
11 POLICE SERVICES

11.1 Introduction

Police services are predominantly a State and Territory Government function, with each operating a police service to enforce laws within its jurisdiction, except the ACT Government which contracts the Australian Federal Police to provide a community policing function. The national policing function of the Australian Federal Police and other national non-police service law enforcement bodies such as the National Crime Authority are not included in the Report.

The framework of performance indicators for police used in this Report has been revised since the 1995 Report and new efficiency indicators have been developed. These new indicators relate to costs and are based on significant areas of police operation.

The major improvement in the data has been the collection of extensive, nationally comparable community satisfaction information. The data set relates to community attitudes towards police and safety and compliance with laws.

11.2 Profile of the sector

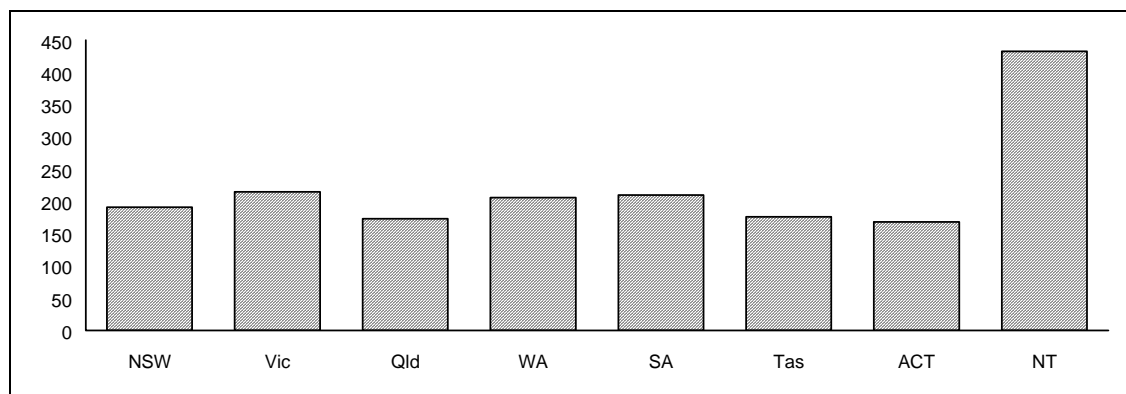
Police services pursue three main objectives:

- *to protect, help and reassure the community* — activities include formal and informal contact with the community (for example, responding to calls for assistance, community consultation and support);
- *to prevent crime* — activities include maintaining a visible police presence, providing community safety and education programs, cautioning and undertaking diversion schemes; and
- *to enforce the law* — activities include investigating crime, identifying and apprehending offenders and assisting the prosecution of offenders, managing traffic and, in some jurisdictions, managing detainees.

These objectives are closely linked. Many police activities may achieve two, or even all three, objectives simultaneously. For example, street patrols reassure the community and prevent crime through their presence, but also enforce the law by being ‘on the scene’ when criminal acts are committed.

Total police services expenditure across Australia was \$3.6 billion in total and \$220 per head in 1995–96. Among jurisdictions it ranged from \$160 per head in Tasmania to \$433 in the NT (Figure 11.1).

Figure 11.1: Police services expenditure, 1995–96 (\$ per head of population)¹

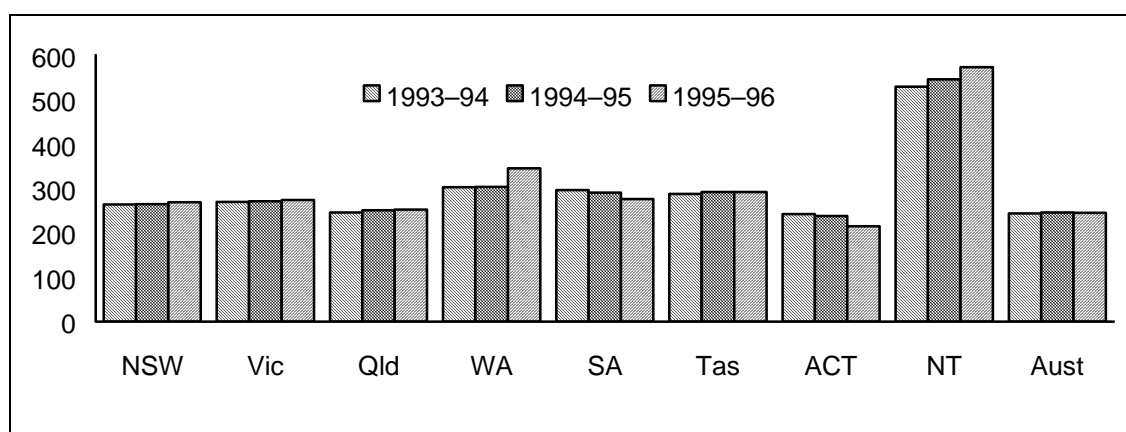


¹ Data is not completely comparable due to differences between jurisdictions in methods of accounting for salaries and other expenditure.

Sources: Tables 11A.1, 11A.2, 11A.3, 11A.4, 11A.5, 11A.6, 11A.7, 11A.8. ABS Cat. No. 3222.0.

Total police services staffing across Australia was 50 700 in 1995–96, with approximately 80 per cent being sworn police officers. Nationally, police service staff per 100 000 population was steady between 1993–94 and 1995–96, but it increased in the NT and WA, and fell in the ACT and SA (Figure 11.2).

