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Property Crime in Queensland

A strategic assessment

1: Introduction

Purpose

This crime bulletin examines the property crime market in Queensland, primarily to reveal the nature and extent of organised criminal activity within this environment. It also reports on related issues, such as the link between property crime and the illicit drug market in the state.

Although this bulletin may present only the 'tip of the iceberg', it highlights the vast nature of the property crime market and the importance of fostering relationships between the private and public sectors through joint training, shared data and greater contact.

Background

Since 1999, reports completed by the former Queensland Crime Commission, the Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) and the Queensland Police Service (QPS) have reported the presence of organised 'elements' within Queensland's property crime market,¹ largely evidenced in the professional and systematic disposal of stolen property.

Subsequent discussions between the QPS Property Crime Investigation Group (PCIG) and the CMC identified a need to specifically assess the overall Queensland property crime market.

Methodology

To assist in the preparation of this bulletin, the CMC commissioned a Queensland University of Technology (QUT) honours student to conduct a series of interviews with 47 property offenders incarcerated in Queensland prisons (the survey questionnaire used in the QUT study is attached as Appendix A and a detailed discussion of the study is attached as Appendix B). An analysis of various aspects of the property crime market, including the nexus to illicit drug markets, disposal routes and emerging issues, was also completed.

Consultations were held with officers from law enforcement agencies (the QPS, including State Crime Operations Command and regional commands; the Australian Customs Service — ACS; and the New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory Police Services), insurance providers, retailers and industry groups. A literature review was also conducted, covering relevant websites, publications and law enforcement holdings.

Limitations

This bulletin does not consider all 'offences against property', such as theft of motor vehicles and earthmoving equipment. Although these offences often constitute organised property offending, the market is sufficiently distinct as to warrant a separate assessment.

Acknowledgments

In preparing this document, CMC officers consulted officers from the Queensland Police Service (including State Crime Operations Command and Regional Commands), the Australian Customs Service (Information & Intelligence Services), the New South Wales Police Service, the Australian Federal Police (ACT policing), eBay Australia & New Zealand (Trust & Safety Division), Myer Ltd (National Security) and various insurance providers. We wish to acknowledge the valuable assistance of these agencies and their officers.

In completing this bulletin, the CMC relied heavily on anecdotal information from numerous law enforcement personnel. Therefore, it should be borne in mind that individual biases and inferences may influence the accuracy of this information. Furthermore, there are limitations to the validity and reliability of the QUT study data (see Appendix B). However, the findings do allow a clearer picture of the property crime market to emerge.

Definitions and scope

For the purpose of this bulletin, the 'property crime market' refers to the acquisition and subsequent disposal of stolen property. As this bulletin focuses on the movement of stolen goods, only the following QPS property crime categories are considered:

- burglary — unlawful entry of dwelling
- break and enter of shop — unlawful breaking and entering of shop premises
- break and enter of other premises — unlawful breaking and entering of other premises including garages, sheds and commercial premises
- stealing from dwelling — removal of property from a dwelling where no breaking has occurred (e.g. theft of television aerial)
- stealing from vehicles — removal of property from a vehicle (also includes breaking and entering of vehicle with intent to steal property)
- shop steal — removal of property from shop premises.

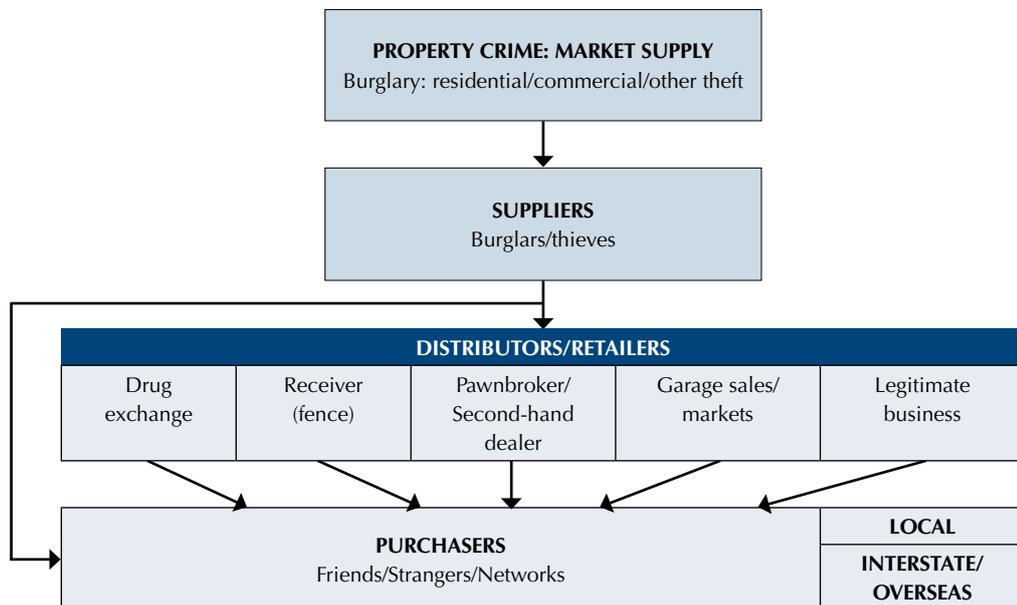
The term 'property crime' refers to these offences.

This bulletin adopts Frieberg's (1997) Property Crime Market Model (see Figure 1), which describes the property crime market as a series of interactions between the following individuals:

- suppliers — those who commit the initial property offence
- distributors/retailers — those who receive the property from the supplier in exchange for a commodity
- purchasers — the ultimate consumer.²

These terms are used throughout this bulletin.

Figure 1: Frieberg's Property Crime Market Model



Source: A. Frieberg, 'Regulating Markets for Stolen Property', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, vol. 30, no. 3, December 1997.

2: The Queensland situation

This section outlines the total number of reported property crime offences in Queensland, the clearance rates of these offences and the recovery rates of stolen goods.

Overview

As shown in Figure 2, the number of reported property offences in Queensland has continually decreased since 2001. The only exception to this trend is shop steal (shoplifting), which has only recently decreased. Overall, all reported offences during the last financial year were at their lowest level since 1990.³ However, it is important to be aware of the possibility of under-reporting; some research has found that up to 35 per

cent of property offences may never be reported to police.⁴

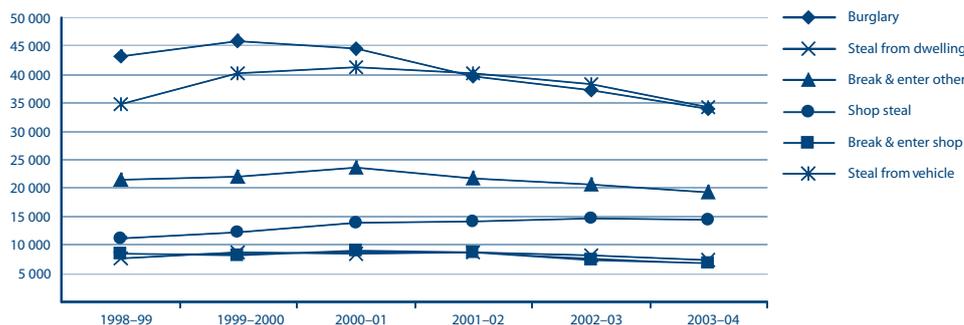
Insurance Australia Group (IAG), Australian Associated Motor Insurers (AAMI) and Suncorp Insurance companies have also recorded decreases in Queensland burglary and theft claims in the past three calendar years.⁵ This downward trend is consistent nationwide, as evidenced in the most recent Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) report. Between 1998 and 2003, unlawful entry offences decreased 23 per cent; and between 2002 and 2003, theft from people, vehicles and retail premises decreased 7 per cent.⁶

Despite recorded decreases, offences against property continue to comprise the majority of reported crime in Queensland (38% in the last financial year)⁷

and demand substantial police resources. In addition, property crime in Queensland costs victims and insurance companies tens of millions of dollars each year.⁸

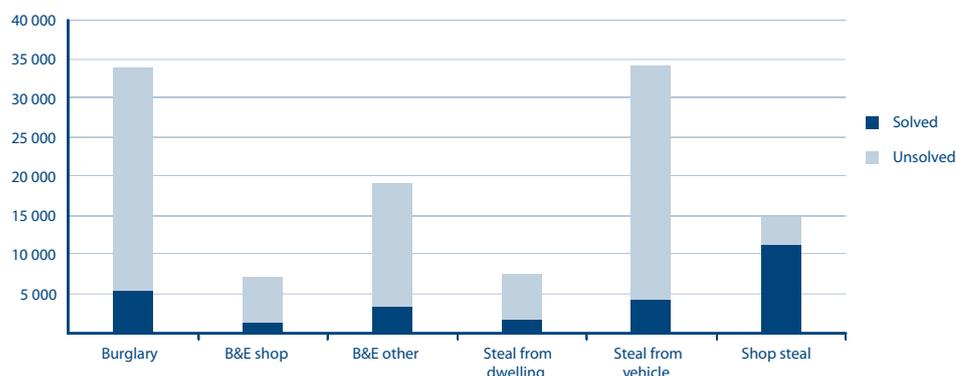
Due to the volume of reported property offences and, at times, a lack of investigative leads, it is often difficult for police to conduct protracted investigations. This is a contributing factor to the low clearance rate of property offences (see Figure 3). In addition, only 12 to 13 per cent of property reported stolen in the offences under review is ever recovered,⁹ suggesting that it is being moved quickly and efficiently (other factors contributing to the low recovery rate of stolen property may include ease of concealment and the difficulty in determining legitimate items from stolen products).

