

Crime 2015/16

Offences Against the Person

The broad offence group of offences against the person is comprised of a number of different offence categories, with the volume of offences reported differing significantly across categories. For example, assaults account for 65% of offences against the person (Figure 1) while homicide (murder) accounts for less than 1%. Thus, assault offences tend to dominate offences against the person, while homicide (murder) will have little effect on the overall total.

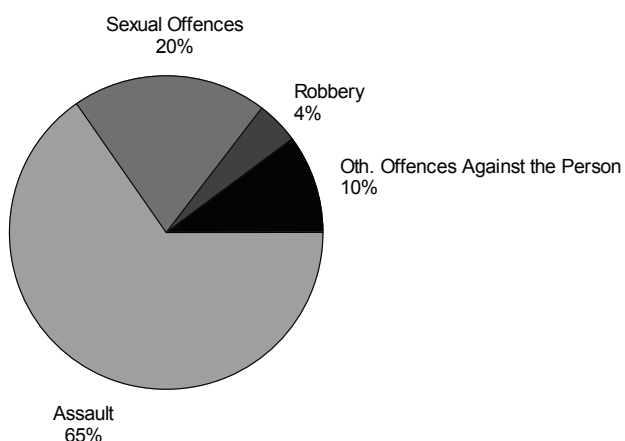


Figure 1: Offences against the person (%) - 2015/16*

Overall, the number of offences against the person increased by 11% in Queensland between 2014/15 and 2015/16. A total of 30,997 offences were reported to police in 2015/16, 3,010 more than the revised figure from the previous financial year. Taking into account the growth of the Queensland population, the rate of offences against the person increased by 9% from 586 to 641 offences per 100,000 persons.

Of the 30,997 offences against the person reported to police during the 2015/16 financial year, 24,950 (80%) were cleared by the end of June 2016 compared with 81% cleared the previous year. An additional 3,108 offences reported in previous time periods were also cleared during 2015/16.

* Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Therefore, although the percentages are correct, they do not add to 100%.

As with previous years, Northern Region recorded the highest rates of offences against the person, while Brisbane Region recorded the lowest. All regions recorded increases in the period under review.

Fifteen to nineteen year old females were most likely to have been victims of offences against the person in 2015/16 followed by ten to fourteen year old females. In the younger age groups (five to nineteen years), females were more likely than males to be victims of offences against the person. From the age of twenty-five years, males were more likely than females to be victims. For 55% of victims of solved offences, the offenders were known to them.

More males were proceeded against for offences against the person compared with females. While only 21% of offenders were female, 25% were male aged fifteen to twenty-four years. The likelihood of offending peaked in the fifteen to nineteen year age group for both males and females and decreased with age.

Of those who were found to have committed offences against the person, approximately 59% were proceeded against through an arrest with a further 23% proceeded against through the service of a notice to appear.

Homicide (Murder)

Homicide (murder) is a small volume offence category and, as such, is subject to sizeable fluctuations from one year to the next and from region to region.

The number of homicide (murder) offences decreased by two offences in Queensland for 2015/16 compared with 2014/15. Of the 50 homicides reported to police in 2015/16, 42 (84%) were cleared in the same period. An additional eight offences were cleared from previous periods.

South Eastern Region recorded the highest increase and Northern Region recorded the largest decrease in the number of homicide (murder) offences within the State. The highest rate was recorded by Northern Region and the lowest rate was recorded by Brisbane Region.

This year, 55% of the victims of homicide (murder) were male, with the highest rate of homicide (murder) offences in the fifty to fifty-four year age group which recorded a

rate of three offences per 100,000 persons. In 58% of solved cases, the offender was known to the victim.

Males were significantly more likely than females to commit homicide (murder) (90%). In 2015/16, males aged twenty-five to thirty-four years were most likely to offend, followed by males aged thirty to thirty-four. In 89% of cases, the offender was proceeded against through an arrest.

Other Homicide

As with homicide (murder), other homicide is a low-volume offence category. Therefore, it is subject to marked fluctuations from year to year and from area to area. The number of other homicide offences decreased by 10% during 2015/16, as a result of decreases in all other homicide categories except for unlawful striking causing death offences. There were three reported cases of unlawful striking causing death offences in 2015/16 compared to one in the prior period.

