

# Statistical Bulletin

## Criminal Justice Series

CrJ/2007/10

Published October 2007

Price £2.00

### RECORDED CRIMES AND OFFENCES INVOLVING FIREARMS, SCOTLAND, 2006-07

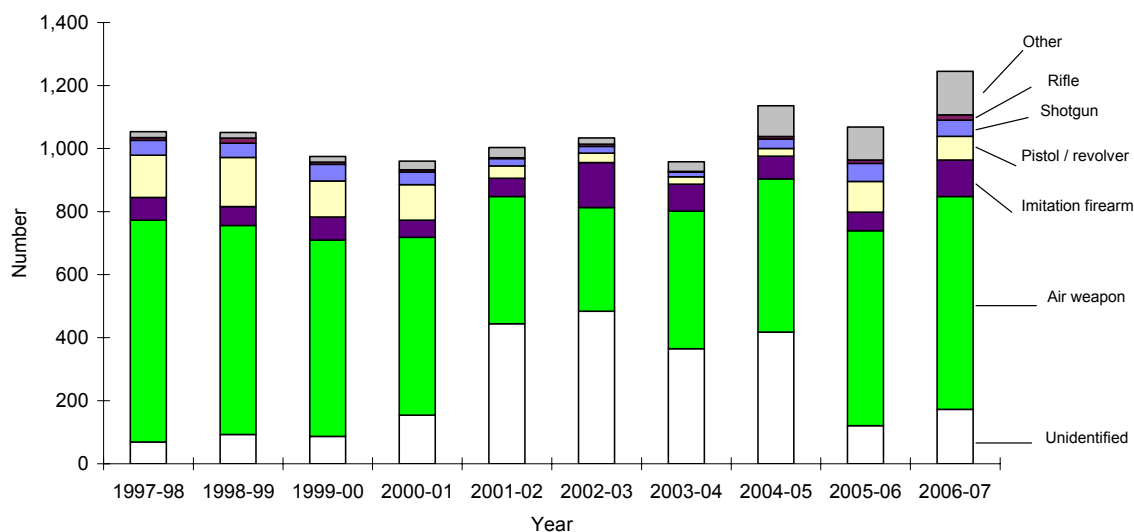
#### 1. Introduction

This bulletin forms part of the Scottish Government series of bulletins on the criminal justice system. It covers those crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was **alleged** to have been used or where a firearm was stolen.

Not all such crimes and offences are reported to the police. The extent of under-reporting is likely to vary considerably according to the seriousness of the crime or offence; for example, armed robberies are much more likely to be reported to the police than malicious damage caused by the firing of an air weapon. Moreover, the propensity of the public to report crimes and offences to the police is influenced by a number of factors and may therefore change over time; thus trends in the number of crimes and offences *recorded* may differ from trends in the number of crimes and offences *committed*.

From 2005-06, and particularly for 2006-07, the figures are expected to provide a fuller coverage of crimes and offences from all police forces. This follows discussions with the police forces regarding the scope of the data collection and clarification regarding what should be included in the statistical returns. This clarification is not considered to impact on the major crimes and offences, but is expected to result in an increase in some of the more minor categories. (See Annex 5.15 – 5.17)

Chart 1 - Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by main firearm used, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07<sup>(1)</sup>



(1) See Annex 5.13 - 5.15.

## Contents

	Page
<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. MAIN POINTS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. COMMENTARY .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Crimes and offences recorded in which a firearm was alleged to have been used .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Crimes and offences cleared up in which a firearm was alleged to have been used .....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Analysis by police force area .....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Crimes and offences in which a firearm was stolen.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<b>4. APPENDIX OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5. ANNEX : NOTES ON STATISTICS USED IN THIS BULLETIN .....</b>	<b>19</b>

*To avoid unnecessary repetition of the term 'recorded crimes and offences' throughout this publication, reference will simply be made to 'offences'. This should be interpreted to mean recorded crimes and offences. The reference to the 'use' of firearms throughout the bulletin should also be interpreted to include the 'alleged use' of firearms (see Annex Paragraph 5.4).*

## 2. Main Points

There have been a number of changes in recording practices in recent years, along with a clarification of the scope of the firearms return. (See Annex 5.13-5.17) The main changes to the return are:

- **From 2005-06, forces agreed to identify weapons whenever possible, based on evidence such as type of damage caused even if the weapon was not recovered. As expected this has led to an increase in the identified firearms categories and a decrease in the number of unidentified firearms. (Table 3)**
- **From 2006-07, forces agreed to include incidents involving air weapons where no injury or damage was caused. These incidents were excluded in previous years. This change would be expected to increase both the total number of offences of reckless conduct with a firearm and the total number of offences involving air weapons. (Table 1 and Table 3)**

These changes should be taken into account when considering the following main points:

- In 2006-07 the Scottish police recorded 1,245 offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used, an increase of 17 per cent from the total of 1,068 recorded in 2005-06, and the highest number in the 10 year period covered by this bulletin. (Table 1)
- There was a large increase in the number of offences of reckless conduct with a firearm, from 123 in 2005-06 to 291 in 2006-07. This is a direct result of the change to recording practices noted above. The number of 'other crimes and offences' increased from 117 in 2005-06 to 209 in 2006-07. It is thought that at least part of this increase is due to a clarification in the scope of the firearms offences return (See Annex 5.15-5.17). (Table 1)
- The number of minor assaults increased by 39 per cent, from 143 in 2005-06 to 199 in 2006-07. The number of vandalism offences fell 49 per cent, from 396 in 2005-06 to 202 in 2006-07. (Table 1)
- The use of firearms in criminal activity continued to constitute only a small proportion of all offences recorded by the police in 2006-07; 7 per cent of recorded homicides (8 offences), 5 per cent of recorded attempted murders (43 offences), and 2 per cent of recorded robberies (82 offences). In each of the remaining three categories, less than 0.5 per cent of offences involved the alleged use of a firearm. (Table 2)
- Air weapons accounted for 54 per cent (675) of all offences involving firearms in 2006-07, compared to 58 per cent (618) in 2005-06. (Table 3)
- The number of offences in which a firearm was fired and killed or caused injury to a person increased by a quarter, from 197 in 2005-06 to 247 in 2006-07. (Table 5)
- Of the 247 main victims injured in recorded offences in which a firearm was fired, 189 (77 per cent) were male and 57 (23 per cent) were female. There was one offence in which a police officer was shot causing injury. Almost a quarter (24 per cent) of main victims were aged between 11-15 years of age and 30 victims (12 per cent) were aged 10 years or under. (Table 10)
- In 2006-07, 57 per cent of all offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used were cleared up, compared with the 43 per cent cleared up in 2005-06. (Table 11)
- The Strathclyde police force area, which contained 43 per cent of the estimated population in Scotland in 2006, accounted for 56 per cent (691) of all offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used in 2006-07. (Table 13)

### 3. Commentary

#### ***Crimes and offences recorded in which a firearm was alleged to have been used***

##### *Crime/offence type (Tables 1, 1A)*

- As with last year's publication, minor Firearms Act 1968 offences, mainly relating to possession, handling and distribution of weapons and ammunition, are no longer included in the main tables. Totals for these offences are presented in Table 15. (See Annex 5.2)
- In 2006-07, the police recorded 1,245 offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used, an increase of 17 per cent from the total of 1,068 recorded in 2005-06, and the highest number in the 10 year period covered by this bulletin. It is thought that at least part of this increase is due to a clarification in the scope of the firearms offences return (See Annex 5.15-5.17).
- The largest category of offence involving the use of a firearm in 2006-07 was 'reckless conduct with firearms', which constituted 23 per cent of all recorded firearms offences. This increase is mainly due to a change in recording practices (see Annex 5.15), which saw the inclusion of incidents involving air weapons where no injury or damage was caused. Such incidents were previously excluded from the figures. The large increase in the 'other crimes and offences' category is also partly due to a clarification of the counting rules. (See Annex 5.15-5.17).
- In 2006-07, the number of homicides involving the use of a firearm was 8, the same number as in 2005-06 and 2004-05. The number of attempted murders increased by 23 per cent from 35 in 2005-06 to 43 in 2006-07. The 19 recorded serious assaults in 2006-07 was almost the same as in 2005-06, when there were 20 .
- The pattern of offences, once those involving unidentified firearms or air weapons are excluded, shows the largest single category of offences are 'Firearms Act 1968 offences' (possession of a firearm with intent), followed by 'minor assault'. (Table 1A)

