



Associate Professor Janet Ransley,
Head, School of Criminology &
Criminal Justice

Mt Gravatt campus, Griffith University
176 Messines Ridge Road
Mt Gravatt, Queensland 4122
Australia

Telephone +61 (0)7 3735 5612
Facsimile +61 (0)7 3735 5608

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Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
Parliament House
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Sir/Madam

Inquiry on strategies to prevent and reduce criminal activity in Queensland

As members of Griffith University's School of Criminology and Criminal Justice we welcome the opportunity to make a submission to this inquiry. We are a group of scholars with longstanding interests in crime prevention, who are located in the largest criminology school in Australia, and one of the largest in the world. We have been researching in this area for up to 30 years, and our joint submission is based on that experience, and our detailed knowledge of what works in reducing and controlling crime in diverse circumstances.

Our submission is particularly focused on the following term of reference:

- **the effectiveness (including the cost effectiveness) of crime prevention strategies, including imprisonment, justice reinvestment, early intervention, alternative dispute resolution, and other models used in national and international jurisdictions;**

However we begin by reiterating three points previously made to the Committee, namely that:

- **The starting point for this inquiry should be an acknowledgement that rates of most crime types have been declining in Australia over the last 20 years, following a similar trend in other developed nations.** As shown in the tables in the attachment to this submission, this drop is seen across both violent and property crimes, and is a continuing trend in Queensland. In short, Queensland is a much safer place in 2014 than it was in 1994. This is borne out by similar trends in victimisation rates, acknowledging that there is still a great deal of crime that is not officially reported. These trends do not mean we should be complacent, and a great deal more can be done to accelerate the crime rate drop, but we should begin by noting that there is no crime crisis currently afflicting the State.
- **Criminal Justice policy should be informed by strong, independent evidence of the effectiveness of possible strategies, and their likely social and economic impacts.** Over the last 50 years the field of criminology has developed a growing body of evidence about what works in crime prevention, and at what costs. Much of this evidence has been produced in the United States and United Kingdom, but a growing amount of local research has tested that knowledge in local contexts. As criminologists we are often frustrated that so little of this knowledge appears in public debates about crime, but acknowledge that we need to play a greater role in translating research evidence for policy purposes. This inquiry is an excellent way of doing this.
- **It follows from two points above that effective policy depends on the existence of accurate data about offending and victimisation, and on careful research into the effectiveness of various crime prevention and reduction strategies.** Without data, we have no way of establishing the extent of the problem, or the effect on it of chosen strategies. Without research, we cannot understand why some things work and others are costly mistakes.

Based on those three factors, namely that most types of crime are declining, crime prevention should be based on evidence of what strategies work and at what cost, and that such evidence requires good data and rigorous research, the rest of our submission addresses the following points:

1. The role of prisons and justice reinvestment in reducing crime (lead author Dr John Rynne)
2. The role of situational crime prevention in reducing crime (Dr Michael Townsley)
3. The need to improve the quality of adult complainant testimony in cases of sexual and violent offending, so as to achieve more just outcomes (Dr Nina Westera & Professor Mark Kebbell)
4. The need to re-establish a multi-agency Domestic Violence Death Review Team in Queensland (Associate Professor Lisa Broidy)
5. A proposal for the establishment of a Queensland Evidence-Based Crime Prevention, Intervention and Support Centre, to provide ongoing evidence and implementation advice to achieve lasting improvements in crime reduction (Professor Ross Homel); and
6. An overview of the proposed Secure Data Facility to be established at Griffith University to provide ongoing secure storage, access and analysis of the data necessary to support research on what works in crime prevention (Professor Anna Stewart).

In brief we recommend a balance of short, medium and long term strategies to prevent and reduce crime, as follows:

- That there be a sustained re-emphasis on innovative community based sanctions (pre and post prison) and that no prisoner should be released without a period of community supervision.
- That there be a move to justice reinvestment as a more effective and efficient option for crime reduction than over-incarceration.
- That current advances in performance management and measurement be improved to develop a system that accurately explains the relationship between prisons/community corrections and rehabilitation, recidivism and criminal outcomes.
- That Situational Crime Prevention techniques be used to analyse and respond to specific crime problems, such as that of alcohol-related violence. Typically such responses require a combination of regulatory changes, focused pro-active policing, and partnerships between police and other agencies.
- That in cases of sexual and violent assault against adults, police video record complainant evidence, that such evidence be admissible in courts, and that delays between charging and trial be reduced.
- That Queensland's Domestic Violence Death Review Team be re-established, as an important tool for identifying systemic gaps in criminal, civil and social responses to domestic violence.
- That a *Queensland Evidence-Based Crime Prevention, Intervention and Support Centre* be established to translate and disseminate research on what works in crime reduction and prevention, and to support agencies to adopt these evidence-based approaches in practice.
- That cross-agency support be given to the proposed secure stand-alone data facility at Griffith University to house sensitive government administrative data for the purpose of research on issues such as what works in crime reduction and prevention.

We thank the Committee for its endeavours, and welcome any opportunity to expand on any of these issues.

Yours Sincerely

Janet Ransley

Mark Kebbell

Ross Homel

John Rynne

Michael Townsley

Anna Stewart

Nina Westera

Prison and Justice Reinvestment

Dr John Rynne

High functioning prisons are mandatory for the effective and safe operation of any society. A high functioning prison is one that is effective and efficient in the delivery of court ordered punishments that support the primary criminal justice system outcomes of incapacitation, deterrence, retribution and rehabilitation. Each of these correctional goals should be structured in organisational deliverables through inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes. Critical or central to each corrections deliverable is safety to the community, corrections staff and prisoners/offenders. Efficient crime prevention via prison then rests on innovation and effectiveness in how well these corrections outcomes are delivered.