Factoring in the increase of the Queensland estimated resident population, other homicide offences decreased by 11% to a rate of 1.5 offences per 100,000 persons. Of the 70 offences reported to police in 2015/16, 66 (94%) were cleared in the same period. Additionally, 14 offences were cleared from previous periods.

Brisbane and Central regions were the only regions to record an increase in the rate of other homicide offences. Central Region also recorded the highest rate. Northern Region recorded the largest decrease.

Three-fifths (60%) of the victims of other homicide were male with the highest rate recorded in the forty to forty-four years age group. In 58% of the solved cases, the offender was known to the victim.

Males were significantly more likely than females to commit other homicide offences (85% of offenders were male). In 2015/16, males aged twenty-five to thirty-four years were most likely to offend. Seventy-one percent of offenders were proceeded against through an arrest, while 21% were issued with a notice to appear.

Assault

Assaults comprise approximately 65% of total offences against the person. As such, they tend to dominate this broad offence group. The rate of assaults in Queensland increased by 12% from 2014/15 to 2015/16.

The increase in the rate of assaults is mainly attributable to increases in grievous assault and common assault (14% each, respectively). Of the 20,162 assaults reported to police in 2015/16, 16,850 (84%) were cleared in the same period with a further 1,700 offences cleared from previous periods.

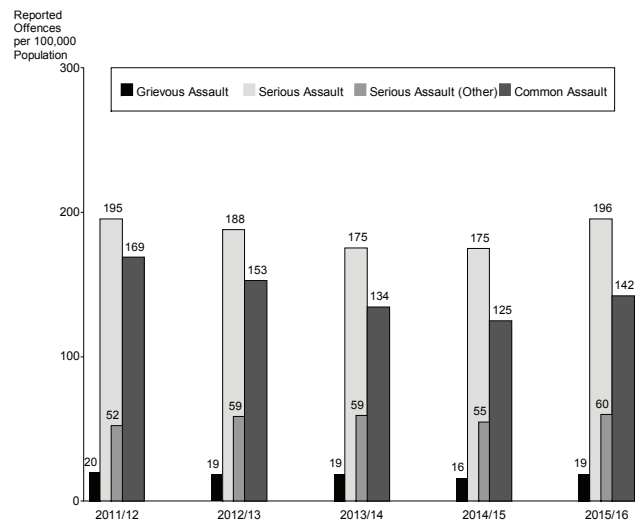


Figure 2: Reported assaults, Queensland, 2011/12 to 2015/16

Higher rates of most of the assault categories were seen in 2011/12 (Figure 2). From 2012/13 to 2014/15, there have been decreases in the majority of these categories, while in the 2015/16 period, there was an increase in the rate for all assault categories. The seasonal influence on the occurrence of assaults can be seen clearly in monthly crime trends (see page 45). These offences peak around December of each year and fall to a low around July.

As with previous years, Northern Region recorded the highest rate of assault in the State while Brisbane Region recorded the lowest. South Eastern Region recorded the highest increase in the rate of assault.

For all age groups apart from fifteen to nineteen years, males were more likely than females to be victims of assault. Males aged twenty to thirty-four years were most likely to be victims. From age thirty, the rate of victimisation for males decreased steadily. The age of victimisation for females peaked at the fifteen to nineteen year age cohort. From this age, victimisation decreased respectively for each age group. For 54% of victims of solved offences, the offender was known to them.

Across all age groups, males were also more likely to commit offences of assault (74% of offenders were male). Males aged twenty to twenty-four years were most likely to offend. Of those people proceeded against, 56% were arrested and 27% were served with a notice to appear.

Sexual Offences

Sexual offences are affected by an unpredictable variability in the reported rates due to offences which occurred decades ago still being reported to police. As offences are counted against the period in which they are reported, rather than when they occurred, increases in crime statistics do not always equate to an increase in victimisation.

The number of sexual offences reported to police in 2015/16 increased by 4% from the number reported in the previous financial year. The number reported equates to a rate of 128 offences reported per 100,000 persons. The increase in the rate is attributable to an increase of 4% in other sexual offences (although there was a 2% decrease for rape and attempted rape offences). Of those offences reported in 2015/16, 4,808 (77%) were cleared, with an additional 986 offences cleared from previous periods.

Northern Region recorded the highest rate in sexual offences and the Southern Region recorded the highest increase of 12%. South Eastern Region recorded the largest decrease of 21%. The lowest rate was recorded by Brisbane Region.

