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## NSW RECORDED CRIME STATISTICS 2000: REGIONAL ANALYSIS OF CRIME TRENDS

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*Between January 1999 and December 2000, recorded offences were trending upwards in three of the sixteen major crime categories in NSW. Over the 24-months to December 2000, a significant upward monthly trend was recorded in NSW for the major property offences of break and enter–non-dwelling, motor vehicle theft, and steal from a motor vehicle. The monthly number of recorded incidents was stable for the other thirteen crime categories over this period. While the trends in most geographical regions in NSW reflect this general stability in crime for the majority of offence categories, there are some areas which experienced significant increases in crime for several categories of offence over this time period. In particular, within the Sydney region, the areas of Blacktown–Baulkham Hills, Gosford–Wyong, Fairfield–Liverpool, the Eastern Suburbs and Hornsby–Ku-ring-gai each experienced a significant upward trend in the recorded incidence of more than three major categories of crime over this time period. Outside Sydney, the Hunter region experienced an upward trend in more than three major offence categories. The most commonly rising offences within these regions are those which are showing a significant upward trend at the State level. Within Sydney regions, there are also notable increases in unarmed robbery, housebreaking and steal from person offences.*

### INTRODUCTION

This briefing paper summarises the trends in recorded crime in NSW as presented in *NSW Recorded Crime Statistics 2000*.<sup>1</sup> Firstly, recent crime trends in NSW are reviewed for each major offence category on an aggregate basis. Secondly, for the sixteen criminal offence categories which are analysed in detail in the annual report, trends are examined on a regional basis. Finally, regions exhibiting significant upward trends are examined at a more detailed level of regional disaggregation.

Notwithstanding the fact that the recorded crime statistics as they are reported here are of considerable use in monitoring trends in crime in NSW, these statistics should be interpreted with care for a number of reasons. Firstly, changes in recorded crime rates may also reflect changes in the willingness of the public to report crime to the police. This is particularly true for some personal offence categories such as assault

or sexual assault, and property crimes such as malicious damage to property, which are subject to variations in police reporting. Secondly, while the more detailed analysis of crime trends is mainly restricted to those offence categories which are reported to, rather than detected by, police, trends in recorded crime may also reflect changes in policing policy and activity, for example in the areas of drug crime and driving offences. Finally, particular caution should be exercised when regional crime statistics are being compared, particularly for the less frequently occurring offences, such as robbery and sexual assault. This is because a very small change in the actual number of incidents may result in a disproportionately large change in derived ratios such as the percentage change over time or the rate per resident population.<sup>2</sup>

For more detailed regional crime statistics, or for a copy of the full annual report, please contact the Information Officer in the Statistical Services Unit of the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.

## SUMMARY OF TRENDS

Table 1 compares the trends in recorded crime which were reported in the 1999 and 2000 annual reports. Statistical trend tests were applied to check for a statistically significant upward or downward trend in the monthly number of incidents recorded by NSW police for the offence categories of assault, sexual offences, robbery offences, break and enter, motor vehicle theft, stealing and malicious damage.<sup>3</sup> The trend tests cover the 24-month periods January 1998 to December 1999 (in the 1999 report), and January 1999 to December 2000 (in the 2000 report). Where a statistically significant trend is detected, the percentage change in the total number of recorded criminal incidents between the consecutive annual periods within the two-year interval is reported.

### *Significant downward trends*

Over the 24-month period to December 2000, there were no major offence categories showing a statistically significant downward trend in the monthly numbers of recorded criminal incidents. This contrasts with the situation 12 months ago, when seven offence categories were trending downwards. The offences for which significant downward monthly trends were recorded in the 24-months to December 1999 were: sexual assault; indecent assault, act of indecency and

other sexual offences; robbery with a firearm; robbery with a weapon other than a firearm; break and enter – dwelling; break and enter – non-dwelling; and motor vehicle theft. Of these seven offence categories, two are now showing significant upward monthly trends while the remainder are stable.

### *Offences where there was no upward or downward trend*

Between January 1999 and December 2000, there was no statistically significant upward or downward trend in the monthly numbers of recorded criminal incidents for any of the following offences:

- murder
- assault
- sexual assault
- indecent assault, act of indecency and other sexual offences
- robbery with a firearm
- robbery with a weapon not a firearm
- robbery without a weapon
- break and enter – dwelling
- steal from retail store
- steal from dwelling

**Table 1: Summary of NSW Recorded Crime Statistics 1999 and 2000: Comparison of twenty-four month trends and annual percentage changes for selected offence categories**

<i>Offence category</i>	<i>January 1998 to December 1999</i>	<i>January 1999 to December 2000</i>
Murder	No significant trend	No significant trend
Assault	No significant trend	No significant trend
Sexual assault	-10.2%	No significant trend
Indecent assault, act of indecency and other sexual offences	-15.6%	No significant trend
Robbery without a weapon	No significant trend	No significant trend
Robbery with a firearm	-24.3%	No significant trend
Robbery with a weapon not a firearm	-19.8%	No significant trend
Break and enter – dwelling	-10.0%	No significant trend
Break and enter – non-dwelling	-6.6%	+8.1%
Motor vehicle theft	-10.5	+8.2%
Steal from motor vehicle	No significant trend	+15.2%
Steal from retail store	No significant trend	No significant trend
Steal from dwelling	No significant trend	No significant trend
Steal from person	No significant trend	No significant trend
Fraud	No significant trend	No significant trend
Malicious damage to property	No significant trend	No significant trend

- steal from person
- fraud
- malicious damage to property.

