

## Overview and comments additional to Victoria Police submission:

In relation to the terms of reference I wish to add the following:

- (a) With regard to *'the types of crimes committed against Australians'*. Although no response was provided in our written submission I would draw the committees attention to the extract Victoria Police Crime Statistics Provisional report of 2001/2002 page 30 that reports the 'most frequently occurring offences recorded by police in 2001/2002'.
- (b) Referring to *'perpetrators of crime and motives'* I wish to add the following comments,

There is little information available on the motivation of offenders for committing for offences, some items of note are: -

(a) Overall drug offences have decreased by 9.4% (00/01: 14258, 01/02: 12914). Traffick heroin offences decreased by 47.0% (00/01: 1728, 01/02: 915). The decrease in these offences was due to a heroin drought and basically some offenders changed to amphetamines as their drug of choice. Evidence for this is possess and use amphetamines offences increased by 29.2% (00/01: 799, 01/02: 1033).

(b) This heroin drought was also a factor in the overall decrease in robbery offences which was 13.1% (00/01: 4331, 01/02: 3765). Robbery offences at service stations and convenience stores fell by about 30%. It is believed that because of the heroin drought addicts no longer had such a desperate need to rob service stations and convenience stores.

(c) Operation Embona teams were formed to target the robbery problem. Of the 694 offenders processed by those teams during the 01/02 fiscal year, 40.6% were said by investigators to have had a drug motivation for committing the crime. 32.8% of the offenders processed by these teams also had prior convictions for criminal offences.

- © In response to the third term of reference, *'fear of crime in the community'* we would add the following;

The last Victorian Crime Victimization Survey for the Department of Justice was conducted in 1999. As such it is dated but some points of interest are: -

- 47.7% of victims of robbery reported the offence to police. This was up from 39.3% in the previous survey (1996).
- 29.9% of victims for assault offences reported the offence to police. This was up from 22.2% in the previous survey.

- The reasons people gave for not reporting offences to police include: offence not important enough, inconvenient to report, police could not do anything, police wouldn't do anything, it was a private matter and fear of retribution.

A National Survey of Community Satisfaction with Policing was conducted for the 2001/2002 fiscal year for the Australasian Centre for Policing Research. Some of the points of interest from that survey are: -

- 76.3% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with police service in Victoria. This compares to a national average of 69.9%.
- 94.3% of respondents felt safe or very safe at home by themselves during daylight hours in Victoria. The national average was 91.3%.
- 81.6% of respondents felt either safe or very safe at home by themselves during the night in Victoria. The national average was 80.4%.
- 90.5% of respondents felt either safe or very safe whilst walking or jogging locally during the day in Victoria. The national average was 87.6%.
- 42.9% of respondents felt either safe or very safe whilst walking or jogging locally during the night in Victoria. The national average was 39.8%.
- Of the respondents surveyed the following percentages were somewhat concerned about being the victim of the following offences: -

	<u>Victoria</u>	<u>Australia</u>
Sexual Assault	36.7%	40.5%
Physical Assault	52.2%	56.4%
Housebreaking	70.7%	74.9%
Motor Vehicle Theft	69.4%	70.0%
Fraud/Credit Card Theft	59.1%	59.7%
Internet Based Crime	44.2%	44.4%

- (d) Our comments in relation to *'the impact of being a victim of crime and fear of are;*

There is very little readily available material on why offenders commit crime. The following points may be of assistance:-

- The number of male victims for Robbery offences aged under 17 years increased by 51.7% (00/01: 352, 01/02: 534). This is an indication that young people, particularly males, are increasing becoming the target of robberies,

particularly offences that occur in the "street" or on public transport. Often the amount of cash involved in these robberies is minimal and can be categorised as a form of victimisation, by youths of around the same age of the victim, to exert power over the victim. There is no indication that drugs motivate these offences and there is anecdotal evidence that young people are reluctant to report these offence either due to a fear of retribution or a belief that police won't be able to respond adequately.

- There is a linkage between the increase in teenage victim of robbery and the 33.1% increase in assault offences involving the use of a knife. That linkage can be summarised as increasing numbers of young people fear being robbed and carry a knife for self protection. When another incident occurs that does not involve robbery, in the heat of the moment the knife is used either in an attack or defensive situation.

- Further evidence that for this scenario is that the number of offences in the Weapons/Explosives category increased last year by 21.7% (00/01: 5004, 01/02: 6092).

In addition to the above and with reference to our earlier submission I have included the following table as an example of some victims unwillingness to pursue matters.

<b>RECORDED OFFENCES FOR RAPE AND SEX (NON-RAPE) OFFENCES, BY RESULT TYPE, PREVIOUS THREE FINANCIAL YEARS</b>						
	<b>1999/2000</b>		<b>2000/2001</b>		<b>2001/2002</b>	
	<b>Offence</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Offence</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Offence</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>RESULT TYPE</b>						
<b>COMPLAINT WITHDRAWN</b>	608	7.8	625	8.2	555	7.7
<b>NO OFFENCE DISCLOSED</b>	201	2.6	191	2.5	159	2.2
<b>OFFENDER PROCESSED</b>	5575	71.8	5388	70.3	4932	68.5
<b>OTHER</b>	76	1.0	91	1.2	70	1.0
<b>UNSOLVED</b>	1308	16.8	1367	17.8	1480	20.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7768</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>7662</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>7196</b>	<b>100.0</b>

- (e) To the term of reference '*strategies to support victims and reduce crime*' I would like to add additional information that illustrates one Victoria Police strategy to reduce crime. This strategy focuses on six identified crime areas with strategies being developed under the direction of individual Acting Assistant Commissioners to best manage crime reduction in these areas.

Emerging Issues or Trends that are having an effect on the Victorian community:

**Vehicle Watch**

Each Region has deployed a dedicated team identified as a TOMCAT team (Theft Of Motor Car Action Teams), which is dedicated to investigating and preventing theft of motor car and theft from motor car.

**Embona**

Each Region has deployed a dedicated team identified as Embona Taskforce Team, which is dedicated to investigating and preventing offences in the Robbery category.

Emerging issue - Of interest is the fact that 33% of offences in the Robbery category are committed against victims less than 20 years old.

**Burglary Response**

Each Region has deployed a dedicated team identified as ACROBAT (Aggravated Commercial Residential Other Burglary Action Teams), which is dedicated to investigations and preventing offences in the Burglary category.

**Property Damage, Theft (other) and Deception** are continuing to be developed.

In addition Robert Reid who has accompanied me will address specific questions in relation to victim strategies that may be asked..

- (f) Additional information from the 2001/2002 Victoria Police Provisional Crime Statistics report is provided in relation '*apprehension rates*'. I would refer the committee to page 7 of that report (circulated).
- (g) '*effectiveness of sentencing*'. Victoria Police makes no response to this term of reference.
- (h) +With regard to this term of reference, '*community safety and policing*', we rely on the previous written submission supplied and would refer the committee to page 5.