could encounter. Based on this, interviewers then decided whether they wanted to undertake the work.

TRAINING

Training for interviewers, which was conducted in the States, emphasised understanding of the concepts, definitions and survey procedures, in order to ensure all interviewers used a standard approach.

The training program included sessions to familiarise the interviewers with the questionnaire, procedures and administrative aspects of the survey, as well as sensitivity and awareness training. The latter session aimed to increase their understanding of issues related to violence against women. It also provided techniques to assist interviewers to deal with difficult or emotional interviews and to react professionally and appropriately to the topics addressed in the survey.

Procedures were put in place to provide support to the interviewers while they were working on the survey, including where needed, counsellors to provide stress management and coping strategies for interviewers. Interviewers were required to

contact the counsellor once during each fortnight of work. At the end of enumeration each interviewer was individually debriefed by a counsellor.

SURVEY PROCEDURES

While generally the standard ABS approach was followed, as with all surveys, there were also specific procedures applied reflecting the nature and content of the survey. The aim of these procedures was to ensure a high level of response.

The ABS considered the best method of advising respondents about their participation in the survey. It was decided that rather than sending an official letter preceding the interview, that the interviewer would explain the nature of the survey. In some cases, the interviewer provided information about the survey to the household through an introductory letter which explained the official status of the survey, what information would be collected and assured respondents of the confidentiality of data collected.

The majority of interviews were conducted face-to-face. However, the option of a telephone interview was offered to respondents who did not wish to proceed with a face-to-face interview.

Interviews were only conducted with women in private, so other household members were only aware of the general nature of the survey. Women selected in the survey were advised that they were not under any obligation to respond.

Special procedures were used to conduct interviews with selected respondents who could not speak English. In other ABS surveys, another person in the household could generally translate for the selected respondent, or a translator could be used. However, as interviewers for this survey required specialised training and because interviews had to be conducted in private, these methods were considered unsuitable. While it was not possible to provide a trained interviewer for every language spoken in households, interviews were conducted with women who spoke one of the main non-English languages. Interviews with women who spoke these languages were conducted by interviewers from the ABS panel who spoke Italian, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Mandarin and Greek and who received the full program of Women's Safety Survey training.

When an interviewer went to a household where the selected woman did not speak English, a prepared card was shown containing a brief explanation of the survey in each of the relevant languages. The card asked the woman to provide her telephone number and informed her that an interviewer would ring her. Most of the 110 foreign language interviews were conducted by telephone.

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

The ABS was particularly concerned not to upset respondents (as women were being asked to recall incidents that may have been traumatic for them), or to further endanger women currently experiencing violence. Women were first advised of the general nature of the survey and asked if they wished to proceed with the interview. If so, less sensitive questions were asked first, such as their demographic details and general safety and harassment questions. This allowed women to become comfortable with the method of questioning and also familiarised them with the survey content. At the point in the interview immediately before questions about sexual and physical violence, respondents were advised of the content of the following questions and that they were under no obligation to continue. They were again asked if they were prepared to continue

answering the questions. A small proportion of women chose not to proceed. Information about them is contained in chapter 5 (see p. 18).

For women who had experienced incidents of violence, the questions asked during the interview may have caused some emotional distress. With this in mind, the ABS provided a card to each respondent which listed selected service agencies in their State or Territory. These included agencies providing sexual assault and domestic violence services, and services for migrant and Indigenous women. This card was offered to all women at the conclusion of an interview, irrespective of whether they reported an incident of violence.

MEASURES TO MAXIMISE RESPONSE

In an ideal situation interviews would be conducted with all people selected in the sample. The ABS attempts to maximise response to avoid bias and reduce sampling variability. However, some non-response is unavoidable as people cannot always be contacted, interviewers cannot be arranged at mutually convenient times or people refuse to cooperate. Measures taken to encourage respondent cooperation and maximise response included:

- using female interviewers;
- offering a telephone interview;
- arranging foreign language interviewers;
- providing information on the broad purpose of the survey, its official nature, the confidentiality of the information collected and the legal basis for the survey;
- interviewing the respondent in private; and
- introducing the survey content progressively, including an explanation of the reasons for asking sensitive questions.

RESPONSE RATE

The Women's Safety Survey was fully completed by 6,333 women, achieving a response rate of 78% (see table 3.1). Full refusals accounted for 13% of the sample (1,038). A further 7.2% of the sample (579) were either unable to be contacted or unable to be interviewed due to language difficulties, death or illness. These non-respondents had either no, or only general information, about the content of the survey. Only 151 women (1.9% of the sample) answered some part of the personal questionnaire but subsequently chose not to continue once they had found out more about the survey. Limited information is available about the characteristics of these women (see p. 18).

Women who did not respond to any question relating to their experience of violence were treated as a part refusal and were not included in the survey estimates. For women who did not answer the income questions, responses were imputed (see p. 15) and they were treated as fully responding.

In an effort to make contact with people in the household, interviewers called at a number of different times during the day and on different days during the enumeration period. However, no contact was made with people in 296 households (3.7% of the sample).

3.1 RESPONSE RATE

	no.	%
Fully completed questionnaire	6 333	78.2
Refusal		
Full refusal	1 038	12.8
Part refusal	151	1.9
<i>Total</i>	1 189	14.7
Non-contact	296	3.7
Other non-response(a)	283	3.5
Total	8 101	100.0

(a) Includes language difficulties and death/illness.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PROCESSING

DATA PROCESSING

A combination of clerical and computer-based systems were used to process the data. Clerical edits were initially applied by interviewers to ensure the completeness and consistency of the questionnaires.

All questionnaires were checked again on receipt in the ABS office to ensure interviewer workloads were fully accounted for and that questionnaires for each household and respondent were completed. Problems with the questionnaire identified by interviewers were resolved by office staff based, where possible, on other information contained in the schedule, or by referring to the comments provided by interviewers.

Questions relating to country of birth required clerical coding. The survey questionnaire listed the nine most frequently reported countries and where applicable, interviewers marked the appropriate box. If the country was not listed, the response was written on the form and subsequently coded.

After clerical checks and coding were completed, information from the questionnaire (apart from names and addresses) was transferred to a computer data file by an optical mark recognition reader. An extensive range of computer edits were applied to each record to check that: logical sequences had been followed; nothing had been incorrectly included or excluded on the questionnaire; all necessary items were present; and that specific values lay within valid ranges.

The edits were designed to detect errors which could have occurred during data transcription, clerical coding or at the time the interviewer recorded the information. Amendments were made to records on the computer file as required.

Information from the questionnaires, other than names and addresses, was stored on a computer output file in the form of data items. In some cases, items were formed from answers to individual questions, while in other cases, data items were derived from answers to several questions.

At the completion of each stage of computer processing, frequency counts and cross-tabulations of selected data items were produced and used to check the contents of the data file. Where necessary, any errors detected in the data capture were subsequently corrected, by reference back to the questionnaire.

WEIGHTING AND ESTIMATION PROCEDURES

A ratio estimation procedure was used to produce national estimates. This procedure ensured that survey estimates conformed to the known geographic distribution of the female population by age. The survey was conducted from February to April 1996 and the age-sex-area benchmarks used were based on population estimates produced by the ABS for March 1996.

Factors or weights were added to the record of each respondent to enable the records to be aggregated to the national survey estimates. The estimation procedure is designed to adjust estimates in such a way as to reduce the non-response bias that may occur as a result of under-enumeration among a particular population sub-group. The estimates for

this survey were also weighted to account for the different partial response rates by women from different countries of birth, household types and marital status.

The weighting process took into account the different methods of selecting the sample in metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas, as well as the probability of selecting a woman in the household. This varied, according to the number of women aged 18 and over in each selected household.

INCOME IMPUTATION

The survey collected information about the woman's income and where applicable, her partner's income. If the only questions not answered in the questionnaire were related to income, then responses to these questions were imputed. Income was also imputed to an exact dollar amount in cases where the amount of income was given in a range. This was necessary to calculate couple income. The procedures involved imputing a random value within the given range, or imputing a value based on a person's principal source of income and hours worked.