*Significant upward trends*

Between January 1999 and December 2000, there was a statistically significant upward monthly trend in the number of recorded criminal incidents for the following property offences:

- break and enter – non-dwelling (up by 8.1%)
- motor vehicle theft (up by 8.2%)
- steal from motor vehicle (up by 15.2%).

**REGIONAL CRIME TRENDS**

This section will examine significant trends in recorded crime for each of the sixteen major offence categories noted above. The method of reporting on regional trends is that developed in last year’s publication *Regional analysis of crime trends in NSW, 1999*, which is fully described in the appendix to this paper.<sup>4</sup>

In summary, regional trends and increases are analysed by offence category as follows:

- Significant trends are reported for monthly recorded incidents over the 24-months to December 2000 within each NSW Statistical

Division (SD) and each Statistical Subdivision (SSD) within Sydney SD (a total of 12 SDs and 14 SSDs). Note that there is no regional analysis of the murder offence category because of the small number of incidents recorded in NSW each year.

- Where a significant trend is found in a region, the percentage change in the total number of incidents between consecutive 12-month periods is shown in Tables 2 and 3.
- Where a significant upward trend is detected in one of the 26 regions, monthly data at the next level of regional disaggregation are examined for a significant trend *or annual increase* in the total number of offences over the 24-months. For SSDs within Sydney SD, this next level of disaggregation is the level of Local Government Area (LGA). For SDs outside Sydney, the next level of disaggregation is SSD. These results are shown in Table 4 at the end of this paper.

*Significant trends in NSW regions*

For each of the major offence categories shown in Table 1, the monthly number of incidents between January 1999 and December 2000 was tested for a statistically significant upward or downward trend in each Statistical Division of NSW. Where a statistically

**Table 2: Percentage change in number of recorded incidents in 2000, compared with 1999, for major offences showing statistically significant trends in NSW Statistical Divisions**

Statistical Division	Assault	Sexual assault offences	Other sexual assault	Robbery with a firearm	Break and enter – dwelling	Break and enter – non-dwelling	Motor vehicle theft	Steal from motor vehicle	Steal from retail store	Fraud	Malicious damage
Sydney				7	9	7	17				
Hunter	13		-33			25	20	13			9
Illawarra	11				14			-10	12		
Richmond-Tweed	15	54									
Mid-North Coast	8			-17		12		-16			
Northern		32	-29	-14							
North Western							21		-5	-56	
Central West											
South Eastern							-29				
Murrumbidgee				14							
Murray				33		18	30				
Far West											

significant trend was found, the percentage change between 1999 and 2000 in the total number of incidents recorded in that region was calculated. These percentage changes are shown in Table 2. Note that the offence categories of indecent assault/act of indecency, robbery without a weapon, robbery with a non-firearm weapon, and steal from person are not shown in Table 2. This is because there was no statistically significant trend found in any NSW SD for these offences. In addition, the murder offence category is not included in this table because the annual number of incidents of this offence is too small to undertake a meaningful regional comparison.

Table 2 shows that, in contrast with the 1999 report, there are now several regions in NSW experiencing a growth in crime. As noted above, there are three property offences showing an upward trend in NSW - namely, break and enter - non-dwelling, motor vehicle theft, and steal from a motor vehicle. Each of these offences is showing a significant upward trend across several SDs of NSW. In addition, the offence categories of assault and break and enter - dwelling are trending upwards in several SDs of NSW. Further details of upward trends in each offence category will

be provided later in this paper. Table 2 also shows that some regions experienced a significant downward trend for some offence categories over this period. These downward trends will be noted in the discussion which follows but will not be examined in further detail in this paper.

It is useful to note at this point that a reported upward trend in a region does not suggest that the area with a significant increase now has a higher crime risk than another area. While some SDs may have experienced an increase over the two-year period examined, the rate of crime in 2000 may remain lower in these regions than elsewhere in NSW. This point will be further developed when regional crime rates are examined for individual offence categories, in the next section, below.

Table 3 shows the results of monthly trend tests by offence category, and percentage changes between 1999 and 2000 in the annual total number of incidents recorded, for each Statistical Subdivision within Sydney. The offence categories of sexual assault, indecent assault/act of indecency and robbery with a firearm are not included in Table 3 because there was no statistically significant trend found in any Sydney SD for any of these offences.

**Table 3: Percentage change in number of recorded incidents in 2000, compared with 1999, for major offences showing statistically significant trends in Sydney Statistical Subdivisions**

Statistical Division	Assault	Other sexual offences	Robbery without a weapon	Robbery with a weapon	Break and enter - non-dwelling	Break and enter - dwelling	Motor vehicle theft	Steal from motor vehicle	Steal from retail store	Steal from dwelling	Fraud	Malicious damage
Inner Sydney				18			21					
Eastern Suburbs		32	35	36	11							8
St George-Sutherland					12		22		14			
Canterbury-Bankstown	-43	-11	-20				21				23	
Fairfield-Liverpool				23	34	17			13			
Outer South Western Sydney		16		-19		18	30					
Inner Western Sydney							13					
Central Western Sydney			29			5	18					
Outer Western Sydney					14		-17				21	
Blacktown-Baulkham Hills		45			17	9	25	10	9	24	34	
Lower Northern Sydney					13							
Hornsby-Ku-ring-gai	10	48				27	34					
Northern Beaches					-21							
Gosford-Wyong				19			52	25		27	-20	18

Regional trends for each offence category will be examined, in detail, below. For each major offence category, regions which showed a statistically significant upward or downward trend in the monthly number of recorded incidents will be noted.