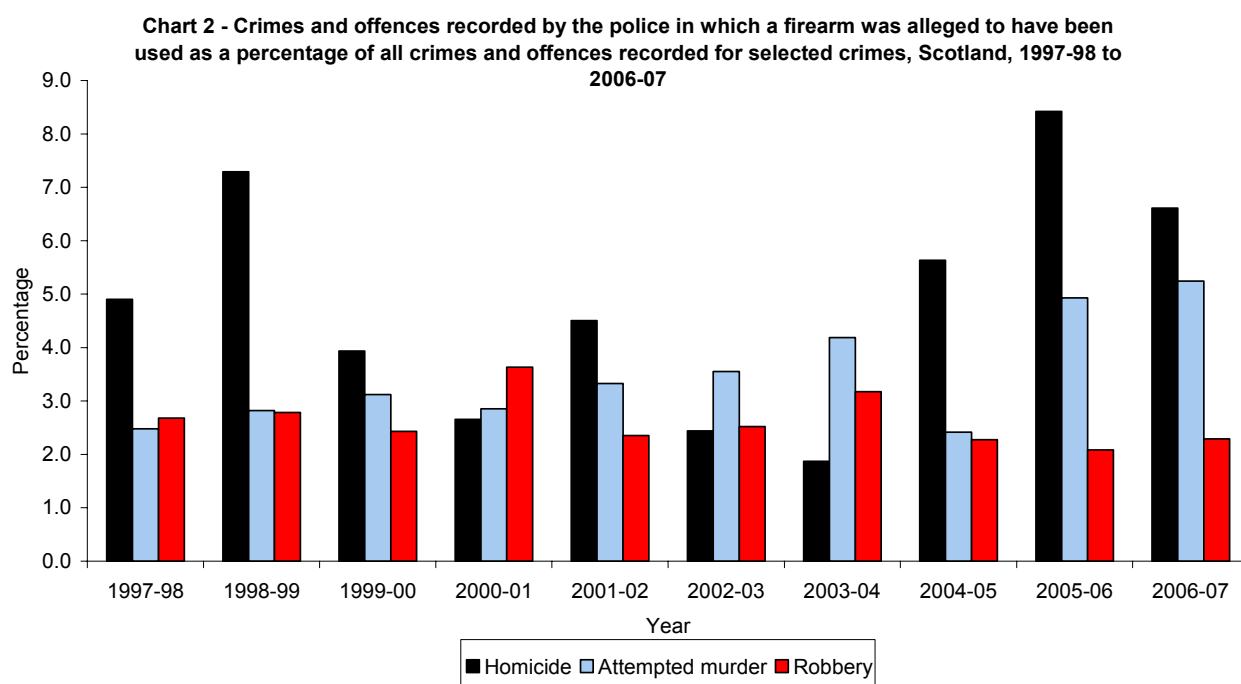
##### *Proportion of crimes/offences involving firearms (Table 2 and Chart 2)*

- The use of firearms in criminal activity constituted only a small proportion of all offences recorded by the police in 2006-07; 7 per cent of recorded homicides (8 offences), 5 per cent of recorded attempted murders (43 offences), and 2 per cent of recorded robberies (82 offences). Less than 0.5 per cent of recorded serious assaults (19 offences), recorded minor assaults (199 offences) and recorded vandalism offences (202 offences) involved the alleged use of a firearm.

##### *Type of firearm (Table 3, Table 3A and Chart 1)*

- There have been various changes in the way the type of firearm has been recorded over the years, which impacts mainly on the numbers of air weapons and unidentified weapons recorded (see Annex 5.13). From 2005-06 onwards, all police forces agreed to identify weapons where possible, resulting in an increase in the alleged use of air weapons (and other identified weapons) and a decrease in the alleged use of unidentified firearms. Furthermore, from 2006-07, all forces were asked to include incidents involving air weapons where no injury or damage was caused. It was anticipated that this would increase the number of recorded offences involving air weapons.
- The number of unidentified weapons increased from 121 in 2005-06 to 173 in 2006-07. This represents 14 per cent of all offences involving firearms in 2006-07. However, this compares with 37 per cent of offences where the firearm was not identified in 2004-05 and shows the impact of the change in recording practice described above.

- Air weapons accounted for 54 per cent of all offences involving firearms in 2006-07, compared to 58 per cent in 2005-06.
- Although the majority of firearms that might previously have been logged as 'unidentified' are now recorded as air weapons, the other categories of firearms would also be expected to increase as a result of the change in reporting practice. This proved to be the case, with all identified categories above pre-2005-06 levels.
- In comparison to 2005-06, the number of offences involving the alleged use of a pistol/revolver was down 23 per cent from 98 to 75, in 2006-07. There was a large increase in the use of imitation firearms, from 59 in 2005-06 to 116 in 2006-07.
- Other firearms were used in 11 per cent of recorded offences in 2006-07. This category includes all other weapons covered by the Firearms Act 1968 not separately identified – such as starting guns, taser guns and pepper sprays.



#### *Crime/offence type by main firearm used (Table 4)*

- In 2006-07, 3 out of the 8 recorded homicides that involved the alleged use of a firearm involved an unidentified weapon. Of the remaining homicides, 1 each involved a shotgun, a rifle, a pistol/revolver, an air weapon and a weapon in the 'other' category.
- In 2006-07, the firearm could not be identified in 12 of the 43 attempted murders. The highest recorded identified weapon was the shotgun, which was used in 11 attempted murders, followed by the air weapon which was used in 10.
- An air weapon was used in 75 per cent (152) of offences of vandalism in 2006-07. An air weapon was also the weapon used in 73 per cent (211) of offences of reckless conduct with firearms, 54 per cent (108) of minor assaults, and 74 per cent (14) of serious assaults.

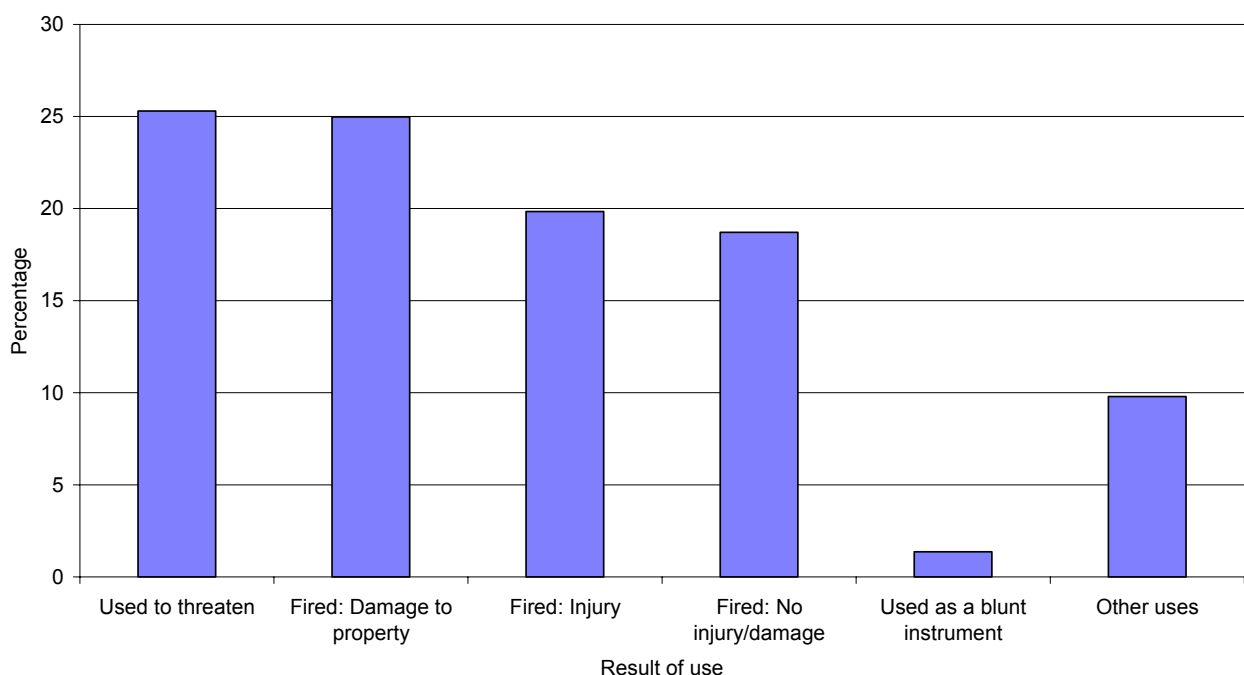
*Result of the use of a firearm (Table 5 and Chart 3)*

