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In reply please quote:

Media Release: Victims of Abduction

Although incidents of abduction/kidnapping are relatively infrequent compared with other types of crime, the recorded rate of kidnapping/abduction in NSW is markedly higher than that in other States.

In 2004, for example (the most recent year for which inter-state comparisons can be made), the recorded rate of kidnapping/abduction in NSW was 6.9 per 100,000 of population, compared with an Australian rate of 3.8 per 100,000 of population.

In order to provide further insight into this offence, the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) studied 238 reports of abduction¹ recorded by the NSW Police between January and June 2004.

The cases studied by BOCSAR suggest that, in cases of abduction, there is a large gap between public perception and fact.

Out of the 238 cases of alleged abduction reviewed by BOCSAR, only 57 per cent involved actual abduction.

Thirty-two per cent of victims experienced an attempted abduction, the experience of four per cent of victims did not concur with the legal definition of abduction, while in seven per cent of cases either no abduction took place or a false report was given to police.

In cases of *actual* abduction, strangers were the most likely perpetrators but they made up less than half (43%) of all offenders. The three dominant motives for actual abductions were sexual desire (35%), robbery (29%) and retribution (24%).

In cases of robbery involving abduction, victims are often abducted and forced to reveal their bank details so the offender can steal their money. Cases of retribution, on the other hand, often involve past or present intimate partners.

Only three cases of abduction for ransom were recorded. In two of these cases the offenders believed the victims owed them money and threatened to harm the victims and/or their families if the money was not paid by a certain date.

In the six-month period examined, five children under the age of 15 were abducted for sexual reasons. One of them was aged less than 10. A stranger abducted two of the children but the other two were abducted by someone known to them (in one case the relationship was unknown).

Further enquiries: Dr Don Weatherburn 0419-494-408 or 9231-9190

¹ This bulletin makes no distinction between the two types of offence.