15 July 2022

Tēnā koe

Request for information

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request of 31 May 2022, in which you asked for information regarding national and regional ram raid activity between January 01, 2012 – May 31, 2022. You requested the following:

1. *The number of ram raids that have taken place nationwide from January 1, 2012 to May 31, 2022, broken down by region.*
2. *The number of people charged in relation to ram raids nationwide and their ages, from January 1, 2012 to May 31 2022, broken down by region.*

I apologise for the delay in responding to your request. Police has been conducting an analysis to determine whether it is possible to provide the data you have requested. The difficulty lies in the fact that Police does not have a specific offence code for "ram raids" or pre-set fields that can be used to easily extract information specific to these incidents.

However, Police has undertaken some high-level analysis at a national level in order to develop a better understanding of this type of offending. I can therefore provide you with the following documentation, which you will find attached:

- *Scanning Report: Ram Raids – an intelligence report produced by the National Intelligence Centre on 26/01/2022.*

This report provides an analysis of ram raid style burglaries within New Zealand and gives the total number of occurrences at a national level between November 2020 - October 2021.

Also attached are a series of graphs and data tables which provide the number of occurrences per year since 2017 where the "scene type" was recorded as a shop, petrol station, supermarket, other (retail) or unknown (retail), and where text describing the incident suggests a ram raid style burglary took place. Due to retail scene codes only being introduced in April 2017, Police is unable to provide data prior to this date. Accordingly, information prior to 2017 is refused pursuant to section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information requested is not held.

It is important to note that this data is indicative-only, as it was collated by text-mining free-text fields. This is an inherently more subjective approach and provides less robust data than using pre-set fields. Any additional text that is added by an officer at the scene, or subsequently during the investigation, is subjective, and can be entered inconsistently from one incident to the next, from one officer to the next, and from one district to the next. It is therefore possible that ram raid style burglaries were missed due to the phrase not being included in the free text. Conversely, the figures may also include incidents that were related but not actually ram raid style burglaries in and of themselves (e.g., receiving stolen property, or a person acting suspiciously prior to a ram raid style burglary).

You will see from the methodology section of the Scanning Report that this manual checking of each occurrence was undertaken for that analysis to improve the accuracy of that report.

Police cannot break this down into more specific cuts of data as, without significant manual analysis to check the accuracy of the text mined data it would not present an accurate picture. Text mining of this data requires work in its own right and manual analysis of individual cases is extremely time consuming.

At a national scale, some of this weakness in the data is likely to be averaged out, but the graphs provided remain indicative as accuracy cannot be confirmed. Breaking it down by time/District/response would become problematic as the data becomes further broken down into smaller elements and decreasingly accurate.

I must refuse the remainder of your request not answered by the information supplied in this response pursuant to section 18(f) of the OIA, as this would require substantial collation or research. Provision of this data would require a manual review of all records classified as burglary victimisations in a retail premise.

Police recognises the impact of retail crime on the community, particularly for small retailers. Ram raid style burglaries when they occur are identified at the individual case level and are investigated. Some significant success has been achieved through investigations and larger scale operations targeting this form of offending. Since February (through Operation Pryor in the Waikato alone) there have been approx.150 arrests and 750 charges.

The recently established Police National Retail Investigation Support Unit is actively engaging with retailers to target retail crime repeat offenders, particularly those using intimidation and violence. The Unit draws on national data from Police and retailers to identify prolific offenders, undertakes initial analysis and investigation and passes the investigative files to Districts who take action to hold the offenders accountable. The NRISU does not deal with individual offences as they are reported – these are responded to by District based Police staff.

A small retailer crime prevention fund was announced on 26 May 2022. The fund is a $6 million package that will draw upon the Proceeds of Crime Fund. The additional fund will enable Police to help smaller retailers who are particularly at risk of, or harmed by crime and don't necessarily have the resources needed to protect themselves. The fund will cover a range of different solutions, tailored to the needs of each retailer. This may include options such as physical barriers (for example bollards, solid planter boxes, reinforced doors or security screens), alarms, and fog cannons.

I hope the information provided is of use to you.

You should be aware the Police may choose to publish this OIA response, or the data attached on its website.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision if you are not satisfied with the response to your request. Information about how to make a complaint is available at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Yours sincerely

Richard Chambers
Assistant Commissioner
New Zealand Police

Attachment 1:
No. of Ram-Raids where the Scene Type was recorded as a Shop Petrol station
Supermarket etc – **GRAPH**

Attachment 2:
Ram-Raids - Closure & Clearance Data – **GRAPH**

Attachment 3:
Ram-Raids – Adult/Youth Data – **GRAPH**

Attachment 4:
All Retail Crime where the Scene Type was recorded as a Shop Petrol station
Supermarket etc – **GRAPH**

Attachment 5:
Ram-Raid OIA Tables 12-07-22 - **DATA**

Attachment 6:
NIC (NZP National Intelligence Centre) Scanning Report / Ram-Raids -220126

No. of Ram-Raids where the Scene Type was recorded as a Shop, Petrol station, Supermarket, Other (Retail), or Unknown (Retail)

No. of Occurrences

| Year | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |

SCENE_TYPE

■ Petrol station ■ Shop ■ Supermarket ■ Other (Retail) ■ Unknown (Retail)

Ram-Raids - Closure and Clearance Data by Month: 2017 to 2022

Note that one occurrence may have multiple clearances (which reflect the range of offences committed and the age of the offenders etc).

