



Public confidence in the New South Wales criminal justice system: 2014 update

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Aim: To assess (1) the level of public confidence in the New South Wales (NSW) criminal justice system (CJS) in 2014, (2) the relationship between confidence levels and individuals' characteristics, including personal exposure to crime, and media consumption behaviours, (3) how confidence in the NSW CJS has changed since 2007, and (4) whether changes in confidence are associated with changing perceptions of crime and criminal justice outcomes.

Method: Data are sourced from a repeat cross-sectional survey of the NSW public ($n=2,002$ in 2007; $n=2,001$ in 2012; $n=1,989$ in 2014). Variation in confidence levels across the 2014 sample and over time is documented and tested for statistical significance. Basic logistic regression models are developed to predict respondents' confidence as a function of their individual characteristics, and extended to control for variation in their perceptions of crime and justice outcomes.

Results: The results suggest that two out of every three NSW residents (64 per cent) are confident that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice. Just 44 per cent of residents are confident that the CJS meets the needs of victims, compared with 81 per cent confidence that the CJS treats individuals accused of committing crimes fairly and respects their rights. Most residents (66 per cent) believe sentences handed down are too lenient. One in three residents (35 per cent) are confident that the CJS deals with cases promptly. Personal exposure to crime is associated with lower levels of confidence in the CJS in general, and confidence also varies across groups with different media consumption habits. Since 2012, there has been a slight reduction in confidence around whether the CJS meets the needs of victims, and punitiveness appears to have intensified. Otherwise, public confidence in the justice system remained largely unchanged over this two-year window. Confidence is at higher levels than those recorded in 2007, and this partly reflects slight corrections in public perceptions of crime and justice outcomes.

Conclusion: Public confidence in the NSW CJS has improved since 2007, but pervasive misperceptions around crime trends and justice outcomes seemingly continue to undermine confidence. The magnitude of the media's influence on confidence levels remains an open question.

Keywords: Public confidence, sentencing, knowledge, media, cross-sectional survey

INTRODUCTION

Improving community confidence in the justice system is one of the stated goals of the NSW 2021 plan and reflects the NSW Department of Justice's overarching vision 'to create a safe and just place for the people of NSW' (NSW Department of Justice, 2014; NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2011). The NSW government has pursued several measures to improve community confidence in the justice system under the 2021 plan (NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2014). Some of these are geared towards enhancing the operational efficiency of the justice system (including investments in court infrastructure, and the adoption of improved video conferencing and related technologies); others are designed to better support victims of crime (including reforms to the Victims Compensation Scheme

and the appointment of a Commissioner of Victims Rights); while there are yet others which might work to better protect the rights and ensure the fair treatment of people who have been convicted of crimes (for example, an independent Inspector of Custodial Services role was recently established to oversee prisons and juvenile detention facilities). Although identifying the impact of these various policy measures would be a challenge, it is helpful to monitor changes in confidence across these dimensions of interest. More generally, public confidence in the justice system is critical to its effective functioning since confidence affects the way in which individuals engage with the system (Gelb, 2011; Roberts, 2004). For example, victims of domestic violence might be less likely to report an offence if they lack confidence that justice processes will meet their needs for protection; prospective

burglars might be more likely to rob a house if they doubt the system is efficacious in bringing people who commit crimes to justice; and if apprehended, the burglars might be more likely to plead guilty if they believe they will be treated fairly. For these reasons, it is important to gauge and understand confidence levels, and to monitor any changes in public confidence that occur over time.

In 2007, the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) conducted a baseline survey (modelled on the UK Home Office British Crime Survey) of a sample of NSW residents to assess public confidence in various aspects of the NSW CJS. The results from this 'Confidence in the CJS' survey were reported by Jones, Weatherburn and McFarlane (2008) and the results from a follow-up survey, conducted in 2012, were reported by Snowball and Jones (2012). The baseline survey indicated high levels of public confidence that the CJS respects the rights of the accused and treats the accused fairly, but lower levels of confidence that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice and meets the needs of victims. The 2007 survey also revealed a low level of confidence that the CJS deals with cases promptly, as well as a widespread belief that sentences handed down by the courts are overly lenient. This pattern of results is broadly consistent with those found in similar surveys conducted in the UK and general population surveys undertaken in other Australian states (see for example Nicholas, Kershaw, & Walker, 2007 and Jones et al.'s 2008 review). The 2012 follow-up survey affirmed these patterns, but also signalled a strengthening in confidence in the NSW CJS over the previous five years.

Opinions on crime and the justice system vary considerably across the population, partly because individuals access information on the CJS from a wide range of varied sources. Personal experience can be important, and it was highlighted by around one in five respondents (21 per cent) in the 2007 BOCSAR survey as one of the 'most influential' sources of information on the CJS. In fact, people recently exposed to crime might have some unique insight into the operations of the justice system. One UK study, for example, found that confidence that the justice system meets the needs of victims was higher among recent victims of crime (Mirrlees-Black, 2001). A more recent UK study suggests people who have been exposed to crime tend to be less confident in the justice system (Chaplin, Flatley, & Smith, 2011). First-hand experience of crime might also bias individuals' beliefs regarding its prevalence.

News media undoubtedly influence public views of crime and justice (see Roberts, Stalans, Indermaur, & Hough, 2003 for a review). Close to three-quarters of respondents (74 per cent) in the 2007 BOCSAR survey indicated that television and radio news programs were influential sources of information on the CJS. Around one in five respondents (22 per cent) specified talk-back radio, close to half (48 per cent) cited broadsheet newspapers, and slightly smaller proportions (41 and 35 per cent respectively) cited local or tabloid papers as influential sources of information (see also Roberts & Indermaur, 2009 for similar

evidence from a national Australian survey). Unfortunately, the causal influence of the media is very difficult to identify empirically as there is a strong tendency for people to source information that accords with their pre-existing views (see Iyengar & Hahn, 2009). Nonetheless, cross-sectional variation in perspectives is potentially of interest in and of itself because it may help identify media sources that could be targeted in order to improve public confidence amongst certain sectors of the population.

Confidence levels also vary depending on the accuracy of individuals' knowledge of crime and justice outcomes. Jones et al. (2008) and Jones and Weatherburn's (2010) analyses of the 2007 BOCSAR survey suggest that NSW residents with more accurate knowledge tend to be more confident in the CJS than those with marked misperceptions. In general, people tend to be poorly-informed about crime and justice trends in Australia and elsewhere (Chapman, Mirrlees-Black, & Brawn, 2002; Doob & Roberts, 1988; Jones & Weatherburn, 2010; Salisbury, 2004; Weatherburn & Indermaur, 2004). The 2007 and 2012 BOCSAR surveys confirmed that people are more likely to overestimate than underestimate the incidence of violence, to envisage escalating crime regardless of actual trends, and to underestimate rather than overestimate conviction and imprisonment rates in NSW. These misperceptions are concerning, since existing research suggests that individuals who overestimate the crime problem and underestimate the justice system's response tend to report lower levels of confidence in the system (Doob & Roberts, 1988; Hough & Roberts, 1998; Mattinson & Mirrlees-Black, 2000; Mirrlees-Black, 2001).

THE CURRENT STUDY

This bulletin reports the results of the third wave of BOCSAR's 'Confidence in the CJS' survey. This survey was administered to 1,989 NSW residents in April and May 2014. For the most part, the questionnaire used in the 2014 survey mirrored that used in the earlier two waves (see Jones et al., 2008 and Snowball & Jones, 2012). Participants reported on their perceptions of various crime and justice outcomes and indicated how confident they are that the NSW CJS achieves various objectives. Unlike previous surveys, however, the 2014 survey included a series of new questions about respondents' recent experience of violence and/or property-related crime in order to investigate the relationship between victimisation and confidence in the CJS. Respondents were also asked about their typical media consumption habits, so variation in confidence levels across groups favouring different news providers could be documented.

The current study also builds on previous BOCSAR survey analyses in exploring the relationship between confidence levels and perceptions of crime and justice outcomes. Previous reports have focussed on the link between confidence and knowledge—that is, the accuracy of an individuals' perceptions of crime and justice outcomes relative to official statistics for NSW. It is also interesting to consider the link between confidence levels

and the very substance of perceptions, irrespective of their accuracy. For example, irrespective of actual conviction rates, an individual may be more confident that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice if she believes offenders brought to court are more likely to be convicted. Similarly, irrespective of the true incidence of violence in reported crime, an individual might be less confident that the CJS meets the needs of victims if he believes violent crime is prevalent. A particular individual might claim sentences are too tough if she believes 99 per cent of convicted offenders are imprisoned, and yet would claim sentences are too lenient if she believed only 1 per cent of convicted offenders were imprisoned. This bulletin focuses on analysing the link between confidence levels and the substance of individuals' perceptions of crime and justice.

The overall aims of the study were to:

1. assess the level of public confidence in the NSW CJS in 2014
2. investigate the extent to which confidence levels are associated with socio-economic and other individual characteristics, including personal exposure to crime, and media consumption behaviours
3. document changes in confidence in the NSW CJS since 2007, and
4. identify any impact of changing perceptions of crime and criminal justice outcomes on confidence levels over time.

METHOD

DATA COLLECTION

Data collection for the 2014 survey followed the method employed in earlier waves of the BOCSAR 'Confidence in the CJS' survey. This method has previously been described in detail elsewhere so is only briefly summarised here (see Jones et al., 2008, and Snowball & Jones, 2012 for further detail). In short, a market research company used Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) technology to interview a quota-based sample of NSW residents. Quotas based on age, gender and residential location were set to ensure that the survey sample was representative of the wider NSW population on these key characteristics. The most recently released census data (2011 for the 2014 survey, and 2006 previously) were used to derive the quota benchmarks and these benchmarks were adhered to within a 5 per cent tolerance limit. Only English-speaking people aged 18 or over were eligible to take part. To identify and contact each prospective participant, fixed-line residential telephone numbers were selected using random digit dialling. In order to achieve quotas most efficiently, interviewers first sought to survey the youngest adult male household member, followed by the youngest adult female, or failing that, another adult. No attempt was made to contact hard-to-reach populations such as institutionalised or homeless people. The interviews were conducted in April and May 2014.¹

Response rates

In administering the 2014 survey, 18,988 valid phone-numbers were called with the following outcomes:

- 6,099 respondents refused to participate (6,090 refused to be interviewed and 9 refused to give their age)
- 3,850 were terminated following no answer after five attempts
- 3,325 were ineligible to participate (2,784 because the quota had been filled for the age/gender cohort in that location and 541 due to inadequate English language)
- 3,725 numbers were still active at the end of the survey period (2,501 due to no answer, 439 due to an engaged signal, 782 due to an answering machine, and 3 where an interview appointment was made but not kept), and
- 1,989 completed interviews.

The nominal response rate (the number of completed interviews divided by the sum of completed interviews and refused interviews) in 2014 was 24.6 per cent. This compares to 28.9 per cent in 2012 and 11.0 per cent in 2007. To the extent that people who did not answer their phone after five attempts are effectively refusing to participate, these nominal response rates in each year are artificially high.²

Sample

Population weights for age, gender and residential location are applied to each year's survey data to adjust for the small discrepancies between the distribution of the survey sample and the benchmark NSW population across these characteristics. In Jones et al.'s (2008) analysis of the 2007 survey, 2006 census data were employed to calculate population weights. In this report, these population weights have been updated to reflect the most recent Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) estimates of the demographic composition of the NSW population for each survey year (though weights for the 2014 sample are based on 2013 demographic statistics—the latest available).³ Weighted data are reported, analysed and interpreted throughout this report.⁴

The socio-demographic characteristics of both the unweighted and weighted samples in each survey wave are shown in Table 1. As seen here, the unweighted distributions of each respondent sample across age, gender and residential location are similar for each of the three surveys. This is expected, given that the same quota sampling method was used for each of the three survey waves, and given the slow-moving nature of demographic change. Variation in the composition of the weighted survey samples by age, gender and residential location solely reflects demographic trends evident in the NSW population over time.