Background

For the 10 years 2004 to 2014, the Queensland prison population increased by 31.8% to 7,222 (2004: 177 per 100,000; 2014: 185.8 per 100,000) exceeding population growth by 10.2% (ABS, 2013). Of even greater concern is the extraordinary growth in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander imprisonment for the same period with Indigenous imprisonment increasing by 55.24% compared with 10.9% for non-Indigenous (ABS, 2013). Recidivism remains relatively constant across Australia with 39.3% of released prisoners returning within two years (Productivity Commission, 2013/2014). At a daily unit cost of \$315.52, and rising, the current rates of imprisonment are highly inefficient and, as similarly evident in the USA, a folly and unsustainable in protecting society through long-term crime reduction (Productivity Commission Report on Government Services, 2014; Padfield & Maruna, 2006).

Prison, as a means of crime prevention has received considerable research attention over many years. While occasional findings suggest otherwise, overwhelmingly the research indicates that, of itself, prison is inefficient and ineffective in long-term crime reduction. A prison sentence and mandating longer sentences have little specific deterrence impacts and, rather than rehabilitate, prison sentences are frequently criminogenic (Bales & Piquero, 2012; Durlauf & Nagin, 2011). The multivariate complexity that highlights the non-linear relationship between crime and prison is evident in recently published Pew Charitable Trust (2014) comparisons between crime rates and imprisonment rates of the 50 states of the USA. Of “the 10 states with the largest decreases in imprisonment rates had a 12 percent average reduction in their crime rates, and, in the 10 states with the largest imprisonment rate increases, crime rates fell an average of 10 percent” (Pew Charitable Trust, 2014).

The conclusions from this and the plethora of similar studies is that to understand the role of prison in crime reduction requires knowledge of factors other than custodial operations. The use of prison as a successful crime prevention agent cannot be considered in isolation or as a unitary solution.

Justice Reinvestment

Initially developed in response to better deal with the United States corrections binge, and now gaining traction in the United Kingdom and Australia, justice reinvestment seeks to target the causes of crime through redirecting savings achieved by reengineering public policy away from ‘fundamentalist’ policy of reliance on mass incarceration to improve public safety (Hemel, 2014). Taxman, Pattavina, and Caudy (2014) recently summarised the US Department of Justice and their partner lead justice reinvestment agencies (i.e., the Pew Foundation, Council of State Governments, and Vera Institute of Justice) definition of justice reinvestment as follows:

Justice reinvestment is a data driven approach to improve public safety, reduce corrections and related criminal justice spending, and reinvest savings into strategies that can decrease crime and strengthen neighbourhoods. The purpose of justice reinvestment is to manage and allocate criminal justice populations more cost effectively, generating savings that can be reinvested in evidence-based strategy to increase public safety or holding offenders accountable. Statesmanlike calories engaging in justice reinvestment collect and analyse data on drawings are criminal justice populations and costs, identify and implement changes to increase efficiencies, and measure but Cisco and Public Safety impacts of those changes (p. 51).

The operational implementation of justice reinvestment is a four stage process as follows (Albertson, Fox, & Wong, 2013):

- Justice mapping: analysis of the prison population and of relevant public spending in the communities in which people return from prison;
- Provision of options to policy-makers for the generation of savings and increases in public

- safety;
- Implementation of options, quantification of savings and reinvestment in targeted high-risk communities; and
- Measurement of impacts, evaluation and assurance of effective implementation.

From a prison perspective, a fully functional justice reinvestment approach is both front-end active through, for example, community-based crime prevention, intervention and diversion programs, and rear-end or pre/post release (i.e., rear-end) via community supervision, job placement and education (Wong, Fox, & Albertson, 2014).

Given the evidence-based success on recidivism and growing popularity of many justice reinvestment programmes in United States and United Kingdom, there is little doubt that, in time, Australia will adopt a similar approach. International lessons of over-incarceration inefficiencies with coalescing and ever-tightening budget pressures highlight the existing approach are unsustainable.

The Way Forward.

The future of prison in modern western democracies is its integration of less incarceration and more community supervision through whole-of-government services partnering with non-government organisations with services delivered on a contestability/performance basis. Successful evidence-based performance will be determined and assessed on genuine outcomes that deliver community/behavioural change; not bureaucratic outputs disguised as outcomes initiated to satisfy simplistic organisational or auditing goals.

Whole-of-government data hub

If Queensland is to deliver efficient custodial outcomes that prioritise crime prevention then it is important that current advances in performance management and measurement be improved to develop a system that accurately explains the relationship between prisons/community corrections and rehabilitation, recidivism and criminal outcomes. This internal performance data should then be matched with all other relevant welfare agencies through a single identifier.

Despite repeated, but all too brief flirtations that emphasise community based corrections, the research is unequivocal that recidivism is reduced with community-based sanctions. While prison remains the appropriate method of ensuring public safety for incarcerating violent and 'career' criminals, a sustained reemphasis of innovative community based sanctions (pre and post prison) are required. Further, no prisoner should be released without a period of community supervision.

The early successes of United States and United Kingdom models of justice reinvestment indicate there are more effective and efficient options for crime reduction than over-incarceration. In particular, performance based payments to non-government organisations to provide pre and post-release services will build communities and improve recidivism outcomes. While not substituting the role of probation and parole officers, prison expenditure will be replaced by services and skills training to build and strengthen communities.