Figure 2: Reported offences to QPS 1998–2004 by financial year



Source: QPS, Annual Statistical Reviews, 1998–2004.

Figure 3: Solved/unsolved offences reported in 2003–04 financial year



Source: QPS, Annual Statistical Review, 2003–04.

3: The Queensland property crime market

This section examines in detail particular aspects of the Queensland property crime market, such as offender characteristics, the level of organised criminal activity, stolen property disposal methods, and the link to illicit drugs.

Modus operandi

Respondents in the QUT study gave some insight into target selection and the characteristics of their modus operandi. This revealed that most Queensland property offenders are quite active: 83 per cent of respondents committed property offences several times a week or more.¹⁰ When questioned about the types of premises they targeted, 96 per cent of respondents noted 'commercial', whereas only 53 per cent noted 'residential' (respondents were allowed to give more than one answer). This is unusual considering that there were more reported residential burglaries than break-and-enters of commercial premises in the past financial year (see Figure 3, previous page). This discrepancy may be due to a range of factors; one being that, although respondents prefer commercial buildings (perhaps due to greater potential value of goods), the availability of commercial targets may not be as high as residential premises.

The QUT study also revealed that, apart from cash, entertainment items (including televisions, game consoles and DVD players), laptops/computers and jewellery were the most targeted types of property. These findings are supported by data from three major insurance providers who record entertainment equipment and jewellery as the most commonly reported items in home burglary claims.¹¹

Evidence of organisation

Intelligence and information gleaned from law enforcement investigations suggest that most property offenders are opportunistic, with few displaying a more

sophisticated, organised manner of offending. This is supported by findings from the QUT study. When questioned about how they chose particular targets, many respondents claimed that location and time were the main determinants, suggesting that their decision to offend was largely opportunistic.¹² However, several respondents stated that they conducted extensive surveillance of targets before offending and had the necessary skills to defeat most home security measures. This supports the theory that, although most property offending is opportunistic, a small number of property offenders are becoming more skilled in planning, preparing and executing property offences. This is highlighted in the following case study.

CASE STUDY

Canal Bandits (2005)¹³

A spate of break-and-enters has occurred on luxury waterfront homes on the Gold Coast. Police believe that several groups of professional offenders are using boats to access the residences. The offenders have taken expensive electronic equipment (including plasma-screen televisions and computers), jewellery and, in one case, a jet ski. The offenders do not leave forensic evidence when committing property crime, and are disabling security alarms and cutting phone lines.

Stolen property disposal

Arguably, the most efficient way to deter property offending is to remove the ability to convert property into cash or a desired commodity. As Allen found, amateur property offenders are likely to cease offending if they are unsuccessful in disposing of the property.¹⁴ The QUT study suggests, however, that many Queensland property offenders (74% of respondents) have established disposal routes and are successfully disposing of stolen goods within three hours of acquiring them.¹⁵ This is perhaps because many property offenders receive an order for particular goods before offending, thus ensuring successful

disposal. In the QUT study, 72 per cent of respondents reported having received an order before offending.¹⁶ Drug suppliers, family/friends and fences (people who receive and sell stolen goods) were most likely to order goods.¹⁷

Respondents were also asked about their preferred method/s of disposing of stolen goods. Table 1 outlines the responses and Figure 4 shows a comparison with findings in NSW and the ACT. The most commonly reported disposal avenues by Queensland respondents were drug suppliers and fences. This is similar to findings in NSW.

National and international disposal

Although LEAs report that national and international disposal of stolen goods is becoming increasingly common, it is difficult to quantify the extent of these activities.¹⁸ It is likely that only a small portion of stolen goods leaving Queensland is ever identified. The Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) estimates that most property stolen from domestic burglaries stays within Australia;¹⁹ however, previous investigations highlight that stolen goods are being sent overseas. Conversely, goods stolen in other states/territories and countries are being trafficked into Queensland.

National and international disposal of stolen property is unlikely to decline as the speed and ease of movement of goods, established networks and the potential for large profits all combine to make a lucrative market in which purchaser resistance is very limited.²⁰

Respondents to the QUT study offered the following information about national and international trafficking of stolen goods:

- 28 per cent were aware that the stolen goods were being moved interstate or overseas by the distributor/retailer
- 21 per cent stated that they had personally sold goods interstate

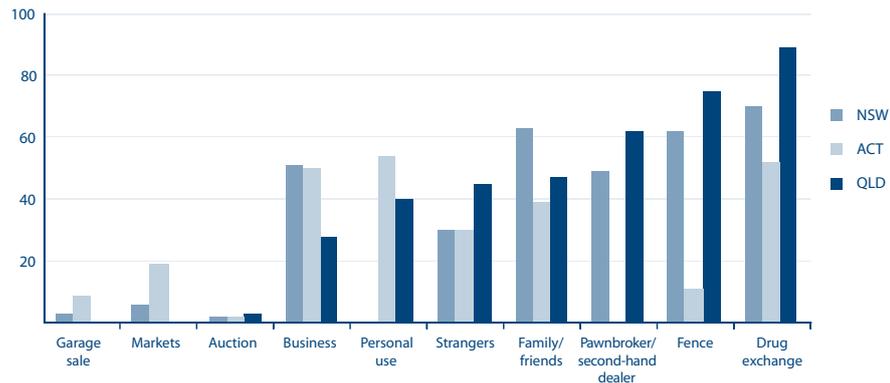
Table 1: Disposal methods used by Queensland property offenders*

	Frequency	Percentage
Traded for drugs	42	89
Sold to a fence	35	75
Sold to pawnbroker/second-hand dealer	29	62
Sold to family/friends	22	47
Sold to strangers	21	45
Sold to jeweller, computer shop etc.	8	17
Sold to convenience store	5	11
Sold at an auction	3	6
Sold to a home shop	2	6
Sold to a garage sale	0	0
Other	3	6

* Respondents were allowed to give more than one answer.

Source: Unpublished QUT honours thesis, 'The Stolen Property Market in Queensland', 2004, p. 33.

Figure 4: Comparison of disposal methods used by state



Source: D. Nelson, L. Collins & F. Gant, *The stolen property market in the Australian Capital Territory*, AIC, 2002; R.J. Stevenson & L.M.V. Forsythe, *The stolen goods market in New South Wales: an interview study with imprisoned burglars*, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, Sydney, 1998; and unpublished QUT honours thesis, 'The Stolen Property Market in Queensland', 2004.

Table 2: Destination of stolen goods

State	Frequency (n = 47)
New South Wales	5
Victoria	4
Western Australia	3
Australian Capital Territory	1
Tasmania	1
South Australia	1
Northern Territory	1
Overseas	2

Source: Unpublished QUT honours thesis, 'The Stolen Property Market in Queensland', 2004, p. 49.

- respondents had interstate contacts (family/friends) who ordered goods
- goods were sold interstate because prices offered were often higher and there was less chance of apprehension
- NSW, Victoria and WA were the most common interstate destinations for stolen goods²¹ (see Table 2 above).

The following case studies demonstrate recent instances of national and international trafficking of stolen goods.

CASE STUDIES

National trafficking

Stolen goods posted to South Australia²²

QPS officers executed a warrant at a residence and located stolen property that included three MP3 players, cameras, a laptop computer and binoculars. Investigations revealed that the offender was posting the stolen property to family members in SA.

Jewellery theft²³ — Jewellery worth \$300 000 was stolen during a home burglary. Investigations revealed that, shortly after committing the offence, the offender travelled to NSW and the ACT to dispose of the property.

International trafficking

Computers to Sri Lanka²⁴

Computer equipment worth about \$47 000 was stolen from Queensland and sold to a computer

store in WA. A third party then attempted to ship the computers to Sri Lanka. ACS intercepted and searched the shipping container and found six of the stolen computers inside the shipping container and a further two computers were found during subsequent searches of the person's home.

QPS operation²⁵ — At the close of this operation, two principal offenders were arrested for about 700 property offences involving stolen property valued at \$5.5 million. The offenders were disposing of the stolen property in various ways, including shipping and personally carrying stolen goods out of Australia.

