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CRIME AND SAFETY, NEW SOUTH WALES, APRIL 1990

- INQUIRIES:** *If you would like to obtain further information about these statistics:*
- ring Bernard Wong on (02) 268 4660;
 - call at the Australian Bureau of Statistics, St. Andrew's House, Sydney Square, Sydney;
 - ring Information Services on (02) 268 4611; or
 - write to Information Services, Australian Bureau of Statistics, GPO Box 796, Sydney 2001.

MAIN FEATURES

Note: Explanatory notes for these data, including definitions of terms, are located on pages 6-7.

Of the estimated 2,017,300 households in New South Wales in April 1990, 179,700, or 8.9 per cent, were victims of at least one break and enter or attempted break and enter offence in the 12 months prior to the survey. In the same period, 151,200 persons, or 3.5 per cent of the estimated 4,380,200 persons aged 15 or over in New South Wales, were victims of at least one robbery or assault.

The number of household victims of break and enter was 113,200 (5.6 per cent), while the number of victims of attempted break and enter was 93,000 (4.6 per cent). The number of persons who were victims of robbery was 69,900 (1.6 per cent), while 92,800 persons (2.1 per cent) were victims of assault.

For both households and persons, the proportion of the population who were victims of the offences surveyed was greater in Sydney than in the balance of New South Wales. In Sydney 10.9 per cent of households and 4.0 per cent of persons were victims, compared with corresponding proportions of 5.6 per cent and 2.6 per cent respectively in the balance of New South Wales.

The proportion of person victims was highest in the 15-24 age group, at 5.7 per cent, and tended to decrease with increasing age. In most age groups there was little difference in the proportion of victims between males and females, but there was a marked difference between the sexes in the 15-24 age group. In this age group, 7.9 per cent of males were victims,

compared with 3.4 per cent of females.

For persons not in the labour force the proportion of victims was only 2.1 per cent, compared with 3.5 per cent for all persons.

An estimated 7.7 per cent of households comprising married couples without children, and 8.3 per cent of households comprising married couples with unmarried children, were victims of the household offences surveyed, compared with 10.4 per cent of single-person households and 10.7 per cent of households comprising one person with unmarried children.

Of the 151,200 person victims, 41.6 per cent were victims on more than one occasion in the last 12 months, as were 33.1 per cent of the 179,700 household victims. Among victims of assault, 27.3 per cent, or 25,300 persons, suffered assault on 3 or more occasions.

The proportion of victims reporting the last incident to the police ranged from 73.2 per cent for break and enter offences, down to 30.8 per cent for assaults.

About 2.3 million people (53.5 per cent) felt their neighbourhood had a crime or public nuisance problem. The problem nominated most often was housebreaking/burglaries/theft from homes, reported by 35.0 per cent of all persons. Dangerous/noisy driving was also of concern to a large proportion of persons, with 31.2 per cent seeing it as a problem.

The number of households in Neighbourhood or Rural Watch programs was 799,800, or 39.7 per cent of all households in New South Wales.

NOTES

The terms used to describe various types of offence in this publication may not necessarily correspond with the legal or police definitions. Victims are counted once only for each type of offence, regardless of the number of incidents of that type.

JOHN WILSON
 Deputy Commonwealth Statistician

TABLE 1. HOUSEHOLDS AND PERSONS: VICTIMS AND NON-VICTIMS OF CRIME
IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS BY TYPE OF OFFENCE
NEW SOUTH WALES, APRIL 1990

Type of offence	Number ('000)			Proportion (per cent)		
	Victims	Non-victims	Total	Victims	Non-victims	Total
HOUSEHOLDS						
Break and enter	113.2	1,904.0	2,017.3	5.6	94.4	100.0
Attempted break and enter	93.0	1,924.3	2,017.3	4.6	95.4	100.0
Break and enter or attempted break and enter (a)	179.7	1,837.6	2,017.3	8.9	91.1	100.0
PERSONS						
Robbery	69.9	4,310.3	4,380.2	1.6	98.4	100.0
Assault	92.8	4,287.4	4,380.2	2.1	97.9	100.0
Robbery or assault (a)	151.2	4,229.0	4,380.2	3.5	96.5	100.0

(a) Refers to households or persons who were victims of either type of offence. Because an individual household or person could be a victim of both types of offence, figures given for individual offence types do not sum to the figures in this row.