## TRENDS IN ASSAULT

Between January 1999 and December 2000, there was no overall significant trend in the monthly number of assault incidents recorded in NSW.

### *Significant downward trends*

There were no regions showing significant downward trends in assault over this time period.

### *Significant upward trends*

The following four SDs in NSW and one SSD within Sydney SD showed significant upward trends in assault over the two-year period to December 2000:

- Hornsby–Ku-ring-gai SSD (up by 10%)
- Hunter SD (up by 13%)
- Illawarra SD (up by 11%)
- Richmond–Tweed SD (up by 15%)
- Mid-North Coast SD (up by 8%).

Note that the increase in assault recorded in the Hunter and Illawarra Statistical Divisions was caused by an increase in reporting of domestic assault. The growth in assault may therefore simply reflect increased willingness to report this offence. It should also be noted that while Hornsby–Ku-ring-gai SSD showed a significant upward monthly trend in assault during this 24-month period, the rate of assault in this region remains well below the average NSW rate and is, in fact, the lowest rate of any Statistical Division of NSW or Statistical Subdivision within Sydney. Similarly, while there was a significant upward trend in assault in the Hunter SD, this region has the lowest rate of assault among all SDs outside Sydney, and remains below the State rate in 2000.

## TRENDS IN SEXUAL OFFENCES

Each of the sexual offence sub-categories showed no statistically significant upward or downward trend in the recorded number of offences over the two-year period to December 2000. Regional trends will be examined for the two individual sexual offence categories of: sexual assault, and other sexual offences. Over this time period, at the regional level, there was no significant upward or downward trend for the offence category of indecent assault/act of indecency. Note that the categories of indecent assault/act of indecency, and other sexual offences are combined when examining State trends.

## Sexual assault

### *Significant downward trends*

There were no regions showing significant downward trends in sexual assault over this time period.

### *Significant upward trends*

The following two SDs in NSW showed significant upward trends in sexual assault over the two-year period to December 2000:

- Richmond–Tweed SD (up by 54%)
- Northern SD (up by 32%).

Note that these increases may be the result of new procedures adopted by the Department of Community Services and the NSW Police Service designed to facilitate the reporting of child sexual offences.

## Other sexual offences

### *Significant downward trends*

The following regions showed significant downward trends in the number of recorded incidents of other sexual offences over the two-year period to December 2000:

- Canterbury–Bankstown SSD (down by 43%)
- Northern SD (down by 29%).

Despite this recent decrease, the rate of sexual offences other than sexual assault in Northern SSD remains well above the average State rate. In Canterbury–Bankstown SSD, however, the rate has been consistently below the State average in recent years.

### *Significant upward trends*

There were no regions showing significant upward trends in indecent assault/act of indecency or other sexual offences over this time period.

## TRENDS IN ROBBERY

The offence categories of robbery without a weapon, robbery with a firearm and robbery with a weapon other than a firearm showed no significant upward or downward monthly trend in the number of recorded incidents over the two years to December 2000. The trends in robbery in NSW primarily reflect trends in robbery within the Sydney metropolitan area. Almost 90 per cent of all incidents of robbery recorded by NSW police occur in the Sydney SD.

## Robbery without a weapon

### *Significant downward trends*

There was one SSD in Sydney showing a statistically significant downward monthly trend in robbery

without a weapon over the two years to December 2000:

- Canterbury–Bankstown SSD (down by 11%).

Despite this downward trend over the past 24-months however, the rate of robbery without a weapon in Canterbury–Bankstown SSD remains the third highest rate of this offence in NSW; it is almost double the average NSW rate.

#### *Significant upward trends*

Although generally stable across NSW, four regions within Sydney SD showed statistically significant upward trends in the number of incidents recorded for the offence category of robbery without a weapon:

- Eastern Suburbs SSD (up by 32%)
- Outer South Western Sydney SSD (up by 16%)
- Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD (up by 45%)
- Hornsby–Ku-ring-gai SSD (up by 48%).

Note that although the Hornsby–Ku-ring-gai SSD experienced a significant increase in the number of incidents, the actual rate of robbery without a weapon in that SSD remains well below the State average and is one of the lowest rates of this offence within the Sydney SD in 2000. On the other hand, while the rate of unarmed robbery in the Eastern Suburbs SSD and in Blacktown–Baulkham Hills was below the State rate in previous years, the recent increase now places each of these SSDs above the State average. The rate of robbery without a weapon in the Outer South Western Sydney SSD, however, remains above the average State rate, as it has in recent years.

#### **Robbery with a firearm**

As was noted above, the offence category of robbery with a firearm showed no statistically significant upward or downward trend over the two-year period from January 1999 to December 2000.

#### *Significant downward trends*

There was one region in NSW which showed a statistically significant downward trend in the incidence of this offence over the time period:

- Hunter SD (down by 33%).

The recorded rate of robbery with a firearm in Hunter SD is less than half the average NSW rate.

#### *Significant upward trends*

There were no regions showing significant upward trends in robbery with a firearm over this time period.

#### **Robbery with a weapon other than a firearm**

Over the two-year period January 1999 to December 2000, there was no statistically significant upward or

downward trend in the recorded number of incidents of robbery with a weapon other than a firearm in NSW.

#### *Significant downward trends*

A significant downward trend in the number of recorded incidents of robbery with a weapon other than a firearm was experienced in one Sydney SD over this period:

- Canterbury–Bankstown SSD (down by 20%).

As for the offence category of unarmed robbery, despite the recent decrease the rate of this offence in Canterbury–Bankstown is one of the highest in NSW and is more than double the State rate.

