

# Women as victims and offenders

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## INTRODUCTION

The NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research receives numerous enquiries regarding the number and characteristics of female offenders and victims of crime. This bulletin is designed to summarise the information which is available for 1993 for NSW's adult female offenders and victims, that is, women aged 18 years or more.<sup>1</sup> It makes no attempt to explain the data provided.

There are a number of information sources about female offenders and victims, including statistics from criminal courts (Local Courts and Higher Courts, the latter comprising the Supreme Court and the District Court), police statistics and crime victim surveys. Utilising these sources, this bulletin presents information regarding the number and per capita rate of women found guilty in 1993 in both Local and Higher Courts, the types of offences for which they were found guilty, the age distribution of those convicted, the penalties imposed on convicted offenders and their prior convictions. The bulletin also provides information on such matters as the offences typically committed against women, the age distribution of female crime victims, their labour force status, their role in the household, and the characteristic locations of offences committed against women.

## WOMEN AS OFFENDERS

### NSW LOCAL COURTS

In 1993, the NSW Local Courts dealt with 105,230 persons charged with criminal offences. Of these, 14,780 (14.0%) were women aged 18 years or more facing a total of 21,329 charges.

Table 1: Number and gender-specific rate of persons found guilty by type of principal offence, NSW Local Courts, 1993

Type of principal offence	Males		Females	
	Number	Rate per 100,000 males <sup>a</sup>	Number	Rate per 100,000 females <sup>a</sup>
Against the person	9,989	454.3	1,047	46.1
Theft	11,805	536.9	4,360	192.1
Property damage	3,155	143.5	349	15.4
Environmental	47	2.1	3	0.1
Against justice procedures	4,085	185.8	611	26.9
Against good order	7,140	324.7	1,181	52.0
Drug	7,059	321.0	1,231	54.2
Driving	32,033	1,456.8	4,022	177.2
Other offences	286	13.0	100	4.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>75,599</b>	<b>3,438.1</b>	<b>12,904</b>	<b>568.6</b>

a Population data for men and women aged 18 years or more are drawn from *Estimated Resident Population by Sex and Age: States and Territories of Australia, Preliminary June 1992 and June 1993* Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1994, Catalogue No. 3201.0.

### Women found guilty

Of the total number of persons whose cases were finalised in 1993, there were 88,503<sup>2</sup> found guilty of at least one charge.<sup>3</sup> Of those found guilty, 12,904<sup>4</sup> (14.6%) were women. Of the 14,780 women whose cases were finalised, 87.3 per cent were found guilty.

The following sections examine the type of offence, age, penalty and prior convictions for the 12,904 women found guilty in the Local Courts.

#### a. Type of offence

With the exception of prostitution, for all offences dealt with in NSW Local Courts in 1993, men outnumbered women as proven offenders. For prostitution, women comprised 72.1 per cent of proven offenders. There are a number of offences, however, where a substantial

proportion of proven offenders were female. These included: *larceny by shop stealing* (45.9%), *fraud* (30.2%), *other larceny* (25.5%), *possession and/or use of opiates* (20.1%), and *other drug offences* (23.3%).<sup>5</sup>

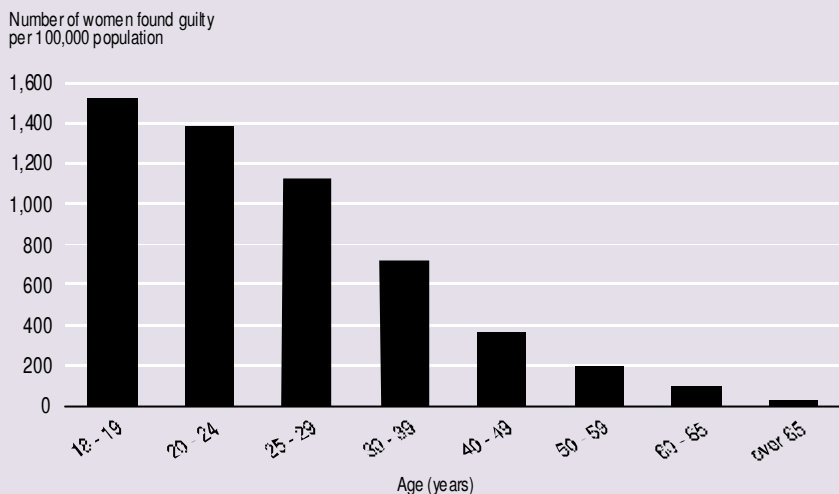
Table 1 presents the number of women found guilty in Local Court cases finalised in 1993 as a rate per 100,000 women in the population. Data are presented by category of principal offence.<sup>6</sup> The equivalent rates for men are also presented.