Status of Investigation

- ■ Prosecution
- ■ No further line of enquiry
- ■ Youth Referral
- ■ Police discretion
- ■ Under Investigation
- ■ All Other
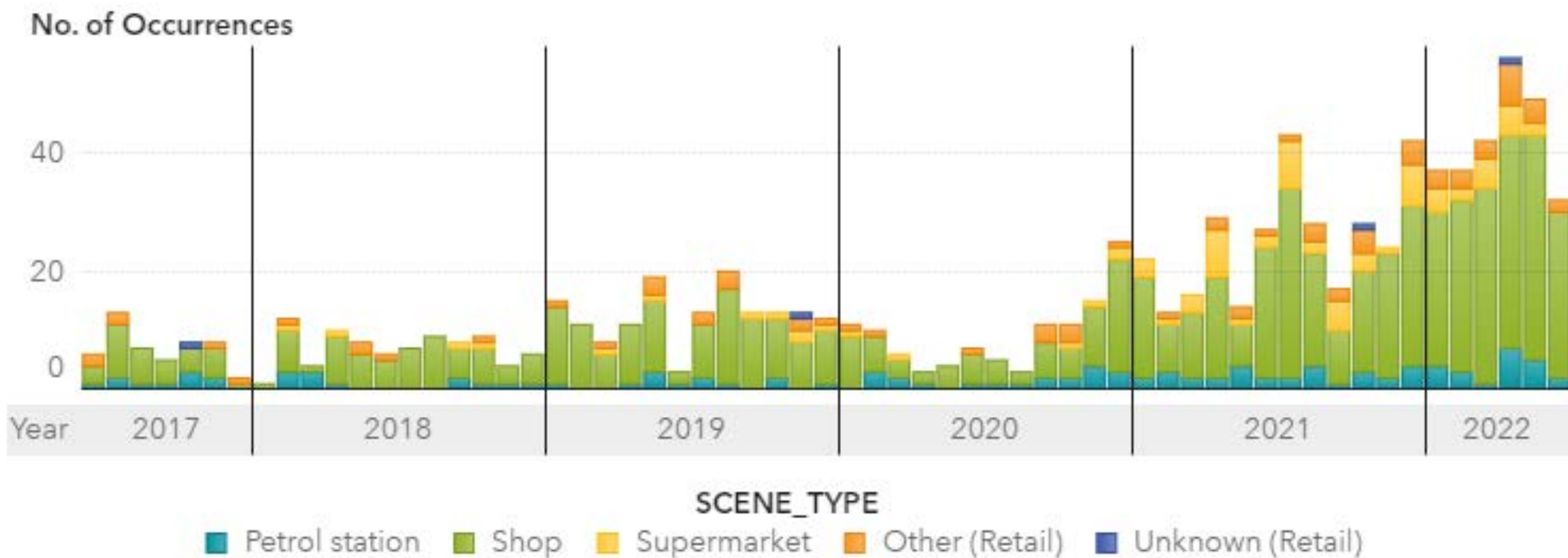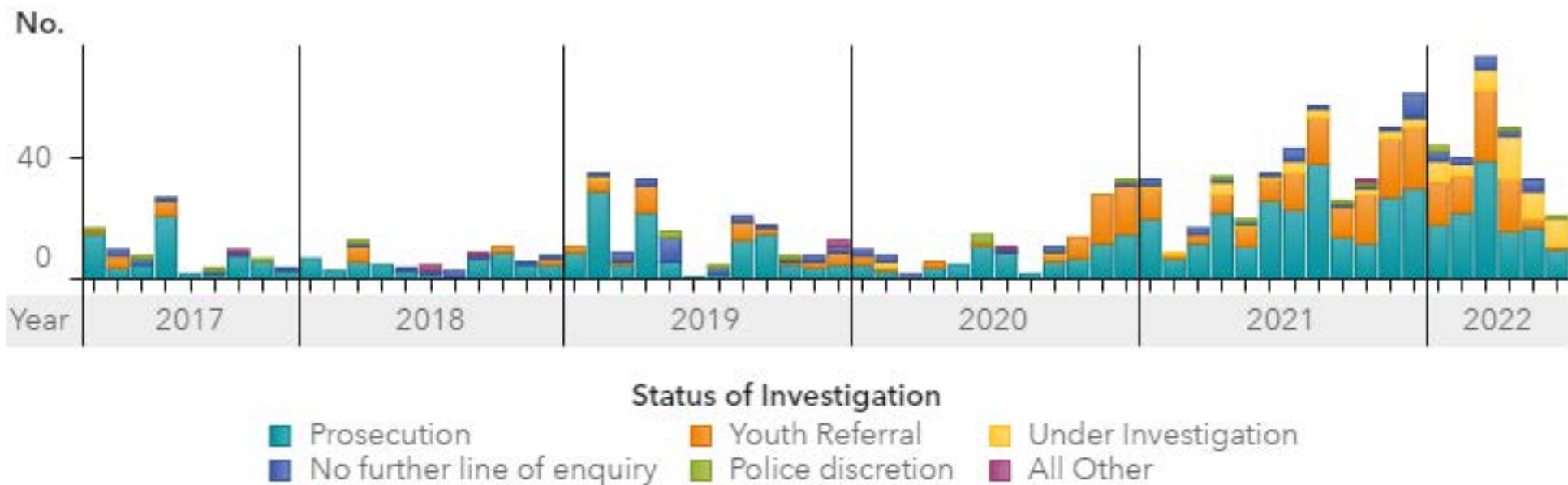
Ram-Raids: The Adult/Youth Breakdown per Occurrence (including Suspects and Offenders)

Note that for some suspects the age of the person is currently unknown.

