THE STOLEN GOODS MARKET IN NEW SOUTH WALES: AN INTERVIEW STUDY WITH IMPRISONED BURGLARS

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New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Reseach

1998

Published by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research
Attorney General's Department
Level 8
St James Centre
111 Elizabeth Street
Sydney

ISBN 0 7313 2601 6

Website: www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/bocsar/

PREFACE

Non-violent theft is far and away the single most prevalent offence in Australia. Last year alone, for instance, nearly 130,000 homes were the subject of a break, enter and steal. At the moment, on average, nearly 1 in 18 NSW homes will be the subject of a break and enter in every twelve-month period. Police efforts to slow the rate of offending by arresting those who commit theft offences have only met with limited success. The major impediment to effective control lies in the fact that the supply of attractive suitable targets is very large while the risk of apprehension is very small. Last year in NSW, for instance, only about 6 per cent of break, enter and steal offences had been cleared up within 180 days of the offence being reported.

Conscious of this problem police have begun to search for other ways of reducing the level of theft. This search was encouraged by the realisation that in many instances seemingly lawful businesses were engaged in the purchase of stolen property. This realisation led police increasingly to switch their enforcement focus from apprehending thieves to apprehending those who purchase stolen goods. There are two attractive features of such a strategy. Firstly, those who regularly trade in stolen goods are often easier to identify and apprehend than those who steal goods. Secondly, by increasing the risks associated with trading in stolen goods police may reduce the willingness of people to purchase such goods. This should reduce the incentives for people to become involved in theft for profit.

The purpose of the present study was to assist police in identifying individuals regularly involved in purchasing or receiving stolen goods. Information from police intelligence and past research provided the basis of a questionnaire administered to a large group of both juvenile and adult offenders serving prison sentences in NSW for theft offences. The survey also sought a range of information from them on their individual rates of offending and the sorts of goods they each stole. This information was used to assess the relative importance and character of different avenues for disposing of stolen goods.

The results of the study should be extremely interesting both to criminologists and to law enforcement agencies. They show the potential value of empirical research to the development of policing strategies. They reveal a close integration between the stolen goods and illegal drugs markets. They also highlight the important role which seemingly legitimate business has in creating a market for stolen goods.

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Director

August 1998

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The impetus for this study came from the Deputy Commissioner of the NSW Police Service, Jeff Jarratt. Thanks are due to the NSW Police Service for their generous contribution to the funding of the study. Assistance in the design of the study was provided by Don Weatherburn, Bronwyn Lind, Pia Salmelainen and Roseanne Bonney from the Bureau, Pat Ward from the NSW Department of Health, and Neil Bridge and Peter O'Connor from the NSW Police Service. Thanks are due to Simon Eyland from the NSW Department of Corrective Services and Tony Jenkins from the NSW Department of Juvenile Justice for facilitating access to the respondents. A special thanks is also due to our interview team and to Kerrie Bannister, Shyama Batra, Thalia Struve-Broughton and Julianne Elliot for their assistance in various aspects of the project. Feedback and helpful comments on earlier versions of the report were provided by Christine Coumarelos, Bronwyn Lind and Don Weatherburn and desktop publishing was carried out for the report by Les Kery and for the interview schedule by Jonathan Nichol. We are also grateful to our colleagues at the Bureau and the Intelligence Officers of the Cabramatta Local Area Command for discussions which assisted us in the interpretation of the results. Finally, a special thanks to all the respondents who generously shared their experiences with us.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(1) Two-hundred and sixty-seven imprisoned burglars — about half adult and half juvenile — were interviewed about the process of burglary and the disposal of stolen goods. Many of the questions focussed on a specific reference period which was the time the respondent was last free, prior to the current incarceration.

(2) Respondents were asked about the number of burglaries they had committed during the reference period and were also asked how many times they had ever been charged with burglary by the police. The respondents' median burglary rate was 8.7 per month during the period on which the interview focussed. There was a significant correlation between the respondents' total number of charges for burglary and the respondents' burglary rate, indicating that respondents who reported committing more burglaries also tended to report more charges for burglary. Burglars who were heroin users reported a higher median rate of burglary (13.0 per month) than did burglars who did not use heroin (8.7 per month). Juveniles had a somewhat higher median rate of burglary (12.7 per month) than did adults (8.7 per month). Burglars specialising in residential properties reported a higher rate of burglary (12.8 per month) than those specialising in commercial properties (8.7 per month). Burglars who thought about getting caught (i.e. risk-aware burglars) reported lower burglary rates (8.3 per month) than those who did not think about getting caught (i.e. risk-unaware burglars, 13.0 per month).

(3) Approximately four-fifths of the respondents who had used a vehicle to get to and from a burglary used a stolen one. Relatively more juveniles than adults used stolen vehicles for burglaries.

(4) Just over four-fifths of the sample reported spending some or all of their burglary income on illicit drugs, nearly half the sample reported spending on general living expenses, nearly half reported spending on clothes and about 7 per cent reported spending on gambling. These patterns of expenditure were broadly similar for all respondents, with one exception — juveniles more frequently identified clothes as an expenditure item than did adults.

(5) Nearly two-thirds of the adult sample and one-quarter of the juvenile sample had used heroin during the period on which the interview focussed.

(6) Median earnings from burglary were $2000 a week. Median burglary income was greater for adults ($2500) and for heroin users ($3000) than for juveniles ($1000) and non-users of heroin ($1000).

(7) Median expenditure on all illicit drugs by drug users was $900 per week. Median expenditure on heroin by heroin users was $1500 per week.

(8) Higher rates of burglary were significantly associated with greater expenditure on illicit drugs (regardless of type of drug).

(9) Prior to sale, respondents typically hid stolen goods in either their own home (36.4%) or a friend's home (31.2%). Stolen goods were also stored in vehicles (16.4% of respondents), hidden in the bush (15.6%), in the family home (14.8%), in lock-up garages (13.6%) and in empty houses (3.2%).

(10) Forty-six per cent of respondents generally committed burglaries alone. However, relatively more juveniles than adults committed burglaries with accomplices.

(11) Only about one-third of respondents claimed to think about getting caught before committing a burglary.

(12) With regard to their most recent sentence, the largest proportion of respondents felt their sentence was better than expected (42.1%), about a third thought it was worse than expected and the remainder thought it was as expected.

(13) Respondents were asked to identify which out of a range of methods of stolen goods disposal they had used. The commonest avenues of disposal for stolen goods were, in order: trading stolen goods for drugs (70.0% of respondents); followed by selling to family, friends and acquaintances (62.8%); selling to fences (62.0%); selling to legitimate businesses (50.8%); selling to pawn and secondhand shops (49.2%); selling to strangers in a public place (29.6%); trading for other goods (18.8%); selling at markets (6.4%); selling at garage sales (2.8%); and selling through an auction house (2.0%).

(14) Respondents used a median of four avenues of disposal during the period on which the interview focussed. Burglars who reported committing many burglaries used significantly more avenues of disposal than did burglars who committed fewer burglaries.

(15) The 70.0 per cent of respondents who had traded stolen goods for drugs during the reference period consisted of 28.0 per cent who reported doing so 'all the time' or 'most of the time' during the reference period, 10.8 per cent who reported doing so 'about half the time' and 31.2 per cent who reported doing so 'some of the time' or 'once'. These 70.0 per cent of respondents were asked how the dealer then disposed of the stolen goods. They claimed that the dealer either kept them or sold them to family, friends and acquaintances (87.9% of respondents), sold them to higher drug dealers (9.5%), melted them down in the case of jewellery (1.7%) or sold them in bulk to unspecified persons (0.9%).

(16) Respondents employed several strategies to avoid police detection when disposing of stolen goods through drug dealers. These included using a dealer they knew and trusted (40.4%) and using a variety of physical measures (34.9%) such as phoning prior to delivery, using a middleman, monitoring police activity with a radio scanner and carrying a fake ID. Notably, some respondents made no effort to avoid detection (19.9%) and this group consisted largely of heroin users.

(17) The estimated dollar value (converted from the quantity and type of drug received) gained from trading certain stolen goods for drugs were: video recorder (VCR), $130 worth of drugs; gold ring, $135 worth of drugs; and power tool, $50 worth of drugs. The retail prices for these items if bought new were (respectively) $395, $700 and $211. Nearly half the respondents (43.1%) had exchanged their stolen goods for drugs within one hour of the burglary and 91.2 per cent (cumulative total) within one day.

(18) Adults and heroin users were more likely to sell to legitimate businesses than were juveniles and non-users of heroin. In nearly all cases where legitimate businesses bought stolen goods, the respondent claimed the purchaser knew the goods were stolen. Many types of business were identified by respondents as

buying stolen goods, the type most frequently nominated being the local corner store, followed by jewellery stores buying mainly gold by weight. Next were wreckers and repair yards, tradesmen, computer and office machine shops, antique shops, pubs and clubs, tobacconists, and restaurants. When respondents were asked how they avoided detection when selling to legitimate businesses, most respondents stated that in many cases they knew and trusted the business people they were dealing with (53.1%).

(19) For sales to pawn and secondhand shops, 67.0 per cent of respondents claimed the owner knew the goods were stolen. Fifty-two per cent of respondents employed a fake ID during pawn and secondhand shop transactions. Speed of disposal through pawn and secondhand shops was quite slow when compared with other outlets. Only 24.7 per cent of respondents had disposed of their stolen goods within one hour of the burglary and only 63.0 per cent had disposed of their goods within one day of the burglary (cf. 43.1% and 91.2%, respectively, for drug dealers).

(20) Sales to strangers were most likely to be made by high frequency burglars. These sales typically occurred in pubs and clubs.

(21) Seventy-seven per cent of respondents had stolen goods to order. Most orders were from family, friends and acquaintances, followed by drug dealers and fences. Orders were typically for consumer electricals (CD players, VCRs etc.).

INTRODUCTION

The police currently employ a number of different strategies in their attempt to control property crime. Amongst these strategies, one particularly promising one concerns the targeting of the stolen goods market. The full potential of this approach has been limited due to the absence of information on the way in which burglars[1] go about disposing of stolen goods. For this reason, the New South Wales (NSW) Police Service asked the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research to investigate the operation of the stolen goods market in NSW, with the intention of providing police with the information necessary to better control the market for stolen goods. To this end the Bureau undertook to interview those with the most knowledge about the disposal of stolen property, namely imprisoned burglars. We begin this report by: (1) examining why targeting the stolen goods market is an important addition to current crime control strategies; and (2) determining what we need to know about the stolen property market to better assist current law enforcement efforts.

CONTROLLING BURGLARY

Australia has the highest rate of residential burglary amongst the industrialised nations, making property crime one of our foremost law enforcement problems (van Dijk, Mayhew & Killias 1990). Although NSW has a moderate burglary rate when contrasted with the other Australian States, burglary is perceived by NSW residents as the primary crime problem in their local area (Australian Bureau of Statistics 1997a). Moreover, NSW has experienced an upward trend in burglaries since 1995 (Chilvers 1998). This increase is mainly accounted for by a rise in the number of residential burglaries (rather than commercial burglaries) which have increased from an average of 168 per day during 1995 to 218 per day during 1997 (Chilvers 1998). Currently, NSW residents experience a burglary approximately once every seven minutes.

The principal approach of the police to burglary has traditionally been a reactive one, characterised by visiting the crime scene after which an attempt is made to locate and detain the burglar (Barlow 1985; Burrows 1986; Prenzler & Townsley 1998). This approach has not been successful in either containing the current rate of burglary or, more importantly, in reducing burglary rates (see preceding paragraph for example). This is because identifying the culprit of a particular burglary is difficult. There are several reasons for this. First, unless burglars are caught in or near the crime scene, they are unlikely to get caught (Burrows 1986), partly at least because of the difficulties in linking them with the crime scene. Second, knowing this, many burglars carefully select targets so as to avoid detection during the process of the burglary (Wright, Logie & Decker 1995). Third, the sheer number of burglaries makes it very difficult for police to conduct detailed investigations into every one. It is therefore not surprising that only around five per cent of reported burglaries are actually cleared up by police (Chilvers 1998). However, what is more disturbing is that many burglars are well aware that they face a very low risk of detection (Prenzler & Townsley 1998).

Though visiting the crime scene and consequent pursuit of burglars is important, its reactive nature is a major limitation. For this reason, police in recent years have adopted a range of more proactive strategies to tackle property crime. These strategies include promoting neighbourhood watch schemes, encouraging target hardening (e.g. fitting

window locks etc.), assisting burglary victims so as to prevent repeat victimisation, marking property with identification details, and targeting the stolen goods market (see Prenzler & Townsley 1998 for a more detailed discussion of these various methods). Even though all of these strategies probably play a useful role in reducing the rate of burglaries, an apparently promising proactive approach is to target the stolen goods market (e.g. Thommeny 1996). The success of recent police operations that have targeted the stolen goods market attest to the usefulness of this approach and these operations are discussed below.

POLICE OPERATIONS AGAINST THE STOLEN GOODS MARKET

Most burglars steal to raise money and to do so they have to sell or trade their stolen property through the stolen goods market (Sutton 1995). There are at least three ways of targeting this market which are or have been employed in NSW. The first entails arresting those involved in purchasing and selling stolen goods by targeting specific avenues of disposal by means other than surveillance (e.g. by examination of business records). The second involves the surveillance of places believed to be used for selling or purchasing stolen goods. The third involves sting operations where police act as receivers to lure burglars to sell their stolen goods. All three of these approaches, reviewed below, have been successfully employed by police.

The first approach primarily involves the examination of business records of pawnbrokers and secondhand dealers, who are believed to be important players in the stolen goods market (e.g. Walsh 1977; Thommeny 1996; and as evidenced by recent legislation, the *Pawnbrokers and Second-hand Dealers Act 1996*). The business records detail the name and address of the person selling or pawning goods and descriptions and serial numbers of the items sold or pawned. The largest examination of such records in NSW was conducted in the recently completed operation 'Ivy'. This led to the recovery of about 1.5 million dollars' worth of stolen property, of which around 0.3 million dollars' worth was located in pawnbrokers (NSW Police Service 1997). A similar, but more limited operation conducted in the Illawarra region during 1996 (known as 'Moorgold') also resulted in the seizure of considerable quantities of stolen property, in this case worth around 0.2 million dollars (*Police Service Weekly* 12 Aug. 1996, p. 3). Both operations led to the arrest and charging of many pawnbrokers who had actively participated in the purchase of stolen goods.

The second approach, in which likely places are identified and then put under surveillance by police, has also been employed on pawnshops, secondhand dealers and jewellery shops specialising in secondhand property (e.g. Sutton 1995). This approach allows currently unknown burglars to be identified (when they repeatedly come to sell stolen goods) as well as gaining evidence against known burglars and against the persons receiving the stolen property. The surveillance of suspected points of disposal or of individuals involved in the purchase of stolen goods is routinely used by police, rather than being specifically restricted to certain operations (see, for example, Smith 1997). No data exist to evaluate the effectiveness of this approach.

The third approach involves police sting operations. In these operations police pose as receivers, by setting up and acting as dishonest pawnbrokers. There have been several such operations in Sydney during the past decade, most notably 'Basalt' in 1994 (Thommeny 1996). In this operation police set up and simultaneously operated four pawnbrokers in different parts of Sydney, attracting a large number of offenders. This

operation led to the recovery of over 1.5 million dollars' worth of stolen property and involved the identification of 180 individuals who had sold stolen goods to the police. Similar but smaller operations have also been employed using the same type of procedure. They include operation 'Honeypot', which recovered 1.1 million dollars' worth of stolen property, along with the identification of 63 individuals who had sold the stolen goods, and operation 'Yugo', which led to the recovery of a quarter of a million dollars' worth of stolen property and identified 62 individuals as selling stolen goods (Thommeny 1996).

Although these operations were undoubtedly successful, both in terms of the number of offenders identified and the quantities of stolen property recovered, it is likely that the stolen goods market consists of far more avenues of disposal than just pawnbrokers and secondhand dealers. Information on these other avenues is critical to expanding the approaches identified above to the targeting of other methods of disposal, as well as allowing police to identify which avenues of disposal are the most in need of police attention. Research into these other avenues and their role in the stolen goods market is currently quite limited (Sutton 1995; Freiberg 1997). There are only three recent detailed investigations of the market. These three investigations are discussed below from the perspective of determining what avenues burglars might use to dispose of stolen goods.

AVENUES OF DISPOSAL

The first investigation, conducted by Walsh (1977), principally involved an examination of American police records dealing with the sale of stolen property in an unnamed US city. The study yielded two main disposal routes for stolen goods: legitimate fronts and illegitimate fronts. Legitimate fronts were businesses which were used as covers from behind which stolen property was bought and sold. This avenue was further subdivided, according to whether the stolen goods were similar or dissimilar to goods normally distributed from that business. Overall, the types of business involved in purchasing stolen property included antique dealers, auctioneers, furniture / appliance stores, restaurants, bars / taverns, construction companies, grocery stores, secondhand dealers, jewellers and garages. The second route of disposal, illegitimate fronts, included all methods of disposal which were not through some legitimate cover. This category included three sub-categories: fences – individuals who buy and sell stolen goods – who had no 'business cover'; criminal entrepreneurs; and thieves selling their own stolen merchandise. Walsh (1977) concluded that legitimate fronts probably accounted for the largest turnover of stolen property.

In the second examination of the stolen goods market, Cromwell and colleagues conducted a series of investigations (Cromwell, Olson & Avary 1991; Cromwell, Olson & Avary 1993; Cromwell & McElrath 1994) in which they interviewed fences, thieves and members of the public. From these interviews, Cromwell identified several different groups who were involved in disposing of stolen property. The first was the professional fence, a category which has received some research attention, most notably from the ethnographic studies of 'Sam' (Steffensmeier 1986) and 'Vince' (see Klockars 1975), two 'businessmen' who both owned successful 'secondhand goods shops' through which they knowingly bought and sold stolen goods. Cromwell's next category of fence, the part-timer, was divided into two sub-categories, passive receivers (who buy for personal use or resale) and proactive receivers (who may place orders for goods with the thief).

These part-time receivers were found to have a smaller flow of stolen goods through their hands than the professional fence. The third category was the associational fence. This category includes individuals, such as bail-bond agents, criminal defence lawyers and police officers, who have close regular contact with thieves and who may be willing to receive payment in stolen goods. The fourth category was the neighbourhood hustler, who acts occasionally as a middle-man between thief and customer within a local area. The fifth category was the drug-dealer fence. This category covers the drug dealer who takes payment in stolen goods for drugs (see also Walsh 1977; Sutton 1995). Cromwell et al.'s (1993) final category was that of the amateur receiver. This category includes burglars who sell directly to strangers, friends or acquaintances, or who keep the goods themselves.

In the most recent research conducted in the United Kingdom, Sutton (1998) followed a similar research design to that used by Cromwell and his colleagues (1991; 1993; 1994), in which data were collected from the public about their purchases of stolen property, and from burglars and fences about the disposal of stolen goods. Sutton (1998) identified four main avenues of disposal. The first was the purchase of stolen property by legitimate businesses knowingly involved in buying stolen goods (e.g. jewellers). The second category constituted residential fences, who purchased stolen property for subsequent resale to the public. The third category comprised network sales where stolen goods were disposed of through friends and acquaintances of the burglar. The fourth was hawking, where burglars themselves fenced goods to strangers.

These three sets of studies are important for two reasons. First, they represent the most serious attempts to date to determine the avenues by which burglars dispose of stolen property. Second, they clearly indicate the sophistication of the market, suggesting at a minimum that the disposal of stolen goods involves more avenues than just pawnshops and secondhand dealers. However, apart from being based on US and UK data which may be of *potentially* limited relevance to NSW, these studies also contain two limitations which restrict their usefulness to law enforcement. The first is a consequence of their respective research designs. Walsh's study was based primarily on police data and therefore any outlets not known to police but extensively used by burglars would not have been identified. Cromwell et al.'s (1991; 1993) study may have suffered from being based on a relatively small number of offenders (30 active burglars) and could lack generalisability. A similar limitation could also apply to Sutton's (1998) study.

A second and more profound limitation of these studies is in their categorisation of stolen goods outlets. As the preceding descriptions might have revealed, none of the studies provide sufficient detail about the avenues of disposal for law enforcement agencies to make effective use of this information. For example, it would be difficult to know how you could target 'neighbourhood hustlers', 'illegitimate fronts' or 'residential fence suppliers'. Even more importantly, none of the studies determined the frequency with which a large sample of burglars use different outlets. As such, it is hard to identify which out of all possible avenues of disposal are likely to be the most worthy of police attention. Therefore the primary aim of the research reported here was to identify the avenues through which stolen goods are disposed of in NSW and the relative importance of these avenues. This information should allow the police to: (1) extend the strategies currently employed against pawnbrokers and secondhand dealers against a new range of stolen goods outlets and (2) adjust these strategies so that the most important avenues become the principal targets.