- Of the 1,245 offences involving the use of a firearm in 2006-07, 791 (64 per cent) involved the actual discharge of the firearm.
- The number of offences in which a firearm was fired and killed or caused injury to a person increased from 197 in 2005-06 to 247 in 2006-07, an increase of 25 per cent.
- The number of cases in which a firearm was fired causing neither injury nor damage to property increased from 68 in 2005-06 to 233 in 2006-07. This increase is a direct consequence of changes to the recording practices (see Annex 5.15). Property damage resulting from the discharge of a firearm fell 38 per cent from 499 in 2005-06 to 311 in 2006-07, reflecting the large fall in vandalism seen in Table 1.
- The number of offences where the firearm was used to threaten increased 46 per cent from 216 in 2005-06 to 315 in 2006-07, while the number of other uses also increased from 78 in 2005-06 to 122 in 2006-07. It is thought that the clarification in guidance to forces regarding which weapons to include in the firearms return may have impacted on these figures (see Annex 5.16–5.17).

*Result of use of firearm by main firearm used (Table 6)*

- Of the 791 offences in which a firearm was actually fired, 67 per cent (530) involved the use of an air weapon. Of those offences involving an air weapon, 1 resulted in death, 143 resulted in injury to a person and 237 resulted in damage to property.
- Where the main firearm used was unidentified, 3 offences resulted in fatal injuries while 22 offences caused injury.
- In the majority of cases that involved a pistol/revolver (59 per cent) or an imitation weapon (65 per cent), the firearm was used to threaten.

**Chart 3 - Recorded crimes and offences involving a firearm: Result of use, 2006-07**



### Crime/offence type by use of firearm (Table 7)

- Of the 199 minor assaults involving a firearm, 124 involved the weapon being fired and causing injury. This represents over half (52 per cent) of all the recorded offences in which a firearm was fired and caused injury. In serious assaults involving a firearm, the firearm was fired and caused injury in 12 out of 19 cases (63 per cent).
- Of the 82 robberies, a firearm was used to threaten in 75 (91 per cent) offences, reflecting the nature of such crimes. In the majority of Firearms Act 1968 offences the use of the firearm was also to threaten.
- Of the 284 offences of reckless conduct with firearms, in which the weapon was fired, 143 (50 per cent) of them resulted in no injury or damage to property.

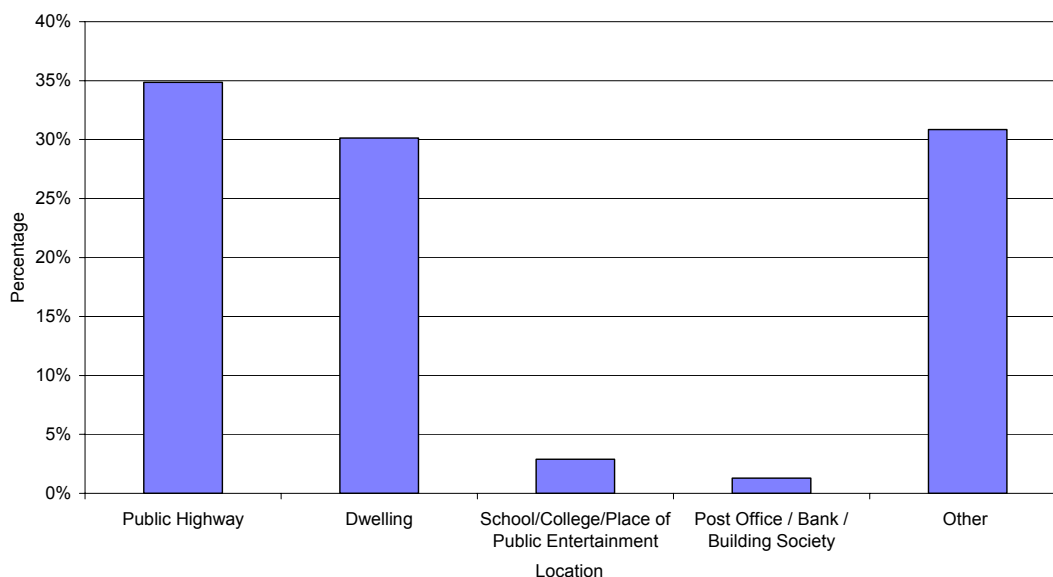
### Location of use (Table 8 and Chart 4)

- In 2006-07, 30 per cent of offences (375) involving the alleged use of a firearm occurred in a dwelling, a decrease of 75 (17 per cent) on 2005-06.
- There was large increase (72 per cent) in recorded offences occurring on public highways (including roads and footpaths), from 253 in 2005-06 to 434 in 2006-07. This increase was due mainly to an increase in recorded reckless conduct with a firearm and the rise in other offences.
- Twenty six offences involving the alleged use of a firearm occurred in a school/college, an increase of 37 per cent from 2005-06 when there were 19 offences.

### Victim characteristics (Table 10)

- Of the 247 main victims injured in recorded offences in which a firearm with fired, 189 (77 per cent) were male and 57 (23 per cent) were female. There was one offence in which a police officer was shot causing injury.
- In 2006-07, almost a quarter, 59 (24 per cent), of main victims were aged between 11 and 15 years and 30 victims (12 per cent) were aged 10 years or under. One hundred and twenty one (49 per cent) were aged 21 or over.

Chart 4 - Recorded crimes and offences involving a firearm: Location of use, 2006-07



## ***Crimes and offences cleared up in which a firearm was alleged to have been used***

### *Clear - up rates (Table 11)*

- In 2006-07, 57 per cent of all offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used were cleared up, an increase from 43 per cent in 2005-06 and the highest recorded in the 10 year period covered by this bulletin. Part of the reason for this increased overall clear-up rate is the smaller number of vandalism offences, which historically have a low clear-up rate and the increased number of offences of reckless conduct and other offences, which have higher clear-up rates.
- The clear-up rate for offences of homicide with firearms was 100 per cent in 2006-07 compared to 88 per cent in 2005-06 (although these figures are based on very small numbers of homicides, namely 8 in each year). The clear-up rate for attempted murder was down from 66 per cent in 2005-06 to 40 per cent in 2006-07, while the clear-up rate for serious assault with firearms decreased from 55 per cent in 2005-06 to 47 per cent in 2006-07.
- Due to the nature of the offence, clear-up rates for vandalism have historically been low. In 2006-07 the clear-up rate was 6 per cent, down from 9 per cent in 2005-06.