#### *Significant upward trends*

There were two regions within Sydney SD showing a significant upward monthly trend over the two-year period:

- Eastern Suburbs SSD (up by 35%)
- Central Western Sydney SSD (up by 29%).

The rate of robbery with a weapon other than a firearm recorded in the Eastern Suburbs SSD has risen to just above the State rate in 2000. The rate in central Western Sydney SSD, however, is more than double the average NSW rate for this offence.

## **TRENDS IN BREAK AND ENTER OFFENCES**

The offence category of break and enter – dwelling was stable over the two years to December 2000. The number of recorded incidents of break and enter – non-dwelling, however, showed a significant upward monthly trend over the same time period, with an increase in the number of recorded incidents between 1999 and 2000 of 8.1 per cent. Regional trends will be examined separately for each category.

#### **Break and enter – dwelling**

#### *Significant downward trends*

A statistically significant downward trend between January 1999 and December 2000 in the number of recorded incidents of break and enter – dwelling offences was found in the following regions:

- Outer South Western Sydney SSD (down by 19%)
- Mid-North Coast SD (down by 17%)
- Northern SD (down by 14%).

Despite the significant decrease in Outer South Western Sydney SSD, the rate of break and enter – dwelling in this region remains above the average State rate. The rate of this offence in both the Mid-North

Coast and the Northern SDs, however, is well below the NSW average.

#### *Significant upward trends*

There were three NSW SDs and four SSDs within Sydney SD showing significant upward trends in break and enter – dwelling in the 24-months to December 2000:

- Sydney SD (up by 7%)
- Inner Sydney SSD (up by 18%)
- Eastern Suburbs SSD (up by 36%)
- Fairfield–Liverpool SSD (up by 23%)
- Gosford–Wyong SSD (up by 19%)
- Murrumbidgee SD (up by 14%)
- Murray SD (up by 33%).

Although showing a significant increase in the rate of break and enter – dwelling over the period, the rate of this offence in each of the country SDs, namely in the Murrumbidgee and Murray SDs, remains well below the State average. In Sydney SD, however, and in each of the SSDs within Sydney SD which showed an upward trend over this time period, the rate is higher than the average rate in NSW.

#### **Break and enter – non-dwelling**

As was noted above, the offence category of break and enter – non-dwelling showed a statistically significant upward monthly trend over the two-year period from January 1999 to December 2000, with an 8.1 per cent annual increase in NSW between 1999 and 2000.

#### *Significant downward trends*

A statistically significant downward trend in the number of recorded incidents of break and enter – non-dwelling was found in one SSD within Sydney SD:

- Northern Beaches SSD (down by 21%).

The rate of this offence in the Northern Beaches region is one of the lowest in NSW.

#### *Significant upward trends*

Almost one-third of all regions in this analysis showed a significant upward monthly trend in the number of recorded offences of break and enter – non-dwelling. There were two regions in NSW and six regions within the Sydney SD where a significant upward trend was recorded over this time period:

- Sydney SD (up by 9%)
- Eastern Suburbs SSD (up by 11%)
- St. George–Sutherland SSD (up by 12%)
- Fairfield–Liverpool SSD (up by 34%)

- Outer Western Sydney SSD (up by 14%)
- Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD (up by 17%)
- Lower Northern Sydney SSD (up by 13%)
- Illawarra SD (up by 14%).

Despite these increases, the rate of break and enter – non-dwelling remains below the average State rate in all but one of the regions noted above. Only Illawarra SD had a rate of break and enter – non-dwelling which was higher than the NSW average rate in 2000.

#### **TRENDS IN MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT**

There was a statistically significant upward monthly trend in the number of recorded motor vehicle theft offences between January 1999 and December 2000 in NSW, with an overall increase of 8.2 per cent between 1999 and 2000.

#### *Significant downward trends*

There was no region in NSW which recorded a statistically significant downward trend in the monthly number of recorded incidents of motor vehicle theft over the two-year period to December 2000.

#### *Significant upward trends*

There were four SDs in NSW and five SSDs within Sydney region which showed a statistically significant upward trend for the offence category of motor vehicle theft:

- Sydney SD (up by 7%)
- Fairfield–Liverpool SSD (up by 17%)
- Outer South Western Sydney SSD (up by 18%)
- Central Western Sydney SSD (up by 5%)
- Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD (up by 9%)
- Hornsby–Ku-ring-gai SSD (up by 27%)
- Hunter SD (up by 25%)
- Mid-North Coast SD (up by 12%)
- Murray SD (up by 18%).

The recorded rates of motor vehicle theft are generally highest in the more densely populated regions of NSW. Only two regions outside Sydney SD showed a recorded rate of motor vehicle theft in 2000 which was higher than, or approximately equal to, the State rate. These were the areas of Illawarra SD and Hunter SD respectively - each being large urban centres outside Sydney. The rate of motor vehicle theft in the Hunter region is now equal to the average NSW rate (after being below average in 1998 and 1999). Despite the increase, the rate of motor vehicle theft in the Mid-North Coast region is less than half the NSW rate. Four of the five Sydney regions which showed an upward monthly trend in motor vehicle theft offences

had a rate in 2000 well above the average NSW rate. The exception is the Hornsby–Ku-ring-gai SSD which, despite the recent increase in recorded incidents, still has a rate at about one-third of the NSW State rate.

## TRENDS IN STEALING OFFENCES

Three of the four categories of stealing offences covered in the annual crime statistics report, namely steal from retail store, steal from dwelling and steal from person, did not show a statistically significant upward or downward trend in the 2000 report. For the offence category of steal from motor vehicle, however, there was a statistically significant upward monthly trend over the two-year period January 1999 to December 2000, with an overall increase of 15.2 per cent between 1999 and 2000.