The income of 1,888 women had to be imputed (30% of the sample). For most of these women (1,620), an income range had been stated. 2,150 women who were married or in a de facto relationship did not state their partner's income (51% of records where a partner's income was required). 1,670 of these women were able to state an income range for their partner. The higher level of imputation for partner's income is a result of the survey procedures, as women were always interviewed in private and were unable to consult their partner about his income.

Due to the high level of imputation and the need for more detailed analysis to assess data quality and the appropriateness of a woman's income as a reflection of her economic circumstance, income was not reported in *Women's Safety, Australia* (4128.0) and care should be taken when using income data items.

CHAPTER 5

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

FACTORS AFFECTING DATA QUALITY

Steps were taken in all aspects of the development and conduct of the survey to ensure that data collected were as accurate as possible. However, as with all surveys, information collected can be affected by various types of errors. The estimates from the survey are subject to two types of error: sampling and non-sampling error. Questions in the Women's Safety Survey related to sensitive issues and required women to recall incidents of violence which they may have never previously discussed. While special procedures were designed to increase response and disclosure (see p. 12) women may have chosen not to report incidents of violence to the interviewer.

The level of confidence in data obtained from a sample of the population can be quantified. However, errors associated with other survey processes cannot be readily measured.

SAMPLING ERRORS

Sampling error is the difference which would be expected between the estimate and the corresponding figure that would have been obtained from a collection based on the whole population, using the same questionnaires and procedures. A measure of the sampling error for a given estimate is provided by the standard error expressed as a percentage of the estimate (relative standard error). Various factors affect the size of the sampling error, including the sample design, sample size and population variability.

The sample design for the survey was selected as the most appropriate, within costs and operational constraints (see p. 8). The larger the sample on which the estimate is based, the smaller the sampling error. Population variability, or the extent to which women differed on the characteristics being measured, can also affect the sampling error. The larger the population variability of a particular characteristic, the more likely it is that the population may not be well represented by the sample, and therefore the larger the sampling error. For example, 2.6% of women who were married or in a de facto relationship (111,000) experienced violence by their partner in the previous 12 month period. An estimate of this size will not sustain detailed disaggregation as the sampling errors would be high.

STANDARD ERROR

One measure of sampling variability is the standard error. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included in the survey, and about 19 chances in 20 that the difference will be less than two standard errors. The relative standard error (RSE) is the error expressed as a percentage of the estimate to which it relates. For example, 3.5% of women with a current partner experienced physical violence by a man during the previous 12 month period. There are about two chances in three that women who had a partner and experienced physical violence by a man during the previous 12 month period is between 3.2% and 3.8%. Details of the method used to calculate standard errors and a table of standard errors and RSEs for estimates of numbers of persons are provided in the Technical Notes (p. 88).

Very small estimates generally have high relative standard errors and this makes them unsuitable for most uses. Only estimates with relative standard errors less than 25% are considered sufficiently reliable for most purposes. Estimates with relative standard errors between 25% and 50% are preceded by the symbol *. Estimates with relative standard errors greater than 50% are preceded by **, indicating that they are subject to high relative standard errors.

NON-SAMPLING ERRORS

Errors made in giving and recording information during an interview can occur regardless of whether the estimates are derived from a sample or from a complete enumeration. These response errors are referred to as non-sampling errors. Other sources of non-sampling error include: non-response bias; errors related to scope and coverage; and errors in processing.

RESPONSE ERRORS

Response errors may arise through ambiguous or misleading questions, inadequate or inconsistent definitions of terms used, or by the complexity of questionnaire sequence guides causing some questions to be missed. Thorough testing of the questionnaire aimed to minimise problems associated with content, design and layout. During testing, particular attention was given to the wording of questions and respondent interpretation of them, as well as to the interviewers instructions which support the questionnaire, to ensure that information collected fitted within the relevant definitions.

While the questionnaire was improved and streamlined through testing, the type and amount of data required from the survey, resulted in a complex questionnaire. In some cases, such as when a woman had experienced incidents of violence by a number of different perpetrators, errors may have resulted from interviewer and/or respondent fatigue or confusion. These problems were identified during data processing and where possible, appropriate changes were made based on information contained in the questionnaire.

In any survey, inaccurate reporting may occur due to respondents misunderstanding the questions or answering incorrectly to protect their personal integrity, their personal safety or to protect somebody else. For example, some women may not have reported incidents they experienced, particularly if the perpetrator was somebody close to them, such as a partner or family member. However, conducting the interviews alone with women was a procedure used to minimise this effect.

Recall

Women were asked to report incidents of physical and sexual violence experienced since the age of 15, the perpetrators of the incidents and when the most recent incident by each type of perpetrator occurred. When the last incident(s) occurred was coded by the interviewer to one of seven time periods with the most recent being during the last 12 months. For women whose last experience of violence occurred more than 20 years ago, detailed information about the last incident was not collected due to the possibility of recall errors.

Recall errors may arise in a number of ways. Women may forget to report incidents that occurred in the past, or they may report incidents as occurring in a more recent time period. It is also possible that women who experienced more than one incident may have focused on the incident they perceived to be the most serious and subsequently

provided details about that incident. Recall errors are likely to be greater for information collected about incidents that occurred a long time ago. It is for this reason that estimates relating to experiences of violence during the previous 12 month period will be more reliable than estimates relating to other time periods.

Some insight into the effect of recall can be gained from the survey results. It could be expected that older women would be more likely than younger women to have experienced an incident of violence at some time since the age of 15. However, the proportion of women aged 55 and over who reported an incident of violence since the age of 15 (21%) was less than half the proportion of women aged 18–24 (44%).

There are a number of possible explanations for this difference. As most incidents of violence reported in the survey had occurred when women were young, older women may have under-reported their experience of violence when they were young. It is also possible that older women may have recalled incidents but not considered them sufficiently serious to report in the survey, particularly if an incident only occurred once. Changes in community attitudes about what is acceptable behaviour may have made it difficult for older women to decide which incidents were serious enough to report. Younger women may have had less difficulty in this regard.

NON-RESPONSE

Non-response can introduce errors into the results, as non-respondents may have different characteristics and experiences of violence from those women who responded. The magnitude of the bias depends on the extent of the differences, the level of non-response and the extent to which non-response adjustments can be made during estimation through the use of benchmarks.

As it is not possible to quantify differences between respondents and non-respondents in any survey, every effort is made to reduce the level of non-response and for this survey, additional measures were taken (see p. 12). 22% of women selected in the sample were non-respondents to the survey. These women either did not cooperate in the survey, only partially completed the questionnaire, could not be contacted or were unable to complete the questionnaire due to language difficulties or illness (see p. 13). Of those women who chose not to participate, the majority had either no, or only general information about the survey content. Therefore it is not reasonable to assume that these women were either more or less likely to have experienced violence.

Of the 1,038 full refusals, 103 women completed the household questionnaire. 64% of these women were married or in a de facto relationship and 15% had never been married. This is a similar distribution to all women in the population. These women were more likely than the overall population to be aged 55 and over (see table 5.1).

Some information is also available about the characteristics and experiences of violence of the 151 women (1.9% of the sample) who partially completed the questionnaire. The responses of these women did not contribute to survey estimates. 64% of them were married or in a de facto relationship and 7% had never been married. They were more likely to be 65 years and over than the overall population.

43 of the 151 women did not answer any questions relating to violence, 95 answered only questions related to violence by men and 13 answered questions about violence by men and women. 47 of the 108 women who answered any questions relating to violence, reported an incident of violence.