Whilst it is important to know the avenues through which stolen goods are disposed of and the importance of each avenue, it is also necessary to determine which classes of burglar use which avenues. Information of this kind can be used by law enforcement agencies to further assist in identifying the most desirable targets for surveillance and enforcement operations (i.e. those avenues which are likely to yield the greatest leverage on property crime). In the section below we discuss some of the factors which may make certain groups of burglars use particular avenues and not others.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BURGLAR AND STOLEN GOODS DISPOSAL

In previous discussions of the stolen goods market (Hall 1952; Klockars 1975; Cromwell, Olson & Avary 1993), there has been little interest in how specific characteristics of the burglar might affect their disposal of stolen goods. Such characteristics may, as noted above, have important consequences for law enforcement. In this study, five characteristics were identified for special examination, based on the research literature, discussion with police and the feasibility of collecting the information needed to categorise offenders into groups. The characteristics were age (juvenile or adult), burglary rate (high or low frequency), opiate use, type of property targeted (commercial or residential) and risk perception. Each is examined below.

There may be differences between adult and juvenile burglars in their ability to dispose of stolen goods. For example, juveniles may not have the wide range of criminal contacts that an adult would have (Cromwell 1994) and thus may not have the 'references' necessary to deal with the more professional and lucrative fences (Walsh 1980). Furthermore, juveniles may not be trusted as much as adults, in that they may not have 'proved' themselves by having passed through the criminal justice system without incriminating other offenders (see Shover 1972). Finally, the authorities may take special exception to any adult seen to be encouraging a juvenile to burgle (e.g. by purchasing goods from them) and so the extra risk involved may make dealing with a juvenile a poor proposition (Steffensmeier 1986; Hill 1992). This could have the effect of limiting where juveniles may be able to sell stolen property.

Two important characteristics of offenders that are probably interrelated are the frequency with which they engage in criminal activity (Visher 1986) and their use of opiates (Collins, Hubbard & Rachal 1985; Dobinson 1985; Dobinson & Ward 1985; Dobinson & Ward 1986; Jarvis & Parker 1989; Hall 1996) and possibly, in the case of juveniles, their use of marijuana (Salmelainen 1995).

In the second Rand inmate survey (Chaiken & Chaiken 1982; Visher 1986), the data indicate that 50 per cent of American prisoners had committed no more than five crimes in the year preceding their imprisonment. Importantly, a small group of offenders had committed several hundred offences each. The importance of these high frequency offenders in accounting for a disproportionate number of crimes can easily be imagined (Chaiken & Chaiken 1984). However, there has been no previous attempt to determine whether high frequency burglars dispose of stolen goods in a way that is different from that used by low frequency burglars or, more importantly, whether frequency of burglary may be related to the *ability* to dispose of large quantities of stolen goods (for related suggestions see Shover 1972; Sutton 1995).

Apart from being associated with a higher frequency of offending, heroin use may itself bring its own unique set of problems. First, many opiate users *may* choose to trade goods for drugs rather than selling them, possibly realising a far lower cash value for

the goods (Cromwell et al. 1993; Sutton 1995). Second, users may sometimes be forced to use more inefficient means of disposal, particularly as they may not be able to sell through more 'respectable' outlets because of the wide-spread belief that opiate addicts are poor security risks (Cromwell et al. 1993) – that is, that their addiction leaves them vulnerable to manipulation by the police. Third, heroin addicts may need cash or drugs very quickly to avoid opiate withdrawal.

Another factor that may affect the disposal of stolen goods by thieves is the type of properties they target. There is at present only a limited literature in respect to whether burglars specialise in breaking into particular types of premises or in stealing certain types of goods (Maguire & Bennett 1982). Maguire and Bennett (1982) observed that the more respected burglars claimed to have specialised 'in shops' or in stealing antiques or paintings for instance, whilst the novices tended to commit the more general and less lucrative domestic burglaries. However, Maguire and Bennett (1982) also note that the skilled thief may in his criminal career pass through multiple specialisations, so as to avoid detection on the basis of the police becoming acquainted with his modus operandi. Nevertheless, any specialist pattern of theft might be expected to involve an equally specialised pattern of disposal (Shover 1972). Such a difference might emerge between burglars who predominantly concentrate on commercial premises (new goods) versus residential premises (secondhand goods).

A further consideration is the burglar's perception of risk. Bennett and Wright (1984) found, when interviewing imprisoned property offenders, that a significant proportion (around 50%) did not think about getting caught prior to committing a burglary. This presence or absence of risk perception might be expected to influence the way in which stolen goods are disposed of. For example, there is undoubtedly a hierarchy of risk of police detection in using certain avenues of disposal over others (e.g. Cromwell et al. 1993). Thus it might be expected that risk-aware burglars would be more sensitive to where and to whom they sold their stolen goods, than would risk-unaware burglars. Thus, altering the *perceived* risk associated with particular outlets might be expected to alter the behaviour of certain burglars.

BURGLARY AND THE STOLEN GOODS MARKET – SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

The NSW Police Service commissioned the research study reported here, not only to assess the frequency of use of various methods of disposal and how these may vary by type of burglar, but also to examine a number of related issues of operational importance. The first was how long it takes burglars to dispose of stolen goods and where they store stolen goods if they do not immediately dispose of them. This is important because burglars are particularly vulnerable to detection while they retain stolen property, as the property allows them to be linked to a particular burglary (Barlow 1985). The second issue concerned the measures that burglars take to avoid detection when engaged in selling stolen property. The usefulness of this information is self-evident. The third was the price that burglars receive for stolen goods from particular outlets. This is useful in three ways: (1) in determining whether price influences a burglar's selection of outlet; (2) in forming a baseline for future comparisons to assess trends in prices of illegal goods; and (3) in providing information for estimating economic aspects of the stolen property market (e.g. the value of stolen goods needed to support a particular size of heroin habit). The fourth issue was whether the purchasers of stolen goods know the goods are stolen. This question is of interest in determining the extent to which purchasers of stolen goods

are a key part of the property crime market. Finally, a number of other topics relevant to committing the act of burglary were identified. These included how offenders select goods to steal, their use of accomplices, their use of cars to get to and from burglaries and the frequency with which they steal specific items. These questions are of interest as they also assist police in preventing property crime.

SUMMARY

The overall aim of this research was to provide the police with the information necessary to more effectively control the stolen goods market. To achieve this aim, three sets of research questions were addressed. The first and most important concerned the avenues that burglars use to dispose of stolen goods and the relative importance of these avenues. The second concerned particular characteristics of the burglar, namely, their age (juvenile or adult), the frequency with which they burgle, the types of property they burgle (commercial or residential), their opiate use and their perception of risk, and how these characteristics influence their disposal of stolen goods. The third concerned aspects of the operation of the stolen goods market and the modus operandi of burglars. Overall, the research was exploratory, in that although specific areas were identified for investigation, no detailed hypotheses were proposed or tested. The research design adopted to answer these questions employed a structured interview with imprisoned NSW burglars.

METHOD

Using a structured interview, imprisoned burglars were asked various questions about the operation of the stolen goods market. This section describes the procedures used to achieve this end and is divided into two principal parts. The first part deals with the interview schedule and considers: (1) respondent honesty; (2) respondent accuracy; (3) the development of the interview schedule; and (4) the finalised interview schedule. The second part deals with the sampling and interviewing process and considers: (1) the representativeness of imprisoned burglars; (2) the selection of institutions; (3) the selection of offenders; (4) the interview procedure; and (5) the number and type of offenders interviewed.

THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

In conducting inmate surveys the principal concerns are to ensure that participants' responses are both honest and accurate. Both of these issues have been investigated in some detail and are discussed here for two reasons. First, a consideration of these issues had an important bearing on the design of the interview schedule. Second, the issue of honesty is particularly important to anyone not familiar with the prison survey literature. The discussion below deals first with honesty and briefly reviews the research findings on this topic and the measures adopted in this study to minimise and detect dishonesty. The issue of accuracy is then considered from the perspective of how the limitations of human memory may influence participants' responses. Again the methods adopted to limit these problems are discussed.

Respondent honesty

In interviewing individuals who have been convicted of a criminal offence involving some form of dishonesty, an obvious issue is whether they will tell the truth. Previous research suggests that two questions bear upon this issue. First, do offenders produce findings that are consistent over time? The assessment of consistency of prisoners' responses is mainly judged on their reinterview at times varying from a few hours to years later. Reinterviews produce results that are broadly consistent with earlier responses, both in adult and juvenile samples (e.g. Peterson, Chaiken, Ebener & Honig 1982; Hindelang, Hirschi & Weis 1981). Such a result would be surprising if the offenders had initially lied, because it might be expected that a more truthful response would be easier to reproduce than a lie, particularly following a long time interval.

The second question bearing on the question of honesty is the degree to which prisoners' responses reflect reality (truth). Two techniques are noted here. The first is to measure the degree to which the offenders' responses concur with some external criterion. The most frequently cited example is the relationship between self-reported frequency of offending and official police records of criminal activity. In the four studies reported by Weis (1986) the correlations were all significant and generally quite high (0.5+) – although they tended to be lower for juvenile offenders. This technique has also seen extension to testing the validity of self-reported drug use in the US against results from a post-interview drug urine test. The results for soft and hard drug use indicate that self-reports are generally accurate (Magura, McKay, Casriel, Goldstein & Lipton 1988; Falck, Siegal, Forney, Wang & Carlson 1992; McElrath, Dunham & Cromwell 1995; Katz, Webb, Gartin & Marshall 1997).

A second measure is the extent to which prediction of future behaviour (from a current survey) agrees with *actual behaviour* at some future point in time. Farrington (1973) found that self-reports of deviant acts by teenage boys significantly predicted their future official convictions, independent of other predictive variables.

Overall, the studies cited indicate that offenders will report, with a fair degree of accuracy, their level and type of involvement in criminal acts, their deviant acts and their drug use. The conclusion to be drawn from these data is that under circumstances where some form of external checks are available, whether known or unknown to the offender, their responses tend to be consistent with those checks.

Given that the research evidence discussed above suggests that offenders do seem to tell the truth, self-report was considered to be an appropriate method of measurement in the present study. Nonetheless, a number of procedures were employed in the survey in an attempt to ensure response integrity. The first and most important was the decision to use a structured interview administered by an interviewer rather than a self-completed questionnaire. Apart from the benefits of higher completion rates and the inclusion of inmates with reading difficulties, interviewers could immediately question respondents if their answers were inconsistent or if the interviewer suspected dishonesty. This in itself provided an important check against lying. Apart from this, two other approaches were also employed.

The first approach concerned reliability. One important measure of reliability was derived from using both free and cued recall questions about the same material, particularly in respect to how the respondent disposed of stolen goods. Respondents were initially asked an open question (free recall) followed by a series of closed questions about the same material (cued recall) – often at later points in the interview. It was assumed that dishonest respondents would be more inconsistent (i.e. less reliable) than honest ones. As well as this, a number of other measures of respondents' reliability were made and an overall reliability score was calculated for each respondent. The reliability score is detailed in Appendix 1.

The second approach to test for dishonesty involved examining whether certain results of previous research studies using inmate populations could be replicated in the present study. The rationale here was that if offender populations consistently lie, then it would be surprising to observe consistent findings across studies. Specific inter-study comparisons were conducted on: (1) the distribution of offending frequency; (2) the age distribution; (3) the use of accomplices by adults and juveniles; (4) the relationship between drug usage and offending frequency; and (5) the frequency of stealing certain items.

Respondent accuracy

In a discussion of the various memory errors that can confound prison interview studies, Blumstein, Cohen, Roth and Visher (1986) identify a number of problems. Several are specific only to those offenders who commit many crimes. These problems include the misclassification of events, such as confusing arrests with more casual forms of police contact, and event saliency, where very frequent events tend to be less memorable. Neither of these error types pose a severe problem for the current research because they do not disturb the *relative order* of events between offenders. Another type of memory error is recency bias. Here more recent events will be recollected better than more distant events. This problem can be partially circumvented by using a recent time frame from which the events are to be recalled. This method tends to be more effective when the period in question is itself anchored to some salient event, such as the point

of imprisonment or arrest. This approach was adopted here. A final problem results from asking offenders to remember events prior to a long period of incarceration. However, in the current study this should not be a major issue, as most offenders will be serving fairly short sentences (e.g. around two years).

The development of the interview schedule

Apart from the issues of honesty and accuracy, the other major design problem was in selecting appropriate questions about the avenues of disposal. This was problematic because little is known about the process. Apart from using the limited research literature reviewed in the introduction, an extensive consultation process (police, government departments etc.) was used to gather information about the disposal process. This led to the production of a pilot interview schedule which itself became the focus of further consultation with these same groups.

The resultant pilot interview schedule that emerged from the final round of consultation was then tried on six juvenile and four adult imprisoned burglars. It immediately became apparent that the avenues of disposal used by these respondents were substantially different from those envisaged as a result of the consultation process. For this reason the interview schedule was substantially revised to include: (1) the role of drug dealers; (2) legitimate businesses other than pawnshops and secondhand dealers; and (3) fences.

Following these modifications a second round of piloting was conducted on eight juvenile and seven adult imprisoned burglars. This further round of pilot interviews confirmed the necessity of the earlier changes and suggested the need for more precise definitions, particularly for what constituted a 'fence'. The term 'fence' was reserved solely for purchasers of stolen goods for whom selling such goods was the primary source of income. Persons who purchased stolen goods but had other primary sources of income such as from legitimate businesses or drug dealing were classified according to those sources. To assist respondents in selecting the most appropriate response, the questions were arranged so that the questions pertaining to legitimate businesses and drug dealers preceded the questions concerning fences. In this way, disposal avenues involving legitimate businesses and drug dealers were filtered out of the 'fence' category.

The finalised interview schedule

Appendix 2 contains a copy of the finalised interview schedule which was used with both the adult and juvenile offenders. Overall it collected data on two main themes. These were: (1) offending history and burglary practice; and (2) the disposal of stolen goods. The latter constituted the larger part of the interview schedule. The main features of the interview schedule are described below.

The front page of the schedule contained the introduction which was read verbatim to all respondents. This outlined the purpose of the study and stated their rights during the interview. Questions 1 to 4 collected biographical information and burglary frequency data. The latter were collected using a modified version of the offending frequency question taken from the second Rand inmate survey (Chaiken & Chaiken 1982). A calendar was used to identify the length of time in months when the offender was last free ('street time'; a maximum of six months was used). This time interval (hereafter 'the reference period') represents the time period to which all the remaining questions refer. Question 5 identified offenders who stole only cash and were therefore

not eligible for the full version of the interview. Question 6 concerned the use of stolen vehicles in burglaries. Questions 7 to 9 identified the offender's legal income, expenditure and earnings from burglary. Question 10 was an open-ended question that asked in general about how stolen goods were disposed of and was termed the *free recall* phase, as offenders were not cued. Questions 11 to 23 exclusively concerned the disposal of stolen goods and covered a range of disposal avenues. These questions constituted the *cued recall* phase of the interview. These questions also collected information about the price obtained for certain stolen goods, namely a video recorder, a gold ring with an inset diamond and a power tool (depicted in colour photographs which were shown to offenders; see Appendix 2), the frequency with which outlets were used, how offenders avoided detection and how long it took them to dispose of stolen goods. Question 24 asked offenders to identify the frequency with which they burgled different types of properties. Questions 25 and 26 concerned offenders' drug and alcohol use. Question 27 asked offenders to rate the frequency with which they had stolen specific items. Question 28 concerned the storage of stolen goods and Question 29 asked for the number of co-offenders who normally accompanied the respondent on a burglary. Questions 30 and 31 were concerned with the offender's perception of risk and severity of sanction. Finally, Questions 32 and 33 asked offenders whether they had any further comments about the stolen goods market and whether the interview had missed any important area.

Three modifications were made to this schedule after it had been 'finalised'. One was to specifically probe offenders to see if goods sold through pawnbrokers and secondhand dealers were going through the 'front door' (as 'legitimate' goods) or being sold privately through the 'back door' (as known stolen goods). This change was made early in the progress of the study and the information was *additional* to the other questions being asked and involved no physical change to the schedule. The second change concerned Question 11b, which asked respondents whether the legitimate business purchaser ran the stolen goods through their (or their employer's) business. It was originally designed as a filter question, but it was decided *before* the first set of interviews took place that the whole of Question 11 should be asked regardless of respondents' answers to this question (note Question 11b remained the same; it just no longer functioned as a filter question). This change was made because the business, even if not used for on-selling the goods, was still acting as a point of purchase and was therefore of interest. A third modification was included to correct an omission in the original design. This was to ask offenders if they ever advertised stolen goods for sale or used the *Trading Post*, a NSW paper devoted to listing items for sale or trade. It was included as part of the final question of the disposal of stolen goods section of the interview and was included for the final 27.7 per cent of respondents.

By the final stage of the study it had become apparent that exchanging stolen goods for drugs was an important means of disposing of stolen property. For this reason it seemed important to ask drug dealers how they disposed of the stolen property that they may have acquired when selling drugs. For this reason drug dealers were interviewed using the same interview schedule described above, but excluding all questions except those concerned with the disposal of stolen property (i.e. Questions 10 to 23). The criteria for selection of both drug dealers and burglars is discussed next.

SELECTION OF RESPONDENTS AND INTERVIEW PROCEDURE

The main study population were imprisoned NSW burglars and drug dealers. The term 'burglar' refers to offenders who committed the offence of *break, enter and steal* during the reference period, regardless of whether this was known to the authorities. Most

adult offenders had in fact been convicted and imprisoned for *break, enter and steal.* However, the juvenile offenders were often convicted of offences other than *break, enter and steal,* even though they had *committed* burglaries during the reference period. The other offences of which offenders were convicted included: *steal from motor vehicle*, *motor vehicle theft*, *stealing* and *armed robbery*. The drug dealers interviewed here were all convicted and imprisoned for *supply prohibited drug*.

Before describing in some detail how institutions and offenders were selected, it is important to consider whether the burglars interviewed in this study are broadly representative of the larger 'free-pool' of burglars. This question is important as it goes to the heart of the generalisability of any findings obtained from this research.

The representativeness of imprisoned burglars

It has been argued in the literature that imprisoned burglars may differ from the wider population of burglars in three main ways (see Blumstein et al. 1986). First, they are likely to encompass the most serious offenders, who have probably been caught more than once. Second, they tend to be predominantly older than the mean age of all convicted offenders passing through the criminal justice system, because first offenders do not tend to attract custodial sentences. Third, they may be the most inept at avoiding detection by the authorities.

The impact of these three factors on the representativeness of the data will vary. In encompassing predominantly the most serious offenders it is likely that those who commit offences most frequently will be over-represented, as they are at greater risk of detection than low frequency offenders (Canela-Cacho, Blumstein & Cohen 1997). The over-occurrence of such offenders is probably a bonus, as they are of especial interest in respect to stolen goods disposal because of the number of transactions they are likely to have made and thus the experience they will have gained about the stolen goods market.

The second factor is the age distribution of imprisoned offenders, which would lead to an undersampling of the youngest offenders. The youngest offenders might be expected to know much less about the market (see Sutton 1998 for example). Consequently, their exclusion from the juvenile burglars interviewed may lead to a reduction in any difference between the juvenile and adult burglars in this study.

The final concern is whether prisoners are the most inept offenders. Whether offenders are detected depends upon the interaction between police skill/luck in detection and burglars' skill/luck in avoidance. As there are no data available on these interacting elements, it seems most likely that some burglars are caught by police skill and some by their own foolishness. Even if imprisoned burglars are inept, it is difficult to see how this would severely distort the data. Whether burglars are detected is also likely to depend on how often they offend. Given that imprisoned burglars are highly active offenders (Canela-Cacho et al. 1997) they had more chances of being detected than did less active burglars.

Overall, the use of imprisoned burglars in the present study is not problematic and has the advantage of concentrating on frequent offenders who should have good knowledge about the process of burglary and the disposal of stolen goods.