The nexus to illicit drugs

An examination of the nexus between the property crime and illicit drug markets in Queensland conducted for this bulletin suggests that there is a strong connection between these markets.²⁶ For example, 89 per cent of respondents in the QUT study stated that they had disposed of stolen goods through their drug dealer in exchange for illicit drugs and 81 per cent of respondents stated that they committed property offences to support a drug habit.²⁷ While most literature indicates a link between property offending and heroin use, it appears that amphetamine is more popular among Queensland offenders.²⁸ This is not surprising; in 2004 the CMC assessed amphetamine as

the number one illicit drug risk to Queensland.²⁹

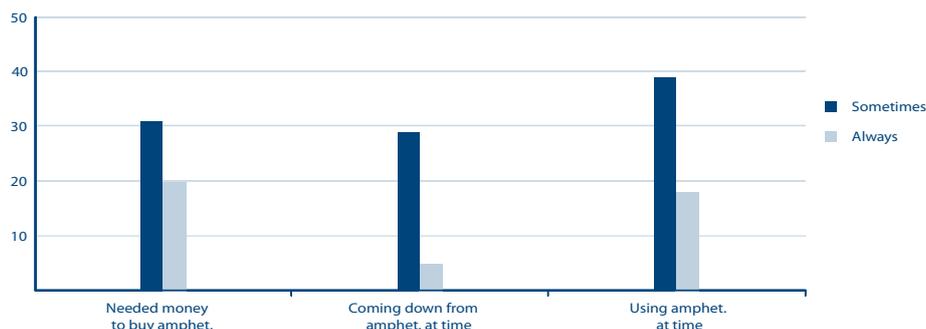
In 2003, a joint CMC and Queensland Health study found that amphetamine use was a causal factor in Queensland property offending.³⁰ Figure 5 outlines respondents' reasons for committing property offences.

The 2003 Drug Use Monitoring in Australia report also lends support for the connection between property offending and illicit drug use. Relevant findings include:

- people nationwide who reported using amphetamine in the previous year were more likely to shoplift and commit property offences as a source of income
- of the male detainees in Brisbane charged with theft, 66 per cent tested positive to cannabis, 34 per cent tested positive to heroin and 28 per cent tested positive to methylamphetamine (detainees were tested for multiple drugs)
- of the male detainees in Southport charged with theft, 73 per cent tested positive to cannabis, 23 per cent tested positive to heroin and 23 per cent tested positive to methylamphetamine (detainees were tested for multiple drugs).³¹

A 2001 study of 2135 adult male prisoners in Queensland, WA, Tasmania and the Northern Territory also found a strong link between property offending and illicit drug use.

Figure 5: Reasons for involvement in property offences by %



Source: CMC–Queensland Health, *Patterns of amphetamine use*, 2003, p. 135.

Of the respondents who self-identified as regular property offenders, 88 per cent had used one or more of the four main drug categories — cannabis, amphetamine, heroin and cocaine — in the six months preceding their arrest, and 81 per cent regularly used one or more of these substances. Table 3 shows the frequency of respondents’ drug use.

A random selection of 50 people arrested for a break-and-enter offence in Queensland during March 2005 found that 64 per cent had previously been arrested for drug offences. Most offenders were in possession of cannabis and had come to police attention more than six months before the commission of the property offence (see Table 4,

next page). Although these figures cannot show a causal link between drug use and property offending, they highlight that just under two-thirds of property offenders in Queensland have used illicit drugs.

A review of relevant Australian Criminal Intelligence Database (ACID) holdings gives strong anecdotal support for the nexus between illicit drug use and property offending in Queensland.³² Numerous intelligence reports conclude that the desire to obtain cash for illicit drugs is the main motivation for committing property offences. In addition, stolen property is often found during the execution of drug warrants, and all QPS regions report that most property crime is committed to

support a drug habit. The following case studies illustrate this point.

CASE STUDIES

QPS operation³³

An offender was arrested and charged with over 100 property offences. The offender admitted injecting a large amount of amphetamine daily and committed the offences in order to sustain the habit.

CMC–ACC–QPS operation³⁴

A joint operation targeting drug production and distribution revealed that vehicles and laptop computers were being stolen by drug-addicted offenders and exchanged for amphetamine and/or heroin.

Table 3: Prevalence of illicit drug use among regular property offenders (%)

	Cannabis	Amphetamine	Heroin	Cocaine	Any	More than 1
Prevalence						
Ever used	93	77	62	39	94	79
Used in 6 months prior to arrest	78	59	38	19	88	63
Current regular user	70	46	30	8	81	53
Current regular users — frequency of use						
Less than monthly	4	11	6	16	—	—
One to several times per week	7	11	7	23	—	—
One to several times per month	16	22	13	35	—	—
Once a day	15	15	14	9	—	—
Several times per day	59	42	61	16	—	—

Source: T. Makkai & J. Payne, *Drugs and crime: a study of incarcerated male offenders*, AIC, 2003.

Table 4: Previous drug charges for break-and-enter offenders (number)

	Cannabis	Amphetamine	Heroin	Other
Within six months of offence	8	2	0	0
>6 months prior to offence	19	2	0	2

Source: QPS Crime Reporting Information System for Police, 2005.

4: Intelligence gap – who are the purchasers?

This section attempts to shed light on the ‘missing link’ in the property crime market — the purchasers of stolen goods.

Motivations of buyers

Anyone who obtains stolen property from a supplier, whether knowingly or inadvertently, is a purchaser.

A key to understanding the property crime market is to understand the motivation of the buyer, as it is their demand that will ultimately determine the supply. Unfortunately, the size of this market segment is not known; this is a problem that plagues every jurisdiction.³⁵ As Freiberg notes, ‘Purchasers may be infrequent or heavy, may purchase only some, or most, of their goods this way, may prefer certain types of goods over others or be geographically, demographically or sociologically distinct’.³⁶

Due to community expectations of law enforcement to identify perpetrators of property offences, little time is left to identify purchasers of the stolen property. Moreover, arrests of professional distributors/retailers are rare, making this a difficult avenue for gleaning information.³⁷ This supports police assertions that the activities beyond this ‘grassroots’ level are largely unknown.³⁸

What is known about purchasers is mainly derived from anecdotal reports from investigators and offender admissions. As the NSW, ACT and QUT studies found, identified purchasers are generally members of the public who order

and/or buy particular goods, often knowing the property is stolen.³⁹

Further, Jochelson points out that many people do not consider purchasing stolen property as a crime and rationalise their actions as ‘the goods were stolen anyway’ or ‘the goods are insured’.⁴⁰

This is highlighted by various self-report studies which have found that up to 12 per cent of respondents would willingly buy stolen goods.⁴¹

The following case studies illustrate this point.

CASE STUDIES

QPS operation⁴²

Two offenders were arrested for stealing approximately 60 plasma-screen televisions. The offenders stated that they provided the goods to a retailer/distributor who then sold them to friends and family members. When questioned by police, the retailer/distributor told police that these people knowingly bought the stolen televisions because they were offered at a reduced price.

QPS investigation⁴³

The offender was arrested for stealing copper wire valued at about \$5000. The offender told police that his father operated a metal recovery company that bought and sold scrap metals. The offender intended to dispose of the wire through this company which was widely known to conduct dubious transactions.

Organised crime groups

There is little evidence to suggest that traditionally recognised organised crime groups are currently controlling this market segment. It appears that most organised or networked property crime offenders operate as a cohesive unit and

identify targets, plan and execute offences independently of a superior ‘purchaser’.⁴⁴ This suggests that there are no ‘Mr Bigs’ controlling the property crime market.

5: Emerging trends and issues of concern

This section discusses some emerging trends in the Queensland property crime market, such as organised shoplifting and online auctions, and highlights potential gaps in Queensland pawnbroker and second-hand dealer legislation.

Emerging trends

Organised shoplifting

Unlike other property crime categories, reported shoplifting offences were steadily increasing until the last financial year. Recent estimates of the cost of shoplifting in Australia range from \$810 million to \$2 billion annually.⁴⁵ Due to the volume of offences and frequent under-reporting (many large retailers do not report shoplifting offences),⁴⁶ it is difficult to monitor recidivist offenders and identify organised distributor/retailers. Items are generally stolen to order and mainly include cosmetics, jewellery, toiletries, clothing and electrical items.⁴⁷

Intelligence indicates that, as in NSW and Victoria, people are committing shoplifting offences and establishing ‘home shops’ in Queensland.⁴⁸ (‘Home shop’ is the term used to describe places set up to buy and sell stolen goods; usually they offer an extensive range of merchandise, often organised in a similar way to legitimate retail stores.⁴⁹)

Intelligence also suggests that a portion of shoplifted goods are sold in local markets and trafficked interstate and overseas.⁵⁰

The following case study describes an organised shoplifting network that was uncovered in Queensland.

CASE STUDY

QPS operation⁵¹

Organised shoplifting offenders from Sydney were travelling to Queensland and stealing large amounts of cosmetics and toiletries. The offenders, who are believed to have stolen property worth about \$50 000, then transported the goods back to a home shop in Sydney. They were arrested in Queensland and charged with 16 offences.