### *Accused characteristics (Table 12, 12A)*

- The total number of offences cleared up, in which there was an accused, increased by 57 per cent from 456 in 2005-06 to 714 in 2006-07. This increase is mainly due to an increase in clear-up rates for reckless conduct with firearms and other crimes and offences.
- The number of offences cleared up in 2006-07 where the main accused was aged 15 years or under was 134, representing 19 per cent of offences cleared up. The main accused was aged 16 – 20 years in 205 cases (29 per cent), and was 21 or over in 375 (53 per cent) of these cases.
- Fifty four per cent (72) of firearm offences involving young persons aged 15 or under related to the use of an air weapon, rising to 63 per cent (130) for those aged 16-20 and falling to 43 per cent (162) for those accused aged 21 or over.

### *Analysis by police force area (Table 13)*

- The Strathclyde police force area, which contained 43 per cent of the estimated population in Scotland in 2006, accounted for 56 per cent (691) of all offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used in 2006-07. This is an increase from the previous year and is partly due to the force now including some offences that were previously excluded, following a clarification in the counting rules (see Annex 5.17).
- More specifically, 6 of the 8 homicides, 81 per cent (35) of attempted murders, 79 per cent (15) of serious assaults, 76 per cent (62) of recorded robberies, and 57 per cent (114) of minor assaults in which a firearm was alleged to have been used, took place in Strathclyde. Over half (52 per cent) of the recorded vandalism offences involving a firearm took place in Lothian and Borders police force area.

### *Crimes and offences in which a firearm was stolen (Table 14)*

- During 2006-07 the Scottish police recorded 10 offences in which a firearm other than an air weapon was stolen, a decrease from 12 offences in 2005-06.
- The number of stolen shotguns fell from 10 in 2005-06 to 1 in 2006-07 and 8 'other' firearms were stolen in 2006-07, compared to 2 in 2005-06.

**Minor Firearms Act 1968 Offences** (Table 15)

- The number of minor Firearms Act 1968 offences, mainly relating to the possession, handling and distribution of weapons and ammunition, increased by 3 per cent from 916 in 2005-06 to 947 in 2006-07. (see Annex 5.2)

#### 4. Appendix of tables

*All the tables relate to crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used.*

Table 1 : All firearms, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 1A : Identified firearms excluding air weapons, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 2 : Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used as a percentage of all crimes and offences recorded for selected crimes, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 3 : Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by main firearm used, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07 – Number and Percentage Change

Table 3A : Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by main firearm used, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07 - Percentage of Total Offences

Table 4 : Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by crime/offence type and main firearm used, Scotland, 2006-07

Table 5 : All firearms by how used, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 5A : Identified firearms excluding air weapons by how used, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 6 : All firearms by how used and main firearm used, Scotland, 2006-07

Table 7 : All firearms by crime/offence and how used, Scotland, 2006-07

Table 7A : Identified firearms excluding air weapons by crime/offence and how used, Scotland, 2006-07

Table 8 : All firearms by location of use, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 8A : Identified firearms excluding air weapons by location of use, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 9 : All firearms fired causing injury by main firearm used, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 10 : All firearms fired causing injury by age and sex of main victim, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 10A : Identified firearms excluding air weapons fired causing injury by age and sex of main victim, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 11 : Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by percentage of crimes cleared up, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 12 : Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by age of main accused in crimes cleared up, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 12A : Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by age of main accused and main firearm used in crimes cleared up, Scotland, 2006-07

Table 13 : All firearms by police force area, Scotland, 2006-07

Table 13A : Identified firearms excluding air weapons by police force area, Scotland, 2006-07

Table 14 : Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was stolen by main firearm stolen (excluding air weapons), Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 15 : Miscellaneous firearms offences by police force area, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

**Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07**

**Table 1**

Crime/offence	Number & Percentage										
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	% change 05-06 - 06-07
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,054</b>	<b>1,051</b>	<b>975</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>1,003</b>	<b>1,034</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>1,136</b>	<b>1,068</b>	<b>1,245</b>	<b>17</b>
Homicide	5	7	5	3	5	3	2	8	8	8	-
Attempted murder	16	18	22	17	24	27	31	20	35	43	23
Serious assault	25	38	45	50	47	39	67	48	20	19	-5
Robbery	122	140	120	156	108	117	132	85	74	82	11
Vandalism	311	289	277	238	280	276	345	408	396	202	-49
Reckless conduct with firearms	206	162	168	140	158	147	137	169	123	291	137
Firearms Act 1968 offences <sup>(1)</sup>	125	115	122	106	125	153	115	120	152	192	26
Minor assault	208	209	183	205	216	230	104	229	143	199	39
Other crimes & offences	36	73	33	45	40	42	25	49	117	209	79

(1) Possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life, commit crime and cause fear of violence. Does not include other miscellaneous offences. These are now given separately in Table 15.

**Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been used, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07**

**Table 1A**

Crime/offence	Number & Percentage										
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	% change 05-06 - 06-07
<b>Total</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>21</b>
Homicide	5	4	3	3	-	-	1	2	5	4	-20
Attempted murder	14	13	17	13	9	-	4	13	19	21	11
Serious assault	7	5	7	4	4	9	16	3	3	3	-
Robbery	87	91	82	90	25	33	29	24	56	50	-11
Vandalism	4	7	4	2	4	4	3	15	27	19	-30
Reckless conduct with firearms	22	10	21	13	5	13	11	10	42	52	24
Firearms Act 1968 offences <sup>(1)</sup>	82	74	84	61	54	104	59	62	80	84	5
Minor assault	45	67	29	34	36	34	21	77	52	72	38
Other crimes & offences	15	24	18	21	18	24	12	26	45	92	104

(1) Possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life, commit crime and cause fear of violence. Does not include other miscellaneous offences. These are now given separately in Table 15.

**Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used as a percentage of all crimes and offences recorded for selected crimes, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07**

**Table 2**

**Percentage <sup>(1)</sup>**

Crime/offence	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Homicide	4.9	7.3	3.9	2.7	4.5	2.4	1.9	5.6	8.4	6.6
Attempted murder	2.5	2.8	3.1	2.9	3.3	3.6	4.2	2.4	4.9	5.2
Serious assault	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	1.0	0.7	0.3	0.3
Robbery	2.7	2.8	2.4	3.6	2.4	2.5	3.2	2.3	2.1	2.3
Vandalism	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.2
Minor assault	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.3

(1) Some of the figures in this table are based on fewer than 100 recorded cases.

**Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by main firearm used, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07 <sup>(1)</sup> - Number and Percentage Change**

**Table 3**

**Number & Percentage**

Main firearm used	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	% change 05-06 - 06-07
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,054</b>	<b>1,051</b>	<b>975</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>1,003</b>	<b>1,034</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>1,136</b>	<b>1,068</b>	<b>1,245</b>	<b>17</b>
Shotgun	47	45	53	41	23	21	16	30	57	51	-11
Rifle	9	16	7	7	3	7	2	8	11	17	55
Pistol/revolver	134	156	114	112	39	30	23	24	98	75	-23
Air weapon	704	663	623	565	404	329	437	486	618	675	9
Imitation firearm	72	60	73	54	58	143	85	72	59	116	97
Unidentified	69	93	87	154	444	484	365	418	121	173	43
Other	19	18	18	27	32	20	30	98	104	138	33
<b>Total identified excluding air weapons</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>21</b>

(1) See Annex 5.13 - 5.15

**Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by main firearm used, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07 <sup>(1)</sup> - Percentage of Total Offences**

**Table 3A**

**Percentage**

Main firearm used	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Shotgun	4	4	5	4	2	2	2	3	5	4
Rifle	1	2	1	1	*	1	*	1	1	1
Pistol/revolver	13	15	12	12	4	3	2	2	9	6
Air weapon	67	63	64	59	40	32	46	43	58	54
Imitation firearm	7	6	7	6	6	14	9	6	6	9
Unidentified	7	9	9	16	44	47	38	37	11	14
Other	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	9	10	11
<b>Total identified excluding air weapons</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>32</b>

(1) See Annex 5.13 - 5.15

**Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by crime/offence type and main firearm used, Scotland, 2006-07**

**Table 4**

Crime/offence	Main firearm used							TOTAL
	Shotgun	Rifle	Pistol/ Revolver	Air weapon	Imitation	Unidentified	Other	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>675</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>173</b>	
Homicide	1	1	1	1	-	3	1	8
Attempted murder	11	1	6	10	-	12	3	43
Serious assault	2	-	-	14	-	2	1	19
Robbery	3	-	29	7	14	25	4	82
Vandalism	-	-	2	152	-	31	17	202
Reckless conduct with firearms	16	8	1	211	7	28	20	291
Firearms Act 1968 offences <sup>(1)</sup>	10	4	21	79	38	29	11	192
Minor assault	3	1	5	108	14	19	49	199
Other crimes & offences	5	2	10	93	43	24	32	209

(1) Possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life, commit crime and cause fear of violence. Does not include other miscellaneous offences. These are now given separately in Table 15.

**Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by how used, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07**

**Table 5**

How used	Number & Percentage										% change 05-06 - 06-07
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,054</b>	<b>1,051</b>	<b>975</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>1,003</b>	<b>1,034</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>1,136</b>	<b>1,068</b>	
Fired - fatal injury	5	7	5	3	5	3	2	8	8	8	-
- causing injury	240	257	259	320	326	340	239	316	189	239	26
- damage to property	384	376	363	301	341	334	416	500	499	311	-38
- no injury/damage	83	56	41	12	22	44	26	61	68	233	243
Used as a blunt instrument	9	13	16	12	18	9	6	14	10	17	70
Used to threaten	302	250	202	222	186	170	183	202	216	315	46
Other uses	31	92	89	90	105	134	86	35	78	122	56

**Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been used by how used, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07**

**Table 5A**

How used	Number & Percentage										% change 05-06 - 06-07
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>329</b>	
Fired - fatal injury	5	4	3	3	-	-	1	2	5	4	-20
- causing injury	18	35	18	32	26	37	31	73	61	74	21
- damage to property	16	15	27	16	8	12	9	19	40	32	-20
- no injury/damage	21	22	20	4	9	11	10	23	34	63	85
Used as a blunt instrument	4	9	9	11	3	3	1	3	6	10	67
Used to threaten	201	155	127	122	61	69	64	91	133	155	17
Other uses	16	55	61	53	48	89	40	21	50	59	18

**Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by main firearm used, Scotland, 2006-07**

**Table 6**

How used	Main firearm used							TOTAL	
	Shotgun	Rifle	Pistol/		Air weapon	Imitation	Unidentified		Other
			Revolver						
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>675</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>1,245</b>	
Fired - fatal injury	1	1	1	1	-	3	1	8	
- causing injury	13	2	9	143	5	22	45	239	
- damage to property	5	4	2	237	-	42	21	311	
- no injury/damage	11	5	5	149	10	21	32	233	
Used as a blunt instrument	4	-	6	7	-	-	-	17	
Used to threaten	11	3	44	87	75	73	22	315	
Other uses	6	2	8	51	26	12	17	122	

**Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by crime/offence and how used, Scotland, 2006-07**

**Table 7**

Crime/offence	How firearm was used							TOTAL
	Fired - fatal injury	Fired - causing injury	Fired - damage to property	Fired - no injury/damage	Blunt instrument	Used to threaten	Other uses	
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>1,245</b>
Homicide	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Attempted murder	-	37	-	4	1	1	-	43
Serious assault	-	12	-	4	2	1	-	19
Robbery	-	1	-	1	5	75	-	82
Vandalism	-	-	202	-	-	-	-	202
Reckless conduct with firearms	-	51	90	143	-	5	2	291
Firearms Act 1968 offences <sup>(1)</sup>	-	13	2	15	2	106	54	192
Minor assault	-	124	-	26	7	42	-	199
Other crimes & offences	-	1	17	40	-	85	66	209

(1) Possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life, commit crime and cause fear of violence. Does not include other miscellaneous offences. These are now given separately in Table 15.

**Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been used by crime/ offence and how used, Scotland, 2006-07**

**Table 7A**

Crime/offence	How firearm was used							TOTAL
	Fired - fatal injury	Fired - causing injury	Fired - damage to property	Fired - no injury/damage	Blunt instrument	Used to threaten	Other uses	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>397</b>
Homicide	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Attempted murder	-	17	-	2	1	1	-	21
Serious assault	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	3
Robbery	-	1	-	-	5	44	-	50
Vandalism	-	-	19	-	-	-	-	19
Reckless conduct with firearms	-	10	10	29	-	2	1	52
Firearms Act 1968 offences <sup>(1)</sup>	-	3	1	7	1	48	24	84
Minor assault	-	40	-	7	2	23	-	72
Other crimes & offences	-	1	2	18	-	37	34	92

(1) Possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life, commit crime and cause fear of violence. Does not include other miscellaneous offences. These are now given separately in Table 15.

Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by location of use, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 8

Location of use	Number & Percentage										
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	% change 05-06 - 06-07
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,054</b>	<b>1,051</b>	<b>975</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>1,003</b>	<b>1,034</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>1,136</b>	<b>1,068</b>	<b>1,245</b>	<b>17</b>
Dwelling	317	314	323	274	306	296	331	411	450	375	-17
Post Office	6	12	12	6	7	9	15	12	3	9	200
Bank / Building society	5	9	14	9	2	11	10	7	13	7	-46
Public highway <sup>(1)</sup>	372	349	322	352	353	391	272	301	253	434	72
School / College	25	38	22	20	20	23	23	26	19	26	37
Place of Public Entertainment	6	2	4	6	7	12	5	4	6	10	67
Other locations	323	327	278	293	308	292	302	375	324	384	19

<sup>(1)</sup> Includes roads and footpaths

Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been used by location of use, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 8A

Location of use	Number & Percentage										
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	% change 05-06 - 06-07
<b>Total</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>21</b>
Dwelling	52	67	74	60	33	36	31	45	96	71	-26
Post Office	4	11	10	6	-	4	3	6	2	7	250
Bank / Building society	4	6	11	3	-	7	3	2	11	3	-73
Public highway <sup>(1)</sup>	94	106	84	70	56	91	44	75	90	153	70
School / College	3	-	2	7	1	8	4	9	8	11	38
Place of Public Entertainment	1	2	1	2	2	3	4	1	2	4	100
Other locations	123	103	83	93	63	72	67	94	120	148	23

<sup>(1)</sup> Includes roads and footpaths

Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been fired causing fatal or other injury by main firearm used, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07 <sup>(1)</sup>

Table 9

Main firearm used	Number & Percentage										
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	% change 05-06 - 06-07
<b>Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>25</b>
Shotgun	4	8	6	5	4	3	2	6	11	14	27
Rifle	-	2	1	1	-	-	1	3	-	3	n/a
Pistol / Revolver	12	26	9	7	6	-	-	2	11	10	-9
Air weapon	220	217	233	268	162	149	100	96	121	144	19
Imitation	2	-	1	4	3	27	12	11	2	5	150
Unidentified	2	8	10	20	143	157	109	153	10	25	150
Other	5	3	4	18	13	7	17	53	42	46	10
<b>Total identified excluding air weapons</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>18</b>

<sup>(1)</sup> See Annex 5.13 - 5.15

Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been fired causing fatal or other injury by age and sex of main victim, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 10