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Effectiveness of Situational Crime Prevention

Dr Michael Townsley

Crimes always have an opportunistic component, from the vulnerability of targets (low/lax security) to offender planning (acquiring specialised skills or information). The volume and quality of criminal opportunities directly correlates to the level of crime in society. If there are lots of good opportunities to commit crime, there is likely to be a great deal of crime.

Situational approaches aim to alter criminal decision-making such that opportunities to commit crime seem less attractive. The perceived attractiveness of criminal opportunities is best altered in the immediate context in which those opportunities are presented, not by changing or emphasising distal factors. Offenders worry about getting caught but are largely ignorant of the likely sanction if apprehended. Situational Crime Prevention is focused on the **where**, **when** and **how** of crime, and less on the **why** of crime.

There are five methods for disrupting offender decision-making using Situational Crime Prevention (each of which has their own five techniques):

1. **Increase the effort** -- Make offenders take their time, slow down, be better prepared and invest more resources etc. in carrying out crimes.
2. **Increase the risk** -- Raise the threshold of perceived risk of apprehension.
3. **Reduce the rewards** -- Reducing the anticipated yield makes any opportunity less attractive, all things being equal.
4. **Remove provocations** -- Provocations are aspects of the immediate setting that facilitate increased criminal motivation.
5. **Remove excuses** -- Acts of minor disorder, defiance and incivilities can be justified by claiming ignorance ("I did not know I could not park there").

As with any school of thought, a number of criticisms of situational approaches exist. Two dominant ones are listed here, although a more complete list can be found in Clarke (2008):

1. **The displacement argument**: If easy opportunities are removed, offenders will simply locate similar opportunities nearby. Underpinning this reasoning is the assumption that criminality is somewhat inevitable, that offenders are highly motivated and will seek out criminal opportunities relentlessly if initially blocked. It turns out that offenders are only weakly motivated and can be easily deflected or demotivated. A number of comprehensive reviews show that absolute displacement (where the crimes prevented were replaced by increases in crime elsewhere) has never been observed in evaluated studies. In fact, diffusion of benefits, whereby a reduction is observed for targets not directly receiving the intervention, is more commonly observed.
2. **The root causes argument**: Situational approaches do nothing to alleviate the root causes of crime: poverty, illiteracy, drug use, poor parenting, and poor educational attainment. This claim misses the point. Situational approaches focus on crimes, not criminals. The remit of situational interventions is on proximate causes of crime, not distal ones that are labelled as root causes. These root causes are noticeably absent among white-collar criminals.

At the time of writing, there are over 200 published case studies of Situational Crime Prevention. Overall efficacy is difficult to establish, mainly due to the focused nature of Situational Crime Prevention and the important role that local context plays in crime problems, but two recent studies provide clues. Guerette & Bowers (2009) provide the most recent and comprehensive assessment of SCP. They conclude that displacement was the

exception rather than the norm, prevalent in only one-quarter of studies and diffusion of benefits was observed in slightly more studies. The recent work of Farrell et al (2011) demonstrated how changes in the quantity and quality of car security was a key driver of the crime drop witnessed in developed countries since the 1990s. Key to their argument is the time of the roll out of immobilisers and central locking in different jurisdictions match closely the observed crime reductions.

Further research evidence

A detailed discussion of the techniques, with examples, of Situational Crime Prevention can be found in:

Clarke, R., editor (1997). **Situational Crime Prevention: Successful Case Studies**. Criminal Justice Press, Monsey, NY, 2nd edition.

Clarke, R. V. (1983). Situational Crime Prevention: Its Theoretical Basis and Practical Scope. In **Crime and Justice: A Review of Research**, volume 4, pages 225–256. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Clarke, R. V. G. (2008). Situational Crime Prevention. In Wortley, R. and Mazerolle, L., editors, **Environmental Criminology and Crime Analysis**, pages 178–194. Willan Publishing, Cullompton.

Demonstrating of how increased security can reduce crime is provided in: Farrell, G., Tilley, N., Tseloni, A., and Mailley, J. (2011). The Crime Drop and the Security Hypothesis. **Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency**, 48(2):147–175.

The most recent meta-study of Situational Crime Prevention: Guerette, R. T. and Bowers, K. J. (2009). Assessing the Extent of Crime Displacement and Diffusion of Benefits: A Review of Situational Crime Prevention Evaluations. **Criminology**, 47(4):1331–1368.

For an explanation of Situational Crime Prevention relating to juvenile justice, see Townsley, M. (2011). "Situational Approaches to Juvenile Justice". In Stewart, A., Allard, T., and Dennison, S., editors, **Evidence Based Policy and Practice in Youth Justice**, chapter 7, pages 100–115. Federation Press, Annadale.

Recommendations for action in Queensland:

It is difficult to be prescriptive, so three simple actions are outlined for a problem of widespread public concern: alcohol-related violence. Considering that violence in public spaces, significant impacts could be realised in the following way:

1. Better regulatory oversight. Currently OLGR is does not provide the level of regulation of licenced venues that the public expect. They managed the recent DrinkSafe initiative (amounting to some \$8 million of public money) in name only and currently have no analytic capability.
2. Restricting venue opening hours. This is simple opportunity reduction -- reducing the capacity to purchase alcohol would inevitably lead to lower levels of consumption/intoxication.
3. Increasing the price of alcohol. Again, this is a simple opportunity reduction. People respond to prices.

Improving the quality of adult complainant testimony in cases of sexual and violent offending

Dr Nina Westera and Professor Mark Kebbell

Achieving just outcomes in cases of sexual and violent offending has long been acknowledged around the world as a major criminal justice challenge by justice sector professionals, and legislators (e.g. Lees, 2001; Phillips & Park, 2006; Stern, 2009). A major difficulty in these cases is that the only evidence is often one persons' word against another (Edwards, 2003; Lees, 2001). Obtaining the best evidence from a complainant in these cases is therefore pivotal to achieving just outcomes. The Queensland criminal justice system can dramatically improve the quality of evidence from adult complainants in these cases by applying current day understandings in psychology, and access to video technology, to how courtroom testimony is given.