TABLE 2. HOUSEHOLDS: VICTIMS AND NON-VICTIMS OF CRIME (a) IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS,
SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS
NEW SOUTH WALES, APRIL 1990

	Number ('000)			Proportion (per cent)		
	Victims	Non-victims	Total	Victims	Non-victims	Total
Whether a member of Neighbourhood (or Rural) Watch—						
Member	68.0	731.8	799.8	8.5	91.5	100.0
Not a member	94.4	940.8	1,035.1	9.1	90.9	100.0
Don't know	17.3	165.0	182.4	9.5	90.5	100.0
All households	179.7	1,837.6	2,017.3	8.9	91.1	100.0
Major statistical region—						
Sydney	136.7	1,118.6	1,255.3	10.9	89.1	100.0
Balance of New South Wales	42.9	719.0	762.0	5.6	94.4	100.0
All households	179.7	1,837.6	2,017.3	8.9	91.1	100.0
Household type—						
Person living alone	38.3	328.9	367.2	10.4	89.6	100.0
Married couple only	35.1	422.2	457.3	7.7	92.3	100.0
Married couple with unmarried child(ren)	63.0	691.6	754.6	8.3	91.7	100.0
One person with unmarried child(ren)	16.9	141.3	158.3	10.7	89.3	100.0
All other households (b)	26.4	253.5	279.9	9.4	90.6	100.0
All households	179.7	1,837.6	2,017.3	8.9	91.1	100.0

(a) Break and enter or attempted break and enter. (b) Also includes all households in caravan parks or camping grounds.

TABLE 3. PERSONS: VICTIMS AND NON-VICTIMS OF CRIME (a) IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS
BY SEX AND AGE
NEW SOUTH WALES, APRIL 1990

Sex and Age	Number ('000)			Proportion (per cent)		
	Victims	Non-victims	Total	Victims	Non-victims	Total
MALES						
15-24 years	34.7	403.0	437.7	7.9	92.1	100.0
25-34 years	21.7	433.6	455.3	4.8	95.2	100.0
35-44 years	14.1	418.8	432.9	3.3	96.7	100.0
45-54 years	10.2	307.4	317.5	3.2	96.8	100.0
55-64 years	*3.3	251.6	255.0	*1.3	98.7	100.0
65 years or over	*3.6	263.8	267.3	*1.3	98.7	100.0
All males	87.5	2,078.2	2,165.7	4.0	96.0	100.0
FEMALES						
15-24 years	14.5	415.2	429.7	3.4	96.6	100.0
25-34 years	18.7	438.0	456.7	4.1	95.9	100.0
35-44 years	14.3	411.4	425.7	3.4	96.6	100.0
45-54 years	9.3	291.7	301.0	3.1	96.9	100.0
55-64 years	*2.3	252.5	254.8	*0.9	99.1	100.0
65 years or over	*4.5	342.0	346.6	*1.3	98.7	100.0
All females	63.6	2,150.8	2,214.5	2.9	97.1	100.0
PERSONS						
15-24 years	49.2	818.2	867.4	5.7	94.3	100.0
25-34 years	40.4	871.7	912.1	4.4	95.6	100.0
35-44 years	28.4	830.1	858.6	3.3	96.7	100.0
45-54 years	19.5	599.0	618.5	3.1	96.9	100.0
55-64 years	*5.6	504.1	509.7	*1.1	98.9	100.0
65 years or over	8.1	605.8	613.9	1.3	98.7	100.0
All persons	151.2	4,229.0	4,380.2	3.5	96.5	100.0

(a) Robbery or assault.