It is clear that, for each category of principal offence, the per capita rate of proven female offenders was lower than that for men.

#### b. Age distribution of proven offenders

The majority (72.0%) of women found

**Figure 1: Age-specific rate of women found guilty, NSW Local Courts, 1993**



a Figure 1 excludes 233 women whose age was not recorded. b Age categories are not of equal size.  
 c Population data for women in each age group are drawn from *Estimated Resident Population by Sex and Age: States and Territories of Australia, Preliminary June 1992 and June 1993* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1994, Catalogue No. 3201.0).

guilty in Local Court cases finalised in 1993 were aged between 20 and 39 years. The age range from 20 to 29 years alone accounted for 45.1 per cent of all women found guilty. Only 6.1 per cent of all women found guilty in Local Courts were aged more than 50 years. The age profile of proven male offenders is very similar to that for females.

Figure 1 shows the age-specific rate of

proven female offenders whose cases were dealt with by the NSW Local Courts in 1993, that is, it shows the number of proven female offenders in each age category relative to the number of women in that age category in the general population.

As Figure 1 indicates, relative to their number in the general population, 18 and 19 year old women had the

highest rate of women found guilty in Local Courts (1,527.1 women per 100,000 women in this age group in the general population), the rate decreasing with increasing age with women aged over 65 years having the lowest rate of those found guilty (23.9 per 100,000 women).

**c. Penalty for principal offence<sup>7</sup>**

Table 2 shows the penalty imposed for the principal offence for which women were found guilty in Local Court cases finalised in 1993.

For most types of offence, a fine was the penalty which was most frequently imposed. A notable exception was for offences *against the person*, for which the most frequent penalty was a recognizance (i.e. a good behaviour bond). Overall, only 3.7 per cent of adult female offenders were given a custodial sentence.

**d. Prior convictions**

Table 3 shows whether the women found guilty in NSW Local Courts in 1993 had prior convictions.

As Table 3 shows, about half of the women found guilty in NSW Local Courts in 1993 had prior convictions. Those whose principal offence was *against justice procedures<sup>8</sup>* or *against good order* were the most likely to have prior convictions.

**Table 2: Women found guilty, NSW Local Courts, 1993: Type of principal offence by penalty for principal offence**

Type of principal offence	Penalty for principal offence													
	Prison <sup>a</sup>		Community Service Order		Recognizance <sup>b</sup>		Fine		Other <sup>c</sup>		No conviction recorded		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Against the person	36	3.4	36	3.4	536	51.2	359	34.3	6	0.6	74	7.1	1,047	100.0
Theft	277	6.4	277	6.4	1,442	33.1	1,981	45.4	33	0.8	350	8.0	4,360	100.0
Property damage	6	1.7	10	2.9	113	32.4	171	49.0	18	5.2	31	8.9	349	100.0
Environmental	-	-	-	-	1	33.3	1	33.3	-	-	1	33.3	3	100.0
Against justice procedures	62	11.0	34	6.0	118	20.9	293	51.9	16	2.8	42	7.4	565 <sup>d</sup>	100.0
Against good order	13	1.1	5	0.4	70	5.9	924	78.2	13	1.1	156	13.2	1,181	100.0
Drug	49	4.0	73	5.9	356	28.9	678	55.1	4	0.3	71	5.8	1,231	100.0
Driving	28	0.7	80	2.0	669	16.6	2,947	73.3	14	0.3	284	7.1	4,022	100.0
Other offences	2	2.0	7	7.0	55	55.0	35	35.0	-	-	1	1.0	100	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>3,360</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>7,389</b>	<b>57.5</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>1,010</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>12,858<sup>d</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>

a Includes imprisonment and periodic detention. b Includes recognizance with supervision, recognizance without supervision and recognizance without conviction.  
 c Includes licence disqualification, compensation, intensive community supervision and nominal sentence. d Excludes 46 cases which received no action taken on a breach of court orders.