There are statistically significant differences in the composition of the survey samples across years by education level, household structure and income level. Respondents in the later surveys are more likely to hold post-secondary-school qualifications and

Table 1. Unweighted and weighted survey sample composition, by socio-demographic characteristics and by survey year

Characteristic	Unweighted sample				Weighted sample			
	2007	2012	2014	p-value	2007	2012	2014	p-value
Gender				.601				.876
Female	52.0	50.5	50.8		51.0	50.3	50.3	
Age-group				.769				.272
Aged 18-34	29.3	30.5	30.2		30.8	30.1	30.1	
Aged 35-49	28.6	29.3	29.4		28.4	26.4	26.0	
Aged 50 and over	42.1	40.2	40.4		40.8	43.5	43.9	
Location				.174				.729
Sydney	60.6	63.3	62.9		64.0	65.0	65.1	
Rest of NSW	39.4	36.7	37.1		36.0	35.0	34.9	
Education				<.001				<.001
Year 10 or less	21.9	16.2	16.4		21.2	16.5	16.7	
Year 11 or 12	21.0	19.5	20.8		21.1	19.5	20.8	
TAFE (e.g. Trade, College)	20.6	24.9	22.9		20.5	24.8	22.7	
University	36.5	39.4	39.9		37.2	39.2	39.8	
Household structure				<.001				<.001
Person living alone	17.2	12.3	11.5		17.0	12.7	12.0	
Couple with no children at home	26.8	23.4	23.6		26.3	24.2	24.6	
Couple with children at home	39.1	45.3	42.9		39.5	44.2	41.6	
Single parent with children at home	6.5	5.2	5.2		6.5	5.1	5.1	
Group household / other	10.4	13.8	16.7		10.7	13.8	16.8	
Household income				<.001				<.001
Less than \$60,000	33.7	27.3	23.9		33.0	27.7	24.3	
\$60,000 - \$99,999	20.0	20.7	18.3		20.0	20.3	18.1	
\$100,000 - \$129,999	10.5	13.2	12.0		10.7	13.0	11.9	
\$130,000 or more	12.8	20.1	23.6		13.1	19.9	23.1	
Can't say / refused	23.0	18.7	22.2		23.2	19.1	22.6	

Note. Reported p-value based on Pearson Chi-square test of independence of distributions over time.

more likely to report higher levels of household income. Changes over time are consistent with socio-economic change evidenced across NSW, and more generally the composition of each survey sample is broadly consistent with the wider NSW population in relation to these characteristics.⁵ Lone-person households may have been slightly over-represented in the 2007 survey, but fewer respondents in the later surveys reported living alone.⁶

QUESTIONNAIRE

Confidence and perceptions of crime and the criminal justice system

Respondents were asked five questions regarding their confidence in various aspects of the CJS in each of the three survey waves. Specifically, they were asked 'how confident are you that the criminal justice system...'

1. '...is effective in bringing people who commit crimes to justice?'

2. '...meets the needs of victims of crime?'

3. '...respects the rights of people accused of committing a crime?'

4. '...treats people accused of committing a crime fairly?' and

5. '...deals with cases promptly?'

After each question, the interviewer read aloud four options: 'very confident', 'fairly confident', 'not very confident', and 'not at all confident' (in reverse order for half the interviews). Respondents were also asked a sixth question to gauge confidence in the appropriateness of penalties:

6. 'In general, would you say that sentences handed down by the courts are too tough, about right, or too lenient?'

Respondents were probed according to their response, with: 'Is that a little too tough/lenient, or much too tough/lenient?'. Answers to this question were recorded as either: 'much too

tough', 'a little too tough', 'about right', 'a little too lenient', or 'much too lenient'.

Another series of questions designed to measure respondents' perceptions of crime trends and the likelihood of conviction and imprisonment was included in each survey. The first of these questions relates to property crime:

1. 'I would like to ask whether you think that the level of property crime in NSW has changed over the past five years. Would you say there is more property crime, less property crime or about the same amount (since five years ago)?'

It was followed by a prompt: 'Is that a lot or a little more/less?', as appropriate. Answers were recorded accordingly as 'a lot more crime', 'a little more crime', 'about the same', 'a little less crime', or 'a lot less crime'.

The second question asked about the prevalence of violent crime:

2. 'Of every 100 crimes recorded by the police, roughly what number do you think involve violence or the threat of violence?'

Respondents' knowledge of conviction and imprisonment rates for burglary were also measured across all three survey waves:

3. 'Of every 100 people charged with home burglary and brought to court, roughly what number do you think end up convicted?'
4. 'Out of every 100 men aged 21 or over who are convicted of home burglary, how many do you think are sent to prison?'

In the 2012 and 2014 surveys, questions (3) and (4) above were repeated (with identical phrasing) to measure perceptions of the likelihood of conviction and imprisonment for murder.

Related factors

Respondents' age, gender, residential location, education level, household composition and household income were measured consistently across all three survey waves. The 2014 survey also included a series of 'yes/no' questions designed to capture respondents' experience of crime in the previous 12 months.

These were:

1. 'In the last 12 months, have you had any property stolen or purposely damaged, or has there been an attempt to steal or damage your property? This could include your home, your car, or other personal possessions.'
2. 'In the last 12 months, did anyone, including people you know, use physical force or violence against you? Please do not include verbal abuse or threats of violence.'
3. 'In the last 12 months, did anyone, including people you know, try to use or threaten to use physical force or violence against you?'

Lastly, the 2014 survey included questions relating to respondents' consumption of traditional news media. These were:

1. 'Thinking of a typical week, on how many days would you read one or more newspaper articles? (This could be in print or online.)' and 'When you do read the newspaper, which newspaper would you read most often?'
2. 'Thinking of a typical week, on how many days would you watch a news or current affairs program?' and 'When you do watch the news or current affairs programs, which station would you watch most often?'
3. 'Thinking of a typical week, on how many days would you listen to the radio?' and 'When you do listen to the radio, which station would you listen to most often?'

For each category, the interviewer read aloud a (rotating) list from which respondents were able to flag their preferred provider, plus a catch-all 'other' option. The options specified were: Daily Telegraph, Sydney Morning Herald and The Australian for newspapers; Channel 9, Channel 7, Channel 10, ABC 1, SBS, Fox and SKY for television news and current affairs programs; and 2GB, ABC702, 2DAY, WSFM, NOVA96.9, MIX106.5, Triple M, Triple J and 2UE for radio.

ANALYSIS

Each of the four aims outlined in the introduction to this report is addressed sequentially in the results section. First, confidence levels recorded in 2014 are reported. Levels of public confidence are estimated by calculating the percentage of the (weighted) sample of respondents indicating they were either 'very' or 'fairly' confident (rather than 'not very' or 'not at all' confident) in each aspect of the CJS. The few respondents who did not indicate their level of confidence (i.e. those stating they did not know how confident they were or who refused to answer the question) were removed from the analysis. The distribution of respondents' opinions on the appropriateness of sentencing is reported in full, with respondents who see sentences handed down as 'about right' considered to be confident in the appropriateness of sentencing.

Second, cross-sectional variation in the 2014 respondents' confidence levels is explored. Confidence levels are compared across sub-groups of the 2014 sample as defined by socio-demographic characteristics: age group, formal educational attainment, gender, geographical location, household structure and relative household income level. Confidence levels are also compared on the basis of whether respondents had recently been exposed to property or violent crime, and by media consumption behaviour. Results from a statistical test of independence are reported to highlight statistically significant differences across groups. In interpreting the results of such tests throughout the report, *p*-values smaller than .05 are assumed to signal statistical significance.

Third, this report examines changes in the distribution of responses to the 'confidence' questions across surveys to assess whether confidence in the CJS has changed over time. Tests of statistical significance are applied to the data. Separate binary logistic regression models are then developed in order

to predict respondents' confidence in the CJS over time, after accounting for significant socio-demographic characteristics.⁷ The outcome variable for each of these models is a binary indicator of respondent confidence in a particular aspect of the CJS. Each model was validated by examining appropriate diagnostics.⁸ A binomial logistic model predicting confidence in the appropriateness of sentencing failed a specification test, so this model was excluded. Instead, a partial proportional ordered logistic model is developed to analyse public opinion on penalties, and to identify shifts in punitiveness over time.⁹ In this specification, the outcome variable is an ordinal measure of the punitiveness each individual displays in their assessment of sentencing practices (punitiveness is considered highest for those individuals who see sentences handed down as 'much too lenient', and lowest for those who see sentences as 'much too tough'). Again, the model was validated using appropriate diagnostics (including tests of the parallel lines assumption intrinsic to the ordered logistic structure).

Lastly, this bulletin seeks to identify any impact of changing perceptions of crime and criminal justice outcomes on confidence levels and apparent punitiveness over time. Public perceptions are measured by calculating average estimates of the incidence of violent crime, the percentage of respondents who felt property crime was increasing, and average estimates of conviction and imprisonment rates. These data are benchmarked against official statistics, and changes in perceptions over time are documented and tested for statistical significance. The relationship between confidence levels and perceptions of crime trends and criminal justice outcomes are displayed graphically using the 2014 survey data. Lastly, the binary logistic regression models predicting confidence in the CJS over time, and the ordinal model predicting punitiveness over time, are extended to include data on perceptions.

RESULTS

PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN 2014

The 2014 survey results suggest that roughly two out of every three NSW residents (64 per cent) are confident (either 'very' or 'fairly' confident, rather than 'not very' or 'not at all' confident) that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice (Figure 1). A smaller share—just 44 per cent—are confident that the CJS meets the needs of victims, while respondents report particularly high levels of confidence relating to the treatment of people accused of committing crimes (81 per cent of respondents are confident each that the CJS respects the rights of the accused, and treats accused fairly). Roughly one in three respondents (35 per cent) are confident that the CJS deals with cases promptly. Figure 2 presents a disaggregation of respondents' opinions on the appropriateness of sentences handed down by the courts—an indication of public punitiveness. Highlighted in the centre are the third of respondents (30 per cent) confident in the appropriateness of sentencing, who consider sentences handed down to be 'about right'. Most respondents (66 per cent) believe sentences are too lenient. Less than 5 per cent consider sentences to be too tough.

VARIATION IN CONFIDENCE LEVELS ACROSS THE NSW POPULATION, 2014

Table 2 documents variation in confidence levels in 2014 across sub-groups of the population according to socio-demographic characteristics. Consistent with previous analyses presented by Jones et al. (2008) and Snowball and Jones (2012), confidence tends to be higher amongst younger age groups and those who have attained higher levels of formal education. In 2014, confidence was also generally higher amongst male respondents than female respondents, except regarding the treatment of people accused of committing crimes (where confidence levels

Figure 1. Confidence in the NSW CJS, 2014

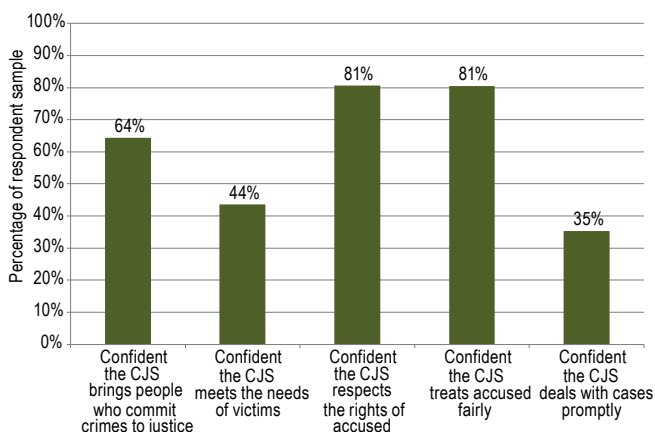


Figure 2. Punitiveness (views on sentencing), 2014

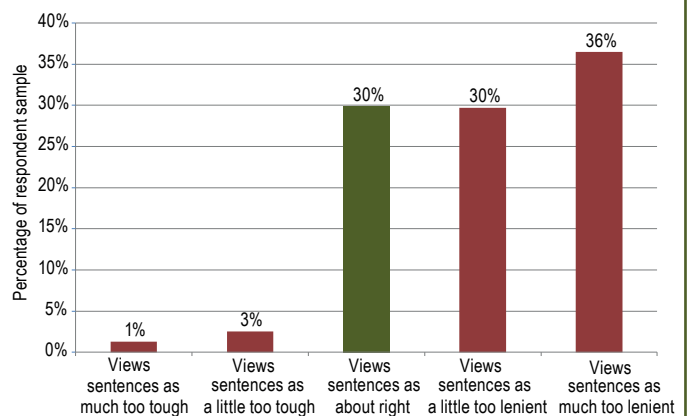


Table 2. Cross-sectional variation in confidence levels according to socio-demographic characteristics, 2014