Figure 11.2: Police services staff, 1993–94 to 1995–96 (number per 100 000 population)¹



¹ Included sworn and un-sworn staff.

Sources: Tables 11A.1, 11A.2, 11A.3, 11A.4, 11A.5, 11A.6, 11A.7, 11A.8. ABS Cat. No. 3222.0.

State and territory police are generally constrained to operating within their jurisdictional borders, but considerable cooperation occurs. Statutory processes, for example, enable those arrested in one jurisdiction to be extradited for crimes committed in another. Formal cooperative mechanisms also exist through the Australasian Police Ministers' Council, Commissioner's Conference forums, and National Common Police Services.

There is also cooperation between police services and other elements of the justice system such as public prosecutors, the courts, and corrective services, as the activities of each component have a significant impact on the others. For example, success in bringing offenders to justice generally requires efforts by the prosecutors and the courts system, as well as the police.

These links are important in understanding the objectives of police services and interpreting performance indicators that address each of these objectives.

11.3 Recent developments

Like many public sector organisations, police services have undergone significant reforms during the 1990s, including the introduction of output based budgeting and commercialisation.

11.3.1 Output based budgeting

There has been a general move throughout police services in Australia to introduce output based budgeting — establishing separate budgets for different program areas and reporting expenditure and outputs against these (Box 11.1).¹

It is important to note that output based budgeting is different to output based *funding* (such as casemix funding in hospitals) where the agency receives a pre-determined amount for each unit of output produced.

Each police service is in the process of developing some form of output based budgeting, but none has yet fully implemented it.

Box 11.1: An example of output based budgeting

The WA Treasury recently released output based budgeting guidelines for the WA public service. These guidelines describe output based budgeting as trying to achieve:

¹ The terminology differs between jurisdictions, output based budgeting may be also called output based funding or outcome based funding.

- the detailed identification, specification, measurement (that is, full costing and quantifying) and reporting of the outputs produced by agencies;
- demonstrated links between those agency external outputs and the achievement of the outcomes desired by government for the community; and
- external reporting of key output based indicators of program performance.

Source: Treasury Department of WA 1996.

11.3.2 Matching tasks to appropriate skills

Police services have been examining their activities to ensure that tasks are undertaken by those with the most appropriate skills.

‘Civilianisation’ of police services has been occurring for a number of years. The main thrust of this program is to replace sworn police officers in positions that could be undertaken more appropriately by civilians. This may release sworn officers to perform ‘front line’ policing duties, and so reduce costs.

Initially, civilianisation programs focused on administrative positions, but it is now recognised that civilians may perform many operational support functions including senior management functions.

In some circumstances police services have been contracted to outside providers — for example, fleet management and maintenance of police vehicles. Victoria has outsourced the procurement and operational maintenance of its helicopters.

In addition to reviewing how police services can be best undertaken, police services are reviewing the many other activities they have been given responsibility for over time and refocussing their services on ‘core business’. These reviews aim to determine which non-core activities could be contracted out or transferred to more appropriate government agencies. For example, in WA, resources belonging to the Licensing and Services Division were transferred from the police service to the Department of Transport on 1 August 1995.

11.3.3 Commercialisation

Commercialisation of police services encompasses sponsorship, strategic alliances (for example, with tertiary education institutions), cost-recovery, and the development of police products and services for sale on the international market.

The cost–recovery principle has been applied to police services where the costs can be identified and the beneficiary is determined to be other than the general community, for example, services provided to other departments and private interests (such as security at entertainment events).

11.4 Framework of performance indicators

The framework of performance indicators has been significantly revised for this Report. New data are available for some indicators, and some new indicators have been developed.