5.1 AGE DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN

Age group (years)	Answered only household questionnaire	Part refusals	Respondents	Population(a)
PROPORTION (%)				
18–24	9.7	6.0	11.0	13.7
25–34	16.5	19.9	23.3	20.7
35–44	16.5	19.2	23.2	20.2
45–54	18.4	14.6	17.0	16.4
55–64	17.5	9.9	10.3	11.0
65 and over	21.4	30.5	15.3	18.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
NUMBER (no.)				
Total	103	151	6,333	6 880 520

(a) Population Estimates, March 1996 (unpublished data)

OTHER NON-SAMPLING ERRORS

Scope and coverage

Some dwellings may have been inadvertently included or excluded due to inaccuracies in the lists of dwellings in the selected areas. In addition, some women may have been inadvertently included or excluded, due to difficulties in applying the scope rules for household visitors or women over 18 years. However, since the ABS has gained considerable experience in these procedures over many years, any resultant errors are considered to be minimal.

Processing errors

Opportunities exist for errors to arise during the processing of data. Again, due to longstanding and proven data processing practices the ABS does not believe that there are any significant processing errors in the data.

Errors may also occur when questionnaires are clerically checked for completeness; when the data is transferred from the original questionnaires to computer files; when computer editing programs fail to detect errors; and when data is coded and transferred at various stages of computer processing.

In order to minimise these errors, computer edits were devised to ensure that logical sequences were followed in the questionnaire, that necessary items were present and that specific values lay between certain ranges. These edits were designed to detect reporting or recording errors, and incorrect relationships between data items or missing data items. Tabulations were obtained from the data file at various stages during processing (such as, after computer editing and subsequent amendments, weighting of the file and after derivation of new data items) to help identify possible errors.

SAMPLE REPRESENTATION

To gain some insight into the representativeness of the sample, the characteristics of survey respondents can be compared to independent estimates of the corresponding

population at the time of the survey. As shown in tables 5.1 and 5.2, the distribution of respondents (classified by age and country of birth) conformed reasonably well with the age and birthplace distribution of the total female population aged 18 and over.

The survey estimation procedures adjusted for non-response differentials by age. That is, the age distribution of the sample was compared to the population at March 1996 and relevant adjustments were made to ensure the survey estimates conformed with the distribution of the population by age (see p. 14).

5.2 BIRTHPLACE DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN AGED 18 AND OVER

<i>Birthplace</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Born in Australia	71.7	72.4
Born outside Australia		
Main English speaking country	12.2	11.1
Other country	16.1	16.4
<i>Total</i>	28.3	27.6
Total	100.0	100.0

(a) Estimated Resident Population by Country of Birth, Age and Sex, June 1995 (preliminary)
(unpublished data)

COMPARISON OF RESULTS

The Women's Safety Survey was the first national survey conducted in Australia which investigated the nature and extent of violence against women, using this methodology. Comparisons with data from other sources cannot be readily made because of differences in data collection methods and the concepts used to measure violence.

Another source of national data on the level of violence against women obtained through a household survey (albeit through a self completing mail back questionnaire) is the 1993 Crime and Safety Survey conducted by the ABS. This survey collected information about a range of personal and property related crimes, such as robbery, automobile thefts and assaults.

Results from the two surveys differ. The Women's Safety Survey found that 5.9% of women experienced physical violence in the previous 12 month period and 1.5% had been sexually assaulted. Corresponding figures from the 1993 Crime and Safety Survey are 1.8% and 0.6%, respectively.

There are a number of methodological reasons why a survey dedicated to issues of women's safety would be expected to provide better estimates of violence against women than the more general survey on crime and safety. These include more detailed and precise questioning and the use of personal interviews, rather than a self completion mail back questionnaire. The use of interviewers ensured that rapport could be established with respondents, that respondents were able to give information in private, and that the concepts and definitions being applied could be explained as necessary.

CHAPTER 6

OUTPUT AND DISSEMINATION

DATA AVAILABILITY

Results from the Women's Safety Survey will be available in the form of:

- publications;
- tables produced on request to meet specific information requirements from the survey; and
- production of a confidential unit record file is also being considered.

All current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Release Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Release Advice are available from any ABS office.

Publications and catalogued releases

Women's Safety, Australia 1996 (4128.0)

Price \$22.00

The publication contains information on women's experiences of physical and sexual violence including who perpetrated the incident, when and where it occurred, actions the woman took as a result of violence and how the incidents of violence affect women's lives. Data is also presented on general safety, harassment and stalking.

Special data services

Special tabulations to suit individual user requirements, can be provided in printed form or on floppy disk. Subject to confidentiality and sampling variability constraints, tabulations can be produced from the survey incorporating data items and populations selected to meet individual requirements. A cost is associated with the production of these tables. For further information please contact the Women's Statistics Unit on (06) 252 6174.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

These publications relate to the other surveys conducted by the ABS on related topics.

Crime and Safety, Australia 1993 (4509.0)

Released April 1994

Price \$18.50

This publication presents the results of the third national household survey of crime and safety. It includes information on household break-ins, attempted break-ins and motor vehicle theft; personal robberies, assaults and some data on sexual assaults in the 12 months prior to the survey. It also provides information on the last incident and whether it was reported to the police. Data are classified by selected demographic characteristics and some State and Territory data is available.

National Crime Statistics 1995 (4510.0)

Released July 1996

Price \$21.00

This publication contains uniform national crime statistics relating to a selected range of offences that have become known to and recorded by police. National crime statistics are compiled on a victim basis and measure the number of victims for each offence category rather than the breaches of criminal law. This publication provides a breakdown of the offence category by month reported. Type of location and use of weapon data are also provided. Future publications will provide additional details on reported offences.

Crime and Safety, New South Wales 1996 (4509.1)

Released October 1996

Price \$13.00

This publication summarises details on household break-ins and attempted break-ins, and personal robberies and assaults, motor vehicle thefts and some data on sexual assault in the 12 months prior to the survey, as well as whether the last incident was reported to the police and whether or not a weapon was used. Also contains details of Neighbourhood Watch Programs and perceptions of crime problems. Data are classified by selected demographic characteristics.

Crime and Safety, South Australia 1995 (4509.4)

Released 1995

Price \$11.50

This publication presents information on a survey of crime and safety showing victims and non-victims of crime by households and persons and type of offence, selected characteristics of households, number of incidents, whether police told about last incident. Victims and non-victims by age and sex, major statistical region, labour force status and location of robbery or assault. Perceptions of crime or public nuisance problems in the neighbourhood.

Crime and Safety, Victoria 1995 (4509.2)

Released 1995

Price \$13.00

This publication contains information on individuals and households about their experience of selected crimes, reporting behaviour and risk factors, and households' membership of Neighbourhood or Rural Watch Programs.

Crime and Safety, Western Australia 1995 (4509.5)

Released March 1996

Price \$13.00

This publication summarises details on household break-ins and attempted break-ins and personal robberies and assaults, motor vehicle thefts and some data on sexual assault in the 12 months prior to the survey, as well as whether the last incident was reported to

the police and whether a weapon was used. Also contains details of Neighbourhood Watch Programs and perceptions of crime problems. Data are classified by selected demographic characteristics.

Information Paper: National Crime Statistics 1993 (4511.0)

Released 1995

No charge

The aim of the National Uniform Crime Statistics Information Paper is to enhance users' understanding of the technical, conceptual and methodological nature of national crime statistics. The paper covers a range of issues in the development and implementation of the national system. These include the scope of the collection, the classifications used, the counting methodology, definitions and data sources. It also provides a detailed explanation of the difference between State and national statistics and focuses on how national statistics can be used.

APPENDIX 1

DATA ITEMS

To assist in the specification of special tabulations, the following list describes the data items, and the categories of each item, collected in the 1996 Women's Safety Survey.