Characteristic	Confident that the CJS					Views sentences handed down as 'about right'
	brings people who commit crimes to justice	meets the needs of victims	respects the rights of accused	treats accused fairly	deals with cases promptly	
	%	%	%	%	%	
Age-group	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> =.011)	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> <.001)
Aged under 25	85.4	66.2	79.5	84.3	51.3	50.6
Aged 25-39	67.1	50.0	84.9	80.4	38.2	31.1
Aged 40-54	66.8	44.2	83.9	83.7	34.8	25.8
Aged over 54	52.9	30.6	75.9	76.9	27.6	24.3
Gender	(<i>p</i> =.002)	(<i>p</i> =.004)	(<i>p</i> =.646)	(<i>p</i> =.102)	(<i>p</i> =.016)	(<i>p</i> =.051)
Male	67.7	46.8	81.0	82.0	38.0	31.9
Female	61.0	40.5	80.2	79.0	32.7	27.9
Education	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> =.013)	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> <.001)
Year 10 or less	47.4	31.9	73.1	74.4	29.8	13.0
Year 11 or 12	68.1	49.0	76.4	79.7	43.2	32.4
TAFE (e.g. Trade, College)	57.9	39.1	83.3	81.4	30.7	22.3
University	73.1	48.4	84.4	83.0	36.1	40.3
Household structure	(<i>p</i> =.011)	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> <.001)
Person living alone	58.5	34.0	73.7	76.7	36.7	28.0
Couple with no children living at home	59.4	37.1	78.9	76.6	26.0	27.4
Couple with children living at home	67.0	45.7	85.3	85.8	36.8	27.6
Single parent with children living at home	63.2	40.1	83.8	78.5	33.3	27.3
Group household of unrelated adults	74.1	59.7	75.2	70.0	47.9	46.2
Group household of related adults	66.5	52.8	75.7	77.4	42.5	39.4
Something else	69.2	57.5	68.4	80.0	46.1	37.9
Can't say / refused	90.8	81.7	92.3	93.0	58.8	51.3
Relative household income^a	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> =.002)	(<i>p</i> =.002)	(<i>p</i> =.575)	(<i>p</i> <.001)
At or above median	70.9	49.1	84.5	83.4	34.3	35.7
Below median	56.6	34.5	77.7	76.4	35.2	21.9
Can't say / refused	64.8	48.8	78.4	81.9	37.4	32.7
Residence	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> =.057)	(<i>p</i> =.799)	(<i>p</i> =.654)	(<i>p</i> =.206)	(<i>p</i> =.143)
Sydney	67.1	45.6	80.8	80.1	36.9	31.3
Newcastle	55.4	34.9	81.4	84.3	30.3	21.2
Wollongong	75.3	40.1	85.7	76.3	31.0	28.5
Elsewhere	58.6	40.8	79.8	81.0	32.7	28.5
Total	64.3	43.7	80.6	80.5	35.3	29.9

Note. Reported *p*-value (in parentheses) based on Pearson Chi-square test of independence of across sub-groups.

^a Relative to median for given household structure.

were similar across gender groups). Confidence levels also vary for individuals living in households with different structures, and tend to be higher in relatively wealthy households (conditional on household structure). Respondents' geographical location is also significant with respect to confidence that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice (individuals living in Wollongong and Sydney appear to be more confident, with individuals living in Newcastle less so), but no statistically significant variation by location was evident in the other confidence measures.

Exposure to crime

Table 3 documents variation in confidence for individuals who have been exposed to property or violent crime, or the threat of violence in the past 12 months. An aggregated measure of personal exposure to such crime is associated with lower confidence that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice, respects the rights of the accused and treats them fairly, and in the appropriateness of sentencing. Respondents

Table 3. Cross-sectional variation in confidence levels according to individual exposure to violent or property-related crime, 2014

	Confident that the CJS					Views sentences handed down as 'about right'
	brings people who commit crimes to justice	meets the needs of victims	respects the rights of accused	treats accused fairly	deals with cases promptly	
Recent exposure to crime	%	%	%	%	%	%
Exposed to property crime	(<i>p</i> =.002)	(<i>p</i> =.032)	(<i>p</i> =.169)	(<i>p</i> =.055)	(<i>p</i> =.947)	(<i>p</i> =.254)
Yes	56.7	38.1	77.8	76.5	35.2	27.2
No	65.7	44.7	81.2	81.2	35.4	30.4
Exposed to physical force or violence	(<i>p</i> =.018)	(<i>p</i> =.925)	(<i>p</i> =.002)	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> =.518)	(<i>p</i> =.212)
Yes	53.5	43.2	68.7	67.0	32.3	24.4
No	64.9	43.7	81.3	81.2	35.5	30.2
Faced threat of physical force or violence	(<i>p</i> =.002)	(<i>p</i> =.347)	(<i>p</i> <.001)	(<i>p</i> =.006)	(<i>p</i> =.355)	(<i>p</i> =.183)
Yes	54.4	40.5	69.2	73.1	32.3	25.7
No	65.4	44.0	81.9	81.3	35.7	30.4
Any of the above	(<i>p</i> =.002)	(<i>p</i> =.160)	(<i>p</i> =.025)	(<i>p</i> =.002)	(<i>p</i> =.933)	(<i>p</i> =.020)
Yes	58.2	40.8	76.9	75.5	35.2	25.5
No	66.1	44.5	81.7	82.0	35.4	31.3
Total	64.3	43.7	80.6	80.5	35.3	29.9

Note. Reported *p*-value (in parentheses) based on Pearson Chi-square test of independence of across sub-groups.

who have recently been exposed to property crime are less confident that the CJS meets the needs of victims (though statistical significance is relatively weak), but this distinction is not evidenced amongst respondents recently exposed to actual or threatened violence. No statistically significant patterns are detected relating exposure to crime and confidence around whether the CJS deals with cases promptly.

It is possible that individuals with particular characteristics are coincidentally more likely to be exposed to crime and less likely to be confident in the CJS in general. In this case, the results in Table 3 could simply reflect the demographic characteristics of respondents recently exposed to crime, rather than the causal impact of crime victimisation itself on confidence. However, exploratory multivariate analyses suggest this is not the case: the tendency for victims of crime to report lower levels of confidence in the CJS persists, and is perhaps even more stark, after controlling for individual socio-demographic characteristics. With socio-demographic controls, individuals recently exposed to crime also appear to be significantly less likely to be confident that the CJS meets the needs of victims (a relationship which was not statistically significant in the cross-sectional analysis in Table 3). (See Appendix Table A1 for details.)

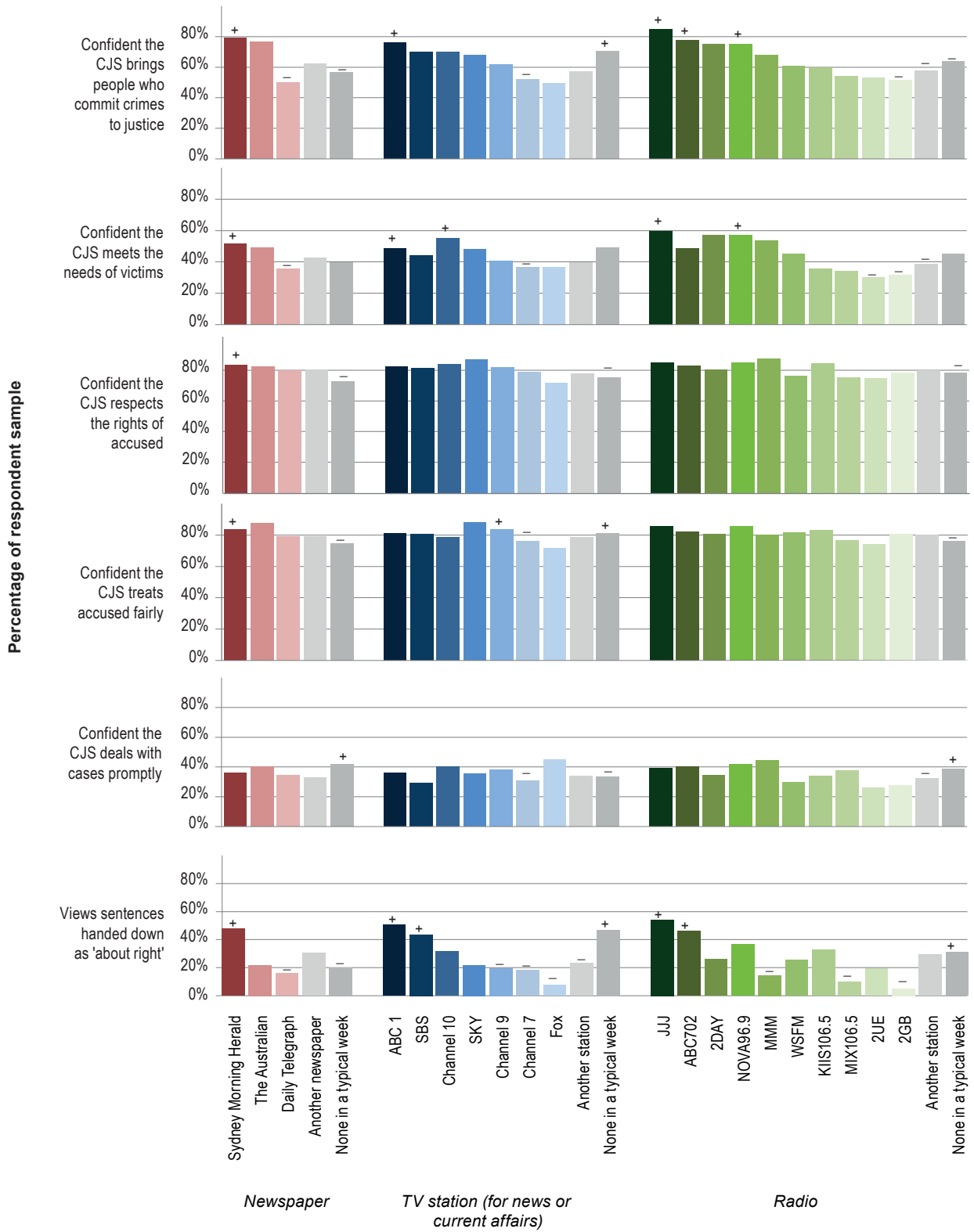
Media consumption

Figure 3 illustrates variation in confidence across groups of respondents who access traditional media (newspapers, television news and current affairs programs, and radio) from different providers. Media sources are presented from left-to-

right in declining order of their consumers' confidence that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice. Confidence levels amongst each particular consumer group are compared to the rest of the respondent sample, and statistically significant differences are highlighted. At one end of the spectrum, for example, readers of the Sydney Morning Herald are significantly more likely than other respondents to report confidence that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice, meets the needs of victims, respects the rights of the accused, treats accused fairly and that sentences handed down are appropriate. Meanwhile, at the other end of the spectrum, 2GB listeners are significantly less likely than other respondents to be confident that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice, meets the needs of victims, and that sentences handed down are appropriate.

The demographic profile presented by subscribers to different media providers likely differs considerably, and exploratory multivariate analyses suggest that this goes some way to explain the evident variation in confidence. For example, confidence that the CJS brings people who commits crime to justice shows no statistically significant variation according to radio program preference after controlling for individual characteristics (for example, that Triple J listeners tend to be from younger age cohorts). (See Appendix Table A2 for details.) In general, the variation evident in Figure 3 is likely to at least partly reflect a tendency for people to access media that reinforces pre-existing views (Iyengar & Hahn, 2009), rather than the isolated causal impact of specific media providers on subscribers' confidence levels.

Figure 3. Confidence in the CJS across groups of respondents who typically consume news from varying media providers, 2014



Newspaper, TV and radio news media accessed most often in a typical week

Note. +/- signify higher/lower confidence for this media consumer-group relative to the rest of the sample significant at the 5 per cent level in a Pearson Chi-square test of independence.

Table 4. Statistically significant changes in confidence over time

Respondent confidence measure	2007-2012	2012-2014	2007-2014
Confident the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice	+		+
Confident the CJS meets the needs of victims	+	-	+
Confident the CJS respects the rights of accused	+		+
Confident the CJS treats accused fairly			+
Confident the CJS deals with cases promptly	+		+
Views sentences handed down as 'about right'	+	-	+

Note. +/- signify increases/decreases in the incidence of confidence significant at the 5 per cent level in a Pearson Chi-square test of independence.

CHANGES IN PUBLIC CONFIDENCE OVER TIME

Figure 4 illustrates variation in confidence in the CJS as recorded in each of the three survey waves starting from 2007, with the statistically significant changes highlighted in Table 4. As reported in Snowball and Jones (2012), public confidence in the CJS strengthened between 2007 and 2012. Between 2012 and 2014, little changed except for a small (but statistically significant) fall in public confidence that the CJS meets the needs of victims. Overall, confidence levels are significantly higher in 2014 than 2007 across all dimensions measured. Figure 5 illustrates changes in public punitiveness over time. The percentage of respondents who consider sentences to be 'much too lenient' dropped considerably between 2007 and 2012 (from 39 to 31 per cent), but has since largely rebounded (to 36 per cent). Conversely, a statistically significant jump in the percentage of respondents confident in the appropriateness of sentencing (who saw sentences handed down as 'about right') between 2007 and 2012 (from 27 to 33 per cent), has since been partly reversed (to 30 per cent).