## NSW HIGHER CRIMINAL COURTS

In 1993, the NSW District and Supreme Courts finalised cases involving 5,563 persons charged with criminal offences. Of these, 515 were women, aged 18 years or more, who were charged with a total of 994 criminal offences.

### Women found guilty

Of the total number of persons whose cases were finalised in 1993 in the NSW Higher Criminal Courts, 3,974<sup>a</sup> persons were found guilty either because they pleaded guilty or because they were found guilty by verdict following a trial. Of these, 364 (9.2%) were women. These 364 women represented 70.7 per cent of the 515 women whose cases were finalised in 1993.

The following sections examine the type of offence, age, penalty and prior convictions for the 364 women found guilty.

#### a. Type of offence

For every offence dealt with in the NSW Higher Criminal Courts in 1993, men outnumbered women among those found guilty. As with the Local Courts, however, there were a number of offences where women comprised a significant proportion of proven offenders. These included *manslaughter* (23.8%); *fraud and misappropriation* (20.9%);<sup>10</sup> *offences against justice procedures* (20.2%); and *possession and/or use of cannabis* (20.0%). The proportion of women convicted in each of these offence categories, however, gives no information about the relative risk of a woman being found guilty of any particular offence.

Table 4 shows, for each type of principal offence, the number of women found guilty in the Higher Criminal Courts in 1993 as a rate per 100,000 women in the population. The equivalent rates for males are also presented.

As was the case for Local Court appearances, for each category of principal offence disposed of in the Higher Courts, the per capita rate of women found guilty was lower than the rate for men.

The categories of principal offence with the highest per capita rates of women found guilty were *theft* offences and *drug* offences (respectively, 5.2 and 4.7 women found guilty per 100,000 women in the general population).

**Table 3: Women found guilty, NSW Local Courts, 1993: Type of principal offence by prior convictions**

Type of principal offence	Prior convictions		No prior convictions		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Against the person	489	55.9	386	44.1	875	100.0
Theft	1,619	48.0	1,757	52.0	3,376	100.0
Property damage	175	59.1	121	40.9	296	100.0
Environmental	0	0.0	3	100.0	3	100.0
Against justice procedures	355	72.3	136	27.7	491	100.0
Against good order	516	64.6	283	35.4	799	100.0
Drug	540	53.0	479	47.0	1,019	100.0
Driving	1,388	44.9	1,703	55.1	3,091	100.0
Other offences	20	37.0	34	63.0	54	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,102</b>	<b>51.0</b>	<b>4,902</b>	<b>49.0</b>	<b>10,004<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>

a Total excludes 2,900 cases where information regarding prior convictions was not documented.

#### b. Age distribution of proven offenders

The age profile of women found guilty in NSW Higher Criminal Courts was similar to that for Local Court appearances: 72.0 per cent of all women found guilty by each type of court in 1993 were between 20 and 39 years of age with the ages 20 to 29 years accounting for the highest proportion of the total (43.1% in

Higher Courts); women aged 50 years or more accounted for the smallest proportion (only 5.2% in Higher Courts).

Figure 2 shows the age-specific rate of women aged 18 years or more who were found guilty in trial and sentence cases finalised in 1993 in the NSW Higher Criminal Courts.

