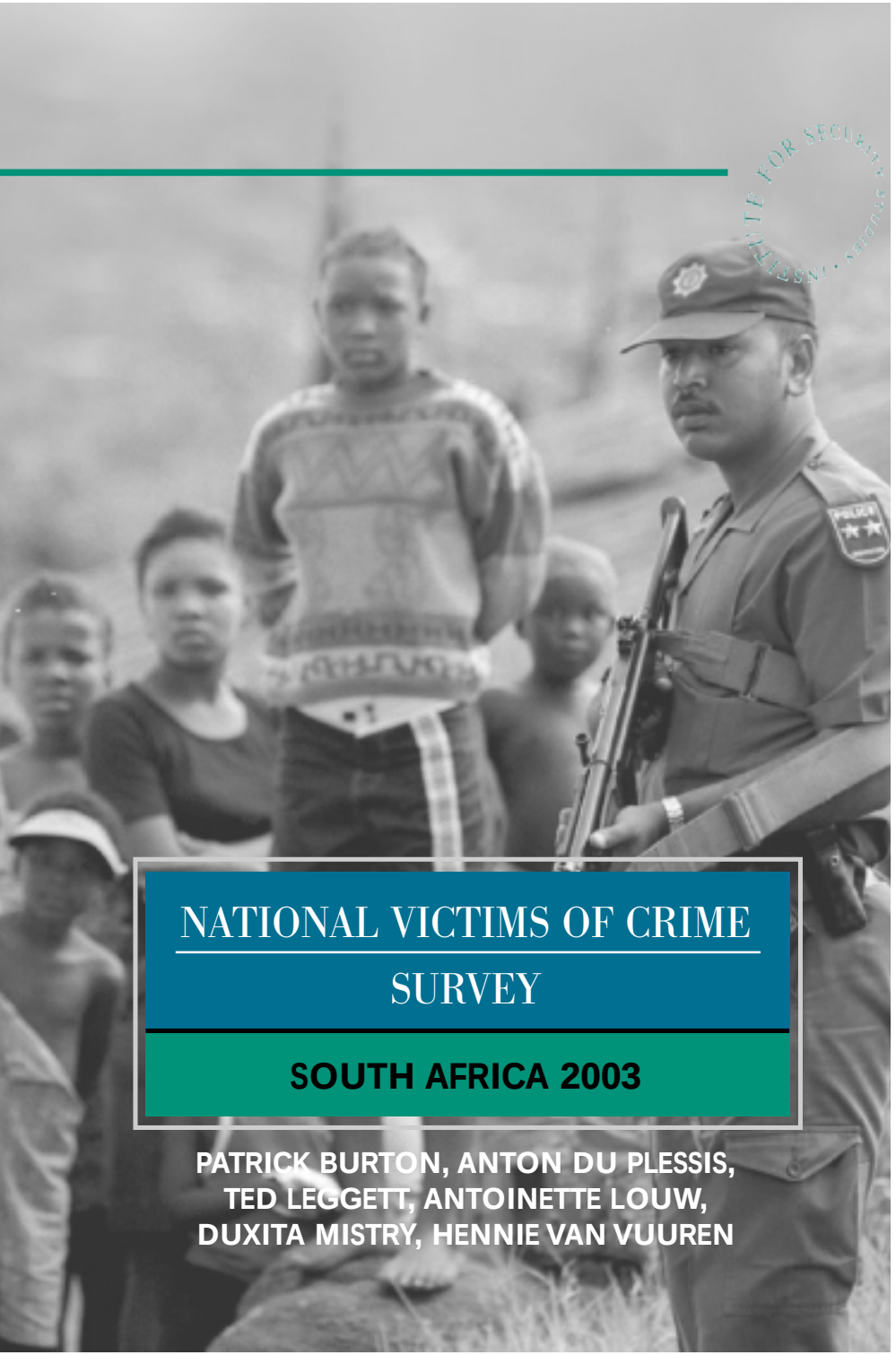

NATIONAL VICTIMS OF CRIME SURVEY

SOUTH AFRICA 2003

PATRICK BURTON, ANTON DU PLESSIS,
TED LEGGETT, ANTOINETTE LOUW,
DUXITA MISTRY, HENNIE VAN VUUREN

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- Dr U Zvekic, Senior Crime Prevention & Criminal Justice Expert, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Finally, the authors would like to thank Development Research Africa for conducting the survey and processing the data.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CATI	Computer-aided telephone interview
CJP	Crime and Justice Programme
CPF	Community Policing Forum
DRA	Development Research Africa
DSS	Department of Safety and Security
EA	Enumerator Area
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ICVS	International Crime Victim Surveys
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
NCCS	National Crime Combating Strategy
SA	South Africa
SAPS	South African Police Service
SSA	Statistics South Africa
UNICRI	United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2003, the Institute for Security Studies undertook the second national victims of crime survey in South Africa. The survey was designed to ensure comparability with the 1998 national Victims of Crime survey conducted by Statistics South Africa for the Department of Safety and Security and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI). The ISS was assisted throughout the study by a group of stakeholders from government and civil society, many of whom participated in the 1998 survey.

The survey was conducted between September and October 2003. Households were randomly selected across the country based on the census data. A national sample of 4,860 was realised. The sample was stratified by province and urban/rural areas, and the data was weighted to reflect the actual composition of the population.

Public perceptions about crime and safety

Feelings of safety have declined markedly since 1998: the number feeling very unsafe at night more than doubled from 25% in 1998 to 58% in 2003. Feelings of safety are also low compared to other countries. Despite this, it is encouraging that nearly half of South Africans (46%) did not believe crime has increased in past three years in their areas of residence. A small majority (53%) said crime had gone up.

Perceptions about crime and safety differed markedly according to race and area of residence. Those most concerned were people living in the metropolitan areas followed by urban areas, and Indian followed by white South Africans. South Africans living in metropolitan (61%) and urban areas (54%) were much more likely to say crime has increased than those in traditional rural (48%) or farming (43%) areas. Indians were much more likely (78%) to believe crime has gone up than whites (61%), blacks (51%) and coloureds (48%). In terms of feelings of safety, those living in rural areas were much more likely to feel safe walking in their neighbourhoods than those in urban areas. Black (64%) and coloured (62%) South Africans were much more likely to feel very safe during the day than whites (35%) and Indians (11%).

Many South Africans (29%) personally know someone who makes a living from crime in their area. Given this intimate knowledge of criminals, it is notable that respondents were more likely to think that criminals are motivated by "greed" and "non-financial motives" than by "real need". In other words, committing crime is largely believed to be a matter of choice. Most South Africans also said that crime is committed by people from within their community, rather than outsiders, and very few (4%) thought foreigners are responsible for most crime.

Many South Africans have personal experience of the most extreme form of violence: 14% have witnessed a murder, and more than half of these people (53%) were between 16 and 25 years at the time. This is a serious matter given the potential impact of witnessing violence at a young age on the risk of offending later in life.

Public perceptions about crime prevention and criminal justice

South Africans rely extensively on the state for protection against crime and for victim support: few take additional measures to protect themselves or their property, a minority participate in community anti-crime initiatives, and the police and hospitals are seen as the main sources of help for victims of violence.

Blacks (30%) and coloureds (45%) were significantly less likely to take self-protection measures than Indians (89%) and whites (95%). Such measures need to be encouraged and made available where possible, given that most of those who did use them (75%) felt safer as a result.

One quarter of those who knew of a community protection group in their area said this group physically punishes criminal suspects. Estimates are that nearly 1,5 million South Africans have witnessed violent punishments by such vigilante groups.

Less than half of respondents (45%) knew what a community police forum is, and few of these participated in its activities. Those living in urban and rural areas were however more likely to be involved in CPFs than those in the metros.

Physical access to the police and courts is generally good, but remains a problem in rural areas and for black South Africans. Only a small majority (52%) thought the police are doing a good job, but these views are influenced by a range of factors, not all of which are about policing. One factor that is clearly within the ambit of the police is response time: this was the key issue influencing both positive and negative perceptions of the police.

As other studies have shown, views of court performance were much more favourable among those who have been to court than among the general public. And although access to courts was better in metro and urban provinces, satisfaction was lowest in these areas. Sentencing was the key issue about which the public formed their opinions of the way courts deal with suspects.

Crime levels in South Africa

Crime, as measured by the victim surveys, dropped slightly between 1998 and 2003: 23% of South Africans were victims in the 12-month period between September 2002 and August 2003—down almost 2% from 24.5% in 1998. The only type of crime explored in this survey that increased during the past five years was housebreaking.

Property crimes occurred more frequently than violent crimes, with the five most prevalent crimes being non-violent. Housebreaking, followed by corruption and then theft of personal property were the most prevalent crimes in the country.

A victimisation rate of less than 1% was recorded for serious crimes such as murder, sexual assault and car hijacking.

Almost all the victims of car theft and hijacking reported the crime to the police. However, reporting rates for other serious crimes like housebreaking, assault and particularly robbery were low. The main reason for not reporting was that the crime was not important enough—even in the case of violent offences like assault and robbery.

Overview of selected crime types

Corruption

Although both instances and allegations of 'grand corruption' receive much media attention, the survey results show that ordinary citizens are vulnerable to petty corruption. In total, 5.6% of South Africans had been asked to pay a bribe in the past year. Cash bribes were by far the most common form of currency in these corrupt transactions.

Traffic officials were most likely to demand bribes and in turn every request for a bribe was met by payment from members of the public surveyed. The other

most common services for which bribes were demanded include policing, employment in the public sector, pensions/social welfare grants, and public utilities. The vulnerability of the poor to non-delivery of services due to corruption in all these categories is a cause for concern.

The pool of whistleblowers in South Africa is tiny. Only 2% of all respondents surveyed had ever attempted to report a corrupt official. The most common reasons for not reporting were the belief that it would not have changed anything, followed by a lack of knowledge about where or who to report to.

Housebreaking

Survey respondents thought housebreaking was both the most commonly discussed crime and the most prevalent crime in their neighbourhoods. These opinions are backed up by the broader survey findings, as more survey respondents said their household had been the victim of housebreaking (7.5%) than any other crime type, and housebreaking is the only crime type whose prevalence increased since 1998. The only crime feared more than housebreaking is murder.

It appears that less than two thirds of the housebreakings that occur are reported to the police, and that of those that are reported, nearly a fifth are not recorded by the police; the official figures are substantial underestimates.

Assault and sexual assault

Assault and sexual assault are almost as difficult to capture in a household survey as they are for the police to detect; as a result, there were too few sexual assaults to be analysed in detail.

Assault is not a single crime, but a variety of offences encompassing, among other things, domestic violence, bar room brawls, and street attacks. The survey captured only the most serious assaults, suggesting that the public has become hardened to the point that minor incidents are no longer reported to fieldworkers. This notion is supported by the fact that few respondents felt that assault was particularly common, feared, or talked about.

Robbery

Unlike housebreaking, public perceptions about robbery do not correlate with reality. South Africans were very concerned about robbery: it is the second most commonly discussed crime, believed to be the second "most common crime" in respondents' areas, and the fourth most feared crime. However,

according to both the survey and official crime statistics, the chances of any South African being robbed in any given year are about two out of a hundred.

Largely as a result of the methodology used, most robberies recorded in the survey were serious, or what the police would call "aggravated robberies"—those that are committed with a weapon. The number of serious robberies in the survey corresponds fairly closely with the number of aggravated robberies recorded by the police.

It is a matter of concern that the second most likely place for a robbery to take place, after streets in residential areas, was in the home. Based on survey projections, nearly 90,000 'home robberies' occurred nationwide over the 12-month survey period.

Few victims reported robberies to the police, especially when they were committed on the street (as opposed to in the home).

Trends for street versus home robberies were quite different: guns were more common in home robberies, as was the likelihood of injury. Street robbers were much more likely to operate in groups than home robbers, and victims in the home were more likely to know the perpetrator than those robbed in the streets.

Stock theft

Black and white South Africans in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal were most likely to have been victimised. Most victims were poor, which suggests that the impact of stock theft on a household is likely to be severe.

Few victims reported theft of stock to the police, largely because they did not think the crime was important enough, or that their property would be recovered. This perception is understandable given that of the few victims who did report, only 4% were aware that an arrest was made, and 4% said their stock was recovered. Stock theft does not go unnoticed however. Over half the respondents reported the crime to an organisation other than the police, with traditional authorities being the most likely source of assistance.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

In 2003, the Crime and Justice Programme of the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) undertook the second national victims of crime survey in South Africa. The study was prompted by the need for an accurate picture of crime levels in the country to complement that provided by the official crime statistics published annually by the South African Police Service (SAPS). While a similar need exists in countries throughout the world, the moratorium on the release of police crime statistics in South Africa intensified the requirement for an independent and reliable national study on crime levels (see text box below).

The onset of the moratorium coincided with claims by the SAPS and the Department of Safety and Security that crime levels were stabilising. However in the absence of any statistical information on the extent of crime nationally, South Africans became increasingly sceptical of the motives and pronouncements of the police on the matter. In a climate such as this, a national victim survey is the only reliable means available for providing an alternative picture of crime. Fortunately, a similar study was conducted in 1998 which allows for a comparison of crime levels over time, and thus provides a means of assessing police claims that crime has stabilised.

The 2003 survey was also motivated by other equally important, if less controversial, needs. No comprehensive national study has been carried out in this country on the risk factors that predispose certain people to becoming crime victims. This data is essential for shaping broad crime prevention policy, and the national victim survey provides an ideal opportunity for this endeavour.

The survey also sought to gather information on public perceptions about crime, the fear of crime, and attitudes towards the police and courts, as well as non-state forms of policing and protection. Perceptions about crime are as important as the reality, and—as the public reaction to the moratorium has all too clearly illustrated—need to be managed by the police and political leadership with as much dedication as the level of crime.

The moratorium on police crime statistics

In July 2000 the then Minister of Safety and Security, Steve Tshwete, announced a moratorium on the release of police crime statistics to the public. Officially, the rationale was to allow time for the police to improve their data collection and processing procedures to ensure that accurate information was being supplied to the public. The moratorium was eventually lifted in 2001, although it remains impossible to access official crime statistics at police station level. The only data that is now provided to the public are the national, provincial and area level figures that are published in the SAPS' annual report. It remains unclear how the police statistics might have changed during the two year 'clean-up', and to what extent the accuracy of the data has improved. This makes comparing pre- and post-moratorium statistics problematic.

Large-scale quantitative surveys are not however sufficient tools for understanding public perceptions. As a result, the ISS will be following the victim survey with a series of country-wide focus groups aimed at exploring the survey results in depth, in order to make recommendations about how to manage perceptions.

Why a victim survey?

Victim surveys have been developed and utilised over the last four decades to complement police statistics in formulating a holistic picture of crime. In countries like the United Kingdom, victim surveys are now conducted annually with state funding in order to supplement official crime records. Police statistics, while essential for tracking crime trends, cannot be regarded as an entirely adequate source, as they depend almost wholly on the public to report crimes to the police (see text box below). In many instances, especially in developing countries, the official data are often incomplete and unreliable. Many victims, for a variety of reasons, do not report crime. And when they do, often only the most basic information is recorded.

By asking victims directly about their experience of crime, victim surveys avoid many of the problems relating to non-reporting that affect police data. The surveys also substantially improve the ability to understand the impact of crime on society, by providing more accurate estimates of the volume of crime and how it changes over time, as well as the nature of crime.[1]

Victim surveys also present a good opportunity to collect data on perceptions and experiences of crime, as well as on police and court performance, and

Advantages of official crime statistics

- Measure official response to crime, that is, all individuals that report crime
- Include crimes against business and industry
- Include crimes against children
- Offences are recorded immediately, or shortly after the incident, so recall is usually accurate
- Offences are ordered in time so that the number of crimes reported in different months or days is easily established
- Crimes are recorded throughout the entire country, providing some information about all urban and most rural areas

Disadvantages of official crime statistics

- Non-reporting by victims for a variety of reasons, including thinking the crime is not serious enough, the inconvenience it causes especially when access to the police is a problem, intimidation by the offender or fear thereof, the belief that the police can't help or won't take the matter seriously, embarrassment, and pressure from family or community not to report
- Bias or error on the part of the person taking report
- Often little information about the victim is collected (e.g. age, sex, relationship with offender)
- Little information about the circumstances of the crime is captured for analysis (e.g. known characteristics of perpetrators, methods used in committing the crime, etc.)
- Not all crimes reported are recorded, as only charges in dockets are entered into the official statistics
- Political pressures to reduce crime levels may impact police recording practice

treatment of victims. Information on what the community is doing in response to crime, is also easily collected in this context. Understanding the community response to crime is important for developing crime prevention and community-police partnerships in general, as well as specific initiatives such as community police forums (CPFs). The role of partnerships in crime prevention has been explored intensively in international debate:

> Crime is no longer solely the concern of the state, nor can an effective crime prevention strategy rest solely on state agencies and programmes. For citizens to participate in crime prevention, it is indispensable to provide them with reliable and timely information as well as give them the opportunity to have their say about their own crime concerns as well as about the working of the criminal justice system.[2]

Detailed information on who is most affected by crime is not usually available through police statistics, and victim surveys provide one tool for the collection of such data. The analysis of a range of indicators and descriptive information about crime allows high risk categories to be identified, including those most affected by crime, as well as the risk of different crimes for different categories of people (e.g. the elderly, women, or youth).[3] This information is essential in formulating area or locality specific crime reduction strategies. From this data, one can also develop an understanding of the nature of specific crimes, such as where and when they are most likely to occur, any relationships between victims and offenders, and the levels of violence used. Such information has had a major impact on changing the definitions of crime and the nature of information available on criminal events.

Finally, victim surveys can contribute to developing theories about crime and its causes, as well as challenging many long-standing assumptions. During the first two decades of victim surveys in the United States, for example, results challenged common assumptions regarding the relationship between victims and fear of crime.[4]

However, while offering a number of advantages, several limitations also apply to victim surveys:

- The surveys do not record data on 'victimless crimes'—crimes where there is no differentiated victim and offender because the offender is normally the victim as well. Examples include speeding or traffic violations and drug-related crimes.[5]
- Victim surveys cannot record information about a crime unless the victim both recognises the incident as an offence, and is willing to discuss it with the interviewer. This is likely to affect information about domestic violence and sexual offences, particularly those occurring in a domestic context.
- The problem of non-reporting noted above also affects levels of petty or less serious crimes recorded in victim surveys. Victims may choose not to mention incidents that they deem trivial, like petty theft, minor vandalism and even less serious assaults.
- Victim surveys do not attempt to document crimes against children because interviewing minors requires the consent of a parent or guardian and special training before fieldworkers are qualified to address traumatic incidents with children. This presents logistical difficulties given the scope and cost of victim surveys.
- Victims may not always be able to accurately recall and articulate details of their victimisation, particularly with regard to time frames.

- Victimisation surveys generally focus on crimes committed against individuals or households rather than those committed against businesses.[6]

Notwithstanding these limitations, victim surveys provide invaluable information on both the nature and extent of crime. As such they complement existing police statistics and provide a point of departure from which effective crime reduction strategies and other criminal justice system initiatives can be designed and initiated.

The 1998 Victims of Crime survey

As mentioned above, this survey is the second national victim survey to be conducted in South Africa. In 1998, Statistics South Africa was commissioned by the Department of Safety and Security and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) to carry out the first national survey. The 1998 survey was conducted between 16-27 March 1998 following an extensive consultation and design process. The instrument and methodology was built on that of the UNICRI international surveys (see text box), with some adaptations to the South African context. The findings were published in a report that was made available to all stakeholders and the general public.[7]

One of the aims of the 2003 National Victims of Crime survey was to ensure that the results would, as far as possible, be comparable to those of the 1998 survey. The results of the 1998 study are therefore referred to throughout the monograph, and where the phrasing of questions and definitions allow, direct comparisons are made between the 1998 and 2003 data.

Aims of the 2003 National Victims of Crime survey

The study aimed to:

- present reliable data on the levels of crime throughout South Africa;
- compare current crime levels, as recorded by the victim survey, with those of the 1998 National Victims of Crime survey;
- establish the key risk factors that predispose certain people to becoming crime victims;
- assess public perceptions of crime, safety and the criminal justice system.

Structure of the monograph

The introductory chapter is followed by a chapter detailing the survey methodology. Chapter 3 outlines the demographics of the survey sample. Chapter 4 explores public perceptions of crime and safety in South Africa,

The International Crime Victim Surveys (ICVS)

The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) has, over the past 15 years, conducted a series of surveys in large cities around the world known as the International Crime Victim Surveys (ICVS). Initially conducted in only a handful of countries, the ICVS has expanded to include 24 industrialised countries and 46 'countries in transition' (largely East and Central European countries), and developing countries.[8] The ICVS has three primary objectives: "to provide an alternative to police crime information, to use the standardised information for comparative purposes, and to extend the information on who is most affected by crime".[9] A standardised instrument has been developed for the ICVS, although various methodologies, including computer-aided telephone interviewing (CATI) and face-to-face interviewing, are used depending on the country in which the survey is run. Although comparisons can only strictly be made between the cities surveyed rather than the countries in which they lie, the ICVS provide the only standardised basis for comparing victim survey results internationally.

including the fear of crime, how crime impacts on people's lives, and perceptions about those who perpetrate crime. Chapter 5 covers public views about crime prevention and criminal justice initiatives. This chapter includes perceptions about individual, community and state responses to crime, such as vigilantism, as well as the performance of the police and courts. Chapter 6 details the crime victimisation levels in the country and compares these to the levels recorded in the 1998 victim survey. Also examined in this chapter are the rates of reporting crime to the police by victims. These results too are compared with those of the 1998 survey. Chapter 7 examines selected crime types in detail in order to better understand the nature of these crimes.

The body of the monograph is interspersed with a number of text boxes that provide comparative survey data and notes about topics relevant to the discussion. Where relevant each chapter starts with a summary of the key findings and ends with a section on the implications of the survey results.

A note must also be made on terminology. Given that the survey was conducted at a household level, both South Africans (those born here), and non-South Africans living in this country would have been included in the survey. For convenience, the discussions that follow refer to South Africans inclusively, that is, the term refers to all those included in the survey, both those born here and those born elsewhere but residing in the country.

CHAPTER 2
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to ensure comparability with the 1998 national Victims of Crime survey, as well as ISS surveys in other African countries that were being conducted at the same time as the national survey, specific aspects of the survey design were predetermined. These included certain components of the questionnaire as well as the sample design.

Sample design

Multi-stage cluster sampling was utilised, with Enumerator Areas (EAs) from the 2001 Census selected at the first stage of the sampling, households within the EAs at the second stage, and individuals within the household at the third stage. Based on the total number of households in South Africa (identified by the 2001 Census as 11,205,705), a total of 80,787 EAs were allocated. The total sample size was determined to be 4,050 households. The sample was calculated at a 95% confidence interval, and with a design effect of two. Ten interviews were collected from each EA. The distribution of the sample through the provinces is reflected in the table below. In total, a sample of 4,860 was realised (Table 1).

Table 1: Sample distribution by province

	Sample size	Sample realised
Eastern Cape	534	590
Free State	418	460
Gauteng	552	600
KwaZulu-Natal	498	550
Limpopo	334	370
Mpumalanga	538	600
Northern Cape	514	570
North West	488	540
Western Cape	520	580
South Africa	4,050	4,860

Households were selected randomly in the following manner. Maps of the EAs were obtained prior to entry of the EA, and random starting points selected. The household nearest to the starting point was selected, and a household interval randomly selected by the supervisor using the day, week and month of the interview. Every *n*th household was then completed until the target number of interviews was obtained. Respondents over the age of 16 years were then randomly selected for interview using a KISH grid.

Questionnaire design

A basic questionnaire, based on those used in the ICVS, previous ISS studies, concurrent regional studies, and the 1998 Victims of Crime survey was used as a staring point. In order to minimise fieldworker error, and coding and capturing error, as well as any ambiguities in responses, the instrument was largely pre-coded. A number of drafts were prepared and presented internally to the ISS, and then to a stakeholder committee for input, before finalisation. An overview of the questionnaire is presented in Appendix 1.

The questionnaire was not translated into any vernacular languages. However, the introduction and definitions of crimes used by enumerators were translated and back-translated from English into Afrikaans, Zulu, and Sotho. Although every precaution was taken during fieldworker training to ensure that interpretations were correct, it is not inconceivable that errors may have occurred. Cross-checks were carried out on 20% of the questionnaires to ensure that the responses given were an accurate reflection of respondents' opinion. These cross-checks did not reveal any consistent error from the latitude ordinarily accorded interviewers in translating the original questionnaire.

Training

Training of enumerators and field supervisors was undertaken over three days, and included a one-day field test. Training was conducted in four cities, namely Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. During the training process, crime specific phrases and questions were verbally translated and back-translated to ensure that all enumerators were familiar with all the terms, and could convey these to potential respondents without loosing their meaning.

Fieldwork

An independent research company, Development Research Africa (DRA), with prior experience conducting victim and crime related surveys, was appointed to undertake the data collection, quality control, coding and capture process. Teams of four enumerators were supervised by one field supervisor.

Enumerators from each of the nine provinces were selected to ensure that all vernacular languages were represented in the teams. Fieldwork took place between 1st September and 30th October 2003. Enumerators were equipped with DRA t-shirts and identity cards to ensure that potential respondents could validate their credentials, as well as to differentiate them from any political or other party or organisation that might canvas or undertake household visits.

Quality control

A three-tiered system of quality control was implemented. DRA enumerators checked each completed questionnaire on a daily basis. These were then handed to field supervisors who again checked the questionnaires to ensure all questions were answered and skip patterns were correctly followed. Any incomplete questionnaires were returned to enumerators for correction and where necessary enumerators returned to the relevant households. Once questionnaires were returned to the DRA office, they were checked for a third time prior to data capture. Call-backs, both telephonic and physical, were completed on 10% of randomly selected completed questionnaires.

In addition, representatives from the Crime and Justice Programme of the ISS undertook spot field visits to field teams all over the country, during which time the sampling procedures were checked as well as the quality of completed questionnaires.

Data coding and capture

Capture was undertaken on Epi-Info. A process of double capture was undertaken in order to eliminate capture error. The completed data sets were finally validated.

In order to correct slight discrepancies between census data (based on the 2001 SSA Census) and the demographics of the sample achieved, the data was weighted by province, race, gender, age and employment status. This is consistent with the process followed in the 1998 Victims of Crime survey and ensured that the findings are truly representative of the South African population.

Definitions of crimes

To enable comparison of the 1998 and 2003 data sets, the definitions used in the study were kept identical to those used in the 1998 survey, with the exception of attempted car hijackings and attempted housebreakings. In this study, car hijacks specifically only included successful incidents, rather than

including attempts as was the case in the 1998 study, while attempted housebreakings were excluded from this study.

For methodological purposes, the types of crimes were divided into those that affect the household, and those that affect individuals.

Household crimes are those crimes that are committed against people living together, eating together, and sharing resources. For example, burglary is a crime committed against a household rather than against an individual, since household goods are usually shared or used by all members. Vehicle theft is a household crime, since vehicles are usually shared by, or made available for, all household members. The following are household crimes:

- *Deliberate damage, burning or destruction of dwellings* includes acts of deliberately setting fire to, or damaging a household's dwelling, but excludes forced removals. This also includes outbuildings that might be used for household functions or for agricultural purposes, and household buildings or part of buildings that may be used by any member of the household for commercial purposes.
- *Deliberate killing or murder* includes a deliberately inflicted death, which could have happened during housebreaking, hijacking, assault including domestic violence, rape or in any other circumstances. Included in this are ritual or muti-related murders or killings. Murder is treated as a household crime because the victim cannot report its occurrence.
- *Hijacking of motor vehicles* occurs when someone uses force to steal or attempt to steal a car, truck, van or pick-up belonging to the household when a member or members of the household are inside, or just outside, the vehicle.
- *Housebreaking and burglary* occurs when someone breaks into the dwelling without permission and steals or attempts to steal something.
- *Theft of livestock, poultry and other animals* involves the actual stealing of animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, chickens and dogs.
- *Theft of motor vehicles* (excluding hijacking) occurs when somebody steals a car, van, truck or pick-up when nobody is present in the vehicle, regardless of where the vehicle was parked at the time.
- *Theft of goods from vehicles* includes theft of car radios or goods left in the car or parts of the car such as a car mirror or spare tyre.
- *Motor vehicle vandalism* occurs when someone deliberately damages a vehicle or parts of a vehicle, such as a car, van, truck or pick-up, for example through scratching the paintwork.

- *Theft of motor cycles* and scooters excludes bicycles.
- *Theft of bicycles* occurs when somebody steals a bicycle.

Individual crimes affect a single person rather than an entire household. The following are individual crimes:

- *Sexual offences (including rape and domestic sexual abuse)* include grabbing, touching or sexually assaulting or raping someone.
- *Robbery involving force* involves taking property from a person using force or the threat of force, for example, pointing a knife at someone and demanding that they hand over their jewellery.
- *Assaults and threats of assault (including domestic violence)* include being attacked, physically beaten or threatened by an attacker in a frightening way without the attacker taking any property from the victim.
- *Theft of personal property* includes pick-pocketing or theft of a purse, wallet, clothing, jewellery or sports equipment, without the use of or threat of force.
- *Consumer fraud* occurs when someone selling something to you or delivering a service cheats you in terms of quantity or quality of the goods or service.

Difficulties encountered in the fieldwork

In addition to those limitations inherent to victim surveys identified above, a number of other challenges arose during the course of the fieldwork:

- Field teams often experienced difficulties gaining access to households, particularly in high-income areas, despite being in possession of a letter of introduction from the ISS.
- In a few instances, respondents feared that participating in the survey might result in negative consequences for them or their households.
- Despite the fact that EA maps from the most recent census were utilised, at times these were incorrect and reflected landmarks such as schools and other institutions where in fact there were none, as well as inaccurately reflecting the EA boundaries. In such instances, enumerators and supervisors made a concerted effort to determine accurately the boundaries of the EA. It is however possible that on occasion households falling just outside the EA might have been included within the selected EA.
- While community preparation was in most cases undertaken prior to arrival by the research company, in some instances access was initially refused as communities claimed they did not know about the study. Such difficulties were in most instances resolved.

- Some respondents did not understand the interval selection of households, and this created some suspicion as to why their household had been selected. However, this is unlikely to have impacted on the responses provided.
- The questionnaire generally took approximately 45 minutes to administer. Despite being informed of this at the outset of the interview, many respondents complained about the length of time taken to answer the questions.

CHAPTER 3
DEMOGRAPHICS

In total, a sample of 4,860 was achieved. The following graphs depict the demographic composition of the weighted and un-weighted data.

Urban areas were most represented in the sample, followed by traditional rural, metropolitan areas and finally farming areas (Figure 1). The metropolitan category includes the five metropolitan areas in South Africa, namely Johannesburg, eThekwini (Durban), Tshwane (Pretoria), Cape Town and Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Council (Port Elizabeth).

In terms of gender, females were in the majority, accounting for 61% of the sample (Figure 3). Once weighted, females accounted for 53% of the sample. As regards age, those between the ages of 16 and 25 years were the most represented age group (31%), followed by 26 to 35 year olds (24%), and 36 to 45 years olds (19%) (Figure 4).