11.4.1 Changes to the framework

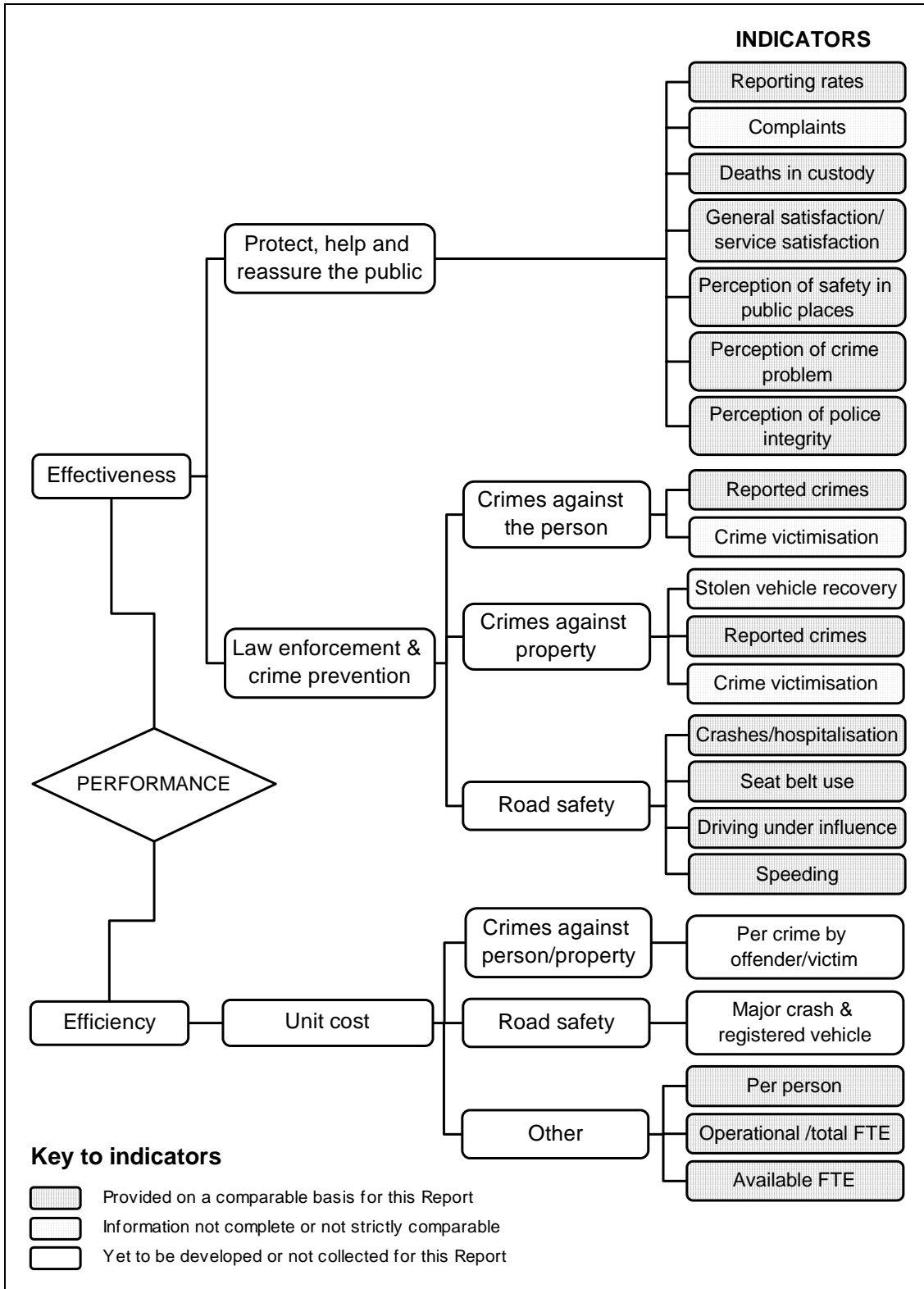
Since the 1995 Report, while retaining the objectives of police services as a basis for the framework, output classes have been added in order to more specifically allocate indicators to output classes (Figure 11.3).

Indicators that apply broadly to the police service, rather than to specific functions, have been linked to the objective of ‘protect, help and reassure the public’. These include reporting rates, complaints, general satisfaction with police and perceptions of safety in public places.

The ‘law enforcement and crime prevention’ objective has been divided into three sub-categories based on major police service output classes: ‘crimes against the person’, ‘crimes against property’, and ‘road safety’. Appropriate indicators have been placed against each output class. For example, reported crimes against the person are related to ‘crimes against the person’ and crashes and hospitalisations are related to ‘road safety’.

Definitions of all indicators are provided in Attachment 11A.

Figure 11.3: Framework of indicators for police services



11.4.2 Changes to the performance indicators

A number of changes have been made to indicators for this Report, with both data being available for previously unreported indicators and the addition of new indicators.

Community perceptions survey

The first comprehensive, nationally comparable, survey of community perceptions of police provided information for a number of indicators:

- general satisfaction with police;
- perceptions of safety in public places;
- perceptions of police integrity;
- satisfaction with police service;
- incidence of seat belt use; and
- incidence of speeding and of driving under the influence.

Only three quarters of data were available for this Report due to the timing of the survey. However full financial year data will be presented in the next Report.

Efficiency indicators

The efficiency indicators reported in the 1995 Report were interim because adequate methods of measuring efficiency had not been determined. Further work has occurred on developing new indicators and while only some of these could be measured for this Report, processes have been established to produce data for subsequent reports.

Removal of indicators

A number of indicators from the 1995 Report have been removed: designated person security, the number of sustained complaints from detainees, and the estimated value of assets confiscated. These were considered to be difficult to measure and of marginal benefit as performance indicators.

11.5 Future directions

A number of improvements to the indicators and the data are being developed which will improve either the appropriateness of the indicators or the quality of data.

11.5.1 Appropriate indicators

A number of tasks have been identified to ensure that the indicators presented are both valid and comprehensive; that is, that they correctly measure police performance, and that they cover all major aspects of police activity.

Activity surveys

An important aspect of developing efficiency indicators is the identification and measurement of inputs relating to output classes. The measurement of inputs poses difficulties in police services because police officers typically produce a range of outputs during a normal working day.

A national activity survey of operational police officers is planned to enable inputs to be measured for output classes. The survey would be completed by operational police officers and involve them identifying which outputs they spent their time producing.

The survey is being developed and a pilot survey is planned for the first half of 1997. It is expected that data will be produced for the next Report and will provide a major improvement in efficiency reporting.

Crime victimisation surveys

Reported crime data from the National Crime Statistics are included in this Report. However, because a proportion of crimes go unreported, information on the full extent of crime is only available through surveying the population directly.

The ABS conducts population surveys in relation to crime (ABS Cat. No. 4510.0) victimisation every five years. These produce detailed crime victimisation data as well as other crime research information. Given the importance of crime victimisation data in establishing an understanding of the true level of crime, it is considered desirable to increase the frequency of collection of at least the major elements of this survey. A crime victimisation survey that can supplement the present five year survey is currently being considered.

Satisfaction with police prosecutions

Given the importance of the police service contribution to the prosecution process, a survey of public prosecutors and/or magistrates is being developed to measure their satisfaction with police prosecutions.²

A pilot survey is planned for early 1997, with the survey conducted during the second half of 1997 to allow for the data to be presented in the next Report.

