

Crime Statistics for fiscal year ending 30 June 2013

Frequently Asked Questions



October 2013

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

There were 365,185 total recorded offences in the period 1 July 2012 – 30 June 2013 compared to 394,522 in the same period last year. This is a decrease of 7.4 percent or 29,337 offences.

New Zealand's resident population rose an estimated 0.5 percent in the same period and when this is taken into account, recorded offences per 10,000 people dropped by 7.9%.

Where are the decreases in crime compared to previous years?

The following offence divisions decreased in recorded offences in 2012/13 from the previous year.

Offence division	Variance
Illicit Drug Offences	-20.6 %
Unlawful Entry Burglary	-10.1%
Offences Against Justice etc.	-9.8%
Theft and related offences	-9.2%
Robbery, Extortion and related offences	-8.2%
Weapons and explosives offences	-6.6%
Property Damage	-6.1%
Fraud, Deception and Related Offences	-5.1%
Public Order offences	-4.5%
Miscellaneous offences	-4.4%
Dangerous or negligent acts	-4.3%
Acts intended to cause injury	-0.1%

Where are the increases in crime compared to previous years?

The following offence divisions increased in recorded offences in 2010/11.

Offence division	Variance
Sexual Assault and Related Offences	+10.8 %
Homicide and Related Offences	+6.8%
Abduction, Harassment etc	+3.1%

What is the main proportion of recorded crime by offence divisions?

The offence divisions which make up the most crime, by proportion, are:

Offence division	Recorded 2012/13	Proportion recorded
Theft and related offences	117,475	32.2 %
Unlawful entry with intent/Burglary/Break and enter	51,532	14.1 %
Property Damage and Environmental Pollution	47,252	12.9 %
Public Order Offences	40,791	11.2 %
Acts intended to cause injury	40,625	11.1 %
Illicit drug offences	17,509	4.8 %

How do the Police Districts compare?

The following table gives a breakdown of recorded offences by District:

District	2011-12	2012-13	Variance	Variance / 10,000 population
Northland	15,146	15,490	2.3%	2.5%
Waitematā	35,334	30,629	-13.3%	-14.5%
Auckland City	54,351	45,244	-16.8%	-17.6%
Counties Manukau	46,482	44,003	-5.3%	-6.8%
Waikato	34,999	30,796	-12.0%	-12.7%
Bay of Plenty	34,886	33,658	-3.5%	-3.4%
Eastern	23,909	23,308	-2.5%	-2.3%
Central	28,508	27,812	-2.4%	-2.5%
Wellington	41,366	35,757	-13.6%	-13.8%
Tasman	16,886	14,766	-12.6%	-12.5%
Canterbury	40,522	42,722	5.4%	5.4%
Southern	22,133	21,000	-5.1%	-5.3%
TOTAL	394,522	365,185	-7.4%	-7.9%

Canterbury District had an increase this year after big drop in recorded offences related to the earthquakes - why is this?

There has been a gradual rise in recorded offences in Canterbury, but this has to be seen in context of a large drop in offences after the earthquake period. Their offence volumes are still below what they were pre-quakes.

Northland is the only other district with an increase this year why is that?

Northland has increased by 2.5 percent which equates to an increase of 344 offences. The largest increase was in the offence code of abduction, harassment and other related offences (up by 219 offences). Northland Police have had a focus on gangs using stand-over tactics and harassment. The increased arrests are reflected in these numbers.

How do you explain the increased homicide rate?

This fiscal year's homicide rate (78) is the second lowest recorded since electronic records began in 1995. The lowest was 73 recorded last year.

Of these, 47 were murders (up from 43 last year). This is still lower than in most years since electronic records have been kept. There have been fewer murders per head of population in each of the last three years than in any year since records have been maintained.

Why are the illicit drug numbers down so much? Does this mean Police are going soft on drugs?

Recorded Illicit drugs offences reduced by 20.6 in 2012-13, from 22,052 to 17,509 offences.

The decrease is mostly in the area of cannabis. The stats for dealing cannabis are down on last year due to the national drug dealing house operation run in the

previous year which increased this offence code by about 2000 offences. Figures for this year are around the same as the 2010/11 year figures.

There are also reductions in lower level cannabis offences. The offences of possess/ or use/smoke illicit drugs (cannabis plant, oil, resin, seed) were down by 23 percent. This reflects the fact that Police continue to target and employ preventive measures which focus on high end dealers, growers and suppliers rather than low end cannabis users.

