

Crime Statistics for fiscal year ending 30 June 2010

Frequently Asked Questions



October 2010

Frequently Asked Questions

Crime Statistics for fiscal year ending 30 June 2010

What is the summary of statistics and how does it compare with previous years?

There were 441,960 recorded offences in the 2009/10 fiscal year, compared with 442,540 the previous year. This is a decrease of 0.1% in real terms. Taking into account a 1% increase in New Zealand's resident population over the same period, recorded offences per 10,000 people dropped by 1.3%.

Where are the big increases in crime compared to previous years?

The following offence divisions had increases in recorded offences in 2009/10 from the previous year.

Offence division	Variance
Homicide and Related Offences	+38.6%
Abduction, Harassment and Other Related Offences	+9.0%
Public Order Offences	+6.0%
Acts Intended to Cause Injury	+3.3%
Sexual Assault and Related Offences	+2.7%
Illicit Drug Offences	+1.8%

The murder rate is high - how do you explain that?

Recorded Homicide and Related Offences rose by 34 offences (38.6%) compared to a reduction of 15 offences (17.8%) in 2008/09. The increase is partly attributable to a spike of 12 unrelated murders that occurred in August 2009. These contributed to a total of 65 murders in 2009/10 compared to 54 the previous year. It is important to note that over a 25 year period, the murder rate is flat.

What is happening with family violence offending?

In the 'Acts Intended to Cause Violence' division, offences rose by 3.3% from the previous year, and this increase has been driven entirely by Family Violence assaults. There were an extra 2,038 family violence offences recorded in 2009/10 in this division, an increase of 8.5%. However, the rate of increase has slowed compared to 2007/08 (28.1%) and 2008/09 (13.1%). Increased reporting of such crimes mirrors the continuing focus on domestic violence and community intolerance to acts of family violence.

Sexual Assaults are also up?

Yes, Sexual Assault and Related Offences make up less than 1% of recorded crime and are known to be significantly under-reported to Police. The increase in recorded sexual offences over the past year (2.7%) has been driven entirely by recorded Family Violence offending.

Has there been a big increase in Abductions?

No. There was a 9% increase in offences in the Abduction, Harassment and Other Related Offences division in 2009/10, one of the largest increases in recorded crime by division. However, this division is dominated by Harassment and Threatening Behaviour offences, which make up 98% of the total number of offences in the division.

How do the Districts compare?

Within the total crime figure, as with every year, there is variation between different types of offences and different parts of the country. Seven Districts reported decreases in the total number of recorded offences: Waitemata (-5.8%), Wellington (-5.4%), Auckland City (-5.2%), Southern (-3.6%), Tasman (-1.6%), Counties Manukau (-1.4%) and Central (-0.2%). The remaining five Districts recorded increases: Eastern (+2.2%), Canterbury (+3.0%), Northland (+3.5%), Waikato (+8.5%) and Bay of Plenty (+10.8%).

Robbery, Burglary and Theft offence divisions all decreased - Police must be pleased with this?

There was a drop (-2.1%) in the Robbery, Extortion and Related Offences division, a small decrease (-0.9%) in the Unlawful Entry with Intent/Burglary, Break and Enter and a -0.2% reduction in the volume of Theft and Related Offences. Police are crediting reductions in burglaries with better targeting of known offenders and an increased focus and imposing meaningful bail conditions on offenders. Theft and Related Offences make up more than 30% of all recorded offences, and 2009/10 saw negligible change in either the volume or resolution rate for this division.

How do Police explain a large drop in Fraud, Deception and Related Offences?

The greatest reduction in any division was in Fraud, Deception and Related Offences - down 25.6% in 2009/10. Across Districts there was wide variation with nine recording reductions and just three recording increases. Districts that experienced increases in this division (Bay of Plenty +44.3%, Tasman +28.6% and Central +4.6%) believe the causes include underlying economic conditions, the failure of some finance businesses and an increase in frauds reported relating to online auction or trading sites.

Illicit drug offences were up by just 1.8% - this seems low?

Again there is variation across Districts with drug-related offending, with seven Districts recording a drop (Waitemata -18.9%, Auckland -14.9%, Tasman -8.5%, Wellington -7.7%, Southern -6.9%, Eastern -4.8% and Northland -3.6%) and five an increase (Central +8.5%, Waikato +10.3%, Canterbury +13.6%, Counties-Manukau +29.7% and Bay of Plenty +38.2%). While overall recorded drug offending rose by 1.8%, all subdivisions recorded increases that were much lower than the previous year, as highlighted in the following table:

Subdivision	Variance 2008/09	Variance 2009/10
Deal or traffic in illicit drugs	+44.9%	+2.7%
Import or export illicit drugs	+50%	-5.1%
Manufacture or cultivate illicit drugs	+41.4%	+9.3%
Other illicit drug offences	+20%	-2.4%
Possess and/or use illicit drugs	+19.8%	+1.8%

Operations targeting organised crime, in particular cannabis and methamphetamine, improved intelligence, and reduced availability of controlled drugs have driven changes to these offences.

How do Police explain a large drop in recorded offences in New Zealand's largest metropolitan area, greater Auckland?

Recorded offences per 10,000 people dropped by 7.2% in Waitemata, 6.6% in Auckland City and 3% in Counties-Manukau in the 2009/10 fiscal year. These encouraging reductions in recorded crime reflect the tremendous work by staff in these Districts combined with a recent increase in staff numbers in Counties-Manukau.

How are this year's recorded offences grouped?

For the first time, the fiscal year offences are grouped according to the [Australian Standard Offence Classification](#) (ASOC) for grouping offence codes. It is important to note the move does not change the total number of offences recorded, just how they are grouped. The move is a first step towards making statistics in the two countries more comparable. However, important differences still exist which mean statistics are not yet comparable. As an example, Australian statistics only count the most serious offence on each file, whereas New Zealand reports every offence. All New Zealand justice sector agencies began using the ASOC offence codes from 1 July this year.