As evidenced in Table 2, confidence in the CJS tends to vary systematically across different subgroups of the population (by age, gender, income level, and so on), so changes in

aggregate public confidence will be affected by any change in population (or survey sample) characteristics. To identify any shifts in confidence at a more fundamental level, binomial logistic regression models are developed to predict respondent confidence as a function of individual characteristics and time. A specification test failed for a binomial logistic model predicting confidence in the appropriateness of sentencing, so a partial proportional ordered logistic model is developed to analyse public opinion on penalties and identify underlying shifts in punitiveness over time.

Table 5 first presents the results of five separate binomial logistic regression models predicting the likelihood of respondent confidence in different aspects of the CJS. The results take the form of estimated odds ratios, which reflect the odds that respondents with a particular characteristic will report confidence in a specific aspect of the CJS, relative to the odds that other respondents with some reference characteristic will report confidence (after controlling for other covariates). For example, according to Model 1, respondents aged under 25 have 3.175 times greater odds of reporting confidence that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice than respondents aged 55 and over (after controlling for the survey

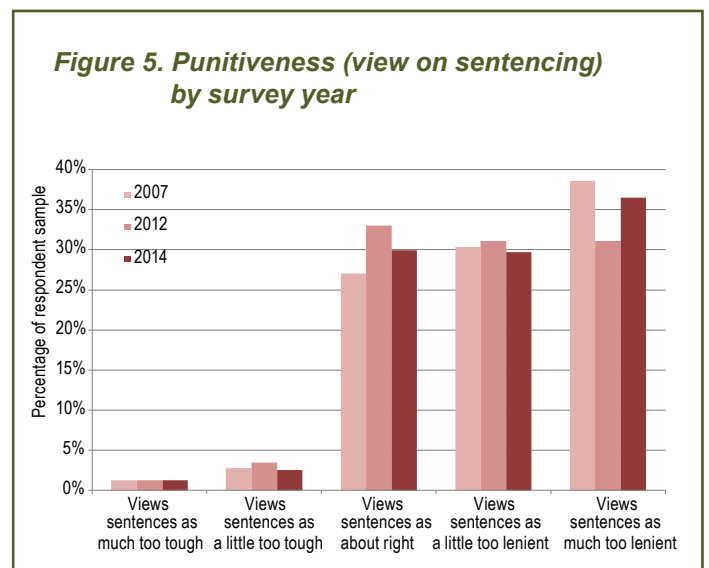
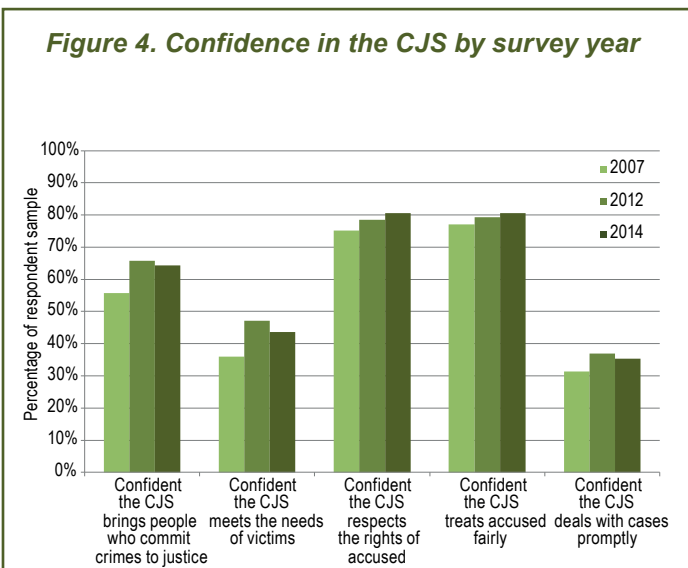


Table 5. Results of the logistic models predicting respondent confidence in various aspects of the CJS across survey waves

Category	Variable	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
		brings people who commit crimes to justice		meets the needs of victims		respects the rights of accused		treats accused fairly		deals with cases promptly	
		OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)
Year	Relative to 2014 survey										
	2007 survey	0.705***	(0.617, 0.806)	0.716***	(0.627, 0.819)	0.743***	(0.636, 0.869)	0.827*	(0.706, 0.968)	0.822**	(0.716, 0.943)
	2012 survey	1.086	(0.948, 1.245)	1.160*	(1.017, 1.323)	0.857	(0.731, 1.005)	0.905	(0.771, 1.062)	1.062	(0.928, 1.217)
Age-group	Relative to group aged 55+										
	Aged under 25	3.175***	(2.552, 3.951)	3.705***	(3.048, 4.504)					2.856***	(2.365, 3.449)
	Aged 25-39	1.563***	(1.355, 1.804)	2.214***	(1.919, 2.554)					2.056***	(1.775, 2.382)
	Aged 40-54	1.326***	(1.151, 1.527)	1.456***	(1.260, 1.683)					1.455***	(1.249, 1.695)
Education	Relative to group with University-level education										
	Year 10 or less	0.392***	(0.332, 0.463)	0.602***	(0.510, 0.711)	0.625***	(0.520, 0.752)	0.701***	(0.582, 0.845)		
	Year 11 or 12	0.581***	(0.495, 0.682)	0.763***	(0.656, 0.887)	0.744**	(0.623, 0.888)	0.855	(0.713, 1.025)		
	TAFE (e.g. Trade, College)	0.508***	(0.438, 0.589)	0.623***	(0.540, 0.719)	0.911	(0.764, 1.088)	0.871	(0.731, 1.038)		
Gender	Relative to males										
	Female	0.894*	(0.792, 0.987)							0.844**	(0.755, 0.944)
Location	Relative to Sydney-based population										
	Newcastle	0.693**	(0.546, 0.879)	0.694**	(0.540, 0.891)					0.850	(0.662, 1.091)
	Wollongong	1.150	(0.802, 1.648)	0.907	(0.639, 1.286)					0.813	(0.556, 1.190)
	Elsewhere	0.875*	(0.772, 0.991)	0.946	(0.836, 1.072)					0.851*	(0.749, 0.966)
Household structure	Relative to lone-person households										
	Couple with no children living at home					1.214	(0.990, 1.489)			1.106	(0.898, 1.363)
	Couple with children living at home					1.546***	(1.274, 1.875)			1.516***	(1.241, 1.852)
	Single parent with children living at home					1.082	(0.801, 1.462)			0.893	(0.660, 1.210)
	Group household of unrelated adults					1.345	(0.894, 2.023)			0.805	(0.552, 1.173)
	Group household of related adults					0.983	(0.763, 1.266)			0.888	(0.686, 1.150)
Something else					1.235	(0.665, 2.292)			0.891	(0.487, 1.630)	
	Can't say / refused					1.119	(0.548, 2.286)			0.572	(0.293, 1.118)
Relative household income	Relative to group above or at median ^a										
	Below median income	0.831**	(0.729, 0.947)			0.763***	(0.656, 0.887)			0.747***	(0.642, 0.870)
	Can't say / refused	0.925	(0.794, 1.078)			0.810*	(0.679, 0.966)			0.790**	(0.662, 0.944)

Note. OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. Each model also includes a constant term.

^a Median for given household structure for given year.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 6. Results of the ordered logistic model predicting higher levels of respondent punitiveness across survey waves

Category	Variable	Punitiveness assessment juncture			
		Much too lenient A little too lenient vs. About right A little to tough Much too tough		Much too lenient vs. A little too lenient About right A little to tough Much too tough	
		OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)
Year	Relative to 2014 survey				
	2007 survey	1.062	(0.941, 1.198)	<i>1.062</i>	<i>(0.941, 1.198)</i>
	2012 survey	0.786***	(0.697, 0.886)	<i>0.786***</i>	<i>(0.697, 0.886)</i>
Age-group	Relative to group aged 55+				
	Aged under 25	0.312***	(0.255, 0.382)	0.199***	(0.155, 0.256)
	Aged 25-39	0.785**	(0.673, 0.914)	0.619***	(0.533, 0.718)
	Aged 40-54	0.914	(0.783, 1.068)	0.852*	(0.737, 0.984)
Education	Relative to group with University-level education				
	Year 10 or less	3.340***	(2.763, 4.036)	2.688***	(2.270, 3.182)
	Year 11 or 12	1.980***	(1.690, 2.319)	2.119***	(1.802, 2.492)
	TAFE (e.g. Trade, College)	2.333***	(2.000, 2.722)	2.046***	(1.755, 2.386)
Location	Relative to Sydney-based population				
	Newcastle	1.418**	(1.150, 1.748)	<i>1.418**</i>	<i>(1.150, 1.748)</i>
	Wollongong	0.938	(0.681, 1.292)	<i>0.938</i>	<i>(0.681, 1.292)</i>
	Elsewhere	1.041	(0.930, 1.167)	<i>1.041</i>	<i>(0.930, 1.167)</i>
Relative household income	Relative to group above or at median^a				
	Below median income	1.192**	(1.060, 1.340)	<i>1.192**</i>	<i>(1.060, 1.340)</i>
	Can't say / refused	1.227**	(1.068, 1.411)	<i>1.227**</i>	<i>(1.068, 1.411)</i>

Notes. OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. Estimated odds ratios are presented in separate columns for each juncture in the punitiveness scale; where the parallel lines assumption holds for a given variable category, identical values of the estimated odds ratios are reported in italics. The model also includes a constant term at each juncture.

^a Median for given household structure for given year.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

year, individuals' level of education, etc.). Estimated odds ratios greater than one indicate higher odds of confidence for the group of interest relative to the reference group, while odds ratios less than one indicate lower odds of confidence relative to the reference group. Estimated odds ratios are denoted as significant when there is a statistically significant difference from one.

The survey year indicator variables are included in the specifications to capture shifts in confidence over time—the tendency for respondents to report confidence in 2007 or 2012, relative to 2014. The patterns of statistical significance on the survey year indicator variables are broadly consistent with the results reported in Table 4. Even after controlling for individual characteristics, respondents in 2007 were significantly less likely to report confidence in the CJS than respondents in 2014 (the odds ratios associated with the 2007 indicator variable are below one and statistically significant in all specifications). In addition, the odds of respondents reporting confidence that the CJS meets the needs of victims were significantly higher in 2012 than 2014 (the estimated odds ratio on the 2012 indicator variable is greater than one and statistically significant in Model 2), after controlling for variation in respondent characteristics. No other statistically significant shifts were detected between 2012 and 2014.

In order to model public punitiveness, perspectives on sentencing are classified into three categories: the most punitive being an assessment that sentences are 'much too lenient', then an assessment that sentences are 'a little too lenient', and the least punitive being an assessment that sentences are either 'about right' or 'too tough' (a more comprehensive range of categories in the dependent variable leads to a misspecified model¹⁰). This categorisation forms the dependent variable in a partial proportional ordered logistic model of punitiveness, the results of which are presented in Table 6. Again, the results take the form of estimated odds ratios. In this model, they are based on the odds of respondents indicating a higher rather than lower level of punitiveness—that is, viewing the sentences being handed down as 'far too lenient', rather than 'a little too lenient'/'about right'/'too tough', or viewing sentences as 'far too lenient'/'a little too lenient', rather than 'about right'/'too tough'.¹¹

The key findings in Table 6 relating to shifts in punitiveness over time are broadly consistent with the evidence presented in Figure 5 (and the converse results related to confidence in sentencing presented in Table 4). After controlling for variation in socio-demographic characteristics, punitiveness has intensified since 2012, returning to similar levels to those observed back in 2007.

CONFIDENCE AND PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME AND JUSTICE OUTCOMES

Cross-sectional analysis

Figures 6a-f present data relating to public perceptions of crime and justice outcomes from the 2014 survey, with each sub-figure focusing on a particular perception measure. Each sub-figure follows the same format, illustrating both the cross-sectional distribution of perceptions held by respondents in 2014 (shaded columns), and variation in respondents' confidence in the CJS (coloured lines) as a function of these perceptions. In the column series, distinct shading is used to highlight perceptions which align most closely with benchmark official statistics for NSW (the source data for these benchmark statistics are described in detail in Appendix Table A3).¹²

Figure 6a documents respondents' perceptions of the prevalence of violent crime. Official statistics suggest that 6 per cent of crimes involve violence. The column series—which illustrates the distribution of respondents' estimates regarding the prevalence of violence in crime, grouped into deciles—shows that only 1 per cent of respondents correctly estimate that between 0-9 per cent of crimes involve violence. The largest proportion of respondents (18 per cent) believe that 70-79 per cent of crimes involve violence.