In order to combat organised shoplifting, the PCIG has implemented Project Mercantile — a continuing venture between the retail business community and the QPS which aims to:

- determine the existence of organised criminal enterprise within the retail industry
- monitor cycles of theft of particular classes of property, fostering best practice and risk management within the retail industry
- highlight best practice methods for the investigation, detection and prevention of offences within the retail industry
- promote the establishment of a national database to record details of all property stolen from retailers.⁵²

Online auctions

In 2004, the CMC reported the likely increase of the use of online auction facilities to dispose of stolen property.⁵⁴ It should be noted that the popularity of online auctions in Australia has been rapidly growing, so it is hardly surprising that more criminals might attempt to dispose of stolen property via the internet. That said, only one respondent in the QUT study reported engaging in these activities.⁵⁵

While at first glance it would appear that online auctions are a ready, low-risk international market for the disposal of stolen property, the reality is that the transparent nature of the internet provides both police and victims with an easy-to-use and powerful tool when carrying out investigations into stolen property. eBay can and does supply law enforcement with a wealth of transactional information to assist investigators.

In an effort to develop strategies to deter online property crime, in June 2005 eBay Australia & New Zealand hosted a workshop for Australian and New Zealand LEAs. A number of proactive strategies were identified that eBay currently exercise to deter offenders from using their facility to dispose of stolen property, and eBay expressed a keen desire to provide assistance to LEAs.

Where matters are being investigated by police, eBay will provide an information package including victim details, complete background information of the person under investigation and advice on what may be required for any search warrants.

eBay's ability and willingness to help law enforcement in this way means that attempts to sell stolen property on eBay can in fact be more easily dealt with than other more traditional avenues for this activity.

This has been demonstrated by the arrest of a number of Australian offenders for selling stolen property online.

Issues of concern

Pawnbrokers/second-hand dealers

There are 2022 licensed pawnbrokers and second-hand dealers currently operating in Queensland.⁵⁶ Although it is commonly assumed that most stolen property is disposed of through these stores, results from the QUT study reveal otherwise.

While almost two-thirds (62%) of respondents reported selling stolen goods to a pawnbroker/second-hand dealer at least once, only 21 per cent regularly used this avenue. Most respondents stated that this was due to the consistently low prices offered for the goods. This is similar to findings in the Australian Capital Territory where relevant stores offer between 10 and 25 per cent of the retail value for goods.⁵⁷

Even though this method of disposal might not be the most popular way of selling stolen goods, it is relatively easy to do so undetected.

The CMC reviewed current Australian pawnbroker and second-hand dealer legislation, which revealed a number of gaps in the Queensland legislation (see Appendix C). For example, the *Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 2003 (Qld)* does not require Queensland stores to provide police with transaction details electronically or within specific timeframes.

However, under the Western Australia and Australian Capital Territory legislation, stores must maintain electronic records, which are then automatically transmitted to police (daily in WA; twice weekly in the ACT).⁵⁸ In addition, people wanting to pawn or sell second-hand goods in Queensland do not have to produce photo identification, allowing false identification to be used with relative ease. Alternatively, people wanting to pawn or sell second-hand goods in WA must prove their identification through a system similar to a 100-point financial institution requirement.

It would be beneficial to examine the Queensland legislation to highlight any changes that may enhance law enforcement's ability to regulate pawnbrokers and second-hand dealers.

6: Future direction

This section outlines policing strategies to prevent property crime.

Proactive partnership policing

Although many aspects of property crime investigation must be reactive, a greater use of proactive law enforcement strategies would help prevent property crime offences. LEAs should continue liaison and partnership with relevant government bodies and private sector industry (including financial institutions, eBay, insurance companies, retailers, security firms and other key stakeholders) to identify strategies to disrupt the property crime market.

Intelligence sharing

In addition, every effort should be made to further coordinate and promote intelligence sharing in the investigation of property crime, particularly between the QPS Drug Squad and PCIG due to the strong connection between property crime and illicit drug use. Intelligence-driven operations targeting known property offenders may help reveal organised distributors/retailers and purchasers of stolen property.

7: Conclusion

This section discusses the key findings of the CMC's analysis of the Queensland property crime market.

Nature of organisation

Traditionally-recognised organised crime groups are not controlling the Queensland property crime market. However, the market can be viewed as organised, mainly due to the established networks of suppliers and distributors/retailers. The property crime market functions according to the demand of purchasers who, evidence suggests, are predominantly members of the general public, not criminal entities. These people either knowingly purchase stolen goods,

or unsuspectingly buy stolen goods from legitimate businesses.

Similar to any other type of organised crime, property crime is fluid and subject to change according to the demands of the consumer, the availability of goods and the effectiveness of deterrents. As such, it would be beneficial to continually monitor characteristics of the market to proactively identify emerging trends. One way of achieving this could be to conduct an examination similar to the QUT study, but on a larger scale. Any such research should include a more representative and geographically diverse sample, comprising adult, juvenile, male and female respondents. It could provide an opportunity for a joint project between the CMC, QPS and the Department of Corrective Services.

National and international disposal of property

Although LEAs report that national and international disposal of stolen goods is becoming increasingly common, it is difficult to quantify the extent of these activities. It is likely that only a small portion of the stolen goods that enter or leave Queensland are ever identified. This is an intelligence gap that needs further attention. There is evidence that Queensland offenders are moving stolen goods interstate via vehicle, train and post, and overseas by personal transport or shipment.

The QUT study suggests that interstate contacts (family or friends) often order specific goods, which offenders then deliver. Respondents also stated that they sold stolen property interstate because the prices offered were often higher and the apprehension risk was lower. Almost one-third (28%) of respondents either personally disposed of, or knew their receiver was disposing of, stolen goods interstate or overseas. NSW, Victoria and WA were the most commonly reported interstate destinations for stolen property.⁵⁹

Discussions between LEAs and other government agencies (including the ACS and Queensland Transport) may lead to strategies to disrupt the national and international movement of stolen property.

Nexus to illicit drugs

Evidence strongly supports the nexus between illicit drug consumption and property offending. Illicit drug use, particularly amphetamine, plays a large part in property offending in Queensland: 81 per cent of imprisoned property offenders claimed that they offended to support a drug habit. A reduction in illicit drug use would likely affect the property crime market. As such, it is imperative for LEAs to continue liaison with key government and private stakeholders to monitor trends in illicit drug use and the connection with property crime, and identify future research initiatives. It may also be useful to examine the effectiveness of primary drug prevention/treatment programs, Intensive Drug Rehabilitation Orders and drug courts in reducing property crime recidivism.

Shoplifting

Organised shoplifting networks are targeting large retailers and using established networks to dispose of property. It is probable that, similar to NSW and Victoria, there will be an increase in 'home shops' in Queensland. It is anticipated that the PCIG Project Mercantile will increase information sharing and training opportunities and help identify organised shoplifting networks.

Online auctions

As the popularity of internet shopping increases in Australia, attempts to use online auction facilities to sell stolen property may also increase, reflecting the phenomenal growth of internet usage. While at first this could present some challenges for law

enforcement, it is worth noting that the transparent nature of the internet provides police with an easy-to-use and powerful tool when carrying out investigations into stolen property.

One positive step is the cooperation of eBay, Australia's leading online marketplace, to provide assistance to LEAs when conducting investigations. eBay has also hosted forums to discuss prohibition and disruption strategies with LEAs.

Proactive partnership policing

This bulletin suggests that a greater use of proactive law enforcement strategies, joint initiatives and intelligence-driven operations would help prevent property crime offences. LEAs should continue liaison and partnership with relevant government bodies and private sector industry to identify strategies to disrupt the property crime market.

In addition, every effort should be made to coordinate and promote intelligence sharing in the investigation of property crime.

Abbreviations

AAMI	Australian Associated Motor Insurers
ABCI	Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACID	Australian Criminal Intelligence Database
ACS	Australian Customs Service
AIC	Australian Institute of Criminology
CMC	Crime and Misconduct Commission
CRISP	Crime Reporting Information System for Police
IAG	Insurance Australia Group
LEA	law enforcement agency
PCIG	Property Crime Investigation Group
QPS	Queensland Police Service
QUT	Queensland University of Technology

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Appendix A: QUT survey

Dear Interviewee,

I would like to personally thank you for participating in this interview and appreciate you taking the time to help me in my studies. Once again, I would like to reiterate that your confidentiality will be maintained, and that your answers will be kept strictly between you and me. Please circle the answer that is applicable to you. If you require any assistance, please do not hesitate to ask me.

