

The Crime Situation in South Africa

1. Introduction

The present report deals with the reported national serious crime figures and ratios for the 2009/2010 financial year (that is the period 1 April 2009 - 31 March 2010). These are compared to the figures recorded during the preceding financial years since 2003/2004. The provincial crime figures are also analysed in more detail and some comments made on aspects influencing the crime situation. More detailed crime figures and maps are provided on the SAPS website at www.saps.gov.za.

A number of significant successes were achieved in combating crime. Three key categories of contact crime decreased, namely murder, attempted murder and robbery with aggravating circumstances. The significant drop in the incidence of murder represents a highlight in this report. For the first time since the establishment of the South African Police Service in 1995/1996, murder declined to below 17 000 cases. The decrease from 26 877 to 16 834 cases between 1995/1996 and 2009/2010 represents a 50% reduction in the murder ratio. While the murder figure is still high, the SAPS is encouraged by the fact that significant progress has been made in this regard.

The decreases of -8,6% and -6,1% in the occurrence of murder and attempted murder respectively can most probably be attributed to reductions of -10,4% in street/public robbery and -6,8% in carjacking. The latter was accompanied by a stabilization of the number of residential and business robberies reported in the country. The positive developments reflected by these notable decreases should be sustained and enhanced.

2. The National Crime Situation

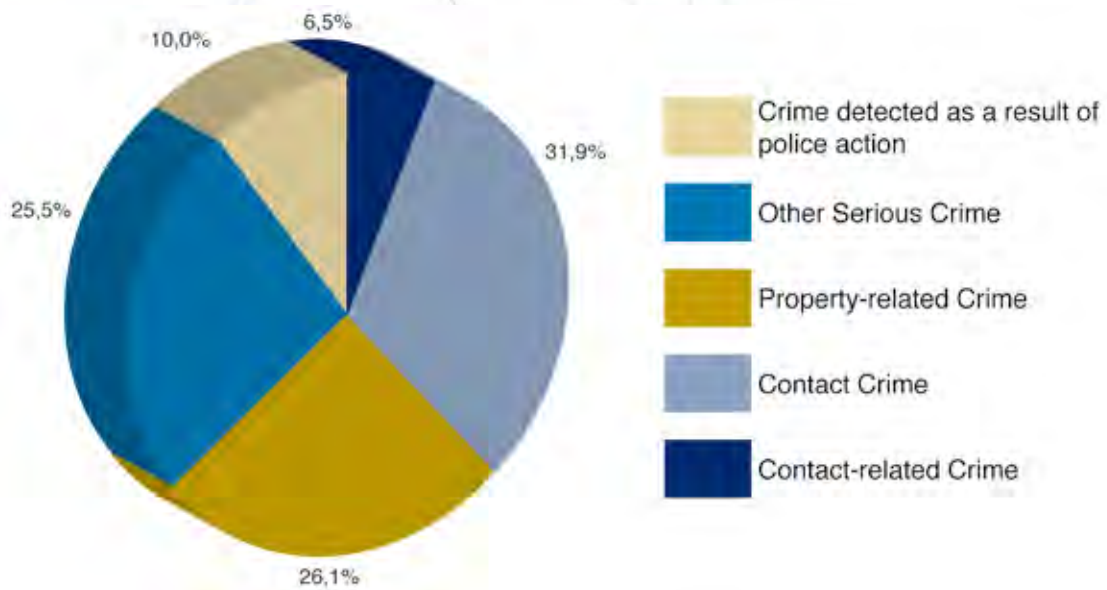
Analysis of the national crime situation is facilitated by grouping the 20 serious crime tendencies discussed in this report into the following broad crime types:

- Contact crime (crimes against the person);
- Contact-related crime;
- Property-related crime;
- Other serious crime; and
- Crime detected as a result of police action.

During 2009/2010 a total of **2 121 887** (approximately 2,1 million) serious crime cases were registered in the RSA. **Figure 1** illustrates the proportional contribution of each of the above broad crime types to the total crime picture in South Africa. Of the approximately 2,1 million cases, roughly a third (**31,9%**) were contact crimes, **26,1%** were property-related crimes, **25,5%** were other serious crimes and **10,0%** and **6,5%** were crimes detected as a result of police action and contact-related crimes respectively (more information on the specific proportions will be provided in each section dealing with the types of crime in question).

Figure 1

Serious Crime in the RSA: 2009/2010
2 121 887 Cases



The ratios and raw figures pertaining to the reported incidence of serious crime in the RSA recorded during the 2009/2010 financial year (1 April 2009 – 31 March 2010) are provided in **table 1**. These figures are compared to those recorded during the preceding financial years since 2003/2004, the year before the implementation of a **7 – 10%** annual contact crime reduction target for South Africa.

According to international practice, ratios (i.e. per capita figures or crimes per 100 000 of the population) are used in most of the comparisons in this report. This is done because ratios equalize matters and eliminate distortions which could result from population growth and different population sizes among different geographical areas.



Table 1

Serious crime during the 2003/2004 to 2009/2010 financial years and the percentage increases/decreases in crime between 2008/2009 and 2009/2010

Crime category	Incidence of crime per 100 000 of the population					Raw figures/frequencies					% Increase/Decrease 08/09 vs 09/10				
	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006		2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
Contact Crime															
Murder	42.7	40.3	39.5	40.5	38.6	37.3	34.1	19 824	18 793	18 528	19 202	18 487	18 148	16 834	-7,2%
Total sexual offences	142.5	148.4	145.2	137.6	133.4	144.8	138.5	66 079	69 117	68 076	65 201	63 818	70 514	68 332	-3,1%
Attempted murder	64.8	52.6	43.9	42.5	39.3	37.6	35.3	30 076	24 516	20 571	20 142	18 795	18 298	17 410	-4,9%
Assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm	560.7	535.3	484.0	460.1	439.1	418.5	416.2	260 082	249 369	226 942	218 030	210 104	203 777	205 293	0,7%
Common assault	605.7	575.0	485.3	443.2	413.9	396.1	400.0	280 942	267 857	227 553	210 057	198 049	192 838	197 284	2,3%
Robbery with aggravating circumstances	288.1	272.2	255.3	267.1	247.3	249.3	230.6	133 658	126 789	119 726	126 558	118 312	121 392	113 755	-6,3%
Common robbery	206.0	195.0	159.4	150.1	135.8	121.7	116.7	95 551	90 825	74 723	71 156	64 985	59 232	57 537	-2,9%
Contact-related Crime															
Arson	19.0	17.6	16.3	16.6	15.5	14.1	13.6	8 806	8 184	7 622	7 858	7 396	6 846	6 701	-2,1%
Malicious damage to property	341.2	323.7	307.7	302.5	286.2	275.8	267.9	158 247	150 785	144 265	143 336	136 968	134 261	132 134	-1,6%

Crime category	Incidence of crime per 100 000 of the population							Raw figures/frequencies							% Increase/Decrease 08/09 vs 09/10	
	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/Decrease 08/09 vs 09/10	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009		2009/2010
Property-related Crime																
Burglary at residential premises	645.2	592.8	559.9	526.8	497.1	506.5	520.2	2.7%	299 290	276 164	262 535	249 665	237 853	246 616	256 577	4.0%
Burglary at non-residential premises	139.3	120.3	116.0	123.3	131.7	143.8	145.5	1.2%	64 629	56 048	54 367	58 438	62 995	70 009	71 773	2.5%
Theft of motor vehicle and motorcycle	190.0	180.0	183.3	182.1	167.7	156.0	145.5	-6.7%	88 144	83 857	85 964	86 298	80 226	75 968	71 776	-5.5%
Theft out of or from motor vehicle	370.8	318.8	296.6	261.7	233.4	225.0	245.1	8.9%	171 982	148 512	139 090	124 029	111 661	109 548	120 862	10.3%
Stock-theft	89.0	70.1	61.3	60.8	60.1	61.7	65.7	6.5%	41 273	32 675	28 742	28 828	28 778	30 043	32 380	7.8%
Crime Detected as a Result of Police Action																
Illegal possession of firearms and ammunition	36.3	33.3	28.7	30.3	28.2	28.8	29.5	2.4%	16 839	15 497	13 453	14 354	13 476	14 045	14 542	3.5%
Drug-related crime	135.1	180.3	204.1	220.9	228.1	240.7	273.4	13.6%	62 689	84 001	95 690	104 689	109 134	117 172	134 840	15.1%
Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs	53.7	64.2	70.6	80.7	101.2	115.4	127.6	10.6%	24 886	29 927	33 116	38 261	48 405	56 165	62 939	12.1%
Other Serious Crime																
All theft not mentioned elsewhere	1 307.4	1 151.1	922.7	876.0	826.1	809.5	745.0	-8.0%	606 460	536 281	432 629	415 163	395 296	394 124	367 442	-6.8%
Commercial crime	120.4	115.8	115.6	130.2	136.4	159.1	172.0	8.1%	55 869	53 931	54 214	61 690	65 286	77 474	84 842	9.5%
Shoplifting	155.0	142.8	137.5	138.2	140.0	165.9	179.7	8.3%	71 888	66 525	64 491	65 489	66 992	80 773	88 634	9.7%

Crime category	Incidence of crime per 100 000 of the population								Raw figures/frequencies							
	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/Decrease 08/09 vs 09/10	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/Decrease 08/09 vs 09/10
Some Subcategories of Aggravated Robbery Already Accounted for Under Aggravated Robbery Above																
Carjacking	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13 793	12 434	12 825	13 599	14 201	14 915	13 902	-6,8%
Truck hijacking	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	901	930	829	892	1 245	1 437	1 412	-1,7%
Robbery of cash in transit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	192	220	383	467	395	386	358	-7,3%
Bank robbery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	54	58	59	129	144	102	93	-8,8%
Robbery at residential premises	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9 351	9 391	10 173	12 761	14 481	18 438	18 786	1,9%
Robbery at business premises	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3 677	3 320	4 387	6 689	9 862	13 920	14 534	4,4%