Figure 1: Sample by area type

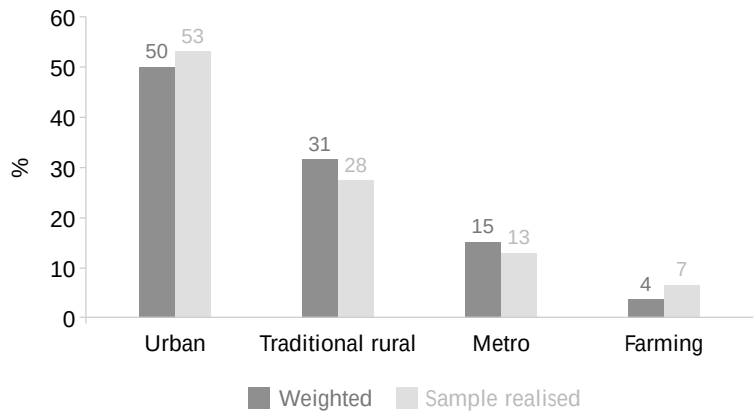


Figure 2: Sample by province

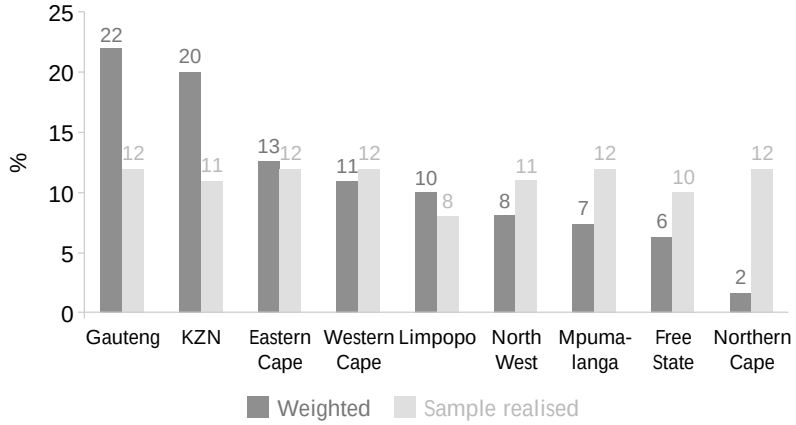


Figure 3: Sample by gender

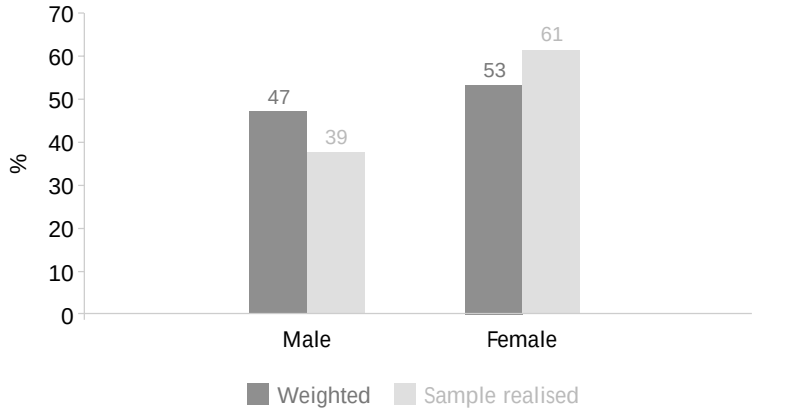


Figure 4: Sample by age

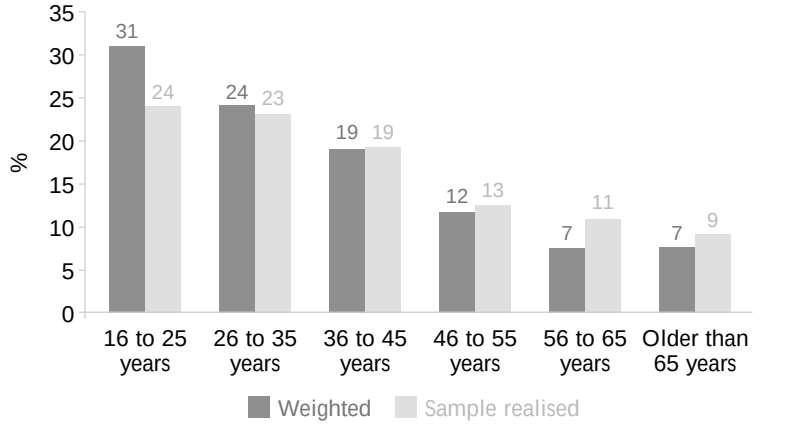


Figure 5: Sample by race

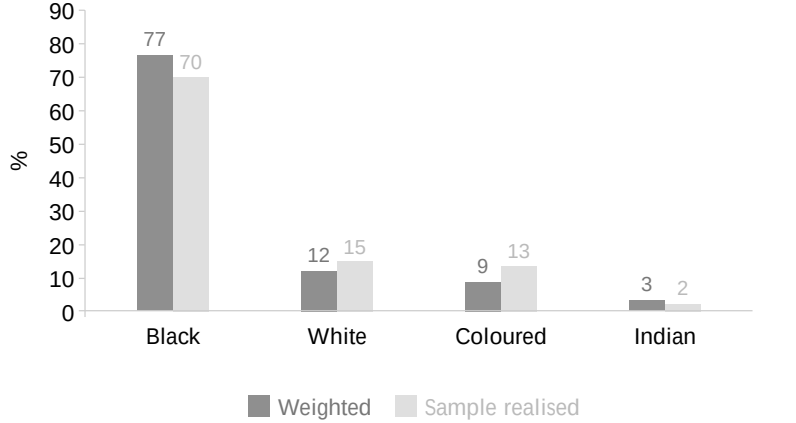


Figure 5 depicts the racial composition of the sample. Black respondents accounted for the majority of the sample, followed by white, coloured and Indian respondents. As Table 2 shows, the highest percentage of black respondents was sampled in North West province followed by Mpumalanga. Most coloured respondents were sampled in the Northern Cape followed by the Western Cape, while most Indians were sampled in KwaZulu-Natal, and most whites in the Western Cape followed by Gauteng.

Table 2: Sample by race and province (%)

	Black	Coloured	Indian	White
Eastern Cape	13.8	6.8	0.0	10.5
Free State	11.6	2.3	0.0	6.9
Gauteng	12.7	2.4	12.6	19.1
KwaZulu-Natal	13.6	0.3	62.1	2.8
Limpopo	10.6	0.0	0.0	1.4
Mpumalanga	14.3	1.0	5.8	13.9
North West	14.5	1.1	1.9	5.0
Northern Cape	4.3	45.2	11.7	18.2
Western Cape	4.6	41.0	5.8	22.4
Total	100	100	100	100

A number of income questions were asked of respondents. Monthly income information was collected for all members of the household, as well as information regarding grants, remittances, pensions and other allowances. Further, information on actual moneys contributed to the household each month by each household member with any form of income was also collected. Figures 6 to 8 present the total income categories of household members after tax, the total income contributed to each household, and the per capita income for each household.

In terms of education, most of the respondents had achieved between a grade 11 and 12 pass at school, followed by roughly one quarter who had achieved between grades eight and ten (Figure 10). In total, more than three out of five (63%) of the households were headed by a male, and the remaining 38% were headed by a female. Most of the respondents (51%) had lived in the area for ten years or more, while another quarter (26%) had lived in their area for between one and five years (Figure 11). As many as four out of five respondents (80%) reported that they (the household) owned the house in which they lived. This is significant because people owning their property are more likely to invest in their property, or even their neighbourhood, in order to make it safer.

Figure 6: Monthly income categories by household member (after tax)

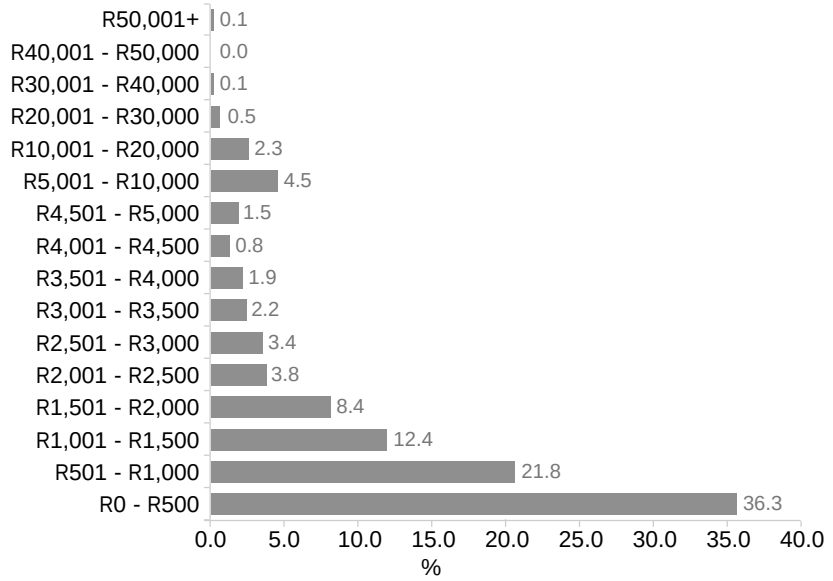


Figure 7: Total monthly income contributed to households

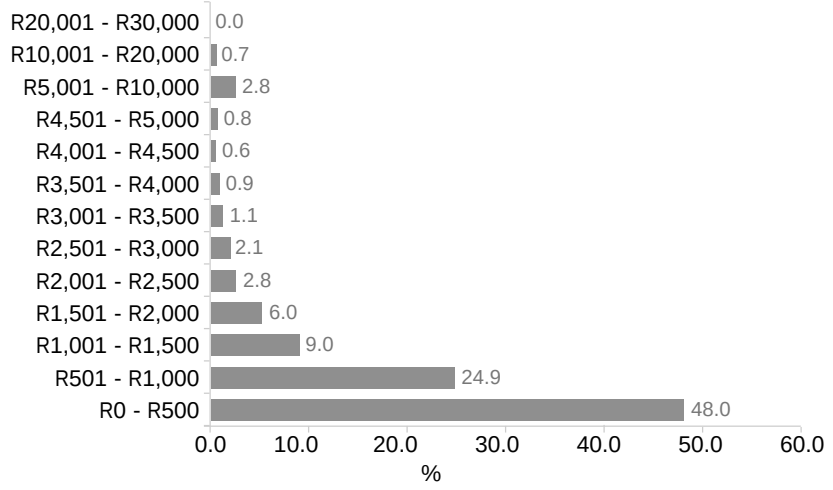


Figure 8: Annual per capita income per household

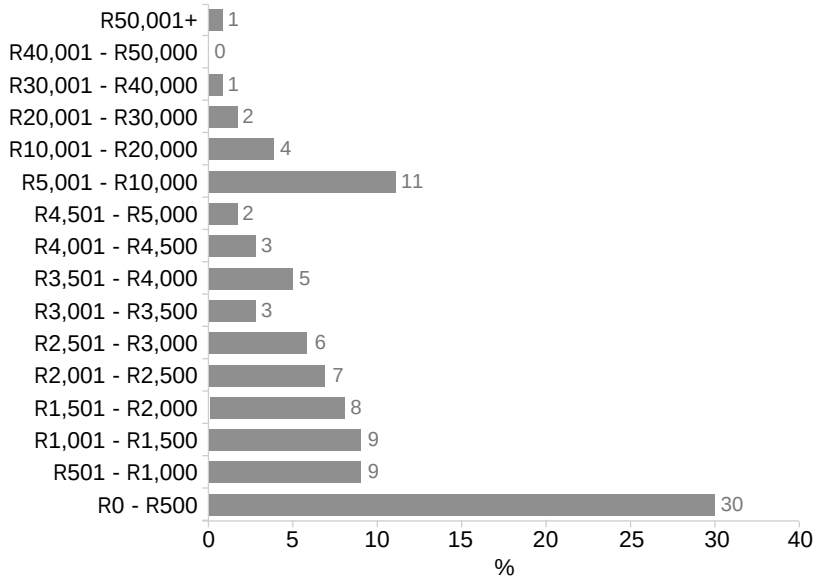


Figure 9: Economic status of sample

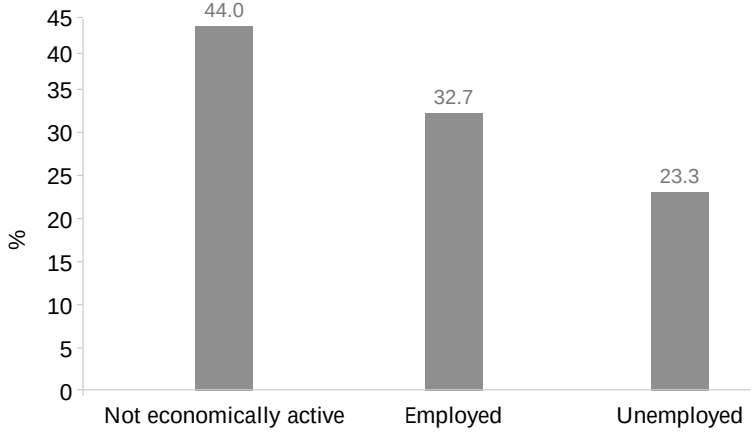


Figure 10: Highest school grade completed (respondents)

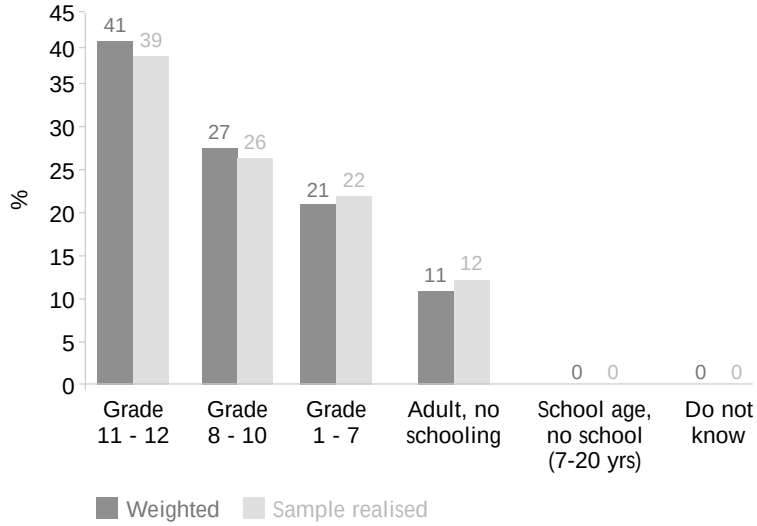
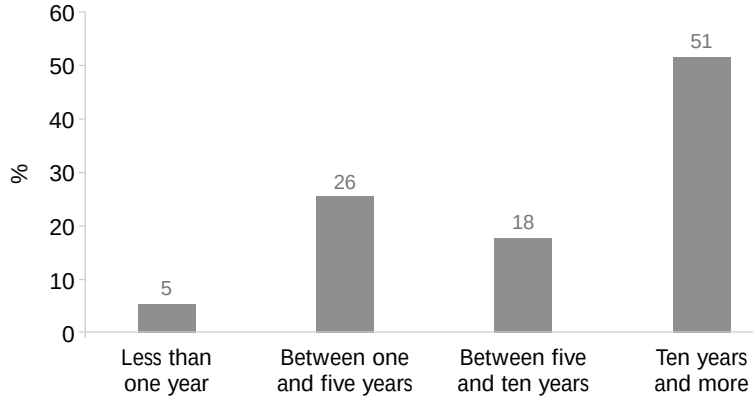


Figure 11: Length of time respondents had lived in the area



CHAPTER 4

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS ABOUT CRIME AND SAFETY

Key points

- Feelings of safety have declined markedly since 1998: the number feeling very unsafe at night more than doubled between 1998 and 2003. Feelings of safety are also low compared to other countries.
- Despite this, it is encouraging that nearly half of South Africans did not believe crime has increased in past three years in their areas of residence.
- Those most concerned about crime and safety are people living in the metros followed by urban areas, and Indians followed by whites.
- People were more likely to think property, rather than violent crime has increased. Despite this, most South Africans worry about violence. The results show that people believe robbery and murder are much more prevalent than they are in reality.
- On the whole, public views about which crimes occur most often are accurate.
- Many South Africans personally know someone who makes a living from crime in their area.
- Given this intimate knowledge of criminals, it is notable that respondents were more likely to think that criminals are motivated by "greed" and "non-financial motives" than by "real need". In other words, committing crime is largely believed to be a matter of choice.
- Most South Africans believe crime is committed by people from within their community, rather than outsiders. And very few believe foreigners are responsible for most crime.
- Many South Africans have personal experience of the most extreme form of violence: 14% have witnessed a murder, most of whom were between 16 and 25 years at the time.

Information about public perceptions of crime and safety should be as important to policy makers as that about the actual crime rate. Perceptions influence behaviour, with the potential for both negative and positive outcomes for those trying to reduce crime. On the one hand, a belief that crime levels are spiralling and the police have little control over the situation may result in desperate citizens taking the law into their own hands. This undermines the criminal justice system and adds to the burden of the police.

On the other hand, concerns about safety may incline people to adopt a more constructive approach to protecting themselves and their property—in the form of, say, burglar-proofing their homes or avoiding unsafe areas. Such actions can assist government's efforts to reduce crime levels. It is therefore important to track public perceptions over time in order to maximise the positive impact on behaviour, and pre-empt negative outcomes.

However, understanding public perceptions about crime is not easy. Perception data gathered in quantitative surveys often seem contradictory and counter-intuitive, and so deter policy makers from using the results. For example, the public may rate the police as fairly effective and then, in the same survey, go on to criticise them for being corrupt. While some of the blame for this rests with the way the information is gathered and analysed, perceptions—whether informed or not—are real, and need to be understood rather than dismissed, no matter how complicated a task this may be.

Public perceptions of crime are influenced by both primary and secondary factors. Primary factors include first hand experiences of crime that an individual or their family or friends may have had. Secondary factors, which often have a wider impact, include media reports, other documentary information about the crime situation, and general word of mouth. Differentiated access to the media may thus be one factor in explaining different perceptions. Notwithstanding this, most South Africans have access to some form of media, whether television, radio or the press. It is hardly debatable that bad news sells, and that as a result, the media often portray South Africa as overrun by crime.

But the public do not simply absorb information in an uncritical or un-selective manner. Perceptions are also likely to be influenced by expectations and by what people are accustomed to. Those who are accustomed to high crime levels and poor service delivery may react with indifference when asked whether they fear crime or are satisfied with service from the police and courts. In contrast, those who have lived in relative safety will be outraged by a spate of burglaries in their neighbourhood.

Perceptions may equally be influenced by general sentiments about life and government, rather than by any specific incident. Service delivery surveys have shown for example, that the general public are far more critical of police and court service than those who have just had contact with police officials or prosecutors.[10] The same studies showed that the general public tended to say the police are corrupt, while none who had recently used police services

mentioned corruption as a problem. These results suggest that general perceptions about government performance, and corruption in this case, are often projected in answers about specific situations.

In this survey, a range of questions was asked about how people thought the crime level had changed, which crime types they believed were most prevalent, and which they feared the most. Questions were also included on feelings of safety when walking alone during the day and night. All these questions referred to the situation in the respondent's area of residence. Views on who perpetrates crime and why, and on the impact of crime on behaviour, were also canvassed. The next chapter covers public perceptions about the performance of the police and courts, as well as community and individual responses to crime.

Views about changes in the crime level

Just over half (53%) of South Africans believed that crime in their area of residence had increased over the past three years. Although this represents a majority, it is surprising, given the high profile of the crime problem, that the margin is not wider. One quarter (25%) of South Africans believed the level of crime had stayed the same, and one fifth (21%) said crime in their area had decreased.

Those in Limpopo province were much more likely than respondents in any other province to say crime had decreased. People living in Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape and North West were most likely to feel that crime in their area had increased (Table 1, Appendix 2).

HSRC national survey, 2001
A national survey conducted in 2001 by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) asked about respondents' feelings of safety compared to 1994. A majority (70%) answered that South Africa was "not safer than it was before 1994". This opinion was most prevalent in the Western Cape (89%), Free State (88%), Gauteng (84%) and Mpumalanga (84%). The political violence that preceded the 1994 election no doubt influenced the views of those in KwaZulu-Natal who were comparatively more positive about their safety: 60% felt that South Africa was less safe than in 1994.

Source: AM Habib and CM de Vos, *Public attitudes in contemporary SA: insights from an HSRC survey*, Cape Town, Human Sciences Research Council, 2002.

Besides provincial differences there were also differences evident between groups of different social, demographic and economic composition. For example, more than three quarters (78%) of Indians felt that crime had increased, while 61% of whites felt this way, compared to just over half (51%) of blacks and less than half of coloureds (48%).

These racial trends reflect those identified in earlier surveys, where Indian South Africans generally felt the most negative about safety and crime in South Africa. In a public opinion survey conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) just prior to the 1999 elections, 75% of Indians felt unsafe in terms of their daily personal safety, as opposed to 63% of whites, 44% of blacks and 43% of coloured South Africans.[11] A more recent HSRC survey however found less difference between the race groups on the issue of changing crime levels. Conducted in July 2001, the study asked whether respondents thought violent crime and political violence had increased since 1994. Most (75%) felt that violent crime had increased since 1994, with 87% of whites, 84% of coloureds, 73% of Africans, and 73% of Indians saying this was the case.[12]

The 2003 National Victims of Crime survey showed that the length of time people have lived in the area is not significant in informing their opinions of how crime has changed within the area. The type of area in which South Africans live does however play a significant role in determining their perceptions about changes in crime levels. Those of all races living in both metropolitan (61%) and urban (54%) areas were significantly more likely to feel crime generally has increased than those living in traditional rural (48%) or farming (43%) areas. However, within each area type, the same racial trends as on a macro level are present, with Indians and whites in metropolitan and urban areas more likely to feel that crime has increased than black or coloured South Africans.

Views about violent and property crime levels

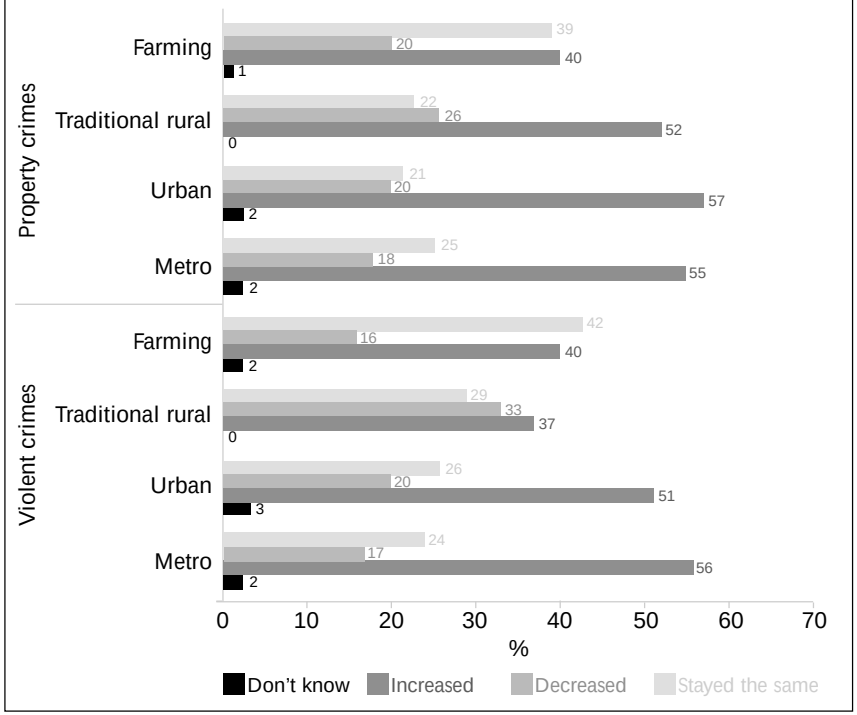
'Crime' is a broad description for a range of quite different acts, and the various types of crime may impact on individuals, households or communities in a variety of ways. Much of what gets exposure in the media is violent crime, and it is this type of crime that probably has the most devastating effect on people. Violent crime includes acts where force is used against an individual, such as murder, rape, assault, sexual assault, robbery and car hijacking. Crimes that involve the removal of belongings are classified as property crime and include housebreaking, theft of personal property, theft of vehicles,

bicycles, crops and livestock. Survey respondents were asked whether they thought violent and property crime levels had changed in the past three years.

Despite the media's emphasis on violent crime, more respondents thought that property crime had increased (55%) than those who said violent crime had gone up (47%). These views are easier to understand when disaggregated by area type. As with perceptions on crime generally, those living in metropolitan and urban areas were most likely to feel that violent crime in their area has increased over the past three years (Figure 12).

A much stronger correlation exists, however, between where respondents live and their perception of violent crime, than their perceptions of crime in general. Less than two out of five of those in traditional rural or farming areas

Figure 12: Perceptions of how violent and property crime levels have changed in the last three years, in respondent's area of residence



felt that violent crime has increased. The differential, and indeed the correlation between location and perception, is less marked when considering property crime: while more than half of those in urban areas thought property crime had increased, only slightly less in rural areas and another two out of five in farming areas thought property crime had increased.

This implies that while more South Africans in urban areas, including the metros, feel that both violent and property crime is increasing, property crime is perceived to be on the rise in rural areas.

Generally, while the majority of those in all income categories tended to feel that crime has increased over the past three years, those with a per capita income in excess of R20,000 were more likely to say this. Specifically, 83% of those with an income of between R30,001 and R40,000 felt that crime had increased, as opposed to 62% of those earning between R1,001 and R1,500. This is explained in part by the fact that most of those earning higher incomes are resident in the metropolitan and urban areas, where most South Africans felt that crime has increased.

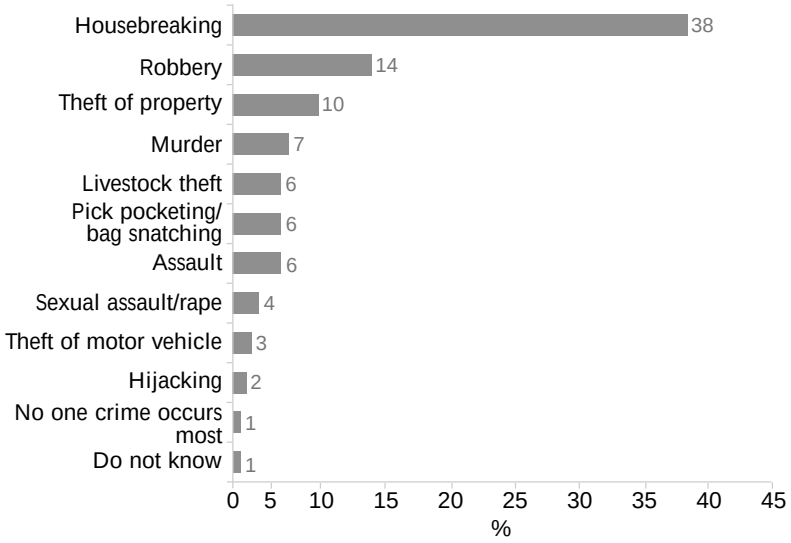
The perception that crime is increasing, as well as direct and indirect experience of victimisation, may influence South Africans' views about specific crime types. Respondents in the survey were asked what one type of crime they thought occurred most in their area, whether they thought the level of this crime had changed over the previous three years, and then what crime frightened them most.

Crime types perceived to be most common

Housebreaking was the crime that a majority of South Africans said occurs most often in their area (Figure 13). This reflects the higher percentage of respondents who felt that property crime had increased than those who thought violent crime had increased. After housebreaking, robbery was perceived to be most common, followed by property theft.

While there is no statistical correlation between the crimes perceived as most common and the province in which people live, it is unsurprising—given that vehicle ownership is higher in Gauteng than other provinces—that of those saying vehicle theft was the most common crime in their area, most lived in Gauteng. Similarly, more vehicle owners tended to rate car hijacking as the most common crime than non-vehicle owners.

Figure 13: The one type of crime that respondents thought occurred most in their area of residence



Respondents in all the provinces thought that housebreaking was the single most common crime in their area, with the exception of Northern Cape, where assault was believed to be the most prevalent crime. People in Northern Cape were also much more likely to think that rape was the crime that occurs most frequently. Gauteng residents were much more likely than those of any other province to say that robbery as well as car hijacking were most common (Table 2, Appendix 2).

Interestingly, while housebreaking was viewed as the most common crime in metropolitan, urban and traditional rural areas, assault was viewed as more common in farming areas.

The various per capita income levels do not appear to influence the perceptions of which crime occurs most, with housebreaking believed to be the most common crime across all income categories.

Given that the majority of those interviewed felt crime in their area had increased, it is unsurprising that two thirds (66%) of respondents felt that the

one crime they thought occurred most in their area had increased over the past three years.

Most feared crime types

When asked what type of crime they were most afraid of in their area, murder was most commonly cited (25%), despite the fact that it was ranked only fourth on the list of those crimes perceived as most common. However, given the violence associated with murder and the fact that South Africa has one of the highest murder rates in the world, the results are not that surprising.

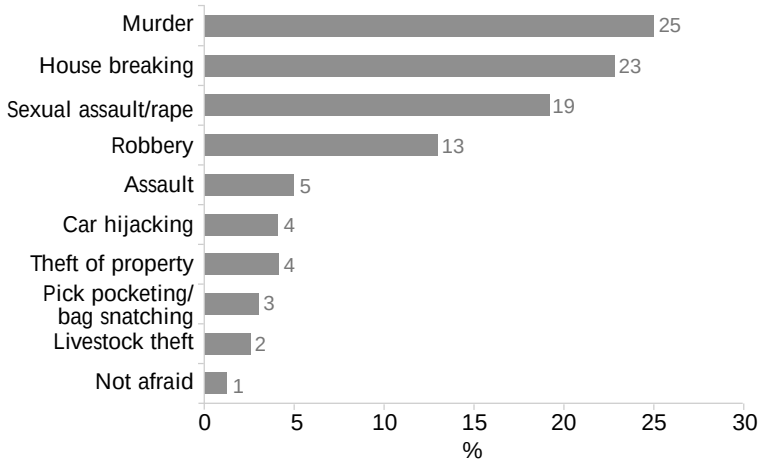
After murder, the crimes that people were most afraid of are housebreaking, sexual assault and rape, and robbery (Figure 14). That three of the four crimes that South Africans fear most are violent, indicates the significance of violence in understanding public fears about crime. It is also telling that three of the four crimes perceived as most common (Figure 13), are among the four crime types that South Africans are most afraid of.

When analysing fear of crime, the responses provided by respondents can be interpreted in a number of ways.[13] First, people may worry about the impact of becoming a victim on their own life, or those of their household members. Second, the crime which respondents fear most may be the one they perceive as the most likely to happen to them. For example, 14% of vehicle owners reported that car hijacking was the crime they were most scared of, as opposed to only 4% of the total sample. However, the results suggest that generally it is violent crimes such as rape, assault or murder that people are most scared of, as these are likely to have the most traumatic impact emotionally and physically, and may result in death.

There was some variation when the results were disaggregated by race. While black and coloured South Africans tended to be most afraid of murder, Indians feared housebreaking most, and whites worried most about vehicle hijacking. In the case of whites' perceptions, this can be partly explained by the fact that vehicle ownership is higher among white South Africans than any other racial group. The horrific media accounts of hijackings that end in rape and murder no doubt also play a role.

Gender was also a significant variable in understanding the crimes that respondents feared most. Women tended to fear rape and sexual assault most, while men were most scared of murder. This further illustrates the concerns about the impact of crime as discussed above.

Figure 14: The one type of crime that respondents were most afraid of in the area where they live



Area type was also significant, with those in farming areas most afraid of murder. Murder also topped the list of most feared crimes for those living in metros and urban areas, although robbery and housebreaking were feared almost as much in these two areas (Table 3). Traditional rural areas were the only ones in which murder was not the most feared crime, with housebreaking being the more common worry.

Table 3: The one crime type respondents were most afraid of, by area (%)

	Metro	Urban	Rural	Farming
Murder	25.5	22.7	25.7	31.8
Housebreaking	14.9	21.6	30.1	10.1
Robbery	24.6	14.0	7.3	4.9
Rape	16.3	20.3	15.2	20.2
Assault	5.2	4.5	3.7	15.3

Although murder was the one crime feared most overall in the country, it was only feared most in three of the nine provinces, namely North West, Eastern Cape and Western Cape. Rape was the most feared crime in Northern Cape

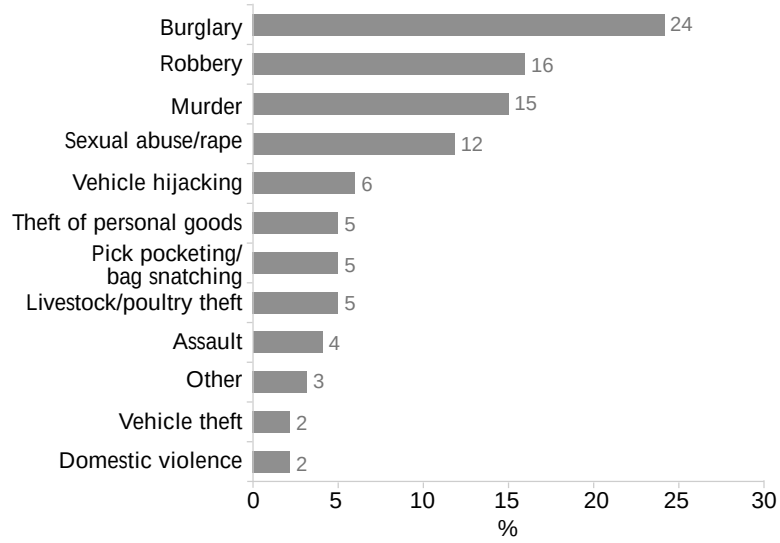
and Free State, while in Gauteng it was robbery (followed closely by murder). In KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga, housebreaking was the crime people worried about most (Table 3, Appendix 2).

Crime as a topic of conversation

Respondents were asked if they had talked about crime in any conversation with friends, family or colleagues over the previous two weeks. Fractionally under half (49%) of South Africans had discussed crime during this time period. The one crime type that was most often discussed was housebreaking.[14] Given that housebreaking was believed to be the most prevalent crime and was the second most commonly feared crime, this is not unexpected. After housebreaking, the most talked-about crimes were of a violent nature, namely robbery, murder, and sexual assault or rape (Figure 15).

There was some variation in the trends according to province, area type, and race. Those in Gauteng (57%), KwaZulu-Natal (55%) and Limpopo (53%) were most likely to have discussed crime over the previous two weeks.

Figure 15: The single most commonly discussed crime in the past two weeks (values less than 1 excluded)



Respondents living in Eastern Cape (40%) and Mpumalanga (29%) were least likely to have discussed crime (Table 4, Appendix 2). Those in metropolitan (58%) and urban areas (53%) were more likely to have discussed crime than people living in traditional rural (40%) and farming (39%) areas.

An analysis by race reveals the same trends in perceptions about crime identified earlier, with whites followed by Indians most likely to talk about crime, while coloureds and black South Africans were least likely to discuss the subject. This trend for Indians and whites to be more concerned about crime and safety than blacks and coloureds, was found in other results discussed later in this chapter, and in the next chapter on perceptions of the police and courts.

Feelings of safety

In keeping with the International Crime Victim Surveys (ICVS) as well as other victim surveys conducted by the ISS, respondents were asked how safe they feel walking alone in their areas of residence during the day and after dark.

In total 85% of South Africans said they feel safe walking alone in their area during the day, while only 23% felt safe walking alone at night (Figure 16). The percentage of South Africans feeling safe at night is higher than that recorded in other comparable site-based victim surveys in the country, including Cato Manor, Hillbrow/Inner Johannesburg, Cato Crest or Meadowlands.[15] However, significantly less South Africans felt safe walking in their area at night than those surveyed in developing countries, including Africa and Latin America (see text box).