TABLE 4. PERSONS: VICTIMS AND NON-VICTIMS OF CRIME (a) IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS
BY MAJOR STATISTICAL REGION AND LABOUR FORCE STATUS
NEW SOUTH WALES, APRIL 1990

	Number ('000)			Proportion (per cent)		
	Victims	Non-victims	Total	Victims	Non-victims	Total
Major statistical region—						
Sydney	110.2	2,676.7	2,787.0	4.0	96.0	100.0
Balance of New South Wales	40.9	1,552.3	1,593.2	2.6	97.4	100.0
All persons	151.2	4,229.0	4,380.2	3.5	96.5	100.0
Labour force status—						
Employed	108.2	2,483.5	2,591.7	4.2	95.8	100.0
Unemployed	8.3	153.3	161.6	5.1	94.9	100.0
Not in the labour force	34.7	1,592.2	1,626.9	2.1	97.9	100.0
All persons	151.2	4,229.0	4,380.2	3.5	96.5	100.0

(a) Robbery or assault.

TABLE 5. HOUSEHOLD AND PERSON VICTIMS OF CRIME IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS:
TYPE OF OFFENCE BY NUMBER OF INCIDENTS
NEW SOUTH WALES, APRIL 1990

Type of offence	Number ('000)				Proportion (per cent)			
	Number of incidents				Number of incidents			
	One	Two	Three or more	All victims	One	Two	Three or more	All victims
HOUSEHOLD VICTIMS								
Break and enter	87.2	20.4	*5.7	113.2	77.0	18.0	*5.0	100.0
Attempted break and enter	66.5	15.9	10.6	93.0	71.5	17.1	11.4	100.0
Break and enter or attempted break and enter (a)	120.1	35.6	23.9	179.7	66.9	19.8	13.3	100.0
PERSON VICTIMS								
Robbery	49.2	12.5	8.2	69.9	70.5	17.8	11.7	100.0
Assault	51.4	16.1	25.3	92.8	55.4	17.3	27.3	100.0
Robbery or assault (a)	88.3	27.7	35.1	151.2	58.4	18.3	23.2	100.0

(a) Refers to households or persons who were victims of either type of offence. Because an individual household or person could be a victim of both types of offence, figures given for individual offence types do not sum to the figures in this row.

TABLE 6. HOUSEHOLD AND PERSON VICTIMS OF CRIME IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS:
TYPE OF OFFENCE BY WHETHER TOLD POLICE ABOUT THE LAST INCIDENT
NEW SOUTH WALES, APRIL 1990

Type of offence	Number ('000)			Proportion (per cent)		
	Told police	Did not tell police	All victims	Told police	Did not tell police	All victims
HOUSEHOLD VICTIMS						
Break and enter	83.0	30.3	113.2	73.2	26.8	100.0
Attempted break and enter	33.5	59.5	93.0	36.0	64.0	100.0
Break and enter or attempted break and enter (a)	179.7	100.0
PERSON VICTIMS						
Robbery	41.7	28.2	69.9	59.7	40.3	100.0
Assault	28.6	64.2	92.8	30.8	69.2	100.0
Robbery or assault (a)	151.2	100.0

(a) Figures for the last incident of either offence type are not available as respondents were asked about the last incident for each offence type separately.

TABLE 7. PERSONS: PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME OR PUBLIC NUISANCE PROBLEMS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
NEW SOUTH WALES, APRIL 1990