No. of Occurrences

Age Group
- Adult
- Unknown
- Youth

All Retail Crime where the Scene Type was recorded as a Shop, Petrol station, Supermarket, Other (Retail), or Unknown (Retail)

No. of Occurrences

8,000

6,000

4,000

2,000

0

Year | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022
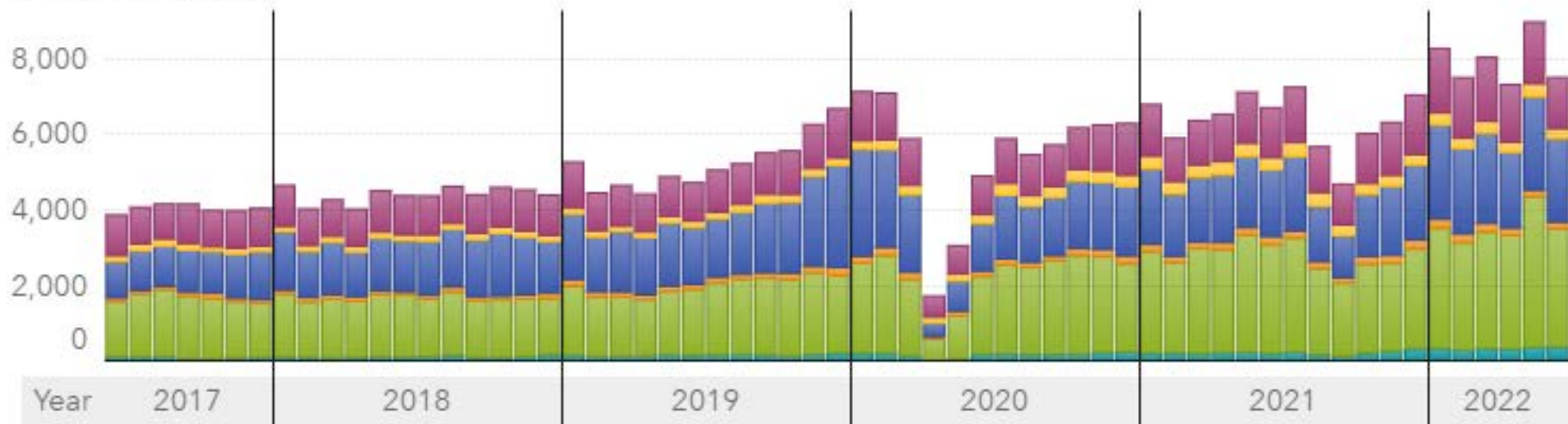
Offence

- ■ Shoplifts ($500-$1,000)
- ■ Take/Obtain/Use Cred/Bank Crd To Pecuniary Ad
- ■ Wilful Trespass
- ■ Shoplifts (Est Val Under $500)
- ■ Theft (under $500)
- ■ All Other

Table 1. All Retail Crime where the Scene Type was recorded as a Shop, Petrol station, Supermarket, Other (Retail), or Unknown (Retail)
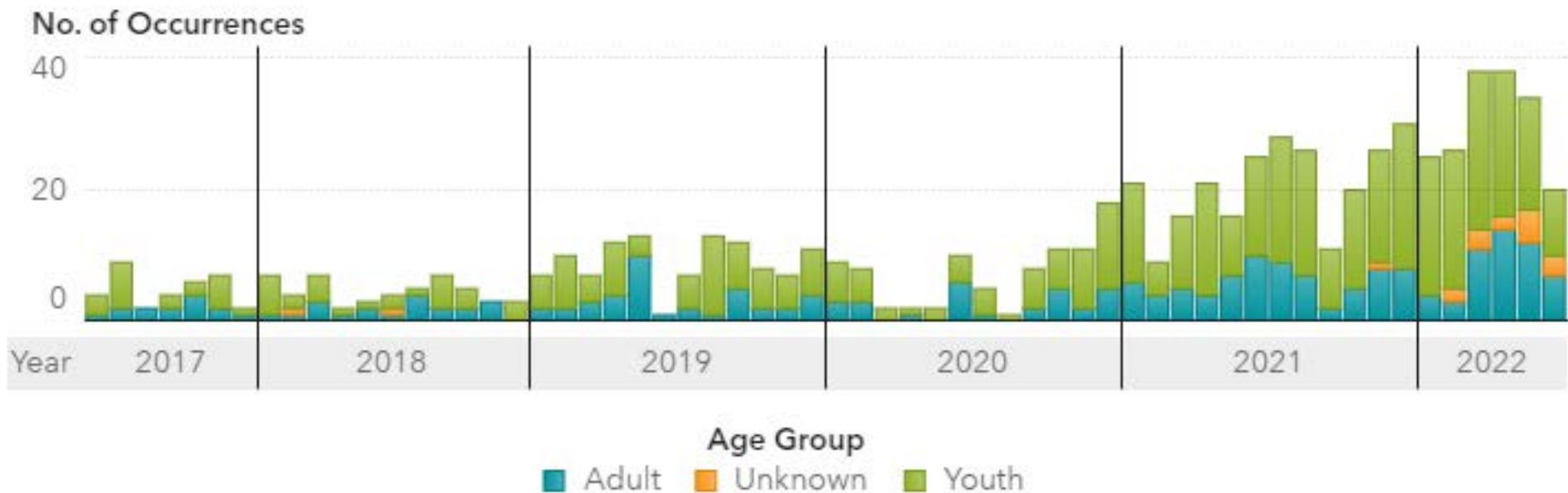
	Shoplifts ($500-$1,000)	Shoplifts (Est Val Under $500)	Take/Obtain/Use Credit/Bank Credit To Pecuniary Advantage	Theft (under $500)	Wilful Trespass	All Other	All
1-Jun-17	137	1,449	101	959	157	1,070	3,873
1-Jul-17	134	1,660	94	1,035	192	963	4,078
1-Aug-17	141	1,765	93	1,060	185	919	4,163
1-Sep-17	91	1,642	113	1,101	177	1,035	4,159
1-Oct-17	90	1,579	145	1,098	125	953	3,990
1-Nov-17	110	1,473	98	1,159	156	988	3,984
1-Dec-17	118	1,436	89	1,267	147	992	4,049
1-Jan-18	127	1,661	106	1,540	144	1,076	4,654
1-Feb-18	116	1,463	121	1,215	160	958	4,033
1-Mar-18	105	1,554	112	1,381	162	958	4,272
1-Apr-18	117	1,482	121	1,180	153	975	4,028
1-May-18	137	1,635	98	1,389	171	1,086	4,516
1-Jun-18	125	1,636	88	1,349	157	1,027	4,382
1-Jul-18	135	1,524	100	1,424	170	1,022	4,375
1-Aug-18	168	1,676	131	1,525	155	972	4,627
1-Sep-18	113	1,509	99	1,499	177	1,013	4,410
1-Oct-18	115	1,529	96	1,652	171	1,037	4,600
1-Nov-18	140	1,519	111	1,517	166	1,083	4,536
1-Dec-18	182	1,486	144	1,369	155	1,066	4,402
1-Jan-19	173	1,830	170	1,736	166	1,195	5,270
1-Feb-19	142	1,562	144	1,444	170	994	4,456
1-Mar-19	145	1,566	135	1,598	144	1,065	4,653
1-Apr-19	158	1,481	129	1,509	155	991	4,423
1-May-19	184	1,678	136	1,676	171	1,038	4,883
1-Jun-19	170	1,740	137	1,496	175	1,008	4,726
1-Jul-19	182	1,905	149	1,536	174	1,110	5,056
1-Aug-19	197	1,984	130	1,631	217	1,068	5,227
1-Sep-19	181	2,026	143	1,842	235	1,085	5,512
1-Oct-19	155	2,013	172	1,870	210	1,147	5,567
1-Nov-19	190	2,158	173	2,386	199	1,157	6,263
1-Dec-19	230	2,054	205	2,698	195	1,296	6,678
1-Jan-20	230	2,379	178	2,823	229	1,293	7,132
1-Feb-20	220	2,584	217	2,580	259	1,230	7,090
1-Mar-20	161	2,018	187	2,053	245	1,223	5,887
1-Apr-20	20	576	67	354	165	549	1,731
1-May-20	72	1,137	127	796	189	742	3,063
1-Jun-20	204	2,051	144	1,249	242	1,012	4,902
1-Jul-20	211	2,346	158	1,686	313	1,175	5,889
1-Aug-20	190	2,301	138	1,489	273	1,076	5,467