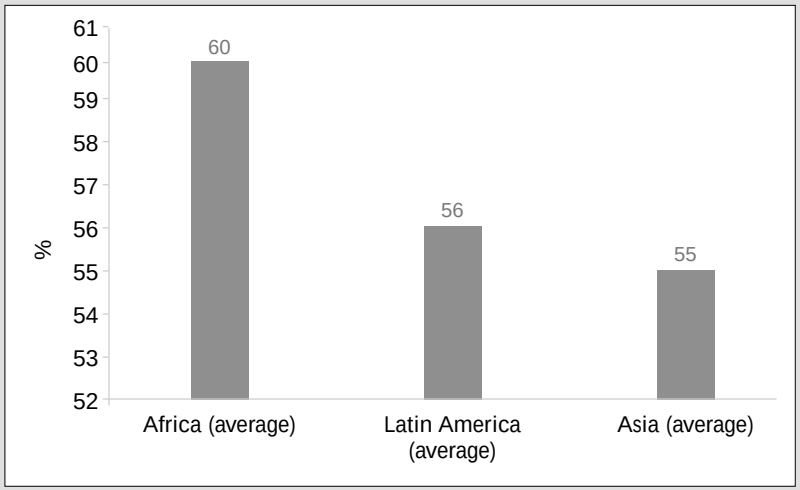
It is interesting to note that those South Africans who have lived in their area for ten years or more were most likely to feel very safe walking alone either during the day (62%) or during the night (12%).

A comparison between feelings of safety in 1998[16] and 2003 presents some remarkable differences. As Figure 17 below illustrates, during the day, the public felt generally as safe in 2003 as they did in 1998, if the 'very safe' and 'fairly safe' categories are added together. However, significantly more felt only fairly safe in 2003 as opposed to very safe in 1998.

This tendency towards feeling less safe becomes an unmistakable trend when the night-time results are considered. South Africans felt significantly less safe when walking alone after dark in 2003 than they did five years ago (Figure 18). More than double the number of people in 2003 than in 1998 felt very unsafe walking in their area after dark (58% in 2003 as opposed to 25% in 1998).

Comparative survey data

A direct comparison between the 2003 (or 1998) Victims of Crime surveys and the ICVS results should be treated with caution as the ICVS are conducted in one city in each country. One would thus be comparing a single city with both urban and rural findings of the national surveys dispersed over a much larger area. However, purely as an illustration, the averages for the latest round of the ICVS in Latin America, Africa and Asia are presented below. As can be seen from the figure, the feelings of safety walking alone at night in one's residential area for South Africa were well below the averages for any of the cities in these regions.



Source: A A del Frate and van Kesteren, The ICVS in the developing world, International Journal of Comparative Criminology, 2(1), de Sitter Publications, 2003, pp 57-76.

It has been argued that perceptions of crime and safety can be influenced by a range of factors, including the direct experience of victimisation. One might expect those who have been victims of crime in the recent past to feel less safe than those who have not been victims. While half (50%) of those who had been victims of crime in the past year still felt safe walking alone in their area during the day, it is somewhat lower than the almost two thirds (62%) who had not been victims of crime. A similar difference exists between victims and

Figure 16: Respondents' feelings of safety when walking alone in their area during the day and after dark

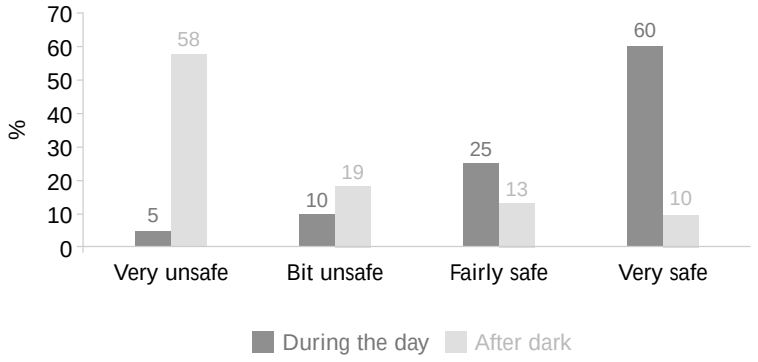


Figure 17: Respondents' feelings of safety when walking alone in their area during the day, 1998 and 2003

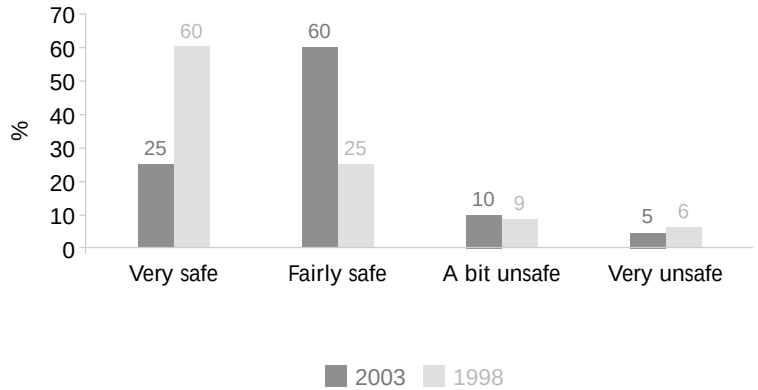


Figure 18: Respondents' feelings of safety when walking alone in their area after dark, 1998 and 2003

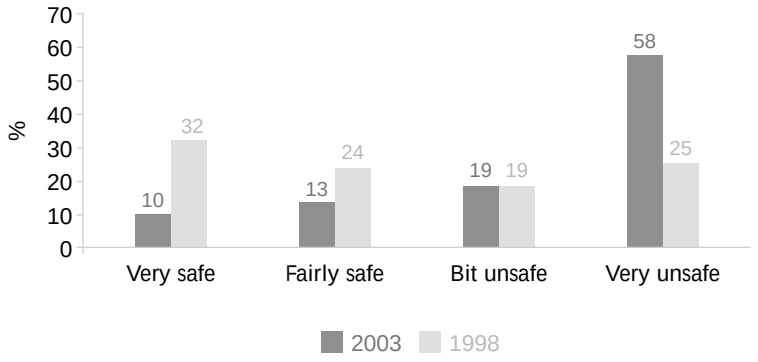
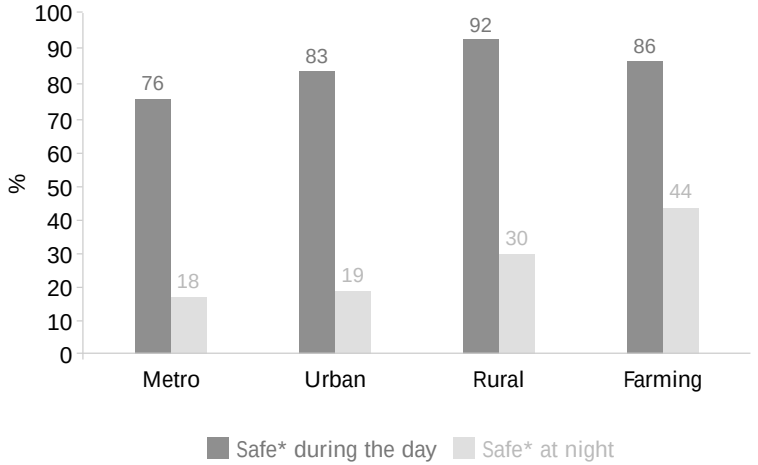


Figure 19: Respondents' feelings of safety when walking alone in their area, by area type



* 'Fairly safe' and 'very safe' responses have been combined to create the category 'safe' used here.

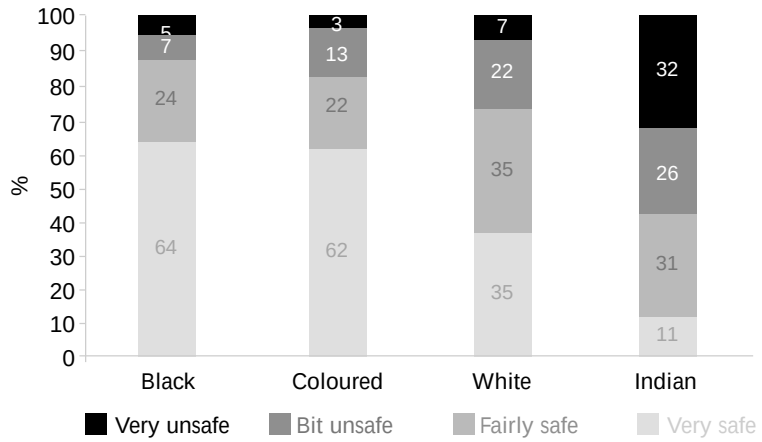
non-victims who felt safe after dark: while one quarter (25%) of non-victims felt safe walking alone in their area of residence after dark, less than one fifth (18%) of those who had been victimised in the past year felt safe.

The type of area in which South Africans live is a significant factor in determining how safe they feel, both during the day and at night. While those in traditional rural areas were most likely to feel safe walking alone during the day, those in farming areas were most likely to feel safe at night (Figure 19).

There were also marked differences in feelings of safety between the race groups. Indian followed by white South Africans were least likely to feel safe during the day (Figure 20). The same pattern applied to results on night-time safety. This trend is similar to that about views on changes in the crime level discussed above, in which Indian and white people were more concerned about crime levels than coloureds and blacks.

During the day, people in Eastern Cape were more likely than those in any other province to feel safe walking alone, while those in Gauteng felt most unsafe (Table 5, Appendix 2). After dark, Gauteng residents also felt most

Figure 20: Respondents' feelings of safety when walking alone in their area during the day, by race



* 'Fairly safe' and 'very safe' responses have been combined to create the category 'safe' used here.

unsafe walking alone at night, while those in Western Cape felt most safe (Table 6, Appendix 2).

Impact of crime

Crime, as well as the fear of crime, can affect individuals, communities and society in a range of ways and understanding the impact of crime would require a study focusing specifically on the subject. The aim of this survey was not to examine the impact of crime, and the few questions that were included were aimed at testing their usefulness in a quantitative survey of this kind.

In the first set of questions about impact, respondents were asked whether crime in their area prevented them from engaging in day-to-day activities ranging from recreational activities to those essential for survival such as walking to fetch water. They were also asked whether crime prevented them from taking part in these activities when alone, and when accompanied by one or more people they knew. Questions such as these that focus on specific activities rather than subjective measures of how safe people feel, can be the best quantitative indicators of how fear of crime is changing and whether crime prevention is working, if repeated in follow-on surveys over time.

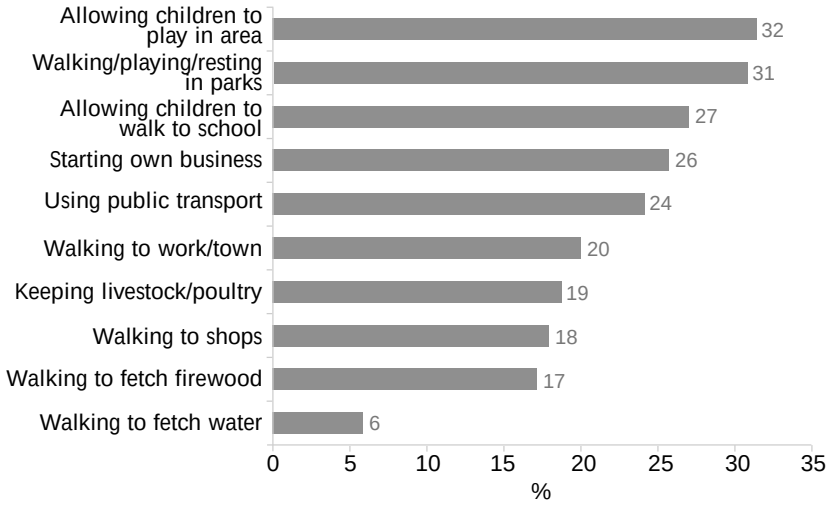
The second set of questions covered whether respondents had, in their lifetime, witnessed a murder, and if so, how old they were at the time and whether they knew the victim. The aim of these questions was to estimate the extent of the phenomenon in South Africa, given the damaging psychological impact this can have, and the links between witnessing violence, particularly at a young age, and the risk of offending later in life.

Impact of crime on daily activities

Almost one third of respondents reported that the levels of crime in their area stopped them from letting their children play freely in the neighbourhood. Slightly less said that they did not walk, play or rest in open spaces or parks, and more than one quarter reported that as a result of crime they did not allow their children to walk to school (Figure 21).

One fifth did not walk to town or work because of crime, while slightly less did not walk to get firewood. Less than one tenth did not walk to fetch water due to the crime level.[17] These last two, while relatively small, are a matter of concern given that both activities are essential in many rural areas for household survival. Black respondents were least likely to be prevented from walking to shops or to work or town (Table 4). This is unsurprising, given that

Figure 21: Respondents who were prevented from engaging in daily, recreational and commercial activities when alone, as a result of crime in their area



most black South Africans who are poorer than other race groups, have fewer alternatives when it comes to the means of transport, and so are forced to walk regardless of their concerns about safety. In total, 15% of black respondents reported that the level of crime in the area prevented them walking to the shops when alone, compared to 17% of coloureds, 34% of whites, and 49% of Indians. The high percentage of Indians saying they would not walk to the shops or to work or town reflects the high levels of concern about crime and safety among this race group discussed earlier in the chapter.

Table 4: Respondents who were prevented from engaging in daily activities when alone as a result of crime in their area, by race (%)

	Black	Coloured	Indian	White	Total
Walking to the shops	14.5	16.6	49.2	34.4	17.7
Walking to work/town	18.0	15.7	44.6	36.3	20.1
Walking to water	6.5	4.5	0.0	6.1	6.4
Walking to firewood	18.3	4.9	0.0	9.2	17.2

In addition to race, the area that people live in also affected the extent to which daily activities are impacted by crime levels. Those living in the metro and urban areas were most likely to have their daily activities impacted by the crime level (Table 5).

Table 5: Respondents who were prevented from engaging in daily activities when alone as a result of crime in their area, by area type (%)

	Metro	Urban	Traditional rural	Farming	Total
Using public transport	39.8	25.9	14.2	19.0	24.0
Walking to the shops	27.4	21.6	7.4	13.3	17.7
Walking to work/town	30.9	21.2	13.6	19.1	20.1
Walking to water	12.4	3.8	7.6	1.6	6.4
Walking to firewood	8.9	9.4	23.1	14.8	17.2

Given the focus placed by government on entrepreneurial and Small Micro and Medium Enterprise (SMME) development as one means of creating employment, the fact that 26% of South Africans said that crime stopped them from starting or investing in a home business presents a challenge to this strategy (Table 6). It also emphasises the complex relationship between crime, the fear of crime, and various forms of development.

Table 6: Respondents who were prevented from engaging in recreational and commercial activities as a result of crime in their area, by area type (%)

	Metro	Urban	Traditional rural	Farming	Total
Walking, playing, resting in open spaces	38.5	35.0	20.1	30.3	31.0
Allowing children to play in area	43.2	38.9	18.5	27.8	32.0
Allowing children to walk to school	37.0	35.1	13.8	20.4	27.0
Keeping livestock/ poultry	10.3	18.8	22.3	10.8	19.0
Investing/starting home business	27.1	29.2	21.8	21.1	26.2

The implications of these findings are serious considering that most of those who said they would not use public transport if alone, walk to the shops alone, walk to work alone or allow their children to walk to school, do not own a car

or even a bicycle. They thus do not have any alternative means of reaching their destination.

There was some variation in the impact of crime on behaviour at a provincial level. For example, the lowest percentage of people reporting that crime stopped them from using public transport when alone was in the Northern Cape (10%). By comparison, almost one third in Gauteng said this was the case. Gauteng also had the highest number of people reporting that crime stopped them from walking to the shops, walking, resting or playing in open spaces, allowing their children to play freely in the area, and allowing their children to walk to school (Table 7, Appendix 2).

Many of those who said crime in their area prevented them from undertaking the listed activities when alone, said the situation would change if accompanied by one or more people they knew. Almost three out of five (58%) of those who reported that they would not fetch firewood alone said that they would fetch firewood if accompanied by someone they knew. This applied to 57% of those who would not walk to the shops alone, as well as those who would not walk to town alone. Fifty-six percent of those who would not—when alone—use public transport, walk, play or rest in parks, and walk to fetch water said they would undertake these activities if accompanied by someone they knew.

Witnessing murder

More than one tenth (14%) of respondents had personally witnessed a murder. Unsurprisingly, given the greater concerns about violence and crime in general in urban areas, a significant relationship exists between the likelihood of witnessing murder and the type of area in which the respondent lives. Those in metropolitan (19%) and urban (15%) areas were more likely to have seen such an incident than those in traditional rural (10%) and farming areas (9%). The trends across the provinces were less significant (Table 8, Appendix).

Race is also a factor, with black South Africans significantly more likely to have seen a murder than whites and Indians: 15% of black South Africans said this was the case as opposed to 12% of coloureds, 9% of whites and 4% of Indians. Although these percentages seem low, they translate into nearly four million South Africans: 3,320,355 blacks, 321,535 coloureds, 303,176 whites and 34,564 Indians.

It has been noted that exposure to violence at a young age, together with exposure to crime, is one of the main risk factors for developing anti-social

behaviour at a later stage in life.[18] Given this, it is a matter of concern that the majority of those who witnessed a murder had seen the incident when they were between 16 and 25 years of age (53%). The next most likely age group was 35–45 years (28%). Males (17%) were also more likely to witness murder than females (10%).

More than half (52%) of those who had witnessed a murder knew the victim, with coloureds (67%), followed by Indians (56%) most likely to have known the victim. Just over half the black respondents (52%) and 31% of whites knew the victim of the murder they saw.

When the victim was known to the respondent, most commonly the victim was a neighbour (43%), a friend (21%) or another relative (excluding sibling, parent or child). Just 5% of respondents who knew the murder victim identified the victim as a sibling, and 2% said the victim was a parent.

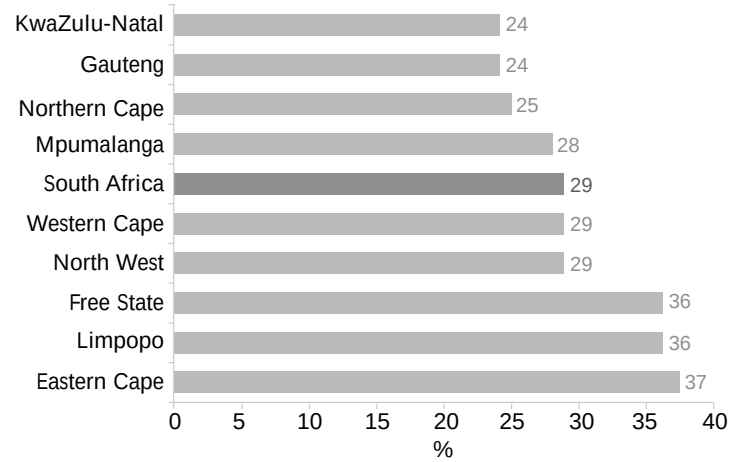
Views about criminals

Those who perpetrate crime are often regarded as 'outsiders' or 'others'—outcasts rather than ordinary members of society. However, the stereotypes about criminals belie the fact that those who commit crime live among us in our homes and neighbourhoods, and as the police readily point out, are often known to and protected by their community and family. If this is the case, the implications for crime prevention are significant. Efforts will need to be made to encourage people to be less accepting of criminal behaviour and to work with the police and courts to prosecute offenders. This requires not only carefully targeted awareness campaigns, but also the kind of treatment and protection for witnesses that encourages and maintains participation in lengthy trials.

In an attempt to explore this phenomenon, as well as public attitudes to criminals in general, respondents in the survey were asked whether they personally know someone who makes a living from crime in their area. They were also asked a range of questions about who they think commits crime in their area, and what their motives might be.

The results show that South Africans' knowledge about who commits crime in their community is indeed high. More than one quarter (29%) of South Africans said they personally know someone who makes their living from crime in their area. More people living in the Eastern Cape said this was the case than in any other province, followed by those in Limpopo and Free State (Figure 22). It is interesting that the two provinces where people were most

Figure 22: Those who know someone in their area who makes a living from crime, by province



likely to know someone who makes a living from crime are also the two poorest provinces in South Africa.

Despite this provincial profile, there was little difference between the metropolitan (30%), urban (29%) and traditional rural areas (30%) in terms of people who know someone who makes their living from crime. However, less people in farming areas (20%) said this was the case.

Trends according to race were more significant than those by area type. Coloured (36%) and black (32%) South Africans were most likely to know someone who makes a living from crime, while less than one fifth (17%) of Indians and just 7% of whites said this was the case.

Respondents were asked two questions regarding who they thought was responsible for most of the crime in the area where they live. The first looked at the origin, or birthplace of perpetrators, and the second covered their residency. The responses clearly indicate that the vast majority of South Africans believe that people born in South Africa, rather than foreigners, are responsible for most crime (Table 8), and that it is people who live in the same area who commit most of the crime (Table 7). These perceptions were common for both violent and property offences.

Some of these views differed significantly, however, when analysed by race and by area type. While everyone agreed that foreigners were not responsible for most crime, a majority of whites thought that both violent and property crimes were more likely to be committed by South Africans from outside their area than by locals: 73% of whites said violent crime was likely to be committed by South African 'outsiders', compared to 37% of Indians, 33% of coloureds and only 25% of blacks.

Respondents living in the metropolitan areas of the country were much more inclined to think that 'outsiders' to their area—whether South African or of foreign birth—were the likely perpetrators of both violent and property crime. Nearly half (47%) of metro residents said people from other areas in South Africa were responsible for violent crime, compared to 36% in urban, 35% in farming and only 24% in traditional rural areas. Metro respondents (8%) were also more likely to blame foreigners for violent crime, compared to 4% in urban, and 2% in both traditional rural and farming areas. Similar trends applied to views on who commits property crime.

The results show that the public places the blame for most crime with South Africans as opposed to "people who were born outside South Africa", and with the exception of white respondents and those in metro areas, with people local to the area where respondents live. The majority of South Africans therefore recognise that those responsible for crime are indeed local community members rather than 'outsiders'—whether from another area in the country, or from abroad.

Table 7: Views on where those most likely to commit property and violent crime live (%)

	Violent crime	Property crime
People living in the area	64	64
People living outside the area	32	32
Both	0	0

Table 8: Views on the birthplace of those most likely to commit property and violent crime (%)

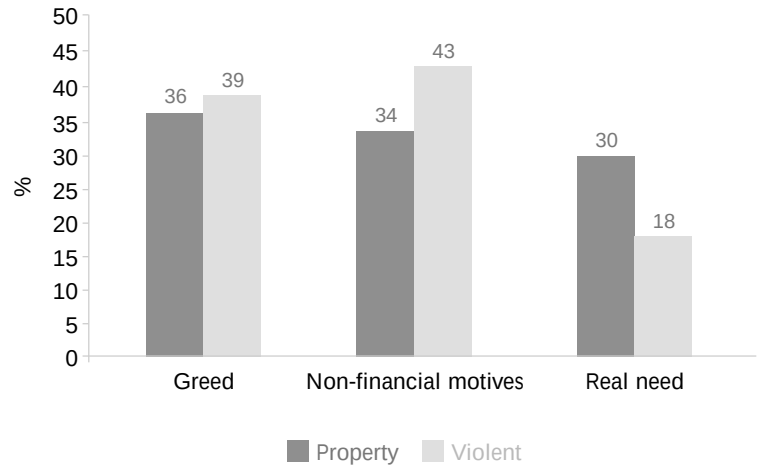
	Violent crime	Property crime
People born in the area	58	69
People from other areas in SA	33	31
People born outside SA	4	4

Respondents were also asked whether they think those responsible for committing violent and property crime are motivated by either "real need, greed or non-financial motives". The latter would apply to all non-acquisitive violent crime.

The two most common reasons cited for both property and violent crimes were greed and non-financial motives. "Real need" was almost as common an explanation for property crime as the other reasons (Figure 23). Although it may be assumed that poorer respondents would be more likely to cite "real need" as the motivation for crime, no statistical relationship was found between respondents' income or that of their households, and their likelihood to cite this as the primary motivating factor for crime.

Whether respondents lived in rural or urban areas did not alter these trends. There was some difference between the provinces, however, with those living in North West much more likely than any other province to cite real need as the motivation for property crime. More respondents in Limpopo than any other province said greed was the driving factor behind property crime. The trend for violent crime across the provinces was similar to that for property crime (Tables 9 and 10, Appendix 2).

Figure 23: Views on the motivations of most perpetrators of property and violent crime



In terms of race, views varied significantly. Indians were much more likely to cite greed than any other motivation, while within other race groups, non-financial motives were the most common reason provided (Table 9).

Table 9: Views on why most perpetrators' commit property and violent crime, by race (%)

	Violent				Property			
	Black	Coloured	Indian	White	Black	Coloured	Indian	White
Need	19	11	16	10	30	17	29	34
Greed	38	32	46	32	34	34	50	36
Non-financial motives	39	52	28	49	34	44	16	26

Implications of the survey results

Responding to declining feelings of safety

The results in chapter six will show that crime levels, as measured by the victim surveys, have dropped slightly since 1998. Despite this, the public feel much less safe now than they did five years ago. Unless a concerted effort is made by government to improve perceptions of crime and safety, the real achievements of the police and courts will make little difference to ordinary people.

A strategy is needed to deal with the problem. Lead by the SAPS national commissioner, it should have a strong public relations component. The message must go beyond saying crime in South Africa is not as serious as people think, or that the police crime statistics show that the situation is improving. Rather it could be based on the following elements:

- Government, and particularly the police, need to acknowledge the serious nature of crime in South Africa, and especially the high levels of violence. Statements to the contrary will simply fuel public concerns about their safety. Along with this recognition, the public needs to be convinced by the police that government knows what needs to be done to reduce crime, and is acting decisively.
- The public need access to accurate and up to date comparative information from as wide a range of sources as possible (including among others, police statistics and victim survey results such as these). An approach that attempts to reduce or downplay the importance of crime information will only increase public scepticism of police efforts to deal with crime.

- Well-publicised and convincing case studies about successes should be disseminated in a variety of ways. These could be both government or non-government initiated projects, and could include reductions in crime in notorious areas like Hillbrow, improvements in the experiences of victims and witnesses in court, the achievements of special units, or examples of successful partnerships between communities, police and municipalities for example, that have reduced crime.
- The strategy must include information on how the public and especially victims of crime can access the police, social workers, prosecutors and other relevant agencies, and make the criminal justice system work for them. Until the public believe that the police and courts place the interests of crime victims first, and until they know how the system works and what they can expect from it, they will continue to feel isolated and unsafe, regardless of what the statistics say.

Needless to say, the strategy would need to be based on a sound understanding of existing perceptions, and tailored accordingly. For example, the survey results indicate stark differences in the views of some race groups towards safety. The strategy would also need to be ongoing, dynamic and must evolve as perceptions change. This implies regular monitoring of public perceptions about crime and safety.

Apart from the important public component of the strategy, attention would also need to be given to working with other entities that influence public opinion such as the media, other government departments and civil society organisations involved in crime prevention, such as Business Against Crime.

Taking responsibility for crime

According to the results, the public do not believe that most criminals are motivated by need. They also do not believe that most crime is committed by 'outsiders' to their areas or by foreigners. And many personally know someone who makes a living from crime in their area. All this suggests that most South Africans believe crime occurs because of choices that are made within our homes and communities, rather than because of external circumstances like poverty or illegal immigration. This information can be used by those in positions of influence to encourage people to be less accepting of criminals, to take personal responsibility for reducing crime, work with the police and courts, and ultimately reverse the widespread acceptance of crime as a part of everyday life.

Focus on metropolitan and urban areas

The results across several questions, ranging from whether crime has increased to how safe people feel, indicate that concerns about crime and the impact of crime are much more pressing in urban areas generally speaking, than in rural areas. The views of those in rural areas should not be ignored or negated, however. But given limited resources and the need to prioritise interventions, efforts to reduce the fear of crime should focus on urban areas.

Deepen our understanding of perceptions

In order to respond effectively to declining feelings of safety, these perceptions need to be properly understood. While the survey provides useful insights into the broad trends, some specific aspects need clarification. The most obvious example is the consistent trend among the race groups for whites and (especially) Indians to be much more worried about crime and safety than coloureds and blacks. This trend has been identified by other surveys, and although there is now no doubt that the trend exists, little has been done to explain it. Further qualitative research is needed to properly understand these views and to hopefully provide policy makers with practical ways of responding to them.

CHAPTER 5

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS ABOUT CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Key points

- South Africans rely extensively on the state for protection against crime and for victim support: few take additional measures to protect themselves or their property, a minority participate in community anti-crime initiatives, and the police and hospitals are seen as the main sources of help for victims of violence.
- One quarter of those who knew of a community protection group in their area said this group physically punishes criminal suspects. Estimates are that nearly 1,5 million South Africans have witnessed violent punishments by such vigilante groups.
- Knowledge of, and participation in, CPFs is low, but those living in urban and rural areas were more likely to be involved in CPFs than those in the metros.
- Physical access to the police and courts is generally good, but remains a problem in rural areas and for black South Africans.
- Only a small majority think the police are doing a good job, but these views are influenced by a range of factors not all of which are about policing. One factor that is clearly within the ambit of the police is response time: this was the key issue influencing both positive and negative perceptions of the police.
- As other studies have shown, views of court performance are much more favourable among those who have been to court than among the general public. And although access to courts is better in metro and urban provinces, satisfaction was lowest in these areas.
- Sentencing is the key issue about which the public formed their opinions of the way courts deal with suspects.

As discussed in chapter four, public perceptions about crime and about what is being done to solve the problem cannot be ignored by policy makers. To the extent that perceptions influence behaviour, public views about the criminal justice system can assist or hinder the work of police and prosecutors. If people believe the justice system can help them recover from victimisation or prevent further offending, and their treatment by officials is acceptable, they are more likely to report crime to the police, cooperate with detectives and participate in court cases. Conversely, if people believe the police and courts

are indifferent to the needs of victims, or are incompetent, unfair or corrupt, they are unlikely to participate voluntarily in the justice system.

The impact of perception is not only important for state attempts to reduce crime, however. Safety and crime prevention depend as much on the actions of individuals, families, communities and organised civil society, as government. Examples of such actions are not walking in unlit areas at night, installing burglar bars, joining a neighbourhood patrol or helping the local business improvement project clean up neighbourhood streets. But civil society does not always respond to crime in constructive ways. Vigilantism is the result of the public losing faith in government's ability to offer protection, with destructive consequences for the functioning of the criminal justice system.

In an attempt to explore these issues, this chapter covers survey results on:

- what individuals have done to protect themselves and their households;
- public attitudes towards, and participation in, community anti-crime initiatives, including community police forums and vigilantism;
- perceptions about access to and performance of the police and courts;
- views on victim support.

Individual and household protection

Respondents were asked what measures they had taken to protect themselves or their households from crime and violence. Only 39% could mention specific measures, which means that most South Africans (61%) have none of the usual means of protecting themselves or their homes.

The most likely type of protection was some sort of physical protection (or 'target hardening') for the home (33%) such as burglar alarms and bars, electric fences, gates, etc. Only 6% said they employed a private security company, while 3% carried weapons for protection, 2% installed alarms or immobilisers on their vehicles, 2% joined self-help or protection groups, and 1% purchased dogs specifically for security.

There were significant differences between the race groups, with Indian and white South Africans much more likely to take measures to protect themselves and their property. Among black respondents, 70% had taken no protection measures, as was the case for more than half of the coloureds (55%). By comparison only one tenth of Indians (11%) had done nothing, and 5% of whites had no protection measures. This trend may be related to supply and demand: not only was the level of fear higher among the Indian and white

population, and feelings of safety much lower, but Indians and whites were more likely to be able to afford household and individual protection.

Of those who had taken protection measures, a sizeable majority overall (75%) felt safer as a result. However, only a small majority (54%) of Indians who had taken any measures felt safer, as opposed to 95% of coloureds, 80% of whites, and 74% of blacks.

Community anti-crime initiatives

The growth of both the private security industry and of vigilante activity are indicators of the popularity of non-state forms of policing. The extent to which people use the services of private security companies or resort to vigilante activity is an expression of both their fear of crime and their faith in the state's ability to protect them. Seen from this point of view, it is encouraging that only 26% of South Africans said that a group or organisation, other than the police, exists in their area to provide protection against crime. This could suggest that levels of confidence in the formal justice system are still quite high, and that the use of private security is limited to a small sector of the population who can afford it.

The existence of legitimate community 'protection groups' can also be a positive indication of civil society taking responsibility for crime prevention at the neighbourhood level. From this standpoint, the fact that only a quarter of South Africans said such a group exists in their area is not positive. It suggests that people rely too heavily on government to protect them from crime—a situation that is unlikely to produce a safer society.

Vigilante activity

Respondents who said a group exists in their area to provide protection against crime were asked a range of questions about the group that help to distinguish vigilante activities from other anti-crime initiatives. Referring to the most active of these groups, the majority (61%) were described as volunteer groups. Just over two thirds (34%) said a fee was paid for the services of the group (suggesting that the organisation could be a private security company, although some known vigilante groups like Mapogo-a-Mathamaga do charge for their services).[19]

At least one quarter of these groups appear to be vigilante organisations, because 25% of respondents said the group administers physical punishment to suspects. These results indicate that although in the minority, many South

Africans have direct experience with vigilantism—a worrying trend that ought to be monitored over time to track changes in public confidence in the justice system.