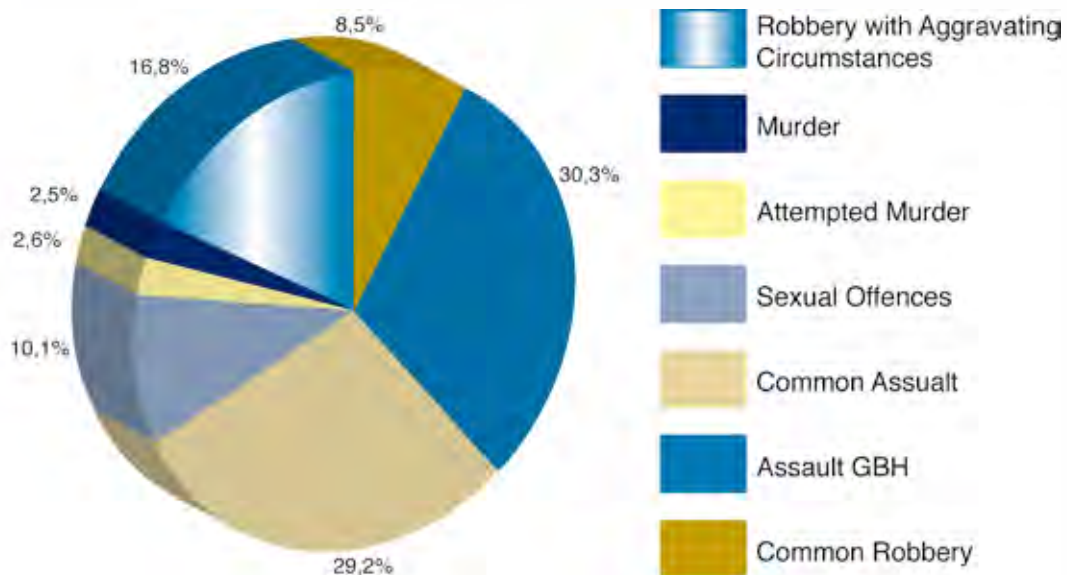
2.1 Contact Crime

Contact crime involves physical contact between the perpetrators and victims. Such contact may last anything from a second or two (e.g. where a perpetrator grabs the handbag from a victim's hand and runs off with it) to an ordeal of several days (e.g. where a perpetrator kidnaps a victim during a carjacking, rapes her repeatedly and eventually kills her). Physical contact between victims and perpetrators will always have a more serious psychological impact than cases in which property is stolen from the victims in the latter's absence (e.g. during a housebreaking when the victim is away from home or otherwise unaware of the crime's occurrence at the time it is committed). Contact crime derives from violence against the person, irrespective of the nature of such violence. This type of crime includes the following categories of offences:

Crime category		Proportion of all contact crime
Murder	-	2,5%
Attempted murder	-	2,6%
Assault GBH	-	30,3%
Common assault	-	29,2%
Sexual offences	-	10,1%
Aggravated robbery	-	16,8%
Common robbery	-	8,5%

Figure 2

Contact Crime in the RSA: 2009/2010 676 445 Cases (31,9%)



Contact or violent crime poses a more pernicious threat to South Africa than crime in general. A distinction is made between social contact crime and robbery, although these two broad categories are not mutually exclusive.

Social contact crimes, which comprises all contact crime except aggravated robbery and common

robbery, are mainly crimes occurring between people who know one another (family, friends, acquaintances, colleagues, neighbours, etc). It frequently results from arguments about money or property, sex, work-related issues and matters of a religious or ideological nature which manifest in physical violence (assault GBH or common assault). The latter could easily escalate to murder, attempted murder or culpable homicide. In a majority of cases such violence is caused by impaired judgement linked to alcohol and drug abuse.

2.1.1 Social Contact Crime

All research conducted by the Crime Information Analysis Centre (CIAC) - now known as the Crime Research and Statistics component of Crime Intelligence - over the past decade has confirmed that approximately **70,0% - 80,0%** of murders, **60,0%** of attempted murders, **75,0%** of rapes and **90,0%** of all assaults (whether GBH, common or indecent assault) involve victims and perpetrators who know one another (whether as family members, friends, acquaintances or colleagues). Alcohol and to a lesser extent drug abuse frequently play a role in these crimes¹. This is why the five crimes in question are referred to as social contact crimes. Strictly speaking, these should have been referred to as dominantly social contact crime. The latest research indicates that roughly **65,0%** of murders are associated with social behaviour and **16,0%** are a consequence of other crimes (mainly robbery), while **12,0%** and **7,0%** respectively are committed in self-defence² by law enforcers or victims of crime; or as a result of group behaviour such as vigilantism, gang wars and taxi-related violence (see *2008/2009 SAPS Annual Report*, pp 10 - 11).

The percentage decreases/increases in the recorded ratios of social contact crime over the 2009/2010 financial year are provided in **table 1**. Significant decreases in the ratios of the following categories of dominantly social contact crime were recorded between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010:

- Murder - 8,6%
- Attempted murder - 6,1%
- Sexual offences - 4,4%

A marginal decrease and even a marginal increase in the incidence of the following two dominantly social contact crime categories were recorded:

- Assault GBH -0,5%
- Common assault 1,0%

2.1.1.1 Murder

The **-8,6%** decrease in the murder ratio between 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 represents a decrease of 1 314 murders, from 18 148 to 16 834 cases. This meets the 7 – 10% reduction target, but is also significant for the following reasons:

- For the first time in the history of the SAPS (which came into being during 1995), the murder figure fell below the 17 000 mark. In 1995/1996, a total of 26 877 murders were recorded, while in 2009/2010 the figure decreased to 16 834 murders. That represents a **37,4%** decrease in cases (which translates into a ratio decrease of almost **50,0%**), while South Africa's population increased by at least **26,0%**. This means that murder decreased by **50,0%** in the face of rapid

¹ However, it should be noted that at least **20,0% - 30,0%** of murders, **40,0%** of attempted murders, **25,0%** of sexual offences and **10,0%** of assaults occur between strangers (often as a result of other crimes). The latter figures consequently in most cases represent people killed, assaulted and raped during robberies, intergroup conflict (e.g. taxi-related and gang fights) and vigilantism.

² Self-defence represents a response to criminal behaviour. An example of this is where the owner of a house shoots a robber during a house robbery.

population growth and massive urbanization, both also stimulated by the additional influx of undocumented immigrants³. Rapid population growth and urbanization are universally associated with unemployment, poverty and the growth of informal settlements. Such areas usually experience social crime and are often difficult to police. Crime experts would have expected an increase in murder cases under such social circumstances. Murder is the one crime trend which can virtually not be influenced by over or under-reporting and/or the non-registration of cases. It is therefore believed to be the most consistent indicator of increases and decreases in crime.

- The **-8,6%** decrease in the murder ratio, which relates to a **-7,2%** decrease in real figures, is the single most significant decrease in the murder figure since the implementation of the **7 – 10%** reduction target during January 2004. Since 2004/2005 the following decreases in real figures were recorded during successive financial years:

Table 2

The changing incidence of murder: 2004/2005 to 2009/2010

2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
-5,2%	-1,4%	3,6%	-3,7%	-1,8%	-7,2%

The 2009/2010 figure is the third-largest decrease in murder recorded since 1995 (a **10,0%** decrease was recorded during 1999/2000 and an **8,0%** decrease during 2003/2004). A number of possible explanations exist for this significant decrease in the murder figure during 2009/2010.

- Extremely high levels of police visibility were maintained during the first quarter of 2009/2010 (April – June 2009) as a result of events such as the 2009 general elections, the inauguration of President Zuma, international cricket matches and the Confederation Cup Football tournament. These were then sustained by the new management of the Department of Police (through the particular efforts of the Minister, Deputy Minister and National Commissioner) during the second quarter (July – September 2009) and again increased during October – December 2009 with Operation Festive Season. These high levels of visibility may not have had any noticeable effect on social contact crime, but it would have reduced the number of robberies (and thus also murders and attempted murders committed by robbers and deaths and injuries caused by their victims acting in self-defence), as well as murders committed during intergroup violence.
- Significant successes were achieved against robbers during the reporting period (see **section 2.1.2**). It was earlier indicated that by far the majority of the **16,0%** of murders committed as a consequence of other crimes are actually perpetrated during robberies. If robberies are reduced as indicated in **section 2.1.2**, it is logical that murders will also drop significantly. The same applies to attempted murder, which is to a large degree also associated with robberies. As already indicated, attempted murders decreased by **-6,1%** during 2009/2010.
- The arrest of robbers will in all probability not only reduce murders as a result of robbery, but also remove perpetrators of social contact crime from society. Research indicates that robbers are not only violent in terms of the robbery they commit, but also sometimes commit social contact crime (murder, attempted murder, assault and sexual offences). On the other hand, the question can then be asked why, if these robbers had been arrested and in that way prevented from committing social assaults and resultant murders, the assault GBH and common assault figures did not also

³ *The following comment in this regard appeared in the 2008/2009 Annual Report of the SAPS (p 9): “This means that the crime ratios may be inflated by 10 – 20% - particularly if it is kept in mind that most of the estimated 3 – 6 million immigrants may belong to the economically active age group as well as the high crime risk age group”. The murder ratio may therefore actually have been 27.3 per 100 000 and not 34.1 per 100 000 during the reporting period (2009/2010) as indicated in table 1 if the number of undocumented immigrants had been correctly reflected in the population figures. The presence of undocumented immigrants might therefore clearly exert an influence on factors considered as generators of or conducive to crime, as well as the calculation of crime ratios. However, it should be noted that previous analyses have never indicated a disproportionate involvement of foreigners in crime in South Africa as such.*

decrease as significantly as the murder, attempted murder and robbery figures. The explanation could be that during big events more partying and alcohol consumption occurs, creating increased opportunity for arguments - particularly between people knowing one another. This will generate upward pressure on less policeable crimes such as assault and sexual offences. On the other hand, more policeable crimes such as robbery, housebreaking and theft of motor vehicles would decrease.