### Steal from motor vehicle

As noted above, there was a statistically significant upward trend in steal from motor vehicle offences in NSW between January 1999 and December 2000 with an annual increase of 15.2 per cent.

#### *Significant downward trends*

There was one region in country NSW showing a statistically significant downward monthly trend in steal from motor vehicle offences over this time period:

- South Eastern SD (down by 29%).

The rate of steal from motor vehicle in this region has fallen to below half of the NSW average rate and is now the lowest of any Statistical Division in NSW.

#### *Significant upward trends*

Most Sydney regions and some country regions showed a statistically significant upward trend in the monthly number of steal from motor vehicle offences recorded over the two-year period:

- Sydney SD (up by 17%)
- Inner Sydney SSD (up by 21%)
- St George–Sutherland SSD (up by 22%)
- Canterbury–Bankstown SSD (up by 21%)
- Outer South Western Sydney SSD (up by 30%)
- Inner Western Sydney SSD (up by 13%)
- Central Western Sydney SSD (up by 18%)
- Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD (up by 25%)
- Hornsby–Ku-ring-gai SSD (up by 34%)
- Gosford–Wyong SSD (up by 52%)
- Hunter SD (up by 20%)
- North Western SD (up by 21%)
- Murray SD (up by 30%).

The majority of regions listed above recorded a rate of steal from motor vehicle which was below the average State rate. The rate of steal from motor vehicle is highest in the regions of Sydney; no NSW Statistical Division outside Sydney has a rate of this offence in 2000 which is higher than the State average. Nine of the total 14 Statistical Subdivisions within Sydney showed a significant upward trend for this offence. Of these nine areas, only four recorded a rate above the NSW average in 2000; these were the SSDs of Inner Sydney, Canterbury–Bankstown, Inner Western Sydney and Central Western Sydney.

### Steal from retail store

There was no significant upward or downward Statewide monthly trend in the incidence of steal from retail store offences.

#### *Significant downward trends*

One region within Sydney SD and two regions outside Sydney experienced a significant downward trend in the monthly number of steal from retail store incidents over the two-year period:

- Outer Western Sydney SSD (down by 17%)
- Illawarra SD (down by 10%)
- Mid-North Coast SD (down by 16%).

Despite the decrease in recorded steal from retail offences in Mid-North Coast SD, the rate of this offence is above average and among the highest of any region outside Sydney.

#### *Significant upward trends*

There were two regions within Sydney and one country region which showed a significant upward monthly trend in steal from retail store offences over the period January 1999 to December 2000:

- Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD (up by 10%)
- Gosford–Wyong SSD (up by 25%)
- Hunter SD (up by 13%).

Despite the increase in incidents, the rate of steal from retail store offences remains below the State average in each of the above regions.

### Steal from dwelling

There was no statistically significant upward or downward trend in the monthly number of incidents of steal from dwelling recorded over the two-year period from January 1999 to December 2000.

#### *Significant downward trends*

One region in NSW showed a significant downward monthly trend in steal from dwelling offences over the period:

- North Western SD (down by 5%).



Although there was a significant downward trend in the North Western region, the rate of this offence remains above the average State rate in 2000.

#### *Significant upward trends*

One Sydney area and one region in country NSW showed a significant upward monthly trend over the period:

- Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD (up by 9%)
- Illawarra SD (up by 12%).

The Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD was also the only Sydney region to show an upward trend in the 1999 annual report. Despite the recent increases though, the rate of steal from dwelling in this region remains below the average State rate. Although the rate of steal from dwelling in Illawarra SD is above the average State rate, this region has the lowest rate of this offence among the country SDs in NSW.

### **Steal from person**

There was no statistically significant upward or downward monthly trend recorded for this offence in NSW over the 24-month period January 1999 to December 2000.

#### *Significant downward trends*

Over the two-year period, there was no region showing a statistically significant downward trend for this offence.

#### *Significant upward trends*

Four Sydney regions recorded an upward trend for the offence category of steal from person, as follows:

- St George–Sutherland SSD (up by 14%)
- Fairfield–Liverpool SSD (up by 13%)
- Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD (up by 24%)
- Gosford–Wyong SSD (up by 27%).

Of the above four regions, only Fairfield–Liverpool SSD recorded a rate higher than the average State rate in 2000. Furthermore, the rate of steal from person in Gosford–Wyong SSD remains one of the lowest within Sydney SD.

### **TRENDS IN FRAUD**

Over the two-year period from January 1999 to December 2000, there was no statistically significant upward or downward trend in the monthly number of recorded fraud incidents in NSW.

#### *Significant downward trends*

There was one region within the Sydney SD, and one country NSW region which showed a significant

downward trend in the monthly number incidents recorded for this offence:

- Gosford–Wyong SSD (down by 20%)
- North Western SD (down by 56%).

#### *Significant upward trends*

There were three regions within the Sydney SD showing a significant upward trend in fraud over this time period:

- Canterbury–Bankstown SSD (up by 23%)
- Outer Western Sydney SSD (up by 21%)
- Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD (up by 34%).

While not among the Sydney regions showing the highest rates of fraud, both Canterbury–Bankstown and Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSDs recorded a rate of fraud in 2000 which was above the average State rate.

### **TRENDS IN MALICIOUS DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OFFENCES**

There was no statistically significant upward or downward State trend in the monthly number of recorded incidents of malicious damage to property between January 1999 and December 2000.