Over forty years of research suggests memory is not like a video recording, but is a reconstructive process that is prone to error (Ryan, Hoscheidt, & Nadel, 2008; Suddendorf & Corballis, 2008; Tulving, 1972). These errors mean traditional live evidence processes for adult complainants are flawed in four main ways:

1. The long time delay between the crime and giving evidence in court is likely to result in an adult forgetting information, reducing the completeness of his or her account (Ebbinghaus, 1913; Read & Connolly, 2007; Rubin & Wenzel, 1996).
2. During this delay the information from external and internal sources may contaminate an adult's memory reducing the reliability of testimony (French, Garry, & Kazuo, 2008; Loftus & Palmer, 1974; Tuckey & Brewer, 2003).
3. How an adult is questioned by criminal justice professionals influences the reliability and quantity of testimony recalled (Powell, Fisher & Wright, 2005). Being asked leading questions by police when interviewed may result in the complainant remembering incorrect information at trial (e.g. Loftus & Palmer, 1974). Short answer questions used by the prosecutor to elicit testimony at trial is likely to restrict the amount of detail recalled (Kebbell, Deprez & Wagstaff, 2002; Westera, Kebbell, & Milne, 2013; Zajac & Cannan, 2009).
4. The stressful environment of the courtroom may further reduce the ability of an adult to recall the crime (Deffenbacher, Bornstein, Penrod & McGorty, 2004; Yerkes & Dodson, 1908).

In the past many of the above problems were unavoidable. However, modern recording technology means we are in a position to minimise many of these problems by adopting the following recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Police video record adult complainant interviews

Due to the fallibility of the interviewer's memory, the current process of a police officer recording an adult's account on a written statement results in a 25-33% loss of forensically relevant information (Köhnken, Thurer, & Zoberbier, 1994; Lamb, Orbach, Sternberg, Hershkowitz, & Horowitz, 2000). This process is also unreliable and far from the verbatim record of a complainant's account as expected by legal professionals (Heaton-Armstrong & Wolchover, 1992; Rock, 2001). Thus replacing the statement process with police video recording the interviews of all adult complainants of sexual or violent offending will improve the quality of information captured by police, which should improve the quality of decision-making in the criminal justice process. Video recording these interviews will also improve the transparency of this process and allow key decision-makers to examine if police used reliable methods to elicit the information.

Queensland already video records the interviews of suspect and child witnesses, the same care should be taken with adult witness accounts. England and Wales, New Zealand and Norway currently video record all adult complainants of sexual assault (Criminal Justice System, 2007; New Zealand Police 2008). Video recording all adult complainant interviews is now feasible with the ability for police to use smart devices that have recording capability. It would save time of police responders and the complainant by removing the need to spend considerable time writing up the statement (Westera, Kebbell & Milne, 2011).

Recommendation 2: Allow video-recorded evidence from adults witnesses in court

The courts having the ability to use the video interview police conduct of the complainant in the place of his or her live evidence-in-chief will address all of the four memory errors detailed above. This fresher account is likely to be more complete and reliable; when police use narrative methods of interviewing, rather than the short answer questions used by prosecutors, the account is likely to be even more complete; and the more relaxed environment of the interview is likely to promote higher

quality information from the complainant than in the courtroom. The video interviews of adult complainants of sexual assault have been found to more than twice the amount of detail about the legal elements to the offending when compared to live evidence-in-chief providing a better basis for fact-finders to make their decisions (Westera et al. 2013).

Many states already have legal reforms that extend the use of video as the basis for the complainant's evidence (followed by supplementary questions from the prosecutor and cross-examination in the usual way) for adult complainants of sexual assault (e.g. England and Wales, New Zealand, Norway and Australia's Northern Territory; Australian Law Reform Commission, 2010; Criminal Justice System, 2007; Mahoney et al., 2007). This process would also benefit complainants because research suggests they want the option of using video-evidence and may encourage early guilty pleas sparing the complainant the need to give evidence in court (Hamlyn, Phelps, Turtle, & Sattar, 2004; Kebbell, O'Kelly, & Gilchrist, 2007).

Recommendation 3: Reduce delays between charging and trial

Memory decays over time and so the completeness and accuracy of an account decreases over time. This is the case for both complainants and defendants. Currently the time between charging a defendant and trial is often extensive. This delay between the crime and giving evidence in court is likely to result in an adult forgetting information and being able to answer questions (Read & Connolly, 2007). Reducing time to trial is worthwhile for this reason alone but there are four additional reasons why reducing time to trial is important. First, waiting to give evidence or for the result of a trial is extremely stressful for complainants and conducting the trial in a reasonable time can reduce this stress (Kebbell et al., 2007). Second, risk to the community is increased because violent offenders and sex offenders remain in the community for long periods without access to treatment or support. Third, a defendant who is later acquitted may in hindsight have been unfairly remanded in custody for this period of time. Forth, police workloads are increased because they must continue to liaise with complainants before they attend trial and ensure defendants who are on bail adhere to their bail conditions.