Each coloured line in Figure 6a relates to confidence in a particular aspect of the CJS. The vertical position of a line reflects the percentage of respondents confident in that particular aspect of the CJS, amongst those respondents who hold a particular belief regarding the incidence of violence in crime (indicated along the horizontal axis). For example, amongst the group of respondents whose estimates of the prevalence of violent crime fall in the 0-9 decile, 78 per cent are confident that the criminal justice system brings people who commit crimes to justice (marked by the red line). In contrast, only 43 per cent of people who imagine that 90-100 per cent of crimes involve violence are confident the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice. The generally downward slope of the red line in Figure 6a suggests that lower (and more accurate) estimates of the prevalence of violence in crime are associated with higher confidence that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice. The line which tracks confidence in the appropriateness of sentencing (marked in yellow) is also sharply downward-sloping; people who believe violence in crime is less common (towards the left-hand side of the figure) tend to be more confident that sentences handed down by the court are 'about right'. A similar trend is evident in confidence around whether the CJS meets the needs of victims. Gentler slopes are apparent for confidence around treatment of the accused, and (as might be expected) confidence around whether the CJS deals with cases promptly shows no relationship to perceptions of the prevalence of violent crime (the navy line is generally flat).

Figure 6b follows a similar format, and relates to respondents' perceptions of trends in property crime. In this case, respondents' perceptions fall into five discrete categories: that there is either 'a lot less', 'a little less', 'about the same', 'a little

more', or 'a lot more' property crime relative to five years earlier. Official statistics suggest that property crime has been declining quite dramatically for many years (e.g. theft is down by 11 per cent over the five years to 2013, robbery is down by 39 per cent). However, just 4 per cent of respondents believe there is currently a lot less property crime than five years earlier (the left-hand side of the figure). Amongst those respondents, 62 per cent are confident that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice (red line), and 39 per cent are confident that sentences handed down are appropriate (yellow line). Meanwhile, 19 per cent of respondents believe there is a lot more property crime than five years earlier (the right-hand side of the figure). A smaller percentage of those respondents are confident that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice (47 per cent), and that sentences handed down are appropriate (13 per cent). Confidence around whether the CJS meets the needs of victims may also be weakly related to perceptions of property crime trends (there appears to be a weak downward trend), but little relationship is evident around the treatment of people accused of committing crimes, or whether the CJS deals with cases promptly (the related lines are relatively flat).

Respondents' estimates of the conviction rate for home burglary (Figure 6c) are fairly evenly distributed around 50 per cent, so the majority fall well below the benchmark official statistic which is 73 per cent. Confidence levels appear to be strongly positively correlated with this particular perception; all lines exhibit an upward trend. This trend is steepest for confidence around whether the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice. Only 30 per cent of the respondents with the lowest estimates of the conviction rate (0-9 per cent) are confident that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice, while 74 per cent of respondents with the highest estimates (conviction rates in the range of 90-100 per cent) are confident that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice.

Figure 6d presents data relating to the imprisonment rate for home burglary. The vast majority (78 per cent) of respondent estimates fall below 60 per cent, and so below the benchmark official statistic which is 61 per cent. Again, confidence generally increases in this perception, particularly confidence around whether the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice, meets the needs of victims, and in the appropriateness of sentencing. There also appears to be a positive relationship with confidence that the CJS deals with cases promptly; confidence levels range from around 25 per cent to close to 50 per cent, for respondents with the lowest and highest estimates of the imprisonment rate for home burglary, respectively. The upward trend is less marked for confidence relating to the treatment of people accused of committing crimes.

Respondents' estimates of the likelihood of convicting a person brought to court on a murder charge (Figure 6e) are fairly evenly balanced either side of the benchmark official statistic which is 61 per cent. As with home burglary, those respondents with higher estimates of the murder conviction rate are more likely to report confidence in various aspects of the CJS (each line in Figure 6e is upward sloping).

Figure 6. Confidence across respondent groups with varying perceptions on crime and justice outcomes, 2014

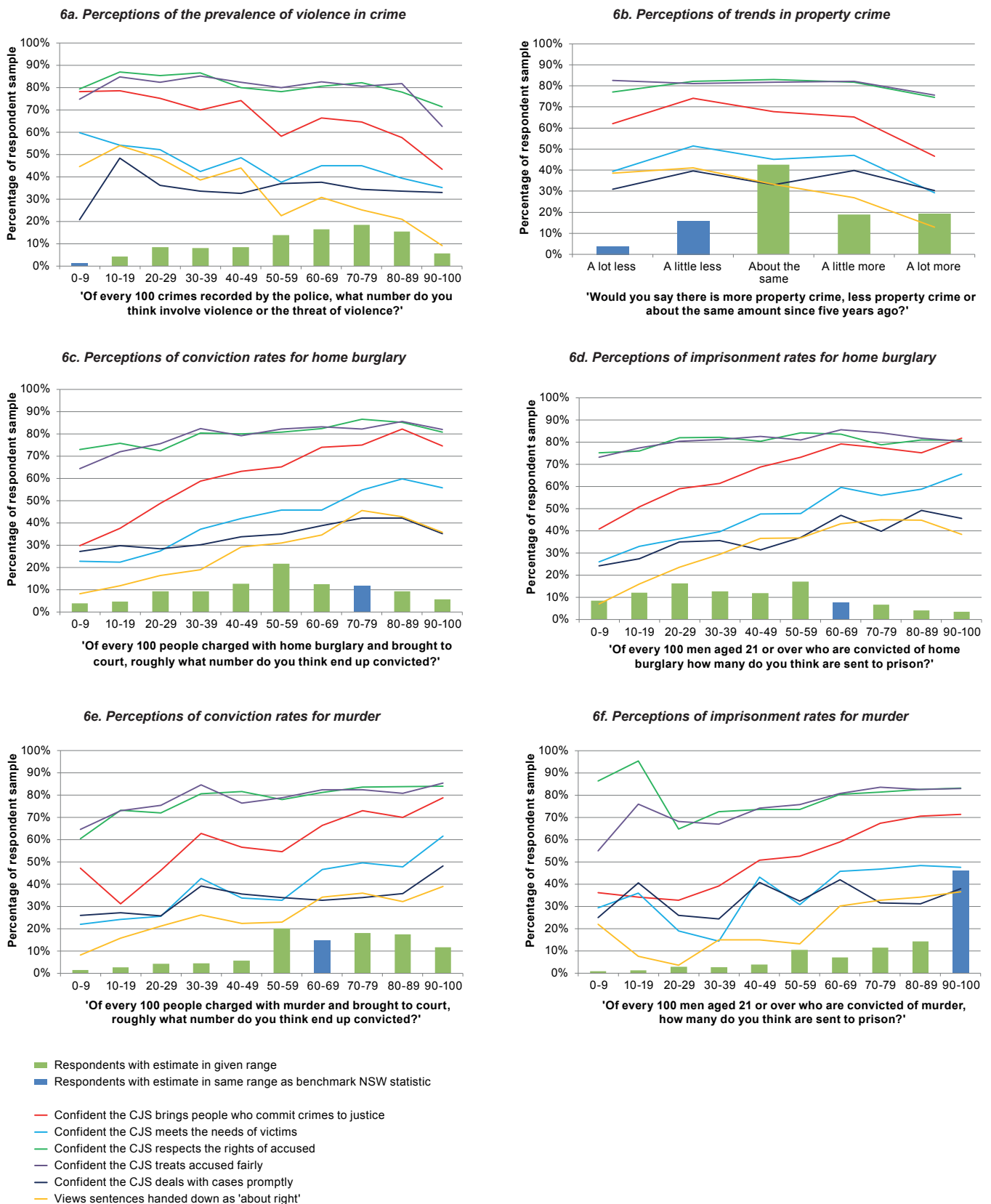


Figure 6f shows that close to half of all respondents estimate that 90-100 per cent of convicted murderers (who are male and aged 21 years and over) are sent to prison. The true figure is 100 per cent, so the remaining respondents underestimate the actual imprisonment rate. Again, confidence in the CJS generally increases as respondents' perceptions of the imprisonment rate for murder increase (though the lines illustrate some variability at the lowest estimate ranges, towards the left-hand side of the figure, reflecting the small numbers of respondents whose estimates fall at this low end of the range).

In sum, the dominant share of respondents:

- grossly overestimate the prevalence of violence in reported crime
- fail to perceive declining property crime
- underestimate conviction and imprisonment rates for home burglary, and
- underestimate imprisonment rates for murder.

An exception to this pattern of misperceptions is evident in respondents' estimates of the murder conviction rate, which on average reflect the actual rate.

The confidence patterns depicted in Figure 6 generally suggest that people are less likely to be confident in the CJS if they envisage high rates of violent crime, escalating property crime, and low conviction and imprisonment rates for home burglary and murder—all commonly held misperceptions.

Some confidence trends are more marked than others. In particular, there appears to be a close relationship between perceptions and confidence around whether the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice, meets the needs of victims, and whether sentences handed down are appropriate. The relationship is less clear for confidence relating to treatment

of accused and whether the CJS deals with cases promptly. Patterns relating to confidence around the treatment of people accused of committing crimes are also somewhat difficult to interpret. Individuals have varying standards around what rights people accused of committing crimes possess and what exactly 'fair' treatment means, and respondents might be inclined to express a lack of confidence if the CJS is seen to be overly generous in its treatment of accused. (A weak upward trend in Figures 6c and 6e, for example, suggests people who estimate higher conviction rates might be more likely to be confident that the CJS respects the rights of the accused and treats accused fairly.)

Changing perceptions over time

For the most part, benchmark official statistics relating to the survey perception measures have not changed markedly since 2007 (see Appendix Table A3).¹³ However, the public's perceptions of crime and justice outcomes have evolved somewhat. Table 7 reports average perception measures recorded in each of the three surveys, and highlights statistically significant changes over time. There has been little shift in the estimated incidence of violence in crime (a small statistically significant decline was observed between 2007 and 2012, but this had disappeared by 2014). In contrast, public perceptions of property crime have evolved to better reflect reality. The proportion of respondents who (incorrectly) perceive increases in property crime has consistently fallen: from 53 per cent in 2007, to 50 per cent in 2012, and 38 per cent in 2014. On average, respondents also report higher (and more accurate) estimates of conviction and imprisonment rates for home burglary in 2014, relative to 2007. The average respondent estimate of the home burglary conviction rate increased by 7 percentage points between 2007 and 2014, while the average estimate of the imprisonment rate increased by 6 percentage points. Survey

Table 7. Average perceptions of crime and the CJS and statistically significant changes over time

Perception measure	Respondent perceptions					
	Average estimate			Statistically significant changes over time		
	2007	2012	2014	2007-2012	2012-2014	2007-2014
Perceptions of crime						
Incidence of violence in reported crime (%)	57	56	56	-		
Property crime trending higher (% respondents) ^a	53	50	38	-	-	-
Perceptions of justice outcomes						
Conviction rate for home burglary (%)	43	49	50	+		+
Imprisonment rate for home burglary (%)	32	38	38	+		+
Conviction rate for murder (%)	n.a.	61	62	n.a.		n.a.
Imprisonment rate for murder (%)	n.a.	76	76	n.a.		n.a.

Notes. n.a. = not available/applicable. +/- signify increases/decreases in estimates significant at the 5 per cent level in a Pearson Chi-square test of independence for the binary property crime trend measure, and by a comparison of means using an adjusted Wald test for all other measures.

^a Average statistic reports fraction of respondents who estimate that property crime has risen, rather than stayed about the same, or declined over previous five years.