	Shoplifts ($500-$1,000)	Shoplifts (Est Val Under $500)	Take/Obtain/Use Credit/Bank Credit To Pecuniary Advantage	Theft (under $500)	Wilful Trespass	All Other	All
1-Sep-20	193	2,478	131	1,540	288	1,093	5,723
1-Oct-20	202	2,605	183	1,776	312	1,097	6,175
1-Nov-20	240	2,544	186	1,764	305	1,213	6,252
1-Dec-20	263	2,325	210	1,830	300	1,362	6,290
1-Jan-21	225	2,686	190	1,996	336	1,357	6,790
1-Feb-21	234	2,392	162	1,643	327	1,142	5,900
1-Mar-21	213	2,780	166	1,718	320	1,169	6,366
1-Apr-21	240	2,718	192	1,783	353	1,249	6,535
1-May-21	250	3,098	195	1,880	347	1,345	7,115
1-Jun-21	221	2,872	211	1,759	325	1,318	6,706
1-Jul-21	254	3,014	191	1,964	373	1,456	7,252
1-Aug-21	184	2,284	174	1,477	351	1,206	5,676
1-Sep-21	149	1,938	134	1,118	283	1,068	4,690
1-Oct-21	224	2,361	202	1,638	288	1,310	6,023
1-Nov-21	275	2,324	215	1,824	290	1,391	6,319
1-Dec-21	344	2,643	231	1,982	272	1,569	7,041
1-Jan-22	352	3,185	232	2,495	312	1,697	8,273
1-Feb-22	309	2,843	227	2,255	277	1,599	7,510
1-Mar-22	349	3,080	225	2,387	315	1,689	8,045
1-Apr-22	337	3,006	191	2,004	267	1,522	7,327
1-May-22	384	3,991	170	2,467	349	1,629	8,990
1-Jun-22	415	3,269	178	2,233	281	1,404	7,780

Table 2. No. of Ram-Raids where the Scene Type was recorded as a Shop, Petrol station, Supermarket, Other (Retail), or Unknown (Retail).

	Petrol station	Shop	Supermarket	Unknown (Retail)	Other (Retail)	Total
1-Jun-17	1	3	.	.	2	6
1-Jul-17	2	9	.	.	2	13
1-Aug-17	1	6	.	.	.	7
1-Sep-17	1	4	.	.	.	5
1-Oct-17	3	4	.	1	.	8
1-Nov-17	2	5	.	.	1	8
1-Dec-17	.	1	.	.	1	2
1-Jan-18	.	1	.	.	.	1
1-Feb-18	3	7	1	.	1	12
1-Mar-18	3	1	.	.	.	4
1-Apr-18	1	8	1	.	.	10
1-May-18	.	6	.	.	2	8
1-Jun-18	.	5	.	.	1	6
1-Jul-18	.	7	.	.	.	7
1-Aug-18	.	9	.	.	.	9
1-Sep-18	2	5	1	.	.	8
1-Oct-18	1	6	1	.	1	9
1-Nov-18	1	3	.	.	.	4
1-Dec-18	1	5	.	.	.	6
1-Jan-19	1	13	.	.	1	15
1-Feb-19	.	11	.	.	.	11
1-Mar-19	.	6	1	.	1	8
1-Apr-19	1	10	.	.	.	11
1-May-19	3	12	1	.	3	19
1-Jun-19	1	2	.	.	.	3
1-Jul-19	2	9	.	.	2	13
1-Aug-19	1	16	.	.	3	20
1-Sep-19	.	12	1	.	.	13
1-Oct-19	2	10	1	.	.	13
1-Nov-19	.	8	2	1	2	13
1-Dec-19	1	9	1	.	1	12
1-Jan-20	.	9	1	.	1	11
1-Feb-20	3	6	.	.	1	10
1-Mar-20	2	3	1	.	.	6
1-Apr-20	1	2	.	.	.	3
1-May-20	.	4	.	.	.	4
1-Jun-20	1	5	.	.	1	7
1-Jul-20	1	4	.	.	.	5
1-Aug-20	1	2	.	.	.	3
1-Sep-20	2	6	.	.	3	11
1-Oct-20	2	5	1	.	3	11
1-Nov-20	4	10	1	.	.	15