Addressing domestic violence: the need to re-establish a multi-agency Domestic Violence Death Review Team in Queensland
Associate Professor Lisa Broidy

Since the 1990's communities throughout the United States have relied on Death Review Teams to help craft victim sensitive responses to domestic violence (Albright et al., 2013; Wilson and Websdale, 2006). The experiences and impacts of these teams indicate that Domestic Violence Death Review Teams can be instrumental for identifying systemic gaps in criminal, civil and social responses to domestic violence. These teams are generally composed of broad range of system actors and community stakeholders, each of whom have both discrete and overlapping knowledge of the range of systemic responses to domestic violence (Websdale, 2012). As a group, these teams conduct in-depth reviews of intimate partner homicides to identify key risk factors that characterize these events, the chronology of system contacts that preceded the event and potential points of intervention that may have redirected the fatal outcome. Teams then examine the cases as a group to identify patterns across cases that speak to gaps in both service delivery and policy with the aim of identifying strategies for systemic and legislative reform that would improve coordinated multiagency responses to domestic violence (Storer et al. 2013). Such strategies, if implemented, should reduce not just domestic violence homicide, but the incidence and toll of domestic violence in communities more generally (Albright et al. 2013).

Since 2009, domestic violence death review teams have been established in five states across Australia, including Queensland (Bugeja et al. 2013). However, the Queensland team has since been disbanded and domestic violence death review is now the responsibility of a single staff member who works with the coroner to help investigate domestic violence deaths. Though this position does liaison with experts, there is no formal fatality review team that meets regularly and is charged with thinking broadly about systemic and policy changes that could improve outcomes for domestic violence victims. Not only does this put a lot of responsibility on one individual, it limits the range of knowledge and ideas brought to bear on the issue, thereby limiting creative and effective policy development. As Storer et al. remark: "One of the strengths of DVFR is the fact that diverse community partners, from law enforcement to prosecutor to domestic violence advocates have the opportunity to come together to identify gaps in their community's coordinated response to domestic violence" (2013: 432).

Albright, D., Banks, L., Broidy, L., Crandall, C. and Campos, G. (2013). Ethical conundrums in fatality review planning, data collection, and reporting: viewing the work of review teams through the lens of evaluation. *Homicide Studies*, 17:436-456.

Bugeja, L., Butler, A., Buxton, E., Ehrat, H., Hayes, M., McIntyre, S., and Walsh, C. (2013). The implementation of domestic violence death review in Australia. *Homicide Studies*, 17: 353-374.

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Websdale, N. (2012). Community, civic engagement, and democracy: The case of domestic violence fatality review. *National Civic Review*, 101: 27-33.

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Proposal for the Establishment of a Queensland Evidence-Based Crime Prevention, Intervention and Support Centre

Ross Homel, July 25, 2014

The Proposal in Brief

What is needed in Queensland is an *independent 'intermediary organisation'* that:

1. *translates* the rapidly growing body of scientific research on 'what works' in crime prevention and offender rehabilitation into a form that is easily useable by government and non-government agencies; and
2. *supports* these agencies to implement evidence-based innovations in diverse communities across the state through practical, tested technical transfer of skills and resources.

Such a Centre is an *intermediary organisation* because it operates in the gap between researchers on the one hand and government agencies and non-government organisations on the other. It must be *independent* of both government and service providers so that the work it does is based on the best evidence, not compromised by political compromises or entrenched agency practices.

A model for the proposed centre is the Evidence-based Prevention, Intervention and Support (EPIS) Center in Pennsylvania, part of the Prevention Research Center within Pennsylvania State University. This centre is funded by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, reflecting the state's commitment (under administrations of all political persuasions) to the dissemination and rigorous implementation of policies and programs that are supported by the best available evidence of effectiveness.

The Current Situation in Queensland

State governments will always be beset by a host of 'wicked problems' in the community safety arena. Prime examples of crime and safety problems that are of perennial community concern include:

1. the relentless growth in substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect;
2. youth crime;
3. domestic violence;
4. alcohol-related violence; and
5. corrupt practices by people in authority, especially police, politicians and public servants

Typically governments respond to these and other crime and safety problems by enacting 'tough' new laws, and sometimes by creating new institutions (such as the Criminal Justice Commission post-Fitzgerald). These types of measures can be effective, but seldom is there a rigorous and continuing evaluation of their effectiveness. In other words, claims are usually made by politicians or police that a new law has reduced crime, but an evaluation that would withstand even basic scientific scrutiny is rare.

What is missing in the formulation of crime policies is routine recourse to scientific evidence.

This is because tough laws or increased rates of imprisonment are primarily a matter of *political theatre* rather than a genuine attempt to make the community safer. Thus the controversial 'bikie laws' in Queensland should be viewed primarily as a morality play for the entertainment of an audience. They are certainly not based on a careful and dispassionate analysis of international evidence on what works best to control the illegalities and incivilities of motor cycle gangs.

Similarly, the weight of evidence is that *prisons exert a criminogenic effect* and produce higher rates of recidivism than alternative punishments in the community. While innovations in (say) offender treatment or community-based prevention are required to demonstrate their effectiveness and cost-effectiveness before they will be considered, policies that increase imprisonment rates are implemented without any such requirement – they are justified simply by the claim that the community demands 'strong action'.

One of the reasons why crime policies have been impervious for so long to evidence of what works is that most of the scientific studies have not produced findings in a form that is 'system-ready.' On the other hand, most organisations are not 'evidence-ready.' An EPIS Centre can help bridge this divide, which in other fields such as medicine and population health would not be tolerated for a moment.

The Pennsylvania EPIS Center (<http://www.episcenter.psu.edu/>)

The EPISCenter supports the dissemination, quality implementation, sustainability, and impact assessment of a menu of proven-effective prevention and intervention programs, and conducts original translational research to advance the science and practice of evidence-based prevention.