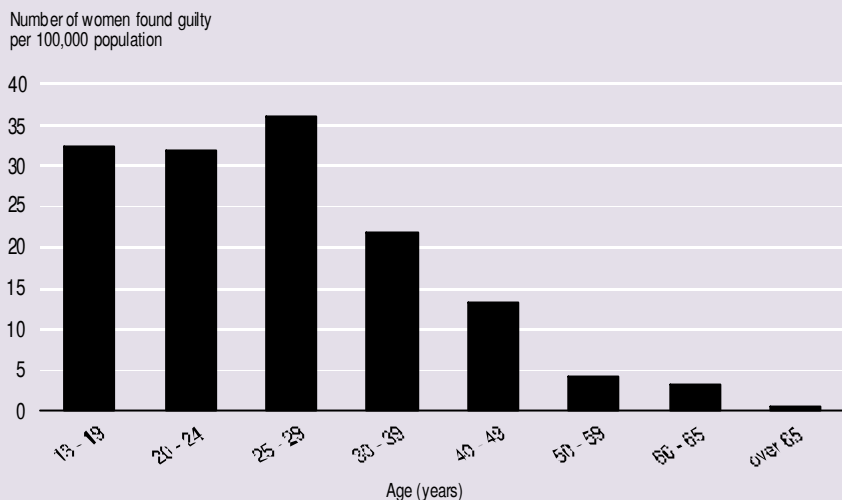
Whereas for Local Courts, 18 and 19 year

**Table 4: Number and gender-specific rate of persons found guilty by type of principal offence, NSW Higher Criminal Courts, 1993**

Type of principal offence	Males		Females	
	Number	Rate per 100,000 males <sup>a</sup>	Number	Rate per 100,000 females <sup>a</sup>
Against the person	869	39.5	48	2.1
Robbery and extortion	491	22.3	32	1.4
Theft	978	44.5	118	5.2
Property damage	77	3.5	7	0.3
Against justice procedures	89	4.0	23	1.0
Weapons	62	2.8	2	0.1
Against good order	33	1.5	2	0.1
Drug	842	38.3	107	4.7
Driving	99	4.5	16	0.7
Against prison rules	57	2.6	5	0.2
Other offences	13	0.6	4	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,610</b>	<b>164.2</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>16.0</b>

a Population data for men and women aged 18 years or more are drawn from *Estimated Resident Population by Sex and Age: States and Territories of Australia, Preliminary June 1992 and June 1993* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1994, Catalogue No. 3201.0).

**Figure 2: Age-specific rate of women found guilty, NSW Higher Criminal Courts, 1993**



a Figure 2 excludes 16 women whose age was not recorded. b Age categories are not of equal size.  
 c Population data for women in each age group are drawn from *Estimated Resident Population by Sex and Age: States and Territories of Australia, Preliminary June 1992 and June 1993* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1994, Catalogue No. 3201.0).

old women had the highest age-specific rate of proven offending (as indicated in Figure 1), in the Higher Criminal Courts, women between the ages of 25 and 29 years had the highest age-specific rate of proven offending. As for Local Court appearances, however, the age-specific rate of proven offenders generally decreased with increasing age.

**c. Penalty for principal offence**

Table 5 shows the penalty imposed for the principal offence for which women were found guilty in Higher Criminal Courts in 1993. For most types of offence, a recognizance was the most common penalty. However, imprisonment was a slightly more common penalty than a recognizance for

*theft offences, drug offences and offences against prison rules.*

Overall, about one-third of all women found guilty in the NSW Higher Criminal Courts in 1993 were given a custodial sentence.

**d. Prior convictions**

Table 6 shows whether the women found guilty in NSW Higher Criminal Courts in 1993 had prior convictions.

As for Local Courts, roughly equal numbers of the proven female offenders had prior convictions at the time of sentencing as had no prior convictions. Women found guilty of a sex offence as their principal offence were the most likely to have prior convictions.