The sexual offence category is one of two offence categories for which there are more female than male victims (82% of victims were female). Females aged between ten and nineteen years were most likely to be victims of sexual offences. Females in this age group comprise 45% of total victims. For 71% of victims of solved offences, the offender was known to them. In 37% of solved cases, the offender was a family member.

In total, 126 females committed sexual offences in 2015/16. Thus, 95% of offenders were male. The age distribution of male offenders is unique for this offence type in that the distribution is almost uniform across all age groups with the exception of fifteen to nineteen year olds, where there are two to three times as many offenders compared to other age groups. The number of male offenders over fifty years is only slightly lower than other age groups, with 21% of all sexual offenders in this category. For those proceeded against, 59% were arrested and 10% were served with a notice to appear.

Robbery

An increase of 5% in the number of robberies reported to police in 2015/16 was due to a 10% increase in the number of unarmed robberies. A total of 1,368 offences were reported to police, which equates to a rate of 28 offences per 100,000 persons. Of these, 995 (73%) were cleared in the period in which they were reported, with an additional 96 offences cleared from previous periods.

The rate of robbery offences have decreased steadily since 2012/13. The rate of reported armed robbery offences recorded a decrease of 1% and unarmed robbery recorded a 9% increase in 2015/16. (Figure 3).

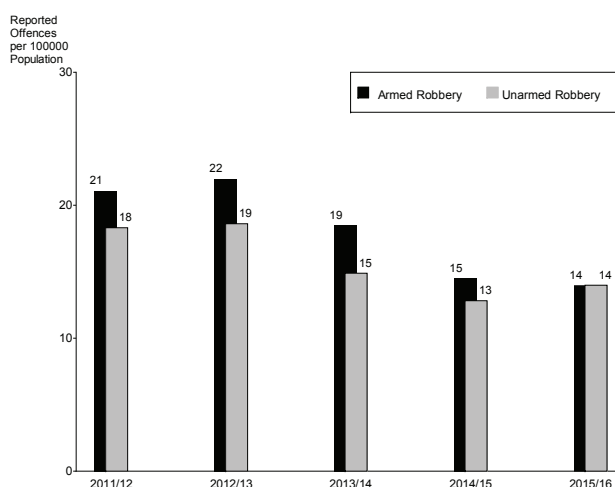


Figure 3: Reported robbery offences, Queensland, 2011/12 to 2015/16

All regions reported increases in robbery offences in 2015/16 except for Brisbane Region. Northern Region recorded the largest increase of 24%. South Eastern Region recorded the highest rate of robbery in the State, although the rate remained unchanged from 2014/15.

For every age group, males were more likely than females to be victims of robbery, with males aged fifteen to nineteen years most likely to be victims. Males were victim to robbery in 71% of all cases reported to police. For the majority of victims (72%) of solved robbery offences, the offender was unknown to them.

Males were significantly more likely than females to commit robbery offences (84% of offenders were male) and 33% of male offenders were aged between fifteen and nineteen years. Of those proceeded against for robbery offences, 83% were arrested and 6% issued with a notice to appear.

Other Offences Against the Person

The category of other offences against the person includes offences such as kidnapping and abduction, extortion, stalking and life endangering acts.

In 2015/16, other offences against the person increased by 11% from 2,823 to 3,140 offences. When taking into account the growth of Queensland's population, the rate increased by 10%. Of the 3,140 reported other offences against the person, 70% were cleared in the same period. In addition, 304 offences reported in previous periods were also cleared.

Females represented 58% of victims of total other offences against the person, with those aged twenty to twenty-four and thirty to thirty-four years most likely to be victims. For 53% of victims of solved offences, the offender was known to them.

Offences Against Property

Offences against property is comprised of a number of categories. As with offences against the person, the contribution of each category to the total differs significantly (Figure 4). In 2015/16, other theft (excluding unlawful entry) accounted for 49% of total offences against property and was the highest in volume of the property offence categories. Unlawful entry with intent and other property damage each accounted for 16% of offences, with fraud accounting for 11%. As such, this broad offence group tends to be dominated by other theft (excl. unlawful entry), unlawful entry with intent and other property damage, with offence categories such as arson having little effect.