DATA ITEM	CATEGORIES	POPULATION
.....		
EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE		
Whether experienced violence	01 Experienced physical violence only 02 Experienced sexual assault only 03 Experienced sexual threat only 04 Experienced sexual threat and physical violence 05 Experienced sexual assault and physical violence 06 Experienced sexual assault and sexual threat 07 Experienced all types of violence 08 Violence not experienced	All women: – male perpetrator – female perpetrator
Whether experienced sexual assault	01 Experienced sexual assault 02 Sexual assault not experienced	All women: – male perpetrator – female perpetrator
Whether experienced sexual threat	01 Experienced sexual threat 02 Sexual threat not experienced	All women: – male perpetrator – female perpetrator
Whether experienced physical assault	01 Experienced physical assault 02 Physical assault not experienced	All women: – male perpetrator – female perpetrator
Whether experienced threatened or attempted physical assault	01 Experienced physical threat or attempt 02 Physical threat or attempt not experienced	All women: – male perpetrator – female perpetrator
Type of action in the last incident of physical violence	01 Physical threat or attempt only 02 Physical assault only 03 Physical assault and physical threat or attempt	Women who experienced physical violence: – male perpetrator – female perpetrator

DATA ITEM	CATEGORIES	POPULATION
Type of physical violence	<p>Responses could be recorded in more than one category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Threatened or attempted to hit with a fist or anything else 02 Threatened or attempted to stab 03 Threatened or attempted to shoot 04 Threatened or attempted to physically hurt in any other way 05 Threw anything that could hurt 06 Pushed, grabbed or shoved 07 Slapped 08 Kicked, bit or punched 09 Hit with something else 10 Beaten 11 Choked 12 Stabbed 13 Shot 14 Other 15 None of these 	<p>Women who experienced physical violence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – last incident by male perpetrator – last incident by female perpetrator <p>Women who experienced physical violence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – during relationship with current partner
Last incident by a woman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Sexual assault 02 Physical violence 	<p>Women who experienced physical violence and/or sexual assault:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – female perpetrator
When the incident occurred (last incident and other incidents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Less than 12 months ago 02 1 year to less than 2 years ago 03 2 years to less than 3 years ago 04 3 years to less than 5 years ago 05 5 years to less than 10 years ago 06 10 years to less than 20 years ago 07 20 years ago or more 	<p>Women who experienced physical violence, sexual assault and/or sexual threat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – male perpetrator – female perpetrator
Relationship to male perpetrator (last incident)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Stranger 02 Boyfriend or date 03 Current partner 04 Previous partner living with at the time 05 Previous partner not living with at the time 06 Father 07 Son 08 Brother 09 Other male relative/in-law 10 Friend/acquaintance/neighbour 11 Employer/boss/supervisor 12 Co-worker/co-volunteer 13 Counsellor/psychologist/psychiatrist 14 Doctor 15 Teacher 16 Minister/priest/clergy 17 Other 	<p>Women who experienced physical violence, sexual assault, and/or sexual threat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – male perpetrator <p>Women who were stalked</p>

DATA ITEM	CATEGORIES	POPULATION
Relationship to female perpetrator (last incident)	01 Stranger 02 Current partner 03 Previous partner 04 Mother 05 Daughter 06 Sister 07 Other female relative/in-law 08 Girlfriend or date 09 Friend/acquaintance/neighbour 10 Employer/boss/supervisor 11 Co-worker/co-volunteer 12 Counsellor/psychologist/psychiatrist 13 Doctor 14 Teacher 15 Minister/priest/clergy 16 Prison warden 17 Other	Women who experienced physical violence, sexual assault and/or sexual threat: – female perpetrator
Relationship to perpetrator	Responses could be recorded in more than one category: 01 Male stranger 02 Boyfriend or male date 03 Current male partner 04 Previous male partner 05 Other known man 06 Female stranger 07 Current female partner 08 Previous female partner living with at the time 09 Other known female	Women who experienced physical violence, sexual assault and/or sexual threat: – male perpetrator – female perpetrator
Length of relationship with partner before the incident	As reported (years)	Women whose last incident of physical violence and/or sexual assault was by a partner: – male partner – female partner
Length of relationship with boyfriend/date before the incident	01 First date 02 As reported (months, years) 03 Do not know	Women whose last incident of physical violence and/or sexual assault was by a boyfriend/date
Whether still in the relationship with boyfriend/date	01 Still in the relationship 02 No longer in the relationship	Women whose last incident of physical violence and/or sexual assault was by a boyfriend/date

DATA ITEM	CATEGORIES	POPULATION
Location where the last incident occurred	01 In a home 02 At woman's workplace 03 At licensed premises 04 In a private vehicle 05 Using public transport 06 In the open 07 In an institution (female only) 08 Other	Women who experienced physical violence and/or sexual assault: – male perpetrator other than partners – female perpetrator other than partners
Involvement of alcohol in the last incident	01 Alcohol was involved 02 Alcohol was not involved 03 Do not know if alcohol was involved	Women who experienced physical violence and/or sexual assault: – male perpetrator
Whether more than one incident occurred	01 More than one incident 02 One incident	Women who experienced physical and/or sexual violence: – male perpetrator – female perpetrator
Whether physically abused as a child	01 Experienced physical abuse 02 No physical abuse experienced	All women
Whether sexually abused as a child	01 Experienced sexual abuse 02 No sexual abuse experienced	All women
ACTIONS TAKEN		
Whether police told about the last incident	01 Police told by woman 02 Police told by someone else 03 Police not told	Women who experienced physical violence and/or sexual assault: – male perpetrator Women who were stalked
Police action taken after the last incident	01 Perpetrator charged 02 Perpetrator not charged	Women who experienced physical violence and/or sexual assault who reported the incident to the police: – male perpetrator Women who were stalked and reported the incident to the police
Whether the perpetrator of the last incident went to court	01 Went to court 02 Did not go to court	Women who experienced physical violence and/or sexual assault and perpetrator was charged: – male perpetrator Women who were stalked and perpetrator was charged

DATA ITEM	CATEGORIES	POPULATION
Main reason police not told about the last incident	01 Shame/embarrassment 02 Dealt with it herself 03 Did not want perpetrator arrested 04 Did not regard it as a serious offence 05 Did not think they could do anything 06 Would not be believed 07 Fear of perpetrator 08 Fear of legal processes 09 Cultural/language reasons 10 Other 11 Do not know	Women who experienced physical violence and/or sexual assault who did not report the incident to the police: – male perpetrator Women who were stalked who did not report the incident to the police
Whether physically injured in the last incident	01 Physically injured 02 Not physically injured	Women who experienced physical assault and/or sexual assault: – male perpetrator – female perpetrator
Type of injury received in the last incident	Responses could be recorded in more than one category: 01 Scratched 02 Bruised 03 Cut 04 Fractured or broken bones 05 Broken teeth 06 Penetrative injury/stab/gun shot wounds 07 Miscarriage 08 Other	Women who experienced physical assault and/or sexual assault: – male perpetrator – female perpetrator
Whether doctor consulted about injuries received in the last incident	01 Doctor consulted 02 Doctor not consulted	Women who experienced physical assault and/or sexual assault who were injured: – male perpetrator – female perpetrator
Whether professional help sought after the last incident	Responses could be recorded in more than one category: 01 Doctor 02 Counsellor 03 Minister or priest 04 Professional help not sought	Women who experienced physical violence and/or sexual assault: – male perpetrator
Whether services used after the last incident	Responses could be recorded in more than one category: 01 Crisis help 02 Legal help 03 Financial help 04 Services not used	Women who experienced physical violence and/or sexual assault: – male perpetrator

DATA ITEM	CATEGORIES	POPULATION
Reason(s) for not using services after the last incident	<p>Responses could be recorded in more than one category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Received help from family/friends 02 Dealt with it herself 03 Did not know of any services 04 Not serious enough to seek help 05 Shame/embarrassment 06 Did not think they could help 07 Would not be believed 08 Fear of perpetrator 09 Cultural/language reasons 10 Other 11 Do not know 	<p>Women who experienced physical violence and/or sexual assault who did not use services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – male perpetrator
Whether talked to others about the last incident	<p>Responses could be recorded in more than one category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Family 02 Friend or neighbour 03 Work colleague 04 Anyone else 05 Did not talk to others 	<p>Women who experienced physical violence and/or sexual assault:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – male perpetrator
CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLENCE		
Fear for personal safety after last incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Lives in fear for personal safety 02 Does not live in fear for personal safety 03 Not stated 	<p>Women who experienced physical violence and/or sexual assault:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – male perpetrator other than partners – female perpetrator <p>Women who were stalked</p>
Whether lived in fear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Lived in fear while in the relationship 02 Did not live in fear while in the relationship 	<p>Women who experienced violence during relationship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – previous partner
Whether lives in fear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Currently lives in fear 02 Does not currently live in fear 03 Partner has died 	<p>Women who experienced violence during the relationship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – current partner – previous partner
Whether took time off work in the 12 months after the last incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Time off 02 No time off 03 Did not work 	<p>Women who experienced physical violence and/or sexual assault:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – male perpetrator – female perpetrator <p>Women who were stalked</p>