Age and sex of main victim	Number & Percentage										
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	% change 05-06 - 06-07
<b>All victims <sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>245</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>25</b>
10 or under	26	21	23	42	32	42	30	52	29	30	3
11-15	100	99	121	119	107	112	73	92	47	59	26
16-20	29	28	32	40	50	49	30	46	21	37	76
21 or over	90	116	87	122	142	140	108	134	100	121	21
Unknown	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Male</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>43</b>
10 or under	19	13	14	35	22	31	24	36	18	22	22
11-15	61	62	86	76	74	82	49	47	28	43	54
16-20	21	20	20	34	37	40	24	27	11	29	164
21 or over	54	86	62	84	105	102	78	98	75	95	27
Unknown	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Female</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>-11</b>
10 or under	7	8	9	7	10	11	6	16	11	8	-27
11-15	39	37	35	43	33	30	24	45	19	16	-16
16-20	8	8	12	6	13	9	6	19	10	8	-20
21 or over	36	25	25	37	36	37	28	36	24	25	4
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Police Officer</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>

(1) Includes Male, Female and Police Officer categories

Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been fired causing fatal or other injury by age and sex of main victim, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 10A

Age and sex of main victim	Number & Percentage										
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	% change 05-06 - 06-07
<b>All victims <sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>23</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>18</b>
10 or under	-	-	-	6	5	10	10	25	14	10	-29
11-15	6	5	5	14	7	13	15	21	14	20	43
16-20	1	2	1	3	3	2	2	3	5	6	20
21 or over	16	32	15	12	11	12	5	26	33	42	27
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Male</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>39</b>
10 or under	-	-	-	5	5	7	9	17	8	9	13
11-15	3	4	2	10	4	9	8	6	8	14	75
16-20	1	2	1	3	3	2	1	1	1	5	400
21 or over	14	29	12	10	11	7	4	19	29	36	24
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Female</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>-26</b>
10 or under	-	-	-	1	-	3	1	8	6	1	-83
11-15	3	1	3	4	3	4	7	15	6	6	-
16-20	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	4	1	-75
21 or over	2	2	3	2	-	5	1	7	3	6	100
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Police Officer</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-100</b>

(1) Includes Male, Female and Police Officer categories

**Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by percentage of crimes cleared up, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07**

**Table 11  
Percentage <sup>(1)</sup>**

Crime/offence	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>57</b>
Homicide	100	57	60	33	0	67	50	63	88	100
Attempted murder	63	72	27	76	38	22	48	40	66	40
Serious assault	76	61	67	50	53	38	57	35	55	47
Robbery	30	31	38	53	39	43	46	48	30	46
Vandalism	5	6	6	9	10	4	8	3	9	6
Reckless conduct with firearms	63	52	50	50	54	52	47	45	49	58
Firearms Act 1968 offences <sup>(2)</sup>	84	86	92	95	91	94	90	83	88	90
Minor assault	55	67	57	53	54	58	57	58	64	62
Other crimes & offences	83	70	76	80	68	90	72	76	62	78

(1) Many of the figures in this table are based on fewer than 100 recorded cases.

(2) Possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life, commit crime and cause fear of violence. Does not include lesser category of miscellaneous offences. These are now given separately in Table 15.

**Crimes and offences cleared up by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used and an accused was identified; by age of main accused, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07**

**Table 12**

**Number & Percentage**

Age (years)	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	% change 05-06 - 06-07
<b>Total</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>714</b>	<b>57</b>
15 or under	128	130	114	117	120	132	69	110	104	134	29
16-20	138	139	129	130	134	154	136	120	112	205	83
21 or over	200	207	185	213	192	189	181	198	240	375	56

**Crimes and offences cleared up by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used and an accused was identified; by age of main accused and main firearm used, Scotland, 2006-07**

**Table 12A**

**Number**

Age (years)	Main firearm used							Other	TOTAL
	Shotgun	Rifle	Pistol/ Revolver	Air weapon	Imitation	Unidentified			
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>714</b>	
15 or under	-	1	1	72	21	3	36	134	
16-20	3	1	6	130	21	12	32	205	
21 or over	28	12	32	162	64	42	35	375	

Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by police force area, Scotland, 2006-07

Table 13

Crime/offence									Number
	Central	Dumfries & Galloway	Fife	Grampian	Lothian & Borders	Northern	Strathclyde	Tayside	SCOTLAND
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>1,245</b>
Homicide	-	-	-	-	2	-	6	-	8
Attempted murder	-	1	-	-	5	-	35	2	43
Serious assault	-	-	2	-	2	-	15	-	19
Robbery	1	1	1	-	12	-	62	5	82
Vandalism	-	9	1	3	106	-	59	24	202
Reckless conduct with firearms	13	7	21	30	34	12	154	20	291
Firearms Act 1968 offences <sup>(1)</sup>	8	1	3	5	35	4	126	10	192
Minor assault	2	-	5	3	46	-	114	29	199
Other crimes & offences	1	7	6	7	64	-	120	4	209

(1) Possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life, commit crime and cause fear of violence. Does not include other miscellaneous offences. These are now given separately in Table 15.

Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been used by police force area, Scotland, 2006-07

Table 13A

Crime/offence									Number
	Central	Dumfries & Galloway	Fife	Grampian	Lothian & Borders	Northern	Strathclyde	Tayside	SCOTLAND
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>397</b>
Homicide	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	-	4
Attempted murder	-	-	-	-	4	-	15	2	21
Serious assault	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Robbery	-	-	1	-	6	-	40	3	50
Vandalism	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	16	19
Reckless conduct with firearms	3	2	1	3	7	4	21	11	52
Firearms Act 1968 offences <sup>(1)</sup>	5	-	1	2	15	3	50	8	84
Minor assault	-	-	1	-	28	-	20	23	72
Other crimes & offences	1	3	1	-	39	-	44	4	92

(1) Possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life, commit crime and cause fear of violence. Does not include other miscellaneous offences. These are now given separately in Table 15.

Crimes and offences recorded by the police in which a firearm was stolen by main firearm stolen (excluding air weapons), Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 14

Main firearm stolen											Number & Percentage
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	% change 05-06 - 06-07
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>-17</b>
Shotgun	12	11	17	9	12	13	9	5	10	1	-90
Rifle	8	4	4	8	5	6	1	1	-	1	n/a
Pistol/revolver	2	6	3	6	1	2	3	1	-	-	n/a
Other firearms	6	8	9	5	11	5	5	6	2	8	300

Miscellaneous firearms Offences <sup>(1) (2)</sup> by police force area, Scotland, 1997-98 to 2006-07

Table 15

Crime/offence											Number & Percentage
	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	% change 05-06 - 06-07
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,032</b>	<b>828</b>	<b>752</b>	<b>758</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>947</b>	<b>916</b>	<b>947</b>	<b>3</b>
Central	43	47	64	55	51	37	40	71	50	51	2
Dumfries & Galloway	59	37	40	34	21	35	37	32	22	29	32
Fife	40	55	29	45	64	21	19	36	26	56	115
Grampian	113	74	56	85	69	62	66	80	88	72	-18
Lothian & Borders	68	41	27	26	36	35	59	102	136	160	18
Northern	129	87	50	71	66	74	62	69	73	95	30
Strathclyde	455	399	420	385	407	327	321	481	461	444	-4
Tayside	125	88	66	57	41	69	60	76	60	40	-33

(1) Mainly offences related to possession, handling and distribution of weapons and ammunition.

(2) Taken from Recorded Crimes and Offences data collection.

## 5. Annex : Notes on statistics used in this bulletin

### Returns

5.1 The statistics in this bulletin are derived from returns submitted by police forces in Scotland in respect of crimes and offences recorded by them in which a firearm is alleged to have been used. A crime or offence is counted in the same way as in the statistics of all crimes and offences recorded by the police. The firearms return used to collect the statistics in this bulletin was revised in January 1993. The major change involved moving from an offence based return to an incident based return. In incidents where several crimes or offences occur each crime or offence within the incident is counted. However, the information in this bulletin is based on crimes and offences involving the alleged use of firearms not incidents.