Table 8. Key results of the logistic models predicting respondent confidence in various aspects of the CJS across survey waves, including controls for perceptions of crime and justice

Category	Variable	Confident that the CJS				
		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
		brings people who commit crimes to justice	meets the needs of victims	respects the rights of accused	treats accused fairly	deals with cases promptly
Year	Relative to 2014 survey	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)
	2007 survey	0.855* (0.743, 0.985)	0.830** (0.722, 0.952)	0.795** (0.677, 0.934)	0.871 (0.742, 1.022)	0.888 (0.771, 1.022)
	2012 survey	1.156* (1.001, 1.336)	1.229** (1.071, 1.409)	0.893 (0.759, 1.050)	0.912 (0.777, 1.072)	1.084 (0.945, 1.244)
Perceptions of crime and justice	Relative to an estimate one percentage point lower					
	Incidence of violence in crime	0.991*** (0.988, 0.994)	0.995*** (0.993, 0.998)			
	Home burglary conviction rate	1.012*** (1.009, 1.016)	1.007*** (1.004, 1.010)	1.008*** (1.005, 1.010)	1.007*** (1.005, 1.010)	1.005*** (1.002, 1.008)
	Home burglary imprisonment rate	1.011*** (1.008, 1.014)	1.010*** (1.007, 1.013)			1.007*** (1.004, 1.010)
	Property crime trends: relative to 'a lot less crime'					
	A little less crime	0.914 (0.609, 1.371)	1.120 (0.771, 1.627)	1.196 (0.795, 1.799)		
	About the same	0.736 (0.505, 1.074)	0.865 (0.609, 1.228)	1.403 (0.960, 2.053)		
	A little more crime	0.680 (0.462, 1.003)	0.899 (0.626, 1.291)	1.621* (1.090, 2.410)		
	A lot more crime	0.432*** (0.294, 0.634)	0.592** (0.412, 0.851)	1.037 (0.705, 1.524)		
	Don't know	0.789 (0.511, 1.218)	0.910 (0.609, 1.361)	1.420 (0.904, 2.230)		

Notes. OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. Additional controls included for age-group, educational attainment, gender, location, household structure and relative household income as per Table 5; these results are presented in Appendix Table A4. Each model also includes a constant term.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 9. Key results of the ordered logistic model predicting higher levels of respondent punitiveness across survey waves, including controls for perceptions of crime and justice

Category	Variable	Punitiveness assessment juncture			
		Much too lenient A little too lenient vs. About right A little to tough Much too tough		Much too lenient vs. A little too lenient About right A little to tough Much too tough	
		OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)
Year	Relative to 2014 survey				
	2007 survey	0.825**	(0.726, 0.938)	<i>0.825**</i>	<i>(0.726, 0.938)</i>
	2012 survey	0.716***	(0.631, 0.812)	<i>0.716***</i>	<i>(0.631, 0.812)</i>
Perceptions of crime and justice	Relative to an estimate one percentage point lower				
	Incidence of violence in crime	1.018***	(1.015, 1.020)	<i>1.018***</i>	<i>(1.015, 1.020)</i>
	Home burglary conviction rate	0.991***	(0.989, 0.994)	<i>0.991***</i>	<i>(0.989, 0.994)</i>
	Home burglary imprisonment rate	0.983***	(0.980, 0.986)	<i>0.983***</i>	<i>(0.980, 0.986)</i>
	Property crime trends: relative to 'a lot less crime'				
	A little less crime	1.087	(0.760, 1.555)	0.550**	(0.368, 0.824)
	About the same	1.678**	(1.205, 2.337)	0.880	(0.610, 1.270)
	A little more crime	1.860***	(1.317, 2.627)	0.749	(0.512, 1.095)
A lot more crime	3.233***	(2.276, 4.595)	1.708**	(1.178, 2.478)	
Don't know	1.542*	(1.037, 2.293)	0.815	(0.528, 1.259)	

Notes. OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. Estimated odds ratios are presented in separate columns for each juncture in the punitiveness scale; where the parallel lines assumption holds for a given variable category, identical values of the estimated odds ratios are reported in italics. Additional controls included for age-group, educational attainment, location and relative household income as per Table 6; these results are presented in Appendix Table A5. The model also includes a constant term at each juncture.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

data on perceptions of conviction and imprisonment rates for murder were only collected in 2012 and 2014, and no statistically significant changes in the average estimates were detected over this period.

Changes in public confidence and punitiveness

The logistic regression models developed earlier to predict confidence in the CJS (Table 5) can be extended to investigate whether changes in public confidence over time can be explained by shifts in public perceptions of crime and justice outcomes. Key results from this exercise are presented in Table 8 (additional results are set out in Appendix Table A4). It should be noted that perceptions relating to murder conviction and imprisonment rates are excluded because these data were only collected in the two most recent surveys. Individuals' perceptions are generally highly significant predictors of confidence levels, and the results are consistent with the apparent trends in Figure 6. Specifically, individuals are less likely to be confident in the CJS if they estimate higher rates of violence, as well as lower conviction and imprisonment rates, and if they believe property crime is increasing (although not all perception measures are significant predictors of confidence in all aspects of the CJS).

The 2007 survey year indicator variable remains a statistically significant predictor of confidence in three of the five models

in Table 8. Specifically, respondents were more likely to report confidence that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice, meets the needs of victims, and treats people accused of committing crimes fairly in 2014 than 2007, even after controlling for changing perceptions of crime and justice outcomes. However, improvements in confidence since 2007 (controlling for other individual characteristics) at least partly reflect evolving perceptions of crime and justice outcomes; in all five models, the odds ratios associated with the 2007 survey indicator variable are higher—closer to one—in Table 8 compared to Table 5. Moreover, changing perceptions appear sufficient to explain the evident increase in confidence between 2007 and 2014 that the CJS treats people accused of committing crimes fairly and deals with cases promptly (the estimated odds ratios on the 2007 survey year variable in Models 4 and 5 were significantly different from one in Table 5, but this is no longer the case after controlling for perceptions in Table 8).

Changing perceptions also appear to have provided some positive support to confidence levels over the more recent two-year window between 2012 and 2014 (though ultimately public confidence was little changed over this period). In particular, the odds ratio associated with the 2012 survey indicator variable in Model 1 in Table 8 is less than one and statistically significant (which was not the case in Table 5). This suggests

that confidence that the CJS brings people who commit crimes to justice might have declined between 2012 and 2014 were it not for a supportive shift in perceptions (e.g. the drop in the number of respondents envisaging escalating property crime). Meanwhile, the statistically significant decline in confidence that the CJS meets the needs of victims between 2012 and 2014 also remains after controlling for perceptions (the coefficient estimate on the 2012 survey indicator variable in Model 2 is greater than one and statistically significant in both Tables 5 and 9).

Table 9 presents key results from an analogous investigation regarding public punitiveness (the remaining results are presented in Appendix Table A5). Here the ordered logistic model of punitiveness presented in Table 6 is extended to include controls for individuals' perceptions of crime and justice outcomes. The results suggest that respondents are more likely to report more punitive views if they imagine violence is prevalent, property crime is escalating, and conviction and imprisonment rates (for home burglary) are low. These findings are consistent—in a complementary sense—with the series in Figure 6 illustrating trends in respondents' views on whether sentences handed down are 'about right'. The statistically significant coefficient on the 2007 survey indicator variable (which was not evident in the original specification in Table 6), suggests that respondents are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of punitiveness in 2014 than in 2007 after controlling for individuals' perceptions of crime and justice outcomes.

DISCUSSION

This report set out to address four main research aims: (1) to assess the level of public confidence in the NSW CJS in 2014, (2) to investigate the relationship between confidence and individuals' characteristics, including personal exposure to crime, and media consumption behaviours, (3) to document changes in confidence in the NSW CJS since 2007, and (4) to investigate whether changes in confidence levels are associated with changing perceptions of crime and criminal justice outcomes.

The method used to collect and analyse the BOCSAR survey data is designed to allow inference to be made regarding the NSW resident population-at-large. However, there remain several ways in which the sampling method might undermine the representativeness of the results to some extent. Most obviously, the survey sample explicitly excludes residents with limited English and hard-to-reach populations (such as people living in institutions, including correctional facilities). In addition to this, the use of fixed-line telephone numbers to contact prospective respondents implicitly excludes people who exclusively use mobile telephones. The selection bias introduced by this approach probably most acutely affects the representativeness of the younger age cohorts; it is also probably more significant an issue in the most recent surveys. It is worth noting that political polling following a similar sampling approach is sufficient to accurately predict electoral outcomes (Knott, 2013). Nonetheless, these potential limitations necessarily qualify any general conclusions drawn from the results.

Subject to these caveats, the 2014 BOCSAR 'Confidence in the CJS' survey suggests that two out of every three NSW residents are confident that the CJS ultimately brings people who commit crimes to justice. However, residents are generally more satisfied with the way the CJS meets its obligations to people accused of committing crimes than with the way it meets obligations to victims, and expressions of punitiveness are not uncommon; a majority of respondents consider sentences handed down by the courts to be too lenient. Confidence in the practical administration of criminal justice is also lacking; only one in three residents are confident that the CJS deals with cases promptly.

NSW residents who have recently been exposed to violence, violent threats or property crime tend to be less confident in the CJS. It is not possible to conclude causality from the correlation between exposure to crime and confidence levels, since the survey data only allow for quite crude controls of demographic and other individual characteristics (which might be correlated with both the likelihood that an individual is exposed to crime and confidence in the CJS). However, the findings are consistent with other evidence which suggests that first-hand experience of being a (potential) crime victim might diminish an individual's confidence in the system (Chaplin, Flatley, & Smith, 2011). This highlights an obvious direct channel through which realised reductions in crime—through reducing the number of crime victims in NSW—might work to improve public confidence in the CJS.

There is a significant body of research investigating the role of the media in shaping public opinion relating to crime and the justice system (for example, see Roberts et al., 2003, Chapter 4; Warren, 2011). This paper is related, in that it documents variation in confidence in the CJS across sub-groups of the population who consume news from different (traditional) media providers, and notes some statistically significant relationships (some of which persist after controlling for variation in consumer demographics). However, the magnitude of the media's influence in this context remains an open question. Since people tend to source information that accords with their pre-existing views (Iyengar & Hahn, 2009), the findings presented very likely at least in part reflect individuals' purposeful selection of which news to consume, rather than necessarily demonstrating the influence of media providers.

Except for the fact that the data relating to newspapers captures online access, the BOCSAR survey focuses on traditional media sources and it also remains an open question how significant non-traditional sources of news, such as social media, might be in either reflecting (or shaping) views on the criminal justice system. When asked about the 'most influential' sources of information on crime and justice in the first BOCSAR survey in 2007, 27 per cent of respondents flagged 'word-of-mouth' sources and 18 per cent flagged the internet. Subsequent surveys have not asked about the role of these sources of information, but it would perhaps not be surprising if social media—effectively the nexus of these two categories—had become increasingly important in recent years. The extent to which changing media consumption habits might exacerbate

a tendency for people to consume news that reinforces pre-existing views on crime and the justice system would be an interesting area for further research (see Flaxman, Goel, & Rao, 2013, for an analysis of this issue in the context of political ideology in the US).

It is not clear what is driving the trend, but expressions of public punitiveness have intensified over the past two years. This finding is apparent both before and after controlling for individual perceptions of crime and justice outcomes, so it may reflect a shift in underlying levels of punitiveness, rather than any change in the external environment. However, the survey measures of perceptions only capture limited types of crime and justice outcomes, and demands for tougher sentencing may also reflect a perceived deterioration in some other relevant outcome in recent years (that is, the analysis presented here very likely omits some important variables related to public views on penalties). There has also been a slight softening in confidence around whether the CJS meets the needs of victims over the past two years, though confidence levels have otherwise remained broadly unchanged in since 2012. Confidence is higher than the levels recorded in 2007, and this partly reflects supportive shifts in public perceptions of crime and justice outcomes over this period.

Perceptions of trends in property crime have finally begun to reflect many years of actual declines; only 38 per cent of respondents in 2014 thought property crime was at higher levels than five years prior, a dramatic drop from 50 per cent of respondents in 2012 (and 53 per cent in 2007). Nonetheless, the majority of survey respondents continue to hold marked misperceptions of crime and justice outcomes. Most people fail to perceive declining property crime, overestimate the prevalence of violence in crime, and underestimate conviction and imprisonment rates. This appears to undermine confidence and exacerbate expressions of public punitiveness (although the causal impact of perceptions on confidence is not definitively identified in this report). More accurate knowledge of crime and justice outcomes would not universally bolster individuals' confidence in the CJS, since there are some individuals who underestimate the crime problem and overestimate the efficacy of the justice response. However, given the nature of common public misperceptions of crime and justice in NSW, continued concerted efforts by policy-makers to communicate more accurate, representative information might work to boost confidence amongst the wider majority of NSW residents. Indeed, the NSW government has recently announced plans to allow court proceedings to be publicly broadcast (NSW Department of Justice, 2014), with an aim to 'improve transparency and community understanding' (NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2014, p. 6-4). This policy approach is broadly consistent with existing research that demonstrates higher confidence following the provision of factual information around crimes and sentencing (Chapman et al., 2002; St Amand & Zamble, 2001; Warner, Davis, Walter, Bradfield, & Vermey, 2011). Research to test the ongoing impact of greater (but

potentially selective) exposure to court proceedings would be beneficial. It should also be acknowledged that this is but one way to provide information about crime and justice, and the impact that other measures might have on the accuracy of public perceptions and confidence in the CJS should also be evaluated.