Finally, it is necessary to emphasize that crimes are registered on the basis of the facts available or circumstances obtaining at the time such crimes are reported to or discovered by the police. This is done because the registered crime and accompanying detailed data are used within 24 hours in operational analysis, which provides the basis for intelligence-led policing. During subsequent investigation and eventually prosecution and once suspects are charged with the crimes, the detectives and/or prosecutors may drop, add or change charges. This could also happen during court cases or once a verdict is reached in court. The result could be that the original pattern (counts) of crime may change quite significantly from what had originally been recorded. A docket analysis involving a representative sample of 9 638 contact crime dockets registered during 2000 was conducted in 2006. This indicated that only **58,7%** and **56,9%** of attempted murder and murder verdicts respectively corresponded with the charges as originally registered. In the case of original murder charges, **34,6%** and **5,7%** of the guilty verdicts were eventually obtained in relation to charges of culpable homicide and assault GBH respectively. In the case of original attempted murder charges, **25,0%** and **3,8%** of the guilty verdicts were eventually obtained in relation to charges of assault GBH and unlawful discharging of a firearm respectively. In the case of assault GBH, common assault and rape, **93,0%**, **94,1%** and **92,8%** of the guilty verdicts were respectively obtained in relation to the charges as originally registered. The reason for the high disparity between original murder and attempted murder charges and guilty verdicts, is that in the case of murder and attempted murder the essence lies in having to prove the intention to kill. Particularly in South Africa, where the majority of murders as well as attempted murders are social in nature, it will not always be clear when the crime is registered whether the intention had actually been to kill.

2.1.1.2 Assault GBH and common assault

Assault GBH and common assault experienced a marginal decrease of **-0,5%** and a marginal increase of **1,0%** respectively. A **7 – 10%** reduction was clearly not achieved in respect of these two largest contributors to the overall contact crime figure and mainly social contact crimes (the two categories together account for nearly **60,0%** of all social contact crime).

Since the implementation of the **7 – 10%** annual reduction target per contact crime category during January 2004, it became more and more difficult to achieve this target. This is evident from the following ratio decreases recorded from 2004/2005 till date:

Table 3

The changing incidence of assaults: 2004/2005 to 2009/2010

Crime	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
Assault GBH	-4,5%	-9,6%	-4,9%	-4,6%	-4,7%	-0,5%
Common assault	-5,1%	-15,6%	-8,7%	-6,6%	-4,3%	1,0%

The reason for the increasing difficulty experienced in efforts to decrease the incidence of assault GBH and common assault can probably be found in the following possible explanations:

- It has already been indicated that assaults (GBH and common) are largely a social phenomenon occurring between people knowing each other, with alcohol and drug abuse also considered as conducive to these crimes. It is further known that these crimes frequently occur in localities not readily covered by conventional policing (patrols, roadblocks, stop-and-search operations) such as the privacy of homes and places of employment, as well as clubs, shebeens, taverns, bars and other social gathering places. To reduce these crimes significantly, communities will have to alter their lifestyle.
- During the past three years the whole world experienced an economic recession (some experts even refer to an economic meltdown or depression) and many countries reportedly experienced a dramatic increase in some property-related and commercial crime (specifically shoplifting, theft and fraud), as well as in social or domestic violent crime. It seems as if there is at least some truth in the old saying that “when economic hardship enters through the front door, love flies out at the back door”. This may also have exerted an upward pressure on the incidence of assault.
- In **section 2.1.1.1** mention has already been made of the fact that big events hosted by South Africa since the beginning of 2009 may have increased the opportunities for less policeable crimes such as assault GBH and common assault to occur because of more socializing, tension and excitement in society.

People will find it difficult to change their lifestyle if their living conditions are grim. A person living in appalling conditions with low levels of education, little prospects of employment and no positive recreational activity may abuse alcohol or drugs. This will occur in social conditions already tense because of damaged self-esteem and an intense competition for extremely scarce resources.

To systematically reduce crime of this nature under the unfavourable conditions described above, the following measures need to be considered:

- Massive economic development and also a growth in the informal sector to create jobs and eliminate unemployment as far as possible.
- The development of suitable human settlements in which people can live a meaningful life and develop a strong, positive self-esteem.
- Providing education to the youth that will develop their self-esteem, entrepreneurial skills and understanding of crime as well as the dangers of being drawn into it.
- Policing geared to achieve the following:
 - Reduction of crime levels (particularly of violent crime) to such an extent that human settlement development is possible.
 - Reduction and elimination of those crimes which inhibit local and foreign investment and tourism – particularly the trio crimes of carjacking, house robbery and business robbery.
 - Creating awareness – through effective prosecution of as many cases as possible - that social and domestic violence are totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated, particularly where women and children are concerned.

When the **7 – 10%** contact crime reduction targets were determined in 2004, it was clearly indicated that these were actually not police targets only, but South African targets. The more social contact crimes such as assault GBH and common assault will only decrease significantly if all relevant Government

departments (among which the Police Service is but one), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and particularly the communities themselves work hand-in-hand to reduce these crimes and the underlying conditions giving rise to them.

2.1.1.3 Sexual offences

With regard to sexual offences, it was already stated in the *Annual Report of the SAPS for 2008/2009* (p 4) that “Fully valid comparisons pertaining to the sexual offences will only become possible after the period 1 October 2009 to 31 March 2010”. However, it can be accepted that the comparisons of figures for the period 1 April 2009 – 31 March 2010 with those recorded from 1 April 2008 – 31 March 2009 will be much more valid than those in the 2008/2009 Annual Report, which indicated a **10,1%** increase. This report for 2009/2010 indicates a ratio decrease of **-4,4%**, from 144.8 sexual offences per 100 000 of the RSA population in 2008/2009 to 138.5 sexual offences per 100 000 in 2009/2010. This represents a decrease of 2 182 cases, from 70 514 to 68 332. The main reason why historical comparisons between these figures of 70 514 and 68 332 cases and the figures of previous years are extremely difficult and even impossible, is that sexual offences as presently defined differ substantially from those recorded in the past – prior to December 2007. These now include a widened definition of rape (encompassing the formerly exclusive concept of vaginal rape, as well as adding oral and anal rape – and thus also male rape – which previously fell under the category of indecent assault). However, it then goes further to add a whole range of offences which never previously formed part of rape or indecent assault – such as sex work, pornography, public indecency and human trafficking. The addition of these sexual offences mainly generated by police action (at least 13 000 cases), makes it impossible to compare the present sexual offences figures as portrayed in **table 1** with figures for rape and indecent assault recorded in the past. If all sexual offence cases registered in 2009/2010 which would have qualified as rape and indecent assault cases before 16 December 2007 are identified and counted, the result adds up to 55 097 cases. If this figure is compared to the last combined rape and indecent assault figures recorded for 2006/2007, which stood at 61 984 cases, a decrease of **-11,1%** is actually noted. This implies an average annual decrease of **-3,7%** from 2006/2007 to 2009/2010.

In future (from 2010/2011) a special effort will have to be made to separate sexual offences between those reported by the public (which basically comprise rape or sexual penetration and indecent assault) and sexual offences which are generated by police action (such as those relating to sex work or prostitution and pornography), in order to depict the figures separately in **table 1**.

2.1.1.4 Crimes Against Women and Children

The number of counts of social contact or violent crime committed against adult women and children of both genders under the age of 18 (meaning up to the age of 17 years, 364 days, 23 hours and 59 minutes) are provided in **tables 4** and **5** respectively. These tables indicate significant (actually shocking) increases of **42,3%**, **36,1%** and **14,5%** respectively in the incidence of attempted murder, all sexual offences and murder against children between 2008/2009 and 2009/2010. The reader should be aware that the increases in attempted murder and murder against children are indeed real, but that these are based on relatively small numerical values. Attempted murder against children increased by 331 cases, from 782 to 1 113 and murder by 122 cases, from 843 to 965. The **36,1%** increase in sexual offences against children, as well as the **19,8%** increase in sexual offences against adult women (which represent 7 276 cases committed against children and 5 969 cases against adult women) are mainly due to an age and gender attribute problem that occurred during the implementation of the new sexual offences codes on the Crime Administration System (CAS) during December 2007. Basically there had been a period during which the gender and age attributes applicable to sexual offences were not recorded, because these were not compulsory fields on the CAS. This was only rectified during August 2009. It can be accepted that at least a proportion of the increase in sexual offences against children and women is indeed real and can in all probability be linked to a new awareness of sexual offences accompanying the implementation of the sexual offences legislation at the end of 2007. Government and the public should take note of the serious increase in murder, attempted murder and sexual offences against children, as well as the increase in sexual

offences against adult women.

It should also be emphasized that according to various previous analyses pertaining to crimes against children according to age, most of the crimes are committed against children between 15 – 17 years old (see e.g. the *2008/2009 SAPS Annual Report*, pp 13 – 14). These indicated that **54,9%** of murders, **59,6%** of attempted murders, **70,8%** of assaults GBH, **63,1%** of common assaults and **39,5%** of sexual offences committed against children were committed against those in the age group of 15 – 17 years. However, it is disturbing to notice that in the case of the most prevalent crime against children, namely the 27 417 cases of sexual offences against children, **60,0%** were committed against children below the age of 15 years. It is even more worrying to note that **29,4%** of these sexual offences involved children aged 0 – 10 years.

Table 4

Crimes against women 18 years and older: 2006/2007 – 2009/2010

Crime category	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	Difference 2008/2009 vs 2009/2010	% Increase/ decrease
Murder	2 602	2 544	2 436	2 457	21	0,9%
Attempted murder	3 362	3 016	2 966	3 008	42	1,4%
All sexual offences	34 816	31 328	30 124	36 093	5 969	19,8%
Common assault	100 390	94 286	91 390	94 176	2 786	3,0%
Assault GBH	69 132	64 084	61 509	62 143	634	1,0%
Total	210 302	195 258	188 425	197 877	9 452	5,0%

Table 5

Crimes against children younger than 18 years: 2006/2007 – 2009/2010

Crime category	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	Difference 2008/2009 vs 2009/2010	% Increase/ decrease
Murder	972	1 015	843	965	122	14,5%
Attempted murder	889	852	782	1 113	331	42,3%
All sexual offences	25 428	22 124	20 141	27 417	7 276	36,1%
Common assault	16 871	16 091	14 544	14 982	438	3,0%
Assault GBH	13 947	13 625	12 422	12 062	-360	-2,9%
Total	58 107	53 707	48 732	56 539	7 807	16,0%

2.1.2 Robberies

2.1.2.1 Common Robbery

Common robbery decreased by **-4,1%**, from 121.7 per 100 000 to 116.7 per 100 000 of the population. This is short of the **7 – 10%** reduction target, which had indeed been met during 2007/2008 with a **-9,5%** decrease and during 2008/2009 with a **-10,4%** decrease. The most probable explanation for this below target performance is the economic slump experienced worldwide during the reporting period.