5.2 A return is submitted for each incident where a crime or offence in which a firearm is alleged to have been involved. Miscellaneous firearms offences relating mainly to possession, handling and distribution of firearms and ammunition are excluded from the main tables. Prior to 2005-06, returns were submitted for miscellaneous firearms offences, but in discussions with police forces it became apparent that not all such incidents were included. Therefore it was decided to remove such incidents from the main tables, and add another table giving totals for these offences based on separate Recorded Crime returns. Because of the wide ranging nature of the relevant crime code, the numbers included in the Recorded Crime data collection dwarf those that were thought suitable for inclusion in the firearms return by police forces, as shown in the following table:

**Miscellaneous Firearms Act 1968 Offences: Previous bulletin figures vs totals from Recorded Crime data collection, 1996-97 to 2004-05**

	Figures from Firearms Bulletins	Figures from Recorded Crime Bulletins	Firearms Bulletins as % of Recorded Crime Bulletins
1996-97	49	1,166	4.2
1997-98	22	1,032	2.1
1998-99	15	828	1.8
1999-00	7	752	0.9
2000-01	10	758	1.3
2001-02	26	755	3.4
2002-03	16	660	2.4
2003-04	17	664	2.6
2004-05	35	947	3.7

5.3 It is possible that some of the inter-police force area variations shown in Tables 13 and 13A arise from differences in procedure or different police force interpretation. The move to an incident rather than individual offence based recording system revealed some undercounting of offences involving firearms in years prior to 1994.

### Legislation

5.4 Contraventions of Scottish criminal law are divided for statistical purposes into crimes and offences. The term 'crime' is generally used for the more serious criminal acts; the less serious are termed 'offences', although the term 'offence' may also be used in relation to serious breaches of criminal law. To avoid unnecessary repetition of the term 'recorded crimes and offences' throughout this publication, reference is simply made to 'offences'. This should be interpreted to mean recorded crimes and offences. The reference to the 'use' of firearms throughout the bulletin should also be interpreted to include the 'alleged use' of firearms.

5.5 The main firearm is that which inflicts the most serious injury or damage or, in cases where no injury or damage is caused, that firearm considered potentially most dangerous. Only about 2 per cent of offences in which a firearm is alleged to have been used involve more than one firearm. The 'Other firearms' category includes weapons such as starting guns and ball bearing guns. From 1988, crossbows were included in the 'Other' category. The 'Imitation' category includes replica and imitation weapons.

5.6 Following the Dunblane incident in 1996, changes to the existing firearms legislation were introduced to enhance public safety. As a result, the Firearms (Amendment) Act 1997 ("the 1997 Act") was implemented and thereafter the Firearms (Amendment)(No.2) Act 1997 ("the 1997 (No.2) Act"). Under the 1997 Act, all pistols (otherwise referred to as "handguns") over .22 calibre were banned with effect from 1 October 1997. The 1997 (No.2) Act came into effect from 1 March 1998. A number of types of handgun were exempted from the 1997 (No.2) Act including muzzle-loading guns, shot pistols, slaughtering instruments, firearms used for the humane killing of animals, trophies of war etc.

5.7 The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 raised the age for owning an air weapon from 14 to 17 years; created a new offence of possessing an air weapon or imitation weapon in a public place without reasonable excuse; banned future import and sale of air weapons using self-contained air cartridge systems and licensed those already held. The Criminal Justice Act 2003 also imposed minimum sentences for the illegal possession of a prohibited firearm. In 2005 there was a 10 week air weapon hand in from 23 March to 3 June. This resulted in 913 air weapons being handed in during those 10 weeks.

### ***Statistical issues***

5.8 Details of the age and sex of the main victim are collected only for offences in which injury is caused. The main victim is the person most seriously injured. Cases involving injury to animals are recorded under the category 'damage to property' rather than 'injury' - which is reserved solely for the purposes of recording injuries to persons.

5.9 Details of the age and sex of the main accused are collected for offences cleared up. In offences involving injury or damage the main accused is the person who inflicts the most serious injury or damage. In other instances, it is taken to be the oldest person. In previous bulletins, there had been an element of overstatement of crimes cleared up, due to including some offences where no accused was identified in the years from 2001 to 2003. This affected figures in Tables 11, 12 and 12A.

5.10 Late returns (for example where a crime or offence is subsequently cleared up) may result in revisions in the next issue of this bulletin.

5.11 The figures shown in Table 14 for stolen firearms are not included elsewhere. The information reflects solely those incidents where firearms were stolen, and not whether they were used to perpetrate a crime or offence.

5.12 Trends in the figures for overall recorded crime have been affected by the introduction of the Scottish Crime Recording Standard (SCRS) which, as anticipated, increased the numbers of minor crimes recorded by the police from 2004-05, such as crimes of vandalism and minor assault. This increase does not seem to be reflected in the number of recorded offences involving firearms. This may be because offences involving firearms were being recorded on a consistent basis prior to the introduction of the SCRS.

5.13 There have been various changes in the way the type of firearm used has been recorded over the years. In Strathclyde, prior to 2001, and Lothian and Borders, prior to 2002, if a weapon was not seen or seen but not established, an assumption was made about what type of weapon this was. It was usually assumed that it was an air weapon and was recorded as such in the statistical return. However, there was a change of this recording practice such that if a weapon was not seen or seen but not established, it was recorded as such and no assumption is made about what the weapon was. This had the effect of increasing the number of incidents involving an unidentified firearm and reducing those involving an air weapon.

5.14 Subsequently, Lothian and Borders police began recording details of incidents using crime reports from members of the public. The complainants may identify the firearm involved as an air weapon, based on the type of damage caused, even if they have not seen the firearm.. For 2005-06 returns, all police forces agreed to identify weapons where possible, resulting in an increase in

the alleged use of air weapons (and other identified weapons) and a decrease in the alleged use of unidentified firearms.

5.15 Following discussion with police forces, it was agreed that from 2006-07 all forces would include incidents involving air weapons where no injury or damage was caused. These incidents were excluded in previous years. This change would be expected to increase both the total number of offences of reckless conduct with a firearm and the total number of offences involving air weapons.

5.16 From 2005-06, and particularly in 2006-07, the figures are expected to provide a fuller coverage of incidents from all forces. This follows clarification with the forces regarding what should be included in the returns. This clarification is not anticipated to impact on the major crimes and offences, but has probably resulted in an increase in the more minor categories.

5.17 The increase in recorded crimes involving a firearm in 2006-07 is partly due to this clarification of the counting rules which has led to the inclusion of some more minor crimes which had sometimes previously been excluded. The scope of what constitutes a firearm for the purposes of the return was also clarified. Some police forces had previously not included incidents involving weapons such as taser guns and Mac and pepper sprays, which are covered under Section 5 of the Firearms Act 1968, as amended. This clarification appears to have particularly affected figures for minor assault and other crimes and offences.

### **Crimes and offences cleared up**

5.18 The definition of 'cleared up' was revised with effect from 1 April 1996. Previously, a crime or offence was regarded as being cleared up if one or more offenders was apprehended, cited, warned or traced for it. This was revised as follows:

*A crime or offence is regarded as cleared up where there exists a sufficiency of evidence under Scots law, to justify consideration of criminal proceedings notwithstanding that a report is not submitted to the procurator fiscal because either*

*(i) by standing agreement with the procurator fiscal, the police warn the accused due to the minor nature of the offence, or*

*(ii) reporting is inappropriate due to the non-age of the accused, death of the accused or other similar circumstances.*

For some types of crimes and offences the case is cleared up immediately because the offender is caught in the act e.g. motoring offences. In Scots law, the confession of an accused person to a crime would not in general be sufficient to allow a prosecution to be taken, as corroborative evidence is required. Thus, a case cannot be regarded as 'cleared up' on the basis of a confession alone.

### **Classification**

5.19 The classification of crimes and offences used by the Scottish Government for criminal statistics contains about 360 codes. These are grouped in this bulletin as follows: -

<b>Category</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Homicide	- Comprises murder and culpable homicide.
Attempted Murder	
Serious assault	
Robbery	- Includes assault with intent to rob.