11.5.2 Quality of data

Outcome of investigations

Information on bringing offenders to justice provides important performance information, but current data collections do not allow this information to be reported. It was possible to collect information on outcomes of investigations, providing partial information on bringing offenders to justice.

The ABS National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics is developing uniform definitions to enable the collection of nationally comparable statistics on the outcome of investigations. Data are scheduled for release next year.

Recovery of stolen vehicles

The 'recovery of stolen vehicles' information reported in the 1995 Report was inconsistent and lacked comparability. The data source has been changed to insurance companies, which is considered to be more comparable between jurisdictions. Only a partial information collection was achieved for this Report, but complete, national, comparable data will be available for the next Report.

11.6 Key performance indicator results

Key results are provided in this section for each objective of police services, and for the law enforcement and crime prevention objectives for each output class (crimes against the person, crimes against property and road safety).

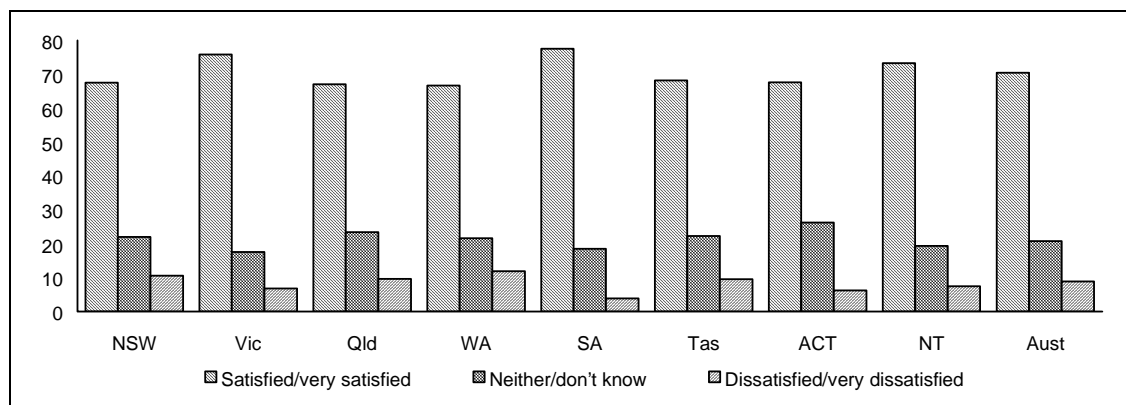
Further information, including additional performance indicators, additional time series data, and greater detail, is provided in Attachment 11A.

² The appropriate survey recipient will depend on the jurisdiction and type of case.

11.6.1 Protect, help and reassure the public

An estimated 70 per cent of the Australian population was satisfied or very satisfied with police services (Figure 11.4). Satisfaction was highest in SA (78 per cent) and lowest in Queensland (67 per cent). Dissatisfaction was, however, highest in WA (11.9 per cent).

Figure 11.4: General satisfaction with police services, 9 months to September 1996 (per cent)¹

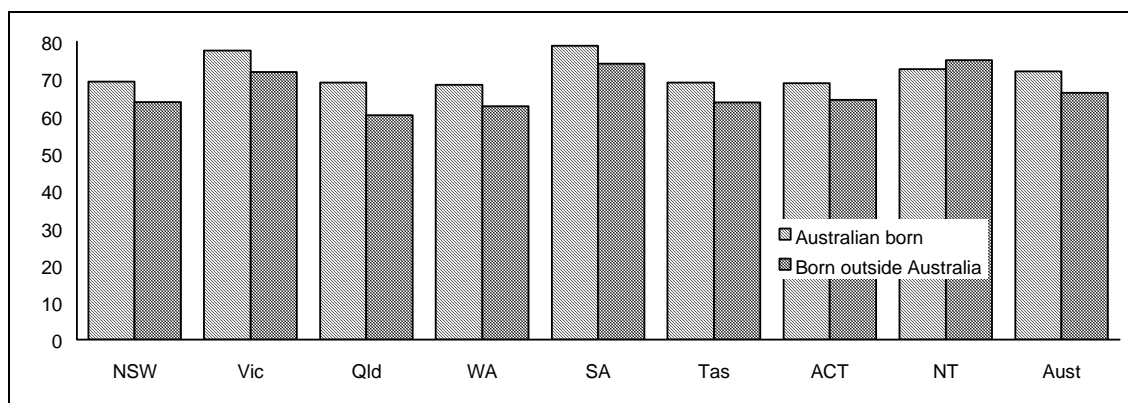


¹ The satisfaction survey was conducted three times during the nine months to September 1996; each time the respondent was asked about their attitudes and behaviour during the last 12 months.

Source: Table 11A.12.

Across jurisdictions, a greater proportion of those born in Australia generally reported satisfaction with police services than those born overseas (Figure 11.5). The difference Australia-wide was approximately 6 percentage points. Only in the NT did people born overseas report a higher level of satisfaction than those born in Australia.

Figure 11.5: Proportion of population satisfied with police services, by birthplace, 9 months to September 1996 (per cent)^{1,2}



1 The satisfaction survey was conducted three times during the nine months to September 1996; each time the respondent was asked about their attitudes and behaviour during the last 12 months.