**WOMEN AS VICTIMS OF CRIME**

**CRIME AND SAFETY SURVEY**

The best information source on victims of crime in NSW comes from the annual *Crime and Safety* survey conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). This survey presents estimates on the number of victims based on responses from thousands of households across NSW. All the information below on women as victims is based on the most recent (1994) *Crime and Safety* survey.<sup>11</sup>

**Table 5: Women found guilty, NSW Higher Criminal Courts, 1993: Type of principal offence by penalty for principal offence**

Type of principal offence	Penalty for principal offence									
	Prison <sup>a</sup>		Community Service Order		Reconizance <sup>b</sup>		Other <sup>c</sup>		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Against the person	11	22.9	7	14.6	26	54.2	4	8.3	48	100.0
Robbery and extortion	12	37.5	6	18.8	14	43.8	-	-	32	100.0
Theft	40	33.9	37	31.4	39	33.1	2	1.7	118	100.0
Property damage	1	14.3	2	28.6	4	57.1	-	-	7	100.0
Against justice procedures	3	13.0	8	34.8	12	52.2	-	-	23	100.0
Drug	42	39.3	26	24.3	39	36.5	-	-	107	100.0
Driving	5	31.3	3	18.8	8	50.0	-	-	16	100.0
Against prison rules	3	60.0	-	-	2	40.0	-	-	5	100.0
Other offences	1	12.5	1	12.5	6	75.0	-	-	8	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>24.7</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>41.2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>100.0</b>

a Includes imprisonment and periodic detention.  
 c Includes fine and no conviction recorded.

b Includes recognizance with supervision, recognizance without supervision and recognizance without conviction.

**Table 6: Women found guilty, NSW Higher Criminal Courts, 1993:  
Type of principal offence by prior convictions**

Type of principal offence	Prior convictions		No prior convictions		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Drug	49	46.7	56	53.3	105	100.0
Sex	5	71.4	2	28.6	7	100.0
Fraud/dishonesty	15	19.5	62	80.5	77	100.0
Property	30	60.0	20	40.0	50	100.0
Against the person	43	58.9	30	41.1	73	100.0
Driving	6	37.5	10	62.5	16	100.0
Other offences	21	58.3	15	41.7	36	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>46.4</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>53.6</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 7: Age distribution of female victims of a personal crime,  
NSW, 1994**

Age (years)	Female victims of a personal crime		
	No.	%	VR <sup>a</sup>
15 - 24	25,700	38.1	6.0
25 - 34	17,700	26.2	3.8
35 - 44	11,700	17.3	2.6
45 - 54	* 5,200	* 7.7	* 1.5
55 - 64	* 5,500	* 8.1	* 2.2
65 or more	* 1,800	* 2.7	* 0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>67,500<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2.9</b>

\* Estimate is subject to a relative standard error of between 25% and 50%.

a VR = Victimization rate of females in that age category, i.e. it is the number of victims as a percentage of the female population in the same age group.

Source: *Crime and Safety, NSW, April 1994* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1994, unpublished tables).

b The figures in the table are calculated to the nearest 100 persons. As a result, the apparent discrepancy in the total is due to rounding error.

**Table 8: Labour force status of female victims of a personal crime,  
NSW, 1994**

Labour force status	Female victims of a personal crime		
	No.	%	VR <sup>a</sup>
Employed	39,900	59.1	3.5
Unemployed	7,300	10.8	6.3
Not in labour force	20,400	30.2	1.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>67,500<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2.9</b>

a VR = Victimization rate of females in that labour force status category, i.e. it is the number of victims as a percentage of the female population in that category.

Source: *Crime and Safety, NSW, April 1994* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1994, unpublished tables).

b The figures in the table are calculated to the nearest 100 persons. As a result, the apparent discrepancy in the total is due to rounding error.

An estimated 159,900 persons aged 15 years or more (3.5% of the NSW population) were victims of a personal crime<sup>12</sup> during the 12 months ending in April 1994. Of these 159,900 victims, 67,500 (42.2%) were females.

#### a. Age distribution

Table 7 shows the age distribution of the number of female victims of a personal crime.

Table 7 reveals that 81.6 per cent of female victims were between the ages of 15 and 44 years, with younger women (between 15 and 24 years) having the highest risk of victimisation (6.0%). This risk generally decreases with increasing age. Women aged between 55 and 64 years appear to have a higher risk (2.2%) than women slightly younger than them, namely 45 to 54 years of age (1.5%) but the standard errors for these estimates are very high.

#### b. Labour force status

Table 8 shows the labour force status of female victims of a personal crime.

Three categories of labour force status are presented: *employed*, *unemployed* (but seeking employment) and *not in the labour force*.