The selection of institutions

All the interviews took place in NSW juvenile detention centres and adult prisons between May and September 1997. No details are reported here about the particular

institutions visited or about the number of offenders interviewed at *each* institution, so as to completely protect the identity of respondents. The selection of institutions for use in the study was broadly based on sampling offenders from the full range of adult and juvenile facilities in NSW, in terms of country / metropolitan, male / female, security level and size. A total of eleven adult and seven juvenile institutions were surveyed. A number of larger institutions were visited on successive days (when it was not possible to approach all inmates on one day) and a few institutions were revisited following an interval of a few months, so as to allow the inmate population to be replaced or to interview a different population (e.g. drug dealers).

The selection of offenders

Offenders' names were provided *centrally* by the information technology branches of the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Corrective Services. These were obtained *prior* to any institutional visit. The specifications given to the two departments for identifying suitable offenders varied according to whether they were in juvenile detention centres or adult prisons. Adults were required to be *currently* serving a sentence for *break, enter and steal* (although they could also be serving a sentence for other offences as well), except those interviewed during the drug dealer phase of the study, who had to be *currently* serving a sentence for *supply prohibited drug*. Juveniles were required to be *currently* serving a control order (a sentence of imprisonment) for *break, enter and steal* or other theft offences (*steal from motor vehicle; motor vehicle theft; stealing; armed robbery*). As with adults, they could also be serving a control order for other offences. There were two reasons for the wider selection criteria in juveniles. First, there are far fewer juveniles who are serving a sentence for *break, enter and steal*, than adults. Second, a previous NSW study of juvenile offending (Salmelainen 1995) observed that many inmates convicted of theft offences other than *break, enter and steal* had also committed *break, enter and steal* unbeknownst to the authorities.

Both the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Corrective Services also provided the Bureau with a list of all the other offences that the eligible offenders were currently serving time for, plus their estimated release date and their imprisonment date. The extra information concerning other offences was used to screen all adult and juvenile lists to exclude offenders with current convictions for murder or sex offences prior to visiting an institution. This screened list was then provided to prison or detention centre staff just before conducting interviews in the institution. Our list was then vetted by the institution to exclude: (1) offenders who were mistakenly included on the list due to errors in the list creation process; (2) offenders who were now absent because of being moved; and (3) offenders whom the staff felt were a security risk. All the remaining names on the list were eligible for interview. On the few occasions when an institution was revisited after a few months for a further round of interviews, the imprisonment date was used to ensure that an offender was not inadvertently re-interviewed.

The final vetted list was then used to call offenders to interview. However, on any visit to an institution, a proportion of eligible offenders were unavailable for interview either because of sickness, commitments within the jail, disciplinary reasons or other activities which precluded seeing the offender. Of those available, as many as possible were brought up to the interviewers by the institution's staff and were asked by one of the interviewers if they would participate. Certain offenders refused to come up and see the interviewers (indirect refusals). Those who did come up were asked to participate. Those refusing to participate at this point (direct refusals) were returned to their cell or place of work. Though we cannot be certain that offenders who refused to take part

were different from those who did take part, casual observation of direct refusals suggests that more Aboriginal and Asian offenders refused than Caucasian offenders. However, overall, it is not possible to know what the refusal population was like. In certain prisons, not all available inmates were called because of time constraints. There is no reason to believe that those called and those remaining (who were not called) were different. This is because prison officers who collected or paged inmates made their way alphabetically through the list of suitable offenders. Note that the procedures adopted for interviewing drug dealers were identical to those used for the property offenders.

The interview procedure

In all institutions a broad routine was established in the approach, conduct and after-interview procedures. At the institution, interviews were completed face to face, one at a time in a private room where the conversation could not be overheard by other inmates or staff. Typically, interviews took between 20 and 30 minutes. Inconsistencies in responses or interesting comments were followed up by the interviewers and in most cases the respondents were willing to elaborate or clarify issues. At all times the interviewers allowed the respondent to see what was being written to allay their suspicions about what was being recorded. Respondents were also allowed to examine the schedule during any point in the interview. At the end, the respondents were thanked and returned to their cells or place of work by the institution's staff and the interviewer was able to correct and make notes on any aspect of the completed interview that needed attention. The institution's staff would then deliver the next inmate, who would be invited to participate by the interviewer.

Table 1: Response rate

	Interviewed		*Directly refused*[a]		*Indirectly refused*[a]		*Total approached*	
	No.	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***
Burglars[b]								
Adult males	142	51.3	69	24.9	66	23.8	277	100.0
Adult females	8	34.8	10	43.5	5	21.7	23	100.0
Juvenile males	115	78.2	14	9.5	18	12.2	147	100.0
Juvenile females	6	66.7	3	33.3	0	0.0	9	100.0
Drug dealers[c]								
Adult males	9	10.3	41	47.1	37	42.5	87	100.0
Total	**280**	**51.6**	**137**	**25.2**	**126**	**23.2**	**543**	**100.0**

a Refusal to participate was indicated directly to interviewers (direct refusals) or by refusal to meet the interviewers (indirect refusals).

b Adult burglars were persons serving a sentence in an adult prison for *break, enter and steal*.
Juvenile burglars were persons serving a sentence in a juvenile detention centre for *break, enter and steal; take from motor vehicle; motor vehicle theft; stealing*; or *armed robbery*.

c Drug dealers were persons serving a sentence in an adult prison for *supply prohibited drug*.

The number and type of offenders interviewed

The numbers directly and indirectly refusing were recorded for each visit. Table 1 details the number interviewed and their respective refusal rates. Refusal rates were generally higher in adult prisons than in juvenile institutions. This difference appeared to be due to the greater level of suspicion felt by adult offenders – in one case an inmate suggested that the interviewers were 'wired, under-cover police officers'.

RESULTS

The results section is divided into four parts. The first describes why certain respondents were excluded from the main analyses and the composition of the final sample. The second provides a profile of the respondents and details their offending history, income, expenditure, use of drugs and patterns of burglary. The third describes the avenues through which offenders disposed of stolen goods. The fourth reviews the data that pertains to respondents' honesty. In many places throughout the results section the data are categorised by the offender groups described in the introduction, namely, juveniles and adults, high and low frequency burglars, users and non-users of heroin, commercial and residential burglars and risk-aware and risk-unaware burglars. The precise definitions of these groups are discussed in the beginning of the second part of the results. Because of the potential for Type 1 errors, statistical testing was mainly limited to a priori comparisons between groups (i.e. concerning the avenues of disposal). When tests were made, the significance level (α) was adjusted depending upon the number of comparisons (using Bonferroni family error rates) and is reported for each test. All statistical comparisons were non-parametric, mainly because most of the data were categorical, but also because many of the continuous variables were skewed.

In many cases, a question number (in the form Q.*n*) is given in the text, to indicate the question from which the data were derived (see Appendix 2 for a copy of the interview schedule). When respondents failed to answer questions or their data were absent, they were not included in the totals from which percentages were calculated. However, there was one important exception to this, in the reporting of responses to the first part of Questions 11 to 23 (which asked whether the relevant avenue had been used). Here, for each main question a common denominator – all those asked – was used for two reasons. First, use of a common denominator allowed comparisons to be made between different avenues of disposal. Second, it meant that the estimates of use of the different avenues were conservative, in that a non-response was treated as a 'no' response. Details of the number of non-responses (averaging about 14 a question) are given in the footnotes to Table 13.

RESPONDENT EXCLUSIONS

In total, 280 interviews were completed. It was decided not to include the nine drug dealers in the main body of the analysis reported here. The main reasons for this were that we had never intended that they should be pooled with those whose primary activity was theft and when considered separately, there were too few drug dealers to give any meaningful insight into their operations. It should, however, be noted that the nine drug dealers identified disposal routes which were not substantially different from those identified by burglars. The non-inclusion of the drug dealers left 271 respondents.

A reliability score was then calculated (see Appendix 1) for each of the remaining offenders, for the purpose of identifying those with inconsistent responses. This procedure revealed a generally high level of internal consistency, although one adult offender's interview was eliminated due to gross deficiencies in this respect (it should be noted that all individuals who scored above the 99th percentile were scrutinised; see

Appendix 1 for details). This left 270 respondents. The length of time in prison and the offender's age were also examined. Most offenders had spent a mean of 14.1 months in prison (median=9.0), with 95 per cent of offenders having served between 12.2 and 15.9 months. One adult's interview was eliminated from further analysis as not only had he spent over 8 years in prison but he also had scored above the 99th percentile on the reliability score. There was only one offender who had served longer (9 years), but as this person's reliability score was quite satisfactory and as the person fell in an under-represented group (female) she was still included. This left 269 respondents. Finally, one adult's data were dropped as the interview had not been successfully completed (because the respondent had great difficulty recalling material), and one juvenile's interview was dropped because the respondent was heavily medicated during the interview (and therefore could not concentrate). Thus, in total, 267 respondents' data were included in the analysis. Of the 267 respondents, 147 were adult burglars (8 female, 139 male) and 120 were juvenile burglars (5 female, 115 male), where 'adult' and 'juvenile' were defined by the institution in which the respondent was currently incarcerated.

OFFENDER PROFILES

Classification of respondents

Five types of classification were employed in this study. The first separated respondents into adults and juveniles, based upon their current place of incarceration. There were 147 respondents classified as *adults* and 120 as *juveniles*.

The second classification was made on the basis of offending frequency, that is, the rate (per month) at which a respondent reported committing burglaries during the reference period. This was calculated by dividing the total number of offences reported during the reference period (calculated from Q.4e), by the number of months free (Q.4d; median months free was 6.0). This gave an offending *rate* per month, but only for 236 respondents, as data were missing for the remaining 31. These 236 respondents were then grouped by median split so that those committing more than the median of 8.7 burglaries per month were categorised as the *high frequency* group (n=116) and those committing fewer than 8.7 burglaries per month were categorised as the *low frequency* group (n=120). The median burglary rate per month was 30.3 (inter-quartile range 18.7-91.0) for the high frequency group and 2.0 burglaries per month (inter-quartile range 0.5-4.3) for the low frequency group.

The third classification was based on whether the respondent reported using heroin during the reference period (Q.25). Respondents were only asked about heroin use if they admitted to illicit drug use. Only those who were asked and answered the specific question relating to heroin use were classified as users or non-users of heroin. On this basis there were 118 *heroin users* and 112 *heroin non-users*. There were 37 respondents who were not classified as users or non-users of heroin either because they did not answer the question on illicit drug use or because they responded negatively to the question on illicit drug use. (Note that none of the respondents who admitted to illicit drug use declined to answer the question on heroin use.)

It is important to note that the heroin use grouping is, in many respects, related to the adult / juvenile grouping, as can be seen from Table 2. This relationship was confirmed, in that adults were more likely than juveniles to use heroin (c^2=43.5; df=1; p<0.01; a=0.01;

n=230; 37 respondents had missing data). It is also important to note that the percentages in Table 2 should not be taken as estimates of the proportions of heroin users in the sample as they take no account of the respondents who reported no use of illicit drugs in the reference period. Table 9b later in the report provides better estimates of the proportions of heroin users.

Table 2: Use of heroin by adult and juvenile respondents[a]

	Used heroin		*Did not use heroin*		*Total*	
	No.	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***
Adults	91	70.5	38	29.5	129	100.0
Juveniles	27	26.7	74	73.3	101	100.0
Total	**118**	**51.3**	**112**	**48.7**	**230**	**100.0**

a Excluded from this table are 37 respondents (18 adults, 19 juveniles) who did not provide information on heroin use.

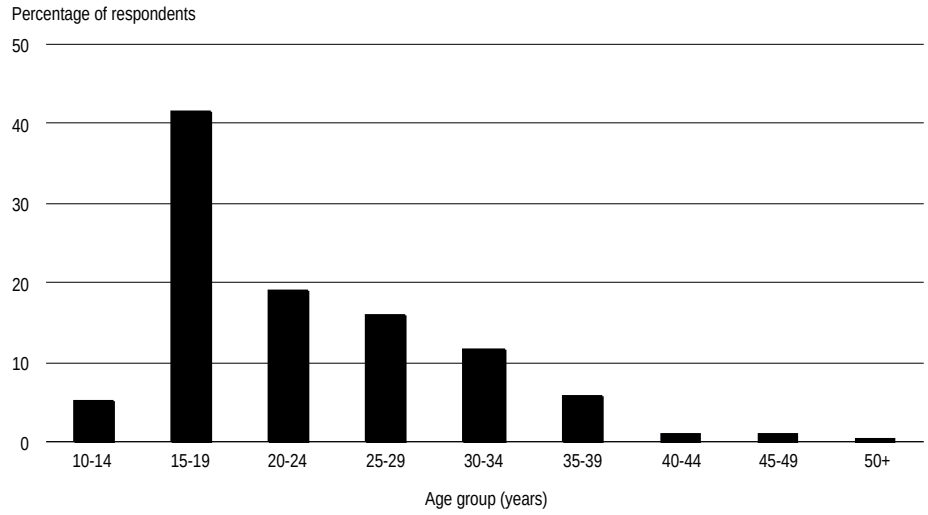
The fourth classification separated respondents according to whether they specialised in predominantly *commercial* (*n*=100) or *residential* burglaries (*n*=119). This classification was based on responses to Question 24, which asked burglars to rate the frequency with which they had targeted different types of premises during the reference period. There were 48 respondents who had missing data, which meant they could not be classified. For each respondent, a mean frequency of burglary was derived for commercial targets (shops and factories) and residential targets (houses, flats and sheds) and whichever was larger was taken to indicate the respondent's preference and classification group.

The fifth and final classification grouped respondents by their answer to Question 30. This asked whether respondents thought about getting caught prior to committing a burglary during the reference period. Eighty-nine responded 'yes' and were classified as *risk-aware*, whilst 156 responded 'no' and were classified as *risk-unaware*. Data were missing for 22 respondents.

Age

The overall age distribution of the sample is illustrated in Figure 1. The median age group for respondents was 20-24 years (ascertained in Q.2; *n*=265; 2 respondents had missing data). The median age group of the juveniles was 15-19 years while that of the adults was 25-29 years. There was no difference in median age group between low frequency and high frequency offenders. Heroin users, however, tended to be older (median age group 25-29 years) than heroin non-users (median age group 15-19 years). There were no differences in median age group between commercial and residential burglars, nor between risk-aware and risk-unaware burglars.

Figure 1: Frequency distribution of age of respondents (*n*=265)



Charges for break, enter and steal

Overall, the median number of previous charges (*lifetime* charges; Q.3) for *break, enter and steal* was four (inter-quartile range 2.0-15.0). Although the median number of charges for adults and juveniles was the same (4.0), the inter-quartile range for adults (2.0-20.0) appeared larger than that for juveniles (2.0-10.0). As might have been expected, high frequency offenders reported more charges (median 10.0, inter-quartile range 4.0-20.0) than low frequency offenders (median 3.0, inter-quartile range 2.0-6.0). There were no apparent differences in number of previous charges between heroin users and heroin non-users, nor between commercial and residential burglars. Risk-aware burglars reported fewer previous *break, enter and steal* charges (median 4.0, inter-quartile range 3.0-10.0) than risk-unaware burglars (median 6.0, inter-quartile range 2.0-20.0).

Frequency of offending

As noted earlier, an offending rate (burglaries per month) during the reference period was calculated for each respondent. Differences in offending rate for the high and low frequency groups are described above (see *Classification of respondents*). Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of burglary frequency for all respondents. The overall median burglary rate was 8.7 per month (inter-quartile range 2.0-30.3). There was a significant correlation between the total number of previous charges and the offending rate, indicating that respondents who reported committing more burglaries during the reference period also tended to report more lifetime charges for burglary (Spearman's ρ=0.44, p<0.05; α=0.05; n=219; 48 respondents with missing data).

Figure 2: Frequency distribution of burglary rate (*n*=236)

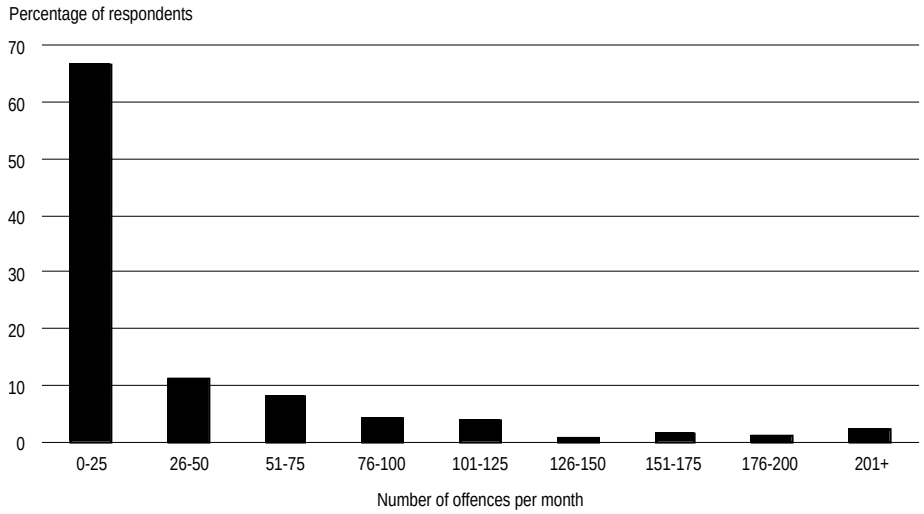


Table 3 illustrates the median burglary rate for each group. Juveniles had a somewhat higher median rate of burglary than adults, although heroin users, a predominantly adult group, reported a higher rate of burglary than non-users. Residential burglars reported a higher rate of burglary than commercial burglars. Risk-aware burglars reported lower burglary rates than risk-unaware burglars.

Table 3: Rate of burglary

	Number of burglaries per month	
	Median	***Inter-quartile range***
Adults[a]	8.7	2.0 – 30.0
Juveniles[b]	12.7	2.0 – 30.0
High frequency offenders[c]	30.3	18.7 – 91.0
Low frequency offenders[d]	2.0	0.5 – 4.3
Heroin users[e]	13.0	3.7 – 60.7
Heroin non-users[f]	8.7	1.5 – 30.0
Commercial burglars[g]	8.7	2.0 – 30.3
Residential burglars[h]	12.8	3.0 – 30.0
Risk-aware burglars[i]	8.3	2.4 – 30.0
Risk-unaware burglars[j]	13.0	2.0 – 60.7

Respondents who did not provide information on frequency of offending were excluded from the calculation of medians and inter-quartile ranges. For each category of burglar, the number of respondents included in the calculation, together with the number of missing values [in square brackets] are:

a 129 [18] *b* 107 [13] *c* 116 [0] *d* 120 [0] *e* 108 [10]
f 99 [13] *g* 91 [9] *h* 110 [9] *i* 84 [5] *j* 137 [19]

Deciding what to steal

Offenders were asked an open-ended question (Q.5a) about how they decided what to steal during the reference period. Multiple responses to this question were allowed. About half the respondents (49.0%; 123 / 251; 16 had missing data) decided what to steal based on their ability to dispose of, and gain a good price for, the item. Smaller minorities took 'what was there' (8.0%; 20 / 251), knew in advance what to take (13.5%; 34 / 251) or only took items that were easy to carry (2.8%; 7 / 251). This pattern of responses was similar for all types of burglars.

Cash thieves

Seventeen respondents were identified as having only ever stolen cash during the reference period. This emerged when they were asked how they selected what to steal (Q.5a) and was supported by their answers when they were asked whether they ever stole cash (Q.5b). There were no obvious differences by offender groups. These 17 respondents did not complete the interview schedule, because the questions concerning the disposal of stolen goods were not relevant to them. Respondents who stole only cash were then asked why they did not take other things. The most common response was that stolen goods were difficult to dispose of (*n*=7), followed by the disposal process being judged too risky (*n*=3) and the respondent specialising in cash burglaries (*n*=3). One burglar objected to stealing personal goods.

Vehicle usage and burglary

Seventy-five per cent of respondents had used a vehicle to get to and from a burglary during the reference period (*n*=189 out of 251; 16 respondents had missing data; Q.6a). The proportion of each group using a vehicle at least once during the reference period is presented in Table 4. More adults appeared to have used a vehicle than juveniles, as had more high frequency than low frequency offenders, more heroin users than non-users and more commercial than residential burglars. There was no obvious difference between the risk-aware and unaware groups.

Respondents were also asked whether that vehicle (referred to above) was ever stolen (Q.6b). Approximately four-fifths of the respondents who had used a vehicle to get to and from a burglary in the reference period had used a stolen vehicle (*n*=148 out of 187; 2 respondents had missing data). Table 5 details stolen vehicle usage by group. There were some apparent differences between groups. Juveniles reported using stolen vehicles more than adults, as did high frequency offenders when compared with low frequency offenders, and commercial burglars when compared with residential burglars. There were no other obvious differences between groups.