The number of reported offences against property for the 2015/16 period increased by 5% when compared with the 2014/15 period. Factoring in the growth of the Queensland population, offences against property were reported at a rate of 4,286 offences per 100,000 persons in 2015/16, an increase of 3% from the previous year. Of all offences against property reported in 2015/16, 40% were cleared in the same period with a further 11,481 offences cleared from previous periods.

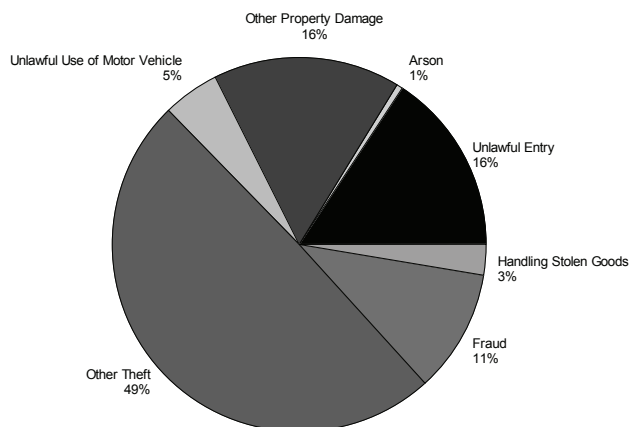


Figure 4: Offences against property (%) – 2015/16**

Northern Region recorded the highest rate of offences against property (5,673 offences per 100,000 persons) in the State. South Eastern Region recorded the largest increase (11%) while Brisbane and Southern regions recorded the largest decrease (2%). Central Region recorded the lowest rate (3,474 offences per 100,000 persons).

** Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Therefore, although the percentages are correct, they do not add to 100%.

Overall, offences against property were more likely to be committed by males (74% of offenders were male). Over one quarter (27%) of offenders proceeded against for offences against property were male aged between ten and nineteen years. Of the total people proceeded against for offences against property, 44% were arrested, 40% were served with a notice to appear and 7% were cautioned.

Unlawful Entry

The number of unlawful entry offences increased by 3%. This equates to a 2% increase in the rate once the growth of the Queensland population is taken into account. Of the 32,555 offences reported to police in 2015/16, 8,663 or 27% were cleared in the same period with a further 1,448 offences cleared from previous periods.

The number of unlawful entry of dwellings offences increased by 3%, the number of unlawful entry of shops offences decreased by 14% and unlawful entry of other premises offences increased by 7%.

Three of the five regions recorded increases, the largest of which was Northern Region (12%). Northern Region recorded the highest rate (1,121 offences per 100,000 persons) while Central Region recorded the lowest rate (562 offences per 100,000 persons).

Most unlawful entry offences were committed by males (87%), of those, 63% were male aged under twenty-five years. Of all offenders proceeded against for unlawful entry offences, 63% were arrested, 9% cautioned and 19% served with a notice to appear.

Arson

Arson is the lowest in volume of the offences against property categories and, as such, exerts very little influence on the offences against property total. Arson offences decreased by 1% per 100,000 persons from 2014/15 to 2015/16. The rate of offences decreased by 1%, from 23.4 to 23.2 offences per 100,000 persons. Of the 1,124 offences reported in 2015/16, 277 (25%) were cleared in the same period. An additional 46 offences were cleared from previous periods.

Brisbane, South Eastern and Southern regions recorded decreases of 9%, 4% and 6% respectively. Northern Region recorded the largest increase (11%), and Brisbane Region recorded the lowest rate. The highest rate was recorded by South Eastern Region.

This year, 85% of offenders were male with ten to fourteen year old males being the most likely to be proceeded against for arson. Approximately 56% of offenders were arrested, 18% cautioned and 13% served with a notice to appear.

Other Property Damage

The number of other property damage offences reported in 2015/16 increased by 6% when compared to the previous financial year. The rate of offences increased by 4%, from 666 to 694 offences per 100,000 persons. Of those offences reported to police in 2015/16, 11,895 (35%) were cleared during this period, with an additional 1,364 offences cleared from previous time periods.

Northern Region recorded the highest rate of 1,149 offences per 100,000 persons. The largest increase was recorded by South Eastern Region (10%) and the lowest rate was reported in Brisbane Region (504 offences per 100,000 persons).

As with most offence types, fifteen to nineteen year old males were most likely to be proceeded against for other property damage offences. Only 17% of offenders were female and only 12% of all offenders were aged forty years or more. In total, 47% of offenders were arrested for this offence type, 11% were cautioned and 34% were served with a notice to appear.