2.1.2.2 Aggravated Robbery

Robbery with aggravating circumstances includes the following subcategories of robbery:

- Carjacking;
- truck hijacking;
- robbery at residential premises (house robbery);
- robbery at non-residential premises (business robbery);
- cash-in-transit (CIT) robbery;
- bank robbery; and
- other aggravated robberies not mentioned elsewhere on this list, which are mainly aggravated robberies occurring on the streets and in other public open spaces. These are described as “street robberies” in this report.

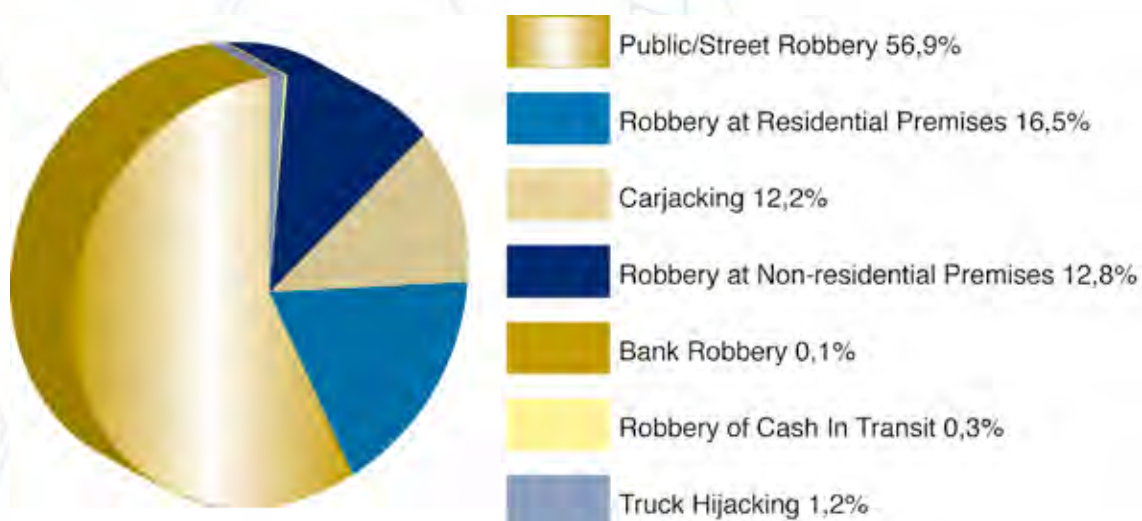
Table 6

Robbery with aggravating circumstances disaggregated according to the percentage contribution of each subtrend in terms of raw figures

Subcategory	Cases reported		Distribution per subcategory during 2009/2010	Real case increase/decrease	% increase/decrease
	2008/2009	2009/2010			
Street/public robbery	72 194	64 670	56,9%	-7 524	-10,4%
Robbery at residential premises	18 438	18 786	16,5%	348	1,9%
Robbery at business premises	13 920	14 534	12,8%	614	4,4%
Carjacking	14 915	13 902	12,2%	-1 013	-6,8%
Truck hijacking	1 437	1 412	1,2%	-25	-1,7%
CIT robbery	386	358	0,3%	-28	-7,3%
Bank robbery	102	93	0,1%	-9	-8,8%
Total	121 392	113 755	100,0%	-7 637	-6,3%

Figure 3

**Different Subcategories of Aggravated Robbery during the 2009/2010 Financial Year
(Total Cases: 113 755)**



Aggravated robbery, despite being a contact crime itself, is also the second-largest generator of other contact crimes, particularly attempted murder and murder, because victims are sometimes killed and/or seriously injured during such robberies. The vast majority of house robberies, carjackings, business robberies, truck hijackings, cash-in-transit (CIT) heists and bank robberies are committed with firearms. Shots are frequently fired at victims and may hit them. The victims in many cases return fire in self-defense and may also hit the robbers, or even innocent bystanders. A number of attempted murders involving people wounded under the above circumstances can consequently be generated during a single case of such robbery.

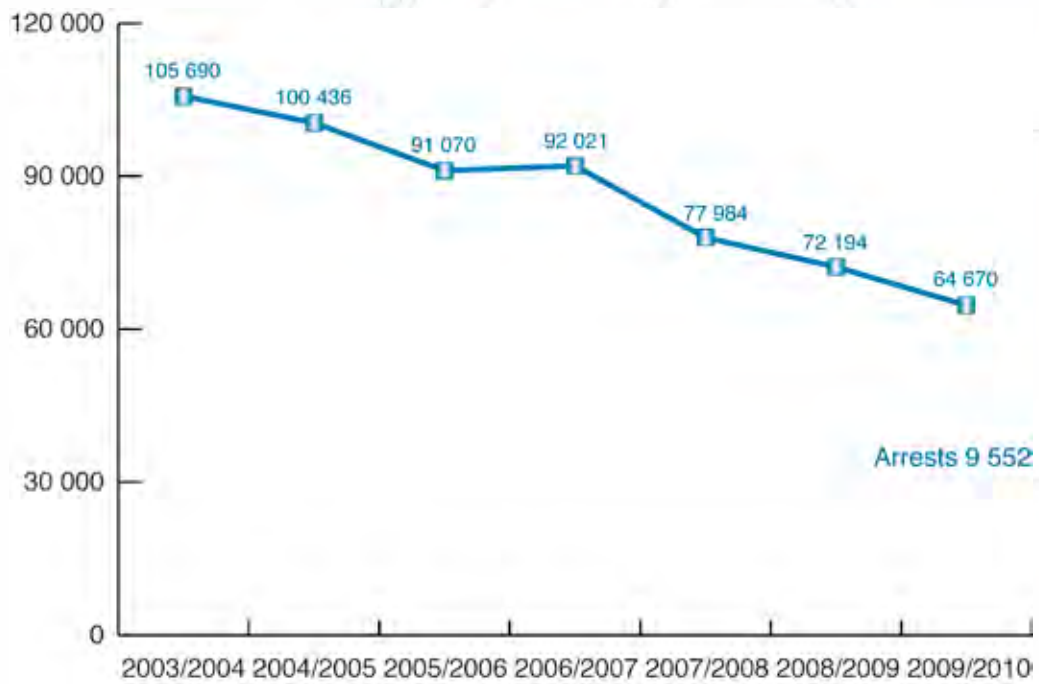
Calculations based on the figures in **table 1** indicate that robbery with aggravating circumstances accounted for **5,4%** of all South Africa's serious crime and **16,8%** of its contact crime during the past financial year (see **figures 1** and **2**). **Table 6** and **Figure 3** depict the number of cases relating to each subtrend of robbery with aggravating circumstances recorded during the 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 financial years; the percentage contribution of each subtrend to the total aggravated robbery figure during 2009/2010, ordered from the most important contributor (street/public robbery) to the least (bank robbery); the increase or decrease in the number of cases recorded for each subtrend; and the percentage increase or decrease this represents for each of those subtrends between 2008/2009 and 2009/2010.

Street robbery, which decreased by a significant (in excess of the target) **-10,4%** - and that upon significant decreases of **-15,3%** and **-7,4%** during 2007/2008 and 2008/2009 respectively - still accounted for the majority (**56,9%**) of all aggravated robberies during the present reporting period. Since the introduction of the **7 – 10%** reduction target in 2004, street or public robbery has decreased from 105 690 cases in 2003/2004 to 64 670 cases during the current reporting year of 2009/2010. That represents a decrease of **-38,8%** or an average of **-6,5%** per year.

For the first time in five years the TRIO crimes stabilized (either no change compared to the previous financial year or only small decreases/increases). The percentage increases/decreases in TRIO crimes since the introduction of the **7 – 10%** reduction target in 2004 are depicted in table 7.

Figure 4

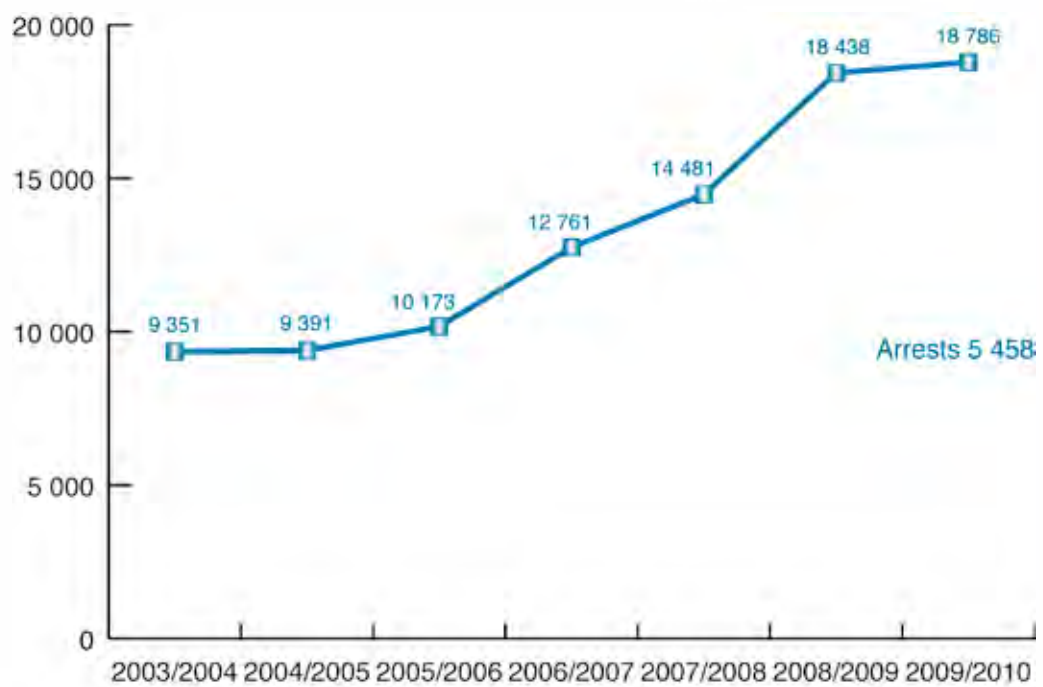
Subcategory of aggravated robbery: Public or street robbery