Vigilante activities were most common in predominantly black areas, with black respondents being most likely to report that local protection groups do not charge a joining fee, and do administer punishment to suspects. In total, more than three quarters (76%) of blacks who reported the existence of a protection group in their area said a joining fee was not charged, as opposed to 70% of coloureds, 43% of Indians, and less than one fifth (19%) of whites.

Such organisations appear to be most common in Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal, with almost two out of five respondents (39%) in the former and a little under one third (31%) in the latter reporting such activity.

A recent study argued that the root of vigilantism lies in both the perceived and real inadequacies of the formal criminal justice system rather than in historical or cultural legacies.[20] Research into the growth of Mapogo-a-Matamaga and the reasons for its widespread support (across race, class, political persuasion, and the urban-rural divide) shows that people enlist Mapogo's services when they lose faith in the formal justice system, or simply do not understand how it works (which in itself reflects poor service, as access to justice includes informing people about how the system works). This would explain why more black people in the survey report vigilante activity: criminal justice services and access to justice are still weakest in areas inhabited by black South Africans and in rural areas. Further, as later discussions will show, perceptions of police performance were low in Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal.

Reports of groups meting out punishment were not pure hearsay: more than one third (37%) of those who said they knew of groups who administer punishment in their area had actually seen members of the group apprehending a suspect, and one fifth (19%) had seen the group administering physical punishment. This translates into 1,477,644 South Africans over the age of 16 who had actually seen a community protection group physically punish a criminal suspect.

KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga again stand out from the other provinces, although not by much: 24% of those reporting such groups in KwaZulu-Natal had actually seen punishment administered, with 22% in Mpumalanga, 20% in Gauteng and 19% in Eastern Cape saying the same. The province where the

fewest people said they had actually seen punishment administered was North West (9%) (Table 11, Appendix 2).

Direct experience of vigilantism was higher among people living in urban areas than other area types: 52% of those in urban areas who said their local protection group administers punishment had actually seen members of the group apprehending a suspect, followed by those in traditional rural (27%) and then metro areas (19%). The same relationship exists between those who saw the group administering physical punishment and the type of area in which they live: half (50%) who reported such a sighting live in urban areas, 26% in traditional rural, 21% in metros and just 3% in farming areas.

Community police forums

Community police forums, as one type of community anti-crime initiative, ought to exist throughout the country as a result of legislation that compels the police to establish forums. The South African Police Service Act of 1995 formally established and detailed the functions of Community Police Forums (CPFs). These bodies were to be established at station, area and provincial level, primarily to enable police-community liaison and communication. Despite a concerted effort by the SAPS, research in certain parts of the country has shown that the success of the CPFs and their reach into the communities they are intended to represent has been limited.[21]

In order to test public knowledge of and participation in CPFs across the country as a whole, questions were included in the survey on these issues. Less than half (45%) of South Africans said they know what a Community Police Forum is. This correlates with the findings of a previous study in 44 police priority station areas in 2001, in which 44–49% reported knowing what a CPF is.[22] In the 2003 National Victims of Crime survey, whites were most likely to know what a CPF is (54%), followed by blacks (45%), Indians (42%) and then coloureds (30%). Those living in urban areas (47%) followed by traditional rural areas (44%) were most likely to know what a CPF is, with only 41% in the metropolitan and 30% in farming areas saying this was the case. When analysed according to province, respondents in Gauteng, followed by Limpopo and Eastern Cape were most likely to know what a CPF is, while those living in Northern Cape were least likely (Table 12, Appendix 2).

Participation in and understanding of CPFs was also low, again echoing the findings of previous studies. Of those who knew what a CPF is, half (51%) reported that there was a forum in their area, and a little over one fifth (23%) had ever attended a meeting. In the 2001 survey, fewer people (35%) said a

CPF was operating in their area, although participation was higher, with 45% saying they participated in the structure in 2001.[23]

Interestingly, in the 2003 National Victims of Crime survey, those in rural areas were most likely (53%) to say there was CPF in their neighbourhood, followed by those in urban (52%) and then farming areas (46%). Those in metros (41%) were least likely to report a CPF in their area.

Coloured South Africans were most likely of the race groups to report a CPF in their area (55%), followed by whites (53%), blacks (50%) and then Indians (46%). This suggests that although whites were the most likely to know what a CPF is, this is probably based more on better access to media and possibly better police dissemination of information than on actual experience of, or interaction with, a CPF.

Those who had lived in their area for ten years or more were significantly more likely to participate in their CPF: one quarter of those who participated had lived in their area for this length of time, as opposed to one tenth of those who had lived in their area for less than one year. No difference was found between home-owners and tenants in the likelihood of participating in a CPF.

As has been discussed in other studies on community policing, these trends probably reflect a combination of generally low participation in community structures as well as insufficient state support for the forums and concept of community policing.[24]

Perceptions about the police

The survey included questions about physical access to police, as well as police performance. It is important to note that no differentiation was made in the questionnaire between the SAPS and other types of police officers, such as municipal police or traffic police. It is, however, likely that in most parts of the country, respondents would interpret 'police' to mean the SAPS, given the size of the organisation and the fact that it has, until recently, been the only traditional police service in the country. In the metropolitan areas, results are more likely to be based on views of both SAPS and municipal police because most of the metros have established their own police services.

Access to the police

Respondents were asked a range of questions about their physical access to the police, including whether they know where the nearest police station is and if so, how long it takes them to get there using their usual mode of

transport. Questions were also included about how often the police are seen on duty and in uniform in the respondent's area of residence.

According to the results, physical access to the police is good: the vast majority (97%) of South Africans knew where the nearest police station is. In almost two thirds (66%) of cases, respondents said the nearest police station is less than 30 minutes away using their usual mode of transport. This is higher than might be expected, and suggests that the police have improved accessibility to their services.[25] Another 23% of South Africans said they live within one hour, but more than 30 minutes away from their nearest police station.

Comparative survey data

In the 1998 victim survey, the question of access to police stations was explored slightly differently. Survey respondents were asked how many kilometres away their nearest police station was. More than two out of five respondents reported it was between one and five kilometres away, while a little under one fifth reported it was between five and ten kilometres away (see table below).

Distance	% of South Africans
Less than 1 km	12.7
1–5 km	41.1
5–10 km	19.7
10–15km	8.7
More than 15 km	14.5

Source: Victims of Crime survey, Statistics SA, 1998

Access varied significantly according to race, area type and province. Black South Africans were most likely to have to travel further to reach their nearest police station. In total, one tenth (11%) of blacks travelled between one and two hours, and more than one quarter (27%) between 30 minutes and one hour to their police station, while only 3% of whites travelled in excess of one hour to their nearest station.

This racial profile correlates with the fact that those closest to police stations live predominantly in metro and urban areas, with those in farming areas further away, and those in traditional rural areas travelling furthest to reach their nearest police station (Figure 24). Unsurprisingly, many more of those

Figure 24: Length of time it takes, on average, to get to the nearest police station using usual mode of transport, by area type

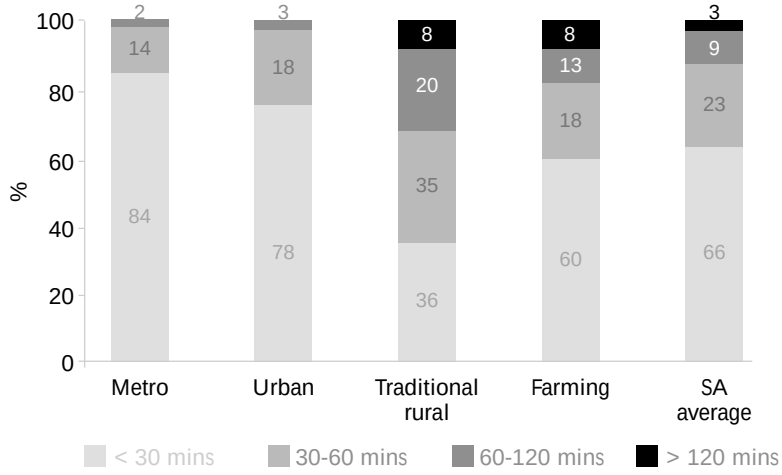
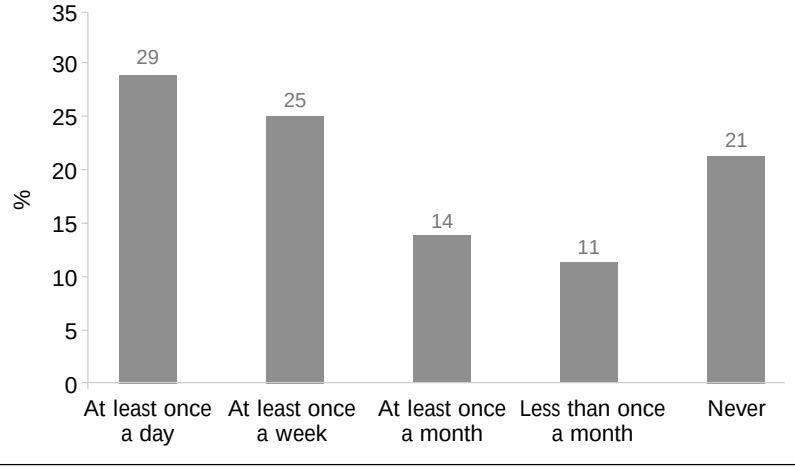


Figure 25: How often police are seen, in uniform and on duty, in the respondent's area of residence



living in the highly urbanised Gauteng and Western Cape provinces were closer to police stations than those in other provinces, while more of those in rural Limpopo and Eastern Cape were further away from a police station (Table 13, Appendix 2).

When asked how often they see the police on duty and in uniform in their area, respondents were most likely to say they see a police officer at least once a day. This was followed by one quarter who reported seeing the police at least once a week. While these results are encouraging, it is a matter of concern that one fifth said they never see a police officer on patrol in their area (Figure 25). Although a direct comparison with the 1998 victim survey is not possible because the questions were asked a little differently, it is interesting how similar the results were (see text box).

Comparative survey data

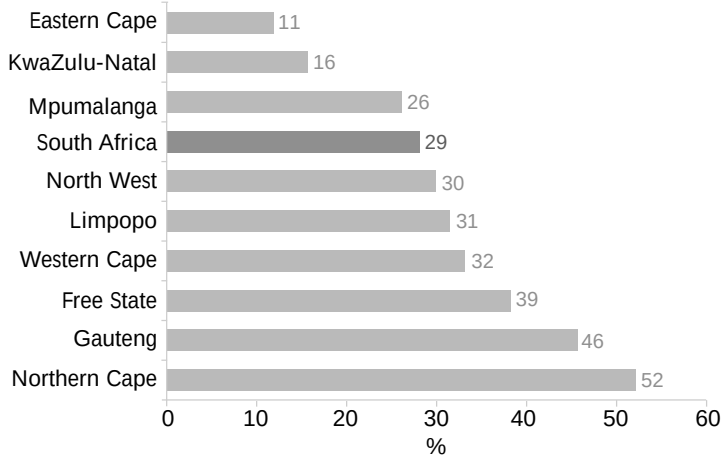
In the 1998 survey, respondents were asked how often a police officer passed by in their immediate neighbourhood either by car or on foot. More than one quarter reported that a police officer passed by at least once a day, followed by more than one fifth who reported that an officer never passed by. Another fifth claimed that an officer passed by at least once a week.

Frequency	% of South Africans
At least once a day	28.6
At least once a week	20.3
At least once a month	14.1
Less often than once a month	11.6
Never	21.8

Source: Victims of Crime survey, Statistics SA, 1998

Coloured South Africans see the police more frequently than other groups, with 34% saying they see an officer once a day, as opposed to 31% of blacks, 17% of whites, and just 9% of Indians. Similarly, coloureds (28%) were more likely to see the police once a week than black (26%), white (17%) or Indian (12%) respondents. These results seem counter-intuitive given the earlier findings that whites lived much closer to their nearest police station than blacks. It is however possible that policing strategies differ between residential areas, or that coloured and black residents see police officers more often

Figure 26: Respondents who see police once a day, in uniform and on duty, in their area of residence, by province



because they are more likely to use public transport and walk in their neighbourhoods than are whites and Indians.

Table 10: Police to population ratios, by province

Province	Ratio
Northern Cape	1:320
Western Cape	1:343
Gauteng	1:350
Free State	1:360
North West	1:492
KwaZulu-Natal	1:571
Mpumalanga	1:606
Limpopo	1:743
South Africa	1:450

Source: SAPS Head Office, February 2004

In terms of the provinces, those living in the Northern Cape were most likely to see an officer once a day, while those in the Eastern Cape were least likely to see the police (Figure 26 and Table 14, Appendix 2). This may reflect the police to population ratios in the provinces, as the Northern Cape has one of the best ratios, with one police officer to 320 citizens (Table 10).

The type of area in which South African's live is significant in determining the frequency with which they see police officers in uniform and on duty. This is probably related to the resources

available to the police, as well as population density in the various areas. While those in metro (37%) or urban areas (37%) were most likely to see an officer at least once a day or at least once a week (26% and 27% respectively), those in traditional rural areas were least likely to see the police once a day (14%), and those in farming areas least likely to see them once a week (14%).

Views of performance

Respondents were asked whether they had had official contact with the police, either by visiting the nearest police station, via telephone or when the police were on patrol. The point of these questions was to ascertain whether such contact had improved their perceptions of the police or not. Almost half (46%) had visited a police station in the last three years, and a little less than one third (32%) had been in official contact with the police.

Of those who had been in contact with the police, more than half (56%) reported that the contact had changed their opinion of the police, and of these, slightly more than half (54%) said their opinion had improved. A little more than one tenth (12%) claimed their opinion remained unchanged, while just over one third (35%) said it had made their opinion worse. Of all the provinces, those in Free State (75%) were most likely, by quite some margin, to report an improved opinion of the police. Respondents living in Gauteng (42%) were least likely to say that their contact with the police had improved their opinion of the organisation (Table 15, Appendix 2).

Disaggregation by race also shows significant variations in these trends. The majority of black South Africans (63%) reported an improvement, while only 46% of coloureds, 34% of whites and less than one tenth of Indians said their opinion improved. Given that access to the SAPS as well as police resources tend to be poorest in predominantly black areas (for example in rural Eastern Cape or KwaZulu-Natal), one would expect people in these areas to be least satisfied with the police compared to those in urban, wealthier and historically advantaged areas. Instead, the converse is true: Indian and white respondents (who fit into the latter category) were least likely to report an improvement in their opinion of the police after some contact with them.

This reflects the trends along racial lines identified earlier, in which black and coloured South Africans tend to be more positive about crime and safety issues generally than white and Indian South Africans. It is possible that these views are less about specific policing issues and more a reflection of general sentiment about safety and governance in the country. Different expectations among the race groups no doubt also play a role. Whites, for example,

probably feel much more vulnerable now than they did before 1994. Having said this, the consistently negative attitudes among the Indian population towards the police, and about safety in general, need to be explored further. It is possible that some of these views are based on changes in the quality and quantity of policing resources in Indian areas since 1994.

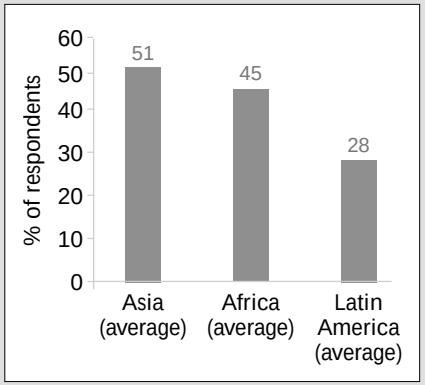
Perceptions of police performance were also tested in a question to all respondents about how they think the police are doing in their area of residence. Just over half (52%) of South Africans said the police are doing a good job in their area, while more than two out of five (45%) thought they are doing a bad job.

Comparative survey data

In the 1998 survey, South Africans were asked a slightly different question about general police performance. Survey respondents were asked if they were "satisfied that the police are controlling crime in their neighbourhood". Only 38% responded that they were satisfied. In a survey conducted in 44 of the SAPS' priority police station areas in 2000, 54% of those interviewed said the police were doing a good job in their area—a figure which correlates closely with the 2003 National Victims of Crime survey results.

Source: Victims of Crime survey, Statistics SA, Pretoria, 1998; E Pelser, J Schnetler and A Louw, *Not Everybody's Business*: *Community Policing in the SAPS' Priority Areas*, ISS Monograph Series No 71, ISS, Pretoria, March 2002.

South Africans' perceptions of the police can be compared to other countries using the ICVS survey results. Bearing in mind that these are city rather than national surveys and thus represent the views only of urbanised populations, South Africa compares favourably with the developing countries surveyed. The figure adjacent depicts the city averages for those who said "the police are doing a good or fairly good job of controlling crime in my area" for developing countries in 2000.



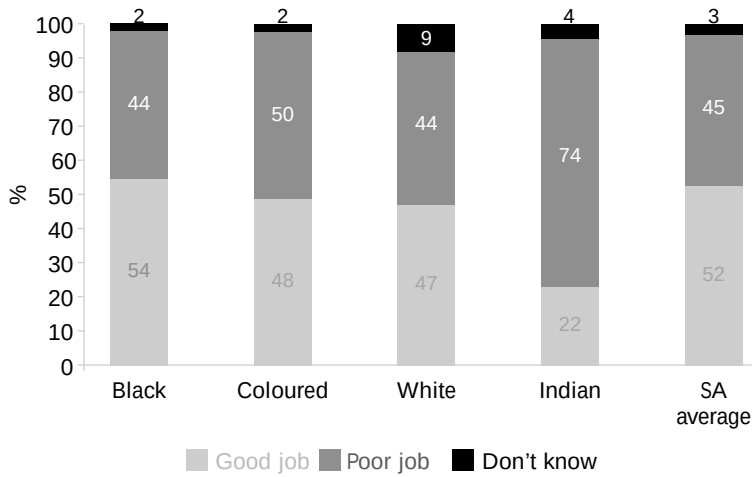
Source: AA del Frate and van Kesteren, The ICVS in the developing world, *International Journal of Comparative Criminology*, 2(1), 2003.

Perceptions of the police varied significantly according to race, province and area type. The same racial trends as those discussed above were found: black South Africans were more likely to say the police are doing a good job than any others, with very few Indians providing a positive assessment of the police in their area (Figure 27).

Those living in the Free State were most likely to think the police are doing a good job in their area, followed by those living in the Northern Cape and Limpopo (Figure 28). Conversely, those in Gauteng were least likely to think this, followed by those in KwaZulu-Natal and the North West. The negative perceptions of the police in KwaZulu-Natal may be related to the high percentage of Indians who thought the police are doing a poor job, as the majority of Indians were surveyed in this province. Indeed, almost four out of five (79%) Indians in KwaZulu-Natal felt that the police are doing a poor job—a larger proportion than any other race group within any other province.

It is noteworthy that Gauteng has the third highest police to citizen ratio in the country (see Table 10), better access to the police than other provinces according to the survey, and nearly half of its residents said they see the police

Figure 27: Respondents' rating of the police in their area, by race



on duty once a day. Nevertheless, public opinion of police performance was lowest in Gauteng of all the provinces. This may be due to high crime rates in the province and higher public expectations of the police—possibly even fuelled by their high visibility.

The provincial results suggest that increasing police numbers and visibility *per se* will not necessarily improve public perceptions of the police. However, when statistics for the country as a whole are analysed, it would appear that a positive relationship does exist between police visibility and perceptions that the police are doing a good job (Figure 29). Most of those who see the police once a day in their area said the police are doing a good job. This percentage declines steadily as the police are seen less frequently, with only 32% who never see the police rating their performance as 'good'. For those who thought the police were performing poorly, the converse trend is true.

Views of the police also differed among area types. Despite media reports about the extent and violent nature of farm attacks and criticisms of the police from this constituency, those in the farming areas were most likely to think the police in their area are doing a good job (65%), followed by those in the

Figure 28: Respondents who said the police are doing a good job in their area, by province

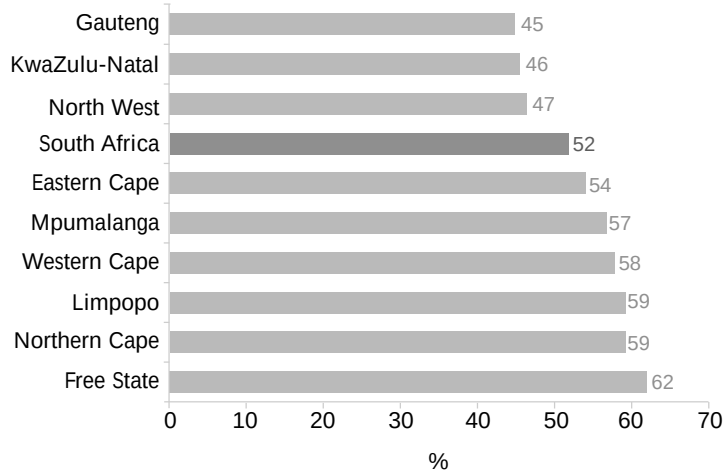
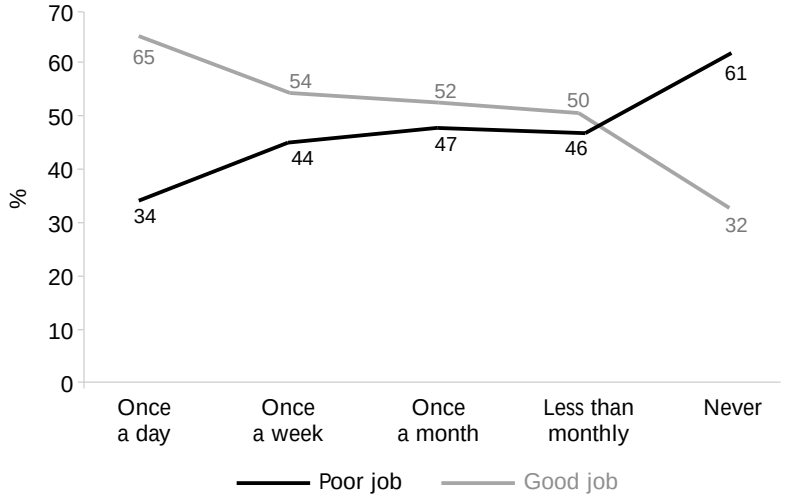


Figure 29: Relationship between how often police are seen on duty and whether they are believed to be doing a good job

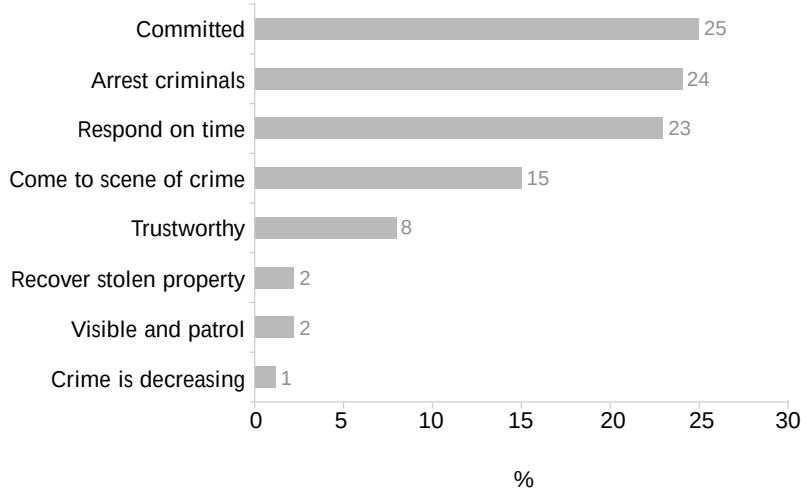


traditional rural areas (55%), urban (50%) and finally metropolitan areas (47%). While the question asked in the 1998 survey was slightly different to that in this study (see text box on p77), it is interesting that in 1998 the trend, by settlement type, was similar. Those living on commercial farms were also most satisfied "that the police were controlling crime in their neighbourhood", followed by those in other non-urban areas such as small villages and traditional areas.[26]

Other factors—over which the police do not have direct or sole control—that can influence perceptions of their performance are whether the public think crime is on the increase, how safe people feel, and whether they have actually been a victim of crime. The survey data showed that all these factors influenced views of the police. Throughout South Africa, those who thought crime had decreased over the past three years were more likely to think the police are doing a good job (65%) than those who thought crime had increased (44%).

Similarly, those who felt safe walking alone in their area after dark were significantly more likely to think the police are doing a good job (66% of those

Figure 30: Reasons for saying the police are doing a good job



who felt "very safe" and 60% of those who felt "fairly safe") than those who felt unsafe (56% of those who felt a "bit unsafe" and 46% of those who felt "very unsafe"). Direct experience of crime also had an impact on perceptions of police performance, with a higher percentage (55%) of those who had not been victims of crime over the preceding year saying the police were performing well than those who had been a victim (41%).

Respondents were asked to explain their positive and negative perceptions of the police. The most common reasons for thinking the police were doing a good job were that they are committed, arrest criminals, and respond on time (Figure 30).

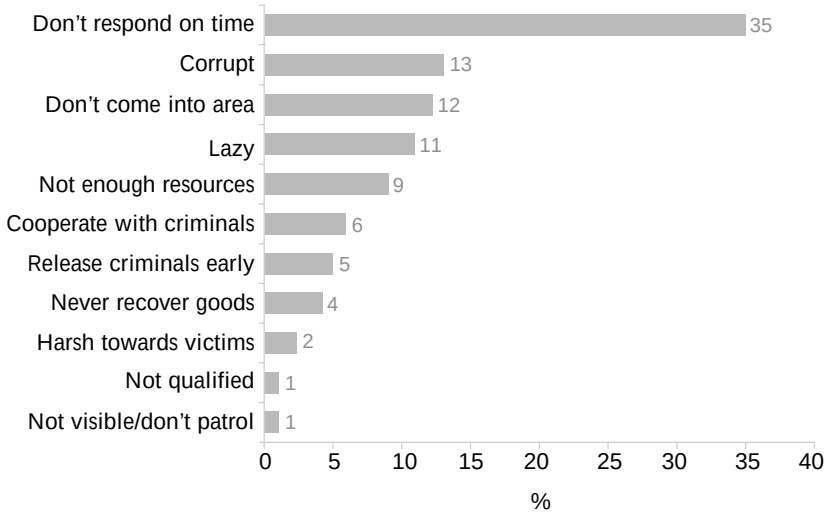
When asked why they thought the police were performing poorly, the most common reason by a wide margin was that they do not respond on time. Response time was one of the main issues raised to explain both good and bad performance, which suggests that this is probably the key factor influencing perceptions of the police. Other reasons for criticising police performance were that they do not have a presence in respondents' area of residence, and are lazy (Figure 31).

The views among the race groups varied more with respect to why the police are doing a poor job than why they are performing well. For black and coloured respondents, the fact that the police do not respond on time was the most common problem raised, while for Indians and whites the lack of resources was the main issue.

Those South Africans living in traditional rural areas were mostly of the opinion that the police do not come into their area, while in the farming areas the lack of resources was the most commonly cited reason for poor performance. In urban areas, corruption was most common, and in the metros, laziness was seen as the main reason for poor police performance.

Significantly, there is no relationship between those who thought that the police are doing a poor job because they respond too late, and those who live further from the nearest police station. This suggests that poor response times are not a result of the long distances that the police might need to travel to reach complainants.

Figure 31: Reasons for saying the police are doing a poor job



Comparative survey data

In a survey of 44 priority police stations in 2000, the most common reasons for unhappiness with police performance were:
- the police are corrupt;
- the police are slow to respond;
- the police are lazy, and
- the police are unhelpful.

Source: E Pelser, J Schnetler and A Louw, *Not Everybody's Business*: *Community Policing in the SAPS' Priority Areas*, ISS Monograph Series No 71, ISS, Pretoria, March 2002.

Two final indicators of public perceptions of policing were included in the survey. The first sought to establish views about the specialised search-and-seizure type operations the SAPS has been conducting in recent years. The second was more experimental and aimed to test levels of public trust in the police.

Less than one quarter of respondents (23%) reported that there had been a specialised police operation (commonly known as 'Operation Crackdown') in their area in the past three years. This is not surprising given that the SAPS' National Crime Combating Strategy, of which Crackdown-type operations are a part, only focuses on 10% of all police station areas in the country. Of those who said there had been such an operation, almost two thirds (64%) thought it had helped to reduce crime in the area.

Trends for the various provinces and area types varied significantly. More people in the Free State (32%) knew of a specialised operation than in any other province. This was followed by Gauteng (28%) and the Western Cape (28%). By comparison, only 13% in Limpopo knew about Crackdown-type operations (Table 16, Appendix 2). Similarly, 33% of those living in the metropolitan areas said there had been an operation in their area, followed by 26% in urban areas, 20% in farming and 15% in traditional rural areas.

The experimental question aimed at testing public trust in the police asked respondents whether they would teach their children, when lost or in trouble, to approach a police officer for help. Almost all South Africans (91%) said they would do so, with slight variations between provinces and race groups.

Those in Limpopo were least likely (86%) to say they would teach their child to approach a police officer for help, while those in the Western Cape (96%)

were most likely (Table 17, Appendix 2). Reflecting the racial trends in views of safety and police performance identified throughout this monograph, coloured (94%) and black (92%) South Africans were more likely to teach their children to ask police officers for help than Indians (84%) and whites (77%).

Perceptions about the courts

As in the section on policing, the public was asked a similar set of questions about their physical access to the courts, as well as their views of court performance.

Access to the courts

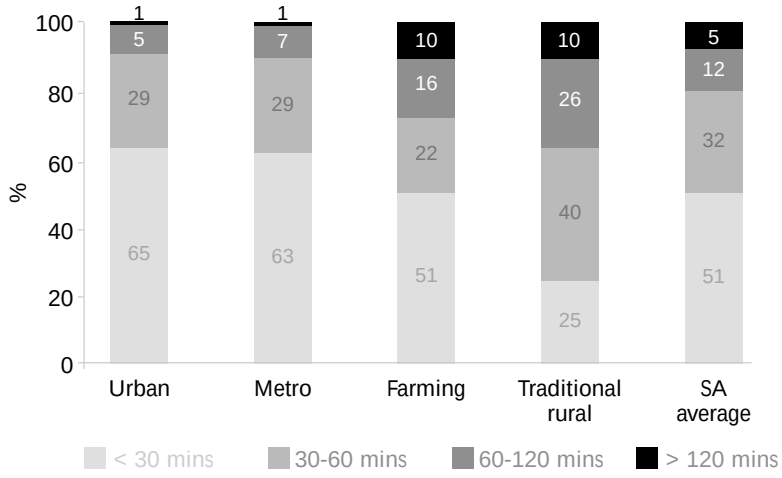
Respondents were asked whether they know where the nearest magistrate's court is, and how long it would take them to reach the court using their usual mode of transport. The vast majority (84%) said they know where the court is, with half (51%) reporting that it would take them less than half an hour to get there using their usual mode of transport. Another third (32%) said it would take between 30 minutes and one hour to reach the court, while a little more than one tenth (12%) would have to travel more than an hour, but less than two hours.

Although there was very little difference among the race groups in knowledge of where the nearest court is, Indian and white South Africans were much more likely to live within a short travelling distance of the court than blacks and coloureds: 90% of whites and 81% of Indians said it takes them less than 30 minutes to reach the nearest magistrate's court, compared to 62% of coloureds and only 43% of blacks.

There was very little difference in knowledge of where the nearest court is between those living in urban and rural areas. However the province that people lived in was more relevant. Those living in KwaZulu-Natal were least likely to know where their nearest court is located, followed by those in Gauteng and Mpumalanga. Respondents in Northern Cape were most likely to know the location of the nearest court (Table 18, Appendix 2).

As would be expected, it took respondents living in the more rural provinces longer to reach their local court. Those in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo were most likely to have to travel long distances, while those in Gauteng and Western Cape travelled for the shortest time (Table 19, Appendix 2). These results correlate with those analysed according to urban and rural areas: respondents living in the metropolitan and urban parts of the country were

Figure 32: Length of time taken to reach nearest magistrate's court using usual mode of transport, by area



most likely to travel for less than 30 minutes to reach their nearest court, while those in traditional rural areas had to travel for much longer (Figure 32).

Views of performance

Respondents were asked three sets of questions about court performance:

- whether they think the courts generally are performing adequately;
- whether they are satisfied with the way courts generally deal with perpetrators of crime; and
- for those who had actually been to court in the past three years, whether they were satisfied with the service provided by the prosecutor and magistrate (or judge).

The first two questions were asked of the general public, while the third was asked of only those respondents with direct experience of the courts. As in the case of questions on police performance, this distinction enables an analysis of the opinions of those who have actually used the service in question, as well as those who have not.

On the whole, South Africans' viewed the performance of the courts slightly more positively than that of the police. When asked whether they thought the

courts generally are performing their duties adequately, well over half (59%) said they were.

Comparative survey data

A national survey conducted by the HSRC in 2001 examined "levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction of South Africans with their post-apartheid governance … their degree of trust in the three tiers of government under which they now live and in some of the institutions spawned by the new democratic dispensation". The questions were slightly different to those in the 2003 National Victims of Crime survey but the results are nevertheless instructive.

Respondents in the HSRC survey were asked "to judge their relative degrees of trust in a variety of civil institutions, including the national government, police and court system". The courts were judged slightly more favourably than the police: 45% expressed trust in the courts compared to 40% for the police and 39% for the local police station.