	Petrol station	Shop	Supermarket	Unknown (Retail)	Other (Retail)	Total
1-Dec-20	3	19	2	.	1	25
1-Jan-21	2	17	3	.	.	22
1-Feb-21	3	8	1	.	1	13
1-Mar-21	2	11	3	.	.	16
1-Apr-21	2	17	8	.	2	29
1-May-21	4	7	1	.	2	14
1-Jun-21	2	22	2	.	1	27
1-Jul-21	2	32	8	.	1	43
1-Aug-21	4	19	2	.	3	28
1-Sep-21	1	9	5	.	2	17
1-Oct-21	3	17	3	1	4	28
1-Nov-21	2	21	1	.	.	24
1-Dec-21	4	27	7	.	4	42
1-Jan-22	4	26	4	.	3	37
1-Feb-22	3	29	2	.	3	37
1-Mar-22	1	33	5	.	3	42
1-Apr-22	7	36	6	1	7	57
1-May-22	5	38	2	.	4	49
1-Jun-22	2	28	.	.	2	32

Table 3. Ram-Raids: The Adult/Youth Breakdown per Occurrence (including Suspects and Offenders).

	Adult	Youth	Unknown[1]	Total
1-Jun-17	1	3	.	4
1-Jul-17	2	7	.	9
1-Aug-17	2	.	.	2
1-Sep-17	2	2	.	4
1-Oct-17	4	2	.	6
1-Nov-17	2	5	.	7
1-Dec-17	1	1	.	2
1-Feb-18	1	6	.	7
1-Mar-18	1	2	1	4
1-Apr-18	3	4	.	7
1-May-18	1	1	.	2
1-Jun-18	2	1	.	3
1-Jul-18	1	2	1	4
1-Aug-18	4	1	.	5
1-Sep-18	2	5	.	7
1-Oct-18	2	3	.	5
1-Nov-18	3	.	.	3
1-Dec-18	.	3	.	3
1-Jan-19	2	5	.	7
1-Feb-19	2	8	.	10
1-Mar-19	3	4	.	7
1-Apr-19	4	8	.	12
1-May-19	10	3	.	13
1-Jun-19	1	.	.	1
1-Jul-19	2	5	.	7
1-Aug-19	1	12	.	13
1-Sep-19	5	7	.	12
1-Oct-19	2	6	.	8
1-Nov-19	2	5	.	7
1-Dec-19	4	7	.	11
1-Jan-20	3	6	.	9
1-Feb-20	3	5	.	8
1-Mar-20	.	2	.	2
1-Apr-20	1	1	.	2
1-May-20	.	2	.	2
1-Jun-20	6	4	.	10
1-Jul-20	1	4	.	5
1-Aug-20	.	1	.	1
1-Sep-20	2	6	.	8
1-Oct-20	5	6	.	11
1-Nov-20	2	9	.	11
1-Dec-20	5	13	.	18
1-Jan-21	6	15	.	21

	Adult	Youth	Unknown[1]	Total
1-Feb-21	4	5	.	9
1-Mar-21	5	11	.	16
1-Apr-21	4	17	.	21
1-May-21	7	9	.	16
1-Jun-21	10	15	.	25
1-Jul-21	9	19	.	28
1-Aug-21	7	19	.	26
1-Sep-21	2	9	.	11
1-Oct-21	5	15	.	20
1-Nov-21	8	17	1	26
1-Dec-21	8	22	.	30
1-Jan-22	4	21	.	25
1-Feb-22	3	21	2	26
1-Mar-22	11	24	3	38
1-Apr-22	14	22	2	38
1-May-22	12	17	5	34
1-Jun-22	7	10	3	20

[1] Note that for some suspects the age of the person is currently unknown.

Table 4. Ram-Raids - Closure and Clearance Data by Month: 2017 to 2022.

Note that one occurrence may have multiple clearances (which reflect the range of offences committed and the age of the offenders etc).

	Prosecution	Youth Referral	Under Investigation	No further line of enquiry	Police discretion	Other	Total
1-Jun-17	5	.	.	2	1	.	8
1-Jul-17	21	5	.	1	.	.	27
1-Aug-17	2	.	.	.	.	.	2
1-Sep-17	2	.	.	1	1	.	4
1-Oct-17	8	.	.	1	.	1	10
1-Nov-17	6	.	.	.	1	.	7
1-Dec-17	3	.	.	1	.	.	4
1-Feb-18	7	.	.	.	.	.	7
1-Mar-18	3	.	.	.	.	.	3
1-Apr-18	6	5	.	1	1	.	13
1-May-18	5	.	.	.	.	.	5
1-Jun-18	3	.	.	1	.	.	4
1-Jul-18	2	.	.	1	.	2	5
1-Aug-18	1	.	.	2	.	.	3
1-Sep-18	7	.	.	1	.	1	9
1-Oct-18	9	2	.	.	.	.	11
1-Nov-18	5	.	.	1	.	.	6
1-Dec-18	5	2	.	1	.	.	8
1-Jan-19	9	2	.	.	.	.	11
1-Feb-19	29	4	1	1	.	.	35
1-Mar-19	5	1	.	3	.	.	9
1-Apr-19	22	9	.	2	.	.	33
1-May-19	6	.	.	8	2	.	16
1-Jun-19	1	.	.	.	.	.	1
1-Jul-19	2	.	.	2	1	.	5
1-Aug-19	13	6	.	2	.	.	21
1-Sep-19	15	2	.	1	.	.	18
1-Oct-19	5	1	.	1	1	.	8
1-Nov-19	4	2	.	2	.	.	8
1-Dec-19	5	4	.	2	.	2	13
1-Jan-20	5	3	.	2	.	.	10
1-Feb-20	3	1	2	2	.	.	8
1-Mar-20	.	.	.	2	.	.	2
1-Apr-20	4	2	.	.	.	.	6
1-May-20	5	.	.	.	.	.	5
1-Jun-20	11	1	.	.	3	.	15
1-Jul-20	9	.	.	1	.	1	11
1-Aug-20	2	.	.	.	.	.	2