Public or street robbery decreased by -10.4% (-7 524 cases) between 2008/2009 and 2009/2010

Figure 5

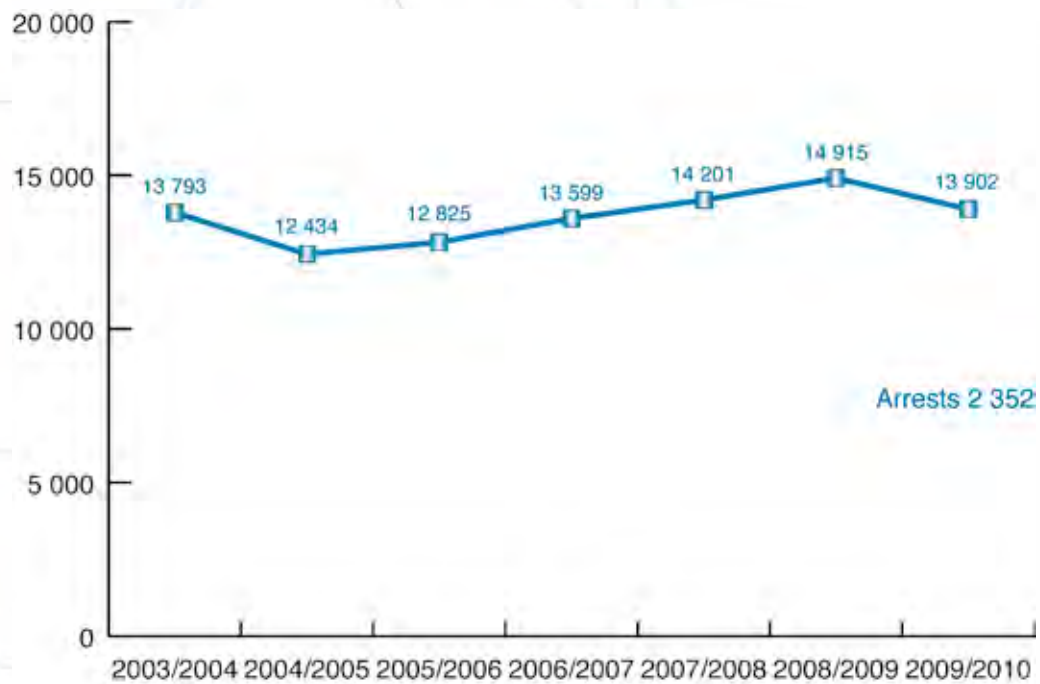
Subcategory of aggravated robbery: Robbery at residential premises



Robbery at residential premises increased by 1,9% (348 cases) between 2008/2009 and 2009/2010

Figure 6

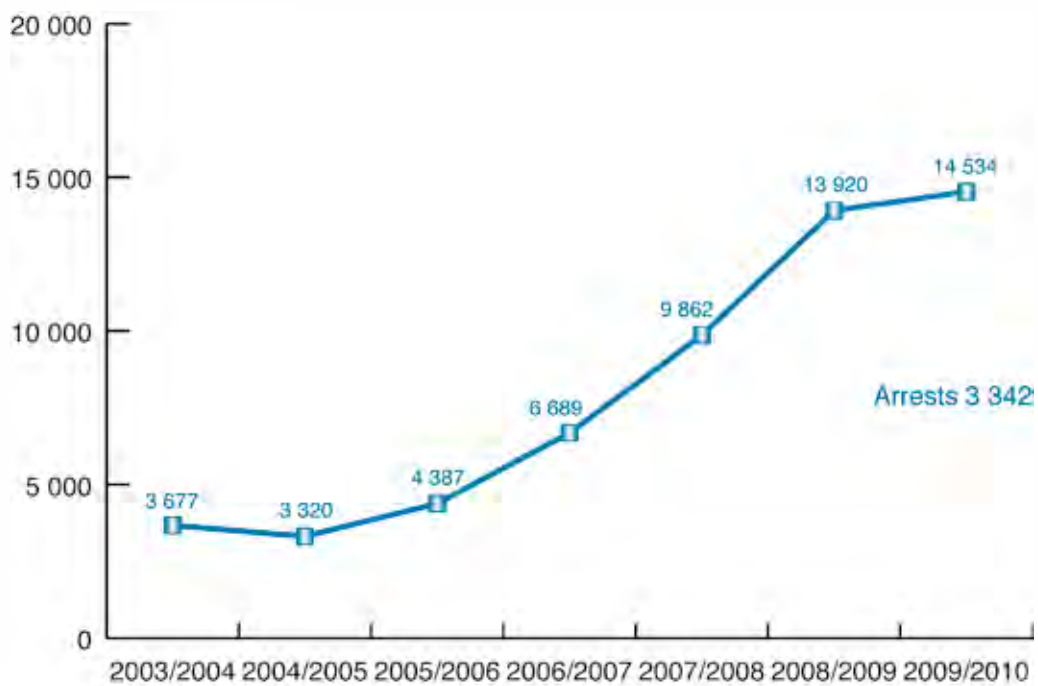
Subcategory of aggravated robbery: Carjacking



Carjacking decreased by 6.8% (-1 013 cases) between 2008/2009 and 2009/2010

Figure 7

Subcategory of aggravated robbery: Robbery at non-residential premises



Robbery at non-residential premises increased by 4,4% (614 cases) between 2008/2009 and 2009/2010

Table 7

Increases/decreases in Trio crimes

Crime	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
Carjacking	-9,9%	3,1%	6,0%	4,4%	5,0%	-6,8%
House robbery	0,4%	8,3%	25,4%	13,5%	27,3%	1,9%
Business robbery	-9,7%	32,1%	52,5%	47,4%	41,1%	4,4%

It is abundantly clear from the trends depicted above that all the TRIO crimes, but particularly house and business robberies, had increased significantly over the four years prior to 2009/2010. However, carjacking decreased by **-6,8%** in 2009/2010, while house robbery and business robbery increased marginally (compared to preceding years) by **1,9%** and **4,4%** respectively. This represents some stabilization after four – five years of major increases, particularly in the incidence of house and business robbery.

These stabilizations can in all probability be linked to the following:

- Much higher visibility of the SAPS during 2009/2010 as a result of the general elections, presidential inauguration, Confederation Cup and cricket tournaments. Operational analysis at station level during 2009/2010 confirmed that police visibility at the right time (peak time of occurrence) at the right places and employing the right tactics (e.g. stop-and-search operations) could clearly decrease the trio crimes significantly. This was reconfirmed by analyses done during the World Cup tournament of June – July 2010. High visibility has the following impact:
 - Trio crimes are discouraged by police visibility in the traditional flashpoints of crime and at peak times of occurrence.
 - Resultant displacement of criminals could pose increased risks of apprehension to them (by e.g. decreasing the reaction time of the police or shifting the robbers' operations to areas and times they are not familiar with).
 - Informed policing based on proper flashpoint and peak time analysis could even displace specific crimes to localities where these can be combated more easily (planned displacement, usually to an area and time posing increased risk to the robbers and ensuring maximum police impact, e.g. an area with fewer exits and escape routes).
- The implementation of provincial operational centres in some provinces (so-called "war rooms") where improved, higher level linkage analysis and profiling can be done. This is of major assistance with regard to the following:
 - Provincial assistance to stations.
 - Clustering investigation teams and focusing on crime series (dockets dealing with the same suspects, targets and/or modus operandi).
 - Identification of intelligence collection targets.

The above measures are important in order to ensure that the combating of Trio crimes is not only focused on the runners or foot soldiers committing these crimes, but also on the criminals at higher levels (e.g. the finger men, leaders and receivers).

- Successes achieved in combating robberies. The number of suspects charged in connection with

all subcategories of aggravated robbery during 2009/2010 are compared to the number of cases for all the subcategories of aggravated robbery registered over the same period in **table 8**.

Table 8

Suspects charged in connection with aggravated robbery: 2009/2010

Subcategory of robbery	Cases of aggravated robbery per subcategory for 2009/2010	Number of suspects charged during 2009/2010	Arrests as % of cases registered
Street/public robbery	64 670	9 552	14,8%
House robbery	18 786	5 458	29,1%
Business robbery	14 534	3 342	23,0%
Carjacking	13 902	2 352	16,9%
Truckjacking	1 412	140	9,9%
Cash in transit robbery	358	52	14,5%
Bank robbery	93	38	40,9%
Total aggravated robbery	113 755	20 934	18,4%

It should be emphasized that all the suspects charged in connection with the indicated crimes during the 2009/2010 financial year cannot always be linked to cases registered during that specific financial year. Some suspects may have been charged in connection with cases registered during previous financial years. The table is presented in this specific way simply to indicate the proportionality of successes against the extent of the crimes. The following should be emphasized:

- A number of the suspects may have been charged in connection with a whole series of cases. All these robberies are usually repeat crimes. Very few perpetrators will commit such crime on a once-off basis. Where proper linkage analysis is done, it is not out of the ordinary to link a perpetrator/group of perpetrators to 30 – 40 case dockets over a relatively brief period of time. It will thus not be correct to make the deduction that if there had been 18 786 house robberies in 2009/2010 and in the same year 5 458 suspects were arrested, arrests had only been made in **29,1%** of the cases and that in **70,9%** of the cases there were no arrests. The reasons are as follows:
 - Some of those charged may have been arrested in connection with a whole series of crimes.
 - A number of suspects may be charged in connection with only one robbery.
 - One suspect charged may also have been responsible for a whole range of the cases included in the figures for aggravated robbery, but may not be linked to all of them.

What the table is actually illustrating, is that quite a number of suspects committing aggravated robbery are charged. If it is accepted that these very same suspects had also committed cases with which they were not linked and thus not charged, it may very well be that 20 934 suspects charged may have committed a significant proportion of the 113 755 cases of aggravated robbery. It is at least evident from research that each aggravated robbery is not committed by a different robber.