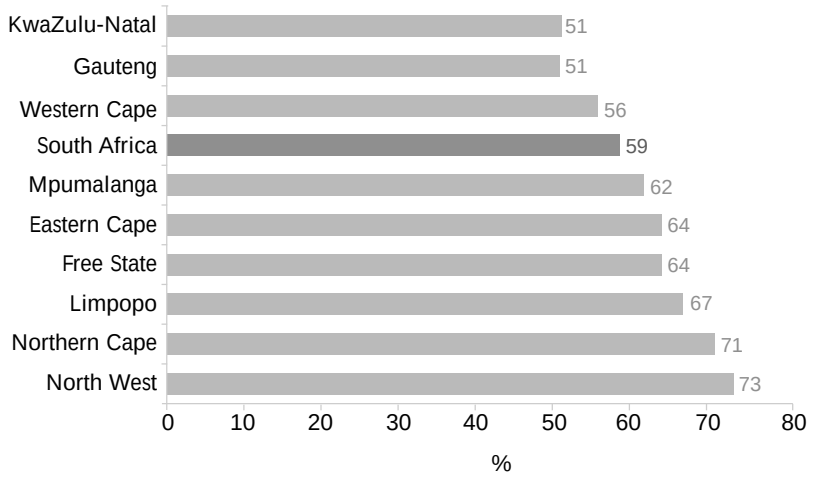
Source: AM Habib & CM de Vos, *Public attitudes in contemporary SA: insights from an HSRC survey*, Cape Town, Human Sciences Research Council, 2002.

Views about court performance differed significantly between race groups and among people living in different areas and provinces. While most black (63%) and coloured (59%) South Africans said the courts are performing adequately, only a third of Indians (33%) and whites (33%) thought this was the case. This again reflects the trends discussed earlier on feelings of safety and police performance, in which Indians and whites were consistently more negative than blacks and coloureds.

Interestingly, those living in the metros (46%) and urban areas (58%) were much less likely to think the courts are doing well, than those in traditional rural (64%) and farming areas (69%). This trend is also reflected in the attitudes at a provincial level. Those provinces where the major metros are located (Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape) were least likely to feel that the courts are performing their duties adequately. The best ratings came from respondents in the rural provinces such as North West, Northern Cape and Limpopo (Figure 33).

In the second question of the general public, respondents were asked whether they were satisfied with the way courts generally deal with perpetrators of crime. Just over half (51%) said they were, with almost as many (45%) expressing their dissatisfaction.

Figure 33: Respondents who said the courts generally are performing their duties adequately, by province



The trends according to race, area type and province were very similar to those discussed above. A majority of black South Africans (58%) were satisfied with the courts' handling of perpetrators, compared to 47% of coloureds, 26% of Indians and only 16% of whites.

South Africans living in metro areas (36%) were much less satisfied than those in urban (50%), farming (57%) and traditional rural (58%) areas (Figure 34). In keeping with this trend, those in the provinces where the metros are located were least satisfied of all, with those in the more rural provinces most satisfied with the way courts deal with perpetrators: at the bottom of the satisfaction scale was Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and Gauteng, while North West and Limpopo had the most satisfied residents (Table 20, Appendix 2).

When asked to explain their reasons for being either satisfied or dissatisfied with the way courts generally deal with perpetrators of crime, answers tended to focus on the sentencing of perpetrators. Almost three out of five of those who expressed satisfaction with the court system thought the courts passed appropriate sentences, while a little over one fifth thought that the courts achieved a good conviction rate. A little under one fifth praised the courts because they were not corrupt (Figure 35).

Figure 34: Satisfaction with the way courts generally deal with perpetrators of crime, by area

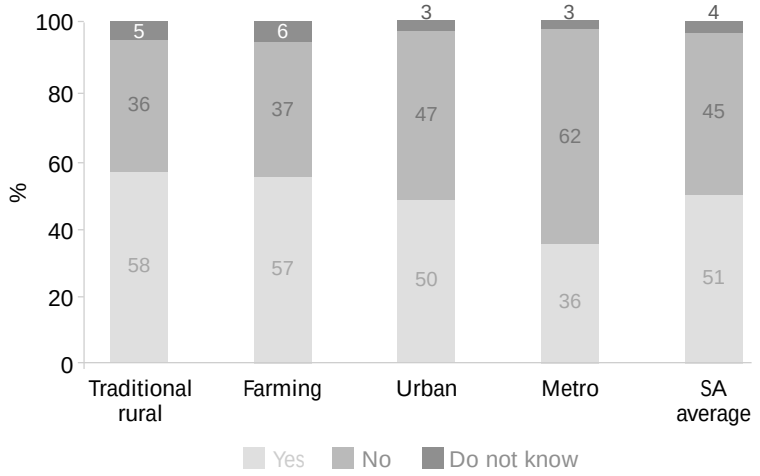


Figure 35: Reasons for being satisfied with the way courts generally deal with perpetrators of crime

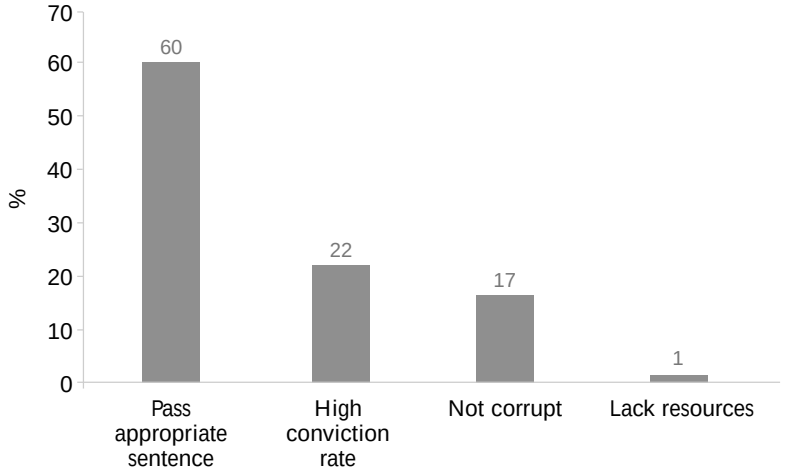
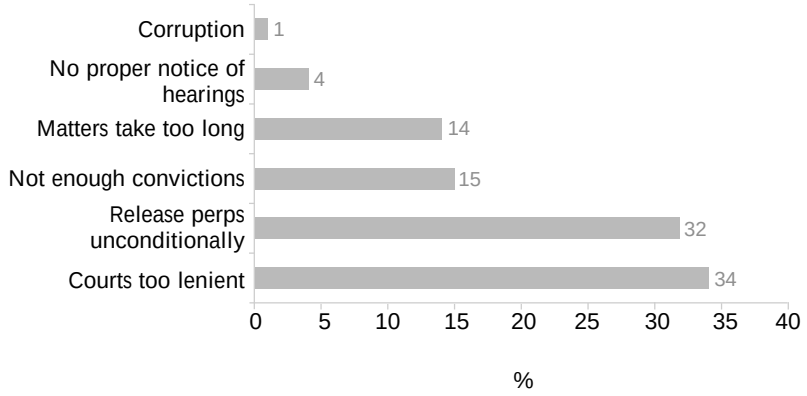


Figure 36: Reasons for being dissatisfied with the way courts generally deal with perpetrators of crime



Among those who were dissatisfied with the courts, the most common reason, as for the positive responses above, related to sentencing, with over a third of respondents saying the courts are too lenient (Figure 36). Almost as many criticised the courts for releasing perpetrators unconditionally.

When asked whether they had actually been to court in the past three years, a little over one fifth (22%) of respondents said they had, predominantly just to attend (i.e. to watch the proceedings) (46%). Three out of ten (31%) were party to a case, and a little more than one tenth (13%) were witnesses in a case. A handful (0.01%) admitted having to attend court because they had "sinned." These results are similar to those of a service delivery survey conducted in the courts in 2001 (see text box on p90).

The trends varied among the race groups and between provinces and areas. Coloured South Africans were most likely to have attended court (25%), with almost as many blacks saying they had been to court (23%). Significantly less whites (17%) and Indians (17%) had attended court in the past three years. For reasons that probably relate to access, those living in metro (26%) and urban areas (24%) were more likely to have attended court in the past three years than those in farming (20%) or traditional rural areas (17%). Respondents from the Free State were most likely to have attended court during this period, while those in Limpopo were least likely (Table 21, Appendix 2).

Comparative survey data

A service delivery survey conducted by the ISS for the National Prosecuting Authority in 2001 found that of the general public living within a three kilometre radius of courts in South Africa, 49% had been to court over the previous three years. This figure is much higher than the 22% recorded in the 2003 National Victims of Crime survey, probably because the 2001 survey was conducted primarily in urban areas. Like the 2003 survey however, the most likely reason for people attending a court case was just to watch (27%), or because they were the victims of crime (20%). Less than one fifth (17%) were witnesses in a case, and a little over one tenth (12%) admitted to being the accused in a case.

Source: P Burton, *Assessment of public and client opinion of the National Prosecuting Authority*, Unpublished data report, ISS, Pretoria, 2001.

Of those who had been to court over the past three years, the majority (70%) were happy with the overall service of the prosecutor or state advocate dealing with the case. A similar proportion (71%) was happy with the magistrate or judge that presided over the case.

The trends according to race were similar to the other findings on performance discussed in the monograph thus far. Black (71%) and coloured (73%) South Africans were much more likely to say they were satisfied with the service of the prosecutor than whites (58%) and Indians (48%). Results on service provided by the magistrate or judge were almost identical to those pertaining to the prosecutors.

Respondents living in different parts of the country were, however, not equally complimentary about the service they received. Just over two thirds of those in metro (67%) and urban areas (69%) were satisfied with the service of the prosecutor compared to 74% in traditional rural and 77% in farming areas. This reflects the earlier trend for people living in the metro and urban areas to be less positive about court performance generally than those in rural areas. The differences were less significant with respect to service provided by the magistrate or judge, although metro respondents were still slightly less satisfied than the rest. The provincial trends showed similar differences between the views of rural and urban respondents, although with less extremes between the provinces than for the general public perception questions above (Tables 22 and 23, Appendix 2).

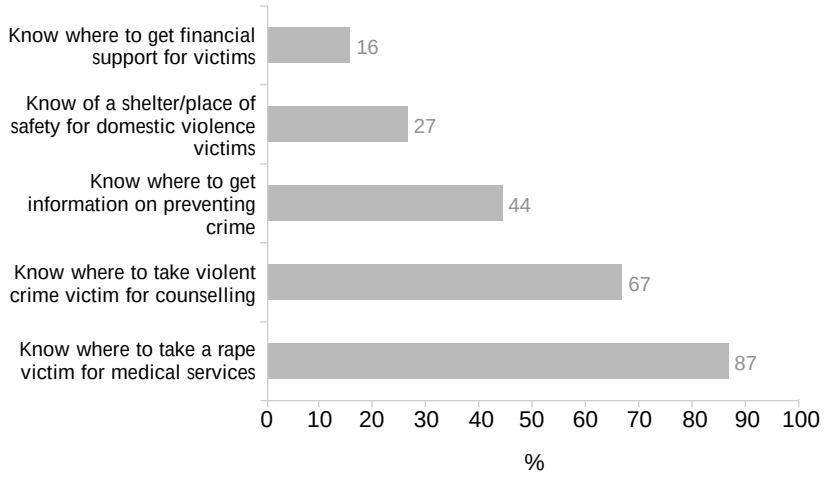
Overall, the results on performance indicate that levels of satisfaction were much higher among those who had actually been to court than among the general public. As discussed above, only 59% of the overall sample thought the courts generally were performing adequately, and even less (51%) were satisfied with the way courts generally deal with perpetrators of crime. This compares to the 70% who had actually attended court who were satisfied with the service provided by prosecutors, and as many (71%) who were satisfied with the magistrates or judges.

These trends suggest that to some extent the opinions expressed in general questions about the 'police' and 'courts' reflect views of the criminal justice system as a whole, or even of government broadly, rather than specific departments. This could explain the consistent differences in opinions of the police and courts among the race groups noted throughout the monograph. According to this trend, black and coloured South Africans were more positive than Indian and white South Africans—a pattern that has been identified in other studies exploring perceptions of government.[27]

Perceptions about victim support services

A range of victim support services exist in South Africa. These are services offered by both government and non-government agencies to those who have been victims of crime, and most commonly include trauma counselling, and

Figure 37: Respondents who knew where to take victims for various forms of support



in some instances medical assistance for victims of violent crimes. The survey aimed to test respondents' awareness about the existence of these services.

Respondents were asked if they knew where to take victims of various types of crime for support. Those who said they did where then asked to name the source of victim support. The vast majority of South Africans knew where to take a rape victim to access medical services (Figure 37). Most also knew where to take a victim of violent crime to receive counselling. However, only slightly more than one quarter knew a place of safety or a shelter in their area where they could take someone who had been a victim of domestic violence. Unsurprisingly given that there is no state support of this nature, few people knew where to take a crime victim for financial support.

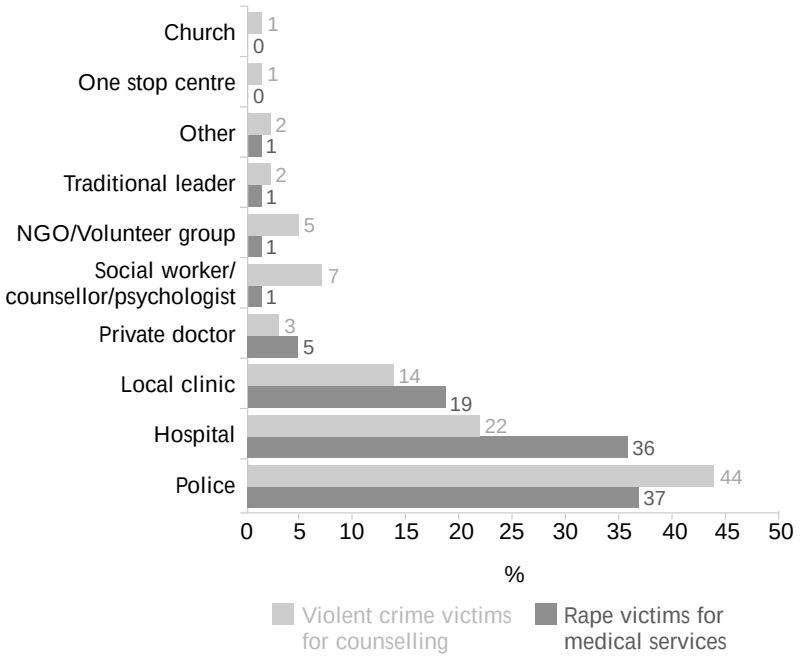
When asked to explain where specifically they would take victims, the majority of respondents identified the police and medical services as the main source of assistance. For rape victims in need of medical help, 37% said they would go to the police, and 60% identified various medical services including hospitals, the local clinic, and a private doctor (Figure 38). Similarly, nearly half (44%) of respondents said they would take violent crime victims in need of counselling to the police, with 39% naming various medical services. Less than one in ten said they would seek help from social workers, counsellors or psychologists, or from NGOs.

Those who knew about a local shelter or place of safety were asked who was responsible for running it. Most respondents said the shelter was run by the state (57%), followed by NGO or volunteer groups (25%).

Of those who knew where to take a victim for financial support, most identified the police (63%), followed by an NGO or volunteer organisation (13%). A few respondents mentioned churches, Muslim societies, the Red Cross and unspecified government offices. The police were also identified as the most common source of information on how to avoid becoming a victim of crime, with 86% saying they would go to the police for this kind of information.

The results indicate the extent to which the public rely on the police for a wide range of services, not all of which can be considered 'traditional' policing activities (such as medical assistance, counselling and even financial support). Respondents no doubt understand that these are not the functions of the police. But since the police are generally the first port of call for all crime problems, people clearly expect the police to be of some assistance, even if

Figure 38: Places where respondents would take rape and violent crime victims for support



this means providing referrals and advice. Although there is a danger that the police can become overburdened by attempts to provide such a wide range of non-core services, SAPS policy is nevertheless to provide victim support where possible. The survey results suggest that this policy is necessary, and that staff at all police stations should be able to assist victims with referrals and to work collaboratively with medical and other victim support service providers. In the case of rape victims, the fact that 60% of respondents indicated that they would take victims to medical service providers (hospitals and clinics) supports the government's initiative to establish one-stop rape care centres at hospitals and clinics.

Views on how government should deal with crime

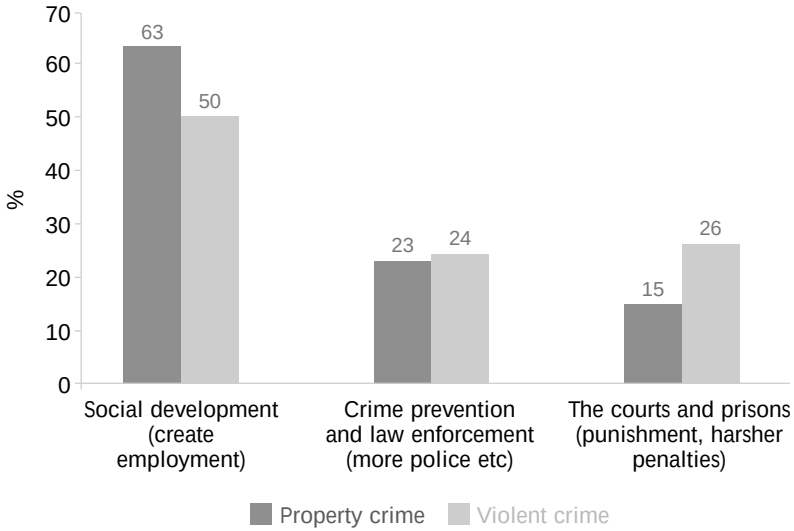
Having canvassed public opinion on a range of community initiatives as well as the performance of the police and courts, it is useful to consider what South

Africans think government should do to make their area safer from crime. Respondents were given a choice of three options, and asked which one government should spend money on to reduce crime in their area of residence. The three options were: crime prevention and law enforcement (including more police), the judiciary and courts (including harsher sentences, punishment and prisons), and social development (including creating employment).

In the case of property crime, more than three out of five respondents said government funds should be spent on social development (Figure 39). This was followed by more than one fifth who identified crime prevention and policing as important, and finally just over one tenth who suggested the judiciary and courts.

The trends for violent crime were similar, although respondents were more likely to think government should focus on the judiciary and courts. Given the extent to which South Africans fear violent crime and the perception that these crimes are less about 'need' than are property crimes as discussed in chapter four, it is not surprising that the public see harsher sentences and punishment

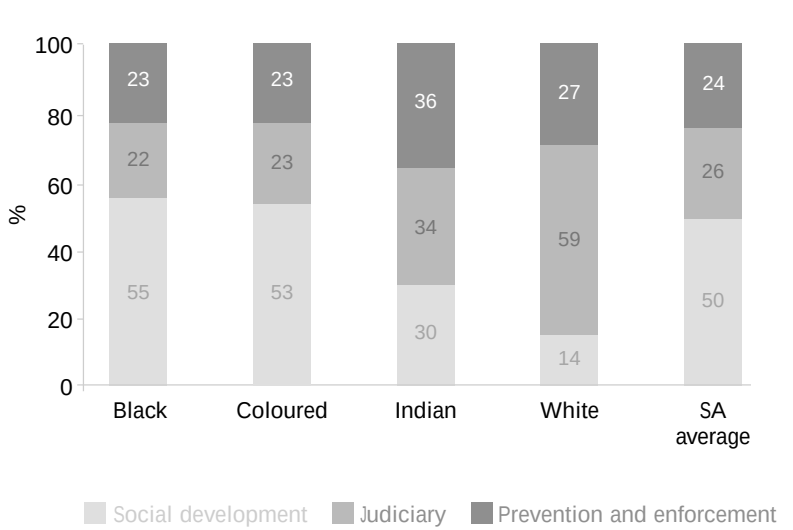
Figure 39: Which one of the following should government spend money on to make your area safe from crime?



as a solution to violent crime. It is nevertheless interesting that for both violent and property crime, social development is overwhelmingly viewed as the solution to crime, despite the fact that greed and non-financial motives were most often considered the motivation for these crimes (see chapter four). While South Africans' understanding of what constitutes social development may be broad, the view possibly exists that adequate employment might obviate greed as a motivation for crime. It is also likely that those who live in conditions of poverty and under-development have an intuitive understanding of the links between crime and a lack of development.

A clear relationship exists between race and the likelihood of citing social development as government's priority in addressing crime. For both violent and property crime, black and then coloured respondents were significantly more likely to identify social development as the area of greatest need. Whites were more likely to suggest an emphasis on crime prevention and law enforcement for dealing with property crime, whereas Indians were most likely to adopt a punitive approach, suggesting a focus on the judiciary and courts (Figure 40). In the case of violent crime, Indians were most likely to

Figure 40: Which one of the following should government spend money on to make your area safe from violent crime? by race



suggest crime prevention and law enforcement, while whites were most likely to be punitive.[28]

Given the racial trends, it is unsurprising that those most likely to suggest social development as a priority lived in the poorer provinces, specifically KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape (Tables 24 and 25, Appendix 2). Similarly, people living in traditional rural areas were most likely to suggest social development, while crime prevention and enforcement were most common in the metropolitan and urban areas. The judiciary and courts (including harsher sentences and punishment) were identified as the priority for dealing with crime by people living in the farming areas.

Implications of the survey results

Individual and community initiatives

The results show that South Africans rely extensively on government for protection against crime. While it is normal for citizens to expect protection from the police and courts, it is also widely accepted that government will not be able to prevent crime without the assistance of individuals, communities and organised civil society.

South Africans therefore need to be encouraged and assisted to take measures to protect themselves and their households from crime. The survey results suggest that this will help to alleviate fear of crime. Also, given that housebreaking is the most common crime in the country and that basic target hardening could have prevented most burglaries (see chapter six), such measures can help to reduce burglary levels. Affordability is likely to be the main obstacle for many South Africans. While some measures like installing burglar bars can be undertaken relatively cheaply, creative ways of securing homes will need to be found for the majority of the population, like ensuring that housing contractors include basic target hardening measures in the planning of low cost housing.

Individual protection is not just about target hardening however. Local police, together with community organisations and local government, need to embark on awareness campaigns to encourage people to consider their personal safety on a daily basis. This may include for example, avoiding crime hotspots, not walking alone in dangerous areas or at night, or locking doors and windows at night or when away. The focus of these efforts, and those mentioned above, needs to be on black and coloured South Africans, who were significantly less likely to have taken protection measures than Indians and whites.

Tracking the prevalence of vigilante activity

The results indicate that many South Africans have direct experience with vigilante activity. For the reasons discussed above, this is a worrying trend and one that needs to be monitored as systematically as possible. Currently no such information exists and few studies are being conducted on the issue. A database on vigilantism would provide a reliable indicator of public support for, and access to, the criminal justice system.

Monitoring vigilantism is not, however, easy. Those that survive the attacks are unlikely to report the incident to the police for fear of further violence from their accusers, because they may well be implicated in the crime, and because of fears that police will not be supportive of their plight. Bystanders and witnesses of vigilante acts are equally unlikely to report to the police for similar reasons. It is nevertheless possible to combine several indicators, such as the survey data used here, with police and court records, media reports and case study material.

Policing

Improving response times

Many of the views on policing appear to be an expression of general sentiments about safety and governance rather than specific issues relating to the police. One exception is the matter of police response times. This emerged as the key issue influencing both positive and negative perceptions of the police. It was also the most common problem raised by black and coloured respondents. Improving response times may be difficult without substantial additional resources, particularly in the rural areas and for black South Africans who have to travel the furtherest to reach a police station.

The police could make a good start on addressing this issue simply by keeping track of response times and perhaps using them as individual performance indicators. This could be done fairly easily in station areas where computer-aided dispatch is in place, such as through the 10111 service. Elsewhere, commanders in charge of responding units should keep track of where their vehicles are and what activities their subordinates are pursuing at any given time. Where tardiness cannot be adequately explained, disciplinary action could be taken. The public should be encouraged to report excessively slow responses, just as they would report bad driving with delivery vehicles or pizza orders that show up late. Members of the public should also be given an estimated response time when they call for assistance, and be given reasons

for prolonged delays. Prioritising response times could have positive knock-on effects with regard to enhancing field accountability among uniformed members. Supervisors would be required to have some sense of staff locations, and the need for enhanced field communications (particularly hand-held radios) would become manifest.

Investigating negative attitudes towards the police

The consistently negative attitudes among Indian respondents need to be explored further. These opinions do not just affect policing—similar trends were found regarding views of crime and safety in general, and of court performance. However, the fact that so few Indians said they see the police on duty in their area once a day (just 9% compared to 29% of all South Africans) suggests that these perceptions may be based on real policing issues. The possibility that the quality and quantity of policing resources in Indian areas has changed since 1994 needs further investigation, particularly in urban KwaZulu-Natal where most Indians live.

Another trend that needs investigation is public perception in Gauteng towards the police. Several questions about police performance in the survey elicited the most critical responses from people living in this province, despite the fact that access to the police is among the best in the country, people are more likely to see the police on duty once a day than in most other provinces, and the police to population ratio is good. These negative perceptions may relate to higher expectations of the police in a province notorious for violent crimes like car hijacking and home burglaries. But given Gauteng's economic importance for the country and its concentration of police and government resources, speculation on the issue is too risky for the SAPS.

Courts

Improving service delivery and perceptions of courts in the metros

People living in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng were least likely to know where their nearest magistrate's court is, and together with those in the Western Cape, were least likely to say the courts are performing adequately. Three of the country's major metropolitan areas are located in these three provinces, which accounts for the fact that views of court performance were worse in the metro areas than among urban and rural respondents surveyed. While it is unsurprising that people are more inclined to know the location of the magistrate's court in small towns and rural areas,[29] the finding that public perception of the courts is lower in major cities is reason for concern.

This negative perception may be linked to the race trend highlighted throughout the monograph, in which Indians and whites—many of whom live in metro areas—are more critical of police and court services than blacks and coloureds. It is also possible that people in the metros simply expect more from service providers. High levels of violent and property crime in the metros, coupled with extensive and often sensationalistic media coverage of events, adds to peoples' expectations that justice should be done swiftly. The courts are responsible for meting out justice, and any failure to do so, whether actual or perceived, results in increased public dissatisfaction with their performance.[30] The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development should nevertheless focus on improving its public image in the major cities. This could be done in a variety of ways, including:

- proactive engagement with the media on controversial cases, especially on the question of sentencing;
- providing victims and their families with sufficient information on the progress of the relevant case, including information on bail and the outcome of the case;
- appointing well trained and experienced prosecutors to man reception courts, remembering that first impressions count;
- improving the case flow management systems in the courts with the aim of decreasing the turnaround time of cases;
- training prosecutors to enable them to effectively and constructively engage with victims and the public;
- appointing more court preparation officials tasked with making court users' experience of the trial as pleasant as possible.

Sentencing as a key factor influencing views of the courts

Sentencing was the main issue about which the public formed their opinions, both positive and negative, of the way courts deal with suspects. This is not particularly surprising given the way the question was phrased in the survey ("are you satisfied with the way courts generally deal with perpetrators of crime?"). Nevertheless, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development should take note of the findings in its efforts to improve its public image (especially in the metropolitan areas), and raise awareness about how the justice system works (see points above and below).

Better communication of successes, particularly of tough yet appropriate sentences, would assist in enhancing the image of the courts. To this end, the media should be encouraged to report on sentences handed down in trials, rather than just the arrests and convictions as is often the case. But the

Department should not underestimate the importance of also providing reasons for why some cases result in an acquittal or why a lenient sentence was passed. Although the public want tougher sentences, the broader interests of justice will be better served by explaining the 'leniency' rather than just broadcasting the harsh sentences. As discussed in the point below, public awareness of how the justice system works is low, and assisting people to understand how and why court decisions are made is as important as being seen to be handling offenders decisively.

Raising public awareness about how the justice system works

When asked if they were satisfied with the courts' handling of perpetrators, no respondents mentioned the importance of receiving a fair trial. Together with widespread public concern about violence, a significant drop in the number who feel safe, and a preference for harsher sentences, it is likely that South Africans will increasingly define the justice system's success in terms of how punitive it is in handling offenders. This not only sidelines important aspects of the justice process (such as the right to a fair trial) but also undermines support for other equally effective ways of dealing with perpetrators, such as diversion.

The criminal justice system is moving towards finding alternative solutions to imprisonment, especially when dealing with child offenders. The Child Justice Bill will soon be in force, and will provide a legal framework that will result in thousands more child offenders being diverted away from the criminal justice system. There is a clear need to educate the public about how the courts function, what their objectives are, and why the rights of the accused as well as the victims need protecting. Without this, it is likely that diversion will be seen as just another example of how the courts "unconditionally" release offenders. Nearly one third of survey respondents criticised the courts for "releasing perpetrators unconditionally", making it the second most common complaint about how the courts deal with perpetrators after saying they are too lenient. This suggests that the public do not understand the bail and sentencing processes.

The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development needs to proactively engage the media on the issue of bail. Other forms of public education are also necessary and could include discussions in schools, and regular radio or television slots that debate the issue. In the case of controversial bail releases and acquittals, all public relations relating to such cases should be handled by the Senior Public Prosecutor concerned or by the head office of the National Prosecuting Authority. In doing so, media releases should be prepared and distributed as soon as possible.

The Department could also consider producing mini court process guidebooks for all persons that come into contact with the courts. On entering the criminal justice process, the witness (or victim), expert, support person and even the accused, could be provided with a handy guide outlining how the system works, including issues related to bail and sentencing.

Victim support

The public rely heavily on the police for a wide range of non-core services, such as medical assistance, counselling and even financial support. The SAPS policy to provide victim support where possible is thus important, although care should be taken to guard against overburdening the police with duties they are not generally trained to perform. The following will be important for those involved in providing victim support:

- Police and medical officials in hospitals and clinics must be trained to assist victims and to refer them to more specialised service providers.
- Systems of referral must be established and regularly updated, in both police stations and hospitals.
- One-stop victim support centres would serve the public well if located at police stations or hospitals.
- In order to share the load between an overburdened government sector and under-resourced independent victim support agencies, collaborative and supportive working relationships are essential.
- Increased support for, and advertising of, the organisations specialising in victim support is necessary to reduce the public's reliance on the police.

CHAPTER 6

CRIME LEVELS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Key points

- Crime, as measured by the victim surveys, dropped slightly between 1998 and 2003: 22.9% of South Africans were victims in the 12-month period between September 2002 and August 2003—down 1.6% from 24.5% in 1998.
- The only type of crime where the share of victims increased during the past five years was housebreaking.
- Property crimes occurred more frequently than violent crimes, with the five most prevalent crimes being non-violent.
- Housebreaking, followed by corruption and then theft of personal property were the most prevalent crimes in the country.
- A victimisation rate of less than 1% was recorded for serious crimes such as murder, sexual assault and car hijacking.
- Almost all the victims of car theft and hijacking reported the crime to the police. However, reporting rates for other serious crimes like housebreaking, assault and particularly robbery were low. The main reason for not reporting was that it was regarded as unnecessary or that the crime was not important enough—even in the case of violent offences like assault and robbery.

This chapter discusses crime rates in South Africa as reported to the survey by members of the public. The 'victimisation rate' as it is called, is established by asking a representative sample of South Africans over the age of 16, whether or not they (or in some cases their household) had been a victim of any crime in the 12 month period preceding the survey date—in other words between September 2002 and August 2003. The victimisation rate for this period (referred to below as the '2003' rate) was compared with that recorded in the 1998 national victim survey.

This chapter also discusses the extent to which victims reported their experiences of crime to the police. The 'reporting rate' does to some extent reflect levels of public confidence in the police. However, reporting rates are also useful for considering whether the police crime statistics provide an accurate picture of the levels of crime in the country.

It is important to note, as was pointed out in chapter two, that this discussion of crime levels in South Africa covers only those crime types that are recorded by victim surveys. The crimes that were not recorded by this survey are: crimes against businesses, crimes against children, and drug and firearm related offences. Crimes that were included, but which traditionally are poorly recorded by victim surveys are domestic violence, rape and sexual offences, and fraud. Corruption is covered in this chapter, although it was treated differently to the other crime types in the questionnaire.

Victimisation rates in 2003

In the 12 months between September 2002 and August 2003, nearly one quarter of all South Africans (22.9%) had been a victim of crime. In most cases, these were property crimes, with the five most prevalent crimes being non-violent.