SECTION A — PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. What is your sex?
(a) male (b) female
2. How old are you?
(a) 18–19 (b) 20–21 (c) 22–25 (d) 26–30
(e) 31–40 (f) other: _____
3. In an average week, roughly, how much did you need to live on for rent, food, bills, drugs, cigarettes, alcohol etc.?
(a) less than \$100 (b) between \$100 and \$200
(c) between \$201 and \$300 (d) between \$301 and \$400
(e) between \$401 and \$500 (f) over \$500
(g) other: _____
4. In an average week, how much money was derived from legitimate means?
(a) less than \$100 (b) between \$100 and \$200
(c) between \$201 and \$300 (d) between \$301 and \$400
(e) between \$401 and \$500 (f) over \$500
(g) other: _____
5. In an average week, how much did you make from theft or burglary?
(a) less than \$100 (b) between \$100 and \$300
(c) between \$301 and \$500 (d) between \$501 and \$750
(e) between \$751 and \$1000 (f) over \$1000
(g) other: _____

SECTION B — OFFENCE

1. How often did you usually commit a theft or burglary?
(a) Every day or almost If yes, how many per day?
(b) Several times a week How many per week?
(c) Every week or almost every week How many per month?
(d) Less than every week How many per month?
(e) Less than every month How many overall during this time?
Other, please describe _____
2. In the last five years, have you committed:
(a) any theft or burglary? (b) sold illegal drugs?
and/or (c) knowingly bought stolen goods?
3. Why did you steal property?
(a) to make money (b) for drugs
(c) for personal use (d) other: _____
4. What type of property did you target?
(a) residential (b) commercial
(c) other: _____
5. Did you ever steal cash?
(a) Yes (b) No
If yes, why? _____

6. What did you prefer to steal?
 (a) jewellery (b) white goods (c) video recorder
 (d) TV (e) DVD (f) mobile phone
 (g) CD player (h) laptop (i) computer
 (j) entertainment centre (k) artwork
 (l) camera (m) game console, e.g. Playstation, Nintendo, Xbox
 (n) all of the above others: _____
7. How did you decide on which property to steal from?
 (a) poor external security (b) no guard dog
 (c) location (d) time
 (e) other: _____
8. Did you usually steal property alone or with others? If no, go to Q10.
 (a) Yes (b) No
9. How many other people did you usually break into properties with?
 (a) 1–2 (b) 3–4 (c) 5–6
 (d) 7–8 (e) 9–10 other: _____
10. Did you know what property you wanted before entering the premises? If no, go to Q12.
 (a) Yes (b) No
11. How did you decide what property to steal?
 (a) Approached by someone who wanted a particular item
 (b) You knew it would be easy to dispose of
 (c) Took what you could carry
 (d) Price that could be obtained for that property
 (e) Other: _____
12. How did you take the property away from where you stole it? If you answer (a) or (b), please go to Section C.
 (a) carried It (b) backpack (c) car
 (d) motorbike (e) van (f) truck
 (g) bicycle (h) other: _____
13. Was the car, motorbike, van, truck, bicycle or other mode of transport stolen?
 (a) Yes (b) No

SECTION C — DISPOSING OF STOLEN PROPERTY

1. Did you keep any of the property for your own use? If no, go to Q4.
 (a) Yes (b) No
2. What percent (%) of the time, did you keep the property for your own use?
 (a) 0 (b) 1–24% (c) 25–49%
 (d) 50–74% (e) 75–99% (f) 100%
3. Did you store the stolen property before selling/giving it to other people? If no, go to Q5.
 (a) Yes (b) No
 If Yes, how long?
 (a) less than 1 day (b) between 1 and 3 days
 (c) between 4 and 7 days (d) between 1 and 2 weeks
 (e) between 3 and 4 weeks (f) more than 1 month
 (g) other: _____
4. Where did you usually store the stolen property?
 (a) own home (b) friend's home
 (c) garage (d) caravan
 (e) shed (f) other: _____

5. If police were to raid your premises and you had stolen property in your possession, did you and/or your friends/family have excuses ready?
 (a) Yes (b) No
 If yes, did the police believe you? _____
6. How did you get rid of the property once you stole it?
 (a) sold it to a fence (b) traded it for drugs
 (c) sold it to friends/family (d) sold it to strangers
 (e) sold it to a pawnbroker or second-hand dealer
 (f) sold it to a home shop (g) sold it to a jeweller, computer shop etc.
 (h) sold it to a convenience store
 (i) others: _____
7. How often did you sell to a pawnbroker/second-hand dealer or other legitimate business? If you answered (a) go to Section D.
 (a) never (b) once
 (c) between 2 and 5 times (d) between 5 and 10 times
 (e) between 11 and 20 times (f) between 21 and 30 times
 (g) more than 30 times
8. Do you know if they sold the stolen property through their business?
 (a) Yes (b) No
 If no, why not? _____
9. Roughly, what price do they give you for:
 (a) jewellery _____ (b) white goods _____
 (c) video recorder _____ (d) TV _____
 (e) DVD _____ (f) mobile phone _____
 (g) CD player _____ (h) laptop _____
 (i) computer _____ (j) camera _____
 (k) artwork _____ (l) entertainment centre _____
 (m) game console _____ (n) other _____
10. Did you ever have to show ID?
 (a) Yes (b) No
11. When selling to these businesses, what did you do to ensure you did not get caught by the police?

12. How long would it take you to steal the item and sell it to these businesses?
 (a) less than one hour (b) between 1 and 3 hours
 (c) between 4 and 6 hours (d) between 6 and 12 hours
 (e) over half a day (f) 1 day
 (g) between 2 and 5 days (h) between 6 and 7 days
 (i) more than 1 week (j) other: _____
13. Do you think they knew the goods were stolen?
 (a) Yes (b) No
14. Did any of these people also deal in illegal drugs?
 (a) Yes (b) No

SECTION D — TRADING GOODS FOR DRUGS

1. Did you ever trade stolen goods for drugs? If no, go to Section E.
 (a) Yes (b) No
2. How often have you used this method?
 (a) once (b) between 2 and 5 times
 (c) between 5 and 10 times (d) between 11 and 20 times
 (e) between 21 and 30 times (f) more than 30 times

3. What types of drugs would you exchange the stolen goods for?

(a) heroin	(b) cocaine
(c) marijuana	(d) speed
(e) ecstasy	(f) LSD
(g) freebase	(h) crack
(i) ice	(j) other: _____

4. Do you know what they did with the stolen goods?

(a) Yes	(b) No
---------	--------

 If yes, please describe: _____

5. When selling to these people, what did you do to ensure you did not get caught by the police?

6. How long would it take you to steal the item and sell it to these people?

(a) less than one hour	(b) between 1 and 3 hours
(c) between 4 and 6 hours	(d) between 6 and 12 hours
(e) over half a day	(f) 1 day
(g) between 2 and 5 days	(h) between 6 and 7 days
(i) more than 1 week	(j) other: _____

SECTION E — SELLING TO FAMILY/FRIENDS

1. Did you ever give or sell stolen goods to friends or family? If no, go to Section F.

(a) Yes	(b) No
---------	--------

2. How often did you sell to family or friends?

(a) once	(b) between 2 and 5 times
(c) between 5 and 10 times	(d) between 11 and 20 times
(e) between 21 and 30 times	(f) more than 30 times

3. What did you usually get for the stolen property? If you did not answer (c), go to Q5.

(a) nothing	(b) money
(c) drugs	(d) alcohol
(e) clothes	(f) vehicle parts
(g) place to sleep	(h) other: _____

4. What type of drugs did you get for the stolen property?

(a) heroin	(b) cocaine	(c) marijuana	(d) speed
(e) ecstasy	(f) LSD	(g) freebase	
(h) crack	(i) ice	(j) other: _____	

5. How did you work out how much to sell/trade the property for?

(a) prior arrangement	(b) depending on item
(c) always below half price	(d) other: _____

6. Do you know what they did with the stolen property?

(a) Yes	(b) No
---------	--------

 If yes, please describe: _____

7. How long would it take you to steal the item and sell/give it to your family/friends?

(a) less than one hour	(b) between 1 and 3 hours
(c) between 4 and 6 hours	(d) between 6 and 12 hours
(e) over half a day	(f) 1 day
(g) between 2 and 5 days	(h) between 6 and 7 days
(i) more than 1 week	(j) other: _____

8. Do you think your family/friends knew the property was stolen?

(a) Yes	(b) No
---------	--------

 If yes, how did they know? _____

9. When selling/giving to your friends/family, what did you do to ensure you did not get caught by the police?

SECTION F — SELLING TO FENCES

1. Did you ever give or sell stolen goods to a fence or home shops? If no, go to Section G.
(a) Yes (b) No
2. How often did you sell to fences or home shops?
(a) once (b) between 2 and 5 times
(c) between 5 and 10 times (d) between 11 and 20 times
(e) between 21 and 30 times (f) more than 30 times
3. What did you usually get for the stolen property?
(a) nothing (b) money (c) drugs (d) alcohol
(e) clothes (f) vehicle parts (g) place to sleep
(h) other: _____
4. How did you work out how much to sell/trade the property for?
(a) prior arrangement (b) depending on item
(c) always below half price (d) other: _____
5. Do you know what they did with the stolen property?
(a) Yes (b) No
If yes, please describe: _____
6. How long would it take you to steal the item and sell it to the fence or home shop?
(a) less than one hour (b) between 1 and 3 hours
(c) between 4 and 6 hours (d) between 6 and 12 hours
(e) over half a day (f) 1 day
(g) between 2 and 5 days (h) between 6 and 7 days
(i) more than 1 week (j) other: _____
7. When selling to these people or businesses, what did you do to ensure you did not get caught by the police?