#### *Significant downward trends*

There was no region showing a statistically significant downward monthly trend in malicious damage to property offences over this time period.

#### *Significant upward trends*

There was one NSW country SD and two Sydney SSDs which recorded a significant upward trend in the monthly number of recorded incidents of malicious damage to property offences:

- Eastern Suburbs SSD (up by 8%)
- Gosford–Wyong SSD (up by 18%)
- Hunter SD (up by 9%).

The rate of malicious damage to property in both the Hunter SD and the Gosford–Wyong SSD is above the average State rate in 2000. The trend in 2000 for malicious damage to property offences differ considerably from those reported for 1999. In last year's report, there were five SDs in NSW and four SSDs within Sydney showing a significant upward monthly trend.

## SUMMARY

The report *New South Wales Recorded Crime Statistics 2000* shows that none of the 16 major offence categories are now trending downwards in NSW, that three property crime categories are trending upwards, and the remainder are stable. This contrasts with the situation in last year's report when seven categories were trending downwards and the remainder were stable.

The regional trends in recorded crime in NSW for the 16 major offence categories have been summarised in this paper. Overall, the main problem crime categories for NSW regions are the three property crime categories which showed a statistically significant upward Statewide trend over the 24-month period from January 1999 to December 2000; namely, break and enter – non-dwelling, motor vehicle theft, and steal from a motor vehicle.

For the motor vehicle theft offence category, Tables 2 and 3 show that between January 1999 and December 2000 nine out of the 26 NSW regions (12 NSW SDs and 14 Sydney SSDs) recorded an upward monthly trend. This contrasts with the position last year when, in the 24-months to December 1999, only two regions recorded an upward trend and eight regions a downward trend for motor vehicle theft. Similarly, for break and enter – non-dwelling, there are now eight regions trending upwards and one downwards, compared with only two regions trending upwards and four downwards last year. Finally, for the steal from motor vehicle offence category, the upward regional trends which were noted last year report have continued. Though stable at the State level in the 1999 report, in the 24-months to December 1999 there were six regions showing an upward trend for this offence category. In this year's report, there are now 13 of the 26 regions showing an upward trend, while one region is showing a downward monthly trend.

There are other offence categories which are not showing a Statewide upward monthly trend in this year's report, but which are showing an upward trend within some regions of NSW. In particular, the offence category of break and enter – dwelling shows several significant upward trends within the regions in contrast to the general stability Statewide. In the 24-months to December 2000, there were seven regions (of the total 26) showing an upward monthly trend, and three regions trending downwards. This contrasts with the situation in the 24-months to December 1999, when there were 12 regions showing a downward monthly trend for break and enter – dwelling offences. Other offences which show some regional contrast with the general NSW trend are the categories of assault, steal from person and unarmed robbery. Tables 2 and 3 show that in this year's report there are five regions trending upwards for assault, four for steal from person offences, and four for unarmed robbery. It is possible that if such upward trends continue and become more

widespread across the State, some offence categories which are presently stable will exhibit an upward Statewide trend over the next 12 months.

## APPENDIX

Regional trends and increases are analysed by offence category, as follows:

- For each major offence category, the monthly number of recorded incidents in NSW Statistical Division (SD) and within each Statistical Subdivision (SSD) within Sydney SD are tested for a statistically significant upward or downward trend over two years (a total of 12 SDs and 14 SSDs). Significant trends are reported. (Note that there is no regional analysis of the murder offence category because of the small number of incidents recorded in NSW each year.)
- Where a significant trend is found in a region, the percentage change in the total number of incidents between consecutive 12-month periods, January to December 1999 and January to December 2000, is reported. These results are summarised in Tables 2 and 3.
- Where a significant upward trend is detected in one of the 26 regions, monthly data at the next level of regional disaggregation are examined for a significant trend or annual increase in the total number of offences over the 24-months. For SSDs within Sydney SD, this next level of disaggregation is the level of Local Government Area (LGA). For SDs outside Sydney, the next level of disaggregation is SSD. (Crime rates in LGAs within country SSDs are not examined in detail because the number of incidents is often too small to allow meaningful discussion of percentage changes.) Furthermore:
- Where the upward trend in an LGA within a Sydney SSD, or in an SSD within a country SD is statistically significant, this will be noted. The percentage change between 1999 and 2000 in the number of recorded incidents will be calculated.
- Where there is no statistically significant upward trend detected, but where an overall increase has been recorded in the incidence of the offence in the region, this is noted.

Note that where a significant upward trend or an increase in annual incidents has been detected over the two-year period, it is useful to compare the current rate of the offence within the region with the overall NSW rate for the same offence category. While the incidence of a particular offence may have increased in a region, that area may still have a comparatively low crime rate. The situation where a crime rate is rising in an area which already has a high rate of that offence is problematic, and is identified in Table 4.