*Unemployed* females had the highest risk of victimisation (6.3%) and females *not in the labour force* had the lowest risk (1.9%).

#### c. Role in the household

Table 9 shows the role of the female victims in the household.

As Table 9 indicates, the risk of victimisation is highest for female *non-family members not living alone*: 6.9 per cent. This category includes people who share a house but who are not related to each other. The lowest risk is for *spouse*: 1.7 per cent.

#### d. Location of last incident

Table 10 shows the location of the last incident of personal crime (assault, robbery or sexual assault) experienced by female victims.

The most notable feature of Table 10 is that the majority of sexual assault incidents occurred either inside the victim's own home or inside another person's home. These two locations combined accounted for 68.1 per cent of the most recent incidents of sexual assault experienced by women.

#### e. Whether offender known in last incident

Information regarding whether the female



**Table 9: Role of female victims in the household, NSW, 1994**

Victim's role in the household	Female victims of a personal crime		
	No.	%	VR <sup>a</sup>
Spouse	23,300	35.3	1.7
Sole parent	9,800	14.8	5.0
Full time student aged 15-24 years	7,200	10.9	4.6
Other daughter (aged 15 years or more) of married couple or family head	**5,900	**8.9	**3.5
Other relative of married couple or family head	**1,800	**2.7	**3.4
Non-family member not living alone	7,500	11.4	6.9
Person living alone	10,500	15.9	4.4
<b>Total<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>66,000</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2.9</b>

a VR = Victimization rate of females in that category. b Total excludes females whose role was not coded.  
 \*\* Estimate is subject to a relative standard error of over 50%.  
 Source: *Crime and Safety, NSW, April 1994* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1994, unpublished tables).

victim knew her offender in the last incident of a personal crime is provided in Table 11.

It is clear that the personal crimes of assault and sexual assault were different from robbery in terms of whether the victim knew her offender in the last incident. Almost 60 per cent of the female victims of assault reported that the offender was known to them; for sexual assault, 61.8 per cent of victims knew their offender. For robbery, 19.4 per cent of female victims knew their offender. Whilst this proportion is much lower than that for assault and sexual assault, it is nonetheless remarkable that so many female victims of robbery knew their offender.

**f. Number of incidents experienced**

Table 12 shows the number of incidents of each personal crime experienced by

**Table 10: Location of the last incident of assault, robbery and sexual assault experienced by female victims, NSW, 1994**

Location of last incident	Assault		Robbery		Sexual assault	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
At victim's home - inside	9,000	22.7	*4,200	*17.7	7,800	54.2
At victim's home - outside	*5,800	*14.6	*2,500	*10.5	**	**
At another's home - inside	**	**	**	**	*2,000	13.9
At another's home - outside	**	**	**	**	**	**
At victim's place of work/study - inside	*4,100	*10.3	*3,100	*13.0	**	**
At victim's place of work/study - outside	**	**	*1,800	*7.6	**	**
Inside some other building	*2,800	*7.1	**	**	**	**
In a vehicle (private or public)	**	**	**	**	**	**
Outside - in the street/open bushland/park	9,800	24.7	6,700	28.2	*1,600	*11.1
Other	*1,900	*4.8	*1,800	*7.7	**	**
<b>Total</b>	<b>39,700<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>23,600<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>14,400<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Estimate is subject to a relative standard error of between 25% and 50%. \*\* Estimate is subject to a relative standard error of over 50%.  
 Source: *Crime and Safety, NSW, April 1994* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1994, unpublished tables).  
 a Totals include the estimated number of incidents at all locations, including the estimates where the standard errors are over 50%.

**Table 11: Whether offender known to female victim in the last incident of assault, robbery and sexual assault, NSW, 1994**

Offender known to victim	Assault		Robbery		Sexual assault	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	23,400	58.9	4,300	19.4	8,900	61.8
No	16,300	41.1	17,900	80.6	*5,500	*38.2
<b>Total<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>39,700</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>22,200</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>14,400</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Estimate is subject to a relative standard error of between 25% and 50%.  
 a Total excludes those responses coded as *don't know* and those cases where there were multiple offenders and some were known to the victim.  
 Source: *Crime and Safety, NSW, April 1994* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1994, unpublished tables).