A similar centre is proposed for Queensland, drawing on experience in Pennsylvania as well as on the work of intermediary organisations of a similar type operating in Australia. These include the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, which although part of the public service has always operated as an independent voice on crime data and policy; and the Parenting Research Centre in Melbourne, which perhaps best approximates the kind of structures and practices that might work best in Queensland.

Papers published by Brian Bumbarger and his colleagues at Penn State demonstrate the effectiveness of their model of moving science to service. For example, recent evaluations of the effectiveness of the community coalitions promoting evidence-based practices that now operate in 80% of the state show a 12% reduction in youth crime and a similar decline in the influence of deviant peers, as well as a 33% improvement in school achievement scores and a 20% improvement in levels of engagement with school. These results have been shown to have been achieved in a cost effective manner.

Thus the EPIS Centre makes the community safer, reduces youth crime and improves school engagement and achievement, and saves the state of Pennsylvania money millions of dollars each year. How can Queensland not afford to move in this direction? Even half the level of success achieved in Pennsylvania would be better than the colourful but evidence-free forms of street theatre that characterise current Queensland crime policy.

Secure Data Facility (Griffith University) Professor Anna Stewart

Aim

To build a secure stand-alone data facility at Griffith University to house sensitive government administrative data for the purpose of research. Phase one will involve only the importation of crime data from Queensland Police Service into the Secure Data Facility (SDF). Working with QPS will allow us to develop the necessary protocols to store, manage and access these data. It is envisaged that future phases will include data from other government departments (and jurisdictions) such as Queensland Corrective Services and the Department of Justice and Attorney General. This will provide a seamless and integrated system of data analysis for academic and Government research.

Background

Increasingly government departments, including QPS, are investing in the collection and storage of large quantities of electronic data. These data are essential for the day-to-day operations of the agency. These data are also extremely valuable for research, policy analysis and strategic decision-making. However, the specialist expertise and capacity necessary to fully exploit these data are often not available in organisations whose primary focus is service delivery. Partnerships between government departments and universities provide a way to capitalise on both the wealth of knowledge held within administrative data and broad ranging expertise offered by research institutions. Such partnerships will generate high impact research outcomes that benefit society.

Historically, access to data has been a major challenge to research partnerships between Government and university. Government has been cautious to release data that it is legislatively bound to protect thereby ensuring individuals' rights to privacy and confidentiality. It is now understood that data can safely and securely be provided to advance knowledge whilst protecting the rights of citizens.

The SDF provides the essential infrastructure to enable research and policy oriented scholars from multiple disciplines to access and analyse these valuable data. Housing sensitive administrative data in a secure environment with advanced analytic and computational technology will fundamentally transform crime and criminal justice research and practice in Australia.

This will be the first such facility in Queensland (and Australia). This will place Queensland as a front-runner in government university partnerships. At present two other such facilities exist worldwide – the first at the Institute for Canadian Urban Research Studies, Simon Fraser University, Canada (est. 2005), and the second at the Department of Crime Science and Security, University College London, UK (est. 2011). The SDF will enable Griffith University and Australia to collaborate with these prestigious international research facilities.

Privacy

Governments have a responsibility to secure and manage their data. Equally, there is also a responsibility to ensure that these data are used for improving services and advancing knowledge. Currently researchers access data through lengthy and costly project-based approval processes. These processes involves the relevant department approving an application for a research project (though their respective Research Committees), and then department personnel extracting the appropriate data to provide to researchers. As the information systems are designed to collect data for operational purposes these data are not always easily extracted for research purposes. This exacerbates the complexity and costs associated with data extraction by departments.

The development of the SDF will enable approval, extraction, and analysis processes to be streamlined while data is managed in line with legislative privacy protections. Rather than agencies approving specific research projects, researchers will be security cleared and approved to work with data that has already been stripped of names and transferred to the Griffith University based facility.

The facility meets appropriate electronic and physical security protocols in compliance with the Queensland Information Security (IS18) standards and relevant Federal legislation. These compliance requirements exist across the physical, network, systems and application layers of the Griffith technology architecture. For example, physical access will be electronically monitored and limited to

approved researchers. Electronic security will include the facility being separated from the network and no wireless or telephone access into the facility.

Additionally the operation of the SDF and the conduct of the researchers will be in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct of Human Research (NHMRC, 2007) and Griffith University's Human Research Ethics Committee.

Griffith University

Griffith University has a strong tradition of collaboration with Queensland Government. This proposal builds on established and productive relationships between the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice and the Queensland Police Service (QPS). Griffith University values these partnerships and is prepared to provide the necessary funds build the Secure Data Facility.

While Griffith University will build the infrastructure, the data stored within this infrastructure remains the property of the providing agency. Consequently Griffith University will provide access (on a cost recovery basis) to all Queensland researchers who meet the data custodian's security requirements for access their data. The prototype protocols for data access arrangements will be developed in conjunction with the QPS.

Costs and Benefits to QPS and Queensland Government

The establishment of the SDF will strengthen and extend the strong relationships between QPS, Queensland Government and Griffith University and other renowned criminal justice scholars in Queensland, Australia and internationally. Better access to data will allow the efficient development and management of research projects. The SDF will provide the necessary infrastructure and access to administrative data required to address both strategic and policy related research questions vital for the efficient and effective use of Queensland government resources.