**Table 4: NSW regions with upward trends in crime rates, selected offence categories:  
January 1999 to December 2000**

<i>Offence category</i>	<i>Significant upward trends in NSW Statistical Divisions (SD), or Statistical Subdivisions (SSD) within Sydney SD</i>	<i>Increases in SSDs within SDs other than Sydney, or Local Government Areas within Sydney SSDs*</i>	
Assault	Hunter SD (13%)	Balance Hunter SSD* (29%) Newcastle SSD* (11%)	
	<i>Illawarra SD (11%)</i>	<i>Wollongong SSD* (16%)</i> <i>Balance Illawarra SSD (1%)</i>	
	Richmond–Tweed SD (15%)	Balance Richmond–Tweed SSD* (17%) Tweed Heads SSD (7%)	
	<i>Mid-North Coast SD (8%)</i>	<i>Hastings SSD (8%)</i> <i>Clarence SSD (7%)</i>	
	Hornsby–Ku-ring-gai SSD (10%)	Hornsby LGA* (9%) Ku-ring-gai LGA (16%)	
	Sexual assault	<i>Richmond–Tweed SD (54%)</i>	<i>Balance Richmond–Tweed SSD* (61%)</i> <i>Tweed Heads SSD (43%)</i>
		<i>Northern SD (32%)</i>	<i>Northern Slopes SSD* (70%)</i> <i>Northern Tablelands SSD (58%)</i>
		Robbery without a weapon	<i>Eastern Suburbs SSD (32%)</i>
	<i>Outer South West Sydney SSD (16%)</i>		Camden LGA (60%) <i>Campbelltown LGA (18%)</i>
	<i>Blacktown-Baulkham Hills SSD (45%)</i>		<i>Blacktown LGA* (39%)</i> Baulkham Hills LGA (100%)
Hornsby–Ku-ring-gai SSD (48%)	Hornsby LGA* (56%) Ku-ring-gai LGA* (36%)		
Robbery with a weapon not firearm	<i>Eastern Suburbs SSD (35%)</i>		<i>Randwick LGA* (41%)</i> <i>Woollahra LGA (100%)</i>
	<i>Central Western Sydney SSD (29%)</i>		<i>Parramatta LGA* (51%)</i> <i>Auburn LGA (20%)</i> <i>Holroyd LGA (1%)</i>
	Break and enter – dwelling		Murrumbidgee SD (14%)
Murray SD (33%)		Albury SSD* (56%) Central Murray SSD (19%) Upper Murray SSD (13%)	
<i>Inner Sydney SSD (18%)</i>		<i>Sydney LGA* (67%)</i> <i>Leichhardt LGA* (33%)</i> <i>South Sydney LGA* (31%)</i> Botany Bay LGA* (27%)	
<i>Eastern Suburbs SSD (36%)</i>		<i>Randwick LGA* (42%)</i> <i>Woollahra LGA* (34%)</i> <i>Waverley LGA (25%)</i>	
<i>Fairfield–Liverpool SSD (23%)</i>		<i>Liverpool LGA* (29%)</i> <i>Fairfield LGA* (17%)</i>	
<i>Gosford–Wyong SSD (19%)</i>		<i>Gosford LGA* (34%)</i> <i>Wyong LGA (3%)</i>	

\* indicates statistically significant upward monthly trend 'italics' indicates that the 2000 rate in the region is higher than the State rate for that offence.

**Table 4: NSW regions with upward trends in crime rates, selected offence categories:  
January 1999 to December 2000, continued**

<i>Offence category</i>	<i>Significant upward trends in NSW Statistical Divisions (SD), or Statistical Subdivisions (SSD) within Sydney SD</i>	<i>Increases in SSDs within SDs other than Sydney, or Local Government Areas within Sydney SSDs*</i>	
Break and enter – non-dwelling	Illawarra SD (14%)	<b>Wollongong SSD* (14%)</b> Balance Illawarra SSD (16%)	
	Eastern Suburbs SSD (11%)	Randwick LGA* (34%) Woollahra LGA (2%)	
	St George–Sutherland SSD (12%)	Hurstville LGA* (49%) Sutherland LGA (11%) Kogarah LGA (4%)	
	<b>Fairfield–Liverpool SSD (34%)</b>	<b>Liverpool LGA* (62%)</b> Fairfield LGA (15%)	
	Outer Western Sydney SSD (14%)	Hawkesbury LGA (27%) Penrith LGA (14%) Blue Mountains LGA (5%)	
	Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD (17%)	Baulkham Hills LGA* (42%) Blacktown LGA (10%)	
	Lower Northern Sydney SSD (13%)	Ryde LGA* (13%) Hunters Hill LGA (44%) Willoughby LGA (27%) Mosman LGA (14%) <b>North Sydney LGA (9%)</b>	
	Motor vehicle theft	Hunter SD (25%)	<b>Newcastle SSD* (25%)</b> Balance Hunter SSD (29%)
		Mid-North Coast SD (12%)	Hastings SSD* (11%) Clarence SSD (12%)
		Murray SD (18%)	Central Murray SSD* (20%) Upper Murray SSD* (94%) Albury SSD (24%)
		<b>Fairfield–Liverpool SSD (17%)</b>	<b>Liverpool LGA* (22%)</b> <b>Fairfield LGA* (12%)</b>
		<b>Outer South Western Sydney SSD (18%)</b>	<b>Campbelltown LGA* (17%)</b> Camden LGA (32%) Wollondilly LGA (3%)
		<b>Central Western Sydney SSD (5%)</b>	<b>Holroyd LGA* (13%)</b> <b>Auburn LGA (5%)</b> <b>Parramatta LGA (1%)</b>
		<b>Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD (9%)</b>	Baulkham Hills LGA* (20%) <b>Blacktown LGA* (7%)</b>
Hornsby–Ku-ring-gai SSD (27%)		Hornsby LGA* (20%) Ku-ring-gai LGA* (51%)	
Steal from motor vehicle		Hunter SD (20%)	<b>Newcastle SSD* (21%)</b> Balance Hunter SSD* (16%)
		North Western SD (21%)	<b>Upper Darling SSD* (32%)</b> Macquarie–Barwon SSD (73%) Central Macquarie SSD (11%)
		Murray SD (30%)	Albury SSD* (65%)

\* indicates statistically significant upward monthly trend *'italics'* indicates that the 2000 rate in the region is **higher** than the State rate for that offence.