<i>Crime or public nuisance problem</i>	<i>Perceived to be a problem (a)</i>		<i>Perceived to be the main problem</i>	
	<i>Number ('000)</i>	<i>Proportion (b) (per cent)</i>	<i>Number ('000)</i>	<i>Proportion (b) (per cent)</i>
Housebreaking/burglaries/heft from homes	1,558.3	35.6	879.9	20.1
Car theft	1,005.5	23.0	139.6	3.2
Other theft	399.0	9.1	39.5	0.9
Louls/youth gangs	813.8	18.6	229.3	5.2
Prowlers/loiterers	371.6	8.5	42.2	1.0
Vandalism/graffiti	818.3	18.7	165.5	3.8
Dangerous/noisy driving	1,365.9	31.2	514.5	11.7
Illegal drugs	563.8	12.9	165.0	3.8
Sexual assault	198.0	4.5	24.4	0.6
Other assault	201.8	4.6	11.2	0.3
Problems with neighbours/domestic problems	344.5	7.9	83.9	1.9
Other	127.4	2.9	50.5	1.2
No perceived problem	2,034.8	46.5	2,034.8	46.5
All persons	4,380.2	..	4,380.2	100.0

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

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This publication contains results from a survey of crime and safety which was conducted throughout New South Wales in April 1990 using the ABS Australia-wide Monthly Population Survey as the survey vehicle. The survey was conducted at the request of the New South Wales Police Department and the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR), and was funded by these organisations.

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

Survey methodology

3. The survey was conducted using all the private dwellings, as well as caravan parks and camping grounds, included in the Monthly Population Survey (MPS) for New South Wales, with the exception of private dwellings containing only visitors. The MPS was conducted during the two weeks commencing Monday, 9 April 1990.

4. Crime and Safety questionnaires were delivered to the selected households by MPS interviewers, for completion by respondents and return by mail. One questionnaire per household contained questions relating to the household as a whole. In addition, all persons in scope were provided with a questionnaire relating to their personal experiences of crime. All persons provided with a questionnaire were advised that participation in the Crime and Safety Survey was voluntary.

5. Information was sought from approximately 17,100 persons of whom about 12,400 (73.4 per cent) responded. Data pertaining to households were sought from approximately 7,900 households and about 5,800 (73.1 per cent) replied. Examination of successive waves of responses did not indicate any serious problem of non-response bias. Special estimation procedures were employed to reduce the effect of non-response.

Scope

6. The survey was conducted for all persons aged 15 and over who were usual residents of private dwellings, camping grounds or caravan parks, except

- (a) residents of other non-private dwellings such as hospitals, motels and jails (included in the Monthly Population Survey);
- (b) members of the permanent defence forces;
- (c) certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from censuses and surveys;
- (d) overseas residents in Australia; and

- (e) members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependants) stationed in Australia.

Definitions

7. A *household* is a group of residents of a dwelling who share common facilities and meals or who consider themselves to be a household. It is possible for a dwelling to contain more than one household, for example where regular provision is made for groups to take meals separately and where persons consider their households to be separate.

8. *Neighbourhood (or Rural) Watch* is a community-based crime prevention program mainly aimed at preventing break and enter offences.

9. The term *offence* is used in this publication to indicate crimes which persons or households reported had been committed against them (i.e. the responses obtained in this survey are based on the respondents' perception of their having been the victim of an offence). The terms used summarise the wording of the questions asked of the respondent, and may not necessarily correspond with the legal or police definitions which are used for each offence.

10. A *break and enter* offence was recorded when the person responding for the household indicated that their home had been broken into in the last 12 months. The respondent's home was defined to include their garage or shed, but break and enter offences relating to their car or garden were excluded. If the respondent indicated that, apart from any incident reported as a break and enter, they had found signs of an attempted break in, an *attempted break and enter* was recorded.

11. A *robbery* was recorded when a person indicated that someone had stolen something from them in the last 12 months by threatening or attacking them.

12. *Assault* refers to any incident in the last 12 months, other than a robbery, when the respondent was threatened with force or attacked.

13. A *victim* is a person or a household reporting one of the offences listed above. Victims are counted once only for each type of offence, regardless of the number of incidents of that type.

14. *Crime or public nuisance problems* are anything perceived by the respondent to be problems arising from crime or people creating a public nuisance.

15. *Neighbourhood* — respondents were asked about crime problems in their neighbourhood. The precise definition of this term was left to the respondent.