SECTION G — SELLING TO STRANGERS

1. Did you ever give or sell stolen goods to strangers? If no, go to Section H.
(a) Yes (b) No
2. How often did you sell to strangers?
(a) once (b) between 2 and 5 times
(c) between 5 and 10 times (d) between 11 and 20 times
(e) between 21 and 30 times (f) more than 30 times
3. What sorts of places have you sold stolen goods to strangers?
(a) taxi ranks (b) local pub
(c) on the street (d) outside shopping centres
(e) building sites (f) other: _____
4. What did you usually get for the stolen property?
(a) nothing (b) money
(c) drugs (d) alcohol
(e) clothes (f) vehicle parts
(g) place to sleep (h) other: _____
5. How did you work out how much to sell/trade the property for?
(a) prior arrangement (b) depended on item
(c) always below half price (d) other: _____

6. Do you know what they did with the stolen property?
 (a) Yes (b) No
 If yes, please describe: _____
7. How long would it take you to steal the item and sell it to your strangers?
 (a) less than one hour (b) between 1 and 3 hours
 (c) between 4 and 6 hours (d) between 6 and 12 hours
 (e) over half a day (f) 1 day
 (g) between 2 and 5 days (h) between 6 and 7 days
 (i) more than 1 week (j) other: _____
8. Do you think the strangers knew the property was stolen?
 (a) Yes (b) No
 If yes, how did they know? _____
9. When selling to your strangers, what did you do to ensure you did not get caught by the police?

SECTION H — GARAGE SALES

1. Did you ever sell stolen goods at a garage sale? If no, go to Section I.
 (a) Yes (b) No
2. How often did you use this method?
 (a) once (b) between 2 and 5 times
 (c) between 5 and 10 times (d) between 11 and 20 times
 (e) between 21 and 30 times (f) more than 30 times

SECTION I — SELLING AT AUCTION

1. Have you ever sold stolen goods at an auction? If no, go to Section J.
 (a) Yes (b) No
2. How often did this happen?
 (a) once (b) between 2 and 5 times
 (c) between 5 and 10 times (d) between 11 and 20 times
 (e) between 21 and 30 times (f) more than 30 times
3. Did you approach an auctioneer to sell goods for you?
 (a) Yes (b) No
4. Has an auctioneer ever approached you to steal property for them to sell?
 (a) Yes (b) No
5. Have you ever sold stolen goods on an internet auction site? If no, go to Section J.
 (a) Yes (b) No
6. How often did this happen?
 (a) once (b) between 2 and 5 times
 (c) between 5 and 10 times (d) between 11 and 20 times
 (e) between 21 and 30 times (f) more than 30 times
7. Did you use the same user ID every time?
 (a) Yes (b) No
8. How long would it take you to steal the item and sell it to your strangers?
 (a) less than one hour (b) between 1 and 3 hours
 (c) between 4 and 6 hours (d) between 6 and 12 hours
 (e) over half a day (f) 1 day
 (g) between 2 and 5 days (h) between 6 and 7 days
 (i) more than 1 week (j) other: _____
9. Do you think the strangers knew the property was stolen?
 (a) Yes (b) No

If yes, how did they know? _____

10. When selling to your strangers, what did you do to ensure you did not get caught by the police?
- _____

SECTION J — ORDERING STOLEN GOODS

1. Did anyone ever ask you to steal goods for them? If no, go to Section K.
(a) Yes (b) No
2. How often did this happen?
(a) once (b) between 2 and 5 times
(c) between 5 and 10 times (d) between 11 and 20 times
(e) between 21 and 30 times (f) more than 30 times
3. What sort of people asked you to steal for them?
(a) friends (b) family
(c) drug dealers (d) fences or home shops
(e) strangers
(f) pawnbrokers/second-hand dealers
(g) others: _____
4. What sort of goods were ordered?
(a) jewellery (b) white goods
(c) video recorder (d) TV (e) DVD
(f) mobile phone (g) CD player (h) laptop
(i) computer (j) entertainment centre
(k) artwork (l) camera
(m) game console, e.g. Playstation, Nintendo, Xbox
(n) all of the above
Others: _____
5. How long would it take you to steal the item and sell it to the person who requested it?
(a) less than one hour (b) between 1 and 3 hours
(c) between 4 and 6 hours (d) between 6 and 12 hours
(e) over half a day (f) 1 day
(g) between 2 and 5 days (h) between 6 and 7 days
(i) more than 1 week (j) other: _____
6. When selling to these people, what did you do to ensure you did not get caught by the police?
- _____

SECTION K — MOVING STOLEN GOODS INTERSTATE

1. Do you know if any of the people (friends, pawnbrokers, fences, etc.) you usually sold to, were planning to move the stolen property outside of Queensland? If no, go to Section L.
(a) Yes (b) No
2. Where were they planning to move it?
(a) NSW (b) ACT (c) VIC
(d) SA (e) WA (f) NT
3. How were they planning to move it?
(a) car (b) van (c) transport van
(d) Australia Post (e) ship (f) plane
(g) other: _____
4. Have you ever stolen property for someone not living in Queensland? If no, go to Section L.
(a) Yes (b) No
If yes, where were they from?
(a) NSW (b) ACT (c) VIC
(d) SA (e) WA (f) NT

5. How often did you sell outside Queensland?
 - (a) never
 - (b) once
 - (c) between 2 and 5 times
 - (d) between 5 and 10 times
 - (e) between 11 and 20 times
 - (f) between 21 and 30 times
 - (g) more than 30 times
6. Why did you decide to sell property outside of Queensland?
 - (a) better prices
 - (b) less likely to be apprehended
 - (c) other: _____

SECTION L — OTHER

1. Do you ever think about getting caught before breaking into places?
 - (a) Yes
 - (b) No
 What did you think about? _____
2. How likely did you think it was that you would get caught for breaking into a house/commercial business?
 - (a) never
 - (b) not very likely
 - (c) 50/50
 - (d) highly likely
 - (e) every time
3. What would stop you from committing burglaries in the future?
 - (a) imprisonment time
 - (b) lack of support for family
 - (c) fear of attacks from other burglars
 - (d) moving onto other crimes
 - (e) lack of money derived from burglaries
 - (f) other: _____
4. What do you think of the police and their ability to apprehend burglars or prevent burglaries from occurring? (e.g. in regard to their capabilities, scanners, operations)

5. How did you store the money you made from the sale of the property?
 - (a) bank
 - (b) financial Institution
 - (c) keep it at home
 - (d) give it to someone to hold
 - (e) send it into an overseas account
6. Is there anything else you would like to say about the stolen goods market?
 - (a) Yes
 - (b) No
 If yes, please describe: _____
7. Of all the methods used to dispose of stolen goods, which method do you find the most effective?
 - (a) selling it to a fence
 - (b) trading it for drugs
 - (c) selling it to friends/family
 - (d) selling it to strangers
 - (e) Selling it to a pawnbroker or second-hand dealer
 - (f) selling it to a home shop
 - (g) selling it to a jeweller, computer shop etc.
 - (h) selling it to a convenience store
 - (i) others: _____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME IN COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE. YOUR INPUT IS INVALUABLE AND GREATLY APPRECIATED.

Appendix B: QUT study facts and findings

Methodology

Interviews were conducted with 47 male adult inmates (suppliers) who were incarcerated in various prisons throughout South East Queensland for at least one break-and-enter offence. Although the respondents were suppliers, questions were also designed to ascertain information about distributors/retailers and purchasers of stolen goods. The interviews were semi-structured and conducted face-to-face, each lasting between 25 and 45 minutes. The interview survey comprised various open and closed questions, which were modelled from previous surveys used in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. The interview survey contained questions relating to:

- personal attributes such as sex, age and income
- various disposal avenues used by the respondents
- issues relating to organised crime such as interstate and international networks.

Data limitations

As with any study conducted on prison subjects, the reader should be aware of data validity and reliability. The information received is only representative of people who have come to law enforcement attention; those who have not been apprehended may employ different modus operandi and have different motivations. In addition, as is the case with any survey, respondents may be deceitful or biased. To ensure the data received were as truthful as possible, the interviewer conducted face-to-face interviews and the respondents' anonymity was protected. To ensure data consistency, all interviews were carried out by the same researcher. It should be noted, however, that data interpretation is ultimately affected by personal biases and beliefs.

The reader should also be aware of the limited sample size used in this study. Because females and juveniles were not included in the study, the results may not be wholly representative of all Queensland property offenders. However, it should also be pointed out that this study is the first of its kind and the findings do allow a more tangible understanding of a market that has previously been largely understood through anecdotal information.