	Prosecution	Youth Referral	Under Investigation	No further line of enquiry	Police discretion	Other	Total
1-Sep-20	6	2	1	2	.	.	11
1-Oct-20	7	7	.	.	.	.	14
1-Nov-20	12	16	.	.	.	.	28
1-Dec-20	15	16	.	1	1	.	33
1-Jan-21	20	10	1	2	.	.	33
1-Feb-21	7	1	1	.	.	.	9
1-Mar-21	12	3	.	2	.	.	17
1-Apr-21	22	6	4	1	1	.	34
1-May-21	11	6	1	1	1	.	20
1-Jun-21	26	7	1	1	.	.	35
1-Jul-21	23	12	4	4	.	.	43
1-Aug-21	38	15	3	1	.	.	57
1-Sep-21	14	10	.	1	1	.	26
1-Oct-21	12	16	2	1	1	1	33
1-Nov-21	27	19	3	1	.	.	50
1-Dec-21	30	20	3	8	.	.	61
1-Jan-22	18	14	7	3	2	.	44
1-Feb-22	22	12	4	2	.	.	40
1-Mar-22	39	23	7	4	.	.	73
1-Apr-22	16	17	14	2	1	.	50
1-May-22	17	3	9	4	.	.	33
1-Jun-22	10	1	9	.	1	.	21

Scanning Report: Ram Raids

Background

1. The issue of ram raids has been prominent in recent district reporting, as well as national and international media and has suggested an increase in offending, particularly by youth.

2. A ram raid refers to 'a technique where a vehicle is used to unlawfully gain entry into a premise, in order to steal stored or displayed commodities.'[1]

3. This report aims to provide a current analysis of ram raids within New Zealand, to identify whether any new trends have emerged. Findings will be compared against historic National Intelligence Centre (NIC) reporting.

Methodology

4. Data was extracted from the BusinessObjects NIA Occurrence universe for burglary offences (4100) created between 1 November 2020 to 31 October 2021, and where 'ram raid', 'ramraid', or 'rammed' was mentioned in the occurrence narrative. A manual search of each occurrence helped eliminate false positives and allowed other measures to be recorded including: the occurrence scene type, whether multiple locations were involved in one occurrence, the commodities targeted, and the reasons why offenders were unsuccessful in some ram raids. Residential locations were omitted from the results.

5. Offender data was also extracted from the BusinessObjects NIA Occurrence universe. Details were pulled for any persons linked as an 'Offender', 'Cleared Offender', or 'Youth Aid Offender' to every confirmed ram raid occurrence.

6. Data was extracted from the BusinessObjects NIA Charge universe to determine the outcome of each occurrence.

7. All figures have been rounded to the nearest number.

Preliminary Analysis

8. Between 1 November 2020 and 31 October 2021, a total of 283 ram raids were committed nationally; a 167 percent increase since previous reporting (n=106, July 2015 to July 2016).[2]

9. The highest percentage of ram raids were committed during July 2021 (15 percent). The number of ram raids being committed appears unaffected to changes in COVID-19 alert levels.

10. The highest number of ram raids occurred in Waikato (27 percent), Bay of Plenty (19 percent), and Auckland City (16 percent) respectively (See Figure 2). Comparatively, the total number of ram raids for Waitematā and Counties/Manukau (previously the top two districts[3]) has remained relatively stable. However, these districts now only account for seventeen percent (n=49) of the total number of ram raids, which amounts to a thirty percent decrease compared with previous reporting (they were 47 percent of the total).

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[1] National Intelligence Centre. (August 2016). *Ram Raids NIC/IR/160815.* IN CONFIDENCE. New Zealand Police.
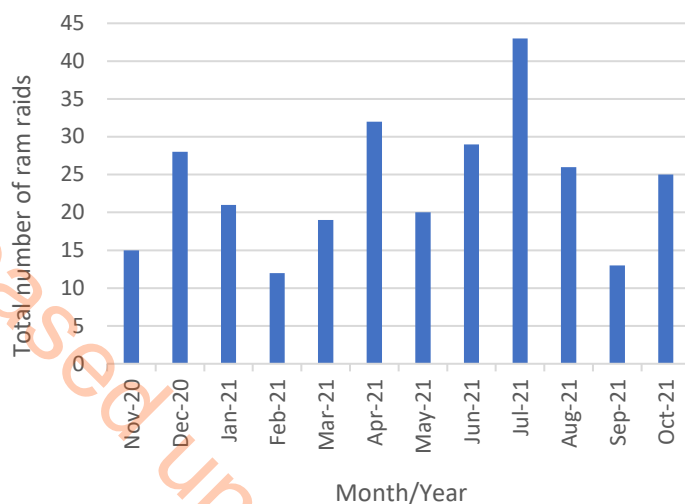[2] Ibid
[3] Ibid

*Figure 1: Total ram raids per month between November 2020-October 2021.*

District	Total number of Ram-Raid occurrences	%
Waikato	76	27
Bay of Plenty	53	19
Auckland City	44	16
Waitematā	32	11
Central	17	6
Counties/ Manukau	17	6
Eastern	15	5
Canterbury	14	5
Northland	7	2
Wellington	4	1
Tasman	3	1
Southern	1	1

Figure 2: Number of ram raids by district between November 2020-October 2021.

TARGETED SCENE TYPE[4]

11. There was little distinction between the top two scene types, with 31 percent of ram raids occurring at a retail location, and 30 percent at a dairy/superette.