Estimation procedure

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

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

Reliability of estimates

18. Estimates in this publication are subject to *sampling* and *non-sampling* errors. For information on these sources of error and the reliability of the estimates, refer to the Technical Note on Data Reliability overleaf.

Related publications

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

Crime and Crime Prevention Survey, Victoria, July 1987, Preliminary (4507.2)

Crime Victims Survey, Victoria, 1986 (4506.2)

Crime Victims Survey, Australia, 1983, Preliminary (4505.0)

Victims of Crime, Australia, 1983, (4506.0)

Additional data

20. In some cases the ABS can make available information from this survey which is not published. This may

include data relating to reasons why offences were not reported to the police, items stolen in break and enter offences, and breakdowns of data by statistical district, division or subdivision. In general, a charge is made for providing unpublished information. For further information please phone Bernard Wong on (02) 268 4660 or contact the ABS as shown in the Inquiries Section at the front of this publication.

21. A list of the complete range of publications available from the ABS can be obtained from any ABS Office. A range of statistics is also available via electronic dissemination services. AUSSTATS, an on-line database containing a wide range of statistics, is available Australia-wide. In addition, selected economic, social and demographic statistics are released on DISCOVERY *656#. Further information about AUSSTATS is available on (06) 252 6017, while details of other services can be obtained from the Sydney ABS Information Services on (02) 268 4611, or from any ABS Office.

Symbols and other usages

- * estimate is subject to a relative standard error of 25 per cent or more. (See the Technical Note on Data Reliability overleaf.)
- .. not applicable

22. Figures have been rounded, and discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals shown. Published proportions are calculated prior to rounding of figures and, therefore, some discrepancies may exist between published proportions and those that could be calculated from the rounded figures.

23. In some tables, an individual person or a household may fall into more than one of the listed categories. The sum of the numbers in all categories may therefore exceed the total number of persons or households shown in the table.

TECHNICAL NOTE ON DATA RELIABILITY

Sources of error

24. There are a number of possible sources of error in sample surveys and these can be classified into two types: sampling error and non-sampling error.

Non-sampling errors

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

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

Sampling errors

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

Standard error of estimates

28. One measure of the variability of estimates which occurs as a result of surveying only a sample of the population is the standard error (SE). There are about two chances in three that a survey estimate is within one standard error of the figure that would have been obtained if all persons had been included, and about nineteen chances in twenty that it is within two standard errors. That is, there are 19 chances in 20 that the true estimate is in the range—

$$X - 2 SE(X) \text{ to } X + 2 SE(X)$$

(where X is the estimate)

The standard error of an estimate can be obtained from the following table. Linear interpolation should be used to calculate the standard error of estimates falling between the sizes of estimates listed in the table.

29. For all tables in this publication, only estimates with relative standard errors of 25 per cent or less, and percentages based on such estimates, are considered sufficiently reliable for most purposes. However, estimates and percentages with larger relative standard errors have been included and are preceded by an * to indicate that they are subject to high standard errors and should be used with caution.

Relative standard errors

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

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

(where X is the estimate)

31. The look up table on this page provides a guide for the calculation of standard errors and relative standard errors for the estimates in this publication.

STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATES OF PERSONS AND HOUSEHOLDS, NEW SOUTH WALES

Size of estimate (households or persons)	Standard error (number)	Relative standard error (per cent)
1,000	640	63.8
2,000	900	44.9
3,000	1,100	36.4
4,000	1,250	31.3
5,000	1,400	27.8
6,000	1,500	25.2
8,000	1,700	21.6
10,000	1,900	19.1
20,000	2,600	13.0
30,000	3,100	10.3
40,000	3,500	8.7
50,000	3,850	7.7
100,000	5,100	5.1
200,000	6,700	3.3
300,000	7,800	2.6
400,000	8,700	2.2
500,000	9,400	1.9
1,000,000	12,100	1.2
2,000,000	15,400	0.8
5,000,000	20,800	0.4