DATA ITEM	CATEGORIES	POPULATION
Change in day-to-day activities in the 12 months after the last incident	<p>Responses could be recorded in more than one category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Housework 02 Shopping 03 Child care 04 Voluntary or community work 05 Social activities 06 No change 	<p>Women who experienced physical violence and/or sexual assault:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – male perpetrator – female perpetrator <p>Women who were stalked</p>
MALE PARTNER VIOLENCE		
Type of physical violence	<p>Responses could be recorded in more than one category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Threatened or attempted to hit with a fist or anything else 02 Threatened or attempted to stab 03 Threatened or attempted to shoot 04 Threatened or attempted to physically hurt in any other way 05 Threw anything that could hurt 06 Pushed, grabbed or shoved 07 Slapped 08 Kicked, bit, or punched 09 Hit you with something else 10 Beaten 11 Choked 12 Stabbed 13 Shot 14 Other 15 None of these 	All women with a current partner
Frequency of violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Often 02 Sometimes 03 Rarely 04 One incident of violence 	<p>Women who experienced violence during the relationship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - current partner - previous partner
Whether experienced emotional abuse (during the last 12 months and during the relationship)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Experienced emotional abuse 02 No emotional abuse 	All women with a current partner

DATA ITEM	CATEGORIES	POPULATION
Type of emotional abuse	<p>Responses could be recorded in more than one category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Tried to prevent contact with family or friends 02 Tried to prevent use of the telephone or car 03 Tried to prevent knowledge about or access to family money 04 Insulted with the intent to shame, belittle or humiliate 05 Threatened to harm children 06 Damaged or destroyed property 07 Threatened to harm or harmed pets 08 No emotional abuse 	All women with a current partner
Whether violence occurred during pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Violence occurred during pregnancy 02 Violence did not occur during pregnancy 03 Not pregnant during relationship 	<p>Women who experienced violence during relationship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – current partner – previous partner
Whether violence occurred for the first time during pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Violence occurred for the first time during pregnancy 02 Violence did not occur for the first time during pregnancy 03 Do not know 	<p>Women who experienced violence during relationship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – current partner – previous partner
Whether violence witnessed by children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Violence witnessed by children 02 Violence not witnessed by children 03 Do not know if witnessed by children 04 No children in their care during the relationship 	<p>Women who experienced violence during the relationship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – current partner – previous partner
Whether separated from partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Separated from partner 02 Did not separate from partner 	<p>Women who experienced violence during the relationship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – current partner – previous partner
Whether wanted to separate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Wanted to separate 02 Did not want to separate 	<p>Women who experienced violence during the relationship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – current partner
Main reason for wanting to separate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Due to partner's abuse or violence to the women or her children 02 Concern for children's safety 03 Concern for own safety 04 Other 	<p>Women who experienced violence during the relationship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – current partner

DATA ITEM	CATEGORIES	POPULATION
Main reason unable to separate	01 No money/financial support 02 Nowhere to go 03 Sake of children 04 Shame of divorce 05 Fear of partner 06 Cultural reasons 07 Other	Women who experienced violence during the relationship: – current partner
Number of times separated	01 Once only 02 Twice 03 Three times 04 More than three times 05 Do not know	Women who experienced violence during the relationship who separated: – current partner – previous partner
Main reason for separation	01 Due to partner's abuse or violence to the women or her children 02 Better life for children 03 Court ordered him away 04 Partner initiated separation 05 Found someone else 06 Partner died 07 Other	Women who experienced violence during the relationship: – current partner
Main reason for ending the relationship	01 Due to partner's violence or threats to children 02 Better life for children 03 Court ordered him away 04 Partner initiated separation 05 Found someone else 06 Partner died 07 Other	Women who experienced violence during the relationship: – previous partner
Whether assaulted during separation	01 Violence occurred while separated 02 Violence did not occur while separated	Women who experienced violence during the relationship: – current partner – previous partner
Whether assaulted for the first time during separation	01 Violence occurred for the first time while separated 02 Violence did not occur for the first time while separated	Women who experienced violence during the relationship: – current partner – previous partner
Whether violence increased while separated	01 Violence increased while separated 02 Violence did not increase while separated	Women who experienced violence during the relationship: – current partner – previous partner

DATA ITEM	CATEGORIES	POPULATION
Whether violence increased when the relationship ended	01 Violence increased after relationship ended 02 Violence did not increase after relationship ended	Women who experienced violence during the relationship: – previous partner
Reason(s) for returning to partner	Responses could be recorded in more than one category: 01 Partner promised to stop abuse 02 No money/financial support 03 Nowhere to go 04 Sake of children 05 Shame of divorce 06 Fear of partner 07 Other	Women who experienced violence during the relationship: – current partner – previous partner
Whether ever moved away from partner	01 Relocated to a new house 02 Did not relocate to a new house	Women who experienced violence during the relationship: – current partner – previous partner
Whether left property or assets behind when moved away	01 Left behind property or assets 02 Did not leave behind property or assets	Women who experienced violence during the relationship: – current partner – previous partner
Whether partner damaged or destroyed property	01 Damaged or destroyed property 02 Did not damage or destroy property	Women who experienced violence during the relationship: – previous partner
GENERAL SAFETY		
Using public transport alone after dark	01 Used and felt unsafe 02 Did not use because felt unsafe 03 Used and felt safe 04 Did not use for other reasons	All women
Waiting for public transport alone after dark	01 Waited and felt unsafe 02 Waited and felt safe 03 Did not wait because felt unsafe 04 Did not wait for other reasons	All women
Walking in the local area alone after dark	01 Walked and felt unsafe 02 Did not walk because felt unsafe 03 Walked and felt safe 04 Did not walk for other reasons	All women

DATA ITEM	CATEGORIES	POPULATION
At home alone in the evening or night	01 At home and felt unsafe 02 Not at home because felt unsafe 03 At home and felt safe 04 Not at home for other reasons	All women
STALKING BY MEN		
Whether stalked	01 Stalked 02 Not stalked	All women
Type of stalking behaviour	Responses could be recorded in more than one category: 01 Loitered outside home 02 Loitered outside workplace 03 Loitered outside place of leisure/social activities 04 Followed 05 Watched 06 Interfered with or damaged property 07 Gave or left offensive/disturbing material where it could be found 08 Telephoned, sent mail or contacted electronically 09 None of these	All women
When stalking began	01 Less than 12 months ago 02 1 year to less than 2 years ago 03 2 years to less than 3 years ago 04 3 years to less than 5 years ago 05 5 years to less than 10 years ago 06 10 years to less than 20 years ago 07 20 years ago or more	Women who were stalked
Whether stalking has stopped	01 Stalking has stopped 02 Stalking has not stopped 03 Do not know	Women who were stalked
Length of time stalked	01 Less than 1 month 02 1 month to less than 6 months 03 6 months to less than 1 year 04 1 year to less than 2 years 05 2 years to less than 3 years 06 3 years to less than 5 years 07 5 years or more	Women who were stalked and stalking has stopped