It was earlier indicated that carjacking almost met the 7 – 10% reduction target with a decrease of **-6,8%**. At the same time, house robbery and business robbery stabilized with relatively small increases of **1,9%** and **4,4%** respectively after years of extraordinary increases. It is also clear from **table 7** and **figures 5, 6** and **7** that although carjacking was on the increase from 2005/2006, it did so at much lower rates than house robbery and business robbery. From **table 7** it is clear that the percentage increases in house and business robberies were almost seven times higher than those of carjacking.

Research and operational analysis over the past five – seven years indicated that aggravated robberies

can be committed by a single perpetrator acting wholly on his own right through to groups of 10 – 15 or even more perpetrators operating for their own account or upon instruction or to the benefit of others as part of organized crime. Conversely perpetrators may simply supply such a syndicate with contraband without actually being part of it; or may commit their crime in response to orders for specific types of contraband emanating from a syndicate not linked to the actual crime at all. The following findings are relevant to this discussion:

- Most street robbers operate at street level in central business districts (CBDs) and megatownships as individuals or in small groups. They mainly rob cash or cellular telephones and in some cases small, expensive articles such as watches. This subcategory of aggravated robbery is in all probability in most cases not organized at all. The only contact point with organized crime will be if cellular telephones and/or other small items (such as watches or laptop computers) are sold to given receivers on a regular basis.
- Most house robbers operate in small (two – three person) groups, often with a single firearm, selecting their targets on the basis of appearances (an impression that a target may offer rich pickings). They rob mainly between 22:00 and 04:00 at night, because they want their victims present in order to open safes and/or hand over cash, cellular telephones or jewellery. Most of them have no contact with a next level of receivers, meaning that this crime can rarely be described as truly organized crime. House robbery is only an organized crime if the robbers strike with a specific target in mind and in response to prior intelligence, i.e. when they are sent by somebody at a higher level to a specific address in order to rob some specific items (e.g. the Rolex gang/s).
- Business robbers can basically be divided into two categories. Most of them rob small and even unregistered businesses (e.g. spaza shops and shebeens), but also sometimes targeting medium-sized businesses. They steal mainly cash and cellular telephones. That is why they frequently rob cash-based businesses in residential areas. The perpetrators may even be the same criminals who also commit house robbery. This category of business robbers is in most cases neither organized themselves, nor do they link up with organized crime at a higher level.

A smaller category of business robbers rob medium-sized to large stores or businesses. These groups of frequently 10 – 15 members operate in very much the same way as CIT robbers. Their targets are specifically cash in bulk, jewellery, expensive computer equipment, cellular telephones, etc. Like CIT robbers, these groups are more organized and will either link up with or be part of higher levels of organized crime.

- Carjackers mostly differ from the groups above. They are usually part of hijacking syndicates or serve as suppliers to highly organized syndicates at a higher level of organized crime. Most carjackings are committed with the following in mind:
 - Exporting the vehicles to another country.
 - Cloning the vehicles and re-entering them into the legal market.
 - Dismantling the vehicles for spare parts.

To achieve (particularly the first two of) the above aims with hijacked vehicles, requires the involvement of organized crime. It can only succeed with higher level planning, corruption of Police, Home Affairs, SARS and licencing officials and will most probably involve money laundering and multidimensional organised crime.

2.2 Contact-related Crime

Contact-related crime covers the crimes of arson and malicious damage to property, which accounted for **6,5%** of all serious crime reported during 2009/2010. Such crimes can flow from either individual behaviour (someone in bad faith causing damage to another person's property for whatever reason) or from collective behaviour (a group of people going on the rampage as a result of industrial action; out of frustration with e.g. trains running late or a lack of service delivery; or from being swept along by a frenzy of e.g. xenophobic fury). In this regard it has to be kept in mind that if a train is set alight, a charge of malicious damage to property will be registered, as arson usually only occurs when immovable property is set alight. This may partly explain the large difference in the reported figures of the two crimes under discussion. According to **tables 1** and **9**, the incidence of arson decreased by **-3,5%**, while malicious damage to property decreased by **-2,9%** since the previous financial year. Compared to figures for 2003/2004, arson has decreased by **-28,4%** over the past five financial years and malicious damage to property by **-21,5%**.

Table 9

A comparison of the decreases in the ratios of recorded contact-related crimes between 2008/2009 and 2009/2010

Crime Category	Financial year 2008/2009	Financial year 2009/2010
Arson	-9,0%	-3,5%
Malicious damage to property	-3,6%	-2,9%

The seriousness of the crimes under discussion is often overlooked. Deliberate destruction of or damage to sophisticated – and even not that sophisticated – equipment can cause disruption and losses running into millions to both the private and the public sector in material terms alone. It may ruin some concerns, with an attendant loss of employment opportunities and concomitant effects on the rest of society.

In a similar vein, deliberate (or even negligently started) veld or forest fires (whether resulting from pure maliciousness, intended as an act of intimidation, meant as revenge or originating from whatever purpose the criminals involved could devise) can have unforeseen consequences. The ensuing costs not only result from the direct damage incurred, but possible loss of life and also the efforts spent on preventing and combating such fires. The damage itself could be far-reaching and such fires might rage over literally hundreds of kilometres, engulfing and sometimes completely destroying heritage sites; productive farmland (often leaving both small-scale and commercial farmers totally devastated); invaluable natural resources (including sensitive elements of biodiversity); and other irreplaceable assets. The direct and indirect suffering to human beings and animals caused by such wanton destruction is literally incalculable.

2.3 Property-related Crime

This category of crime includes burglary at residential and non-residential premises, theft of motor vehicles and motorcycles, theft out of or from motor vehicles and stock-theft. These crimes (except in some cases of theft out of or from vehicles) mainly occur in the absence of the victims and therefore involve no violence other than damage to property in some cases. The figures contained in **table 1** and **figure 1** indicate that property-related crime accounted for **26,1%** of all reported serious crime during 2009/2010. A matter of real concern is that according to **table 10**, four of the five categories of property-related crime experienced increases during 2009/2010, namely theft out of or from motor vehicle (**8,9%**), stock-theft (**6,5%**), burglary at residential premises (**2,7%**) and burglary at non-residential premises (**1,2%**). Theft out of or from motor vehicle, stock-theft and burglary at residential premises decreased constantly between 2003/2004 and 2007/2008, then increased slightly during

2008/2009 and increased even further during 2009/2010 (the current reporting period). The decreases in the incidence of these three property-related crimes over the four years preceding 2008/2009 were as follows:

- Theft out of/from motor vehicle -39,3%
- Stock-theft -32,5%
- Burglary at residential premises -23,0%

There can be little doubt about the conclusion that these trends are due to the world economic slump since 2008.

Table 10

The decreases and increases in the ratios of property-related crimes recorded during 2008/2009 and 2009/2010

Crime Category	Financial year 2008/2009	Financial year 2009/2010
Burglary at residential premises	1,9%	2,7%
Burglary at non-residential premises	9,2%	1,2%
Theft of motor vehicle and motorcycle	-7,0%	-6,7%
Theft out of or from motor vehicle	-3,6%	8,9%
Stock-theft	2,7%	6,5%

Different schools of thought exist regarding the influence of economic hardship on crime. Some are of the opinion that no link exists between unemployment and crime, as the vast majority of unemployed people do not and will not become criminals. They argue that "...even if poverty or unemployment do tempt some people to commit offences, in the larger scheme of things they cannot rank highly as causes of crime. At best they are just excuses. The causes of crime lie within rather than outside the mind of a wayward person".⁴ Although this way of thinking may hold some truth, international experience has shown that there tends to be an increase in certain forms of crime during times of economic hardship. Increases of up to **22%** in burglary experienced during July 2008 in a number of police precincts in Britain were ascribed to the recession that hit Europe during the first part of 2008.⁵ A report on conditions in the United States indicates that "Of 233 police agencies surveyed by the Police Executive Research Forum, a Washington US based law enforcement organisation, 44% reported a rise in certain types of crime they attributed to the United States' worst economic and financial crisis in decades. Of the 100 agencies that linked crime rises to the economic crisis, 39% said they had seen an increase in robberies, 32% an up tick in burglaries and 40% an increase in thefts from vehicles".⁶ From the above comments the deduction can be made that the increases in residential burglaries, theft out of/from motor vehicle and stock-theft recorded locally may be closely intertwined with the current economic situation. Real deprivation could be forcing people to commit crimes of a less violent nature, more from need than as a result of greed. Interestingly enough, the crimes experiencing an increase are in many cases strongly connected to the most basic needs of people, namely food (particularly stock-theft associated with "pot slaughter"), theft out of motor vehicle and housebreaking at residential premises (to steal food and clothing).

The marginal increase of **1,2%** in burglary at non-residential premises (mainly businesses and specifically small to medium-sized businesses) during 2009/2010 actually represents a stabilization,

⁴ D Weatherburn, "Economic Adversity and Crime", *Trends & Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice No 40*, Australian Institute of Criminology, August 1992.

⁵ J Doward & J Forsdike, "Figures confirm fear of 'recession crime wave'", *The Observer*, 21 September 2008.

⁶ "US Recession fuels crime rise, police chiefs say", *Reuters*, 27 January 2009
 < www.reuters.com/article/domestic_news/as_extracted_on_2009-01-27 >.

taking into account that this crime increased by **6,3%**, **6,8%** and **9,2%** respectively during 2006/2007, 2007/2008 and 2008/2009. Previous analysis indicated that burglary at business (non-residential) premises is more likely to be of an organized nature (e.g. to systematically steal computer equipment) than a crime of need. The same applies to theft of motor vehicles, which decreased systematically since 2003/2004 by **-18,6%** (from 88 144 cases in 2003/2004 to 71 776 cases in 2009/2010).

Research done by Business Against Crime (BAC) as well as international studies indicated that the more motor vehicles are stolen, the more the targets are hardened by installing additional and increasingly sophisticated security or anti-theft devices and systems. At first only associated with the more expensive and luxurious models, the technology has since also become a feature of the less expensive models. Short-term insurance companies also played a role in this development by constantly increasing the security requirements pertaining to less expensive models. (Tracking devices were e.g. a few years ago only compulsory in vehicles costing R300 000-00 or more. Within two - three years this amount was lowered to R200 000-00). The result is that the latest vehicles cannot easily be stolen anymore and now have to be hijacked by criminals. Not surprisingly, this contributed to a decrease in motor vehicle theft and an increase in hijackings.