2 Included those who were 'satisfied' and those who were 'very satisfied'.

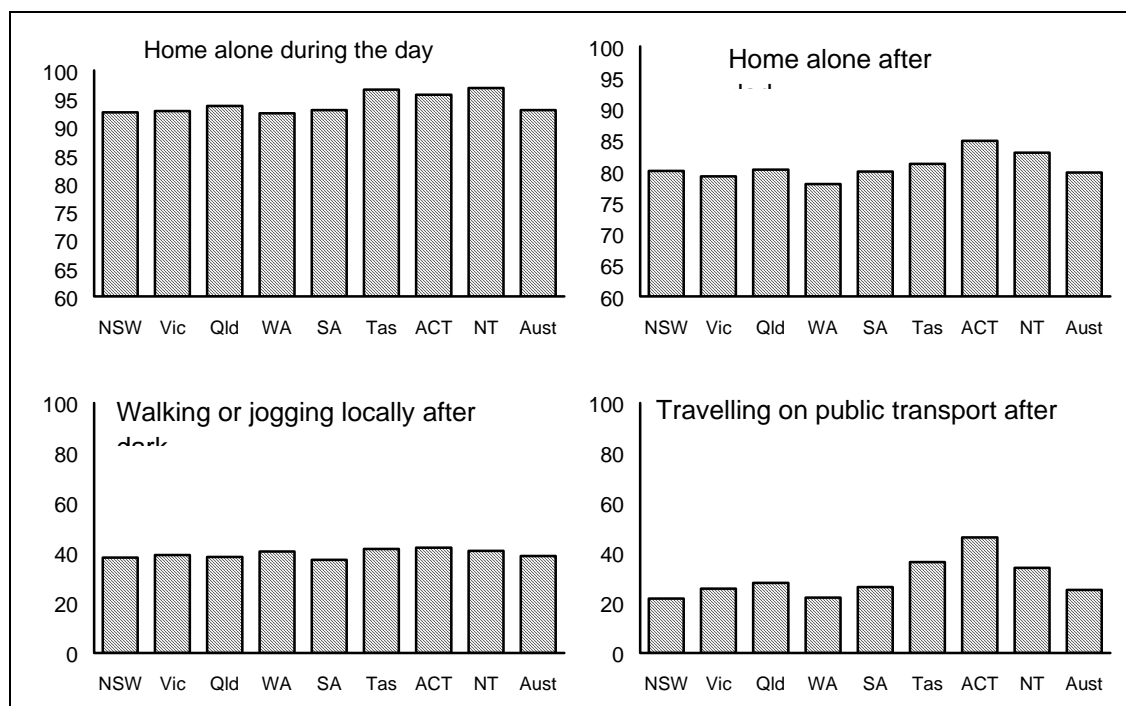
Source: Table 11A.16.

Among jurisdictions there was a generally consistent pattern to perceptions of safety in different public and private places although differences were more pronounced for some places. The perceptions of safety were consistently highest in Tasmania, the ACT and the NT (Figure 11.6).

People reported feeling relatively safe when 'home alone during the day', and less so when 'walking or jogging locally after dark', but there was little variation among jurisdictions in either place.

There was more variation among jurisdictions in the proportion of people reported as feeling relatively safe for 'home alone after dark'. The highest rate was for the ACT — 85 per cent reported feeling safe — and the lowest rate was in WA — 78 per cent. Perceptions of safety for 'travelling on public transport after dark' also varied significantly among jurisdictions. The highest rate was in the ACT — 46 per cent, followed by Tasmania — 36 per cent, and the NT — 34 per cent. The lowest rate was in NSW (22 per cent felt safe).

Figure 11.6: Proportion of population who felt safe in private and public places, 9 months to September 1996 (per cent)^{1,2}



1 The satisfaction survey was conducted three times during the nine months to September 1996; each time the respondent was asked about their attitudes and behaviour during the last 12 months.

2 Included those who felt 'safe and those who were 'very safe'.

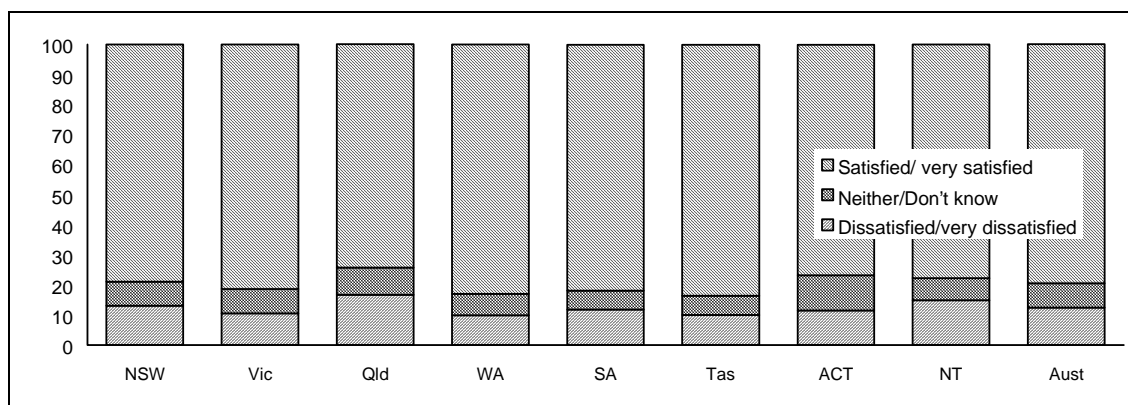
Source: Table 11A.15.

The community perceptions survey also collected information from people regarding their most recent contact with police. A large majority — 80 per cent — were satisfied with the service they received, but 13 per cent reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. The highest level of dissatisfaction was in Queensland — 17 per cent — and the lowest was in WA — 10 per cent (Figure 11.7).