**Table 4: NSW regions with upward trends in crime rates, selected offence categories:  
January 1999 to December 2000, continued**

<i>Offence category</i>	<i>Significant upward trends in NSW Statistical Divisions (SD), or Statistical Subdivisions (SSD) within Sydney SD</i>	<i>Increases in SSDs within SDs other than Sydney, or Local Government Areas within Sydney SSDs*</i>
Steal from motor vehicle cont.	<i>Inner Sydney SSD (21%)</i>	<i>South Sydney LGA* (32%)</i> <i>Botany Bay LGA* (22%)</i> <i>Sydney LGA (27%)</i> <i>Leichhardt LGA (5%)</i>
	St George–Sutherland SSD (22%)	<i>Rockdale LGA* (15%)</i> Kogarah LGA (40%) <i>Hurstville LGA (33%)</i> Sutherland LGA (16%)
	<i>Canterbury–Bankstown SSD (21%)</i>	<i>Bankstown LGA* (22%)</i> Canterbury LGA* (18%)
	Outer South Western Sydney SSD (30%)	Camden LGA* (62%) <i>Campbelltown LGA* (29%)</i>
	<i>Inner Western Sydney SSD (13%)</i>	<i>Burwood LGA* (25%)</i> <i>Ashfield LGA* (16%)</i> <i>Strathfield LGA (30%)</i>
	<i>Central Western Sydney SSD (18%)</i>	<i>Holroyd LGA* (43%)</i> <i>Auburn LGA (17%)</i> <i>Parramatta LGA (8%)</i>
	Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD (25%)	<i>Blacktown LGA* (25%)</i> Baulkham Hills LGA* (24%)
	Hornsby–Ku-ring-gai SSD (34%)	Hornsby LGA* (41%) Ku-ring-gai LGA (23%)
	Gosford–Wyong SSD (52%)	Wyong LGA* (55%) Gosford LGA* (50%)
Steal from retail store	Hunter SD (13%)	Newcastle SSD* (15%)
	<i>Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD (10%)</i>	<i>Blacktown LGA* (15%)</i>
	Gosford–Wyong SSD (25%)	Gosford LGA* (35%) Wyong LGA (13%)
Steal from dwelling	<i>Illawarra SD (12%)</i>	<i>Wollongong SSD (12%)</i> <i>Balance Illawarra SSD (11%)</i>
	Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD (9%)	Baulkham Hills LGA* (17%) Blacktown LGA* (7%)
Steal from person	St George–Sutherland SSD (14%)	Rockdale LGA (29%) Sutherland LGA* (26%) <i>Hurstville LGA (11%)</i>
	<i>Fairfield–Liverpool SSD (13%)</i>	<i>Fairfield LGA* (10%)</i> Liverpool LGA (19%)
	Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD (24%)	Baulkham Hills LGA*(100%) Blacktown LGA* (15%)
	Gosford–Wyong SSD (27%)	Gosford LGA* (48%) Wyong LGA (1%)

\* indicates statistically significant upward monthly trend 'italics' indicates that the 2000 rate in the region is higher than the State rate for that offence.

**Table 4: NSW regions with upward trends in crime rates, selected offence categories:  
January 1999 to December 2000, continued**

<i>Offence category</i>	<i>Significant upward trends in NSW Statistical Divisions (SD), or Statistical Subdivisions (SSD) within Sydney SD</i>	<i>Increases in SSDs within SDs other than Sydney, or Local Government Areas within Sydney SSDs*</i>
Fraud	<i>Canterbury–Bankstown SSD (23%)</i>	<i>Bankstown LGA* (42%)</i>
	Outer Western Sydney SSD (21%)	Hawkesbury LGA* (48%) Blue Mountains LGA (34%) <i>Penrith LGA (14%)</i>
	<i>Blacktown–Baulkham Hills SSD (34%)</i>	<i>Blacktown LGA* (39%)</i> Baulkham Hills LGA* (14%)
Malicious damage to property	<i>Hunter SD (9%)</i>	<i>Balance Hunter SSD* (30%)</i>
		<i>Newcastle SSD (6%)</i>
	Eastern Suburbs SSD (8%)	Randwick LGA* (12%) Woollahra LGA (4%) Waverley LGA (3%)
	<i>Gosford–Wyong SSD (18%)</i>	<i>Gosford LGA* (24%)</i> <i>Wyong LGA* (11%)</i>

\* indicates statistically significant upward monthly trend *'italics'* indicates that the 2000 rate in the region is **higher** than the State rate for that offence.

## NOTES

- 1 Doak, P. 2001, *New South Wales Recorded Crime Statistics 2000*, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, Sydney.
- 2 For further discussion, see Matka, E. 1997, *Uses and Abuses of Crime Statistics*, Crime and Justice Bulletin No.11, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, Sydney.
- 3 The statistical test used is Kendall's rank order correlation test for trend; see, for example, Conover, W. J. 1980, *Practical Non-Parametric Statistics*, 2nd edn, John Wiley and Sons, pp. 256-260. A 5% two-tailed test was used to determine whether there was an increasing or decreasing trend in the monthly rates of recorded criminal incidents. Some month-to-month variations in the rates of recorded criminal incidents suggest seasonal factors may be at work. The test for trend is not sensitive to seasonal variations; it is sensitive only to a generally increasing or decreasing trend over the time period examined.
- 4 Chilvers, M. 2000, *Regional Analysis of Crime Trends in NSW, 1999*, Crime and Justice Statistics Bureau Brief, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, Sydney.