DATA ITEM	CATEGORIES	POPULATION
HARASSMENT		
Whether received an obscene phone call	01 Received in the last 12 months 02 Received during lifetime 03 Did not receive	All women
Whether experienced indecent exposure by a man	01 Experienced in the last 12 months 02 Experienced during lifetime 03 Did not experience	All women
Whether received inappropriate comments about body/sex life by a man	01 Received in the last 12 months 02 Received during lifetime 03 Did not receive	All women
Whether experienced unwanted sexual touching by a man	01 Experienced in the last 12 months 02 Experienced during lifetime 03 Did not experience	All women
DEMOGRAPHICS		
Age	Age in 10 year age groups As reported (years)	All women Male partner (if applicable)
Birthplace	01 Australia 02 Main English speaking countries 03 Other overseas countries	All women Male partner (if applicable)
Year of arrival in Australia	As reported (year)	Women born overseas Male partner born overseas (if applicable)
Birthplace of father	01 Australia 02 Main English speaking countries 03 Other overseas countries	All women
Birthplace of mother	01 Australia 02 Main English speaking countries 03 Other overseas countries	All women
Whether woman or her parent(s) born in a non-English speaking country	01 Non-English speaking country 02 English speaking country 03 Do not know	All women

DATA ITEM	CATEGORIES	POPULATION
Marital status	01 Married 02 De facto 03 Separated 04 Divorced 05 Widowed 06 Never married	All women
Whether ever married	01 Currently married 02 Currently married and previously partnered 03 Previously partnered 04 Never married	All women
EDUCATION		
Age left school	01 Still at secondary school 02 Never went to secondary school 03 Under 14 years 04 14 years 05 15 years 06 16 years 07 17 years 08 18 years 09 19 years 10 20 years 11 21 years and over 12 Do not know (partner only)	All women Male partner (if applicable)
Highest level of educational qualification obtained	01 Higher degree 02 Postgraduate diploma 03 Bachelor degree 04 Undergraduate diploma 05 Associate diploma 06 Skilled vocational 07 Basic vocational 08 Secondary school 09 Not qualified/out of scope 10 Do not know (partner only)	All women Male partner (if applicable)
Whether completed post-school qualification	01 Completed post-school qualification 02 Did not complete post-school qualification 03 Do not know (partner only)	All women Male partner (if applicable)
EMPLOYMENT		
Labour force status	01 Employed 02 Unemployed 03 Not in the labour force	All women Male partner (if applicable)

DATA ITEM	CATEGORIES	POPULATION
Full-time/part-time status	01 Full-time 02 Part-time	Women who were employed Male partners who were employed (if applicable)
Hours worked	As reported (hours)	Women who were employed Male partners who were employed (if applicable)
Duration of unemployment	As reported (weeks)	Women who were unemployed Male partners who were unemployed (if applicable)
Time since last job	As reported (weeks)	Women who were unemployed Male partners who were unemployed (if applicable)
INCOME		
Income	As reported (dollars) Quintiles Deciles	All women Male partner (if applicable)
Couple income	As reported (dollars) Quintiles Deciles	All women with a current partner
Main source of income	01 Profit or loss from own business 02 Profit or loss from rental investment properties 03 Dividends 04 Interest 05 A wage or salary from employer 06 A wage or salary from own limited liability company 07 Family payment/additional family payment 08 Another government pension or cash allowance 09 Child support/maintenance 10 Superannuation/annuity 11 Workers compensation/accident or sickness insurance 12 Any other regular income	All women Male partner (if applicable)

DATA ITEM	CATEGORIES	POPULATION
Sources of income	<p>Responses could be recorded in more than one category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Profit or loss from own business 02 Profit or loss from rental investment properties 03 Dividends 04 Interest 05 A wage or salary from employer 06 A wage or salary from own limited liability company 07 Family payment/additional family payment 08 Another government pension or cash allowance 09 Child support/maintenance 10 Superannuation/annuity 11 Workers compensation/Accident or sickness insurance 12 Any other regular income 	<p>All women</p> <p>Women's partner (if applicable)</p>
GENERAL		
Household type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Woman living alone 02 Married or de facto couple only 03 Married or de facto couple living only with their unmarried children aged 15 or over 04 Married or de facto couple living only with their children aged 0–14 05 Married or de facto couple living only with their children aged 0–14 and their unmarried children aged 15 or over 06 One person living only with his/her unmarried children aged 15 or over 07 One person living only with his/her children aged 0–14 08 One person living only with his/her children aged 0–14 and his/ her unmarried children aged 15 or over 09 All other households 	<p>All women</p>
Socio-economic index of relative disadvantage		<p>All women</p>

TECHNICAL NOTES

ESTIMATION PROCEDURES

$$\text{Standard error } (x / y) = \sqrt{[\text{RSE } (x)]^2 - [\text{RSE } (y)]^2}$$

1 Estimates obtained from the survey were derived using a complex ratio estimation procedure. This procedure ensures that survey estimates conform to an independently estimated distribution of the total female population by age and area (rather than to the age-area distribution within the sample itself). The survey was conducted over a 12 week period (5 February to 26 April 1996) and estimates were made to conform to the population distribution during that period.

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES

2 As estimates are based on a sample they are subject to sampling variability. In this publication only estimates with relative standard errors of 25% or less are considered sufficiently reliable for most purposes. Estimates with a relative standard error greater than 25% have been included and are preceded by a single asterisk (*). Estimates with a relative standard error of over 50% are preceded by a double asterisk (**) to indicate they are subject to high standard errors and should be used with caution.

3 In addition to sampling errors, estimates are subject to non-sampling errors. These may include errors in reporting (e.g. incorrect interpretation of questions or difficulty recalling exactly when an incident occurred) and errors arising during processing (e.g. incorrect coding or data recording). Non-sampling errors are not specific to sample surveys and can occur in a census enumeration. A number of procedures are undertaken to ensure this type of error is reduced to a minimum such as careful design and testing of questionnaires, intensive interviewer training and efficient operating procedures.

4 Space does not allow for the separate indication of the standard errors of all estimates in this publication. A table of standard errors and relative standard errors for estimates of the number of women are provided in table A. These figures will not give a precise measure of the standard error of a particular estimate but they will provide an indication of its magnitude. An example of the calculation and use follows.

CALCULATION OF STANDARD ERRORS

5 From table 3.13 in *Women's Safety, Australia* (4128.0), the estimate of the number of women who were married or in a de facto relationship who experienced physical violence by a man during the last 12 months is 151,000. Since the estimate is between 100,000 and 200,000 the standard error for Australia will be between 11,800 and 16,200 (taken from the standard error column of table A) and can be approximated to 14,000 (rounded to the nearest 100). Therefore, there are about two chances in three that the value that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey will fall in the range of 137,000 to 165,000 and about 19 chances in 20 that the value will fall within the range of 123,000 to 179,000.

6 The smaller the estimate the higher the relative standard error. Very small estimates are thus subject to such high standard errors (relative to the size of the estimate) as to detract seriously from their value for most reasonable uses.

RATES AND PERCENTAGES

7 Proportions and percentages formed from the ratio of two estimates are also subject to sampling errors. The size of the error depends on the accuracy of both the numerator and the denominator. A formula to approximate the relative standard error (RSE) of a proportion is given below.

8 Referring back to table 3.13, the 151,000 women who were married or in a de facto relationship who experienced physical violence by a man during the last 12 months represented 3.5% of all women with a partner (4,318,300). The standard error of 4,318,300 is approximately 47,300, so the relative standard error is 1.1%. The relative standard error for 151,000 is 9.3%. Applying the above formula, the relative standard error of the proportion is $\sqrt{(9.3)^2 - (1.1)^2}$ or 9.2%, giving a standard error for the proportion (3.5%) of 0.3 percentage points. Therefore, there are about two chances in three that women who had a partner and experienced physical violence by a man during the last 12 months as a proportion of all women with a partner is between 3.2% and 3.8% and 19 chances in 20 the proportion is within the range 2.9% to 4.1%.

9 The standard error of an estimated percentage or rate computed by using sample data for both numerator and denominator, depends upon both the size of the numerator and the size of the denominator. However, the relative standard error of the estimated percentage or rate will generally be lower than the relative standard error of the estimate of the numerator.