Table 4: Vehicle use for burglaries

	Vehicle used at least once		*No vehicle used*		*Total*	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Adults[a]	118	85.5	20	14.5	138	100.0
Juveniles[b]	71	62.8	42	37.2	113	100.0
High frequency offenders[c]	93	82.3	20	17.7	113	100.0
Low frequency offenders[d]	79	69.9	34	30.1	113	100.0
Heroin users[e]	98	86.7	15	13.3	113	100.0
Heroin non-users[f]	69	62.7	41	37.3	110	100.0
Commercial burglars	85	85.0	15	15.0	100	100.0
Residential burglars[g]	78	66.7	39	33.3	117	100.0
Risk-aware burglars[h]	66	75.9	21	24.1	87	100.0
Risk-unaware burglars[i]	114	74.5	39	25.5	153	100.0

Respondents who did not provide information on use of vehicles for burglary are excluded from this table. For the affected categories the numbers of missing values are as follows:

a 9 *b* 7 *c* 3 *d* 7 *e* 5 *f* 2 *g* 2 *h* 2 *i* 3

Table 5: Stolen vehicle use for burglaries

	Stolen vehicle used at least once		*Stolen vehicle not used*		*Total who used a vehicle*	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Adults[a]	83	70.9	34	29.1	117	100.0
Juveniles[b]	65	92.9	5	7.1	70	100.0
High frequency offenders	79	84.9	14	15.1	93	100.0
Low frequency offenders[c]	55	71.4	22	28.6	77	100.0
Heroin users	78	79.6	20	20.4	98	100.0
Heroin non-users	54	78.3	15	21.7	69	100.0
Commercial burglars[d]	70	83.3	14	16.7	84	100.0
Residential burglars[e]	56	72.7	21	27.3	77	100.0
Risk-aware burglars	51	77.3	15	22.7	66	100.0
Risk-unaware burglars[f]	92	82.1	20	17.9	112	100.0

Respondents who did not provide information on use of stolen vehicles for burglary are excluded from this table. For the affected categories the numbers of missing values are as follows:

a 1 *b* 1 *c* 2 *d* 1 *e* 1 *f* 2

Table 6: Need for cash, legal income and burglary income

	Need for cash ($ per week)		*Legal income ($ per week)*		*Burglary income ($ per week)*	
	Median	*Inter-quartile range*	*Median*	*Inter-quartile range*	*Median*	*Inter-quartile range*
Adults[a]	1400	600 – 3500	150	135 – 190	2500	1000 – 5000
Juveniles[b]	350	200 – 2000	73	0 – 125	1000	375 – 2500
High frequency offenders[c]	1400	600 – 4000	120	0 – 160	2500	1000 – 5000
Low frequency offenders[d]	500	300 – 1400	150	50 – 180	1000	300 – 2000
Heroin users[e]	2000	1000 – 5000	150	55 – 170	3000	1400 – 5000
Heroin non-users[f]	400	200 – 1000	118	0 – 150	1000	300 – 2500
Commercial burglars[g]	1000	325 – 2750	120	0 – 160	2000	1000 – 4000
Residential burglars[h]	950	300 – 2000	150	30 – 180	1100	450 – 4000
Risk-aware burglars[i]	1000	300 – 3000	150	33 – 180	2000	500 – 4000
Risk-unaware burglars[j]	1000	300 – 3000	125	0 – 160	2000	600 – 5000

Respondents who did not provide information on their need for cash, their legal income or their burglary income were excluded from the calculation of the relevant medians and inter-quartile ranges. For each category of burglar, the numbers of respondents included in the calculations, together with the numbers of missing values [in square brackets], are as follows for (1) need for cash, (2) legal income and (3) burglary income, respectively:

a (1) *n*=123 [24]; (2) *n*=133 [14]; (3) *n*=113 [34]
b (1) *n*=91 [29]; (2) *n*=110 [10]; (3) *n*=98 [22]
c (1) *n*=101 [15]; (2) *n*=114 [2]; (3) *n*=110 [6]
d (1) *n*=93 [27]; (2) *n*=107 [13]; (3) *n*=86 [34]
e (1) *n*=105 [13]; (2) *n*=112 [6]; (3) *n*=103 [15]
f (1) *n*=89 [23]; (2) *n*=107 [5]; (3) *n*=87 [25]
g (1) *n*=88 [12]; (2) *n*=96 [4]; (3) *n*=86 [14]
h (1) *n*=98 [21]; (2) *n*=115 [4]; (3) *n*=102 [17]
i (1) *n*=79 [10]; (2) *n*=85 [4]; (3) *n*=77 [12]
j (1) *n*=127 [29]; (2) *n*=148 [8]; (3) *n*=126 [30]

Income and expenditure of burglars

Respondents were asked how much money they needed to live on in an average week during the reference period (Q.7). Respondents claimed to need a median income of 1000 dollars a week (inter-quartile range $300-$2500; *n*=214; 53 respondents had missing data). Respondents were also asked what their weekly average legal income was during this time (Q.8). Median legal income was only 140 dollars a week (inter-quartile range $0-$170; *n*=243; 24 respondents had missing data). Respondents were then asked how much their average weekly earnings from burglary were during the reference period (Q.9a). Median earnings from burglary were 2000 dollars a week (inter-quartile range $600-$4000; *n*=211; 56 respondents had missing data).

The cash needs, legal income and burglary income during the reference period for the different groups are presented in Table 6. Cash needs were greater in adults, high frequency offenders and heroin users, when compared with their appropriate counterparts. Legal incomes, nearly all composed of social security payments (informal observation) were similar between groups, except for adults and juveniles, where juveniles received only about half as much legal income as adults. Burglary income was greater for adults, high frequency offenders, heroin users and commercial burglars, when compared with the other member of each group. The only group with approximately equal incomes was the risk-aware and risk-unaware group.

Spending income

Respondents were asked how they spent their income during the reference period, with the emphasis being on the income component gained from burglaries (Q.9b). As this was an open-ended question, respondents were allowed to give multiple responses. Eighty-three per cent of respondents (213/256; 11 respondents had missing data) reported spending on illicit drugs, 47.7 per cent reported spending on general living expenses (rent, food etc; 122/256), 46.9 per cent reported spending on clothes (120/256) and 6.6 per cent reported spending on gambling (17/256). Table 7 shows that these patterns of expenditure were fairly similar between groups, with one exception: juvenile respondents more frequently identified clothes as an expenditure item than did adults.

Table 7: Spending income

	Respondents who spent income on:							
	Drugs		***Living expenses***		***Clothes***		***Gambling***	
	No.	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***
Adults[a]	119	85.0	73	52.1	43	30.7	12	8.6
Juveniles[b]	94	81.0	49	42.2	77	66.4	5	4.3
High frequency offenders[c]	102	88.7	55	47.8	56	48.7	8	7.0
Low frequency offenders[d]	91	78.4	61	52.6	52	44.8	8	6.9
Heroin users[e]	109	93.2	58	49.6	48	41.0	4	3.4
Heroin non-users[f]	94	83.9	54	48.2	58	51.8	14	12.5
Commercial burglars[g]	82	82.0	55	55.0	49	49.0	6	6.0
Residential burglars[h]	105	88.2	51	42.9	50	42.0	7	5.9
Risk-aware burglars[i]	75	84.3	50	56.2	40	44.9	8	9.0
Risk-unaware burglars[j]	130	83.9	69	44.5	77	49.7	14	9.0

1 Note that the categories for spending burglary income are not mutually exclusive. Hence row percentages do not add to 100%.

2 Respondents who did not provide information on how they spent their burglary income are excluded from this table. For each category of burglar, the number of respondents, together with the number of missing values [in square brackets], are:

a 140 [7] *b* 116 [4] *c* 115 [1] *d* 116 [4] *e* 117 [1]
f 112 [0] *g* 100 [0] *h* 119 [0] *i* 89 [0] *j* 155 [1]

Illicit drug use

When directly asked about illicit drug use (Q.25) over ninety per cent of respondents (230/254; 13 respondents had missing data) reported using illicit drugs during the reference period. These 230 respondents were then asked how much money they spent on illicit drugs during an average week in the reference period. Median expenditure was 900 dollars per week (inter-quartile range $250-$2050; *n*=216; 14 respondents had missing data). This represented expenditure on all illegal drugs. Respondents were then asked whether they had used heroin or other opiates. As noted earlier (see *Classification of respondents*), 51.3 per cent of respondents reported using heroin

(118/230). Those who reported using heroin were then asked how much money they spent on it in an average week during the reference period. Median expenditure on heroin was 1500 dollars a week (inter-quartile range $500-$3500; *n*=118).

Illicit drug and heroin expenditure are illustrated by group in Table 8. Of those who used illicit drugs, adults spent more on them than juveniles did. High frequency offenders also appeared to spend more on illicit drugs and more on heroin, than did low frequency offenders. There were no obvious differences between commercial and residential burglars or between risk-aware and unaware burglars. (In Table 8, note that by definition the heroin non-users had no expenditure on heroin as they claimed not to have used it during the reference period).

Table 8: Illicit drug and heroin expenditure

	Illicit drug expenditure for illicit drug users ($ per week)		*Heroin expenditure for heroin users ($ per week)*	
	Median	***Inter-quartile range***	***Median***	***Inter-quartile range***
Adults[a]	1400	700 – 3250	1500	700 – 3500
Juveniles[b]	362	175 – 1000	1400	300 – 3000
High frequency offenders[c]	1400	600 – 3500	2050	1200 – 4500
Low frequency offenders[d]	350	150 – 1000	750	200 – 2000
Heroin users[e]	2000	1000 – 3500	1500	500 – 3500
Heroin non-users[f]	250	100 – 600	–	–
Commercial burglars[g]	1000	300 – 2000	1450	700 – 3500
Residential burglars[h]	850	200 – 2500	1500	650 – 3500
Risk-aware burglars[i]	950	200 – 2000	1500	700 – 2800
Risk-unaware burglars[j]	850	250 – 3000	1750	375 – 3750

Respondents were only asked about expenditure on illicit drugs and on heroin if they responded positively to questions about use of these drugs. Respondents who did not provide information on their illicit drug expenditure or their heroin expenditure were excluded from the calculation of the relevant medians and inter-quartile ranges. For each category of burglar, the numbers of respondents included in the calculations, together with the numbers of missing values [in square brackets], are as follows for (1) illicit drug expenditure and (2) heroin expenditure, respectively:

a	(1) *n*=124 [5];	(2) *n*=91 [0];	*b*	(1) *n*=92 [9];	(2) *n*=27 [0]
c	(1) *n*=103 [3];	(2) *n*=62 [0];	*d*	(1) *n*=94 [7];	(2) *n*=46 [0]
e	(1) *n*=117 [1];	(2) *n*=118 [0];	*f*	(1) *n*=99 [13];	–
g	(1) *n*=85 [3];	(2) *n*=46 [0];	*h*	(1) *n*=103 [6];	(2) *n*=57 [0]
i	(1) *n*=80 [0];	(2) *n*=46 [0];	*j*	(1) *n*=127 [14];	(2) *n*=68 [0]

Table 9a presents the number of respondents reporting illicit drug use by group, Table 9b presents the number using heroin by group, and Table 9c presents the number using marijuana by group – all during the reference period (Q.25). Though illicit drug use and heroin use were established through discrete questions, marijuana and other illicit drug use was established only if: (1) respondents claimed to spend money on illicit drugs, but not on heroin; or (2) if the expenditure on heroin was considerably less than

that claimed for all illicit drugs (see Q.25). As a result, use of drugs other than heroin (such as marijuana) in the present sample may be underestimated. If either (1) or (2) occurred then respondents were asked for what drug(s) they had incurred this expenditure. In nearly all cases (*n*=144 out of 172 respondents) the answer was marijuana. The next most frequently cited drugs were amphetamines (*n*=40 out of 172 respondents), followed by cocaine (*n*=29 out of 172 respondents) and hallucinogens (*n*=8 out of 172). Only marijuana was categorised by respondent group because of the relatively low number of other responses.

Table 9a: Illicit drug use

	Used illicit drugs		*Did not use illicit drugs*		*Total*	
	No.	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***
Adults[a]	129	92.8	10	7.2	139	100.0
Juveniles[b]	101	87.8	14	12.2	115	100.0
High frequency offenders[c]	106	94.6	6	5.4	112	100.0
Low frequency offenders[d]	101	86.3	16	13.7	117	100.0
Commercial burglars	88	88.0	12	12.0	100	100.0
Residential burglars[e]	109	92.4	9	7.6	118	100.0
Risk-aware burglars[f]	80	90.9	8	9.1	88	100.0
Risk-unaware burglars[g]	141	91.0	14	9.0	155	100.0

Respondents who did not provide information on illicit drug use are excluded from this table. For the affected categories the numbers of missing values are as follows:

a 8 *b* 5 *c* 4 *d* 3 *e* 1 *f* 1 *g* 1

Table 9b: Heroin use

	Used heroin		*Did not use heroin*[a]		*Total*[b]	
	No.	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***
Adults	91	65.5	48	34.5	139	100.0
Juveniles	27	23.5	88	76.5	115	100.0
High frequency offenders	62	55.4	50	44.6	112	100.0
Low frequency offenders	46	39.3	71	60.7	117	100.0
Commercial burglars	46	46.0	54	54.0	100	100.0
Residential burglars	57	48.3	61	51.7	118	100.0
Risk-aware burglars	46	52.3	42	47.7	88	100.0
Risk-unaware burglars	68	43.9	87	56.1	155	100.0

a Includes respondents who answered 'no' to the question on illicit drug use as well as respondents who answered 'no' to the question on heroin use.

b Includes only those respondents who answered the question on illicit drug use.

Table 9c: Marijuana use

	Nominated marijuana use[a]		*Did not nominate marijuana use*		*Not asked about drugs other than heroin*		*Did not use illicit drugs*		*Total who answered question about illicit drug use*	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Adults	54	38.8	24	17.3	51	36.7	10	7.2	139	100.0
Juveniles	90	78.3	4	3.5	7	6.1	14	12.2	115	100.0
High frequency offenders	64	57.1	18	16.1	24	21.4	6	5.4	112	100.0
Low frequency offenders	67	57.3	8	6.8	26	22.2	16	13.7	117	100.0
Commercial burglars	57	57.0	8	8.0	23	23.0	12	12.0	100	100.0
Residential burglars	67	56.8	16	13.6	26	22.0	9	7.6	118	100.0
Risk-aware burglars	47	53.4	9	10.2	24	27.3	8	9.1	88	100.0
Risk-unaware burglars	92	59.4	17	11.0	32	20.6	14	9.0	155	100.0

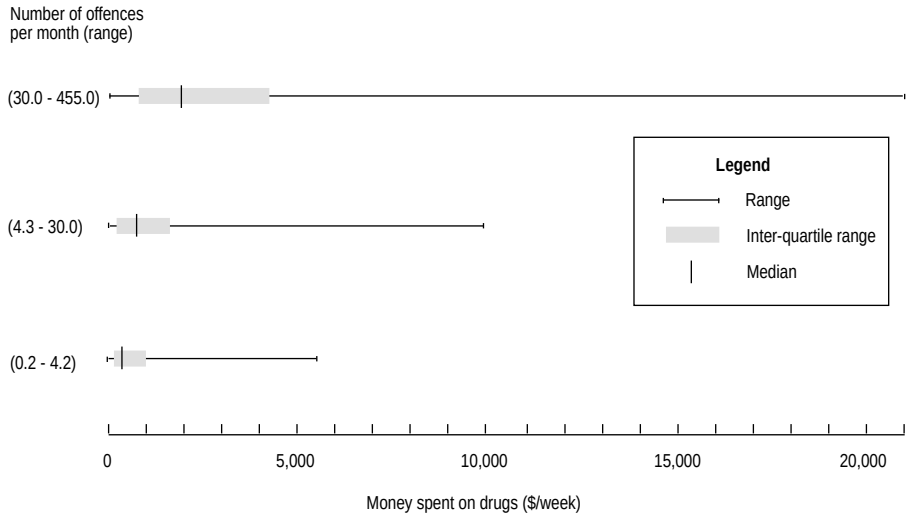
a Respondents were only asked what drugs other than heroin they had used *if* they reported spending money on illicit drugs, but spent less on heroin than this amount, or *if* they reported spending money on illicit drugs, but did not use heroin.

High frequency offenders tended to be more likely to use illicit drugs (Table 9a) and more likely to use heroin (Table 9b). Adults were more likely to use heroin than were juveniles, with an estimated 65.5 per cent of adults using heroin but only 23.5 per cent of juveniles using heroin. From Table 9c it can also be seen that a higher percentage of juveniles (78.3%) reported using marijuana than did adults (38.8%). Apart from these differences the patterns of illicit drug use were similar for all types of burglars.

A considerable body of research suggests that strong relationships should exist between drug use and burglary. For this reason several correlations were calculated. The first examined whether higher rates of burglary (burglaries per month) were associated with greater illicit drug expenditure (Q.25). As expected, there was a significant relationship between these variables, suggesting that a higher rate of burglary was associated with a greater expenditure on illicit drugs (Spearman's ρ=0.42; p<0.01; α=0.01; n=197; 70 respondents had missing data).

The relationship between frequency of offending and expenditure on illicit drugs is illustrated in Figure 3. Here, respondents were ranked by their burglary rate and then split into three approximately equal-sized groups. These three groups had median burglary rates of 0.8 burglaries per month (inter-quartile range 0.3-2.7; n=65), 12.8 burglaries per month (inter-quartile range 8.3-17.3; n=66) and 60.7 burglaries per month (inter-quartile range 34.7-121.3; n=66). For each of these groups the median amount of money spent per week on illicit drugs (from Q.25), the range and the inter-quartile range were determined. The results are illustrated in Figure 3 and it is clearly evident that as offending frequency increases, so does expenditure on illicit drugs

Figure 3: Relationship between expenditure on all illicit drugs and burglary rate (*n*=197)



Finally, it was of interest to see whether the burglary rate was related to: (1) expenditure on heroin (Q.25); (2) need for cash (Q.7); and (3) income from burglary (Q.9a). In all three cases, these variables were positively associated with the rate of burglary (expenditure on heroin: ρ=0.40, p<0.01, α=0.01, n=108, 10 respondents had missing data; need for cash: ρ=0.36, p<0.01, α=0.01, n=194, 73 respondents had missing data; income from burglary: ρ=0.42, p<0.01, α=0.01, n=196, 71 respondents had missing data).

Alcohol use

Respondents were asked how much, on average, they spent a week on alcohol during the reference period (Q.26). Half the sample did not drink alcohol during the reference period (median expenditure=$0, inter-quartile range $0-$100; n=231; 36 respondents had missing data). Alcohol expenditure was significantly higher in younger respondents and lower in older respondents (rank order correlation between age in years [Q.2] and alcohol expenditure: Spearman's ρ=-0.17, p<0.05, α=0.05, n=230, 37 respondents had missing data).

Choice of burglary targets

Respondents were asked how frequently they had burgled different types of property during the reference period (Q.24). Frequency of burglary for each property type was indicated by the respondent selecting one of six possible responses from a cue card (varying from *all the time* [1] to *never* [6]; see Appendix 2). For the purpose of analysis, frequency responses 1 and 2 were collapsed together as *most of the time* and responses 3-5 were collapsed together as *some of the time*. As there were no obvious differences between groups (except for residential and commercial burglars who were grouped on this variable) the data are presented for the entire sample in Table 10. Overall, houses were the most popular burglary target (50.6% burgling them most of the time; 120/237), followed by shops (31.0% most of the time; 76/245), factories (16.5% most of the time; 42/254), sheds (14.4% most of the time; 35/243) and then flats (13.9% most of the time; 34/245).

Table 10: Frequency with which burglars targeted different types of property

	Respondents who burgled property types:							
	Most of the time		*Some of the time*		*Never*		*Total*	
Property type	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***
House[a]	120	50.6	71	30.0	46	19.4	237	100.0
Flat[b]	34	13.9	84	34.3	127	51.8	245	100.0
Shed[c]	35	14.4	82	33.7	126	51.9	243	100.0
Shop[d]	76	31.0	113	46.1	56	22.9	245	100.0
Factory[e]	42	16.5	92	36.2	120	47.2	254	100.0

The numbers of missing values for each property type are as follows:

a 30 *b* 22 *c* 24 *d* 22 *e* 13

Theft rate for specific items

Respondents estimated the frequency with which they had stolen each of five types of item (i.e. ring, power tool, compact disc [CD] player, computer and VCR) during the reference period by selecting one of six possible responses from a cue card (Q.27; varying from *all the time* [1] to *never* [6]; see Appendix 2; the score was reversed here for analysis purposes). Using this information an overall rank order of theft frequency was calculated by adding the frequency responses for each item across respondents (for example items stolen most frequently [score 6] by most offenders would have a high overall score, whilst items stolen infrequently or never [score 1] by most offenders would have a low overall score). Overall, respondents took VCRs most frequently, followed by the gold ring, CD player, power tool and computer. There were no differences between groups.