2.4 Other Serious Crime

Other serious crimes, which accounted for **25,5%** of South Africa's total serious crime during the reporting period, include all theft not mentioned elsewhere, commercial crime and shoplifting. All theft not mentioned elsewhere (also called "other theft") basically refers to all theft excluding theft of motor vehicles and motorcycles, theft out of or from motor vehicles, housebreaking at both residential and non-residential premises and stock-theft (i.e. the crimes discussed as property-related crime). With 367 442 registered cases during 2009/2010, this is the single largest category of crime among the 20 categories of serious crime contained in **table 1**.

Table 11

The decreases and increases in the ratios of other serious crimes recorded during 2008/2009 and 2009/2010

Crime category	Financial year 2008/2009	Financial year 2009/2010
All theft not mentioned elsewhere	-2,0%	-8,0%
Commercial crime	16,6%	8,1%
Shoplifting	18,5%	8,3%

Table 11 indicates that in 2009/2010 other thefts decreased by **-8,0%**. The items stolen during other thefts cover anything from an engagement ring to a nearly worthless piece of hosepipe. Such items in most cases are easy to carry, can sometimes be used by the thieves themselves and are easy to hide or sell. The proceeds thus generated provide some people with the little money or few commodities they need to survive from day-to-day ⁷.

The increase of **8,3%** in shoplifting during 2009/2010 follows upon a much larger increase of **18,5%** during 2008/2009 and is in all probability related to the effects of the world economic crisis, as already discussed in section 2.3 above. Commercial crime - covering all kinds of fraud, forgery and uttering, misappropriations and embezzlement - followed the same upward trend observed since 2006/2007. The number of commercial crime cases reported has increased by **56,5%** since 2006/2007. Universally, the modern trend in commercial crime is for it to be handled "internally" as far as possible (i.e. within the company or industry affected) and these cases are reported to the police for the purpose of prosecution only, hence they are often not reported. Many companies, particularly

⁷ A more comprehensive and detailed discussion of the items stolen during other thefts appeared in the *SAPS Annual Report for 2007/2008*.

those in the financial sector which are entrusted with safeguarding the financial interests of their clients, do not want internal security breaches or corruption to become publicly known. They will consequently investigate such cases internally and even deal with the culprits in their own ways (e.g. by way of dismissal, forcing them to pay back defrauded sums and transfers). Although commercial crime is seen by many people as an easy way towards a lucrative lifestyle, financial pressure may also cause people to opt for this as an easy and often deemed untraceable method of supplementing their income. A study conducted by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners in Denver, Colorado in the United States of America (USA) during 2009 revealed that more fraud-related investigations were conducted in the US during 2008 than in 2007 and that about 50% of the respondents indicated that known perpetrators had reported being exposed to financial pressure before committing the acts in question ⁸.

2.5 Crime Detected as a Result of Police Action

The crimes fitting this category are the following:

- Illegal possession of firearms.
- Drug-related crimes (these cover both the use, possession of and dealing in drugs).
- Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The above crimes are usually not reported to the police by members of the public. These crimes come to attention primarily as a result of police actions such as roadblocks, searches and intelligence collection. An increase in these crimes may actually indicate that the police are more active, whereas a decrease may indicate reduced police activity. Other explanations may also exist for decreases and increases observed in relation to these crimes. Decreases may result from a change in strategy among gunrunners and drug peddlers (e.g. to avoid roadblocks), a real decrease in these phenomena, or the impact of previous actions like “arrive alive” campaigns on people’s drinking and driving behaviour. Crime detected as a result of police action are also indicators of the availability or presence of some of the generators of crime (particularly socially-motivated contact crimes). However, an increase in illegal possession of firearms and drug-related crime cases might not necessarily indicate an increase in the volumes of illegal firearms or drugs available in society. Similarly, a decrease does not necessarily indicate shrinking quantities of such firearms and drugs.

Table 12

The decreases and increases in the ratios of crime detected as a result of police action recorded during 2008/2009 and 2009/2010

Crime category	Financial year 2008/2009	Financial year 2009/2010
Illegal possession of firearms and ammunition	2,1%	2,4%
Drug-related crime	5,5%	13,6%
Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs	14,0%	10,6%

In the case of crime detected as a result of police action, an increase is considered as positive. The increases of **13,6%**; **10,6%** and **2,4%** respectively in drug-related crime, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs and illegal possession of firearms and ammunition during 2009/2010 should therefore be seen as a welcome development. The increase of **13,6%** in drug-related crime during 2009/2010 is particularly significant, being the second-largest increase recorded since 2003/2004. It shows that clean-up operations before the 2009 general elections, the presidential inauguration and

⁸ *White-collar crime strikes often in times of recession, Denver Business Journal, 26 May 2009*
 < www.bizjournals.com/denver/stories/2009/05/25, as extracted on 2009-05-27 >.

the Confederation Cup led to increased arrests of those possessing and dealing in drugs. However, it should also be stated that at least part of the increase might be linked to a higher volume of drugs on the market

3. The Provincial Crime Situation

The provincial serious crime ratios for the 20 serious crimes under consideration during the 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 financial years, as well as the percentage decreases and increases calculated on the basis of these ratios, are reflected in table 13.

Table 13 and the crime figures in **tables 14 - 22** as well as on the South African Police Service website (www.saps.gov.za) are self-explanatory. Only a few comments are therefore made in this section on increases and decreases in the provincial incidence of crime. The focus is on the most serious contact crimes and some subtrends of aggravated robbery.



Crime category	Eastern Cape			Free State			Gauteng		
	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/decrease 08/09 vs 09/10	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/decrease 08/09 vs 09/10	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/decrease 08/09 vs 09/10
Crime Detected as a Result of Police Action									
Illegal possession of firearms and ammunition	23.2	21.4	-7,8%	11.3	11.4	0,9%	38.7	39.1	1,0%
Drug-related crime	128.2	134.6	5,0%	158.5	176.1	11,1%	129.9	139.9	7,7%
Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs	135.7	165.3	21,8%	57.1	57.0	-0,2%	125.9	141.6	12,5%
Other Serious Crime									
All theft not mentioned elsewhere	511.4	434.9	-15,0%	853.8	752.6	-11,9%	1 181.9	1 113.1	-5,8%
Commercial crime	102.9	117.2	13,9%	112.9	120.5	6,7%	294.4	323.7	10,0%
Shoplifting	120.5	120.2	-0,2%	120.1	123.9	3,2%	237.8	263.6	10,8%
Contact Crime (Crimes Against the Person)									
Other Serious Crime									
Contact Crime (Crimes Against the Person)									
Murder	47.0	40.4	-14,0%	14.2	14.6	2,8%	25.1	24.3	-3,2%
Total sexual offences	131.4	127.0	-3,3%	88.6	93.8	5,9%	130.8	127.6	-2,4%
Attempted murder	48.7	44.2	-9,2%	13.3	13.9	4,5%	35.2	34.0	-3,4%
Assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm	298.0	295.6	-0,8%	250.6	254.8	1,7%	475.3	439.8	-7,5%
Common assault	295.9	315.6	6,7%	184.9	171.0	-7,5%	320.1	310.6	-3,0%
Robbery with aggravating circumstances	255.9	222.4	-13,1%	53.4	56.8	6,4%	193.6	183.3	-5,3%
Common robbery	84.9	76.4	-10,0%	63.2	62.9	-0,5%	121.9	110.0	-9,8%
Contact-related Crime									
Arson	11.9	11.5	-3,4%	11.1	11.8	6,3%	17.8	15.9	-10,7%
Malicious damage to property	161.8	160.7	-0,7%	124.4	116.4	-6,4%	242.7	227.6	-6,2%

Crime category	KwaZulu-Natal		Limpopo		Mpumalanga				
	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/decrease 08/09 vs 09/10	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/decrease 08/09 vs 09/10	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/decrease 08/09 vs 09/10
Property-related Crime									
Burglary at residential premises	372.6	386.6	3,8%	235.0	267.4	13,8%	552.6	536.5	-2,9%
Burglary at non-residential premises	110.6	108.3	-2,1%	120.3	119.6	-0,6%	148.4	153.6	3,5%
Theft of motor vehicle and motorcycle	120.1	109.6	-8,7%	20.6	20.9	1,5%	89.1	90.1	1,1%
Theft out of or from motor vehicle	128.4	136.1	6,0%	57.5	66.4	15,5%	155.8	178.2	14,4%
Stock-theft	74.6	76.2	2,1%	27.5	29.7	8,0%	87.9	92.3	5,0%
Crime Detected as a Result of Police Action									
Illegal possession of firearms and ammunition	41.9	47.5	13,4%	8.7	8.8	1,1%	16.4	17.2	4,9%
Drug-related crime	235.7	274.6	16,5%	62.9	92.5	47,1%	45.7	56.6	23,9%
Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs	127.0	114.2	-10,1%	31.5	42.5	34,9%	53.4	58.8	10,1%
Other Serious Crime									
All theft not mentioned elsewhere	486.7	448.7	-7,8%	340.4	307.2	-9,8%	690.6	647.9	-6,2%
Commercial crime	128.3	131.8	2,7%	53.6	57.5	7,3%	113.7	129.8	14,2%
Shoplifting	126.1	147.4	16,9%	81.9	85.5	4,4%	101.3	109.4	8,0%

Crime category	North West		Northern Cape		Western Cape				
	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/ decrease 08/09 vs 09/10	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/ decrease 08/09 vs 09/10	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/ decrease 08/09 vs 09/10
Crime Detected as a Result of Police Action									
Illegal possession of firearms and ammunition	14.1	11.3	-19,9%	6.6	4.4	-33,3%	44.0	40.7	-7,5%
Drug-related crime	207.6	223.3	7,6%	171.7	206.6	20,3%	1 003.1	1 127.7	12,4%
Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs	59.6	63.1	5,9%	110.5	112.0	1,4%	242.1	292.0	20,6%
Other Serious Crime									
All theft not mentioned elsewhere	634.8	554.6	-12,6%	719.4	647.8	-10,0%	1 722.8	1 616.3	-6,2%
Commercial crime	130.2	149.2	14,6%	88.4	99.7	12,8%	216.0	218.4	1,1%
Shoplifting	87.2	80.0	-8,3%	179.2	192.1	7,2%	358.0	382.7	6,9%

* The crime figures for Gauteng and North West provided in the 2008/2009 Annual Report differ from those in this table. This is because four precincts formerly located in North West have since become a policing responsibility of Gauteng as a result of the redemarcation of provincial borders.

