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## MEDIA RELEASE

### Community survey of willingness to receive stolen goods

Over a quarter of a million people in NSW (i.e. 5 per cent of the NSW population) were last year offered goods they suspected might have been stolen.

Nearly 700,000 NSW residents, or 14 per cent of the State's population, have been offered goods at some point in their lifetime which they suspected might have been stolen.

These findings emerged today from the first-ever survey in Australia of public involvement in the stolen goods market.

The survey, of over 5,000 New South Wales residents, was conducted by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.

It showed that young males and those living in high-crime neighbourhoods were the most likely to be offered stolen goods.

More than 16 per cent of males aged 20-29, but only six per cent of males aged 40-49, were offered stolen goods in the past year.

Males were more than twice as likely to be offered stolen goods as females, with seven per cent of males being offered stolen goods, compared with just three per cent of females.

People living in an area known to have a high crime rate are also nearly twice as likely to be offered stolen goods compared with the general population.

The Bureau found that some individuals report receiving several offers of stolen goods in the course of a year, suggesting that sellers of stolen goods may be targeting certain types of individual.

Of the respondents to the survey who had been offered stolen goods, 62 per cent were offered them on more than one occasion in the last twelve months, and 16 per cent had been offered them on five or more times during this period.

Surprisingly, only seven per cent of respondents who had been offered goods they suspected were stolen reported the incident to police.

The main reasons given by respondents for not reporting their suspicions to police were that 'it would not have served a useful purpose' (23 per cent), 'I was not certain the goods were stolen' (22 per cent), 'I couldn't be bothered' (18 per cent) and 'the person was my friend' (16 per cent).

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Commenting on the findings, the Director of the Bureau, Dr Don Weatherburn, said the survey highlighted the difficulties faced by police in their efforts to reduce the incidence of crimes such as break, enter and steal and car theft.

‘If the public at large were half as willing to tell police about incidents in which they are offered stolen goods as they are to tell them about incidents where goods are stolen from them, police would find it much easier to suppress the market for stolen goods’, he said.

‘It is both pointless and hypocritical to bemoan the size of our property crime problem while turning a blind eye to offers of goods which have ostensibly ‘fallen off the back of a truck’.

**Further enquiries:**

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