Vandalism	- Includes malicious mischief.
Reckless conduct with firearms	
Firearms Act 1968 offences	- Includes possessing a firearm with intent to endanger life, commit crime or resist arrest.
Minor assault	
Other crimes and offences	- Includes carrying an offensive weapon, Prevention of Crimes Act 1871, poaching and protection of wildlife legislation.

### **Other**

5.20 The following symbols are used throughout the tables in this bulletin.

- = Nil

\* = less than 0.5

n/a = data not available or calculation not applicable

5.21 Clearly, only a limited selection of tables can be included in any statistical bulletin. Further analyses of recorded crimes and offences involving firearms statistics can be supplied on request once the bulletin is published. In certain cases a fee is charged. Figures for past years are available in previous statistical bulletins, which are available on the Scottish Government website.

## SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT STATISTICIAN GROUP

### OUR AIM

To provide relevant and reliable information, analysis and advice that meet the needs of government, business and the people of Scotland.

### OBJECTIVES

1. To produce statistics and analysis relevant to user needs by
  - Developing our understanding of customer requirements to ensure statistics are kept relevant and analysis is well targeted;
  - Developing the range of statistics and analysis we produce;
  - Where practicable improving timeliness;
  - Providing more statistics disaggregated by age, gender and ethnicity;
  - Developing more data for small areas through the Neighbourhood Statistics project;
  - Contributing to production of comparable statistics across the UK and internationally.
2. To ensure effective use of our statistics by
  - Contributing more directly to policy processes inside and where possible outside government;
  - Improving access to and presentation of data and analysis;
  - Improving the advice provided on statistics.
3. To work effectively with users and providers by
  - Maintaining arrangements to consult and involve users and providers;
  - Involving users and providers in planning developments in outputs and processes;
  - Minimising the burden on data providers through dropping or streamlining collections as appropriate, to ensure the benefits of the information justify the costs of collection.
4. To develop the quality of statistics by
  - Assuring and improving quality as an integral part of data collection and analysis and through regular reviews in line with National Statistics quality strategy;
  - Developing statistical methods, systems and classifications;
  - Working with the rest of the Government Statistical Service to develop joint approaches/solutions where appropriate.
5. To assure the integrity of statistics by
  - Maintaining and promoting integrity through implementation of the National Statistics Code of Practice and related protocols;
  - Safeguarding the confidentiality of data subjects.
6. To ensure the efficient and effective delivery of statistics products and services by
  - Making best use of all sources including administrative sources;
  - Working with other analysts to maximise the contribution of our own and other analysts' work;
  - Ensuring value for money;
  - Making best use of Information and Communications Technology;
  - Ensuring effective communication within the Statistician Group.
7. To develop our workforce and competences
  - Ensuring recruitment of staff with the necessary skills and potential;
  - Ensuring development of expertise amongst existing staff;
  - Promoting and upholding the standards of the statistics profession.

### This is a National Statistics publication

"This is a National Statistics publication. It has been produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice Protocol - see [www.statistics.gov.uk/about\\_ns/cop/default.asp](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/cop/default.asp)

These statistics undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference."

Details of pre-release access will be provided in the Scottish Government Statistics Website under 'Forthcoming Releases'

## Correspondence and enquiries

Enquiries on Recorded Crimes and Offences involving Firearms, Scotland, 2006-07 should be addressed to:

David Cruickshank  
Justice Analytical Services  
Justice and Communities Directorate  
1 WR St Andrew's House  
EDINBURGH EH1 3DG  
Telephone: 0131 244 8322; Fax: : 0131 244 2109  
e-mail: JusticeStatistics@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

General enquiries on Scottish Government statistics can be addressed to:

Ryan Stewart  
Office of the Chief Statistician  
Scottish Government  
3 Floor West Rear, St Andrews House  
EDINBURGH EH1 3DG  
Telephone: (0131) 244 0442; Fax: (0131) 244 0335  
e-mail: statistics.enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Advice on specific areas of Scottish Government statistical work can be obtained from staff at the telephone numbers given below:

### Scottish Government Statistics contacts

Schools – qualifications	(0131) 244 0315
Schools – pupils and teachers	(0131) 244 1689
Further and Higher Education	(0141) 242 0273
The Economy	(0131) 244 2234
Labour market	(0141) 242 5446
Business	(0141) 242 5446
Income, Tax and Benefits	(0131) 244 2583
Local government finance	(0131) 244 7033
Environment	(0131) 244 0445
Planning	(0131) 244 0439
Equality	(0131) 244 0324
Housing	(0131) 244 7236
Transport	(0131) 244 7255
Health	(0131) 244 3432
Community Care	(0131) 244 3777
Social Justice	(0131) 244 0442
Scottish Government personnel	(0131) 244 3926
Agricultural census and labour force	(0131) 244 6150
Fisheries	(0131) 244 6441
Courts and law	(0131) 244 2227
Recorded crime	(0131) 244 2635
Prisons	(0131) 244 2147

### Other contacts for Scottish statistics

Forestry Commission	(0131) 314 6337
The Scottish Funding Councils for Higher and Further Education	(0131) 313 6575
General Register Office for Scotland - Vital statistics and publications - Population statistics, census statistics or digital boundary products	(0131) 314 4243 (0131) 314 4254

For **general enquiries about National Statistics** in the United Kingdom Government contact the National Statistics Public Enquiry Service on

#### 020 7533 5888

minicom: 01633 812399  
Email: info@statistics.gov.uk  
Fax: 01633 652747  
Letters: room DG/18, 1 Drummond Gate,  
LONDON SW1V 2QQ

You can also find National Statistics on the internet - go to **www.statistics.gov.uk**

If you would like to be consulted about new or existing statistical collections or receive notification of forthcoming statistical publications, please register your interest on the Scottish Government ScotStat website at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/scotstat>

Current contact points, e-mail addresses and the publications listed below as well as a range of other statistical publications can be found on the Scottish Government Web site at [www.scotland.gov.uk/stats](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/stats)

Further information on the General Register Office for Scotland is available on the website [www.gro-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk)

### Most recent Justice Statistical Publications relating to the Crime and Justice theme

Ref no.	Title	Last published	Price
CrJ/2007/5	Racist Incidents Recorded by the Police in Scotland, 2003/04 to 2005/06	March 2007	£2.00
CrJ/2007/6	Firearm Certificates Scotland, 2006	May 2007	£2.00
CrJ/2007/7	Prison Statistics Scotland, 2006/07	August 2007	£2.00
CrJ/2007/8	Recorded Crime in Scotland, 2006-07	September 2007	£2.00
Statistics Release	Criminal Appeals Statistics	September 2007	N/A
CrJ/2007/9	Reconvictions of Offenders Discharged from Custody or given Non-Custodial Sentences in 2003-04, Scotland	October 2007	£2.00

Additional copies of these publications may be purchased from **Scottish Government Publication Sales, Blackwell's Bookshop, 53 South Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1YS**, Telephone: 0131 622 8283 or 0131 622 8258, Fax: 0131 557 8149. Cheques should be made payable to 'Blackwell's Bookshop'.

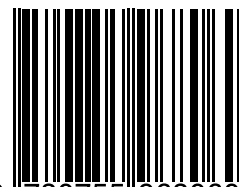
### Complaints and suggestions

If you are not satisfied with our service, please write to the Chief Statistician, Mr Rob Wishart, 3R02, St Andrews House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG, Telephone: (0131) 244 0302, e-mail [rob.wishart@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:rob.wishart@scotland.gsi.gov.uk). We also welcome any comments or suggestions that would help us to improve our standards of service.

ISSN 0264 1178 ISBN 978 0 7559 6806 0 Price £2.00

Crown Copyright: Brief extracts from the Crown Copyright material in this publication may be reproduced provided the source is fully acknowledged.

ISBN 978-0-7559-6806-0



9 780755 968060