The storage of stolen goods

Information on where stolen goods were stored during the reference period, if they were not disposed of immediately, was gathered by both an open-ended (free recall) question (Q.28a) and by a closed-ended (cued recall) question (Q.28b). The cued recall question asked respondents whether they had used each of five specific storage sites (own home, friend's home, family home, lock-up garage, car / van / lorry) during the reference period. These five sites could also have been previously nominated in the free recall question. The upper part of Table 11 shows the number of respondents who reported using these sites, regardless of whether they did so in the free recall or cued recall question. Stolen goods were reportedly stored most often in the respondent's home (36.4%; 91 / 250), followed by friend's home (31.2%; 78 / 250), vehicles (car / van / lorry; 16.4%; 41 / 250), family home (14.8%; 37 / 250) and lock-up garages (13.6%; 34 / 250). Storage sites which were not cued but emerged in the free recall Q.28a are presented in the lower part of Table 11. The most frequently identified storage site (but not included in the options for the cued recall responses) was the bush (15.6%;39 / 250), followed by empty houses (3.2%; 8 / 250) and the 'other' category (7.2%; 18 / 250), which included storing stolen goods in someone else's home without their knowledge, storing in drains, burying, and hiding in schools. A similar pattern of usage of storage sites was observed in all groups.

Table 11: Use of different storage sites for stolen goods[a]

	Respondents who used site	
Storage site	***Number***	***%***
Free & cued responses (sites specifically asked about during interview)		
Own home	91	36.4
Friend's home	78	31.2
Vehicle	41	16.4
Family home	37	14.8
Garage	34	13.6
Free responses only (additional sites identified solely by respondents)		
Bush	39	15.6
Empty houses	8	3.2
Other	18	7.2

a Total *n*=250; 17 respondents had missing data.

Accomplices

Forty-six per cent of respondents reported that they usually committed burglaries alone during the reference period (*n*=111 out of 240; Q.29; 27 respondents had missing data). As can be seen in Table 12, the majority of adults tended to burgle alone whilst most juveniles burgled with accomplices. A similar pattern was evident for heroin users compared with non-users, probably because of the overlap between heroin users and adults (see Table 2). There were no differences between the other groups.

Table 12: Accomplice use by adult and juvenile burglars

	Generally burgled with accomplices		***Generally burgled alone***		***Total***	
	No.	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***
Adults[a]	47	35.3	86	64.7	133	100.0
Juveniles[b]	82	76.6	25	23.4	107	100.0
Total	**129**	**53.8**	**111**	**46.3**	**240**	**100.0**

Respondents who did not provide information on the use of accomplices are excluded from this table. The number of missing values are as follows:
a 14 *b* 13

Risk and sentencing

As noted earlier, 36.3 per cent of respondents (89 / 245; 22 respondents had missing data; Q.30a) thought about getting caught prior to committing a burglary during the reference period (the risk-aware group), whereas nearly *two-thirds* of the sample did not think about getting caught prior to offending (the risk-unaware group).

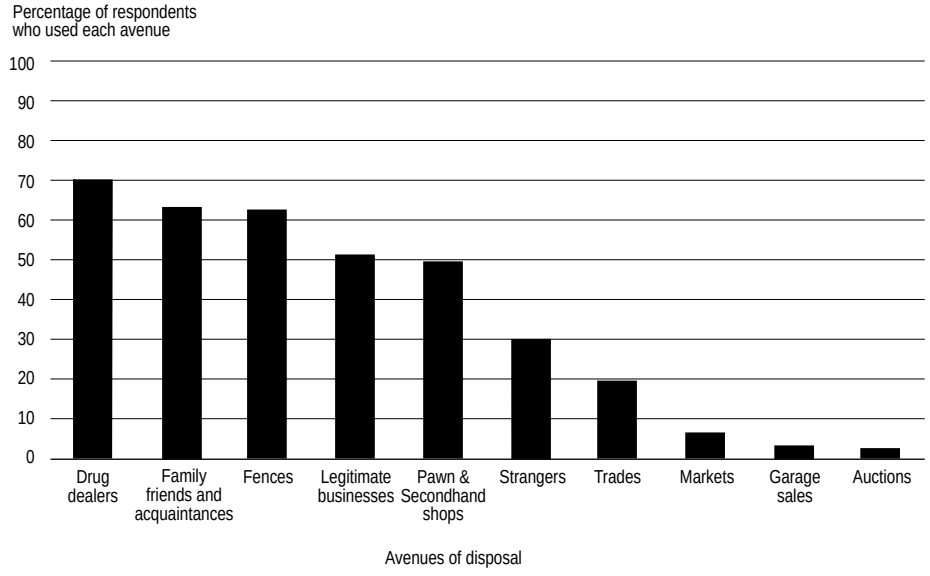
On receiving their current sentence (Q.31), the largest proportion of respondents felt it was better than expected (42.1%; 102 / 242; 25 respondents had missing data), about a third thought it was worse than expected (33.1%; 80 / 242), whilst the remaining respondents thought it was as expected. This pattern was similar for all groups of respondents.

THE DISPOSAL OF STOLEN PROPERTY

General features

A broad summary of the avenues of disposal reportedly used by burglars is illustrated in Figure 4. The data for Figure 4 were derived from the first part of each avenue of disposal question, which asked respondents whether they had used that particular method (i.e. part [a] of Questions 11-23). Each bar in Figure 4 shows the percentage of respondents who said, when asked (cued recall), that they had used that particular avenue at least once during the reference period. Note that percentages are calculated based on *n*=250 because there were 17 respondents, identified as only ever stealing cash, who were not asked Questions 10-23. Given that respondents used more than one disposal avenue in the reference period, the percentages in Figure 4 do not sum to 100. The commonest avenues of disposal, in order, were trading stolen goods for drugs (70.0%; 175 / 250), selling to family, friends and acquaintances (62.8%; 157 / 250), selling to fences (62.0%; 155 / 250), selling to legitimate businesses (50.8%; 127 / 250) and selling to pawn or secondhand shops (49.2%; 123 / 250). Specific differences between offender groups in their use of different avenues of disposal are discussed separately below. It is, however, worth noting that the differences were generally minor and that the pattern reported in Figure 4 is broadly representative.

Figure 4: Use of avenues of disposal (*n*=250)



Number of methods used

The number of methods of disposal used by each respondent was determined by counting the number of 'yes' responses to parts (a) of Questions 11 to 23. Non-responses (i.e. refusals) were treated as 'no' responses. Respondents used a median of four avenues of disposal during the reference period (inter-quartile range 2-5; *n*=250). The only significant difference in the number of avenues used between groups was by frequency of offending, where high frequency offenders used significantly more avenues of disposal (median 4, inter-quartile range 3-5, *n*=116; Mann-Whitney test, Z=2.88; p<0.01; a=0.01) than low frequency offenders (median 3, inter-quartile range 2-4, *n*=120).

Type of avenues used

Table 13 illustrates the *relative* importance of each avenue of disposal under two conditions of recall. First, respondents were asked to recall which methods they had used from memory (free recall; i.e. responses to Q.10). Second, respondents were asked to recall if they had used a particular method when asked directly about it (cued recall; i.e. part [a] of Q.11-23). It is clearly apparent from Table 13 that both methods produce a broadly consistent pattern of responses.

Table 13: Use of different avenues of stolen goods disposal[a]

	Free recall[b]		*Cued recall[b]*	
Avenues of disposal	***Number of respondents using each avenue***	***%***	***Number of respondents using each avenue***	***%***
Drug dealers	92	36.8	175	70.0
Family, friends and acquaintances	92	36.8	157	62.8
Fences	67	26.8	155	62.0
Legitimate businesses	31	12.4	127	50.8
Pawn and Secondhand shops	59	23.6	123	49.2
Strangers	18	7.2	74	29.6
Markets	1	0.4	16	6.4
Others	11	4.4	30	12.0

a Total *n*=250; 17 respondents had missing data, in that they were not asked questions Q.10-23. Although 250 respondents were asked Q. 10-23, in some instances respondents made no reply. These non-replies were counted as answers of 'no' so as to present a conservative picture and to provide a common denominator (i.e. *n*=250) to assist comparison between the avenues. The number of such 'no' replies by question was: Q.10, 11; Q.11, 16; Q.12, 14; Q.13, 11; Q.14, 14; Q.15, 14; Q16, 14; Q.17, 14; Q.18, 14; Q.19, 15; Q.20, 13; Q.21, 13; Q.22, 13.

b Free recall (Q.10) – where respondents were asked to name any avenues used. Cued recall (Q.11-22) – where respondents were asked if they had used that particular avenue.

Offender groups were compared on their responses to the free recall avenues of disposal question (Q.10). To do this, rank orderings of the reported avenues used by respondents were calculated separately for each group (e.g. for heroin users) and then compared between groups (e.g. heroin users with heroin non-users). Rank orderings of use were highly similar, suggesting that groups did not markedly differ in their disposal routes.

It is possible that Table 13 presents a biased picture of the relative frequencies of the different avenues of disposal, because it does not take account of the frequency with which the respondent used each method. For example, if a respondent reported using two avenues, but used one all the time and the other occasionally, both avenues would be counted in Table 13. Effectively, Table 13 is treating these two avenues with *equal weight*. To examine the influence of this equal weighting a simple strategy was adopted, in which respondents who reported using an avenue *all the time* or *most of the time* were treated as 'whole observations', whilst those reporting at a lower frequency (*about half the time*, *some of the time*, *once*) were treated as half an observation. This method of weighted calculation changed the rank order of only two avenues, in that 'family, friends and acquaintances' fell from second most used to third, whilst 'fences' moved from third to second. Therefore weighting the responses according to frequency of use had little effect on the data.

Each of the avenues identified in Table 13 is examined in more detail below.

Drug dealers

Out of the 250 respondents asked whether they had traded stolen goods for drugs during the reference period (Q.12a), 175 indicated that they had, constituting 70.0 per cent of the sample. Twenty-eight per cent of respondents traded stolen goods for drugs most of the time and 42.0 per cent some of the time (Q.12b; note that frequency responses were collapsed as for *Choice of burglary targets*). There were no differences between offender groups in the frequency with which this method had been used, although it might have been expected that some differences would be apparent between heroin users and non-users in their use of this avenue. However, it should be recalled that the question covered trading stolen goods for all types of drugs, not just heroin. Pertinent to this, respondents were also asked what drugs they typically received when trading a VCR, a power tool and a gold ring (Q.12c). Overall, the most common drug traded was marijuana (50.9%; 84 / 165; 10 respondents had missing values), followed by heroin (40.0%; 66 / 165), amphetamines (6.1%; 10 / 165) and cocaine (3.0%; 5 / 165). Important differences emerged between adults and juveniles in the type of drugs received, which can be seen in Table 14. Juveniles were more likely than adults to trade VCRs for marijuana whereas adults were more likely than juveniles to trade VCRs for heroin (c^2=32.4; df=2; p<0.001; a=0.015). The same pattern was also observed for the disposal of power tools (c^2=32.5; df=2; p<0.001; a=0.015) and jewellery (c^2=38.9; df=2; p<0.001; a=0.015). Not surprisingly, those who later in the interview reported using heroin (Q.25), typically traded stolen goods principally for heroin (with the percentage of heroin users trading VCRs, jewellery and power tools for heroin being 77.9% [53 / 68], 79.2% [57 / 72] and 80.9% [38 / 47] respectively). There were no differences between other groups.

Table 14: Drugs traded for stolen goods

	Respondents who traded stolen goods for:							
	Marijuana		*Heroin*		*Other drugs*		*Total*	
Item and group	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
VCR								
Adults[a]	23	31.1	43	58.1	8	10.8	74	100.0
Juveniles[b]	55	76.4	11	15.3	6	8.3	72	100.0
Gold ring								
Adults[c]	17	22.1	50	64.9	10	13.0	77	100.0
Juveniles[d]	40	76.9	8	15.4	4	7.7	52	100.0
Power tool								
Adults[e]	14	28.0	32	64.0	4	8.0	50	100.0
Juveniles[f]	42	84.0	6	12.0	2	4.0	50	100.0

Respondents who did not provide information on which drugs had been traded for a particular item are excluded from this table. For the affected categories the number of missing values are as follows:

a 22 *b* 7 *c* 19 *d* 27 *e* 46 *f* 29

Table 15 presents respondents' replies when they were asked how drug dealers disposed of stolen property (Q.12d). Though respondents could give multiple responses to this question, they often appeared either reluctant to answer or were simply not interested in knowing something they did not need to know (informal observation). Of those that did answer, 87.9 per cent (102 / 116; 59 respondents had missing data) claimed that the stolen goods were either kept, sold or given to their family, friends and acquaintances. The other methods mentioned were that stolen goods were sold to higher drug dealers, melted down in the case of jewellery then sold, or sold in bulk to unspecified persons.

Table 15: Disposal methods of stolen goods by drug dealers as stated by burglars[a]

	Respondents identifying method	
Drug dealers' method of disposal	*Number*	*%*
Kept or sold to family, friends and acquaintances	102	87.9
Sold to higher drug dealers	11	9.5
Melted down stolen jewellery	2	1.7
Bulk sales to unspecified persons	1	0.9

a Total *n*=116; 59 respondents had missing data. Note that respondents could give multiple responses.

Respondents were also asked how they avoided detection by police whilst trading stolen goods for drugs (Q.12e). Again, though multiple responses were possible, respondents' replies were usually quite terse and limited to one method, partly at least because many respondents commented that it was being caught for buying drugs that was their primary concern (informal observation). However, respondents did employ a variety of strategies, as presented in Table 16. The most common was to deal only with people that they knew and trusted (40.4%; 67/166; 9 respondents had missing data). The next most frequently cited method was to use some form of physical measure. These included: phoning the dealer prior to arrival; avoiding being seen; not acting nervously; concealing the stolen goods (e.g. in a rucksack); using a radio scanner; using a middleman and having fake identification (ID). About 20 per cent of respondents made no effort to avoid detection and these respondents largely consisted of heroin users. Finally, a small proportion of respondents felt there was little risk of detection because the buyer was implicated in the crime.

Table 16: Methods of avoiding detection used by burglars when they disposed of stolen goods through drug dealers[a]

	Respondents using method	
Method of avoiding detection	***Number***	***%***
Traded with a known and trusted dealer	67	40.4
Used one or more physical measures	58	34.9
No measure used at all	33	19.9
Dealer implicated (hence will keep silent)	8	4.8

a Total *n*=166; 9 respondents had missing data. Note that respondents could give multiple responses.

Respondents were also asked what quantities of drugs they thought they would receive for the different goods (Q.12c). Respondents' answers were converted into grams and results are reported only for the two most common drugs, heroin and marijuana. These responses are presented in Table 17. Dollar values for these drugs were also calculated, based on price information obtained from the NSW Police Service. The overall median estimated cash equivalents for the drugs were:

- VCR, $130 (inter-quartile range $100-$200; *n*=125, 50 respondents had missing data)
- Gold ring, $135 (inter-quartile range $100-$200; *n*=104, 71 respondents had missing data)
- Power tool, $50 (inter-quartile range $50-$87; *n*=75, 100 respondents had missing data).

Prices did not differ between offender groups. For the items that respondents made their price judgments on, the actual retail prices when purchased as new were: 395 dollars for the VCR; 700 dollars for the gold ring; and 211 dollars for the power tool.

The time taken for offenders to dispose of stolen goods through drug dealers was also obtained (Q.12f). Nearly half the respondents had exchanged their stolen goods for drugs within one hour of stealing them (43.1%; 59/137; 38 respondents had missing data) and 91.2 per cent (cumulative total; 125/137) had done so within a day of the burglary. There were no obvious differences in disposal times between groups.

Table 17: Quantity of heroin and marijuana traded for specific stolen goods

	Quantity of drugs (grams) exchanged for:		
	VCR	***Gold ring***	***Power tool***
Drug	***Median (Inter-quartile range)***	***Median (Inter-quartile range)***	***Median (Inter-quartile range)***
Heroin[a]	0.5 (0.3 – 0.5)	0.5 (0.3 – 1.0)	0.2 (0.2 – 0.3)
Marijuana[b]	12.3 (7.0 – 19.3)	10.5 (7.0 – 14.0)	7.0 (3.5 – 8.8)

Respondents who did not provide information on the quantity of drugs traded were excluded from the calculation of the relevant medians and inter-quartile ranges. For each drug the numbers of respondents included in the calculations, together with the number of missing values [in square brackets], are as follows for (1) the VCR, (2) the gold ring and (3) the power tool, respectively:

a (1) *n*=54 [29]; (2) *n*=58 [46]; (3) *n*=38 [75] *b* (1) *n*=78 [29]; (2) *n*=57 [46]; (3) *n*=56 [75]

Note that the number of missing values are the same for each item (e.g. VCR), because these refer to the number of respondents who gave no drug information for that particular item.

Fences

Out of the 250 respondents asked whether they had sold stolen goods to fences during the reference period (Q.13a), there were 155 (62.0%) who indicated that they had used this method of disposal. Thirty-four per cent of respondents sold to a fence most of the time and 27.2 per cent some of the time (Q.13b; note that the frequency responses were collapsed as for *Choice of burglary targets*). There were no differences in the frequency of use of this avenue between offender groups. When those who had used a fence were asked how the fence then disposed of stolen goods (Q.13d), the majority claimed that the fence either kept, sold or gave away stolen goods, to friends, family and acquaintances (94.0%; 110/117; 38 respondents had missing data). A small minority reported that stolen goods were resold through a business (5.1%; 6/117) and one individual reported that stolen goods were resold in bulk. As for the previous time this question was asked (see *Drug dealers* for discussion), respondents, though able to give multiple responses, generally limited themselves to one response.

When asked how they avoided detection by police (Q.13e; multiple responses were allowed), most respondents reported that they only dealt with individuals they knew and trusted (51.3%; 77/150; 5 respondents had missing data). About 25 per cent of respondents (37/150) used some physical form of avoiding detection, mostly avoiding being seen, avoiding leaving fingerprints or disposing of stolen goods rapidly. There were no methods mentioned by respondents which had not already been identified by those trading for drugs. There were again a group of respondents who made no special effort to avoid detection (18.0%; 27/150) and a further group who felt no special effort was necessary as the fence was 'implicated' (3.3%; 5/150).

The price that respondents thought the fence would typically pay for the VCR, gold ring and power tool (Q.13c) was again obtained:

- VCR, $150 (inter-quartile range $100-$200; *n*=131, 24 respondents had missing data)
- Gold ring, $150 (inter-quartile range $100-$200; *n*=153, 2 respondents had missing data)
- Power tool, $70 (inter-quartile range $50-$100; *n*=105, 50 respondents had missing data).

Prices did not differ between offender groups.

Disposal speed was again investigated (Q.13f). Thirty-seven per cent of respondents (47 / 128; 27 respondents had missing data) had sold stolen goods to a fence within one hour of the theft and 82.8 per cent (cumulative total; 106 / 128) within one day. There were no differences in disposal time between groups.

Legitimate businesses

Out of the 250 respondents asked whether they had sold stolen goods to legitimate businesses during the reference period (Q.11a), a total of 127 (50.8%) indicated that they had used this method of disposal. Seventeen per cent of respondents sold stolen goods to businesses most of the time, 21.2 per cent some of the time and 12.6 per cent did not provide an estimate of how frequently they used this avenue, beyond indicating that they had used it (Q.11d; note that the frequency responses were collapsed as for *Choice of burglary targets*). Some differences were apparent between groups when the use of this avenue was compared. In Table 18, it can be seen that, overall, adults were more likely to sell to legitimate businesses than juveniles (c^2=21.1; df=1; p<0.01; a=0.01) as were heroin users when compared with non-users (c^2=7.9; df=1; p<0.01; a=0.01). No other group differences were significant.