Methamphetamine remains stable. Statistics are down on last year but up from the year before. After four years of consistent vigilance it appears that the price remains high but steady, which indicates that supply is stable with fewer new players coming into the market to make more of the drug."

Police and OFCANZ continue to target gangs who deal in methamphetamine, disrupting their activities and seizing their cash and other proceeds of crime.

During the fiscal year reporting period:

- 16.679 kilograms of methamphetamine was seized in 945 incidents by Police and Customs combined, of which 8.656 kilograms meth was seized by police in 930 incidents. This compared with 18.367 kilograms of meth seized in 1099 incidents by Police and Customs combined in the previous year. (of which, Police seized 12.717 kilograms in 1077 incidents)
- Between 1 July 2012 and 30 June 2013 107 clan labs were dismantled.

What is happening with family violence offending - still no figures for this?

Family Violence statistics have not been included in the official statistics since the 2011 calendar year.

"Statistics around family violence are complex. Our official statistics are the result of counting each offence as it is recorded. People are charged with offences such as male assaults female, grievous assault, sexual assault, harassment and many others. Some of these offences are the result of violence" but in some cases they are not.

Essentially, lumping all these offences together as "family violence" is not international best practice which is why we no longer do it.

We are working on a robust set of FV data that will provide a more accurate picture of family violence and will be publicly available.

The new set of statistics has a focus the relationship between the victim and the offender which we have not had before. It will allow us to assess, for example, how much crime is intimate partner violence, and how much is elder abuse, child abuse, or stranger violence.

While this data set is not yet complete, nothing has changed about the importance of family violence or the priority that the Police put on prevention and response.

Our prime focus is always on the real people behind the numbers and we have made many improvements to the way we work with families suffering from violence"

"We will continue to work to enhance our service to these families and to bring offenders to account.

Burglary

Burglary statistics have been trending down for the past 15 years. Right now we are seeing some of the lowest burglary rates ever. People are far less likely to be burgled than they were 10, 15, 20 years ago.

Our prevention first strategy has paid major dividends over the last few years. Our aim is to prevent crime before it happens and prevent reoffending and victimisation.

We are doing this by effective targeting of known burglars and burglary hotspots, by being more visible in the community and by helping victims improve their security and lessen their chances of being a repeat victim.

Resolution rates

We know that the resolution rates for these types of crimes are low and this is the case internationally. New Zealand is no exception and this is why we are putting so much effort into preventing burglaries in the first place.

We know how unpleasant it is to be a victim of burglary and we work with them to help them reduce their chances of being a repeat victim.

Resourcing

The drop in the number of burglaries and in crime overall would suggest that our resources are going in the right places. Resources are always finite, but the overall crime rate has dropped by 10.7 percent in the last three years and 18 percent in last 15 years. We know it's going in the right direction.

Trust and Confidence

Latest Trust and confidence in Police is at 79 percent. And if you include people who have some trust and confidence it goes up to 96 percent.

93 percent of those surveyed felt safe/very safe in their local neighbourhoods during the day.

72 percent felt safe in their neighbourhood after dark and 54% in their city or town centre after dark

Sexual Assaults

Recorded Sexual Assault and Related Offences increased 10.8% (372 offences). We know these to be significantly under-reported to Police. It is likely that the continued year-on-year increase in this area is down to increased reporting rather than increased offending. Increased trust and confidence in police may also be a factor with victims feeling more able to report to Police.

Police take all complaints of sexual crime seriously and encourage people to come forward and report to Police. It doesn't matter if it happened yesterday, last week, last year or a decade ago.

What impact has the Alternative Resolutions initiative had on these statistics?

Alternative Resolutions - including pre-charge warnings, written traffic warnings and community justice panels - is the use of warnings and discretion to resolve low level offending. However these offences are still recorded in the official crime statistics.

Resolution rates

Recorded offences are counted as resolved when Police apprehend an offender and decide how to deal with him or her – eg by warning, prosecuting etc.

The resolution rate is the percentage of recorded offences that are resolved within 14 days of the end of the year being reported on. If an offence is resolved 15 days or more after the end of the year then it will not appear in official crime statistics for that or any other year. The resolution rate therefore undercounts the number of cases that police have resolved. This phenomenon has a more marked impact for some types of offences than others, such as lengthy investigations including many serial crimes, burglaries and murders.