**Table 12: Number of incidents of assault, robbery and sexual assault experienced by female victims in the last twelve months, NSW, 1994**

Number of incidents	Assault		Robbery		Sexual assault	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
One	20,100	50.6	15,200	64.4	8,500	59.0
Two or more	19,700	49.6	8,400	35.6	**5,900	41.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>39,700<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>23,600</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>14,400</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Estimate is subject to a relative standard error of between 25% and 50%. \*\* Estimate is subject to a relative standard error of over 50%.  
 Source: *Crime and Safety, NSW, April 1994* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1994, unpublished tables).  
 a The figures in the table are calculated to the nearest 100 persons. As a result, the apparent discrepancy in the total is due to rounding error.

female victims in the 12 months ending April 1994. At least one third of the victims of each personal crime had experienced two or more incidents of the crime in the last 12 months.

## SUMMARY

- Women comprise 14.3 per cent of persons found guilty in NSW Local and Higher Criminal Courts.
- Women who become involved in crime, like men, are generally young, typically aged between 18 and 29 years.
- The offences for which at least 20 per cent of proven offenders were women are: in the Local Courts, *larceny by shop stealing, other larceny, fraud and possession and/or use of opiates*; and, in the Higher Criminal Courts, *manslaughter, fraud and misappropriation, offences against justice procedures, and possession and/or use of cannabis*. Women outnumber men as offenders in only one offence, namely, *prostitution*.
- About half of the women found guilty in NSW Local Courts and Higher Criminal Courts in 1993 had prior convictions.
- 42.2 per cent of NSW victims of a personal crime are women.
- The majority of female victims are young, 38.1 per cent being less than 25 years of age.
- Women who are unemployed, sole parents or living in a shared (non-family) household are more at risk of being victims of a personal crime than women who are not in these categories.
- Where women become victims of a personal crime, particularly assault or

sexual assault, the offender is often someone known to them. When the offence is sexual assault, the offence often occurs inside the home.

- More than one-third of female victims of a personal crime have been victims of such a crime at least twice in the last 12 months.

- *Robbery*: an incident where someone had stolen something from a respondent by threatening or attacking them.
- *Sexual assault*: an incident which was of a sexual nature involving physical contact, including rape, attempted rape, indecent assault, and assault with intent to sexually assault. Sexual harassment (that did not lead to an assault) was excluded.

It should be noted that the data for the personal crimes of assault and robbery are based on female victims aged 15 years and over, whereas questions regarding sexual assault incidents were asked only of respondents aged 18 years or more.

## NOTES

- 1 Persons who are above 10 years of age (the age of criminal responsibility in NSW) and less than 18 years of age at the time of the offence are regarded as juveniles; their crimes are dealt with by the Children's Court and information regarding these crimes is not included in this bulletin.
- 2 This figure excludes those whose age was not recorded.
- 3 Persons *found guilty* includes those who pleaded guilty as well as those who were found guilty by the court.
- 4 See Note 2.
- 5 *Other drug* offences could include administration of restricted substances, possession of equipment for administration of prohibited substance, forging prescription for prohibited drug.
- 6 *Principal offence* is defined as that offence charged which received the most serious penalty.
- 7 See Note 6.
- 8 *Offences against justice procedures* could include conspiracy to pervert the course of justice, knowingly give false testimony, making false statement on oath, perjury, obstructing police, resisting arrest, harbouring escaped prisoner, accessory after the fact to murder.
- 9 See Note 2.
- 10 *Fraud and misappropriation* could include offences such as embezzlement, forgery, passing valueless cheque, making counterfeit currency, opening bank account in false name.
- 11 Australian Bureau of Statistics 1994, *Crime and Safety, NSW, April 1994*, Catalogue No. 4509.1, ABS.
- 12 The personal crimes included in the Crime and Safety survey were robbery, assault and sexual assault. The ABS defined these crimes in the following way:
  - *Assault*: an incident other than a robbery where the respondent was threatened with force or attacked.

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