Table 18: Use of a legitimate business for disposal of stolen goods, by adults and juveniles, and by heroin users and non-users

	Selling to a legitimate business		*Not selling to a legitimate business*		*Total*	
Group	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***
Adults and juveniles						
Adults[a]	89	67.4	43	32.6	132	100.0
Juveniles[b]	38	37.3	64	62.7	102	100.0
Heroin users						
Users[c]	72	64.3	40	35.7	112	100.0
Non-users[d]	45	45.0	55	55.0	100	100.0

Respondents who did not provide information on whether they had used a legitimate business were excluded from the table. Missing values for the affected categories of burglars were:

a 7 *b* 9 *c* 3 *d* 3

Importantly, in nearly all cases, the respondent claimed that the purchaser knew the goods were stolen (94.0%; 94 / 100; 27 respondents had missing data; Q.11i). Respondents

were also asked to freely recall as many as they could of the business types to which they had sold stolen goods during the reference period (Q.11c; multiple responses were allowed). Table 19 shows the number of respondents who identified each business type. The most frequently used business was the mixed business local corner store. When respondents were asked how these stores disposed of stolen goods (Q.11e; multiple responses were allowed), they thought that sales occurred through an extensive network of family, friends and acquaintances. Jewellery stores were also used very frequently, but just for disposal of precious stones and gold by weight (informal observation). When respondents were asked how jewellers then disposed of the stolen goods they claimed that the jewellers melted down the gold and resold it. Car yards, wreckers and repair businesses not only purchased stolen cars and car parts, but also bought consumer electrical goods (informal observation). Tradesmen and contractors also purchased stolen goods typically for use in their occupation (notably power tools; informal observation). Computer and office machine shops, antique shops, tobacconists, pubs and clubs and restaurants generally purchased stolen goods primarily for direct use or resale through their business (informal observation). Finally, the 'other' category in Table 19 includes hairdressers, butchers, brothels, real estate agents, bakeries, doctors, government offices, liquor shops and a lawn mower shop.

Table 19: Types of legitimate business used by respondents to dispose of stolen goods[a]

	Respondents who had used business type	
Business type	***Number***	***%***
Mixed business	45	43.3
Jewellery	32	30.8
Wreckers/Mechanics	19	18.3
Tradesmen	13	12.5
Computers	13	12.5
Clothes	10	9.6
Antiques	10	9.6
Electrical	9	8.7
Pubs/Clubs	9	8.7
Tobacconist	8	7.7
Petrol stations	6	5.8
Restaurants	5	4.8
Other	14	13.5

a Total *n*=104; 23 respondents had missing data. Note that respondents could give multiple responses.

It was anticipated that business people who purchased stolen goods would principally buy the type of goods which they could then resell through their business as legitimate, thus maximising their profits. Whilst many respondents (68.7%; 79 / 115; 12 respondents had missing data; Q.11b & e; multiple responses were allowed for Q.11e) who had sold to a legitimate business thought that the stolen goods were resold through that business, this still left the remainder to be kept by the buyer or resold through a more diffuse network of contacts.

When asked how they avoided detection by police when selling to a legitimate business, most respondents relied on knowing and trusting the business people they were dealing with (53.1%; 51 / 96; 31 respondents had missing data; Q.11g; multiple responses were allowed). Smaller groups of respondents reported doing nothing in particular (14.6%; 14 / 96), or employing one of the many physical methods mentioned earlier (e.g. using a police scanner, not leaving fingerprints). It is also interesting to note that 35.4 per cent (34 / 96; 31 respondents had missing data; Q.11j) of those who sold stolen goods to legitimate businesses indicated that the buyers also dealt in drugs. This activity occurred in all the types of business reported here.

The price respondents claimed they would have obtained for the VCR, gold ring and power tool were again determined (Q.11f). Businesses typically paid:

- VCR, $150 (inter-quartile range $100-$200; *n*=97, 30 respondents had missing data)
- Gold ring, $175 (inter-quartile range $100-$250; *n*=111; 16 respondents had missing data)
- Power tool, $55 (inter-quartile range $50-$100; *n*=77, 50 respondents had missing data).

There were too few businesses of each type to make any meaningful comparisons between prices offered. Prices did not differ between groups.

Speed of disposal was again determined. Thirty-three per cent of respondents (26 / 78; 49 respondents had missing data) had disposed of the stolen goods to a legitimate business within one hour of the theft and 82.1 per cent (cumulative total; 64 / 78) within one day. There was some indication that both heroin users (91.1% in under a day [41 / 45]) and adults (90.7% in under a day [49 / 54]) disposed of stolen goods faster through these outlets than heroin non-users (65.5% in under a day [19 / 29]) and juveniles (62.5% in under a day [15 / 24]), respectively. There were no differences between other groups.

Pawn and secondhand shops

Out of the 250 respondents asked whether they had sold stolen goods to pawn or secondhand shops during the reference period (Q.20a), a total of 123 (49.2%) indicated that they had used this method of disposal. Twelve per cent of respondents sold to pawn or secondhand shops most of the time and 36.4 per cent some of the time (Q.20b; note that the frequency responses were collapsed as for *Choice of burglary targets*). There were no differences in the use of this outlet between groups. It was originally assumed that stolen goods sold to pawnbrokers were mainly over the counter (i.e. legitimate) transactions. However, during the course of the study it became apparent that at least three different types of transaction took place. The first was where stolen goods were

bought unknowingly by the pawnbroker. The second also involved over the counter sales, but this time with the pawnbroker knowing the goods were stolen, but still willing to buy. The third also involved the pawnbroker knowing the goods were stolen, but the stolen goods were not mixed with the legitimate stock. In this case the pawnbroker or secondhand dealer acted as a fence, sometimes even buying stolen goods in bulk.

Though it is difficult post hoc to tell the relative importance of these three methods, some idea can be gained from examining respondents' answers to a number of questions. Undoubtedly the second and third methods combined are more common than the first, as 67.0 per cent of respondents (73 / 109; 14 respondents had missing data) claimed that the dealer knew the goods were stolen (Q.20f). When respondents were asked how they guarded against police detection, 51.8 per cent (58 / 112; 11 respondents had missing data; Q.20d; multiple responses were allowed) used fake IDs, suggesting that *at least* 51.8 per cent of this group used method one or two, as these both involve over the counter sales which would require some demonstration of legality.[2] In relation to method three, 5.4 per cent (6 / 112) claimed to have sold *under the counter* (i.e. illegally) as a means of avoiding detection. This may imply that only five per cent of the sample had used method three, making it the least used.

The price respondents thought they would have obtained for selling certain stolen goods to pawnbrokers and secondhand dealers was also determined (Q.20c). The prices that respondents claimed they would receive were:

- VCR, $100 (inter-quartile range $80-$150; *n*=93, 30 respondents had missing data)
- Gold ring, $100 (inter-quartile range $75-$150; *n*=85, 38 respondents had missing data)
- Power tool, $50, (inter-quartile range $40-$80; *n*=78, 45 respondents had missing data).

These prices were amongst the lowest of all the outlets for which price data were obtained. Prices did not differ between groups.

Speed of disposal was also different from the other outlets considered, in that only 24.7 per cent of respondents (20 / 81; 42 respondents had missing data) had sold stolen goods to a pawn or secondhand shop within one hour of the burglary, and only 63.0 per cent had done so within one day (cumulative total; 51 / 81). There were no differences between groups. Proportionally, the larger number of respondents taking more than one day to dispose of stolen goods through this avenue concords with respondents' own observations that pawn and secondhand shops were often sales points of last resort. This was partly due to the low prices offered for their goods and also because many respondents were concerned about police detection when selling through this avenue (informal observation).

Family, friends and acquaintances

Out of the 250 respondents asked whether they had sold or given stolen goods to their family, friends or acquaintances during the reference period (Q.19a), 157 (62.8%) indicated that they had done so. Fifteen per cent of respondents did this most of the time and 47.0 per cent did this some of the time (Q.19b; note that the frequency responses were collapsed as for *Choice of burglary targets*). There were no differences between groups in the use of this avenue. No further questions were asked of respondents in respect to disposal through this route, due to the sensitivity of questions concerning their family.

Selling to strangers

Out of the 250 respondents asked whether they had sold stolen goods to strangers during the reference period (Q.15a), 74 (29.6%) indicated that they had done so. Two per cent of respondents had sold stolen goods this way most of the time and 27.6 per cent some of the time (Q.15b; note that the frequency responses were collapsed as for *Choice of burglary targets*). Differences emerged between groups in selling to strangers, as can be seen in Table 20. High frequency offenders were more likely to use this avenue of disposal than low frequency offenders (c^2=8.2; df=1; p<0.01; a=0.01). There were no other differences between groups.

Table 20: Disposal of stolen goods to strangers by high and low frequency offenders

	Respondents who:					
	Sold to strangers		*Did not sell to strangers*		*Total*	
Group	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
High frequency offenders[a]	43	39.4	66	60.6	109	100.0
Low frequency offenders[b]	22	21.4	81	78.6	103	100.0
Total	**65**	**30.7**	**147**	**69.3**	**212**	**100.0**

a 4 respondents had missing data. *b* 4 repondents had missing data.

The places where sales to strangers occurred are presented in Table 21 (Q.15c; multiple responses were allowed). Sales took place predominantly in pubs and clubs (43.8%; 32/73; 1 respondent had missing data) but also on the streets and in other public places. The 'other' category covered sales to cabs waiting at a taxi rank and sales where the respondent could be safe from observation whilst the sale was conducted (e.g. in an alley, behind a building)

Table 21: Locations where burglars sold stolen goods to strangers[a]

	Respondents who had used location	
Location	*Number*	*%*
Pubs/Clubs	32	43.8
On the street	26	35.6
Shops/Shopping centres	12	16.4
Railway	9	12.3
Parks	8	11.0
Other	9	12.3

a Total n=73; 1 respondent had missing data. Note that respondents could give multiple responses.

Advertising, auctions, markets and garage sales

Only 74 respondents (48 adults and 26 juveniles) were asked whether they had advertised stolen goods for sale or used the *Trading Post* (a paper devoted to listing items for sale or trade) because the question was added to the questionnaire only after most interviews had been completed. Of this sample, 6.8 per cent (5/74) reported using advertising or the *Trading Post* during the reference period. It is important to note that this and related methods were not mentioned *at all* during the free recall question (Q.10), suggesting that they were used infrequently by most burglars.

Out of the 250 respondents asked whether they had sold stolen goods through an auction, only two per cent had done so during the reference period (5/250; Q.16a). Only one respondent used the method most of the time during the reference period (Q.16b). Note that the frequency categories for auctions, markets and garage sales were all collapsed as for *Choice of burglary targets*.

Out of the 250 respondents asked whether they had sold stolen goods at a market, 6.4 per cent had done so during the reference period (16/250; Q.14a). Only one respondent used this method most of the time (Q.14b).

Out of the 250 respondents asked whether they had sold stolen goods via garage sales, only 2.8 per cent had done so during the reference period (7/250; Q.21a). No respondent used this method most of the time (Q.21b).

Overall, there were no apparent differences in the use of advertising, auctions, markets or garage sales between the groups.

Trading for other goods

Out of the 250 respondents asked whether they had traded stolen goods for other goods during the reference period (Q.18a), 47 (18.8%) indicated that they had done so. Only one respondent used this method most of the time (Q.18b; note that the frequency responses were collapsed as for *Choice of burglary targets*). The most frequent items for which stolen goods were traded were vehicles or vehicle parts (45.7%; 21/46; 1 respondent had missing data; Q.18c; multiple responses were allowed). The remaining items included clothes, consumer goods, guns and alcohol. The traded items were also sometimes stolen. Most items, once traded, were kept by their new owners (65.9%; 27/41; 6 respondents had missing data; Q.18d). There were no differences in the use of this method of disposal between groups.

Ordering stolen goods

Out of the 250 respondents asked whether they had had orders placed with them during the reference period (Q.17a), 193 (77.2%) indicated that they had stolen to order. Thirty-one per cent of respondents had stolen goods to order most of the time and 46.0 per cent some of the time (Q.17b; note that the frequency responses were collapsed as for *Choice of burglary targets*). As can be seen in Table 22, high frequency offenders were more likely to steal to order than low frequency offenders (c^2=13.2, df=1; p<0.01; a=0.01). There were no other differences between groups.

These orders varied from the most general, such as 'any consumer electricals', to the highly specific, where an item in a certain property would be specified. For example,

Table 22: Stealing goods to order, by high and low frequency offenders

	Had stolen to order		*Had not stolen to order*		*Total*	
Group	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***
High frequency offenders[a]	100	91.7	9	8.3	109	100.0
Low frequency offenders[b]	75	72.8	28	27.2	103	100.0
Total	**175**	**82.5**	**37**	**17.5**	**212**	**100.0**

a 4 respondents had missing data. *b* 4 respondents had missing data.

one respondent reported that a jeweller gave him details of clients who had purchased expensive jewellery, so that he could steal it back. All the respondents who had had goods ordered from them were then asked who had ordered the stolen goods (Q.17c). They were able to give multiple responses to this open-ended question and their responses are detailed in Table 23. Most orders were from family, friends and acquaintances (58.7%; 111/189; 4 respondents had missing data), followed by drug dealers (41.3%; 78/189) and fences (30.7%; 58/189).

Table 23: Orderers of stolen goods[a]

	Respondents who stole to order	
Orderer	***Number***	***%***
Family, friends and acquaintances	111	58.7
Drug dealers	78	41.3
Fences	58	30.7
Legitimate businesses	35	18.5
Pawn and Secondhand shops	9	4.8
Other	7	3.7

a Total *n*=189; 4 respondents had missing data. Note that respondents could give multiple responses.

There were some apparent differences between offender groups in terms of who placed orders. Table 24 shows that for both juveniles and adults, orders were placed primarily by family, friends and acquaintances. However, for juveniles, drug dealers were the only other major orderer, whilst fences, legitimate businesses and drug dealers all featured prominently for adults. A similar pattern of differences emerged for heroin users and non-users, probably because users were mainly adults (see Table 2). There were no differences between the other groups.

Table 24: Orderers of stolen goods for juveniles and adults, and heroin users and non-users

	Respondents who stole goods ordered by:									
	Drug dealers		*Family, friends and acquaintances*		*Fences*		*Legitimate businesses*		*Total*	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Adults and juveniles										
Adults[a]	18	18.6	37	38.1	22	22.7	20	20.6	97	100.0
Juveniles[b]	28	34.1	43	52.4	8	9.8	3	3.7	82	100.0
Heroin users										
Users[c]	21	23.9	34	38.6	20	22.7	13	14.8	88	100.0
Non-users[d]	22	28.9	39	51.3	9	11.8	6	7.9	76	100.0

a 8 respondents had missing data. *b* 6 respondents had missing data. *c* 12 respondents had missing data. *d* 17 respondents had missing data.

The type of goods ordered (Q.17d; open-ended, multiple responses were allowed) reflected the same general trends observed in the rest of the data (see Table 25), with the most frequently requested items being consumer electricals (VCRs, TVs etc.) and jewellery. There were no differences in the type of goods ordered between groups.

Table 25: Type of stolen goods ordered[a]

	Respondents who stole item	
Item	*Number*	*%*
Consumer electricals	152	81.3
Jewellery	64	34.2
Vehicle parts	38	20.3
Clothes and shoes	22	11.8
Tobacco	11	5.9
Antiques and furniture	7	3.7
Firearms	5	2.7
Other	22	11.8

a Total *n*=187; 6 respondents had missing data.

Getting someone else to sell stolen goods for you

Out of the 250 respondents asked whether they had had someone else sell stolen goods for them during the reference period (Q.22), there were 134 (53.6%) who indicated that they had. This practice was far more common in juveniles, with 66.3 per cent of them having done so (69 / 104; 7 respondents had missing data) compared with 48.9 per cent

of adults (65 / 133; 6 respondents had missing data). There were no differences between the other groups.

Miscellaneous avenues

Thirty-three avenues were mentioned in the final open-ended question at the end of the avenues of disposal section of the interview (Q.23). Twenty-five of these referred to legitimate businesses of the sort discussed earlier (mixed business, jewellery shops etc.). In addition, there were five respondents who claimed to have sold stolen goods to a brothel. One respondent each had sold stolen goods to a government office, at a taxi rank, at a nightclub, to a hippie commune and to police.

Comparison of price and speed of disposal across avenues

Up to this point we have examined the features of each avenue of disposal separately. There are two features in particular which are of interest to compare across avenues of disposal, namely, the price obtained for the VCR, ring and power tool, and the speed of disposal of stolen goods. Table 26 illustrates the medians of the prices respondents thought they would have obtained for the VCR, gold ring and power tool, for the four principal avenues of disposal. The only major difference between outlets was that pawnbrokers and secondhand dealers tended to offer the lowest prices for stolen property. Generally, stolen goods fetched around one-quarter to one-third of their retail value when new.

Table 26: The prices expected to be obtained for specific stolen goods

Disposal avenue	*VCR* *Median (inter-quartile range)*	*Gold ring* *Median (inter-quartile range)*	*Power tool* *Median (inter-quartile range)*
Legitimate businesses[a]	150 (100 – 200)	175 (100 – 250)	55 (50 – 100)
Fence[b]	150 (100 – 200)	150 (100 – 200)	70 (50 – 100)
Drug dealers[c]	130 (100 – 200)	135 (100 – 200)	50 (50 – 87)
Pawn and Secondhand shops[d]	100 (80 – 150)	100 (75 – 150)	50 (40 – 80)
Actual 'new' price	**395**	**700**	**211**

Respondents who did not provide information on the expected price were excluded from the calculation of the relevant medians and inter-quartile ranges. For each category of disposal, the numbers of respondents included in the calculations, together with the numbers of missing values [in square brackets], are as follows for (1) the VCR, (2) the gold ring and (3) the power tool:

a (1) *n*=97 [30]; (2) *n*=111 [16]; (3) *n*=77 [50];
b (1) *n*=131 [24]; (2) *n*=153 [2]; (3) *n*=105 [50];
c (1) *n*=125 [50]; (2) *n*=104 [71]; (3) *n*=75 [100];
d (1) *n*=93 [30]; (2) *n*=85 [38]; (3) *n*=78 [45]

The second feature of interest was the speed with which burglars disposed of stolen goods after they had completed a burglary. This is illustrated in Table 27. Overall, respondents disposed of stolen property extremely rapidly, in that regardless of the avenue used, about half the respondents disposed of stolen goods within four hours of the burglary. However, two other interesting patterns emerged from these data. The first is that the time to dispose of goods through pawnbrokers is generally longer than for disposal through other avenues. The second observation is the rapidity with which trade with drug dealers is conducted.

Table 27: Speed of disposal of stolen goods

	Respondents who disposed of goods:									
	Under 1 hour from theft		*1-4 hours from theft*		*4-24 hours from theft*		*1 day + from theft*		*Total*	
Disposal avenue	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Legitimate businesses[a]	26	33.3	9	11.5	29	37.2	14	17.9	78	100.0
Drug dealers[b]	59	43.1	25	18.2	41	29.9	12	8.8	137	100.0
Fences[c]	47	36.7	28	21.9	31	24.2	22	17.2	128	100.0
Pawn and Secondhand shops[d]	20	24.7	22	27.2	9	11.1	30	37.0	81	100.0

a 49 respondents had missing data. *b* 38 respondents had missing data. *c* 27 respondents had missing data. *d* 42 respondents had missing data.

CONSISTENCY AND HONESTY OF RESPONDENTS

Three types of data reported here suggest that respondents' answers were consistent and honest. First, the results here match previous research findings with respect to the offending frequency distribution of burglars (e.g. Visher 1986); the age distribution of burglars (e.g. NSW Department of Juvenile Justice 1997; Australian Bureau of Statistics 1997b); the difference between juveniles and adult burglars in the use of accomplices (e.g. Mukherjee 1985); the relationship of drug use with offending frequency in burglars (e.g. Hall 1996); and the frequency with which certain items are stolen (e.g. Jochelson 1995).

Second, the data were also internally consistent – a result that would be unexpected if respondents had lied indiscriminately (see Appendix 1). Several measures of internal reliability were examined. For example, one measure of the internal reliability of the data was given by the consistency between the free and cued recall measure of disposal avenues. The internal consistency of the data is also suggested by the correlation between certain variables. For example, frequency of offending was correlated with earnings from *break, enter and steal,* illicit drug expenditure and cash estimates of money needs. In all these cases, the correlated items were recorded at *different points* in the interview, suggesting internal consistency (see Appendix 1 for more details).

Third, much of the data on stolen goods disposal are consistent with patterns emerging from current police investigations, particularly in respect to identifying jewellers (Smith 1997), and the role of the drug trade in the stolen goods market (see for example: *Illawarra Mercury* 19 Mar. 1998, p.1; *Daily Telegraph Mirror* 10 Mar. 1998, p.7). Overall, it would seem that the data here present a broadly accurate picture of the respondents' experiences with the stolen goods market.