Across Australia, that police 'took no action' was the most common reason for dissatisfaction — 34 per cent. Among jurisdictions, dissatisfaction for this reason was highest in NSW (42 per cent) and lowest in SA (24 per cent). Dissatisfaction was also relatively high for factors relating to the attitude of police such as 'impolite', 'unhelpful' and 'kept waiting'. These reasons were reported by between 20 and 30 per cent of those dissatisfied with police services.

There were also a number of other reported reasons for dissatisfaction. Ten per cent across Australia reported 'made false accusation', and 5 per cent reported 'used unnecessary force' as the reason for dissatisfaction (Table 11.1).

Figure 11.7: Satisfaction for most recent contact with police, 9 months to September 1996 (per cent)¹



1 The satisfaction survey was conducted three times during the nine months to September 1996; each time the respondent was asked about their attitudes and behaviour during the last 12 months.

Source: Table 11A.24.

Table 11.1: Reason for dissatisfaction with police for last contact with police, 9 months to November 1996 (per cent)¹

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Took no action	42	26	37	24	25	30	31	38	34
No interest shown	23	31	32	30	27	33	20	24	28
Kept waiting	17	23	20	18	27	25	14	18	20
Unfriendly/impolite	28	38	21	25	40	30	36	20	29
Unhelpful	28	29	28	21	33	21	32	16	28
Unprofessional/unfair	26	35	27	22	25	17	29	25	28
Not kept informed	22	26	23	23	9	28	15	19	22
Made false accusation	9	10	11	6	14	11	17	16	10
Used unnecessary force	4	5	6	2	5	8	2	8	5
Used complex language	1	4	3	2	4	6	5	5	3

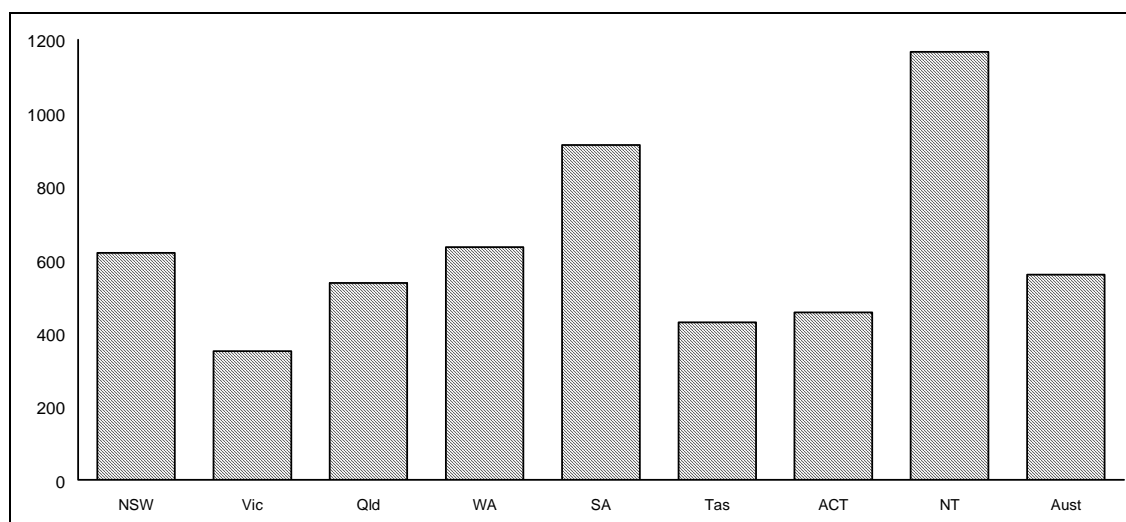
1 The sum of the percentages is larger than 100 per cent as more than one reason could be chosen.

Source: Table 11A.26.

11.6.2 Law enforcement and crime prevention — crimes against the person

Information on reported victims of assault (direct injury or violence including attempts or threats in a confronting manner) has become available for the first time. The highest number of reported assault victims per 100 000 population occurred in the NT (1167) and SA (913). The lowest reported assault rates were in the ACT (457), Tasmania (430) and Victoria (351) (Figure 11.8).

Figure 11.8: Reported victims of assault, 1995 (number per 100 000 population)¹



1 Figures were based on crimes reported to police.

Source: Table 11A.27.

The rates of reported victims of sexual assault also varied significantly across jurisdictions in 1995 (Figure 11.9). The lowest levels in 1995 were in Tasmania and the ACT with 34 and 25 reported victims per 100 000 population respectively. Reported rates in the other states and territories varied between 62 and 103. However, significant changes occurred over the three years to 1995, with increases of 37 per cent and 26 per cent in the rate per 100 000 population in WA and Tasmania respectively, and falls of 14 per cent and 37 per cent in SA and the NT respectively.