Motivation

The majority of respondents (81%) stated that they committed property offences to support a drug habit. This is similar to findings in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. While most offenders stated that their main legitimate source of income was social security benefits (and some claimed to be employed), when the cost of living expenses were compared to legitimate income, many respondents did not earn enough money to support their lifestyle, including their drug habit.

Modus operandi

Most respondents (83%) stated that they offended several times a week or more. Almost every respondent (96%) stated that they targeted commercial premises, whereas only about half (53%) claimed to target residences, including sheds and garages. Apart from cash, entertainment items (including televisions and DVD players), laptops/computers, jewellery and camera/video recorders were the most targeted types of property. This is similar to data provided by major insurers, who record entertainment equipment and jewellery as the most commonly reported property stolen in home burglary.

When questioned about how they chose particular targets, many respondents claimed that various home security measures were inefficient deterrents and asserted that location and time were the main determinants for offending. This suggests that most offenders are opportunistic and their decision to offend largely depends on their feelings immediately before the offence. However, several respondents stated that they conducted extensive surveillance of targets before offending. This supports the assumption that, although most property offending is opportunistic, a few offenders are more organised.

Most respondents (72%) stated that they had received an order for particular goods before offending. People ordering goods were most often drug dealers, family/friends and fences.

Disposal avenues

Drug exchange and fence: The most commonly used disposal avenues in Queensland are selling to a fence and exchanging for drugs. Of those respondents who reported selling to a fence, 74 per cent stated that they received drugs as payment. It appears that there is considerable overlap between these two disposal avenues. Overall, most Queensland respondents (substantially more than in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory) are exchanging property for illicit drugs. Other disposal methods are primarily used only when a drug dealer or fence is unavailable.

Pawnbroker/second-hand dealer: Although almost two-thirds (62%) of the respondents reported selling goods to a pawnbroker/second-hand dealer at least once, only 21 per cent used this avenue more than 30 times. Most respondents stated that this was due to the consistently low prices offered for the goods, with one respondent reporting he received \$150 for a laptop computer. Most respondents stated that they were required to produce identification when selling goods. However, eight respondents (17%) reported never being required to produce identification.

Family/friends: Thirty-five per cent of respondents sold to family/friends at least once; 11 per cent did so more than 30 times. Respondents were more evasive when discussing this disposal method, possibly disinclined to implicate close associates in illegal activities.

Strangers: Forty-five per cent of respondents sold to strangers at least once; few sold to strangers regularly. The most frequent location for selling these goods was on the street, followed by the local pub.

Auctions: Six per cent of respondents sold property at auctions; one respondent stated that he used this method more than 30 times. Limited information was gleaned from the respondents due to the scarcity with which this method was used. Interestingly, one respondent stated that he knew the distributor/retailer was selling goods on the online auction facility, eBay.

Legitimate businesses: About 28 per cent of offenders sold to jewellers, computer shops or convenience stores at least once. However, respondents were not further questioned about these activities, so the frequency of use of these disposal avenues is not known.

Personal use: Very few respondents stated that they intended to keep the property for personal use.

Tables and figures

Demographic information

Table 1: Age of offender

	Frequency	Percentage
18–19	3	6.4
20–21	1	2.1
22–25	14	29.8
26–30	12	25.5
31–40	14	29.8
41–50	3	6.4
>50	0	0
Total	47	100

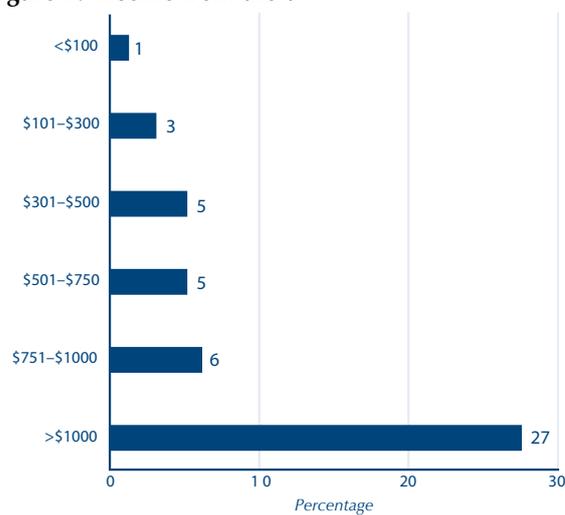
Table 2: Living expenses (by week)

	Frequency	Percentage
\$101–\$200	1	2.1
\$201–\$300	1	2.1
\$301–\$400	9	19.1
\$401–\$500	5	10.6
>\$501	31	66
Total	47	100

Table 3: Legitimate income per week

	Frequency	Percentage
<\$100	6	12.8
\$101–\$200	7	14.9
\$201–\$300	7	14.9
\$301–\$400	11	23.4
\$401–\$500	3	6.4
>\$501	13	27.6
Total	47	100

Figure 1: Income from theft



Modus operandi and motivation

Table 4: Frequency of burglaries

	Frequency	Percentage
Everyday or almost	25	53.2
Several times a week	14	29.8
Every week or almost every week	4	8.5
Less than every week	0	0
Less than every month	3	6.4
Other	1	2.1
Total	47	100

Table 5: Motivation for offending

	Frequency
For drugs	38
To make money	31
For personal use	19

Table 6: Location of theft

	Frequency
Commercial	45
Residential	25
Other	3

Table 7: Preferred goods

	Frequency
Jewellery	29
Mobile phone	22
Laptop	22
Camera	19
Entertainment centre	14
Game console, e.g. Playstation, Xbox	13
TV	12
DVD	11
CD player	11
Computer	11
White goods	10
Video recorder	10
All of the above	7
Artwork	5
Other	15

Table 8: Reasons for targeting properties

	Frequency
Location	24
Poor external security	18
Time	18
No guard dog	8
Other	15

Table 9: Offending with other persons

	Frequency
Alone	29
With others	6
Other	12

Disposal methods

Table 10: Methods of disposal

	Frequency	Percentage
Traded it for drugs	42	89.4
Sold it to a fence	35	74.5
Sold it to a pawnbroker/second-hand dealer	29	61.7
Sold it to family/friends	22	46.8
Sold it to strangers	21	44.7
Sold it to a jeweller/computer shop etc.	8	17
Sold it to a convenience store	5	10.6
Sold it at an auction	3	6.4
Sold it at a garage sale	0	0
Sold it to a home shop	2	4.3
Other	3	6.4

Figure 2: Frequency of selling to fences

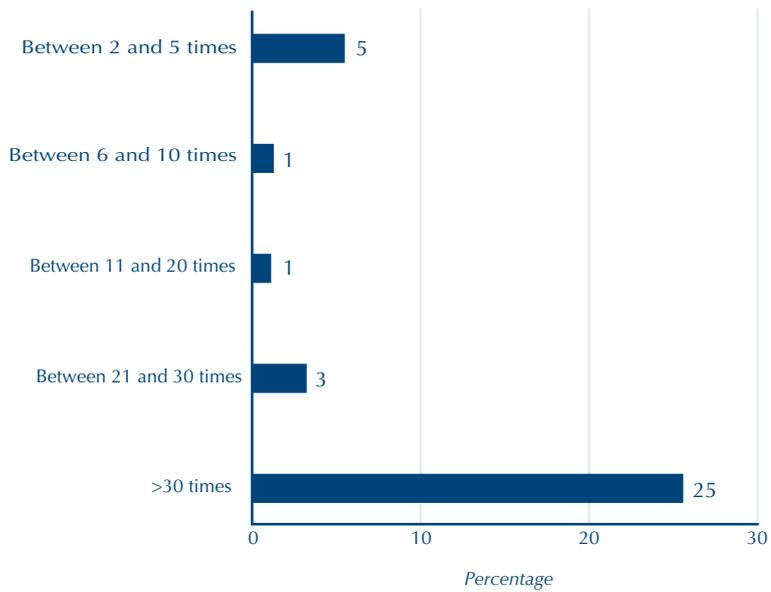


Table 11: Time taken to dispose of stolen property (to fences)

	Frequency
Less than one hour	11
Between 1 and 3 hours	15
Between 4 and 6 hours	3
Between 6 and 12 hours	0
Between 13 and 23 hours	0
1 day	2
Between 2 and 5 days	0
Between 6 and 7 days	0
More than one week	0
Other	3
Total	34

Table 12: Types of drugs obtained

	Frequency
Speed	31
Heroin	27
Marijuana	26
Ecstasy	9
Ice	7
Cocaine	4
LSD	1
Crack	0
Freebase	0
Other	1

Table 13: Time taken to dispose of stolen property (to drug dealers)

	Frequency
Less than one hour	18
Between 1 and 3 hours	14
Between 4 and 6 hours	2
Between 6 and 12 hours	0
Between 13 and 23 hours	0
1 day	3
Between 2 and 5 days	0
Between 6 and 7 days	0
More than one week	0
Other	4
Total	41