DISCUSSION

Of the proactive methods available to police to combat property crime, the control of the stolen goods market appears to offer much potential (Sutton 1998). This potential can be seen, for example, by the success of recent NSW police operations such as 'Ivy' and 'Basalt', both of which resulted in the arrest of a large number of burglars (Thommeny 1996). However, the full exploitation of the stolen goods market as an area for crime control has been handicapped by a lack of knowledge about several aspects of its structure and function. The current study attempted to fill some of these gaps by interviewing convicted and imprisoned burglars about the stolen goods market. These interviews yielded three sets of findings. The first concerned the impact of offender characteristics on the disposal of stolen goods. The second and most important findings concerned the avenues that offenders actually used to dispose of stolen goods. The third set of findings concerned certain features of the stolen goods market and the modus operandi of burglars. Each of these sets of findings are discussed below and their implications for law enforcement and the prevention of property crime are then assessed in a final section.

OFFENDER CHARACTERISTICS

Five types of offender characteristic were examined in the study. On each characteristic, respondents were grouped into appropriate categories. The impact of each grouping on the disposal of stolen goods and on the pattern of offending is examined here for each of the five characteristics.

The first characteristic was age, which was examined by splitting respondents into adult and juvenile groups, based on the institution in which they were currently residing. Juveniles differed from adults in several ways – apart, of course, from age. Juveniles tended to report a higher rate of burglary, a lower need for cash, a lower legal income and a lower income from burglary. In addition, juveniles spent less on illicit drugs and when they did spend, they typically purchased marijuana rather than heroin, whereas adults typically purchased heroin. The higher rate of burglary in juveniles and their apparently lower income from burglary might be explained by their more frequent use of accomplices than adults (see Mukherjee 1985) – particularly as the price obtained for stolen goods did not differ between these two groups. Thus the spoils of burglary might have to be split between a greater number of offenders. Alternatively, adults may simply have stolen more items per burglary or more valuable items per burglary.

Overall, adults and juveniles disposed of stolen goods in the same way and there were only a few differences between them. Adults tended to sell stolen goods to legitimate businesses more often than did juveniles and also, when selling through this outlet, tended to dispose of the goods faster. Adults had also stolen goods to order for a wider range of clients than juveniles. The general similarity between adults and juveniles here may be accounted for by the fact that only the 'worst' juvenile burglars are placed in detention. That is, in the Children's Court only 14.0 per cent of juveniles convicted of *break, enter and steal* are given a detention sentence, whereas 39.8 per cent of adults convicted of *break, enter and steal* in the Lower Courts are sentenced to prison (NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research 1997). These juveniles, when compared with a non-detained juvenile sample, may more resemble adult burglars because of their increased experience in property crime.

The second type of offender characteristic examined was offending frequency, that is, the rate at which burglars commit burglaries. High frequency offenders committed around thirty burglaries a month, compared with low frequency offenders who committed around two burglaries a month. The high frequency offenders also reported having more prior charges for *break, enter and steal*, greater need for cash and a larger burglary income than low frequency offenders. High frequency offenders also tended to spend more on illicit drugs. Generally, high frequency offenders used about four avenues of disposal, whilst low frequency offenders used about three. High frequency offenders also sold stolen goods to strangers more often than did low frequency offenders and also had stolen to order more often. Importantly, there were few other differences between high and low frequency offenders in the way in which they disposed of stolen property.

The third grouping split respondents into heroin users and non-users. In many respects this grouping was similar to that produced by splitting offenders by institution (juvenile versus adult), as heroin non-users were typically juveniles and heroin users were typically adults. Heroin users reported a higher rate of burglary, a greater need for cash and a larger burglary income than heroin non-users. As with adults and juveniles, there were far greater similarities in the way heroin users and non-users disposed of stolen property than there were differences. The only difference was that heroin users sold to legitimate businesses more often and disposed of stolen goods to them faster than did non-users.

The fourth grouping split respondents into commercial and residential burglars, based on the frequency with which they burgled different types of property. Generally, there were few differences between these groups, although residential burglars tended to commit burglaries at a higher rate and have a smaller burglary income than did commercial burglars. There were no differences in the way these two groups disposed of stolen goods.

The fifth and final grouping was by whether respondents did or did not think about getting caught prior to committing a burglary. One-third of respondents reported thinking about being caught and were classified as risk-aware. These risk-aware respondents tended to have fewer prior *break, enter and steal* charges and reported a lower burglary rate than risk-unaware respondents. There were no differences in the way these two groups disposed of stolen goods.

In conclusion, although there were many differentiating features between groups, as described above, the general pattern of disposal was the same – irrespective of whether information about disposal was obtained by the free or the cued recall method. This would suggest, with the possible exception of sales to strangers by high frequency offenders (as the capture of these offenders has a potentially large impact on the burglary rate), that it is quite appropriate to discuss the avenues of disposal data without reference to different types of offender, as all types appear to use broadly similar methods of disposal. These methods of disposal are discussed next.

THE AVENUES OF DISPOSAL

The study's most important findings concern the avenues by which the offenders disposed of stolen goods. Of these avenues, the most important was trading stolen property for drugs. This was the most frequently identified outlet under conditions of both free and cued recall. Even though this method of disposal was not expected to be so important at the *beginning* of the study, there are at least three reasons why this result

should not in fact be viewed as surprising. First, given the large literature identifying property crime as an important source of money for supporting drug use (see for example, Dobinson & Ward 1985; Collins, Hubbard & Rachal 1985; Jarvis & Parker 1989; Hall 1996), it is not surprising that the present study found that burglars trade stolen goods directly with drug dealers to obtain drugs. Thus, the tripartite relationship between drug-user / burglar (steals to obtain cash for drugs), fence (buys stolen goods from drug-user / burglar for cash) and dealer (sells drugs to drug-user / burglar for cash) has been rationalised into two parts. These two parts are: (1) the drug-user / burglar who steals goods to trade for drugs; and (2) the dealer / fence who trades drugs directly for stolen goods. That this rationalisation is a relatively recent phenomenon (e.g. over the last decade) is suggested by the finding that only 3 out of 129 heroin addicts interviewed in a 1988 study of the NSW heroin market reported exchanging stolen goods for drugs, even though 78 per cent of the sample reported involvement in property crime (Dobinson & Poletti 1988).

A second reason why the importance of trading stolen goods for drugs should not be viewed as surprising is that the exchange of stolen goods for drugs is known to occur in both the UK and in the US, but with no specific estimates of its importance (Walsh 1977; Sutton 1995). Moreover, Freiberg (1997) has suggested that trading stolen goods for drugs probably does occur in Australia, but he had little data to assess its relevance.

A third reason is that a number of recent drug raids in Sydney have also uncovered large stashes of stolen property, supporting the concept of dealer as receiver (e.g. *Illawarra Mercury* 19 Mar. 1998, p. 1; *Daily Telegraph Mirror* 10 Mar. 1998, p. 7; and see *Sydney Morning Herald* 4 Jul. 1998, p. 3). Clearly, as demonstrated many times before, property crime and the use of drugs are closely interconnected (Dobinson & Ward 1985; Collins, Hubbard & Rachal 1985; Jarvis & Parker 1989; Hall 1996).

In an attempt to determine how drug dealers dispose of stolen goods, we tried to interview convicted dealers, but they were generally reluctant to talk. Those that did speak revealed a similar picture of the stolen goods market to that described by the property offenders, suggesting no novel or privileged avenues of disposal. Discussions with representatives from the NSW police in areas with high drug sales suggested that most of the stolen goods obtained from drug deals were disposed of into the dealers' communities, through an informal network of family, friends and acquaintances. This may constitute at least one important avenue through which the stolen goods are disposed of and this is broadly in agreement with our respondents' comments and overseas research (Sutton 1998).

The second most frequently used disposal route was the sale or trade of stolen goods to family, friends and acquaintances. This method of sale is similar in many respects to that of drug dealers, in that disposal appears to occur through a network of informal contacts.

Fences were the third most frequently used outlet. Similar methods of disposal through informal networks of acquaintances are probably their main means of disposal, again as noted by respondents. However, fences (and possibly drug dealers) may also be involved in more organised forms of disposal as a few respondents noted that stolen goods were disposed of through a business (type unspecified) or resold in bulk.

The fourth most frequently used avenue of disposal involved the sale of stolen goods to legitimate businesses. On the basis of what respondents said, local corner shops or mixed businesses were the most frequently identified types of legitimate businesses

which purchased stolen goods. It may be surmised that this type of shop has a wide range of contacts in the local community, that is, exposure to likely 'customers' and burglars, as well as being places where people and goods frequently come and go without suspicion. Thus these enterprises are perfectly positioned to function as disposal points for stolen property, by ascertaining 'customers' needs' and acting as 'middle-man' between burglar and 'customer'.

As in the UK (Sutton 1998) and consistent with observations from the NSW Police (Smith 1997), jewellery shops were another type of legitimate business identified as an important point of sale for stolen goods – notably jewellery. However, the study did not make clear whether these jewellery shops were secondhand dealers who specialised in jewellery, or whether the business that offenders used were solely jewellery shops which bought secondhand goods as a sideline. Such a distinction may be important in identifying those most involved in purchasing stolen jewellery.

Several other types of business were also identified. These included wreckers and mechanics, who again purchased any type of stolen property as well as stolen car parts, and tradesmen, who tended to purchase stolen goods relevant to their trade. Many other outlets were also mentioned, suggesting that a large variety of retail enterprises were represented in the stolen property market.

Unsurprisingly, pawn and secondhand shops appeared to be actively involved in the stolen goods market – often knowingly purchasing and ordering stolen goods. However, their level of involvement (fifth most frequently used) was less than might have been expected based on the degree of law enforcement and legislative interest in this outlet. Of course, it is *possible* that this very interest might be responsible for our finding, in that as a result of increased law enforcement, burglars may now be using other avenues of disposal.

Three types of transaction emerged at pawn and secondhand shops. The first was where false ID was used to facilitate the sale of stolen goods, generally without the pawnbroker knowing the goods were stolen. In the second case, the pawnbroker bought the goods over the counter, knowing they were stolen. Here, false IDs were also probably employed. In the third case the pawnbroker purchased stolen goods in full collusion with the burglar.

Though many of the respondents had used pawn and secondhand shops, the general feeling seemed to be that they were a point of last resort that was used when other avenues, for whatever reason, were not available. In fact examination of the time for disposal data supports this conclusion, in that goods sold through pawnbrokers had, at the point of sale, often been in the offender's hands for longer than 24 hours. This was quite unusual, as most goods sold through other outlets were typically disposed of within a few hours of being stolen. Burglars' reasons for disliking pawn and secondhand shops were twofold. First, many knew of the various police sting operations, which made them wary of dealing with pawnbrokers and secondhand dealers, suggesting a further long acting benefit of this type of operation. Second, the price offered for stolen goods was quite low when compared with other outlets, providing an economic disincentive to use this avenue.

As *primary points* of disposal, markets, auctions and garage sales appear to be unimportant, in that they were the eighth, ninth and tenth most frequently cited disposal

avenue. However, given that the present study focussed on the first point of disposal (i.e. by the burglars themselves) , this does not mean that these outlets are not important in the disposal of stolen goods. It is possible that these outlets receive stolen goods further along the distribution chain. Alternatively, these outlets could act as receivers of stolen goods from less professional thieves who have not yet found their way into the prison system.

Sales through the *Trading Post* or other advertised media were not frequently used by the burglars interviewed here. However, advertisements can make quite a promising means of disposal, by allowing, over time, the build-up of an informal disposal network. For example, one respondent had advertised a TV for sale on a local community noticeboard. Each time someone phoned the offender, they were offered a TV. Before long, certain patrons realised the true nature of the transaction and started to pass goods on to their own network of family, friends and acquaintances. In the end, further advertisement was unnecessary, as an informal network of purchasers had been established.

Selling blindly to strangers in pubs and clubs or on the streets was also fairly common. Over one-quarter of respondents had at some time used this method – though not often. The majority of stranger sales involved an offender selling to someone in a bar or on the street. However, disposal to strangers was not just limited to sales in pubs or on the street. In one case, the burglar visited building sites selling stolen power tools to builders (similar of course to sales to tradesmen noted earlier). Another case was where a particular *place*, a taxi rank, gained a reputation for sale, almost a stolen goods market by repute. At this taxi rank individuals sold stolen goods to waiting taxi drivers who were then able to leave the district with the goods on board.

THE OPERATION OF THE STOLEN GOODS MARKET AND THE MODUS OPERANDI OF BURGLARS

Several new findings emerged about the operation of the stolen goods market. The most important was the observation that burglars disposed of stolen goods extremely rapidly, often within one hour of committing the burglary. The speed with which stolen goods are disposed of stresses the relevance of strategies which rely on targeting the stolen goods disposal process, rather than strategies which rely on catching burglars in possession of stolen goods. Clearly, detection of burglars becomes more difficult once they are no longer in possession of stolen property. Though in many cases the goods were disposed of rapidly, respondents were still asked where they stored stolen goods. Respondents tended to hide them either in their own or their friends' homes.

Respondents were also asked how they avoided detection by police. Apart from the rapid disposal of stolen property, a common response was to deal only with people they knew. One implication of this latter finding is that arresting receivers – one consequence of targeting the stolen goods market – would make it more problematic for offenders to re-establish relations with another receiver, because of the probable time needed for them to get to know the new receiver and vice versa. Although, overall, respondents noted similar methods of avoiding detection for all avenues, the use of false ID was particularly common for pawn and secondhand shops, as noted before.

There were three sets of questions that were intended to shed light on the modus operandi of burglars. The first set of questions examined how burglars decide what to steal. These questions revealed that items were stolen if they could be *easily sold* and if they realised a good price. Both findings reinforce the need for making stolen goods

disposal more difficult, as offenders, at least, seem to think they are factors in deciding what to take. The second set of questions concerned car use. It was found that three-quarters of respondents had used a car in the commission of a burglary. Respondents were then asked whether the vehicle was stolen. Juvenile burglars were found to have used stolen vehicles far more frequently than adults. The third question determined whether respondents had used any accomplices during their burglaries. As noted earlier and in accordance with previous findings (e.g. Mukherjee 1985), juveniles tended to use accomplices more frequently than did adults.

THE IMPLICATION OF THESE FINDINGS FOR CONTROLLING BURGLARY

At the beginning of the discussion it was suggested that these results might lead to an extension of current law enforcement efforts against the stolen property market, with the ultimate aim of reducing property crime. The data here suggest several methods by which this aim might be achieved. First, the data suggest which avenues are the most important to target for special operations and surveillance. From this perspective the principal targets should include drug dealers, the immediate social network of burglars, fences, legitimate businesses, pawnbrokers and secondhand dealers, as well as the other targets identified earlier in the report (see Table 13). Second, the data suggest specific strategies for particular avenues of disposal. These are discussed below.

Exchanging stolen goods for drugs was the most frequently identified method of disposing of stolen property and two strategies (not including opiate replacement therapies) are suggested here for dealing with it. The first is that when police have grounds for searching a suspected drug dealer's premises for drugs they should also be empowered to search for stolen goods. Our findings indicate that drug dealers are quite likely to have stolen property in their possession and therefore that searching for stolen goods in the course of drug raids could be an effective way of targeting the stolen goods market. A second strategy is that police should routinely de-brief persons arrested for property crime or drug offences to obtain continuous updates about the stolen goods disposal process. This strategy would allow for the continuous collection of strategic intelligence about the drugs and stolen goods market. Indeed, investigations into drug dealing should not be conducted in isolation from investigations into property crime.

The sale or trade of stolen goods to family, friends and acquaintances (and the public in general) might be controlled through a public education program combined with moral persuasion. In the UK at least, stolen goods, both new and secondhand, are purchased most frequently by 16-24 year olds living in impoverished neighbourhoods with drug problems and high burglary rates (Sutton 1998). Though no similar data are available for Australia, it is at least known here that impoverished areas typically have higher than average burglary rates (Devery 1991). Therefore purchasers of stolen goods might themselves be more likely to be victims of burglary than those who do not purchase stolen goods. Making people conversant with the relationship between community participation in buying stolen property and how this directly supports the act of burglary, could act to reduce the involvement of at least some individuals in purchasing stolen property.

Many offenders sold stolen goods to legitimate businesses. Two potential strategies are possible here to limit this type of sale. The first is to take advantage of the legislative reforms due to come into effect in 1999. Under the new legislation licensed dealers will be required to electronically remit details of their trading to the NSW Police Servce on

a regular basis. Analysis of these records could provide information to assist police identify businesses suspected of receiving and selling stolen goods. Such businesses could then become targets for police surveillance. A second strategy is to run an education campaign to inform businesses that under the new procedures they have a greater risk of being detected if they trade in stolen goods. The aim of such a campaign would be to increase their *perceived risk* of detection.

A further strategy would be to review the legislation governing the sale of goods through markets and auctions. Though sales by burglars at markets and auctions were infrequently used as primary points of disposal, they may be important further along the chain of disposal, as noted earlier. Auctions, which are points of sale for a large amount of unredeemed pledges, *might* offer the potential for mixing illegitimate with legitimate goods. Moreover, the absence of regulations covering the sale of consumer goods through auctions, makes it *potentially* possible for them to be used as final disposal points for stolen goods. A similar consideration might also apply to markets. Although there is no evidence from this study, another possible source of stolen goods for these outlets could be stolen goods from inter-State. It is worth noting that at present there is little formal exchange of information regarding stolen goods between Australian States (Packer 1997).

The detection of sales to strangers would be useful. Because of the propensity of high frequency offenders to use this avenue of disposal, such detection may net some of the most highly active burglars. Detection could be enabled by the use of surveillance of suspect sites and by gathering intelligence from those arrested. The information could be used to eliminate informal 'markets', such as the taxi rank example cited earlier. These disposal routes probably change quite frequently and, though amenable to law enforcement, require the fast acquisition and dissemination of information for appropriate action to be taken. As a result, the use of these disposal avenues stresses the importance of regularly collecting intelligence on how offenders dispose of stolen property – possibly, as noted earlier, by general intelligence gathering from drug dealers and property offenders.

CONCLUSION

A number of new strategies flow from this report. The most important of these is the provision to police of the necessary information to target the most important avenues of stolen goods disposal. Several other strategies emerge as well. The first is to tackle the involvement of drug dealers in the disposal of stolen goods by: (1) empowering police to search for stolen property during drug raids; and (2) collecting and sharing strategic intelligence about the drugs and stolen goods market (from all sources). The second is to apply moral pressure to members of the public who purchase stolen property, by educating them about the relationship between the locations where stolen goods are purchased and the locations from which goods are stolen and, therefore, about the fact that being a purchaser of stolen goods increases a person's chances of being a victim. The third is to alert police to the importance of identifying sales to strangers, due to the overrepresentation of high frequency offenders using this method. The fourth is to target businesses identified using information gathered via police intelligence and from the routine collection of trading information from secondhand dealers. The fifth is to inform businesses about their increased risk of detection because of this targeting. Taken together, these approaches would make it more difficult for burglars to dispose

of stolen property. However, as burglars may rapidly adapt to changing circumstances by changing their routes of disposal, the importance of proactive approaches, led by continuous intelligence gathering and the rapid dissemination of such intelligence, cannot be gainsaid.

Further strategies which do not follow directly from the findings in this report but which may be useful are to investigate (1) whether current regulatory frameworks, particularly in relation to sales through auction houses and markets, are sufficient to make trade in stolen goods unlikely and (2) whether any changes in cooperation between Australian States need to be made with respect to the flow of information concerning the descriptions of stolen goods.

Finally, it should not be forgotten that an important finding from this study is the interrelationship between illicit drug use, burglary rate and the disposal of stolen goods. This finding further strengthens the case for treating methadone maintenance (Hall 1996) and similar schemes (e.g. heroin prescription, treatment for heavy marijuana use in juveniles) as important crime control strategies.

NOTES

1 Throughout the report, for the sake of convenience, the term 'burglary' is used to refer to the offence of *break, enter and steal,* and the terms 'burglar' and 'burglars' are used to refer to persons who have committed *break, enter and steal.*

2 It is important to note that most respondents gave only one response to Question 20d and that this response is presumed to be their *usual* method of avoiding detection when dealing with pawnbrokers and secondhand dealers.