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NOTES

- 1 In 2007, the surveys were conducted in August and September, and in 2012, in March and April; the analysis assumes seasonality does not significantly impact responses.
- 2 A large share of those households that refused to participate would have been ineligible given the quota restrictions. This artificially depresses the nominal response rate figures. In 2014, 41.7 per cent of those who agreed to participate were eligible according to the quota restrictions (the 1,989 who were interviewed were eligible, whereas the 2,784 who fell outside the quota for their age-gender-location cohort were not). If a commensurate proportion of those who refused to be interviewed would have been eligible according to the quota restrictions, then the headline nominal response rate for 2014 would be significantly higher at 43.9 per cent. It is not clear whether non-response introduces any bias in this context, but the quota restrictions preserve some degree of representativeness of the sample by age, gender and location.
- 3 These data are sourced from a customised ABS dataset and are consistent with publicly available estimated resident population data (ABS catalogue numbers 3218.0 and 3235.0).
- 4 This is achieved through the use of the 'svy' prefix command in Stata (version 12.1), which adjusts analyses to account for the survey design, including weights and stratification by age, gender and location.
- 5 The ABS estimates that 35.8 per cent of NSW residents aged 15 to 64 had attained university-level qualifications (a postgraduate degree, graduate diploma/certificate, bachelor degree, or diploma) in 2013, up from 30.4 per cent in 2007 (ABS catalogue number 6227.0). This compares to 37.2 and 39.8 per cent in the (weighted) survey samples in 2007 and 2014, respectively.

Meanwhile, the median household income in NSW increased by roughly 13 per cent between 2007/08 and 2011/12, from around \$67,000 to \$76,000 in annualised terms (ABS catalogue number 6523.0). The survey responses suggest

that the median household income for the sample was \$60,000-\$70,000 in 2007, and \$80,000-\$90,000 in 2012. This appears slightly high relative to the median income for the wider NSW population in the latter period, but given the somewhat divergent time frame and scope for measurement error (around one in five survey respondents could not or would not disclose their household income), it is difficult to conclude that there is any systematic bias in the survey sample along this dimension.

- 6 The share of NSW residents living in lone-person households remained broadly stable at 9 per cent—roughly 23 per cent of total households—between 2006 and 2011 (ABS Census TableBuilder, Persons in Private Dwellings dataset and Families dataset). The BOCSAR survey sampling methodology risks over-representing people living in lone-person households, since they comprise a greater share of households (the primary sampling unit) than people. This may have occurred in 2007, but does not appear to be an issue in the later years. Somewhat surprisingly, the distribution of individuals across household types in the 2012 sample is broadly consistent with the distribution across the wider NSW population reported in the 2011 census. It is possible that applying quotas to age cohorts—which are strongly correlated with household types—contributed to this outcome.
- 7 Stata's 'svy' prefix, employed to estimate the models using the weighted survey-data, applies maximum pseudo-likelihood estimators.
- 8 These included (as appropriate in the context of weighted survey-data): a Wald test of model significance, the Archer-Lemeshow-Hosmer (2007) goodness-of-fit test (across ten deciles), Pregibon's (1979) test for specification error (applied on unweighted data using Stata's 'linktest' command), the deviance (based on the pseudo-likelihood), and the area under the ROC curve (AUC).
- 9 The partial proportional ordered logistic model is a generalisation of an ordered logistic model; it allows parameter values to vary across the dependent variable response-categories for specific independent variables, when a test of the parallel lines assumptions intrinsic to an ordered logistic model has failed. The user-provided Stata 'gologit2' command (Williams, 2005) is applied to estimate the models. A test of the parallel lines assumption holds for the survey year indicators in each specification presented.
- 10 A model using all five response categories in the dependent variable failed the specification test proposed by Pregibon (1979) (applied using the linktest command on unweighted data in Stata), which tests for spurious correlation with squared predicted values.
- 11 The odds ratios associated with reporting higher levels of punitiveness are assumed to be equal across these two response category junctures, unless a test of this 'parallel lines' assumption fails for a category of independent variables. If this occurs, the parameter estimates associated with the relevant independent variables are allowed to vary across punitiveness category junctures. For example, two distinct sets of estimated odds ratios relating to respondents' age are reported in Table 6, since the associated parallel lines assumption was found not to hold. That is, while older age is closely correlated with higher levels of punitiveness in general, the relationship is particularly pronounced with respect to reports of extreme punitiveness (when sentences are seen as 'much too' lenient').
- 12 Survey respondents were not explicitly prompted to estimate statistics for NSW when they were asked about their perceptions of crime and justice outcomes. Although the terms 'misperceptions', 'overestimate' and 'underestimate' are employed in benchmarking perceptions against official NSW statistics in this paper, it is worthwhile acknowledging that where individual respondents' estimates differ from the benchmarks they are not necessarily 'incorrect'; variation in perceptions could conceivably reflect cross-sectional variation in the experience of particular socio-demographic groups or in particular locales. However, to the extent that the survey sample is representative of the NSW population, the average of respondents' estimates would be expected to be broadly consistent with benchmark official statistics for NSW.
- 13 An increase in the murder conviction rate is one possible exception. However, survey data on public perceptions of conviction and imprisonment rates for murder were only collected in 2012 and 2014 and changes in the benchmark official statistics over this short period is likely dominated by natural volatility (only relatively small numbers of murder charges are brought to court each year).

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APPENDIX

Table A1 presents the results of binomial logistic regression models estimated to predict confidence in the CJS in 2014 as a function of recent experience of crime (by an aggregated measure which captures exposure to either property crime, violence, or threats of violence), and socio-demographic characteristics. Estimated odds ratios greater than one indicate higher odds of confidence for the group of interest relative to the reference group, while odds ratios less than one indicate lower odds of confidence relative to the reference group. (The models confirm the statistically significant relationships documented in Table 3.)

In Table A2, these models are extended to include indicators for respondents' media consumption preferences. In comparison to Figure 3, few statistically significant relationships relating to media consumption behaviours are detected in this specification. (To some extent, however, this partly reflects the specification itself. There were also fewer significant relationships in a benchmark logistic model not reported here that included only the media-consumption indicators as independent variables.)

Table A3 provides detail on select official NSW statistics used to benchmark public perceptions of crime and criminal justice outcomes.

Tables A4 and A5 present additional results for the models predicting confidence across survey waves summarised in Tables 8 and 9, respectively.

Table A1. Results of logistic regression models predicting respondent confidence in various aspects of the CJS in 2014, including a control for recent exposure to crime

Category	Variable	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
		OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)
Exposure to crime^a	Relative to no exposure										
	Exposed to crime	0.565***	(0.448, 0.713)	0.705**	(0.561, 0.885)	0.670**	(0.513, 0.876)	0.659**	(0.505, 0.859)	0.867	(0.683, 1.102)
Age-group	Relative to group aged 55+										
	Aged under 25	5.193***	(3.386, 7.963)	4.175***	(2.978, 5.853)	1.458	(0.936, 2.272)	1.672*	(1.059, 2.642)	2.585***	(1.814, 3.684)
	Aged 25-39	1.673***	(1.298, 2.155)	2.194***	(1.702, 2.828)	1.514*	(1.058, 2.166)	1.103	(0.789, 1.543)	1.584**	(1.183, 2.119)
	Aged 40-54	1.588***	(1.235, 2.041)	1.664***	(1.295, 2.139)	1.261	(0.884, 1.799)	1.140	(0.803, 1.619)	1.348*	(1.005, 1.808)
Education	Relative to group with University-level education										
	Year 10 or less	0.418***	(0.311, 0.562)	0.696*	(0.515, 0.940)	0.661*	(0.465, 0.939)				
	Year 11 or 12	0.607**	(0.450, 0.817)	0.836	(0.635, 1.102)	0.669*	(0.475, 0.941)				
	TAFE (e.g. Trade, College)	0.534***	(0.413, 0.692)	0.741*	(0.577, 0.950)	0.999	(0.716, 1.394)				
Gender	Relative to males										
	Female	0.713***	(0.586, 0.869)	0.760**	(0.629, 0.919)					0.787*	(0.648, 0.957)
Household structure	Relative to lone-person households										
	Couple with no children living at home					1.241	(0.844, 1.825)	0.966	(0.657, 1.419)	0.601**	(0.424, 0.853)
	Couple with children living at home					1.642*	(1.103, 2.444)	1.687*	(1.123, 2.533)	0.797	(0.566, 1.122)
	Single parent with children living at home					1.546	(0.827, 2.889)	1.103	(0.608, 2.003)	0.742	(0.432, 1.275)
	Group household of unrelated adults					0.902	(0.465, 1.753)	0.626	(0.328, 1.194)	1.053	(0.593, 1.867)
	Group household of related adults					0.935	(0.579, 1.511)	0.851	(0.519, 1.395)	0.793	(0.517, 1.216)
Relative household income	Relative to group above or at median^b										
	Below median income	0.729**	(0.578, 0.918)	0.665***	(0.532, 0.832)	0.733*	(0.550, 0.977)	0.650**	(0.500, 0.846)		
	Can't say / refused	0.850	(0.649, 1.113)	1.065	(0.824, 1.377)	0.753	(0.543, 1.042)	0.884	(0.639, 1.223)	2.277	(0.707, 7.339)

Notes. OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. Each model also includes a constant term.
^a Exposure to property crime, and/or physical force or violence, and/or a threat of such, over the past 12 months.
^b Median for given household structure for given year.
 * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Table A2. Results of logistic regression models predicting respondent confidence in various aspects of the CJS in 2014, including controls for typical media consumption behaviours (continued over)

Category	Variable	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		
		Confident that the CJS						treats accused fairly		deals with cases promptly		
		OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	
Media source	Newspaper source: relative to none in a typical week											
	Sydney Morning Herald	1.771**	(1.221, 2.569)	1.062	(0.743, 1.518)	1.313	(0.849, 2.030)	1.441	(0.948, 2.190)	0.623**	(0.436, 0.891)	
	The Australian	1.513	(0.753, 3.038)	1.014	(0.520, 1.979)	1.311	(0.577, 2.978)	1.912	(0.786, 4.650)	0.720	(0.373, 1.390)	
	Daily Telegraph	0.710	(0.497, 1.015)	0.803	(0.558, 1.156)	1.349	(0.873, 2.086)	1.276	(0.836, 1.947)	0.699	(0.487, 1.004)	
	Another newspaper	1.020	(0.724, 1.436)	0.905	(0.640, 1.279)	1.357	(0.896, 2.056)	1.228	(0.818, 1.841)	0.588**	(0.412, 0.839)	
TV source: relative to none in a typical week	TV source: relative to none in a typical week											
	ABC 1	1.402	(0.913, 2.154)	1.290	(0.868, 1.917)	1.772*	(1.114, 2.818)	0.959	(0.579, 1.586)	1.467	(0.969, 2.219)	
	SBS	0.976	(0.490, 1.945)	0.941	(0.497, 1.783)	1.582	(0.715, 3.503)	0.914	(0.406, 2.054)	0.985	(0.486, 1.995)	
	Channel 10	1.149	(0.657, 2.008)	1.515	(0.893, 2.570)	1.907	(0.967, 3.761)	0.798	(0.428, 1.486)	1.567	(0.920, 2.671)	
	SKY	1.185	(0.585, 2.401)	1.267	(0.645, 2.488)	2.336	(0.953, 5.728)	1.591	(0.616, 4.110)	1.412	(0.713, 2.793)	
	Channel 9	1.051	(0.698, 1.583)	1.003	(0.679, 1.481)	1.834**	(1.162, 2.893)	1.220	(0.745, 1.996)	1.640*	(1.098, 2.449)	
	Channel 7	0.692	(0.460, 1.042)	0.891	(0.597, 1.330)	1.459	(0.927, 2.298)	0.743	(0.453, 1.219)	1.206	(0.794, 1.830)	
	Fox	0.597	(0.208, 1.711)	0.895	(0.337, 2.374)	1.025	(0.374, 2.804)	0.555	(0.203, 1.520)	2.477	(0.985, 6.228)	
	Another station	0.819	(0.495, 1.355)	0.972	(0.605, 1.561)	1.334	(0.765, 2.327)	0.836	(0.465, 1.504)	1.417	(0.862, 2.331)	
	Radio source: relative to none in a typical week	Radio source: relative to none in a typical week										
JJ		1.689	(0.980, 2.911)	1.056	(0.680, 1.640)	1.253	(0.706, 2.224)	1.581	(0.899, 2.782)	0.691	(0.442, 1.080)	
ABC702		1.343	(0.870, 2.073)	1.110	(0.751, 1.642)	0.991	(0.604, 1.628)	1.162	(0.719, 1.876)	1.325	(0.892, 1.968)	
2DAY		1.834	(0.841, 4.000)	1.677	(0.856, 3.285)	0.849	(0.372, 1.940)	1.103	(0.462, 2.633)	0.821	(0.407, 1.656)	
NOVA96.9		1.138	(0.661, 1.960)	1.084	(0.663, 1.770)	1.122	(0.589, 2.137)	1.414	(0.735, 2.719)	0.860	(0.523, 1.414)	
MMM		1.328	(0.702, 2.513)	1.334	(0.742, 2.400)	1.274	(0.555, 2.925)	0.935	(0.451, 1.935)	1.106	(0.617, 1.981)	
WSFM		0.818	(0.451, 1.483)	0.998	(0.555, 1.793)	0.683	(0.328, 1.421)	1.141	(0.550, 2.368)	0.680	(0.357, 1.292)	
KIIS106.5		0.683	(0.357, 1.306)	0.527	(0.277, 1.001)	0.950	(0.397, 2.269)	1.176	(0.514, 2.691)	0.719	(0.375, 1.376)	
MIX106.5		0.655	(0.360, 1.191)	0.607	(0.322, 1.144)	0.558	(0.284, 1.098)	0.840	(0.431, 1.638)	0.948	(0.515, 1.744)	
2UE		1.230	(0.640, 2.364)	0.903	(0.461, 1.771)	0.772	(0.370, 1.612)	0.802	(0.391, 1.642)	0.730	(0.362, 1.471)	
2GB		0.793	(0.498, 1.264)	0.742	(0.465, 1.183)	0.851	(0.502, 1.442)	1.123	(0.664, 1.897)	0.697	(0.435, 1.118)	
Another station		0.873	(0.636, 1.200)	0.891	(0.653, 1.217)	0.966	(0.658, 1.418)	1.184	(0.828, 1.695)	0.830	(0.606, 1.136)	