10 Approximate standard errors of the rates or percentages may be derived by first obtaining the number of persons corresponding to the numerator of the rate or percentage and then applying this figure to the estimated rate or percentage.

11 The difference between two survey estimates is itself an estimate and is therefore subject to sampling variability. The standard error of the difference of two survey estimates depends on the standard errors of the original estimates and on the relationship (correlation) between the two original estimates. An approximate standard error (SE) of the difference between two estimates ($x - y$) may be calculated by the following formula:

$$\text{Standard error } (x - y) = \sqrt{[\text{SE } (x)]^2 + [\text{SE } (y)]^2}$$

12 While this formula will only be exact for differences between separate and uncorrelated (unrelated) characteristics or sub-populations, it is expected to provide a good approximation for all differences likely to be of interest.

A STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATES

<i>SIZE OF ESTIMATES</i>	<i>Standard error</i>	<i>Relative standard error</i>
<i>Number of women</i>	<i>no.</i>	<i>%</i>
1 500	1 070	71.3
1 600	1 120	70.0
1 800	1 210	67.2
1 900	1 250	65.8
2 000	1 300	65.0
2 500	1 500	60.0
3 000	1 690	56.3
4 000	2 030	50.8
5 000	2 340	46.8
6 000	2 610	43.5
7 000	2 860	40.9
8 000	3 100	38.8
9 000	3 320	36.9
10 000	3 540	35.4
20 000	5 240	26.2
30 000	6 510	21.7
40 000	7 560	18.9
50 000	8 450	16.9
100 000	11 800	11.8
200 000	16 200	8.1
300 000	19 200	6.4
400 000	21 600	5.4
500 000	23 500	4.7
1 000 000	30 000	3.0
2 000 000	38 000	1.9
5 000 000	50 000	1.0

GLOSSARY

Abuse when a child	<p>Abuse experienced by a woman before the age of 15 from any adult (male or female), including the woman's parents. Emotional abuse is excluded.</p> <p><i>Physical abuse.</i> Any deliberate physical injury (including bruises) inflicted by an adult. Discipline that accidentally resulted in an injury is excluded.</p> <p><i>Sexual abuse.</i> Involving a child in sexual processes beyond their understanding or contrary to currently accepted community standards.</p>
Age	Of the woman at the time of the survey.
Assault	See <i>Physical assault</i> and <i>Sexual assault</i> .
Birthplace	Classified according to the <i>Australian Standard Classification of Countries for Social Statistics</i> (1269.0). Main English speaking countries include the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, United States of America, South Africa and New Zealand.
Children witnessed violence	Women who had children in their long-term care reported whether or not these children saw or heard the violence by a current and/or previous partner. The children may have been the woman's or her partner's, step-children, adopted or foster children. Children of relatives, friends or neighbours who were visiting and saw or heard the violence were excluded.
Doctor consulted	Includes qualified medical practitioners working in private practice, health centres, hospitals, emergency services who the woman visited to treat the injuries sustained in the last incident of either physical assault and/or sexual assault by a man.
During the relationship	Refers to the time that a woman lived with her current or previous partner.
Educational attainment	The highest level of qualification completed.
Effects on life	<p>The effects on a woman's life as a result of the last incident of physical violence and/or sexual assault during the 12 months after the incident.</p> <p><i>Whether took time off work.</i> Time off from paid work or work without pay in a family business. This includes time off work to: appear in court; meet with the police or a lawyer; to visit the doctor or a counsellor; or because she was unable to work because of either physical injuries or emotional distress.</p> <p><i>Change in day-to-day activities.</i> Includes a change in the usual way of carrying out unpaid work such as shopping, housework, child care, voluntary or community work and social activities. The change may have been either a reduction or an increase in the amount that the woman did or a change in the way activities were carried out because of injuries or her emotional condition, for example, she was unable to complete any of her normal household duties and arranged for a relative to do them or she was unable to attend her regular leisure activities because the perpetrator would be there.</p>

Emotional abuse	<p>Manipulation, isolation or intimidation by a current male partner.</p> <p><i>Tried to prevent contact with family or friends.</i> Long-term prevention of contact with family, relatives or friends, including those overseas.</p> <p><i>Tried to prevent knowledge about or access to family money.</i> The partner controls the household income or assets and does not let the woman know about them. For example, the woman is only given a certain amount of money each week and does not know how much money comes into the family.</p> <p><i>Tried to prevent use of the telephone or family car.</i> Includes persistent behaviour that seeks to control the woman's activities or contact with others. It excludes the occasional situation where a woman has not been able to use the car because her partner needs it or not being able to use the telephone because the last bill was too large.</p> <p><i>Insulted with the intent to shame, belittle or humiliate.</i> Intentional putting down of the woman. Insults that are said in jest or fun were excluded.</p>
Employed	<p>Women who worked for one hour or more for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind in a job or business, or on a farm. Includes women who were employees, employers or self employed. Women who usually worked 35 hours or more in their main job were classified as working full time.</p>
Fear	<p>If a woman had experienced any incident of violence by a current or previous partner she was asked if she lived in fear. If the last incident of physical violence or sexual violence was perpetrated by a person other than a partner, the woman was asked if she feared for her personal safety as a result of the incident. Fear for personal safety was also collected in relation to the last incident of stalking.</p> <p><i>Fear for personal safety.</i> Includes fear of reprisals or the recurrence of a similar incident by either the perpetrator or another person. It excludes fear for her children.</p> <p><i>Lived in fear.</i> A broader concept than fear for personal safety, incorporating the generalised fear which a woman may have experienced as a result of living with the perpetrator of the violence. Includes fear of leaving the house, fear of men in general and fear for her children's safety.</p>
Frequency of violence	<p>Relates to violence by a current and/or previous partner. If the frequency of violence changed, for example, depending on the time of the year, then the woman was asked to determine how often the assaults occurred overall. If a woman reported violence by more than one previous partner this relates to the partner who was violent to her in the last incident.</p>
General safety	<p>Relates to women's feelings of safety in various situations when they are alone. If a woman had only a young child with her she was treated as being alone.</p> <p><i>Using and waiting for public transport alone after dark.</i> Includes using and waiting for buses, trains, trams, taxis and ferries.</p> <p><i>Walking alone in the local area after dark.</i> Includes the woman's neighbourhood or suburb.</p>

Harassment Relates to a range of disturbing situations that a woman may have experienced.

Obscene phone call. Refers to a telephone call that the woman felt was indecent or improper due to the sexual content of the message. Includes phone calls in which profanity was used or any other type of obscene message.

Indecent exposure by a man. The act of exposing genitals, where the woman believed the purpose was to distress, shock, humiliate and/or generate fear.

Inappropriate comments about body/sex life by a man. Includes inappropriate comments in a group situation or when alone with a man.

Unwanted sexual touching by a man. Any intentional touching, grabbing, kissing or fondling which is carried out without a woman's consent. It is momentary or brief touching which did not lead to sexual assault. It includes groping, brushing against or grabbing a woman's bottom.

Injured As a result of the last incident of physical assault or sexual assault.

Other injuries. Includes burns, bites, loss of fingers, toes, limbs, eyes or hearing, internal injuries, sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV and hepatitis.

Involvement of alcohol In the last incident of physical violence and/or sexual assault. Alcohol was involved if the woman, the perpetrator or anyone else had been drinking alcohol at the time of the incident or if the woman believed alcohol contributed to the incident, for example, when the perpetrator was recovering from a hangover.

Last incident of violence If the incident occurred 20 years ago or more, information was only collected about relationship to perpetrator.

Left property or assets When separating from their current or previous partner. Includes furniture, household goods, clothing, car, jewellery, the house (if owned by the woman), money (in the bank or cash left in the home), shares, securities, land or share in a business.

Location Where the most recent incident of either physical violence and/or sexual assault occurred. This information was not collected if a current or previous partner was the perpetrator in the most recent incident.

In a home. Includes the woman's or another person's home. Includes the yard.

At licensed premises. Includes hotels, bars, taverns and licensed restaurants and the areas surrounding these premises such as on the footpath, in a beer garden or carpark of a hotel.