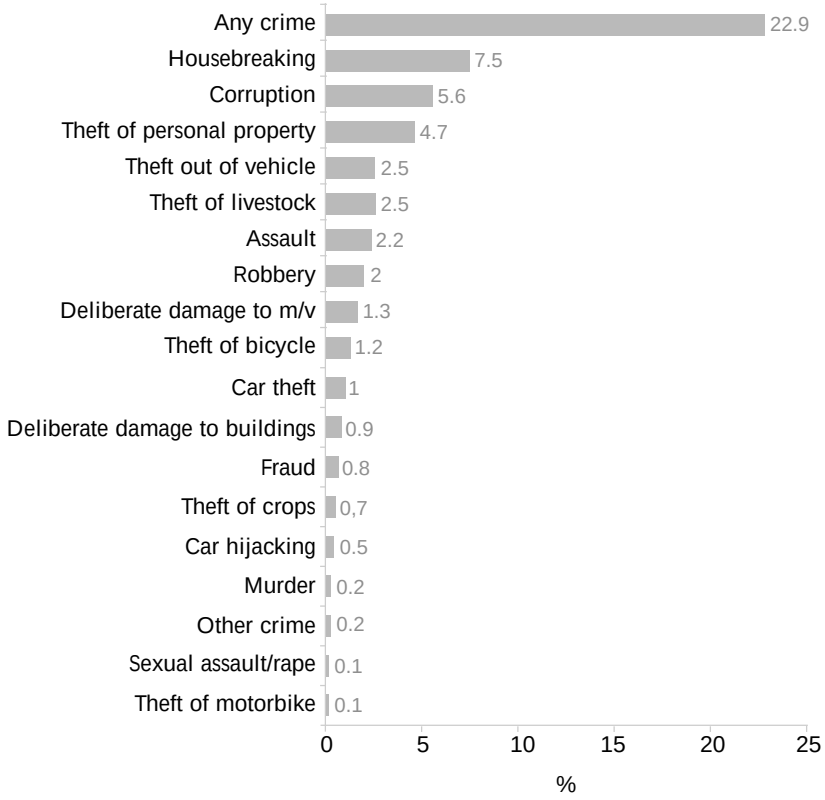
Housebreaking, followed by corruption and then theft of personal property were the most common crimes experienced by South Africans (Figure 41). In total, 7.5% of respondents experienced housebreaking, while 5.6% reported experiences of corruption and 4.7% said personal property was stolen from them (including incidents such as pick pocketing and bag-snatching). These are all non-violent crimes, as are the fourth and fifth most common crimes, namely theft out of a vehicle and theft of livestock (both experienced by 2.5% of respondents). Only two types of violent crime featured in the top ten most prevalent categories: assault (reported by 2.2% of respondents) and robbery (reported by 2% of respondents).

A comparison between the actual levels of crime and perceptions about which crimes are most common (see Figure 13, Chapter 4) reveals that three of the five crimes believed to be most common were in fact among the most frequently experienced crimes (namely housebreaking, theft of personal property and theft of livestock). This suggests that public perceptions about the extent of crime in South Africa are not far off the reality. Two of the crimes that people said they were most afraid of (namely housebreaking and assault) were also among the six most common crimes actually experienced (see Figure 14, Chapter 4).

1998 and 2003 rates compared

A comparison of the overall victimisation rate shows that crime, as measured by the victim surveys, declined slightly between 1998 and 2003 (Table 11). In 1998, 24.5% of South Africans had been victimised in the preceeding 12-month period, compared to 22.9% in 2003. Bearing in mind that the

Figure 41: Victimisation rates, September 2002–August 2003



victim surveys do not cover all types of crime, the results suggest that claims by the police that crime has "stabilised" in recent years are probably accurate.

The general distribution, or ranking, of the various crime types was similar in 1998 to 2003, with the exception of stock theft, assault and fraud which had much higher rates in 1998 than in 2003. In both years, housebreaking followed by theft of personal property were the most common crimes experienced by South Africans.

Housebreaking was the only crime that increased in the past five years, from 7.2% in 1998 to 7.5% in 2003. Rates of theft from a vehicle and deliberate

Table 11: Comparative victimisation rates, 1998 and 2003 (%)

	1998	2003
Any crime	24.5	22.9
Housebreaking	7.2	7.5
Corruption*	-	5.6
Theft of personal property	4.8	4.7
Stock theft	4.9	2.5
Theft out of vehicle	2.5	2.5
Assault	4.2	2.2
Robbery	2.4	2.0
Deliberate damage to vehicle	1.3	1.3
Bicycle theft*	-	1.2
Car theft	1.2	1.0
Deliberate damage to buildings	1.1	0.9
Fraud	3.0	0.8
Crop theft*	-	0.7
Car hijacking**	1.4	0.5
Other crime	1.6	0.2
Murder	0.5	0.2
Theft of motorbike	0.0	0.1
Sexual assault/rape	0.4	0.1

* crime types not covered in the 1998 survey

** In the 1998 survey the category 'car hijackings' included attempted and 'successful' hijackings, while in the 2003 survey only successful hijackings were recorded. This probably accounts for the decrease in the hijacking rate between 1998 and 2003 reflected here.

damage to vehicles remained the same and all the other crimes decreased over the past five years. The changes in rates of the main crimes are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Rates of reporting to the police

All those who said they had experienced a crime over the previous year were asked whether they reported it to the police and if not, why. They were also asked whether they reported the crime to an organisation other than the police.

A victim's decision about whether or not to report to the police is based on a range of factors, many of which have nothing to do with the police or justice system. So despite the tendency to see reporting rates as a reflection of public confidence or trust in the police, this is not always a fair assessment. Indeed the survey results show that the most common reason for not reporting was that it was deemed unnecessary or that the crime was not important enough—a judgement that is highly personal and one for which the police cannot be held responsible.

There are nevertheless distinct trends in reporting rates, and these often vary according to the nature of the crime experienced. For example, murder tends to be highly reported, not only because it is a serious crime, but because there is always evidence that the crime has been committed in the form of a dead body.[31] Serious property crimes such as car theft, car hijacking and housebreaking are usually well reported, often in order to make an insurance claim on the stolen goods. This trend is however premised on people being able to afford vehicle and household insurance.

Less serious property crimes such as theft of personal property are seldom reported to the police because the stolen goods are hard to recover, are rarely insured, and the crime is regarded as 'petty'. Victims see little point in going through the bureaucratic motions of reporting when there is little chance of either an arrest or of recovering the stolen goods.[32] Finally, crimes like assault and domestic violence are also seldom reported because the offences are regarded as too personal, and as a matter to be dealt with between the parties concerned rather than the formal justice system.

Figure 42 illustrates the reporting rates for those crime types where the victimisation rate was greater than 1%. The high reporting rate for car theft is to be expected, given the issues affecting reporting discussed above. Given the serious nature of robbery however, a worrying trend is that only 29% of victims reported the offence to the police. Similarly, housebreaking is the most prevalent crime in the country, and also a major cause of concern among the public, and yet only 57% of victims reported it to the police.

A comparison of reporting in 1998 with that in 2003 is encouraging, because the rate of reporting for some of the most common crimes has increased. As Figure 43 reveals, reporting of crimes such as theft out of motor vehicles, assault and theft of personal property has increased, while reporting rates for housebreaking remained the same.

Figure 42: Reporting to the police for crimes with rates >1%

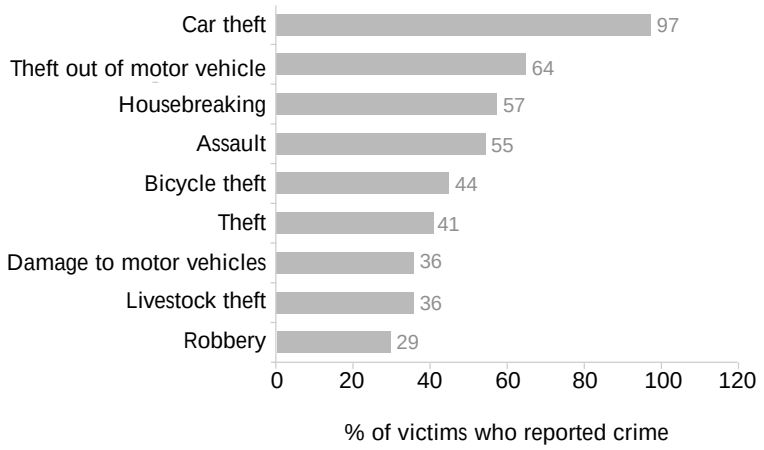
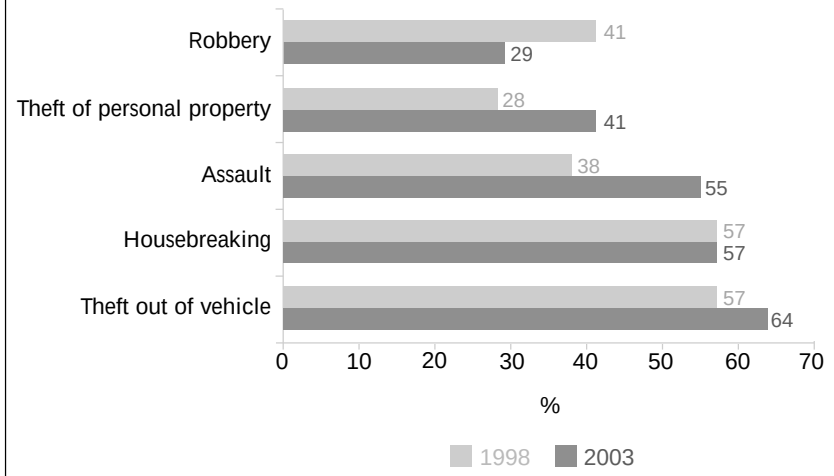


Figure 43: Comparative reporting rates, 2003 and 1998, selected crimes



Reasons for not reporting to police

An important consideration when discussing reporting rates is the reasons given by victims for not reporting crime to the police. These provide an insight into perceptions of the police and criminal justice system, but also into the way victims view different crimes, and how serious they consider them to be. The latter is significant when considering the degree to which crime has become accepted by society.

Table 12 shows that for the most prevalent crime types, the most common reason for not reporting was that it was not necessary or that the crime was not important enough. Another common reason for not reporting was that "other means" were used to resolve the crime. These other means could include calling a private security company, reporting to a traditional authority or resolving the matter between the parties concerned. It could also refer to vigilantism.

Table 12: Victims' reasons for not reporting crime to the police, selected crimes (%)

	Theft from vehicle	House-breaking	Stock theft	Robbery	Property theft	Assault
Not necessary or important enough	70.4	34.8	30.2	35.5	56.1	37.7
No chance of recovering property	–	–	31.8	–	–	–
Other means used to resolve	3.8	14.7	11.8	13.5	12.3	18.1
No evidence	–	17.6	–	–	–	–
Don't trust the police	2.5	20.2	–	4.5	6.1	2.5
Police not available	2.2	–	8.8	16.2	8.6	17

Implications of the survey results

- This survey supports the claims of the South African Police Service that crime has stabilised since 1998. It cannot however, determine whether this stabilisation is due to police action, or other social factors.
- Despite this progress, each year South Africans face nearly a 25% chance of becoming a victim of crime.
- It appears that less than half of all crime committed in South Africa gets reported to the police. This means that the official police statistics are an inaccurate reflection of the crime situation, and should not be used exclusively in any decision-making or evaluative process.
- In order to assess crime trends, both the official statistics and victim survey data are essential. Given the importance of the issue in South Africa, regular crime surveys should be undertaken by the government.

CHAPTER 7
OVERVIEW OF SELECTED CRIME TYPES

This chapter looks in detail at the crime types most likely to have the greatest impact on the South African public, as determined by the seriousness of the crime and its prevalence in the survey. Thus while murder, for example, is a serious crime, it is also one that, according to the official statistics, occurs only about 22,000 times each year, compared to some 500,000 recorded assaults, 300,000 burglaries, and 225,000 robberies.[33] In keeping with this relative infrequency, the number of murders documented in the survey was too small to allow for detailed analysis.

The following crime types are discussed below: corruption, housebreaking (residential burglary), assault and sexual assault, robbery and hijacking, and stock theft. Because corruption was treated differently to the other crimes covered in the survey, the discussion below follows a different format to that used for the other offences. In terms of this chapter's format, key points and implications are included for each crime type, rather than at the start and end of the chapter.

Corruption

Key points

- Although both instances and allegations of 'grand corruption' receive much media attention, ordinary citizens are vulnerable to petty corruption. In total 5.6% of South Africans had been asked to pay a bribe in the past year.
- Cash bribes were by far the most common form of currency in corrupt transactions.
- Traffic officials were most likely to demand bribes and in turn every request for a bribe was met by payment from members of the public surveyed.
- The other most common services for which bribes were demanded include policing, employment in the public sector, pensions/social welfare grants, and public utilities. The vulnerability of the poor to non-delivery of services due to corruption in all these categories is a cause for concern.
- The pool of whistleblowers in South Africa is tiny. Only 2% of all respondents surveyed had ever attempted to report a corrupt official. The most common reasons for not reporting were the belief that it would not have changed anything, followed by a lack of knowledge about where or who to report to.

Definition: The abuse of entrusted power for private benefit.

Public perceptions about corruption

South Africans were most likely to think that corruption in the public sector has increased between 2000 and 2003: 40% said the number of requests for bribes has increased over this time period, while 30% thought levels have stayed the same, and only 17% believed corruption has decreased.

These views differed significantly among race groups, with Indians much more likely to think that corruption has increased: 74% held this opinion compared to 58% of whites, 37% of blacks and 30% of coloureds. This trend is consistent with the pattern highlighted throughout the survey, in which Indian, followed by white South Africans were much more concerned about crime and safety, and far more critical of the performance of the police and courts than blacks and coloureds.

Opinions about corruption varied marginally between people living in urban are rural areas: those in the metropolitan parts of the country were slightly more inclined to believe that corruption had increased (46%), than those in urban (42%), farming (37%) and traditional rural (33%) areas. A similar trend was found among the provinces (Table 26, Appendix 2.)

These views are no doubt informed by actual experience as well as perception. Media reports play an important role in shaping public opinion, and the media has, correctly, given corruption scandals extensive coverage. However, given that most of the survey respondents were poor, the perception that corruption—particularly pertaining to delivery of basic services—has increased, should be a matter of concern for those committed to ensuring clean government and the public service principal of '*batho pele*' or '*people first*'.

Extent of corruption

It should be noted from the outset that many incidents of corruption or attempted corruption were probably not reported to the survey. Some victims may be aware of their perceived 'complicity' as the bribe payer (albeit on demand, possibly accompanied with the threat of withholding a service) and would worry that by answering the questions they might implicate themselves. Others may not be aware that being asked for a bribe in return for a service is a crime, and may instead see this as a 'normal' transaction fee required to ensure the delivery of services. Similarly, requests for 'favours' and 'gifts' may

be overlooked as a form of corruption. These acts typically involve the purchase of a cold drink, alcohol or a meal in return for speeding up a service or the efficient delivery of a service. Some members of the public may regard this as simply an accepted form of gratitude.

Considering that corruption is one of the crime types that is likely to be under-recorded by victim surveys, the fact that it was the second most prevalent crime in the country is a matter of concern. Respondents were asked if, "over the past year, any government official asked or indicated that they would be receptive to either money, a favour or a present in return for a service that they were legally required to perform." If all three variants of corruption—money, favours and gifts—are added together, corruption was the second most frequent crime type recorded by the survey with 5.6% of South Africans reporting experiences of corruption. When only cash bribes are counted, corruption ranks third. In total 4.6% of the sample reported corruption involving money, while 0.6% described an incident involving a favour, and 0.4% a present (such as purchasing a cold drink or meal for an official).

A comparison between the 1998 and 2003 national victim surveys suggests that the rate of corruption has almost tripled from 2% to 5.6%. Three factors could explain this dramatic increase:

- The increase over the past five years reflects a rise in petty corruption particularly at the site of service delivery, i.e. local and provincial government. Corruption at this level reflects a legacy of bad governance inherited from the past which if unchecked could develop into endemic corruption. The Eastern Cape is a good example of this, where the provincial leadership witnessed an unprecedented intervention by national government in late 2002 in an attempt to stop rampant corruption and maladministration.

- Media attention on cases of alleged grand corruption such as the arms deal has raised public awareness about what constitutes an act of corruption. This, combined with a greater awareness among citizens of their rights to fair administrative action, may have resulted in respondents reporting corrupt behaviour in 2003 that might have been regarded as 'normal' practice in 1998.

- Differences in methodology between the surveys could have influenced the results. The 1998 survey asked respondents if, "…any government official, for instance a customs official, police officer or inspector asked you or wanted you to pay a bribe for his/her service?" In contrast the 2003 survey asked respondents if "…any government or public official asked you or indicated to you that they would be receptive to the following: money, a favour, a present in return for a service (that the official is legally required to perform)?" In 2003, the description of a bribe was more comprehensive, including not only monetary forms of corruption but also favours and presents—of which there were many cases reported to the survey. In order to track corruption trends over time, future surveys should disaggregate corruption into these three forms to ensure comparability and a more accurate representation of the problem.

What other surveys say about corruption

Unlike most other crimes, corruption is notoriously difficult to quantify given its clandestine nature. Quantitative surveys are nevertheless important indicators of public experiences of corruption. Two types frequently used are victim surveys and perception surveys. The latter are often criticised for the subjective nature of responses that may be informed by factors other than people's own experience. This is relevant in a country such as South Africa which remains socially and economically very divided. Despite such shortcomings, perception surveys do provide an indication of what concerns ordinary citizens. A number of recent quantitative surveys have probed corruption:

- The ICVS which in 2000 (the last year surveyed) found that 13.3% of respondents in Johannesburg had experienced corruption, an increase from 7,6% in 1996.[34]
- The Markinor Omnibus Survey, which probed the opinions of 2,000 metropolitan and 1,500 rurally based adults during October 2001, found that corruption was a major problem.[35] Approximately 11% of respondents, or a member of their family, had experienced corruption. Unlike the Markinor survey, the 2003 National Victims of Crime survey probed only individual experiences, thereby avoiding the inclusion of hearsay or the possibility of including incidents that may have been reported more than once.
- In an Afrobarometer survey conducted between 13 September and 13 October 2002 respondents were asked, "What are the most important problems facing this country that the government ought to address?"[36] Similar surveys were conducted in 1994, 1997 and 1998. The findings indicate that corruption, HIV/Aids and job creation were the only issues (of the ten major issues covered in the survey) to show an increase. In fact corruption was first mentioned in 1995 by only 2%, compared to the 13% of South Africans who now regard it as an important problem.
- Less revealing is a survey conducted in 2004 by AC Nielsen on behalf of *Business Day* that found negative perceptions among urban adults: over 60%

believed that politicians were more corrupt or slightly more corrupt today than before 1994.[37] This methodology is questionable because a ten-year period may be too long to provide valid results. In addition, attempts to compare governance in a democracy with that in an oligarchy is likely to produce contentious results.

Nature of corruption

Bribes demanded

Corruption was most evident in encounters with traffic officials, followed by the police, and then during interactions with officials over employment opportunities (Figure 44). This supports the perception that corruption is a major problem both in local government traffic departments and the SAPS, and highlights the discretionary power of some of these officials. For example, the public largely interact with traffic officials on the road where the actions of corrupt officials are difficult to monitor. The frequency of demands for bribes by members of the SAPS is worrying given their role in fighting crime and corruption. These results underscore calls for a designated body or unit to monitor and investigate corruption within the ranks of the SAPS.[38]

The high number of requests for bribes in the course of inquiries about employment in the public service reflects the massive levels of unemployment in the country. When demand outstrips supply to such an extent, unscrupulous officials are aware that they can use this situation to their own advantage.

Corruption was next most common among officials responsible for paying pensions or social welfare grants. These are a major—and often the only—source of income for many impoverished households. The Minister of Social Development, Zola Skweyiya, has pointed out that approximately R15 billion earmarked for pensions, social grants and other forms of poverty alleviation has been 'lost' to corruption between 1994 and 2004.[39] Reports of corruption were as common during applications for identity documents, a responsibility of the Department of Home Affairs, as for pensions and grants.

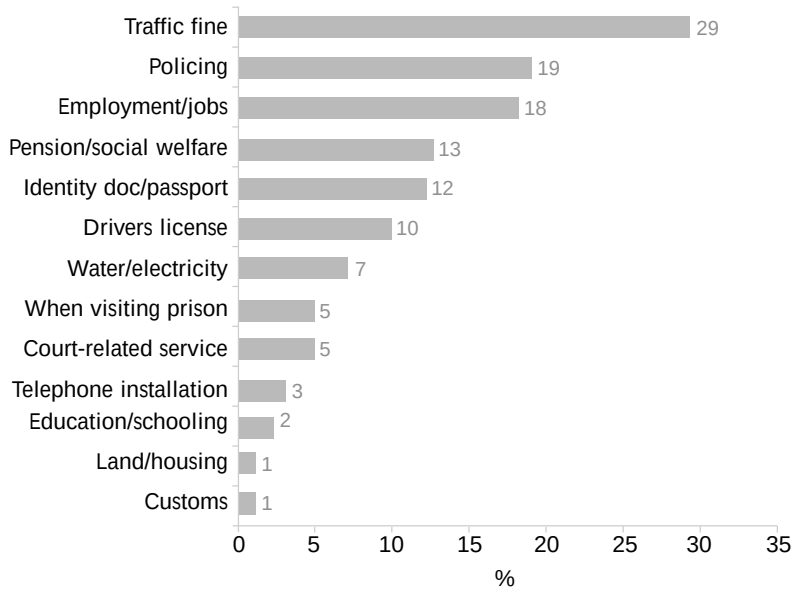
The public was next most likely to encounter bribery during applications for driver's licenses, which again involves traffic departments, and by implication local government. Considering that traffic officials were implicated in the most common type of bribery recorded by the survey—encounters with traffic officials over fines—as well as during the issuing of driver's licenses, the overall poor performance of local government is a major cause for concern.

Comparative survey data

The 1998 national Victims of Crime survey enquired whether respondents were asked to pay a bribe in eight separate categories. This was increased to 14 categories in the 2003 survey. Some of the categories not included in the 1998 survey were water or electricity, telephone installation, education/schooling, and employment/jobs. In addition, police and traffic officials were grouped together in one category in the 1998 study.

According to the 1998 survey, police and traffic officials were most likely to have requested a bribe (59%) with other categories trailing far behind, such as officials from the Department of Home Affairs (13%), customs officials (9%) and health officials (8%). The other categories (prosecutor/court official, pension official, and local authority) were all reported by less than 3% of respondents. Because of the different descriptions in the 1998 and 2003 surveys, comparisons for many of the categories are not possible.

Figure 44: Percentage of all those who were asked to pay a bribe in the past year, by department or sector



Bribes paid

Those respondents who said an official requested a bribe, were asked whether or not they paid it. The most commonly paid bribe was for traffic fines, with an astounding 100% of respondents indicating that they had indeed paid the bribe (Figure 45).

An important explanatory factor is that bribes are often demanded in situations where road users have committed an offence such as speeding, overloading, or driving unlicensed or unroadworthy vehicles. Bribery in these instances may be used to ensure that the offender escapes a stiffer penalty (i.e. a R100 bribe is requested when the alternative is to pay a legitimate fine of double that amount). Unscrupulous officials may also however prey on road users who have not committed an offence. Anecdotal evidence suggests that nationals of neighbouring countries may be requested to pay a bribe or face the possibility of not passing through a border post 'on time' if they are not able to pay the much stiffer fine. Equally some South Africans may be willing to pay these bribes to avoid the 'hassle' factor of having to prove their innocence, particularly if they are passing through a province in which they are not resident.

The results clearly indicate a propensity among those surveyed to regard bribe payment to traffic officials as an innocuous exercise. The effect of such behaviour is however not only a loss of state revenue. When corrupt officials allow motorists who speed, or who are driving vehicles that are not roadworthy to proceed with their journey, the consequences for other road users are potentially disastrous. A breakdown in public trust of the integrity of traffic officials is also likely to result in an increase in lawlessness among road users.

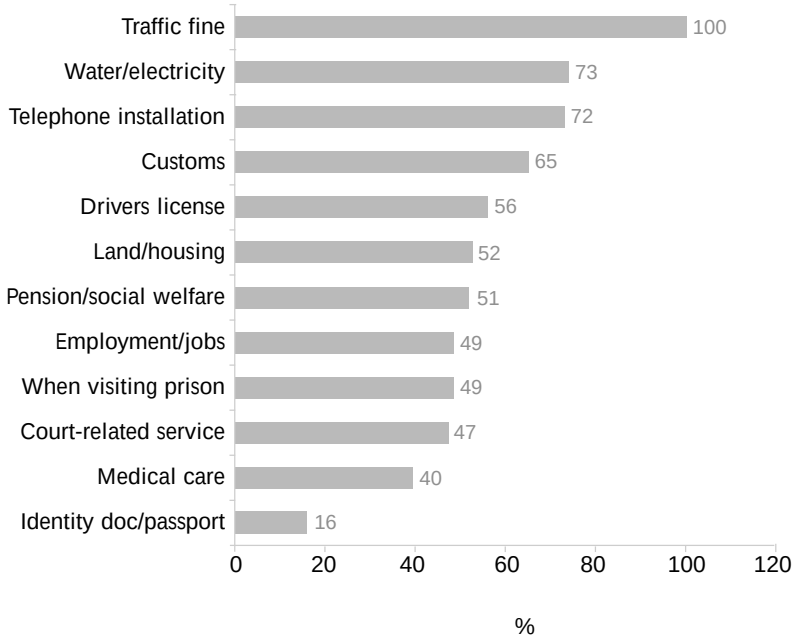
After traffic fines, other services for which bribes were often paid were utilities (water or electricity) and telephone installation. These could well be illegal connections or illegal reconnections after disconnection, highlighting the discrepancy between the availability of such services and the ability of many people to pay for them. The fact that many who have been disconnected, resort to 'illegal' connections to ensure access to basic services underscores the fact that bribery is possibly seen as a means to facilitate access to public utilities. The privatisation of these services is unlikely to lessen this practice, given that a real need exists among poverty stricken households to have sustained basic services (water, electricity, telephony) and not merely a 'connection' which users are unable to afford given competing livelihood needs.

It is noteworthy that although policing was the second most likely sphere in which South Africans were asked for a bribe (Figure 44), none of the respondents admitted to paying the bribe. Although this may reflect integrity on the part of the respondents, it is also possible that they were reluctant to admit to bribing a police official for fear of repercussions. Bribery of an official in the criminal justice sector may also be viewed as more serious than that of a traffic official.

Private sector corruption

Only two questions were put to respondents regarding private sector corruption. This is because bribes are usually not requested when members of the public have a choice in procuring goods and services. Although corruption is a massive problem in the private sector (referred to as white collar crime)

Figure 45: Percentage of respondents, of those who were asked, who paid the bribe, in the past year



and is often used to gain unfair advantage in securing government contracts, most of these crimes involve the 'elite' rather than ordinary citizens. Quantifying this problem in a survey of a representative sample of South Africans would therefore be difficult.

Nevertheless, 4.3% of respondents said that either they, or a family member, had *ever* been asked for a bribe in return for speeding up a job application in the private sector, while 5% reported that they, or a family member, had *ever* been requested for a bribe in return for getting a job in a private company. While these figures seem high, it is important to note that these experiences were not restricted to the past year, as was the case in the questions on public sector corruption discussed above. The results again suggest the high demand for employment in South Africa and the accompanying opportunities this creates for individuals who are willing to partake in corrupt transactions. Although there is no way of knowing how many of these respondents actually obtained the jobs in question after paying the bribe, the results dispel the myth that in corporate South Africa it is always the 'best person for the job'.

Reporting corruption to the authorities

All respondents, rather than just those who had experienced corruption, were asked whether they had ever tried to report a corrupt official. Very few (2%) said that they had. When asked who they reported the incident to, the most likely answer was "another official" (42%), presumably from the same department and who is possibly a superior to the official who asked for the bribe. Almost as many respondents said they reported to the local police station (40%), while significantly less used a telephone hotline (17%) such as a whistleblower hotline.

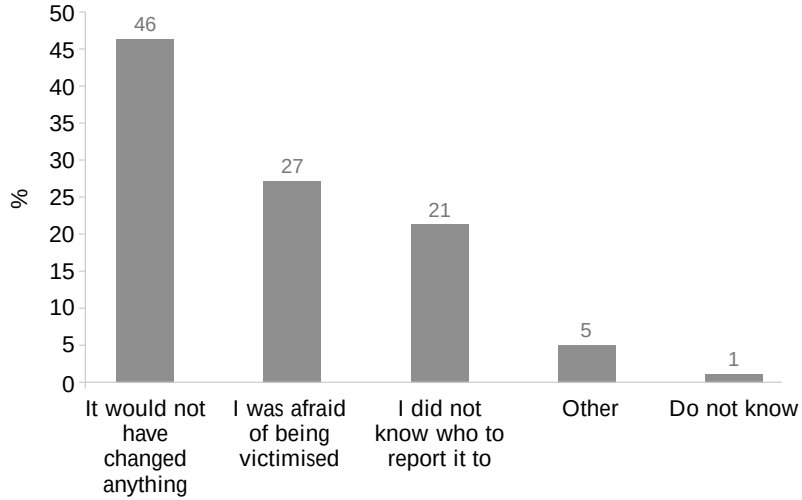
The primary reason given by the 98% of respondents who did not report bribery was that it would not have changed anything (Figure 46). Despite good whistleblower provisions (South Africa is one of only seven countries with legislation protecting whistleblowers) as many as 27% said they are afraid of reprisals. This is a major deterrent to reporting corruption as these whistleblowers are essentially victimised twice—both by the act of corruption as well as the potential threat of reprisal in the event of reporting it. A significant proportion of respondents said they did not know who to report the incident to. These figures reflect the relatively low-key approach towards promoting public awareness of the need for individuals to fight corruption and of how to report it.

Of the three main reasons for not reporting corruption, the view that it would not change anything, and the lack of knowledge about where and how to report

(which together represent two thirds of responses) could be addressed in the short term by a sustained awareness campaign by the public service. This should be geared towards informing citizens of why they need to counter corruption, thus popularising a whistleblowing culture, as well as ensuring that people know what channels to use to report (i.e. through national hotlines). In the long term, the public needs to believe that their actions will result in speedy investigations and when appropriate, prosecution and conviction. One way of doing this is to inform citizens of convictions achieved as a result of information provided by whistleblowers.

The more complex issue is dealing with the fear of reprisal. This can only be tackled by ensuring that citizens feel adequately protected by the provisions of the Protected Disclosures Act (the 'whistleblower' Act) and that the relevant authority assists in ensuring that they remain free of intimidation in the event of disclosure. The SA Law Commission is reviewing ways to improve this key piece of anti-corruption legislation which should hopefully see whistleblowers, particularly those in the workplace, making better use of this instrument. Whistleblowers, as ordinary citizens, are key to effectively challenging both grand and petty corruption.

Figure 46: Reasons for not reporting requests for bribes to the authorities, all respondents



Implications of the survey results

- Although endemic corruption is not a problem in South Africa, the high level of petty corruption in certain sectors is a cause for concern, not least because if unchecked, it can become endemic. The results indicate that some traffic departments are probably vulnerable to this, and local governments need to tackle petty corruption jointly with national and provincial Departments of Transport.
- The continued high level of unemployment means that demand for jobs will far outstrip supply. Other that the urgent need to address the scarcity of employment opportunities, public and private sector employers must be seen to be doing enough to keep corruption and nepotism in check.
- The results suggest that South Africa's poor are especially vulnerable to petty corruption. This is worrying because their inability to access basic services due to the demand for bribes will further deepen socio-economic cleavages and contribute to their alienation from the democratic process.
- A dedicated public education campaign is needed to start to address the lack of awareness about what constitutes corruption and how to report it. Consensus among the elite will not be enough to stop corrupt practices. Ultimately broad public participation is required to promote a culture of whistleblowing in the public and private sectors, but also to ensure that corruption is prevented in future.

Housebreaking

Key points

- Survey respondents thought housebreaking was both the most commonly discussed crime and the most prevalent crime in their neighbourhoods.
- These opinions are backed up by the broader survey findings, as more survey respondents said their household had been the victim of housebreaking (7.5%) than any other crime type, and housebreaking is the only crime type whose prevalence increased since 1998.
- The only crime feared more than housebreaking is murder.
- It appears that less than two thirds of the housebreakings that occur are reported to the police, and that of those that are reported, nearly a fifth are not recorded by the police; the official figures are substantial underestimates.

Definition: Housebreaking occurs when someone breaks into a dwelling without permission and steals or attempts to steal something.

The definition used in the survey corresponds well to the crime of residential burglary as recorded in the official crime statistics, but excludes commercial burglary. Because of common confusion around the definition, this survey, like others, captured a small number of 'home robberies' under the heading of housebreaking, as will be discussed further below.

Public perceptions of housebreaking

According to both the 1998 and 2003 surveys, housebreaking is the most commonly experienced crime in South Africa, with 7.5% of the respondents in 2003 saying their household had been burgled in the last year, compared to 7.2% in 1998. This would suggest that on a suburban block of 14 houses, chances are that one would be burgled every year. Not surprisingly then, the survey indicates that housebreaking is also the most commonly discussed crime, with 24% of respondents saying they talked about housebreaking with friends, family or colleagues over the previous two weeks. It was also perceived as the "most common crime in my area" by 38% of respondents—a higher percentage than that accorded to any other crime type.

Perhaps more unexpectedly, nearly a quarter of those interviewed said it was the crime they feared the most—only murder was mentioned more often (see chapter four). This suggests that the South African public has an accurate picture of the real risk of becoming a victim of housebreaking, and that the threat is feared. Indian respondents in particular were concerned about housebreaking, with 31% of those interviewed identifying it as their most feared crime. This is important because neither government's National Crime Prevention Strategy nor the SAPS' National Crime Combating Strategy have prioritised housebreaking, despite prioritising just about everything else. Typically, it is regarded as a mere property crime, without a real appreciation of the impact that having a home invaded can have on feelings of safety, or the threat that loss of property can have on the livelihoods of poor families.

It is a shame that more attention is not given to this crime, because the stereotypical suburban housebreaking can be prevented by traditional policing and security techniques (see 'implications' section below). From the outset, target hardening devices—including everything from lighting to alarms to precautions taken when on holiday—are an effective deterrent to all but the most committed or well-connected burglars. Unlike robbery, housebreaking takes place in a fixed location, and so burglars are constrained in their choices. Many burglaries are planned for a period of time, and unexpected police or security presence at the chosen location can foil the attempt. Entry,

gathering of property, and exit typically take time if they are to be done stealthily, during which the burglar is vulnerable to surprise patrols. Opportunistic burglaries, which often involve forcible and noisy entries, can call unwanted attention from residents or their neighbours, including calls to the police. Finally, well-marked or otherwise identifiable property can be traced back to the burglars when located in area searches or by other techniques.