Figure 3: Frequency of selling to drug dealers

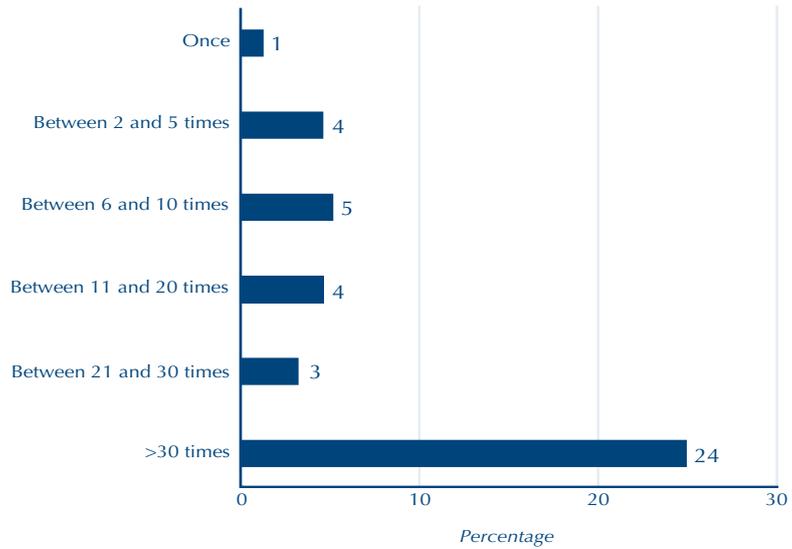


Figure 4: Frequency of selling to family/friends

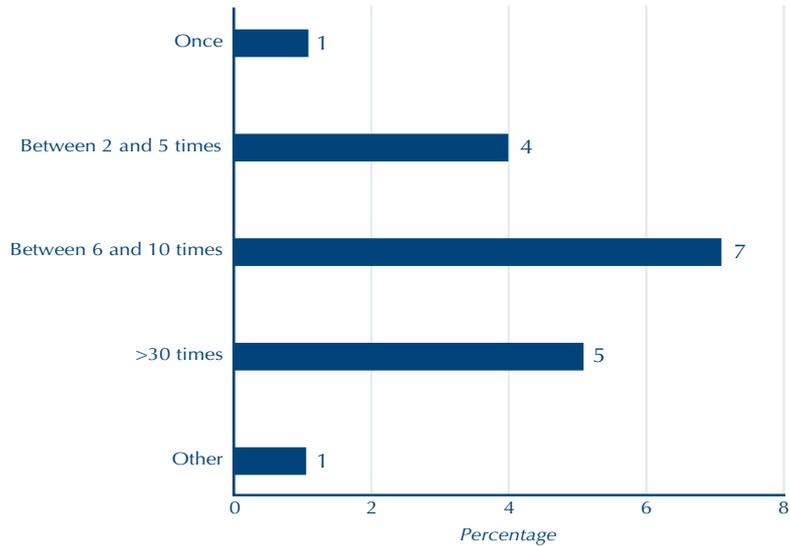


Figure 5: Selling to pawnbrokers/second-hand dealers

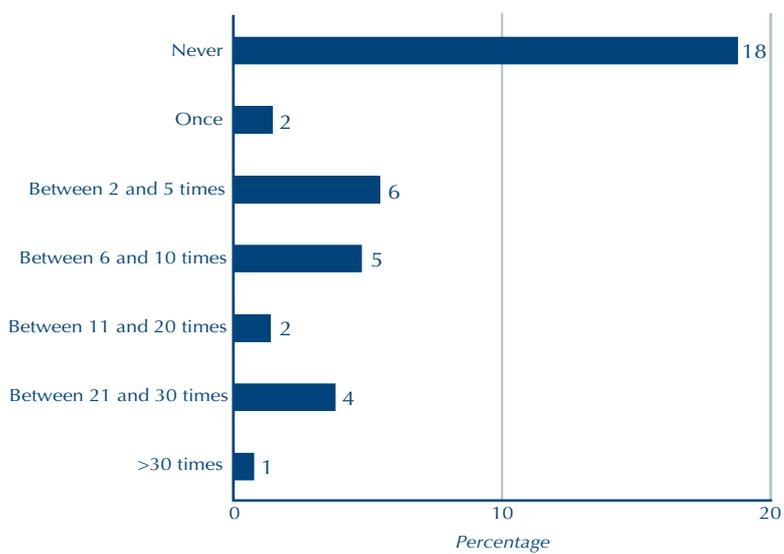


Table 14: Time taken to dispose of property (at pawnbroker/second-hand dealer)

	Frequency
Less than one hour	12
Between 1 and 3 hours	6
Between 4 and 6 hours	3
Between 6 and 12 hours	0
Between 13 and 23 hours	0
1 day	4
Between 2 and 5 days	0
Between 6 and 7 days	0
More than one week	0
Other	2

Figure 6: Frequency of selling to strangers

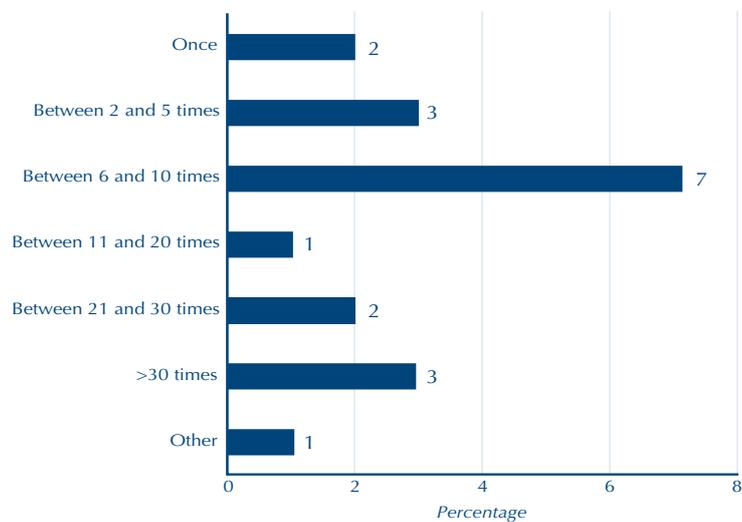


Table 15: Locations where burglars sold stolen goods to strangers

	Frequency
On the street	14
Local pub	13
Outside shopping centres	7
Building sites	7
Taxi ranks	5
Other	2

Table 16: Destination of stolen goods

	Frequency
New South Wales	5
Victoria	4
Western Australia	3
Australian Capital Territory	1
Tasmania	1
South Australia	1
Northern Territory	1
Overseas	2

Miscellaneous

Table 17: Person ordering stolen goods

	Frequency
Drug dealers	28
Fences	22
Friends	13
Family	11
Strangers	3
Pawnbrokers/second-hand dealers	2
Other	1

Table 18: Where were the proceeds of burglary kept?

	Frequency
Financial institution	8
Bank	7
Spending	5
Give it to someone to hold	4
Personal	3
Home	2
Laundered through business	1
Family	1
Overseas account	0

Table 19: Likelihood of apprehension

	Frequency
Never	4
Not very likely	16
50/50	24
Highly likely	0
Every time	1

Table 20: Reasons to cease burglary

	Frequency
Imprisonment time	28
Lack of support provided to family	8
Moving onto other crimes	4
Nothing	4
Decriminalising drugs	4
Getting a job	3
Retirement from crime	3
Fear of attacks from other burglars	2
Lack of money derived from burglaries	2

Appendix C: Review of state pawnbroker and second-hand dealer legislation

Name of Act	QLD	NSW	VIC	WA	SA	ACT	TAS
	<i>Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 2003</i>	<i>Pawnbrokers and Second-hand Dealers Amendment Act 2002 and Pawnbrokers and Second-hand Dealers Act 1996</i>	<i>Second-Hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers (Amendment) Act 2001 and Second-Hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 1989</i>	<i>Pawnbrokers and Second-hand Dealers Act 1994</i>	<i>Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 1996</i>	<i>Second-Hand Dealers Act 1906 and Second-hand Dealers Regulations 2002</i>	<i>Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 1994</i>
Grounds for prohibition from trading/cancellation of license	Licence was obtained fraudulently; conviction of an offence against this Act within past 5 years	Dishonesty conviction; conviction of an offence involving receiving of stolen goods and/or against this Act	Licence was obtained improperly; conviction of an offence against this Act; business is carried out in dishonest/unfair manner; engagement in discreditable conduct	Prior dishonesty conviction; conviction of an offence against Act	Prior dishonesty conviction; subject in bankruptcy; being in possession of stolen goods on three occasions in one year without notifying police	Prior dishonesty conviction; conviction of an offence against Act; previous revocation or cancellation of licence in other jurisdiction	Prior dishonesty conviction; conviction of an offence against Act
Computer records required	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Records automatically transmitted to police	No	No	No	Yes, daily	Not specified	Yes, twice weekly	No
Requires photo ID	No	No	No	Yes — similar to 100-point financial institution requirement	No	Preferred; if no photo ID, must produce 3 documents to prove identification	No

CRIME AND
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