3.1 Social Contact Crime

Table 14

Murder ratios sorted from the highest decrease to the highest increase between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010

Province	2008/2009	2009/2010	Increase/Decrease
RSA	37.3	34.1	-8,6%
North West	25.1	21.5	-14,3%
KwaZulu-Natal	47.0	40.4	-14,0%
Gauteng	37.9	32.7	-13,7%
Northern Cape	36.5	33.2	-9,0%
Western Cape	44.6	42.4	-4,9%
Mpumalanga	25.1	24.3	-3,2%
Eastern Cape	49.5	48.4	-2,2%
Free State	31.6	31.4	-0,6%
Limpopo	14.2	14.6	2,8%

From **table 14** it is evident that the highest ratio of murder reported during 2009/2010 was recorded in the Eastern Cape, followed by the Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and the Northern Cape. North West, KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and the Northern Cape achieved or exceeded the **7 – 10%** reduction target, while all other provinces (with the exception of Limpopo) recorded decreases of between **-4,9%** (Western Cape) and **-0,6%** (Free State). Limpopo recorded a slight increase of **2,8%** in the incidence of murder.

Table 15

Ratios of all sexual offences⁹ from the highest decrease to the highest increase between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010

Province	2008/2009	2009/2010	Increase/Decrease
RSA	144.8	138.5	-4,4%
Gauteng	174.0	148.6	-14,6%
North West	146.6	137.9	-5,9%
Northern Cape	170.3	160.8	-5,6%
Eastern Cape	143.7	136.1	-5,3%
KwaZulu-Natal	131.4	127.0	-3,3%
Mpumalanga	130.8	127.6	-2,4%
Free State	157.2	157.8	0,4%
Limpopo	88.6	93.8	5,9%
Western Cape	166.7	180.7	8,4%

The highest incidence of all reported sexual offences was recorded in the Western Cape, followed by the Northern Cape and Free State, while Limpopo featured at the bottom of the list. Six of the nine provinces recorded decreases in sexual offences, while three experienced increases. Only one of the

⁹ See elucidation in section 2.1.1.3.

six provinces which experienced decreases also met the reduction target, namely Gauteng with a very significant decrease of **-14,6%**. The increases in sexual offences of **8,4%** in the Western Cape and **5,9%** in Limpopo are cause for concern.

Table 16

Attempted murder ratios sorted from the highest decrease to the highest increase between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010

Province	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/Decrease
RSA	37.6	35.3	-6,1%
KwaZulu-Natal	48.7	44.2	-9,2%
Free State	32.0	29.1	-9,1%
Gauteng	49.8	45.6	-8,4%
Western Cape	33.6	31.9	-5,1%
Northern Cape	64.9	62.0	-4,5%
Eastern Cape	30.3	29.2	-3,6%
Mpumalanga	35.2	34.0	-3,4%
Limpopo	13.3	13.9	4,5%
North West	23.0	24.3	5,7%

The highest incidence of attempted murder during 2009/2010 was recorded in the Northern Cape, followed by Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. According to the figures in **table 16**, all the provinces with the exception of North West and Limpopo recorded decreasing trends in the incidence of attempted murder during 2009/2010. The decreases recorded by KwaZulu-Natal, the Free State and Gauteng met the **7 - 10%** reduction target for contact crime.

The highest ratio of assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm (twice the national ratio) was recorded in the Northern Cape. With the exception of Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State (where the recorded ratios were either less than 300 or in excess of 500), the levels of assault GBH in the other provinces closely followed the national average. While five of the provinces experienced decreases in the incidence of assault GBH, only the substantial decrease of **-7,5%** in Mpumalanga met the contact crime reduction target.

Table 17

Assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm ratios sorted from the highest decrease to the highest increase between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010

Province	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/Decrease
RSA	418.5	416.2	-0,5%
Mpumalanga	475.3	439.8	-7,5%
Northern Cape	884.7	830.7	-6,1%
North West	430.9	421.9	-2,1%
Free State	552.0	542.5	-1,7%
KwaZulu-Natal	298.0	295.6	-0,8%
Gauteng	461.9	466.1	0,9%
Eastern Cape	477.7	485.0	1,5%
Limpopo	250.6	254.8	1,7%
Western Cape	438.7	449.2	2,4%

Table 18

Common assault ratios sorted from the highest decrease to the highest increase between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010

Province	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/Decrease
RSA	396.1	400.0	1,0%
Limpopo	184.9	171.0	-7,5%
North West	272.6	257.7	-5,5%
Free State	681.3	655.2	-3,8%
Mpumalanga	320.1	310.6	-3,0%
Northern Cape	497.9	485.7	-2,5%
Gauteng	560.6	559.8	-0,1%
Eastern Cape	256.8	260.4	1,4%
KwaZulu-Natal	295.9	315.6	6,7%
Western Cape	602.1	642.3	6,7%

The highest incidence of common assault was recorded in the Free State, followed by the Western Cape and Gauteng. The lowest level of common assault was recorded in Limpopo, as was the case with regard to the other categories of social contact crime (see **table 13**). Six of the provinces recorded decreases in the incidence of common assault, with only Limpopo meeting the contact crime reduction target.

3.2 Aggravated Robbery and its Subtrends

Table 19

Robbery with aggravating circumstances ratios sorted from the highest decrease to the highest increase between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010

Province	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/Decrease
RSA	249.3	230.6	-7,5%
Northern Cape	108.3	90.4	-16,5%
KwaZulu-Natal	255.9	222.4	-13,1%
Gauteng	490.6	449.0	-8,5%
Mpumalanga	193.6	183.3	-5,3%
Free State	179.4	171.2	-4,6%
North West	163.3	157.1	-3,8%
Western Cape	241.9	234.1	-3,2%
Eastern Cape	149.2	145.5	-2,5%
Limpopo	53.4	56.8	6,4%

From **table 19** it is evident that the highest incidence of aggravated robbery (at a ratio nearly twice as high as the national average) was recorded in Gauteng, the economic and financial hub of South Africa. The Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal recorded the second and third-highest ratios, but closely matched the national average. All the provinces recorded decreases in aggravated robbery, except Limpopo which recorded a **6,4%** increase. The Northern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng respectively achieved **-16,5%**; **-13,1%** and **-8,5%** decreases, which met the reduction target. Since a majority of aggravated robberies occur in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, the significant reductions recorded there are a most positive development.

The figures in **table 20** indicate that **80,3%** of all reported carjackings occurred in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, with **53,6%** and **26,7%** of the reported cases respectively. All the provinces, with the exception of North West, the Free State and Northern Cape experienced decreases in carjacking.

Table 20

Carjacking sorted from the highest decrease to the highest increase between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010*

Province	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/Decrease
RSA	14 915	13 902	-6,8%
Mpumalanga	984	709	-27,9%
Western Cape	698	575	-17,6%
Eastern Cape	706	606	-14,2%
Limpopo	289	251	-13,1%
KwaZulu-Natal	4 062	3 715	-8,5%
Gauteng	7 662	7 444	-2,8%
North West	252	273	8,3%
Free State	255	316	23,9%
Northern Cape	7	13	_*_*

* Raw figures

** The low numerical values involved in the Northern Cape make this calculation meaningless.

The decreases in carjacking in Mpumalanga (-**27,9%**), the Western Cape (-**17,6%**), Eastern Cape (-**14,2%**) and Limpopo (-**13,1%**) exceeded the reduction target of 7 – 10% by far.

Table 21

Robbery at residential premises sorted from the highest decrease to the highest increase between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010*

Province	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/Decrease
RSA	18 438	18 786	1,9%
North West	919	899	-2,2%
Gauteng	8 190	8 051	-1,7%
KwaZulu-Natal	4 601	4 580	-0,5%
Eastern Cape	1 517	1 606	5,9%
Free State	490	535	9,2%
Mpumalanga	1 188	1 300	9,4%
Limpopo	514	584	13,6%
Western Cape	974	1 167	19,8%
Northern Cape	45	64	_*_*

* Raw figures

** The low numerical values involved in the Northern Cape make this calculation meaningless.

Most of the robberies at residential premises recorded during 2009/2010 were reported in Gauteng (**42,9%**) and KwaZulu-Natal (**24,4%**). A further **8,5%**, **6,9%** and **6,2%** of cases were reported in the Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and the Western Cape respectively. Most of the provinces (with the exception of North West, Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal) experienced increases.

The trends pertaining to robbery at non-residential premises (mostly businesses) are very similar to

those observed with regard to robbery at residential premises. Most of the cases were reported in Gauteng (43,9%) and KwaZulu-Natal (14,2%). A further 8,8%, 7,8% and 7,3% were reported in the Eastern Cape, North West and the Western Cape. Only KwaZulu-Natal experienced a substantial -17,3% decrease in robbery at non-residential premises. The situation in the Western Cape remained static and Gauteng experienced a marginal increase of 2,2%, while the rest of the provinces experienced increases of more than 10,0%.

Table 22

Robbery at non-residential premises ranked from the highest decrease to the highest increase between 1 April 2008 and 31 March 2009*

Province	2008/2009	2009/2010	% Increase/Decrease
RSA	13 920	14 534	4,4%
KwaZulu-Natal	2 499	2 066	-17,3%
Western Cape	1 058	1 058	0,0%
Gauteng	6 244	6 379	2,2%
Free State	785	873	11,2%
North West	1 015	1 130	11,3%
Limpopo	529	630	19,1%
Mpumalanga	818	978	19,6%
Northern Cape	121	147	21,5%
Eastern Cape	851	1 273	49,6%

* Raw figures