Using public transport. Includes waiting for, or using any vehicle where a fare is charged such as, buses, trains, trams, coaches, taxis, ships and aircraft.

In the open. Includes streets, sidewalks/footpaths, parks, sporting fields, forests or bushland etc.

Main reason police not told	<p>If the woman did not tell police about the last incident of physical violence and/or sexual assault by a man she was asked why not.</p> <p><i>Shame/embarrassment.</i> Includes reasons such as did not want to make trouble, that the woman considered it to be a family problem, that she was asked not to by someone in the family or that she did not want anybody to know about the incident.</p> <p><i>Cultural/language reasons.</i> Includes fear of police because of experiences in her country of origin; could not communicate well enough in English to make complaint known; thinks that police believe violence against women is accepted as part of other cultures; or belief that the police are racist.</p>
Marital status	<p>As reported by the woman at the time of the survey.</p> <p><i>Married.</i> Includes women who are married or in a de facto relationship.</p>
Number of incidents	Refers to the number of incidents of violence a woman experienced by male and female perpetrators since the age of 15. Excludes repeat victimisation by a boyfriend/date or man who the women knew other than a partner.
Number of perpetrators	Refers to the type of perpetrators (as defined in relationship to perpetrator) who were violent toward a woman in the previous 12 month period. Includes violence by male and female perpetrators.
Partner violence	Any incident of physical or sexual violence by a current and/or previous partner.
Perpetrator went to court	As a result of being charged over the last recent incident. Includes family and magistrates court and cases that were still pending.
Physical assault	<p>The use of physical force with the intent to harm or frighten a woman. The assault may have occurred in conjunction with a robbery. It excludes incidents of sexual assault which also involved physical assault and incidents which occurred before the age of 15. If a physical assault was preceded by a threat of the same type in the same incident, only the physical assault was recorded. Various types of physical assault were identified, including:</p> <p><i>Push, grab or shove.</i> Includes being pushed off a balcony, down stairs, or across the room.</p> <p><i>Slapped.</i> Includes a hit with an open hand. Excludes slaps with a belt or bat, etc.</p> <p><i>Hit with something.</i> Includes being hit with a bat, hammer, belt, pot, ruler, etc. Excludes being punched.</p> <p><i>Choked.</i> Includes being choked by hands, a rope, a scarf, a tie or any other item.</p> <p><i>Beaten.</i> Includes punching, hitting or slapping in a repetitive manner.</p> <p><i>Stabbed.</i> With a knife.</p> <p><i>Shot.</i> With a gun.</p> <p><i>Other.</i> Includes burns, scalds, being dragged by the hair.</p>

Physical attempt or threat	<p>Verbal and/or physical intent to inflict physical harm which the woman believed was able and likely to be carried out. It excludes incidents which occurred before the age of 15. Various types of physical attempt or threat were identified, including:</p> <p><i>Threaten or attempt to hit with a fist or anything else that could hurt.</i> Includes threats or attempts to slap, punch or hit in any way with a fist or weapon such as a bat, hammer or pot.</p> <p><i>Threaten or attempt to shoot with a gun.</i> The gun may or may not have been aimed at the woman. Includes situations where a gun was left in an obvious place or if the woman knew that the perpetrator had access to a gun. Includes toy guns, starter pistols etc.</p>
Physical violence	Any incident of physical assault, attempt or threat (as defined above). Incidents so defined would be an offence under State and Territory criminal law.
Police action taken	The outcomes for the perpetrator as a result of an incident being reported to police, that is, whether he was charged and went to court.
Professional help	<p>Advice or support sought from a doctor, counsellor or priest after the last incident of physical violence and/or sexual assault by a man. The support may have been in the form of listening to the problem, making suggestions, giving information about other appropriate services, and offering further help.</p> <p><i>Doctor.</i> Includes qualified medical practitioners in private practice, health centres, hospitals, emergency services who the woman visited for advice or support. Doctors who were visited for the sole purpose of treatment of an injury were excluded.</p> <p><i>Minister or priest.</i> Includes any member of the clergy such as Christian brothers, monks, elders, deacons or rabbi who the woman sought advice or support from.</p>
Reasons services not used	<p>Women who did not use any crisis, legal or financial help recorded all the reasons why they did not use them.</p> <p><i>Cultural/language reasons.</i> Includes the inability to communicate well enough in English to use services and cultural and religious reasons, such as not being able to talk to anyone other than her husband.</p>
Relationship to perpetrator	<p>The woman's relationship to the perpetrator at the time of the incident, with the exception of previous partner.</p> <p><i>Current partner.</i> Includes both married and de facto relationships. If the incident occurred while the woman was dating a man who she later married, the perpetrator of the incident would have been described as boyfriend/date.</p> <p><i>Previous partner.</i> Includes both married and de facto relationships. Includes partners at the time of the incident from whom a woman is now separated and partners a woman was no longer living with at the time of the incident.</p>

	<p><i>Boyfriend/date.</i> This relationship may have different levels of commitment and involvement, for example, one date only, regular dating with no sexual involvement, or a serious sexual or emotional relationship. Excludes de facto relationships.</p> <p><i>Other known man/woman.</i> Any man/woman who does not fit into any of the above categories, for example, family members, doctors or teachers.</p> <p><i>Stranger.</i> Someone the woman did not know, or someone she only knew by hearsay.</p>
Separated from partner	Whether the woman stopped than started her relationship with her current or previous partner. The separation must have been for at least one night. Excludes nights spent apart due to holidays or business trips and the final separation from a previous partner.
Services used	<p>Includes services contacted or visited after the last incident of physical violence and/or sexual assault by a man. If a woman used more than one source of help offered by an individual service then each relevant category was answered.</p> <p><i>Crisis help.</i> Includes shelters, refuges providing accommodation, telephone crisis lines, rape crisis services, etc.</p> <p><i>Legal help.</i> Includes legal aid commissions, community legal centres, Clerks of Court, private solicitors or legal centres which provide special services for Indigenous people, women or migrants.</p> <p><i>Financial help.</i> Includes the Department of Social Security and church or community groups that offer financial help, or financial counselling such as The Smith Family.</p>
Sexual assault	Acts of a sexual nature carried out against a woman's will through the use of physical force, intimidation or coercion. It includes attempts to force a woman into sexual activity. However, attempts are not separately identified. It includes rape, attempted rape, aggravated sexual assault (assault with a weapon), indecent assault, penetration by objects and forced sexual activity that did not end in penetration. It excludes unwanted sexual touching and incidents which occurred before the age of 15. Incidents so defined would be an offence under State and Territory criminal law.
Sexual threat	The threat of acts of a sexual nature which a woman believed were able and likely to be carried out. It includes verbal threats, threats with a weapon and threats to harm children. It excludes incidents that occurred before the age of 15.
Sexual violence	Any incident of sexual assault or threat (as defined above).
Stalking by a man	The definition of stalking is based on State and Territory legislation. It is defined by a range of activities which the woman believed were undertaken with the intent to harm or frighten. Activities include: loitering outside a women's home, workplace or place of leisure activities; following or watching her; interfering with her property; giving or leaving offensive material and telephoning; and sending mail or contacting electronically. In order to be classified as stalking more than one type of stalking behaviour had to occur, or the same type of behaviour had to occur on more than one occasion. Women who had been stalked by more than one man during their lifetime provided details about the most recent incident of stalking.

Talked to others	Includes family members, friends or neighbours, work colleagues or anybody else. Excludes talking to professionals or contacting services.
Unemployed	A woman who was not employed during the reference week who had actively looked for work during the previous four weeks and who was available to start work.
Unwanted sexual touching	See <i>Harassment</i> .
Violence	Includes physical and sexual violence (as defined above).
Violence increased	Includes an increase in the number or severity of violent incidents by a current or previous partner during pregnancy, separation or after the relationship ended.
Whether police told	Whether the police were contacted about the last incident of physical violence and/or sexual assault. The contact with police may have been by the woman or another person.