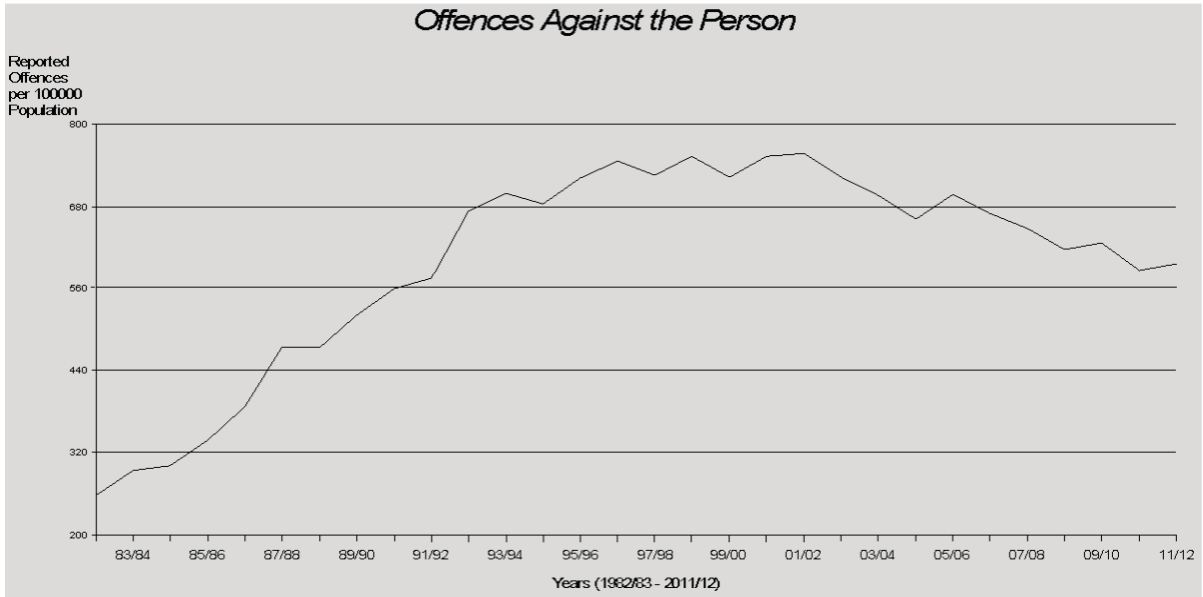
The SDF will provide the necessary infrastructure for researchers at Griffith University to capitalise on existing relations with the two international facilities in Canada and the UK. This will ensure that the work carried out at the SDF using Queensland government data is informed by the best international research placing Queensland research as the best crime research in Australia.

Griffith University sees the considerable value in government university partnerships and will provide the necessary funds build and run the Secure Data Facility. However, in the initial stages of establishing the facility, costs will be incurred by QPS developing the protocols and providing the data. These costs will be in-kind support from senior executive participating in development and management process and information technology officers setting up the appropriate data delivery systems. It is anticipated that the data will be provided in six monthly snapshots. Once the processes are in place the resources required to extract and export the data to the SDF should be modest. In addition these costs will be off set by a reduction in project-based applications to QPS and the individual extracts currently required.

A working group of GU, QPS and Public Safety Business Agency personnel will be established to deliver the project. Ongoing support through the QPS Research Committee and PSBA management will primarily be through an advisory mechanism such as ethics approval and strategic planning for future research programs.