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APPENDIX 1: THE OVERALL RELIABILITY SCORE

INTRODUCTION

The overall reliability score for each respondent was made up of several components, each of which is described in some detail in the method section below. A high value for the overall reliability score indicates a low level of internal consistency or reliability for a respondent's answers on the survey. (Similarly, high values on each component of the overall score indicate low internal consistency.)

METHOD

The overall reliability score was calculated simply by summing the scores on its various components. The calculation of each component of this score is described below.

Component (1): Income from break, enter and steal, and frequency of offending

This component examined the correspondence between a respondent's scores on two variables: income from *break, enter and steal* (Q. 9a), and frequency of offending, calculated by dividing the total number of burglaries reported during the reference period (Q. 4e) by the length of the reference period (Q. 4d). Given the correlation between these two variables (r=0.42), some correspondence between them would generally be expected for respondents who were telling the truth. The degree of correspondence on these two variables for each respondent was calculated as follows. For both the income and frequency of offending variables, all responses were assigned to one of four percentile brackets, namely 0-25th, 26th-50th, 51st-75th and 76th-100th. Each respondent was then given a score based on the percentile brackets into which their responses fell for each of the two variables. A respondent scored 1 if his responses on each variable lay within the same percentile bracket. If responses occurred in adjacent percentile brackets (e.g. 0-25th for 1st variable and 26th-50th for 2nd variable) the respondent scored 2. If responses were separated by one percentile bracket the respondent scored 3. For responses separated by 2 percentile brackets, the respondent scored 4. If data were missing for either the income or frequency of offending variables, the respondent received a score of 1.

Component (2): How much money you need to live on and money spent on illegal drugs

Because these two variables were strongly correlated (r=0.75), respondents who recorded spending larger amounts of cash on illegal drugs (Q.25) should, if they were telling the truth, have tended to report larger needs for cash in general (Q.7). The degree of correspondence between these variables for each respondent was detected using the method outlined for component (1).

Component (3): Response consistency for disposal avenues

This component examined whether the disposal avenues that a respondent identified under free recall (Q. 10) were also identified by the respondent when they were cued in part (a) of Qs. 11 to 21. If all the disposal avenues identified under free recall were also identified subsequently when cued, the respondent received a score of 1 (the lowest

possible score) on this component. A respondent who subsequently failed to identify one disposal avenue received a score of 2; a respondent who subsequently failed to identify two disposal avenues received a score of 3 etc.

Component (4): Outlying prices I

This component examined respondents' estimates of the prices they would obtain from legitimate business owners for the stolen VCR, ring and power tool (Q. 11f). This measure attempted to ascertain the position of a respondent's price information in relation to other respondents. Unreliable respondents might be expected to be further away from the centre of the sample (note that only high price discrepancies were considered, as these would be more unlikely to occur when selling stolen goods than low price discrepancies). For VCR prices for Q.11f, the values for the 86th, 90th, 91st, 95th and 96th percentiles were calculated. Respondents lying below the 85th scored 1, those between the 86th and 90th scored 2, those between the 91st and 95th scored 3 and those above the 96th scored 4. This process was then repeated for the ring and the power tool. As before, respondents with missing data were given a score of 1.

Component (5): Outlying prices II

Scores for this component were calculated in the same way as for component (4), using responses to Q.12c, which examined respondents' estimates of the quantities of drugs they would obtain (converted to dollar values) for the stolen VCR, ring and power tool.

Component (6): Outlying prices III

Scores for this component were calculated in the same way as for component (4), using responses to Q.13c, which examined respondents' estimates of the prices they would obtain from fences for the stolen VCR, ring and power tool.

Component (7): Outlying prices IV

Scores for this component were calculated in the same way as for component (4), using responses to Q.20c, which examined respondents' estimates of the prices they would obtain from pawn or secondhand shop owners for the stolen VCR, ring and power tool.

Component (8): Response consistency between items stolen and estimated prices for items stolen

This component checked the consistency of a respondent's response to Q.27, which examined the frequency with which certain items were stolen, with their responses to Qs. 11f, 12c, 13c and 20c, which examined the prices the respondent estimated they would have obtained for the VCR, the ring and the power tool. For example, it would be inconsistent for a respondent to claim not to have stolen a ring (Q. 27) but then give an estimated price obtained for a ring (Q.11f). Respondents scored a 1, indicating consistency, either if (a) they reported stealing a ring and gave a price for the ring in any of Qs. 11f, 12c, 13c and 20c, or (b) they reported not stealing a ring and did not give a price in any of Qs, 11f, 12c, 13c and 20c. Respondents scored a 2, indicating inconsistency, either if (a) they reported not stealing a ring but gave a price for the ring in any of Qs. 11f, 12c, 13c and 20c or (ii) they reported stealing a ring but did not give a price in any of Qs. 11f, 12c, 13c and 20c. This process was repeated for the power tool and VCR.

Component (9): Response consistency between storage sites for stolen items and time for disposal of stolen items

This component checked the consistency of a respondent's response to Q.28, which examined the storage sites used for stolen items, with responses to Qs. 11h, 12f, 13f and 20e which examined the time taken to dispose of stolen items. For example, it would be unlikely that a respondent would require storing items that were disposed of quickly. Respondents scored a 1 on this component, indicating consistency, either if (a) they reported using storage sites in Q. 28a or Q. 28b and they reported taking more than four hours to dispose of items in any of Qs. 11h, 12f, 13f and 20e, or (b) they did not report using storage sites in Q. 28a or Q. 28b and reported taking less than four hours to dispose of stolen goods in any of Qs. 11h, 12f, 13f and 20e. Respondents scored a 2, indicating inconsistency, either if (a) they reported using storage sites in Q.28 and they reported taking less than four hours to dispose of item in any of Qs. 11h, 12f, 13f and 20e or (b) they did not report using storage sites in Q. 28a or Q. 28b but reported taking more than four hours to dispose of stolen goods in any of Qs. 11h, 12f, 13f and 20e.

Component (10): Charges for break, enter and steal and frequency of offending

As frequency of offending (see component (1) for calculation of this variable) and number of previous charges for *break, enter and steal* (Q.3) were correlated (r=0.44), this component aimed to identify respondents who had inconsistent responses on these two variables. The method used was the same as for component (1).

Component (11): Response consistency between premises types burgled and overall offending

This component checked the consistency between a respondent's answers to Q.24, which examined which types of premises the respondent had targeted, and the overall number of reported offences in the reference period (Q. 4e). The total number of premises types targeted was calculated for each respondent, with the maximum possible number of premises types being 7 (consisting of 5 cued premises types and any 2 additional premises types mentioned by the respondent). A respondent received a score of 1 on this component, indicating consistency, if the total number of premises types reported in Q.24 was not more than the total number of offences reported in Q.4e. A score of 2 was received, indicating inconsistency, if the number of premises types reported exceeded the total number of offences reported.

Component (12): Interviewer notes

This component took into account interviewer notes and comments made on the back of the schedule after the completion of the interview. Where the interviewer made any negative remark about a respondent's honesty, reliability, 'holding back' etc., then they scored 2. Where no such remarks were made, they scored 1.

RESULTS

Overall reliability scores could vary between a minimum of 19 (which indicated very high reliability) and a maximum of 77 (which indicated very low reliability). The mean overall reliability score was 25.9, with a standard error of 0.16. Furthermore, 95.0 per cent of respondents' overall reliability scores fell within +/-0.32 of the mean, indicating

a high degree of reliability. The most outlying observation scored 37 and this respondent was eliminated from the study. Any observation over the 99th percentile was also examined in some detail to determine the cause of their score. However, it was not found necessary to eliminate any other respondent solely on these grounds, as there were good explanations for their pattern of responses in most cases.

APPENDIX 2: THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interviewer: **J A T B F C D E O**

INTRODUCTION

My name's (first name) and I'm from the Attorney General's Department.

We're doing this study to find out how stolen goods are sold and why people commit burglaries.

I'll be asking you a series of questions which will take about 20 minutes.

Your name isn't recorded anywhere on this form so everything you say is completely private. I can't tell ***anybody*** anything about what we discuss today, that includes the police, prison and other authorities. So it's completely confidential.

It is important that you know the following things. Firstly, that you don't have to do this interview if you don't want to. Secondly, that you don't have to answer any questions that you don't want to. Thirdly, that you can stop the interview and leave at anytime you want.

Is that all okay? ☐ If not, STOP.

Okay then let's begin.

1 Is your current conviction (or one of your current convictions) for Break, Enter and Steal?

YES NO

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2 How old are you now? 10 - 14 15 - 19 20 - 24 25 - 29 30 - 34 35 - 39
40 - 44 45 - 49 50 - 54 55 - 59 60 - 64 65+

---

3 How many times have you ***ever*** been charged by the police for Break, Enter and Steal? ☐

4a Can you indicate on the calendar roughly when your current period of imprisonment started (**J**).

Mark 'J' on calender opposite, then....

4b Can you indicate on the calendar roughly when you were charged for the offence for which you are now in prison (**C**).

Mark 'C' on calender opposite, then....

4c In this ***(☛POINT)*** 6 month period before you were charged, were you free?

Now determine whether the offender was free during the 6 month period preceding C.
If not, then determine the longest period of free time in the one year prior to C.
Indicate on the calendar the 6 month period (or the longest period free) using a high-lighter pen.

It is this period on the calender which we will be talking about today.

Mark 'free period' on calender opposite, then....

4d Indicate number of months free. ☐ ***(☛PROMPT - Point out that this is the period of time we will be talking about)***

4e During this time, how often did you usually do Break, Enter and Steals?

(Check one box)

Everyday or almost everyday	☐	❶How many per day?	☐
Several times a week	☐	❶How many per week?	☐
Every week or almost every week	☐	❶How many per month?	☐
Less than every week	☐	❶How many per month?	☐
Less than every month	☐	❶ How many overall during this time?	☐
Other	☐	❶Please describe:	

CALENDAR

1995	1996	1997
January *Early Mid Late*	**January** *Early Mid Late*	**January** *Early Mid Late*
February *Early Mid Late*	**February** *Early Mid Late*	**February** *Early Mid Late*
March *Early Mid Late*	**March** *Early Mid Late*	**March** *Early Mid Late*
April *Early Mid Late*	**April** *Early Mid Late*	**April** *Early Mid Late*
May *Early Mid Late*	**May** *Early Mid Late*	**May** *Early Mid Late*
June *Early Mid Late*	**June** *Early Mid Late*	**June** *Early Mid Late*
July *Early Mid Late*	**July** *Early Mid Late*	**July** *Early Mid Late*
August *Early Mid Late*	**August** *Early Mid Late*	**August** *Early Mid Late*
September *Early Mid Late*	**September** *Early Mid Late*	**September** *Early Mid Late*
October *Early Mid Late*	**October** *Early Mid Late*	**October** *Early Mid Late*
November *Early Mid Late*	**November** *Early Mid Late*	**November** *Early Mid Late*
December *Early Mid Late*	**December** *Early Mid Late*	**December** *Early Mid Late*

4f ***(☛ IF Q.1 = NO, Q.3 = 0, or a very low number & Q.4e = 0, or a very low number, ASK THIS QUESTION, OTHERWISE GO TO Q.5)***

In the last five years have you committed any Break, Enter & Steals, sold illegal drugs or knowingly bought stolen goods?

(☛ IF YES, GO TO Q.10 and complete through to Q.22 and STOP; IF NO, STOP)

YES ***(☛ GO TO Q.10)*** NO ***(☛ STOP)***

5a When you have broken into a place, how do you decide what to take?

(☛ PROMPT - If offender claims never to have taken 'goods', ASK:)

5b Did you ever steal cash?

YES NO ***(☛ check if 4f has been completed; STOP)***

5c ***If YES,*** Why did you not take other things?

(☛ PROMPT - Then complete questions 6 to 9 and 24 to 26 and 29 to end.)

6a During this time, did you ever use a vehicle to get to and away from a Break, Enter and Steal?

YES ***(☛ GO TO Q.6b)*** NO ***(☛ GO TO Q.7)*** UNSURE ***(☛ GO TO Q.7)***

6b ***If YES,*** Was that vehicle ever stolen?

YES NO ***(☛ GO TO Q.7)*** UNSURE ***(☛ GO TO Q.7)***

If YES, Roughly how often did you use a stolen vehicle to do Break, Enter and Steals during this time? ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

7 In an average week, during this time, roughly how much money did you *need* to live on?

*(☛ **PROMPT- rent, food, bills, drugs, cigs, alcohol, etc)***

$ _____

---

8 In an average week, during this time, roughly how much money did you legally *get* to live on?

*(☛ **PROMPT- work, savings, dole, pension, etc)***

$ _____

9a In an average week, during this time, roughly how much money did you make from doing Break, Enter and Steals?

$ _____

9b What sort of things did you spend this money on?

---

10 During this time, can you tell me all the ways that you have sold, traded or otherwise got rid of stolen goods?

11a During this time, did you sell stolen goods to someone who owned or worked for a ***legitimate business***?

YES NO ***(☛ GO TO Q.12)***

11b Did they run the goods through their jobs or businesses?

YES NO ***(☛ GO TO Q.12)***

11c What sort of jobs/businesses were they?

(☛ PROMPT - jewellers, garages, antique shops, milk bars, corner shops, computer stores etc.)?

11d How often have you used each of these? ***(☛ SHOW CARD: record responses next to Q.11c)***

11e Do you know how they then disposed of the stolen goods? ***(Try to get an answer for each response in Q.11c)***

11f Roughly what price do you think they would give you for the?: ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

VCR $ ____ Jewellery $ ____ Power tool $ ____

11g When selling to these people, what do you do to make sure you don't get caught by the police?

11h Roughly how long would it take from stealing the item to getting rid of it through these people?

11i Do you think they knew the goods were stolen?

11j Did any of these people also deal in illegal drugs?

YES NO

12a During this time, did you trade stolen ***goods for drugs***?

YES NO ***(☛ GO TO Q.13)***

12b How often have you used this method? ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

12c Roughly what quantity and type of drug would you typically get for the: ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

VCR .....

Jewellery .....

Power tool .....

12d Do you know how they then disposed of the stolen goods?

12e When selling to these people, what do you do to make sure you don't get caught by the police?

12f Roughly how long would it take from stealing the item to getting rid of it through these people?

13a During this time did you sell stolen goods to people who:

(1) ***did not*** run the goods through their jobs or legitimate businesses; or

(2) ***did not*** trade you drugs for them?

YES NO ***(☛ GO TO Q.14)***

13b How often have you used this method? ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

13c Roughly what price do you think they would give you for the: ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

VCR **$** Jewellery **$** Power tool **$**

13d Do you know how they then disposed of the stolen goods?

13e When selling to these people, what do you do to make sure you don't get caught by the police?

13f Roughly how long would it take from stealing the item to getting rid of it through these people?

14a During this time, did you sell stolen goods on a ***market stall***?

YES NO ***(☛ GO TO Q.15)***

14b How often have you used this method? ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

15a During this time, did you sell any stolen goods to a ***stranger*** in a public place?

YES NO ***(☛ GO TO Q.16)***

15b How often have you used this method? ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

15c What sort of places have you sold stolen goods to strangers?

16a During this time, did you sell stolen goods via an ***auctioneer***?

YES NO ***(☛ GO TO Q.17)***

16b How often have you used this method? ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

17a During this time, did anyone ***order stolen goods*** for you to steal?

YES NO ***(☛ GO TO Q.18)***

17b How often did this happen? ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

17c What sort of people ordered the goods? ***(☛ PROMPT - friends, fences, pawnbreakers etc.)***

17d What sort of goods were ordered? ***(☛ PROMPT - jewellery, antiques etc.)***

18a During this time, did you ***trade stolen goods*** for anything?

YES NO ***(☛ GO TO Q.19)***

18b How often did you use this method? ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

18c What sort of things did you trade stolen goods for? ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

18d Do you know how they then disposed of the stolen goods?

19a During this time, did you give or sell stolen goods to ***friends, family or acquaintances***?

YES NO ***(☛ GO TO Q.20)***

19b ***IF YES,*** How often did this happen? ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

(☛ PROMPT - if 1, 2 or 3, probe for details; if 4, 5 or 6 go to Q.20)

20a During this time, did you sell any stolen goods to a ***pawn shop or secondhand shop***?

YES NO ***(GO TO Q.21)***

20b How often did you use this method? ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

20c Roughly what price do you think they would give you for the: ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

VCR **$** Jewellery **$** Power tool **$**

20d When selling to these people, what do you do to make sure you don't get caught by the police?

20e Roughly how long would it take from stealing the item to getting rid of it through these people?

20f Do you think these people knew the goods were stolen?

21a During this time, did you sell any stolen goods at ***garage sales***?

YES NO ***(GO TO Q.22)***

21b How often did you used this method? ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

22 Did you ever get somebody else to sell things for you?

23 Are there any other outlets for stolen goods that I have not mentioned?

24 During this time, roughly how often did you commit Break, Enter and Steals on:
(☛ ***READ & RECORD RESPONSE; SHOW CARD)***

Shops	
People's FLATS	
People's HOUSES *(excluding Garages & Sheds)*	
Garages and Sheds	
Factories	

Are there any others?

(specify... *)*	
(specify... *)*	

---

25 During this time, did you use any illegal drugs?

YES NO *(☛ GO TO Q.26)* UNSURE *(☛ GO TO Q.26)*

IF YES, In an average week, during this time, roughly how much money did you spend on illegal drugs? **$** ____

IF YES, Did you use heroin OR other opiates during this time?

YES ***(SEE BELOW)*** NO ***(SEE BELOW)*** UNSURE ***(SEE BELOW)***

IF YES, On an average week during this time, roughly how much money did you spend on heroin or other opiates? **$** ____

IF NO, UNSURE OR BIG DISCREPANCY, What drugs did you buy?

26 On an average week, during this time, roughly how much money did you spend on alcohol? **$** ____

---

27 During this time, roughly how often have you taken each of the following items?
(☛ READ ITEM, GET & RECORD RESPONSE; SHOW CARD)

Ring (jewellery)	
Power tool	
Compact disc player	
Computer	
Video recorder	

28a During this time, what sort of place or places have you stored stolen goods, before getting rid of them?
(☛ LIST AND ALSO TICK OFF LIST ON (b))

28b Have you ever used any of these places during this time?
(☛ READ OUT LIST EXCLUDING ITEMS ALREADY SELECTED IN (a); FOR POSITIVE RESPONSE, TICK THEM)

Own home	
Friends home	
Family home	
Lock-up garage	
Car/van/lorry	

Are there any others?

(specify...)	
(specify...)	

---

29 During this time, did you generally commit Break, Enter and Steals *Alone*; with *1 Accomplice*; with *2 Accomplices* etc; just roughly.
(☛ PROMPT & RECORD RESPONSE)

30a During this time, did you think about getting caught before breaking into places?
(☛ PROMPT RESPONSE USING CATEGORIES BELOW)

GENERALLY YES ***(GO TO Q.30b)*** GENERALLY NO ***(GO TO Q.31)*** UNSURE ***(GO TO Q.30b)***

30b ***(☛ IF ANSWER ABOVE IS YES OR UNSURE, THEN:***)
How likely did you think it was that you would get caught for breaking into places? ***(☛ SHOW CARD)***

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31 ***(☛ IF ON REMAND, SKIP THIS QUESTION)***
When you heard the sentence that you had been given, was it worse, better or pretty much what you expected?

WORSE BETTER AS EXPECTED

---

32 Is there anything else you'd like to say about the stolen goods market?

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33 Is there anything important that you think I've missed out?

APPENDIX 2: Card 1 - (used in Q.6B, 11D, 12B, 13B, 14B, 15B, 16B, 17B, 18B, 19B, 20B, 21B, 24 and 27)

(1) All the time

(2) Most of the time

(3) About half the time

(4) Some of the time

(5) Once

(6) Never

APPENDIX 2: Card 2 - (used in Q.30B)

(1) Very likely

(2) Likely

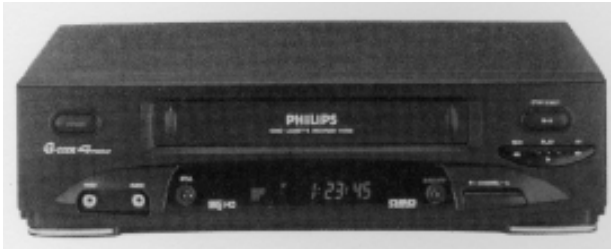
(3) Unlikely

(4) No chance

(5) No idea / unsure

APPENDIX 3: Card 3 - (used in Q.11F, 12C, 13C and 20C)

As new Phillips VCR



18 ct gold ring with inset diamond

As new AEG impact drill