Unlawful Use of Motor Vehicle

The rate of unlawful use of motor vehicle offences increased by 10% in 2015/16. This increase is equivalent to 1,021 additional offences reported during 2015/16.

In 2015/16, 10,046 unlawful use of motor vehicle offences were reported to police. Of these, 4,822 (48%) were cleared during this period, with an additional 635 offences cleared from previous periods (note: for recovery rates see Queensland Crime, page 13. In 2015/16, unlawful use of motor vehicle offences were reported at a rate of 208 offences for every 100,000 persons.

The only decrease in unlawful use of motor vehicle offences was recorded in Brisbane Region (1%), while Northern Region recorded the largest increase (32%). The highest rate was reported in South Eastern Region (326 offences per 100,000 persons) and Central Region reported the lowest rate of 126 offences per 100,000 persons.

Males aged fifteen to nineteen years were most likely to commit unlawful use of motor vehicle offences (31% of male offenders were in this group). Thirty-one percent of female offenders were aged fifteen to nineteen years. Approximately 67% of offenders were arrested and 21% were served with a notice to appear.

Other Theft (excluding Unlawful Entry)

The rate of other theft (excluding unlawful entry) offences increased by 5% from 2014/15 to 2015/16. This category is the highest in volume of the offences against property categories and thus exerts a significant influence on total property crime. In 2015/16, 102,560 other theft offences were reported to police, of which 38% were cleared during this period. A further 4,721 were cleared from previous periods.

There were increases in the number of offences reported for all four sub-categories of other theft (excluding unlawful entry) offences: shop stealing (13%), stealing from dwellings (8%), other stealing (7%) and stealing from vehicles (1%).

The highest rate of other theft (excluding unlawful entry) occurred in South Eastern Region (11%) while the lowest rate was recorded in Central Region in the year under review. Brisbane Region recorded the only decrease (0.1%) of other theft (excluding unlawful entry) offences during 2015/16.

The proportion of female offenders for other theft was higher than for most other offence types at 33%. For both males and females, those in the fifteen to nineteen year age group were most likely to commit other theft offences. Arrest rates are low for this offence type at 35%, while 51% were served with a notice to appear. Ninety-six percent of offenders cautioned were juvenile (i.e. aged between ten and sixteen years).

Fraud

Queensland recorded a decrease in the number of offences per 100,000 persons in three out of five sub-categories of fraud offences during the current period: computer fraud offences (71%), cheque fraud offences (9%) and other fraud offences (19%). This resulted in an overall decrease of 6% in the number of fraud offences. Credit card fraud and identity fraud offences reported increases of 15% and 8% respectively in 2015/16.

Of the 22,054 offences reported in 2015/16, 14,203 (64%) were cleared in the same period with a further 3,003 offences cleared from previous periods.

South Eastern Region recorded the highest rate of fraud offences as well as the largest increase in these offences. Central Region recorded the lowest rate in the State.

A relatively higher proportion of females commit fraud offences compared with other offence types. Approximately 34% of offenders were female. Males aged fifteen to nineteen years and females aged thirty to thirty-four years were most likely to commit fraud offences. Thirty-eight percent of offenders were arrested, while 48% were issued with a notice to appear.

Handling Stolen Goods

There was an increase in the number of handling stolen goods offences reported. The rate of offences increased by 5%, from 107 to 112 offences per 100,000 persons. Of the total 5,436 offences reported to police in 2015/16, 4,956 (91%) were cleared in the same period, with a further 264 offences cleared from previous periods.

South Eastern Region recorded the highest rate as well as the greatest increase (23%) of handling stolen goods offences. Central Region recorded the lowest rate and Northern Region recorded the greatest decrease (10%) in 2015/16.

As with most offence categories, males were most likely to commit handling stolen goods offences (73% of offenders were male) and males in the fifteen to nineteen year age group were most likely to offend. Offenders were more likely to be served with a notice to appear (51%), although 42% were arrested.

Other Offences

Other offences comprises a range of disparate offence categories. These categories are distinct from offences against the person and property in that they are generally offences detected by police rather than being reported by the public. Drug offences, traffic offences and prostitution offences are examples of this. Trends and patterns in the levels of other offences are therefore often indicative of specific and proactive initiatives of the Queensland Police Service rather than being indicative of the level of crime actually occurring. As such, increases are often seen as a positive improvement of police detection rates.