12. Larger chain corporations such as supermarkets and liquor stores have the resources to be able to implement costly prevention methods such as bollards.

s.6(c) OIA
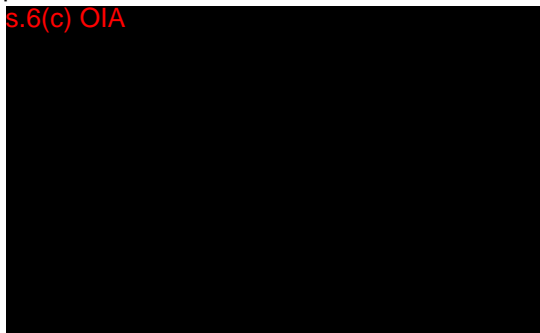
13. Previous reporting identified petrol stations as one of the second most targeted scene types for ram raids.[5] Current data suggests petrol
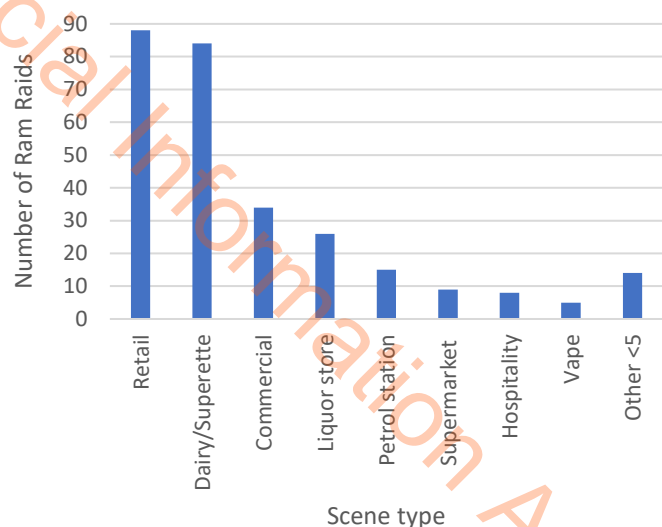
Figure 3: Total number of ram raids by scene type.

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[4] 'Commercial' locations refers to business locations which provide services rather than selling goods. 'Other' refers to 'Grocer', 'Healthcare', 'School', 'Post Office', 'Pound', 'Bank', 'Butcher', and a 'Church'. Also included is two ram raid occurrences in which multiple locations were targeted.

[5] National Intelligence Centre. (August 2016). *Ram Raids NIC/IR/160815.* IN CONFIDENCE. New Zealand Police.

stations were targeted in only five percent of ram raids (n=15); an 18 percent reduction since 2016 (n=24).

14. This significant decrease could be attributed to better prevention methods such as Auror[6] that increase the likelihood of being caught and thus make the reward less desirable.

COMMODITIES STOLEN

15. At least one commodity was successfully stolen in 81 percent of ram raids (228 occurrences).

16. In 10 percent of ram raids (27 occurrences) offenders failed to gain entry to the location.

17. In 10 percent (28 occurrences) offenders gained entry to the premise, but no items were stolen.

18. Of the 228 occurrences where a commodity was taken, the specific commodity/commodities was only listed within the NIA occurrence in 85 percent (n=193). The highest proportion of items successfully stolen was money/cash register (n=52). However, the most targeted but not successfully obtained item was cigarettes/tobacco which was successfully obtained in 14 percent of ram raids (n=40) and attempted to obtain in a further 27 occurrences, a combined total of 24 percent of all ram raids. Cigarettes/tobacco are highly sought after due to their street resale value.[7]

19. It is possible that proposed legislation as part of the Smokefree Aotearoa 2025 Action Plan will see an increase in ram raids targeting cigarettes and tobacco as these commodities become legally unattainable for youth.

20. Ram raids at petrol stations had a higher fail rate. Overall, 73 percent (11 occurrences) of petrol station offences targeted cigarettes/tobacco, however almost half of these were unsuccessful due to cigarette cabinets being locked/inaccessible. s.6(c) OIA
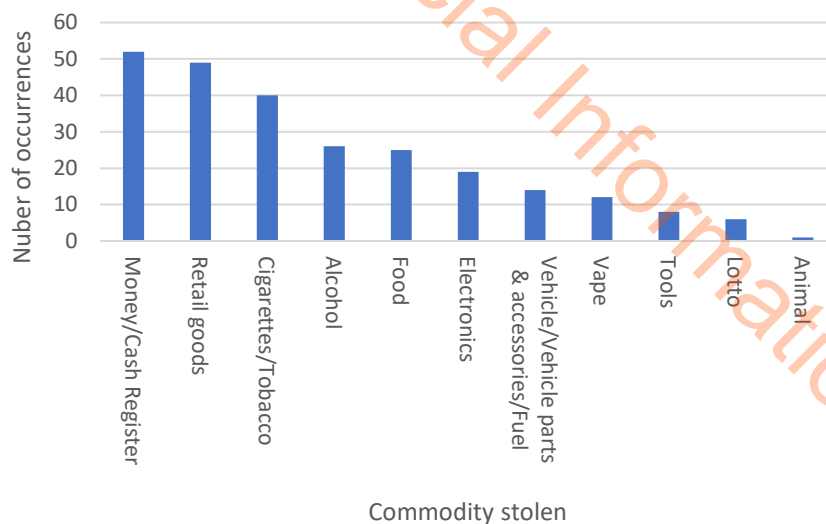

Figure 4: Commodities stolen and identified.

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[6] Auror is a retail crime intelligence and loss prevention platform that helps in identifying offenders.
[7] New Zealand Police National Drug Intelligence Bureau Representative, personal communication, 13 December 2021. Estimates based off a 20 pack of cigarettes smuggled into New Zealand from overseas, actual street value of stolen branded cigarettes in New Zealand is likely to be higher.

OFFENDERS

21. Of the 283 ram raids, 42 percent (118 occurrences) had an identified offender/s linked to the occurrence.

22. Of these 118 occurrences, 157 unique individuals were identified as an offender. As some occurrences have had more than one unique offender it is almost certain the ram raids are often committed by groups of offenders. This included 38 repeat offenders, who were responsible for 26 percent of the total number of ram raids. These repeat offenders were aged between 12-19 years old.