Table A2. Results of logistic regression models predicting respondent confidence in various aspects of the CJS in 2014, including controls for typical media consumption behaviours (continued)

Category	Variable	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
		brings people who commit crimes to justice		meets the needs of victims		respects the rights of accused		treats accused fairly		deals with cases promptly	
		OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)
Exposure to crime^a	Relative to no exposure										
	Exposed to crime	0.571***	(0.449, 0.727)	0.714**	(0.566, 0.900)	0.653**	(0.496, 0.859)	0.646**	(0.494, 0.846)	0.871	(0.684, 1.108)
Age-group	Relative to group aged 55+										
	Aged under 25	4.601***	(2.893, 7.317)	4.055***	(2.799, 5.875)	1.426	(0.891, 2.281)	1.467	(0.903, 2.382)	3.070***	(2.070, 4.553)
	Aged 25-39	1.820***	(1.366, 2.425)	2.287***	(1.737, 3.012)	1.559*	(1.073, 2.266)	1.073	(0.752, 1.532)	1.751***	(1.279, 2.399)
	Aged 40-54	1.712***	(1.309, 2.240)	1.732***	(1.334, 2.248)	1.269	(0.885, 1.820)	1.117	(0.782, 1.596)	1.386*	(1.025, 1.875)
Education	Relative to group with University-level education										
	Year 10 or less	0.612**	(0.444, 0.844)	0.795	(0.575, 1.099)	0.669*	(0.461, 0.970)				
	Year 11 or 12	0.826	(0.604, 1.129)	0.926	(0.693, 1.236)	0.658*	(0.465, 0.933)				
	TAFE (e.g. Trade, College)	0.672**	(0.511, 0.883)	0.798	(0.614, 1.037)	0.971	(0.688, 1.368)				
Gender	Relative to males										
	Female	0.754**	(0.613, 0.928)	0.792*	(0.651, 0.963)					0.789*	(0.646, 0.965)
Household structure	Relative to lone-person households										
	Couple with no children living at home					1.184	(0.797, 1.760)	0.917	(0.619, 1.358)	0.584**	(0.408, 0.836)
	Couple with children living at home					1.551*	(1.031, 2.334)	1.582*	(1.045, 2.396)	0.784	(0.550, 1.118)
	Single parent with children living at home					1.494	(0.792, 2.820)	1.018	(0.558, 1.858)	0.723	(0.420, 1.243)
	Group household of unrelated adults					0.838	(0.427, 1.645)	0.543	(0.280, 1.054)	1.052	(0.578, 1.915)
	Group household of related adults					0.883	(0.539, 1.445)	0.818	(0.494, 1.355)	0.758	(0.489, 1.174)
	Something else					0.727	(0.265, 1.998)	0.944	(0.314, 2.837)	1.055	(0.410, 2.717)
Can't say / refused					3.987	(0.448, 35.496)	2.765	(0.348, 21.975)	2.267	(0.672, 7.645)	
Relative household income	Relative to group above or at median ^b										
	Below median income	0.811	(0.637, 1.032)	0.688**	(0.547, 0.866)	0.737*	(0.547, 0.994)	0.693**	(0.526, 0.913)		
	Can't say / refused	0.899	(0.675, 1.197)	1.096	(0.842, 1.427)	0.776	(0.555, 1.085)	0.937	(0.675, 1.302)		

Notes: OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. Each model also includes a constant term.
^a Exposure to property crime, and/or physical force or violence, and/or a threat of such, over the past 12 months.
^b Median for given household structure for given year.
 * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Table A3. Benchmark official statistics relating to survey measures of perceptions of crime and criminal justice outcomes

Perception measure	Survey year	Official statistic		
		Source data (NSW BOCSAR crime and courts statistics databases)	Benchmark year	Statistic (%)
Incidence of violence in recorded crime	2007	Proportion of all police-recorded incidents over the year that fall into categories of homicide, assault (including both domestic and non-domestic), sexual offences or robbery	2007	7
	2012		2012	6
	2014		2013	6
Five-year trend in property crime	2007	Percentage change in number of incidents recorded annually relative to five-years prior	2007	-30
	2012		2012	-39
	2014		2013	-38
	2007	Theft	2007	-29
	2012		2012	-11
	2014		2013	-11
Conviction rate for home burglary	2007	Annual court conviction rate for people charged with offences under ANZSOC Classification Division 7: Unlawful entry with intent/burglary, break and enter, which combines both residential and non-residential offences	2007	74
	2012		2012	73
	2014		2013	73
Imprisonment rate for home burglary	2007	Annual imprisonment rate for people convicted of offences under ANZSOC Classification Division 7: Unlawful entry with intent/burglary, break and enter, which combines both residential and non-residential offences	2007	59
	2012		2012	60
	2014		2013	61
Conviction rate for murder	2007	Annual court conviction rate for people charged with murder	2007	47
	2012		2012	50
	2014		2013	61
Imprisonment rate for murder	2007	Annual imprisonment rate for people convicted of murder	2007	100
	2012		2012	100
	2014		2013	100

Note. ANZSOC = Australian and New Zealand Standard Offence Classification (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011).

Table A4. Additional results of the logistic models predicting respondent confidence in various aspects of the CJS across survey waves, including controls for perceptions of crime and justice (see Table 8)

Category	Variable	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
		OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)
Age-group	Relative to group aged 55+										
	Aged under 25	2.665***	(2.127, 3.338)	3.268***	(2.673, 3.996)					2.631***	(2.173, 3.187)
	Aged 25-39	1.618***	(1.390, 1.883)	2.268***	(1.956, 2.631)					2.025***	(1.745, 2.350)
	Aged 40-54	1.409***	(1.214, 1.635)	1.533***	(1.319, 1.780)					1.467***	(1.256, 1.713)
Education	Relative to group with University-level education										
	Year 10 or less	0.516***	(0.432, 0.615)	0.755**	(0.633, 0.900)	0.686***	(0.568, 0.828)	0.733**	(0.608, 0.884)		
	Year 11 or 12	0.735***	(0.621, 0.870)	0.905	(0.773, 1.060)	0.785**	(0.655, 0.940)	0.884	(0.736, 1.061)		
	TAFE (e.g. Trade, College)	0.615***	(0.526, 0.720)	0.727***	(0.626, 0.843)	0.969	(0.809, 1.160)	0.911	(0.763, 1.087)		
Gender	Relative to males										
	Female	0.989	(0.878, 1.114)							0.834**	(0.745, 0.935)
Location	Relative to Sydney-based population										
	Newcastle	0.757*	(0.594, 0.965)	0.763*	(0.591, 0.985)					0.897	(0.697, 1.153)
	Wollongong	1.171	(0.795, 1.724)	0.888	(0.621, 1.270)					0.786	(0.533, 1.160)
	Elsewhere	0.915	(0.802, 1.043)	0.990	(0.871, 1.126)					0.864*	(0.760, 0.983)
Household structure	Relative to lone-person households										
	Couple with no children living at home					1.252*	(1.019, 1.538)	1.141	(0.925, 1.407)		
	Couple with children living at home					1.590***	(1.307, 1.933)	1.555***	(1.271, 1.902)		
	Single parent with children living at home					1.090	(0.804, 1.477)	0.908	(0.670, 1.231)		
	Group household of unrelated adults					1.291	(0.853, 1.954)	0.798	(0.546, 1.166)		
	Group household of related adults					0.951	(0.736, 1.228)	0.883	(0.681, 1.145)		
Something else					1.209	(0.647, 2.259)	0.892	(0.482, 1.652)			
	Can't say / refused					1.090	(0.528, 2.262)	0.538	(0.274, 1.057)		
Relative household income	Relative to group above or at median ^a										
	Below median income	0.878	(0.765, 1.008)			0.770***	(0.661, 0.897)	0.750***	(0.644, 0.874)	1.261***	(1.107, 1.436)
	Can't say / refused	0.983	(0.836, 1.156)			0.836*	(0.698, 1.000)	0.797*	(0.666, 0.953)	0.992	(0.848, 1.161)

Notes. OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. Additional controls included for survey-year and perceptions of crime and justice as per Table 8. Each model also includes a constant term.
^a Median for given household structure for given year.
 * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Table A5. Additional results of the logistic models predicting higher levels of respondent punitiveness across survey waves, including controls for perceptions of crime and justice (see Table 9)

Category	Variable	Punitiveness assessment juncture			
		Much too lenient A little too lenient vs. About right A little to tough Much too tough		Much too lenient vs. A little too lenient About right A little to tough Much too tough	
		OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)
Age-group	Relative to group aged 55+				
	Aged under 25	0.331***	(0.267, 0.411)	0.231***	(0.179, 0.299)
	Aged 25-39	0.692***	(0.587, 0.814)	0.565***	(0.482, 0.662)
	Aged 40-54	0.824*	(0.697, 0.973)	0.767***	(0.658, 0.894)
Education	Relative to group with University-level education				
	Year 10 or less	2.263***	(1.842, 2.779)	1.897***	(1.578, 2.281)
	Year 11 or 12	1.569***	(1.321, 1.863)	1.694***	(1.429, 2.009)
	TAFE (e.g. Trade, College)	1.854***	(1.574, 2.186)	1.633***	(1.384, 1.925)
Location	Relative to Sydney-based population				
	Newcastle	1.259*	(1.011, 1.568)	<i>1.259*</i>	<i>(1.011, 1.568)</i>
	Wollongong	0.922	(0.645, 1.319)	<i>0.922</i>	<i>(0.645, 1.319)</i>
	Elsewhere	0.963	(0.855, 1.084)	<i>0.963</i>	<i>(0.855, 1.084)</i>
Relative household income	Relative to group above or at median ^a				
	Below median income	1.082	(0.956, 1.225)	<i>1.082</i>	<i>(0.956, 1.225)</i>
	Can't say / refused	1.107	(0.957, 1.281)	<i>1.107</i>	<i>(0.957, 1.281)</i>

Notes. OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval. Estimated odds ratios are presented in separate columns for each juncture in the punitiveness scale; where the parallel lines assumption holds for a given variable category, identical values of the estimated odds ratios are reported in italics. Additional controls included for survey-year and perceptions of crime and justice as per Table 9. The model also includes a constant term at each juncture.

^a Median for given household structure for given year.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.