As a total, the number of other offences increased by 9% state-wide from 219,933 offences recorded in 2014/15 to 240,802 offences recorded in 2015/16. This equates to a rate of 4,977 offences per 100,000 persons in 2015/16.

Northern Region recorded the highest rate of other offences in the state while Brisbane Region recorded the lowest rate. The greatest increase was recorded by Southern Region.

Drug Offences

Increases in three of the five sub-categories of drug offences contributed to an overall increase of 9%. When taking into account the growth of Queensland's population, drug offences recorded an increase of 7%, with drug possession offences and other drug offences each increasing by 8% respectively.

Drug offences were almost three times more likely to be committed by males (74%) than females (26%).

Offenders aged twenty to twenty-four years accounted for approximately 20% of all drug offenders.

Southern Region recorded the highest rate of drug offences in the State. Four regions (all except for South Eastern Region) reported increases with Southern Region recording the largest increase. The lowest rate was recorded by Brisbane Region (1,429 offences per 100,000 persons).

Breach of Domestic Violence Protection Orders

Breach of domestic violence protection orders are a breach of a court order and, as such, are classed as "Regina" offences; hence, the inclusion under other offences and not offences against the person.

The 2015/16 financial year saw a 39% increase in the number of breach of domestic violence protection order offences. A total of 22,853 offences were reported to police, equating to a rate of 472 offences per 100,000 persons.

While all regions reported increases, Southern Region recorded the smallest increase (33%) and South Eastern Region recorded the largest increase (44%). Brisbane Region recorded the lowest rate of breach of domestic violence protection order offences in the State, while Northern Region recorded the highest.

Males were more likely to breach domestic violence protection orders (86%) compared to females, with 19% of male offenders in the thirty to thirty-four year age group. In the period under review, 53% of all offenders were arrested and 23% were served with a notice to appear.

Weapons Act Offences

The number of *Weapons Act* offences increased by 10% from 6,068 offences reported in 2014/15 to 6,685 offences reported in 2015/16. The overall increase is attributable to increases in all five weapons sub-categories: unlawful possession of concealable firearm (33%), *Weapons Act* offences - other (16%), unlawful possession of firearm - other (11%), bomb possession and/or use (7%) and possess and/or use of other weapons or restricted items (0.3%).

All regions except for South Eastern Region recorded increases in *Weapons Act* offences during 2015/16. Brisbane Region recorded the largest increase of 23%. During 2015/16, Northern Region recorded the highest rate of 186 offences per 100,000 persons while Brisbane Region recorded the lowest rate of 101 offences per 100,000 persons.

Good Order Offences

The rate of good order offences increased by 1% from 2014/15 to 2015/16. A total of 61,630 offences were detected by police which equates to a rate of 1,274 offences for every 100,000 persons. An increase in the rate of fare evasion (29%) and resist incite hinder obstruct (4%) offences contributed to the overall increase. Decreases were recorded for the sub-categories of disobey move-on direction (15%) and public nuisance (6%). Decreases were recorded for the sub-categories of disobey move-on direction (15%) and public nuisance (6%).

Brisbane and Northern regions recorded the largest increase of 7% and Northern Region had the highest rate of good order offences. The lowest rate was recorded by Brisbane Region and the decreases were reported by Central and South Eastern Region.

Traffic and Related Offences

Traffic and related offences increased by 13% from 39,306 to 44,405 offences. All four sub-categories recorded increases, of which the largest was a 19% increase in the number of drink driving offences. Drink driving is the largest in volume of the sub-categories and, as such, exerts the greatest influence on the traffic and related offences total. The rates for this sub-category recorded a 17% increase per 100,000 persons. Interfere with mechanism of a motor vehicle, dangerous operation of a vehicle and disqualified driving recorded increases of 12%, 6% and 2% respectively per 100,000 persons.

All regions recorded an increase in traffic and related offences, with the largest increase recorded in Southern Region. Brisbane Region recorded the lowest rate and Northern Region recorded the highest rate of 1,358 offences per 100,000 persons.

Please note that the traffic and related offences category does not include traffic crashes, speed and red light camera notices, random breath tests or vehicle impoundments, which are contained in the Traffic section on pages 161-169.