Many South African burglaries do not adhere to this suburban model, however. Burglaries in shack areas, for example, cannot easily be prevented by target hardening or patrols, and, when residents are at home at the time of the offence, given the small area of these dwellings, may involve an explicit or implied element of violence.[40]

Burglaries in farming or traditional areas are similarly not as amenable to target hardening or patrols as those in more densely settled areas. Even in urban high-rise buildings, there is little need for stealth when the threat of retribution and lack of community cohesion allow some to operate with impunity. Housebreaking is a crime that underscores our vulnerability, even in our own homes. This time, property may be the target, but next time, something more precious might be taken. After all, burglars necessarily know where we live.

Extent and risk of housebreaking

With 11,205,705 households in South Africa, a 7.5% annual victimisation rate for housebreaking with 57% of victims reporting to the police should result in 479,044 records of residential burglary in the police's database. In fact, in 2002/3 the police recorded 393,159 incidents, or 18% less than expected based on the victim survey results.

This could be linked to under-recording by the police, because the fact that victims *reported* does not necessarily mean the incident was *recorded* by police (see text box), and no questions were asked in the survey about whether a case number was received by the respondent (which would indicate that the incident was actually recorded).

In terms of who is most at risk of housebreaking, white (14%) and Indian (14%) households were more likely to say they were burglarised than were blacks (7%) and coloureds (4%). Housing type was not associated with victimisation, but respondents from metro (8%) and urban areas (8%) were more likely to report victimisation than those from farming (6%) and traditional rural areas (7%).

Reporting vs recording of crime incidents by the police

Although victims may report crime to the police, cases are recorded in the official database by the SAPS only when a docket is opened (with a corresponding case number). Under-recording is common and expected in other countries; in most cases the police have discretion as to whether the facts of a case merit the opening of a docket. For comparison, the British Home Office reports an under-recording rate of 6% for burglary with loss, but a 58% under-recording rate when there is no loss of property.

Nature of housebreaking

Most of the burglaries discussed by respondents occurred at night (70%), but were as likely to occur when the residents were at home (50%) as when they were absent (50%). Just under half of the cases (46%) involved entry through a window, while in 36% of cases, a door was simply smashed open. A small number of these 'burglaries' were actually home robberies (see the section on robbery below), as six incidents resulted in injury to residents. Electronic equipment was taken in 50% of the incidents in which property was taken, and cash was taken in another 14%.

Reporting to the police and case outcome

Only 57% of housebreaking victims said they reported the crime to the police. The single largest reason for not reporting was because "it wasn't necessary or important enough" (32%), which is generally the most common reason given for not reporting all crime types (see chapter five). This lack of 'necessity' may be tied to the fact that only 17% of victims said they were insured against housebreaking. Of those who were insured, 98% reported, compared to 47% of uninsured victims. More disturbing are the 19% of victims who said they did not report because they did not trust the police, and the 14% who said they "used other means to resolve the situation". An additional 15% said they felt they did not have sufficient evidence to justify reporting. Only 2% of victims—all of whom were living in traditional rural areas—did not report because they felt threatened by the perpetrators.

Of those who did report, most were unhappy with the response they received from the police (54%), and 63% were unhappy with the response from the authorities overall (includes police and courts). There are many possible reasons for this high level of dissatisfaction, including unrealistic expectations of what can be done in a housebreaking case. Influenced by media images,

victims may expect the police to dust for fingerprints, for example, when this is not always possible.

Respondents were aware that arrests had been made in 11% of cases reported, which is close to the 13% referral to court rate found in the 2000 police statistics[41] and compares favourably with the 14% detection rate reported in 2002/3 in England and Wales.[42] Keep in mind that these incidents could have occurred any time in the previous year, including very recently, so it is possible that more arrests will be made in the future. In 12% of the cases, the stolen goods were recovered. Perhaps the public should be informed that chances of a positive outcome are a little better than one in ten.

Aftermath of housebreaking

Housebreaking victims were equally concerned with getting life back to normal (29%) and recovering the stolen property (27%), with only 9% being most concerned with the apprehension or punishment of the perpetrators. A comparison across crime types shows that getting life back to normal and recovering property are the most common concerns for many victims (see Table 13, page 142).

Just under half (49%) of housebreaking victims took measures to protect themselves against repeat victimisation, the majority of which (57%) involved 'target hardening' security hardware installed in the home. In three quarters of these cases (66%), these measures did indeed make the victim feel more secure.

Implications of the survey results

- Given valid public concerns about housebreaking and high levels of fear, government and police policies need to target this crime type. Neither the National Crime Prevention Strategy nor the National Crime Combating Strategy prioritised housebreaking.
- This is one crime type for which the public should be encouraged to take greater responsibility for personal safety, since target hardening could be an effective deterrent; enhanced security on windows and reinforced doors would have been helpful in 82% of cases reviewed.
- Since police performance in making arrests compares favourably with international standards, high levels of public dissatisfaction suggest that the public needs to be educated about the reasonable prospects of success in housebreaking cases: your chances of seeing an arrest or recovering your property after a housebreaking are slightly better than one in ten.

Assault and sexual assault

Key points

- Assault and sexual assault are almost as difficult to capture in a household survey as they are for the police to detect. As a result, there were too few sexual assaults to be analysed in detail.
- Assault is not a single crime, but a variety of offences encompassing, among other things, domestic violence, bar room brawls, and street attacks.
- The survey captured only the most serious assaults, suggesting that the public has become hardened to the point that minor incidents are no longer reported to fieldworkers. This notion is supported by the fact that few respondents felt that assault was particularly common, feared, or talked about.

Definition: Assault (including domestic violence), includes being attacked, physically beaten or threatened by someone in a frightening way without the attacker taking anything from the victim.
Definition: Sexual offences including rape and domestic sexual abuse, include grabbing, touching, or sexually assaulting or raping someone.

The crimes of assault and sexual assault are extremely difficult to capture in a household survey—and are hard for the police to handle—for many of the same reasons. Some degree of physical beating is felt by many to be acceptable in some relationships, such as parent-child, elder-youth, and even husband-wife relationships. Similarly, in some communities consensual brawling in various contexts is considered normal, especially between male peers. Certain forms of verbal provocation or other slights are felt to justify physical retaliation by segments of the public. While the law has recently been updated to allow for spousal rape, this concept still escapes many South Africans. As a result, there is a disharmony between community practice and the letter of the law. Exactly the same physical attack could be deemed a criminal assault in one community and not in another, and opinions on the matter can vary across time, even for the same victim.

In addition, assault does not represent just one crime type with one motivation. It encompasses a range of circumstances, from domestic violence to bar room brawls, to attempted robberies, to hate crimes. Many, if not most, of these crimes involve people who know one another.

Assaults between intimates are unlikely to make it to the attention of the police, especially if injuries are minor and reconciliation timely. If the

perpetrator is in a position of power or support over the victim, reporting may not be in the material best interests of the victim. For much the same reasons, the crimes are unlikely to be mentioned to a fieldworker conducting a door-to-door survey, especially if the location of the interview is the home, perhaps within earshot of neighbours or even the perpetrator himself. There is also an element of embarrassment in admitting victimisation, especially for some sexual assault survivors, who may even blame themselves for the incident.

As far as law enforcement is concerned, making arrests for assault is relatively easy, since the perpetrator is usually known to the victim. But prosecuting assault is difficult because, perhaps more than any other crime, assault is considered by the public to be an offence against an individual, not against the state. This view is supported by the fact that it can be the basis of a civil suit in addition to criminal charges. As a result, many complainants, or their families, feel they reserve the right to determine whether criminal action should proceed. This means that the perpetrator can influence whether he winds up in jail by negotiating with the victim, offering either reconciliation or compensation. This is not generally considered witness tampering, even by the police.

While the police could, in theory, mount a prosecution even without a cooperating victim, the practicalities of such an action and the case loads confronted by the criminal justice system would argue against it. This results in a high number of reported assault cases being withdrawn at the request of the complainant: as high as 61% of common assault cases and nearly 20% of rapes in 2000, for example.[43] Even if authorities are able to keep the victim interested long enough to make an arrest and get the case to court, many cases are withdrawn at a later stage: in 2000, more than half of all assault cases that made it to court were withdrawn, and more than three times as many rape cases were withdrawn in court than saw a conviction.[44] Since many of these cases are destined to go nowhere, the enthusiasm of the authorities for investigating assault may be less than for other crimes. Police and prosecutors may feel they are meddling in personal matters, and, in many cases, the public agrees with them.

Public perceptions of assault

The survey showed that assault is still viewed in an ambiguous light by the South African public. It is not believed to be as highly common as other types of crime: only 6% of respondents thought it was the one type of crime that occurred most in their area of residence, ranking assault in seventh place of the crimes believed to be most common. Similarly only 5% said assault was the

one crime they feared most, ranking fifth after other offences. It is not surprising then that only 4% of respondents said assault was the most commonly discussed crime in the past two weeks (see chapter four).

Extent and risk of assault

The survey also suggests that public attitudes towards assault may be growing more conservative, or could be hardening. Only 2.2% of South Africans claimed to have been assaulted in the previous year, down from 4.2% in 1998. It is unlikely that this dramatic reduction can be attributed to a decline in real incidence, because the police figures show an increase during this period of time. While the rate of reporting claimed by respondents actually increased between the two surveys, from 38% in 1998 to a remarkable 55% in 2003, this cannot account for the increase in police figures if real incidence actually halved, as the surveys suggest.

Rather, it appears that the 2003 survey captured only the most serious assaults, as though lesser attacks no longer leave much of an impression on victims. Among the assaults detailed in the 2003 survey, 57% involved weapons and 73% resulted in injuries, 78% of which required medical attention, and 43% of which involved hospitalisation. These are no common assaults, but would probably have been captured by the police as assaults with intent to cause grievous bodily harm, or ‘assault GBH’.

If, in fact, 2.2% of the 30 million South Africans eligible for the survey experienced assault, and 55% of these people reported the crime to the police, the survey would project about 363,000 reported crimes in 2002/3. In fact, the SAPS recorded 548,847 assaults, including both common and GBH. But if we compare only the serious assaults captured by the survey to the figures for assault GBH alone, the numbers are startlingly close: about 265,000 assaults projected by the survey, compared to 266,321 recorded by the police. So, as is the case for robbery (see below), it would appear that the survey captured only the most serious assaults.

With regard to sexual assault and rape, the door-to-door survey technique has repeatedly shown itself to be ineffective in South Africa. The number of survey respondents willing to discuss their rape with a fieldworker at their door was very small: 17 people nationwide. This should surprise no one. While a woman may be willing to recount this most personal and traumatic of experiences to the police in the hope of stopping the rapist, she would have little incentive to undergo this trauma for the benefit of an anonymous person

who shows up at her door. At this point in South African history, the topic is simply too sensitive to research in a general household survey.

Returning to assault, respondents from metro (3%) and urban (3%) areas were more likely to say they had been assaulted in the last year than those from farming (2%) and traditional rural areas (1%), but this may be linked to conservative notions about what constitutes an assault in rural areas. Coloured respondents were most likely to say they had been assaulted (3%), compared to other ethnic groups (2% each)—an observation that is supported by the fact that assault is most common in the two provinces (Western Cape and Northern Cape) where coloured people are in the majority. Of course, this may be due to greater openness to discussing the matter in this community, both to the police and surveyors, rather that greater incidence.

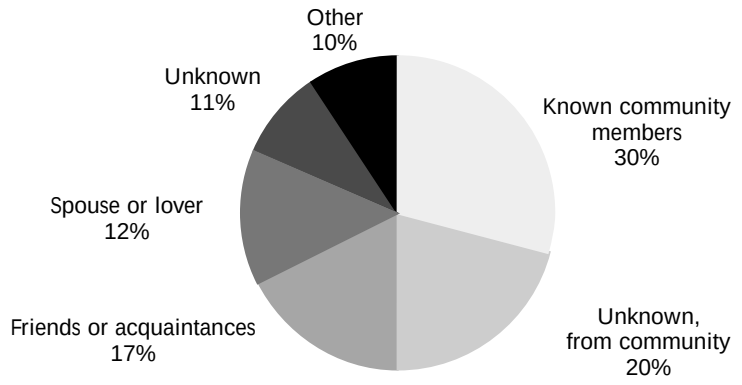
Nature of assault

The survey shows most of the assaults to be of an interpersonal nature. In only 11% of the cases was the assailant completely unknown, with 20% of respondents being confident that the perpetrator was from the community, though personally unknown to them. Another 30% were community members known to the victim, 17% were friends or acquaintances, and in 12% of the cases, the assailant was a spouse or lover (Figure 47).

The number of typical domestic violence cases captured by the survey was small, no doubt for all the reasons discussed above that limit reporting of such incidents. It is also possible that, because most assaults reported to the survey were very violent attacks, those domestic violence cases that involved less serious beatings were not reported to the fieldworkers. In only 14 cases (12%) was the perpetrator identified as the spouse or lover of the respondent; in 11 of these cases the victim was female, in 10 of these cases was the location of the assault identified as the home.

In 79% of spousal assaults, no weapon other than physical strength was used, but in 43% of these attacks medical attention was required. Since it is unlikely that 43% of all beatings in the home require medical attention, it seems that many respondents talked only about the most serious incidents to the surveyors. In 65% of spousal assault cases, the victim reported having been victimised by their attacker before. Perhaps surprisingly, alcohol played a lesser role in these assaults than in other assaults: in only 36% of the cases did the respondent believe the attacker to be under the influence of alcohol and in only 14% of the cases did the victim admit to drinking.

Figure 47: Perpetrators of assault



Compare this to the overall picture, in which 44% of the victims felt the assailant was under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and in which a third conceded that they themselves were under the influence of drugs or alcohol. While the number of cases is small, it is worth noting that coloured respondents were more likely than other ethnic groups to associate alcohol with the attack, and were more likely to be assaulted in a bar or entertainment area.

Since most of the crimes were interpersonal, it is not surprising that 42% occurred in the home, with only 30% on the street, and 11% in a bar or other entertainment area. It is also not surprising that 27% said they had been assaulted by this person before, including 65% of the spousal violence victims. In terms of numbers of perpetrators, 53% said the assault involved only one assailant (including all but one of the spousal violence survivors), 25% two, and 22% more than two attackers. Thus, 47% of the assaults were group attacks.

The reasons for the assaults varied, with 20% of the respondents concluding that the attack was due to long term personal anger towards the victim, 17% assuming it to be an attempted robbery, 15% to be motivated by sudden personal anger towards the victim, 13% by money disputes, 12% by jealousy or other romantic motives, and 12% by anger towards the friends or family of the victim. While the numbers are small, whites were more likely to claim that attempted robbery was the motive than other ethnic groups. All but one of the ‘attempted robberies’ involved groups of two or more.

Reporting to the police and case outcome

In a remarkable 55% of the cases, the victim reported the crime to the police. But this figure may not be as impressive at it seems at first if some of this 'reporting' was involuntary—the product of hospitals that treat the victims being responsible for calling the authorities. In 38% of the cases, the incident went unreported because it was deemed not important enough, which is pretty standard fare. More disturbing are the 18% of cases in which other means were used to resolve the incident, and the 17% where the crime was not reported because the police were not accessible.

Most of the victims were satisfied with the police response (57%) although just under half (47%) of those who reported were satisfied with how the authorities handled their case. A remarkable 38% of the victims who reported were aware of an arrest being made, probably immediately after the offence, and in 68% of these arrest cases, the victim was required to attend court. In 46% of the arrest cases, a conviction had been handed down. Thus, in 11% of all assault cases captured in the survey, and in 17% of the reported cases, convictions had already been handed down, despite the fact that all of these incidents had occurred in the last year. This high success rate is probably due to the fact that the majority of the victims knew their perpetrators, and the severity of the attacks provided corroborating evidence. Thus, if the complainant is willing to see out the criminal process, the prospects of success are good.

Aftermath of the assault

Over half (54%) of the respondents were chiefly concerned with getting their lives back to normal after the attack, a higher share than for any other crime type (see Table 13, page 142). For many, this is likely to have included reconciliation with the assailant. A good fifth (21%) however, wanted most to avoid repeat victimisation, including those who got a restraining order issued. A total of 15% wanted most for the perpetrators to suffer or to be taken off the street.

Over half (54%) changed their behaviour as a result of this incident. The most common modifications included avoiding certain areas (29%), being more alert (25%), and giving up going out alone altogether (20%). More than three quarters (77%) felt safer as a result of this action.

Implications of the survey results

- Assault is not one crime type, but many, each of which may require its own specialised intervention.
- While 79% of domestic violence incidents in the survey involved no weapons, 43% required medical attention. Victims' interests must be maintained in order to ensure these assaults do not someday become murders.
- In nearly half (44%) of the cases captured, the victim felt the perpetrator was under the influence of alcohol and in a third, the victim himself was under the influence. This means that regulating alcohol availability and use could play a significant role in reducing assault.
- The greatest barrier to successfully jailing assailants is victim participation in the process—co-operative victims result in high conviction rates.

Robbery

Key points

- Unlike housebreaking, public perceptions about robbery do not correlate with reality. South Africans were very concerned about robbery: it is the second most commonly discussed crime, believed to be the second "most common crime" in respondents' areas, and the fourth most feared crime. However, according to both the survey and official crime statistics, the chances of any South African being robbed in any given year are about two out of a hundred.
- Most robberies recorded in the survey were serious, or what the police would call "aggravated robberies"—those that are committed with a weapon.
- The number of serious robberies in the survey corresponds fairly closely with the number of aggravated robberies recorded by the police.
- It is a matter of concern that the second most likely place for a robbery to take place, after streets in residential areas, was in the home. Based on survey projections, nearly 90,000 'home robberies' occurred nationwide over the 12-month survey period.
- Few victims reported robberies to the police, especially when they were committed on the street (as opposed to in the home).
- Trends for street versus home robberies were quite different: guns were more common in home robberies, as was the likelihood of injury. Street robbers were much more likely to operate in groups than home robbers, and victims in the home were more likely to know the perpetrator than those robbed in the streets.

Definition: Robbery involves taking something from a person with the use of force or the threat of force, for example, pointing a knife at someone and demanding their wallet.

Robbery was defined in the survey, as in the law, as the taking of property by force or threat of force. This includes a wide range of offences such as armed and unarmed mugging, bank and cash-in-transit robbery, vehicular hijacking,

purse snatching and smash-and-grabs, and robberies that occur in the home and at business premises. To capture this diversity, the SAPS keeps track of several sub-sets of robbery, in addition to distinguishing between aggravated (generally, armed) robbery and common robbery. In this survey, vehicular hijackings were recorded separately from robbery.

Public perceptions of robbery

Robbery is a crime of high concern among the South African public. According to the survey, it is the second most commonly discussed crime, believed to be the second "most common crime" in respondents' area of residence, and the fourth most feared crime (see chapter four). Looking at ethnic differences, 17% of Indian respondents thought robbery was the most common crime in their area, with 18% mentioning hijacking as most common—only housebreaking was a more common choice. Robbery was also regarded as the second most common crime among coloured (18%) and black (15%) people. While only 12% of white respondents felt hijacking was the most common crime, it was the crime most feared by white respondents, with 22% saying they fear hijacking the most—just slightly more than those who fear rape most (21%).

Based on both the official crime statistics and the victim survey, these perceptions do not correlate with reality. Only 17 respondents reported actually having been hijacked in the last year (0.3%), a number too small to place much credence in further analysis. While robbery was more common, a comparison of survey and official data indicates that the chances of any South African being robbed in any given year are about two out of a hundred (see discussion below on extent of robbery).

Robberies can be planned or opportunistic, the former often tied to organised crime, and the latter being very difficult to prevent. Because robberies are usually committed by strangers, do not take long to commit, and often involve attention-grabbing weapons, identification of the perpetrators is difficult. In addition, the property taken may be impersonal, such as cash, and therefore impossible to trace. This compounds the difficulty of responding to robbery.

Partly due to the low chances of apprehending the perpetrators and recovering lost property, robbery is generally one of the most underreported crimes. The property taken is rarely insured, there is usually little chance of the offence recurring, and traumatised victims simply want to get on with their lives. Of course, not having the details in the official record further reduces the state's ability to prevent future robberies and to get the perpetrators off the street.

These difficulties are reflected in the low conviction rates for robbery. In 2000, the last year in which conviction rates were made public, the ratio of convictions to reported cases was only 3%.[45] But this challenge is not unique to South Africa: in the United States and in England and Wales comparable ratios were only 5% and 8% respectively.[46]

Despite these difficulties, the SAPS has designated robbery as a "more policeable" crime,[47] based on the notion that it can be reduced by increased police visibility. But robbery of individuals can be committed anywhere, and this allows criminals to plan their actions around police patrolling patterns. Indeed, unless they saturate an area with members, the more 'visible' the police, the easier they are to avoid in this respect.

The Ministry for Safety and Security regards the increase in recorded incidents of robbery since 1994 as one of the chief challenges facing the SAPS. Since 1994, national recorded aggravated robberies have increased by 50%, while common robbery has increased by 211%.[48] Several explanations have been given by the police, including the suggestion that many reports of robberies of cell phones are fraudulent claims, filed for the purposes of acquiring insurance money in order to purchase a newer model of phone.[49] Allegedly, robbery is claimed instead of theft in order to rule out counterclaims of negligence from insurers.

One theory the SAPS has not explored is the possibility that the levels of reporting by the public, rather than the actual incidence of robbery, have increased. Since the prospects of positive outcome are small (as was discussed above) the main reason for reporting robbery is out of a sense of civic duty. This inclination has hopefully increased for the majority of South Africans since 1994. This possibility is discussed further below.

Extent and risk of robbery

Two percent of respondents said they had been robbed in the past year, down from 2.4% in the 1998 survey. In addition to this apparent decline in incidence, levels of reporting to the police are also down, from 41% in 1998 to 29% in 2003. On its face, this does not tally well with the increase in the number of robbery incidents recorded by the SAPS since 1998.

But a more careful review of the survey findings reveals that not all types of robbery were captured in the poll. Just as there are many reasons why people would fail to report crime to the police, there are many reasons why people do not report crime to surveyors. One is that the incident is not regarded as

memorable or important enough to report to a pollster months after the fact. Another is that the public does not understand how the legal definitions fit specific circumstances. In South African law, for example, bag-snatching—even when no resistance is offered—is considered robbery, although it might not be considered forcible by the average survey respondent.

In this case, however, it was probably the definition used in the survey, and specifically the example that was attached to the definition ("pointing a knife at someone and demanding their wallet"), that resulted in mainly serious robberies in which the use of force was evidenced through a weapon, being reported by respondents.[50] Indeed, 81% of the incidents captured by the survey were armed robberies, and thus fall into the category of what the police call aggravated robberies. Bearing in mind that exactly the same definition of robbery was used in both surveys, this is much greater than the share of armed robberies captured in the 1998 poll (61%). The 1998 ratio corresponds almost exactly to that found in the police's recorded crime statistics for that year (59% of robberies were aggravated), which is what would be expected if both aggravated and common robberies have the same reporting rate. Compare this to the difference between the 2002/3 recorded aggravated robbery ratio (56%) and the present survey ratio of armed robberies (81%). This suggests that, for whatever reason, fewer common robberies were captured in the 2003 poll.

Since the pool of people eligible for the survey (those over the age of 16) represents about 30 million South Africans, the 2% of victims reporting their robbery case to the police 29% of the time should have produced 174,000 reports. Since 81% of this figure can be classified as 'aggravated robberies', predictions based on the survey would be that about 141,000 incidents were reported to police. In fact, the SAPS recorded 127,000 incidents, so the survey findings correspond fairly well to official recorded crime statistics. It would appear that common robberies may have been under-captured in the survey. Because the survey appears to have more accurately captured the incidence of armed robberies, much of the following discussion will focus on this crime.

In terms of risk, the chance of any given adult South African becoming a victim of serious robbery in any given year is about two out of a hundred, but your chances vary quite a bit based on who you are and where you live.

Exactly half of the armed robberies examined in the survey took place in Gauteng and 17% took place in KwaZulu-Natal, which corresponds closely with the 46% and 21% shares held by the provinces in the official aggravated robbery statistics.

Just under 4% of Gauteng residents surveyed said they had been the victims of robbery in the past 12 months. Even looking at the official rates, the risk of being an aggravated robbery victim is twice as great in Gauteng than the national average (Figure 48). This is probably linked to the fact that the province is 97% urbanised,[51] and a large part of the province falls into one of the two major metro areas of Johannesburg or Pretoria. Nationally, 3.6% of metro residents surveyed reported being robbed in the past 12 months.

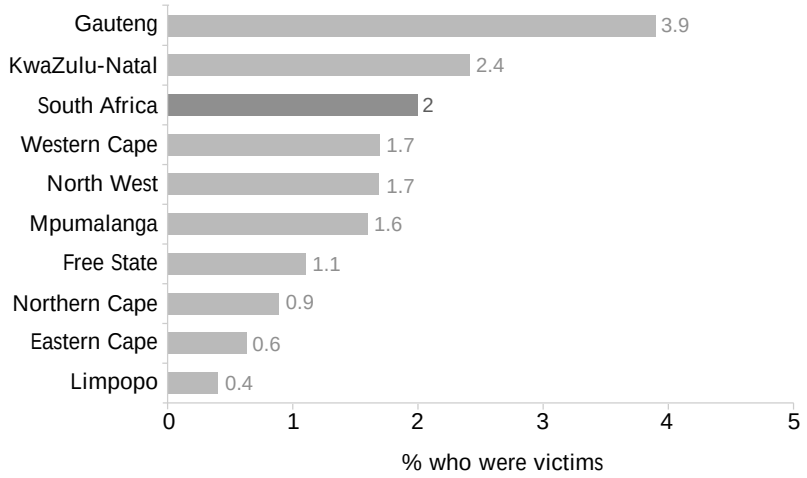
Black people were disproportionately likely to say they had been armed robbery victims, comprising 92% of the victims surveyed, while they make up only 79% of the population. Men were far more likely to claim to have been robbed than women, with more than three quarters of the armed robbery victims in the survey being men. Among black men, 3.4% said they had been robbed in the last year. Younger people were also more vulnerable, with 54% of the victims being between the ages of 19 and 29, compared to the 27% share this demographic has of the national population eligible for the survey.

Nature of robbery

The majority of robberies captured in the survey took place on the street in residential areas (57%). But the second most common locus was, alarmingly, the respondent's home, with 15% of incidents recorded as occurring there. The phenomenon of home robberies has been highlighted in past community victim surveys[52] and, from last year, the SAPS started recording home robberies as a separate subset of robbery. But it would appear that the police's crime information system is not fully utilising this category during its first year of existence. The survey projections suggest nearly 90,000 of these incidents occurred nationwide, and that 72% of victims reported the crime to the police. The SAPS however only recorded just over 9,000 home robberies in 2002/3. While these crimes were probably captured under the heading of general robbery, this discrepancy might lead the police to underestimate the scale of the problem.

While nearly three quarters of home robbery victims reported the crime to the police, only 12% of street robbery victims did so. The high rate of reporting of home robberies is probably due to many factors that would cause the victim to be more confident of a positive outcome in reporting, such as the length of contact with the perpetrator (improving chances of identification), the ability to identify the property taken, and the likelihood of multiple witnesses. In addition to the fact that 81% of home robbery victims were not alone at the time of the robbery (compared to 40% of street robbery victims), other

Figure 48: Provincial robbery rates, 2003



witnesses, such as neighbours, could provide further eyewitness testimony and would probably be more likely to do so than random individuals on the street. Fear of repeat victimisation may also be a factor prompting reporting, with the householder taking proactive steps to prevent a second 'visit'. In addition, the crime scene in a home robbery is the home, which—with access to a telephone—is a more convenient place for the victim to report the crime.

Guns were the most common weapon used in armed robberies (73%), being more popular in the home (83%) than on the street (73%). On the street, knives were also popular (26%). Injuries were more common in armed robberies in the home (24%) than on the street (17%), which may be a result of opportunistic violence, since home victims were no more likely to resist than street victims (both just under 50%).

Street armed robbers were more likely to work in groups (86%) than those robbing in the home (45%), so street robbers may exercise better physical control over victims, reducing the need to inflict injury. In addition, street armed robbers were more likely to target lone victims that those in the home: 60% of street robbery victims were alone at the time of the incident, compare to 19% of home robbery victims.

Armed robbery victims in the home were more likely to know the perpetrator (30%) than those robbed in the streets (16%), which suggests the element of

intimidation may have been more important in the home context. This personal knowledge is likely behind the higher rate of arrest for reported armed robberies in the home context (24%) than the residential street context (8%).

The respondents said they were injured in the robbery in 14% of the cases, compared to about 30% of cases in 1998. This is probably due to the much higher proportion of less serious robberies recorded in the 1998 survey. Injuries were more likely to be sustained when the perpetrator relied on physical strength (54%) rather than a knife (37%) or a gun (4%). Ironically, then, the more deadly the weapon, the less harmful the encounter. When injuries were sustained, they were quite serious: respondents reported needing medical attention in 67% of cases, and were admitted to hospital in 55% of cases.

The most common items taken on the streets were handbags/wallets and cell phones, while home robberies most often claimed electronic equipment and cellphones.

Reporting to the police and case outcome

Due to the small number of robbery cases recorded by the survey, as well as the few victims who reported the crime to the police, meaningful analysis of data on arrests and case outcome is not possible.

Aftermath of robbery

As was suggested above, few robbery victims held out much hope of recovering lost property—only 9% identified this as the most important thing to them after the crime. But, like assault victims, some were stirred by a desire to see the criminals suffer (12%). The most common response by far, however, was the simple desire to get life back to normal (37%) (see Table 13, page 142).

Eleven percent most wanted to avoid future harm, and 73% said they had changed their behaviour in order to accomplish this. Thirty-four percent said they would avoid certain areas, 23% said they would be more alert, 17% said they had taken unspecified measures to make their property more difficult to steal, and 17% had given up going out altogether. Three quarters (75%) said this change had made them feel safer.

Implications of the survey results

- The public needs to be encouraged to report robberies to the police. Given the high levels of public concern about robbery, the serious and violent nature of the crime, and the fact that it has been prioritised by the police, it

will be difficult to make corrective action work unless there are accurate records of these crimes that can be monitored and analysed. The differences in the nature of street versus home robberies reflected in the survey data reinforces this point: unless details are available on the nature of particular crimes, interventions that target specific elements of a crime cannot be developed.

- Given the seriousness of robbery in South Africa, the SAPS needs to clarify the massive increases in their own records of 50% for aggravated robbery and 211% for common robbery since 1994. It will be difficult to take any crime problem seriously while the possibility exists that these increases are to some extent due to fraudulent insurance claims.
- The SAPS needs to pay careful attention to recording, at police station level, of robberies that occur in the home, since the survey data suggests that many of these incidents are currently under-recorded in official statistics. Although most of the nearly 90,000 home robbery victims polled said they reported to the police, SAPS records reflect just over 9,000 cases as home robberies in 2002/3. A discrepancy of this magnitude might lead the police to underestimate the scale of the problem.
- On the street, most robbers work in groups and target lone victims—moving in groups and avoiding groups of other people on the street should be a practical prevention strategy employed by the public.
- Guns are key to robbery, so measures taken to reduce the number of guns on the street should be taken alongside a public information campaign not to resist robbery, whatever the weapon employed.

Stock theft

Key points

- Black and white South Africans in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal were most at risk.
- Most victims were poor, which suggests that the impact of stock theft on a household is likely to be severe.
- Few victims reported theft of stock to the police, largely because they did not think the crime was important enough, or that their property would be recovered. This perception is understandable given that of the few victims who did report, only 4% were aware that an arrest was made, and 4% said their stock was recovered.
- Stock theft does not go unnoticed however. Over half the respondents reported the crime to an organisation other than the police, with traditional authorities being the most likely source of assistance.

Definition: Theft of livestock, poultry and other animals involves the actual stealing of animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, chickens and dogs.

Public perceptions about stock theft

Only 6% of the respondents felt that stock theft was the crime that occurred most frequently in their area, with 82% of these responses coming from traditional rural areas and 91% from black respondents. Only 2% identified it as the crime they were most afraid of. In keeping with these figures, only 5% identified stock theft as the crime type about which they most recently spoke.

Extent and risk of stock theft

Stock theft was one of the most commonly experienced crimes, affecting 2.5% of respondents surveyed during the previous year, including 8% of black, 5% of white, and less than 1% of coloured and Indian respondents. Most of these crimes occurred in the Eastern Cape (34%) and KwaZulu-Natal (25%).

Nature of stock theft

Stock was most often taken from a kraal (37%), immediately outside the home (30%) or in the fields (30%). Poultry was the most common livestock taken (38%), followed by cattle (22%) goats (18%) and sheep (15%). Black African households were most likely to lose poultry (40%) or cattle (24%), while whites most often lost sheep (42%) and poultry (24%).

Most of the victims were poor—68% reported earning less than R1,000 a month—so victims were robbed of a significant portion of their annual income with the loss of one of the larger animals.

Most of the thefts occurred in the winter or early spring, with 57% occurring between the months of June and September.