Figure 11.9: Reported victims of sexual assault, 1993 to 1995 (number per 100 000 population)¹

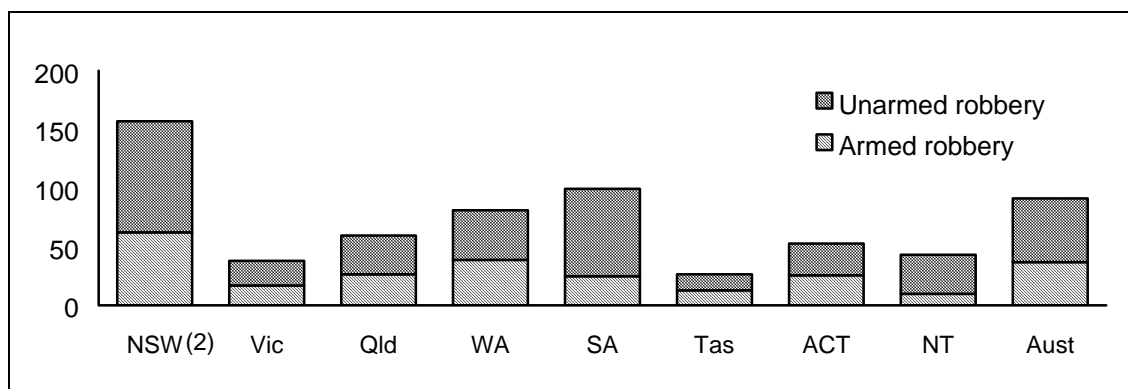


1 Figures were based on crimes reported to police.

Source: Table 11A.27.

Robbery data for NSW was not comparable with the data of other jurisdictions because it included trauma victims as well as victims suffering financial loss (Figure 11.10). The highest rate of the remaining jurisdictions was in SA (99), the lowest was Tasmania (27). There were more cases of unarmed robbery than armed robbery in all jurisdictions. However the ratio of reported armed to unarmed robberies varied between jurisdictions. For example, there were approximately three reported victims of unarmed robbery for every reported victim of armed robbery in SA whereas Tasmania had only slightly more victims of unarmed robbery than armed robbery.

Figure 11.10: Reported victims of armed and unarmed robbery, 1995 (number per 100 000 population)¹



1 Figures were based on crimes reported to police.

2 NSW introduced a new incident based reporting system in 1994. Since then victims of robbery have included trauma victims as well as victims suffering financial loss. It is not possible to compare NSW and national robbery statistics.

Source: Table 11A.27.

Crime victimisation data based on a direct survey of the population provides more complete information on the incidence of crime than reported crime statistics. Nationally comparable surveys in 1983 and 1993 showed that there has been limited variation in the national apparent victimisation rate. On a jurisdictional basis, while some victimisation rates rose (for example robberies in NSW rose from 800 per 100 000 population in 1983 to 1300 per 100 000 population in 1993) they also fell in many cases (for example the assault rate in SA fell from 4000 per 100 000 population in 1983 to 2500 per 100 000 population in 1993) (Table 11.2).

Table 11.2: Estimated victims of crime, reported and unreported, 1983 and 1993 (number per 100 000 population)¹

<i>Data item</i>	<i>Year</i> ²	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Robbery	1983	800	400	400	700	*400	**	*700	**	600
	1993	1300	1000	1200	1300	1300	800	1700	1700	1200
Assault	1983	3000	3800	2900	4300	4000	*1400	*4800	*6500	3400
	1993	2600	2200	2900	2200	2500	2800	3500	3600	2500
Sexual Assault	1983	600	*400	*400	*700	*300	**	*900	**	500
	1993	800	500	500	*300	800	*500	*900	*200	600

1 Figures derived from surveys of the Australian population. Figures were for the 12 months to April of the specified year.

2 Due to the small sample size in States and Territories, some results are subject to large standard error.

* Estimate is subject to a relative standard error of between 25 per cent and 50 per cent.

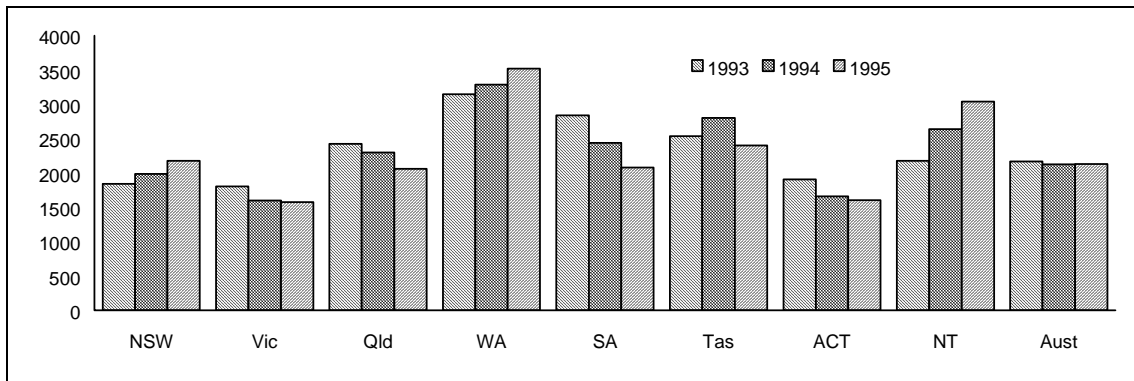
** Estimate is subject to a relative standard error of over 50 per cent.

Source: Table 11A.30.

11.6.3 Law enforcement and crime prevention — crimes against property

The rate of reported unlawful entry with intent (to commit an offence such as burglary) varied significantly across jurisdictions (Figure 11.11). There was a general increase in the reported rate in NSW, WA and the NT, while it fell in Victoria, Queensland, SA and the ACT, and remained reasonably stable in Tasmania.

Figure 11.11: Reported victims of unlawful entry with intent, 1993 to 1995 (number per 100 000 population)¹



¹ Figures were based on crimes reported to police.
 Source: Table 11A.29.