23. Of the total identified offenders, 59 percent of offenders were aged between 14 to 17. Reporting from 2015-2016 determined 72 percent of offenders were under the age of 20 years. This has since increased 16 percent to 88 percent,[8] suggesting the drastic increase in ram raids is attributable to specifically a youth offending issue.

24. Four percent of offenders (n=7) are recorded as a patched member of a gang, and a further 5 percent (n=8) are recorded as having a gang association. Five offenders were recorded as being a gang prospect/probate. The Gang Intelligence Centre and District Intelligence[9] does not hold any information to confirm media reporting that suggested ram raids are being used as part of the gang prospecting process.[10][11]

25. Of the 283 total ram raids, 37 percent (n=105) resulted in enforcement action – of this, 39 percent resulted in a youth referral, and 61 percent in prosecution (for one or more offender).[12]

26. In 46 occurrences a suspect was linked, including eleven repeat suspects but no further enforcement action was taken.
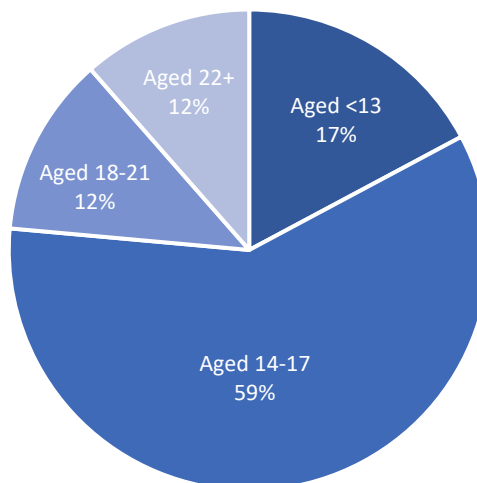

Figure 5: Percentage of offenders by age.

OFFENDER MOTIVATION

27. The increasing number of ram raids being committed by youth offenders possibly suggests a link to organised youth crime and an increasing presence of youth gangs. In both Waikato and Bay of Plenty, where ram raid offending was the highest, ram raids are reportedly being committed for fun and notoriety. The offending is often posted online. In Waikato it is sometimes live streamed for others to view.[13][14]

28. In Waikato offending is predominantly being committed by youth gangs. Members often meet while in juvenile custody then make connections with youth offenders in other districts. The stolen goods are often shared amongst themselves and sold online. Drugs, specifically methamphetamine, is sometimes consumed before offending. There is a level of sophistication to their offending; s.6(c) OIA

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[8] National Intelligence Centre. (August 2016). *Ram Raids NIC/IR/160815.* IN CONFIDENCE. New Zealand Police.

[9] New Zealand Police District Intelligence Unit Representatives, personal communication, 14 December 2021.

[10] New Zealand Police Gang Intelligence Centre Representative, personal communication, 14 December 2021.

[11] This includes both validated and non-validated gang links. Gang membership was determined based on their NIA status at the time of writing. This does not guarantee gang involvement at the time of offending, however due to the relatively small timeframes, likely provides a good indication.

[12] Occurrences may have resulted in more than one outcome e.g. youth referral and prosecution.

[13] Bay of Plenty District Intelligence Representative, personal communication, 14 December 2021.

[14] Waikato Tactical Crime Unit Representative, personal communication, 17 December 2021.

PREVENTION METHODS DEPLOYED

29. In 10 percent (27 occurrences) a ram raid was attempted but offenders were unable to gain entry to the premise. This was largely due to vehicles being unable to successfully ram through the premises' main doors/roller door to provide the offenders access (15 occurrences). The second highest cause of hinderance was due to offenders driving into bollards (six occurrences).

30. While bollards are an effective method to prevent any damage to the targeted premise from a car, in numerous occurrences where Police recommended their installation, store owners, in particular for small businesses such as dairies, stated they could not afford to do so.

31. A fog cannon was activated during one ram raid but did not deter the offenders from following through with the ram raid.

32. In nine occurrences offenders decamped without taking anything, after either being confronted by a store owner or member of the public, or they were deterred when an alarm/siren was activated.

33. Locked cigarette cabinets and locked cash registers were notably successful in preventing offenders from obtaining the targeted commodity.

Conclusion & Recommendations

34. Police should continue providing CPTED[16] prevention advice to business owners including:

    a. Installing bollards outside the premise.

    b. Securing cash registers to bench tops to prevent offenders from uplifting the whole cash register to later open in private.

    c. Putting signs on windows 'no cigarettes or cash held here overnight.'

    d. Ensuring the cash register is empty at the end of the day and that businesses carry a reduced number of cigarettes/tobacco to reduce the potential reward for any successful offenders.

    e. Install CCTV inside and outside the premise to assist in the identification of vehicles used as well as the offenders.

    f. Installing a security system including an alarm to draw attention from the public and to deter offenders from entering the premise if the vehicle successfully rams the building.

35. s.6(c) OIA

    It would be beneficial for Police to engage with youth offenders, in particular the younger first-time offenders who are more likely to cooperate with Police, to gain understanding of offending motivations and how this differs between districts.

36. The inconsistent manner in which ram raids are described in reporting limits understanding of the ram raid landscape within New Zealand. Consideration into further education around the correct terminology and recording standards is needed. In some instances, 'ram raid' was not mentioned in an occurrence and instead was referred to by using 'rammed', 'smash and grab', and in some cases just by describing the actions. When

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[15] Waikato Tactical Crime Unit Representative, personal communication, 17 December 2021.
[16] Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

entering an occurrence into NIA, ensuring 'ram raid' was included in the subject line would assist with data retrieval.

37. Creating a flag in NIA to select when entering a ram raid occurrence would further help ensure consistency by allowing occurrences to be easily retrieved for ongoing analysis of the environment.

38. Consideration could be given to a multi-agency approach, engaging with Oranga Tamariki to address youth currently known to them, who have been identified as also having committed a ram raid. This would help to provide a more targeted and tailored approach to reducing risk and allow for recidivism intervention.

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