Reporting to the police and case outcome

The theft was reported to the police in only 36% of the cases, which tallies with the 38% of victims who said they knew the offender by sight or name. When asked how they knew the offender, the most common answer was that it was general community knowledge (38%). Those who did not report to the police mostly felt it was not important enough (30%) or that there was no chance of recovery even if a report was made (32%). The respondent felt he knew who stole his property in only 9% of the cases, and the stolen animal was eventually recovered in just 4% of the cases.

Those who did report were satisfied with the police response in just over half of the cases, but in only 4% was the respondent aware of an arrest being made. Nearly 90% of those who were aware of an arrest said they had attended court, but that a conviction resulted in less than half (42%) of the cases.

Aftermath of stock theft

Over half the respondents (53%) reported the crime to an organisation other than the police, with 46% of these reporting to a traditional authority, and 25% reporting it to some "other" organisation. The most important thing to most victims following the crime was getting life back to normal (46%), with 24% focusing on recovering the lost livestock. Only 11% were most concerned with what happened to the criminals.

Just under half of the victims (47%) took measures to avoid further incidents of stock theft, most of which (82%) involved target hardening of one sort or another. Nearly 90% felt more secure after this action.

Implications of the survey results

Stock theft is clearly a crime that is resolved primarily outside the criminal justice system. Low reporting rates may be related to accessibility of the police in rural areas, use of traditional authorities to resolve the matter, and the fact that positive outcomes for reporting are rare. Less than 10% of respondents felt they knew who stole their animal at the time of the survey, and recovery of their property had occurred in less than 5% of cases. This is a pity because the impact of this loss on poor households could be significant.

Reducing the impact of stock theft could take two paths. One would be to reduce victimisation through target hardening. Since most of the victims felt safer after taking additional precautions, the police could assist by recommending safety measures before victimisation occurs. The other option is to increase the rate of recovery after the fact. This could be advanced by making livestock easier to identify or track. The state could become involved in registering ownership and marking animals accordingly. Low cost ways of doing this could be developed, and marking stock may also have a deterrent effect.

Conclusion

A very small share of those who become victims of crime are most concerned with the apprehension or punishment of the perpetrators, with most being chiefly concerned about returning life to normal and, where relevant, recovering lost property (Table 13). Victims of the violent crimes of robbery and assault were slightly more vindictive. Very few victims of any stripe were civic minded enough to be most concerned with incapacitating the offenders.

From a purely selfish perspective, this makes good sense. With the exception of interpersonal crimes like assault, where the victimisation may be continual, taking a single criminal off streets is likely to have little impact on the safety of the victim. In terms of providing a service to the victims of crime, it is therefore imperative that the police and the criminal justice system inconvenience victims as little as possible in their investigations. As far as recovering property is concerned, the public should be informed about the true chances of recovering their property through the criminal justice system.

Table 13: The one thing that respondents were most concerned with after the crime (%)

	Getting life back to normal	Recovering the property	That the criminals suffer	Avoid being victimised again	That the criminals be taken off street	Nothing
Assault	52	2	12	20	3	0
Robbery	38	9	12	11	5	18
Housebreaking	29	27	4	9	5	20
Stock theft	46	24	4	9	7	0

All this has implications for those wishing to increase citizen participation in reporting and prosecuting crime. Victims must be encouraged to see beyond their selfish interests and to participate in the criminal justice process out of a sense of civic duty. Of course, it is incumbent on the police and the rest of the system to make this process as painless as possible, by reducing the number of appearances required and otherwise streamlining the process. The police, prosecutors, and judges need to be aware that witnesses are performing a public service, and should be treated accordingly.

CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSION

Victim surveys are by no means a perfect tool for understanding crime. As the discussions throughout this monograph have shown, the surveys do not make provision for recording certain types of crime (such as child abuse), and often fail to record the true extent of others (such as sexual offences or less serious assaults). Like police crime statistics, the data generated by victim surveys have their limitations. Nevertheless, no analysis of crime trends can be considered thorough without consideration of both sets of information.

The police's crime database is the only source that provides a picture of crime, collected in a systematic way over an extended period of time, thus allowing for trend analysis. It also provides information on the country as a whole, which allows for discussions of the national crime situation, and crucially, comparisons with crime trends in cities and towns. It is only by comparing localised trends over time, that crime and its causes can truly be explained.

However the main drawback of the police statistics is that so few victims report their experiences to the authorities. The survey results show that less than half of all crime committed in South Africa is reported to the police. This means that the official police statistics do not reflect the true crime picture, and should not be used exclusively in any decision-making or evaluative process.

Victim surveys provide an ideal supplement to the police statistics—their greatest strength lies in the very area where the official data are weakest. By drawing on a representative sample of the population and systematically covering a range of crime types, the surveys provide data across a specified geographic area that fills the gap in the official database left by victims who do not report crime to the police.

The crime statistics provided by the police and by victim surveys are clearly complementary. Both sets of data are essential for understanding crime and tracking trends over time. It is for this reason that governments like that in the

United Kingdom, for example, now conduct annual national victim surveys to supplement their police crime data. It is an exercise that has worked in the police's favour. In the UK, the surveys have shown that some increases in crime levels as recorded by the police are, according to the national survey, nothing more than an increase in the tendency of victims to report. In South Africa, the results of the 2003 National Victims of Crime survey support the South African Police Service's claims that crime has stabilised since 1998.

National victim surveys are therefore a tool that the police, and other departments responsible for justice and crime prevention, ought to rely on in the formulation and monitoring of their policies and programmes. For this to occur however, it is essential that the surveys are conducted regularly (every two years would be ideal), and that each survey is directly comparable to the last. Although the 1998 and 2003 Victims of Crime surveys were conducted by different organisations, the ISS made every effort to ensure that the 2003 study was comparable with the 1998 one. To ensure that future surveys can be compared with these two, the process needs to be institutionalised to some degree.

While the surveys need not be conducted by government, a department responsible for criminal justice does need to be a key partner in the project, not only to facilitate the use of the results in government, but also to secure funding. National victim surveys are an expensive undertaking and both the 1998 and 2003 studies were restricted in their scope by the limited funds available. Ideally a national victim survey should have a large enough sample that allows for much more detailed analyses of individual crime types as well as provincial crime trends, than was possible in the 2003 survey. Both the 1998 and 2003 studies were conducted using donor funds. While this arrangement currently works well, it is by no means secure. Considering that the true benefits of victim surveys can only be realised if they are repeated at regular intervals, a guaranteed long-term source of funding is important. Again, government need not be responsible for the entire budget. A good approach would be a partnership that requires matching funding to be provided by non-state sources.

Apart from offering a budget that would allow for a more detailed survey, this approach would also help to ensure the credibility of the results. This is an important consideration given the doubts that were cast over the reliability of the police crime statistics since the moratorium on their public release, and the handling of subsequent debates by government. State support for regular

victim surveys to supplement police statistics would not only ensure the delivery of a useful product—it would boost public confidence in government's commitment to dealing with the crime problem.

NOTES

1 D Cantor and J P Lynch, Self-Report Surveys as Measures of Crime and Criminal Victimization, *Criminal Justice 2000: Measurement and Analysis of Crime and Justice,* Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice 4(85), Washington DC, 2000.
2 U Zvekic, *Criminal Victimisation in Countries in Transition*, UNICRI Publication 47, Rome, 1998, also J Van Kesteren, P Mayhew and P Nieuwbeerta, *Criminal Victimisation in Seventeen Industrialised Countries: Key findings from the 2000 International Crime Victims Survey*, Research and Documentation Centre (WODC), Netherlands Ministry of Justice Series: Onderzoek en Beleid, No 187, The Hague, 2001.
3 See P Burton and M Sekhonyane, *Crime and Policing in Meadowlands, Soweto*, ISS Monograph (forthcoming), ISS, Pretoria.
4 See among others J van Dijk, *Crime and Victim Surveys,* Paper presented at the 8th International Symposium on Victimology held in Adelaide, South Australia, 21-26 August 1994.
5 A Louw, *Crime in Pretoria: results of a city victim survey*, ISS Monograph, ISS, Pretoria, August 1998.
6 See S Stavrou, *Victimisation surveys: A methodology paper*, paper commissioned by the UNDP Dar-es-Salaam Safer Cities Project, February 2001.
7 SSA, *Victims of Crime Survey,* Statistics South Africa, Pretoria, 1998.
8 CMB Naude, JH Prinsloo and HF Snyman, *The Third International Crime (Victim) Survey in Johannesburg, South Africa, 2000,* unpublished research report, Department of Criminology, University of South Africa, Pretoria, 2001.
9 J Van Kesteren, et al, op cit.
10 E Pelser, J Schnetler and A Louw, *Not Everybody's Business*: *Community Policing in the SAPS' Priority Areas*, ISS Monograph Series No 71, ISS, Pretoria, March 2002; and P Burton, *Assessment of public and client opinion of the National Prosecuting Authority,* unpublished data report, ISS, Pretoria, 2001.
11 S Rule (ed), *Public opinion on National Priority Issues: Elections '99*, HSRC Publishers, Pretoria, 1999.
12 AM Habib and CM de Vos, *Public attitudes in contemporary SA: insights from an HSRC survey*, Cape Town, Human Sciences Research Council, 2002.
13 The fear of crime and perceptions of safety and security warrant further research and to this end ISS intends undertaking focus group discussions in the near future.
14 Respondents were asked for only one response to this question. Multiple answers were not allowed. If more than one crime had been discussed, the one crime type that dominated the conversation, at the last conversation (if discussed on more than one occasion in the two week period), was recorded.
15 See T Leggett, *Rainbow Tenement: Crime and policing in inner Johannesburg*, ISS Monograph Series, No 71, ISS, Pretoria, April 2003; and P Burton and M Sekhonyane, op cit.
16 SSA, op cit.
17 The questions on walking to fetch water and firewood were only asked of respondents who would normally have to undertake such activities. People living in suburban Johannesburg, for

example, would not have been asked about these two activities.

18 See A Dawes, Social contexts, child development and anti-social behaviour, presentation to the Open Society Foundation Crime Prevention and Development Seminar, 26–27 June, 2003.

19 It should be noted that while the original intention was to exclude various forms and understandings of private security companies and thus provide an indicator of vigilante activity, the distinction between paying and non-paying activities is not particularly helpful, as probably the most famous South African vigilante group in South Africa, Mapogo-a-Matamaga, charges a joining fee. This means that when respondents refer to these charges, they may well be referring to Mapogo, not to a commercial security company.

20 A Louw and M Sekhonyane, *Violent Justice: Vigilantism and the State's Response*, ISS Monograph Series No 72, Pretoria, 2002.

21 See E Pelser, et al, op cit; and P Burton and M Sekhonyane, op cit.

22 E Pelser, et al, op cit.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

25 Since the 1997/1998 financial year, 28 new police stations, 13 satellite stations and 9 contact points have been established according to personal communication from SAPS Efficiency Services, March 2004.

26 SSA , op cit.

27 S Rule, op cit.

28 These trends broadly reflect findings identified in previous studies, where Indians in particular feel most strongly about crime and punitive actions as government priorities, while black South Africans focus more on the need to generate employment as a government priority (see S Rule, ibid).

29 This is possibly due to the fact that in small or rural towns the magistrate's court is often on the same premises as the town hall, local police station etc.

30 As with the reporting of crime incidents, the media also report extensively on case outcomes and failures rather than on successes.

31 See T Leggett, The facts behind the figures: crime statistics 2002/3, in *SA Crime Quarterly,* No 6, ISS, Pretoria, December 2003.

32 See P Burton and M Sekhonyane, op cit.

33 Crime Information Analysis Centre, crime statistics for 2002/3 published on the internet, 2004, at: http://www.saps.gov.za/8_crimeinfo/200309/index.htm

34 J Van Kesteren, et al, op cit.

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36 Afrobarometer–Idasa, *The Changing Public Agenda? South Africans' Assessments of the Country's Most Pressing Problems*, Afrobarometer Briefing Paper No 5, July 2003.

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38 See G Newham and L Gomomo, Bad cops get a break: The closure of the SAPS Anti-Corruption Unit, in *SA Crime Quarterly* No 4, ISS, Pretoria, June 2003.

39 R15bn welfare money missing, *News24.com*, 25 February 2004, <http://www.news24.com/News24/South_Africa/Politics/0,,2-7-12_1489313,00.html> accessed on 11 May 2004.

40 The survey results indicate that the type of housing is not associated with victimisation, so shack dwellers are as vulnerable to burglary as are those in permanent homes.

41 Crime Information Analysis Centre, unpublished reports on SAP 6 statistics, Pretoria, 2001.

The year 2000 is the last year in which detailed figures on police cases dispositions were revealed to the public.

42 J Simmons and T Dodd, *Crime in England and Wales 2002/3*, Home Office Statistical Bulletin 07/03, London, Communications Development Unit, 2003.

43 CIAC, 2001, op cit.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

46 T Leggett, The sieve effect: South Africa's conviction rates in perspective, *SA Crime Quarterly* No 5, ISS, Pretoria, 2003.

47 SAPS, *2001/2 Annual Report,* Pretoria, Government Printers, 2002.

47 CIAC, 2001, op cit.

49 Ibid.

50 This was the definition of robbery used in the 1998 national Victims of Crime survey, and was used again in the 1993 survey in order to ensure the comparability of the results in the two studies.

51 South African Institute of Race Relations, *Fast Facts*, Johannesburg, April 2002.

52 T Leggett, *Rainbow tenement: Crime and policing in inner Johannesburg,* op cit. Similar results were found by the same author in a survey in Cato Manor, Durban.

APPENDIX 1

OVERVIEW OF QUESTIONS ASKED IN THE VICTIM SURVEY

Victimisation	When	Where	Violence used/weapons	Injuries	Reported to the police	Police response	Arrest and conviction	Recovery of property	Insurance	Knowledge of perpetrators	Number of perpetrators	Motive	Drugs and alcohol	Priorities after victimisation	Feel safer as a result	Reporting to others
Household crimes																
Theft of car	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•	•
Housebreaking	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•	•
Hijacking of car	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•
Theft of livestock	•	•			•	•	•	•		•				•	•	•
Theft of crops	•	•			•	•	•	•		•				•	•	•
Theft of bicycle	•	•			•	•	•	•		•				•	•	•
Murder		•	•		•	•				•		•	•	•		•
Theft out of vehicle	•	•			•	•	•	•		•				•	•	•
Theft of motorbikes	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•	•
Damage- buildings	•				•	•	•		•	•				•	•	•
Damage- vehicles	•				•	•	•		•	•				•	•	•
Personal crimes																
Robbery		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Assault		•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Theft of property		•			•	•	•	•		•				•	•	•
Sexual assault		•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Fraud					•	•	•	•		•						

Additional questions asked about crimes

Theft of car – type of car, what security measures did the car have

Burglary – were items stolen, was anyone at home, additional security added

Theft out of car – what was stolen

Robbery – did victim resist, what was taken

Hijacking – type of car, inside or outside vehicle, alone or in company at the time

Assault – prior attacks, pressurised not to report

Sexual assault – classification of incident, awareness of help available after incident

Murder – how many died, victim a source of household income, relationship to victim, part of ongoing problem

Theft – what was stolen, when realised

Theft of livestock – type of livestock stolen

Theft of crops – type of crops taken

Damage to buildings – what buildings were damaged

Damage to motor vehicles – what part of vehicle was damaged

Crime and safety

Feelings of safety after dark

Feelings of safety during day

Have levels of crime changed (all, property, violent)

Type of crime that occurs most in area

Type of crime most feared in area

Who commits most of the crime

Activities not undertaken because of crime in area

Recent conversations about crime

Police and courts

Knowledge of police stations

Length of time taken to get to nearest station

Contact with police/visits to station

Impact of visit on opinion

Reporting of crimes witnessed

Visibility/frequency of police visibility

Opinions of police performance and service

Knowledge of courts

Length of time to nearest court
Contact with nearest court
Opinions of courts
Knowledge and opinion of Operation Crackdown

Community and official response to crime
Government spending priority for property and violent crime
Community group activity in dealing with crime in area
Support for and participation in community groups
Witnessed community group trying to arrest a suspect
Use of violence against suspects by community groups
Knowledge of community police forums
Participation in community police forums
Measures taken to protect self/home
Experience as witness of murder (age at time, knowledge of and relationship to victim)

Community cohesion
Knowledge of neighbours
Willingness to let neighbours watch children
Willingness to let neighbours watch house
Participation in community activities
Knowledge of criminals in community

Corruption
Experience of requests for bribes in form of money, gift or service from public official
Details of department/service, when and response to request or implication
Views on change in level of corruption
Ever asked for a bribe from private sector when applying for employment
Reporting of corrupt officials

Victim support and other interventions
Knowledge of where to take someone for medical service if raped, for counselling if victim of violent crime, victim of domestic violence, for financial support, and to get information on how to prevent becoming a victim of crime

Personal and household information

Gender	Occupational status	Source of water
Age	Income (monetary)	Sanitation
Ethnicity	Income (in kind)	Ownership of house
Location	H/H expenditure	Ownership of vehicles
Relationship to h/h head	Length of time in area	Main language
Marital status	Housing type	Schooling

Knowledge of loss to HIV/AIDS
Personal knowledge of young people who have lost a caregiver to HIV/AIDS
Age of individual
With whom they stay most of the time

APPENDIX 2
PROVINCIAL TABLES

Table 1: Views on how crime level in area of residence has changed in the past three years (%)

	Increased	Decreased	Unchanged	Don't know
Mpumalanga	57.0	19.2	22.8	1.0
Eastern Cape	55.2	22.4	22.0	0.4
North West	55.0	19.4	24.1	1.5
Western Cape	53.3	15.6	29.8	1.3
Gauteng	53.3	22.3	23.1	1.3
KwaZulu-Natal	52.4	16.8	30.4	0.4
Free State	49.1	22.4	26.3	2.2
Limpopo	48.5	30.6	20.2	0.7
Northern Cape	47.8	19.9	31.6	0.8
Total	52.9	20.8	25.3	1.0

Table 2: One type of crime that respondents thought occurred most in their area of residence (%)

	Eastern Cape	Free State	Gau-teng	KZN	Lim-popo	Mpum-alanga	North West	Northern Cape	Western Cape	Total
Housebreaking	41.8	30.0	30.9	48.4	35.4	54.5	44.5	15.8	37.8	39.4
Property theft*	7.3	26.1	19.9	11.8	25.4	15.9	18.0	9.2	14.0	16.3
Robbery	11.5	10.2	24.0	11.8	3.3	12.9	9.7	12.4	16.4	14.0
Murder	6.0	6.0	6.6	10.6	3.6	8.2	5.5	8.9	9.0	7.3
Livestock theft**	20.0	5.5	0.3	5.8	12.9	2.0	11.1	8.4	1.9	6.9
Assault	7.5	11.5	2.8	2.3	8.2	1.5	4.5	27.6	11.6	5.9
Rape	4.3	8.8	3.0	1.7	8.3	2.6	5.4	14.6	3.0	4.2
Vehicle theft	1.5	1.8	3.9	2.6	2.0	1.9	0.9	2.5	4.8	2.7
Car hijacking	0.0	0.0	7.2	2.8	0.0	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.2	2.3
Other	0.2	0.0	1.6	2.1	0.8	0.3	0.0	0.6	1.3	1.1

* includes pick pocketing/bag snatching
** includes crop theft

Table 3: The one type of crime that respondents were most afraid of in their area of residence (%)

	Eastern Cape	Free State	Gau-teng	KZN	Lim-popo	Mpum-alanga	North West	Northern Cape	Western Cape	Total
Murder	31.1	26.1	23.4	23.4	18.0	22.1	32.0	30.2	26.4	25.1
Housebreaking	20.3	14.7	18.0	34.4	23.9	32.7	21.7	6.5	20.1	23.4
Rape	24.9	31.8	14.8	11.6	22.6	12.1	22.1	40.8	18.1	18.6
Robbery	9.9	6.6	23.6	11.6	4.7	16.5	9.9	9.1	13.7	13.4
Property theft*	1.7	10.8	5.8	4.3	14.8	8.8	8.5	2.5	5.0	6.5
Assault	5.1	7.5	1.7	3.8	7.1	3.0	2.0	8.4	13.2	5.0
Car hijacking	0.6	1.1	12.1	4.5	0.5	3.0	1.0	0.7	1.9	4.3
Stock theft**	5.5	0.9	0.0	3.9	6.7	0.5	1.9	0.5	0.0	2.5
Other	0.5	0.2	0.3	1.8	1.0	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.8
Vehicle theft	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.3	0.8	0.9	0.6

* includes pick pocketing/bag snatching
** includes crop theft

Table 4: Whether crime was discussed with friends, family or colleagues in the past two weeks (%)

	Yes	No
Gauteng	56.6	43.4
KwaZulu-Natal	54.7	45.3
Limpopo	53.2	46.8
Western Cape	49.3	50.7
North West	49.2	50.8
Northern Cape	41.0	59.0
Free State	40.1	59.9
Eastern Cape	39.7	60.3
Mpumalanga	29.3	70.7
Total	49.1	50.9

Table 5: Respondents' feelings of safety when walking alone in their area during the day (%)

	Very safe	Fairly safe	Bit unsafe	Very unsafe
Limpopo	74	14	5	7
Eastern Cape	74	16	8	2
Mpumalanga	70	20	5	5
Free State	66	17	10	6
Northern Cape	64	27	5	3
North West	62	26	9	3
Western Cape	56	24	14	6
KwaZulu-Natal	50	35	9	6
Gauteng	48	32	14	7

Table 6: Respondents' feelings of safety when walking alone in their area after dark (%)

	Very safe	Fairly safe	Bit unsafe	Very unsafe
Free State	15.1	10.1	14.8	60.1
Limpopo	14.1	13.5	24.6	47.7
Western Cape	13.5	20.5	20.3	45.7
Eastern Cape	13.4	15.0	20.0	51.6
Northern Cape	13.1	19.5	29.6	37.7
Mpumalanga	9.8	10.3	13.3	66.3
North West	8.6	9.2	19.3	63.0
KwaZulu-Natal	8.3	16.6	19.7	55.2
Gauteng	5.4	6.9	15.5	71.7

Table 7: Respondents who were prevented from engaging in daily activities when alone as a result of crime in their area (%)

	Using public transport	Walking to the shops	Walking to town/ office	Walking to water	Walking to fire-wood	Walking or resting in open spaces	Allow children to play freely	Allow children to walk to school	Keeping live-stock or poultry
Eastern Cape	20.5	10.0	27.5	7.9	27.8	37.8	24.6	18.0	34.5
Free state	25.2	18.9	20.9	6.6	27.2	36.0	37.8	21.1	38.6
Gauteng	31.8	23.7	25.4	3.2	6.6	39.1	47.9	47.5	17.9
KwaZulu-Natal	20.9	20.0	17.4	6.6	13.5	23.9	23.4	19.8	14.4
Limpopo	16.0	10.4	11.4	7.2	30.0	23.4	29.5	21.7	10.3
Mpum-alanga	22.6	15.4	14.7	3.1	9.0	22.0	27.9	23.3	14.2
North west	19.2	19.2	18.4	11.1	8.2	29.9	29.5	24.4	17.8
Northern Cape	10.1	10.3	10.5	1.4	4.1	16.9	28.6	23.9	13.4
Western Cape	31.3	18.0	19.6	7.4	8.5	29.7	33.8	30.2	8.9

Table 8: Respondents who had witnessed a murder in their lifetime (%)

Free State	16
Gauteng	15
KwaZulu-Natal	14
Mpumalanga	14
Eastern Cape	13
Northern Cape	13
Western Cape	12
North West	11
Limpopo	11
Total	14

Table 9: Views on the motivations of most perpetrators of property crime (%)

	Real need	Greed	Non-financial motives
Eastern Cape	28.8	35.5	35.7
Free State	30.6	31.6	37.8
Gauteng	35.9	35.5	28.6
KwaZulu-Natal	25.5	29.3	45.2
Limpopo	23.2	57.3	19.5
Mpumalanga	38.0	17.8	44.2
North West	40.0	38.6	21.4
Northern Cape	25.7	25.6	48.7
Western Cape	21.4	39.2	39.3
Total	29.9	35.6	34.4

Table 10: Views on the motivations of most perpetrators of violent crime (%)

	Real need	Greed	Non-financial motives
Eastern Cape	15.8	39.5	44.6
Free State	13.1	34.6	52.3
Gauteng	28.4	33.8	37.8
KwaZulu-Natal	12.5	36.2	51.3
Limpopo	12.7	64.1	23.2
Mpumalanga	16.1	34.8	49.1
North West	30.6	33.6	35.8
Northern Cape	9.6	15.0	75.4
Western Cape	10.2	41.4	48.4
Total	18.0	38.9	43.1

Table 11: Respondents who have seen protection groups in their area mete out physical punishment to suspects (%)

	Yes	No	Do not know
KwaZulu-Natal	24.3	74.6	1.1
Mpumalanga	21.8	75.0	3.2
Gauteng	19.9	77.5	2.6
Eastern Cape	19.3	76.0	4.7
Western Cape	16.6	81.3	2.1
Limpopo	14.7	81.6	3.7
Free State	12.9	85.3	1.8
Northern Cape	12.4	78.5	9.1
North West	8.6	91.4	0.0
Total	19.0	78.4	2.6

Table 12: Whether respondents know what a CPF is (%)

	Yes	No
Gauteng	49.7	50.3
Limpopo	47.6	52.4
Eastern Cape	47.1	52.9
KwaZulu-Natal	44.5	55.5
Free State	40.8	59.2
North West	40.0	60.0
Mpumalanga	39.4	60.6
Western Cape	38.2	61.8
Northern Cape	29.7	70.3
Total	44.5	55.5

Table 13: Length of time it takes, on average, to get to the nearest police station using the usual mode of transport (%)

	< 30 mins	30-60 mins	60-120 mins	> 120 mins	Don't know
Gauteng	82.3	15.1	2.0	0.6	-
Western Cape	81.5	14.0	3.5	1.0	-
Mpumalanga	68.3	24.4	4.4	2.8	0.1
KwaZulu-Natal	65.1	25.7	7.0	2.3	-
Free State	62.5	24.0	9.1	3.1	1.3
Northern Cape	60.6	26.8	6.4	5.6	0.6
North West	59.4	30.0	8.5	1.4	0.7
Eastern Cape	45.4	28.2	18.5	7.5	0.3
Limpopo	45.2	28.5	20.3	5.9	0.2

Table 14: Frequency with which police are seen, in uniform and on duty in the respondent's area of residence (%)

	At least once a day	At least once a week	At least once a month	Less than once a month	Never
Northern Cape	51.6	24.6	6.4	3.9	13.1
Gauteng	45.9	22.5	10.8	4.9	15.8
Free State	38.7	20.3	14.5	5.7	20.4
Western Cape	31.8	29.2	11.4	7.5	19.9
Limpopo	31.1	27.3	14.2	10.4	16.7
North West	29.5	26.8	13.6	10.0	20.0
Mpumalanga	26.4	19.5	15.6	13.7	24.3
KwaZulu-Natal	15.8	26.7	20.3	11.7	24.7
Eastern Cape	10.8	21.7	11.0	27.6	28.8

Table 15: How perceptions of the police changed after respondents had been in contact with them (%)

	Better	Worse	No change
Free State	75.0	19.6	5.4
Western Cape	63.3	22.0	14.7
Northern Cape	60.4	27.3	12.3
Limpopo	59.8	30.9	9.3
KwaZulu-Natal	59.2	31.1	9.7
North West	55.0	30.1	14.9
Mpumalanga	52.8	35.1	12.1
Eastern Cape	46.4	48.4	5.2
Gauteng	42.2	43.4	14.4
Total	53.9	34.5	11.6

Table 16: Whether respondents knew of a specialised search-and-seizure police operation in their area in recent years (%)

	Yes	No	Don't know
Free State	31.5	67.8	0.7
Gauteng	28.4	69.4	2.2
Western Cape	28.1	71.2	0.8
Eastern Cape	24.1	74.7	1.1
Northern Cape	23.9	74.9	1.2
Mpumalanga	20.3	79.2	0.5
KwaZulu-Natal	19.7	79.6	0.7
North West	19.0	79.6	1.4
Limpopo	12.9	86.6	0.5
Total	23.2	75.6	1.1

Table 17: Whether respondents would teach their children, when lost or in trouble, to approach a police officer for help (%)

	Yes	No
Western Cape	95.7	4.3
Mpumalanga	95.5	4.5
North West	95.3	4.7
Northern Cape	94.1	5.9
Eastern Cape	93.1	6.9
Free State	91.6	8.4
KwaZulu-Natal	90.5	9.5
Gauteng	87.7	11.8
Limpopo	85.9	14.1
Total	91.3	8.7

Table 18: Whether respondents knew where the nearest magistrate's court is (%)

	Yes	No
Northern Cape	94.8	5.2
Limpopo	91.8	8.2
North West	91.6	8.4
Western Cape	90.1	9.9
Free State	88.6	11.4
Eastern Cape	86.2	13.8
Mpumalanga	79.4	20.6
Gauteng	78.2	21.8
KwaZulu-Natal	76.5	23.5
Total	83.7	16.3

Table 19: How long it takes on average to reach the nearest magistrate's court by usual mode of transport (%)

	< 30 mins	30-60 mins	60-120 mins	> 120 mins	Don't know
Gauteng	69.0	26.7	3.3	1.0	0.0
Western Cape	67.8	22.5	7.3	2.2	0.2
Free State	50.9	30.2	13.7	3.9	1.3
Mpumalanga	50.8	36.0	10.3	2.6	0.3
North West	46.2	39.9	11.3	2.2	0.4
KwaZulu-Natal	45.1	40.1	11.7	3.1	0.0
Northern Cape	45.1	34.4	13.0	7.1	0.4
Limpopo	37.3	27.9	25.0	9.6	0.2
Eastern Cape	35.2	34.8	20.8	8.8	0.4
Total	51.4	32.1	12.2	4.1	0.2

Table 20: Whether respondents were satisfied with the way courts generally deal with perpetrators of crime (%)

	Yes	No	Don't know
North West	65.1	28.5	6.4
Limpopo	59.6	38.6	1.8
Northern Cape	58.3	36.9	4.8
Free State	58.1	36.9	5.0
Eastern Cape	57.1	38.2	4.7
Mpumalanga	52.2	43.5	4.3
Gauteng	44.8	53.1	2.1
KwaZulu-Natal	43.8	50.4	5.8
Western Cape	43.5	53.6	2.9
Total	50.9	45.2	4.0

Table 21: Whether respondents had been to court in the past three years (%)

	Yes	No
Free State	28.7	71.3
Northern Cape	26.9	73.1
Gauteng	22.7	77.3
KwaZulu-Natal	22.6	77.4
Western Cape	22.4	77.6
Eastern Cape	22.0	78.0
North West	21.5	78.5
Mpumalanga	18.9	81.1
Limpopo	16.2	83.8
Total	22.0	78.0

Table 22: Whether respondents who had been to court were satisfied with the overall service of the prosecutor or state advocate dealing with the case (%)

	Yes	No
Limpopo	80.1	19.9
Northern Cape	79.6	20.4
North West	75.3	24.7
Eastern Cape	75.2	24.8
Western Cape	71.1	27.1
Free State	68.3	31.7
Gauteng	66.4	33.6
KwaZulu-Natal	65.9	34.1
Mpumalanga	60.4	39.6
Total	69.8	30.0

Table 23: Whether respondents who had been to court were satisfied with the overall service of the magistrate or judge dealing with the case (%)

	Yes	No
Limpopo	82.7	17.3
Northern Cape	81.3	18.7
Western Cape	76.9	22.0
North West	74.5	25.5
Free State	73.6	25.1
Eastern Cape	73.4	26.6
Gauteng	68.9	31.1
KwaZulu-Natal	65.2	34.8
Mpumalanga	63.3	36.7
Total	71.4	28.4

Table 24: What government should spend money on the make respondents' area safer from property crime (%)

	Social development (including employment)	Crime prevention and policing	Courts (including punishment, harsher penalties)
Limpopo	74.7	16.0	9.3
KwaZulu-Natal	70.2	20.6	9.2
Mpumalanga	68.4	20.9	10.7
Eastern Cape	65.3	19.2	15.4
North West	63.1	15.2	21.7
Free State	57.4	24.1	18.4
Western Cape	57.4	25.9	16.7
Northern Cape	57.3	24.5	18.2
Gauteng	50.9	30.4	18.7
Total	62.6	22.6	14.8

Table 25: What government should spend money on the make respondents' area safer from violent crime (%)

	Social development (including employment)	Crime prevention and policing	Courts (including punishment, harsher penalties)
Limpopo	65.4	15.4	19.2
KwaZulu-Natal	62.7	23.7	13.6
North West	59.9	13.1	27.0
Mpumalanga	56.5	25.9	17.6
Western Cape	47.8	26.6	25.7
Eastern Cape	39.0	22.3	38.7
Gauteng	38.0	32.1	29.9
Northern Cape	33.2	27.6	39.1
Free State	31.5	22.5	46.0
Total	49.6	24.1	26.3

Table 26: Views on how the level of corruption has changed in the past three years (%)

	Increased	Decreased	Unchanged	Don't know
Gauteng	46.9	20.0	21.7	11.4
Mpumalanga	42.4	17.9	29.4	10.3
Western Cape	42.4	8.6	27.8	21.2
Limpopo	40.1	34.8	21.4	3.7
North West	39.5	10.8	26.0	23.6
Eastern Cape	37.6	21.1	23.1	18.2
KwaZulu-Natal	34.0	6.2	54.1	5.7
Free State	1.1	23.1	21.4	24.4
Northern Cape	25.2	10.3	41.7	22.7
Total	39.5	16.8	30.3	13.4