11.6.4 Law enforcement and crime prevention — road safety

A number of factors besides police effectiveness influence the levels of road fatalities and hospitalisations, but the data probably gives some indication of the success of police service road safety programs. The highest levels of road deaths and hospitalisations in 1995–96 occurred in the NT where there were 425 road deaths and hospitalisations per 100 000 registered vehicles (Figure 11.12).

Figure 11.12: Road fatalities and hospitalisations, 1993–94 to 1995–96 (number per 100 000 registered vehicles)

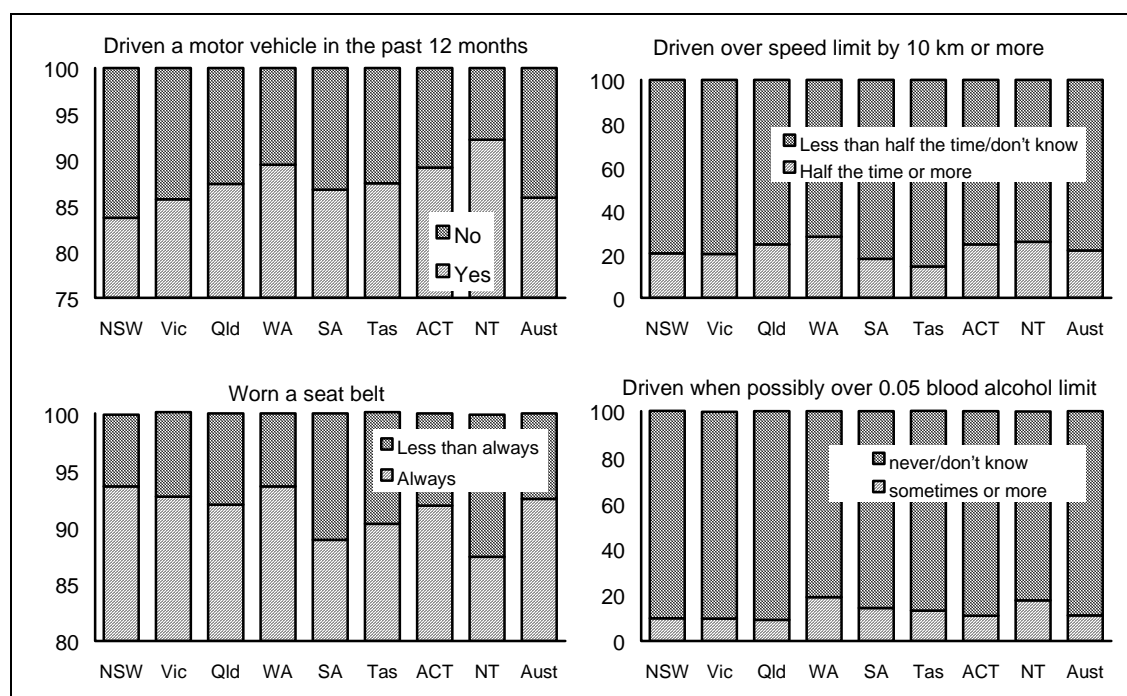


¹ Figures included all collisions with serious injury (involving overnight hospitalisation). The ACT data included collisions with serious injury and non-serious injury.
 Source: Table 11A.33.

Information on the incidence of certain road safety behaviour was collected with the police community perceptions survey. Across Australia, approximately 22 per cent of drivers have driven 10 kilometres or more over the speed limit half the time or more. Occurrence of this was highest in WA — 28 per cent — and lowest in Tasmania — 14 per cent (Figure 11.13). Seat belt usage was high — 93 per cent of drivers across Australia reported that they always wore a seat belt. Most states and territories had similar rates except for SA and NT which had slightly lower (89 and 87 per cent respectively).

Approximately 11 per cent of drivers Australia-wide drove when possibly over the 0.05 blood alcohol limit at least sometimes. Only 0.7 per cent drove over the limit at least half the time. The highest incidence recorded was in WA where 19 per cent reported driving at least some time when possibly over the 0.05 blood alcohol limit, and the lowest incidence was in Queensland — 9 per cent.

Figure 11.13: Incidence of certain road safety behaviour, 9 months to November 1996 (per cent) ^{1,2}



1 The first graph shows the proportion of the population who had driven a motor vehicle in the last 12 months. The other three charts show the incidence of certain road safety behaviour, as a proportion of the population who had driven a motor vehicle in the last 12 months.

2 The satisfaction survey was conducted three times during the nine months to September 1996; each time the respondent was asked about their behaviour during the last 12 months.

Sources: Tables 11A.34, 11A.35, 11A.36, 11A.37.

Only limited information on efficiency is currently available, however this should improve with the introduction of an activity survey (see Section 11.5.1). The Steering Committee is currently undertaking a study using Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) as a method of measuring efficiency (see Box 11.2).

Box 11.2: DEA Case Study — NSW police patrols

The Steering Committee is undertaking a case study using Data Envelopment Analysis to assess the technical efficiency of a sample of police patrols in NSW. The technique is discussed in Section 2.3.2.

The efficiency of the police patrols in the sample is being assessed in terms of their potential to increase their outputs while maintaining the same level of inputs. The inputs and outputs used in the model are:

Inputs	Outputs
Full time equivalent police officers	Number of arrests,
Full time equivalent civilian employees	Number of incidents responded to
Number of police cars	Number of summons served
	Number of car accidents attended
	Kilometres travelled by police cars

A full discussion of the DEA methodology, this model and results will be contained in a paper being prepared by the Steering Committee.