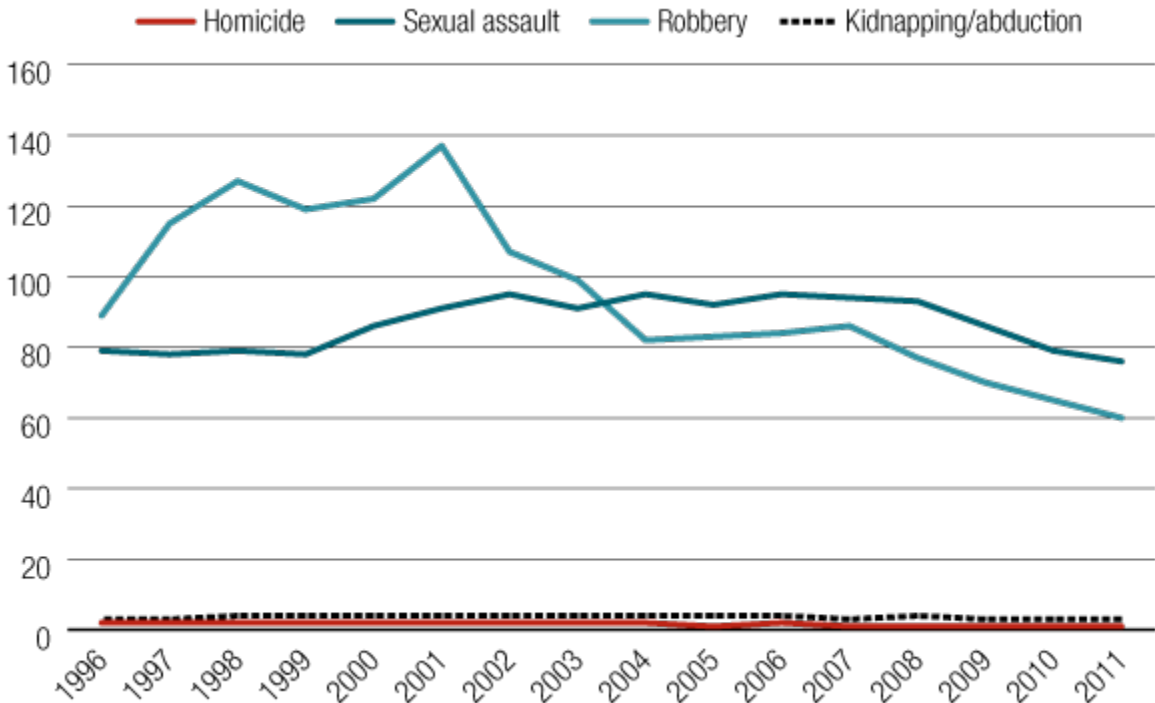
Attachment: Crime Trends in Australia

Crime trends in Qld: Offences against the person 1983-2012



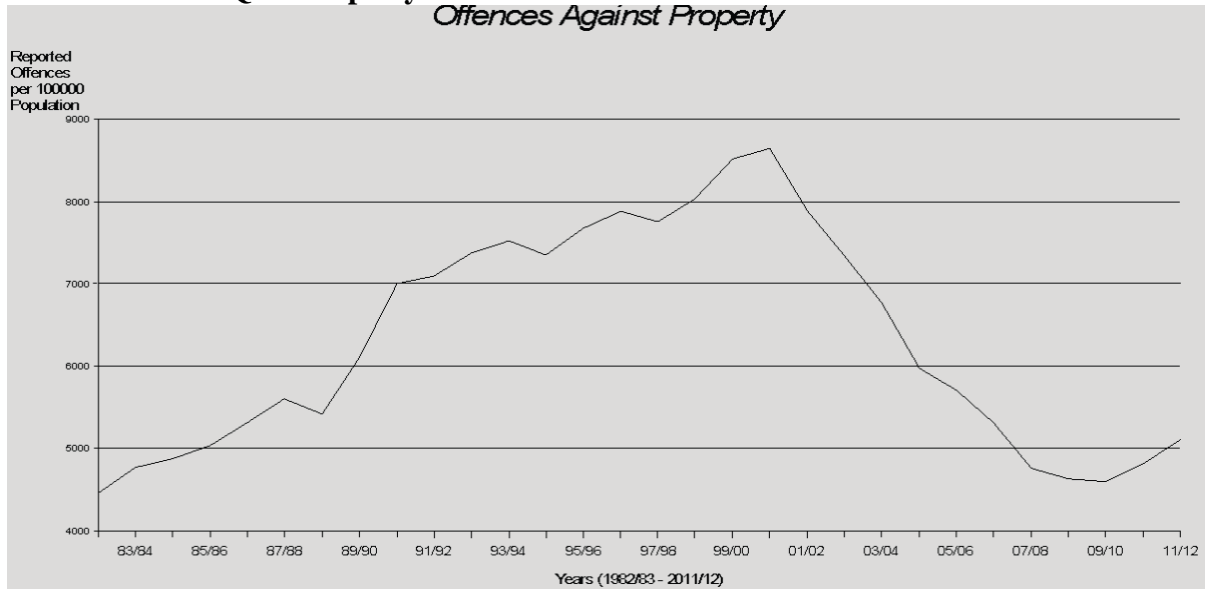
Source: QPS Annual Statistical Review 2011-2012

Trends in Australian crime: offences against the person by type 1996-2011



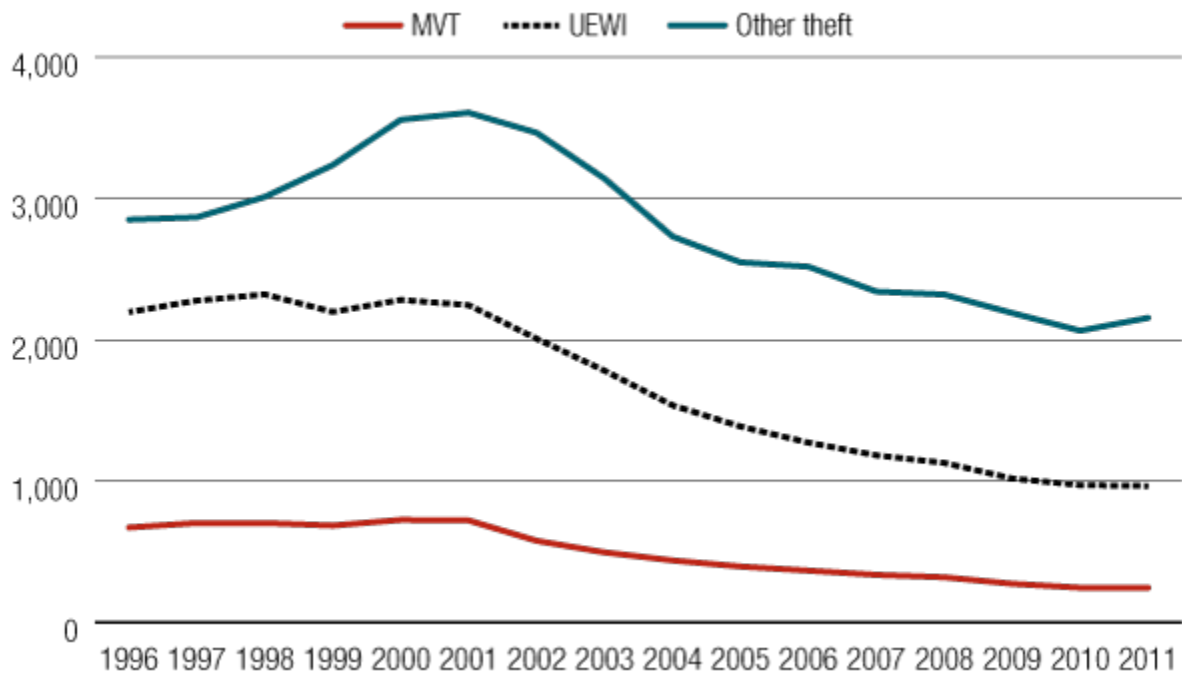
Source: Australian Institute of Criminology *Australian Crime Facts & Figures 2012*

Crime trends in Qld: Property offences 1983-2012



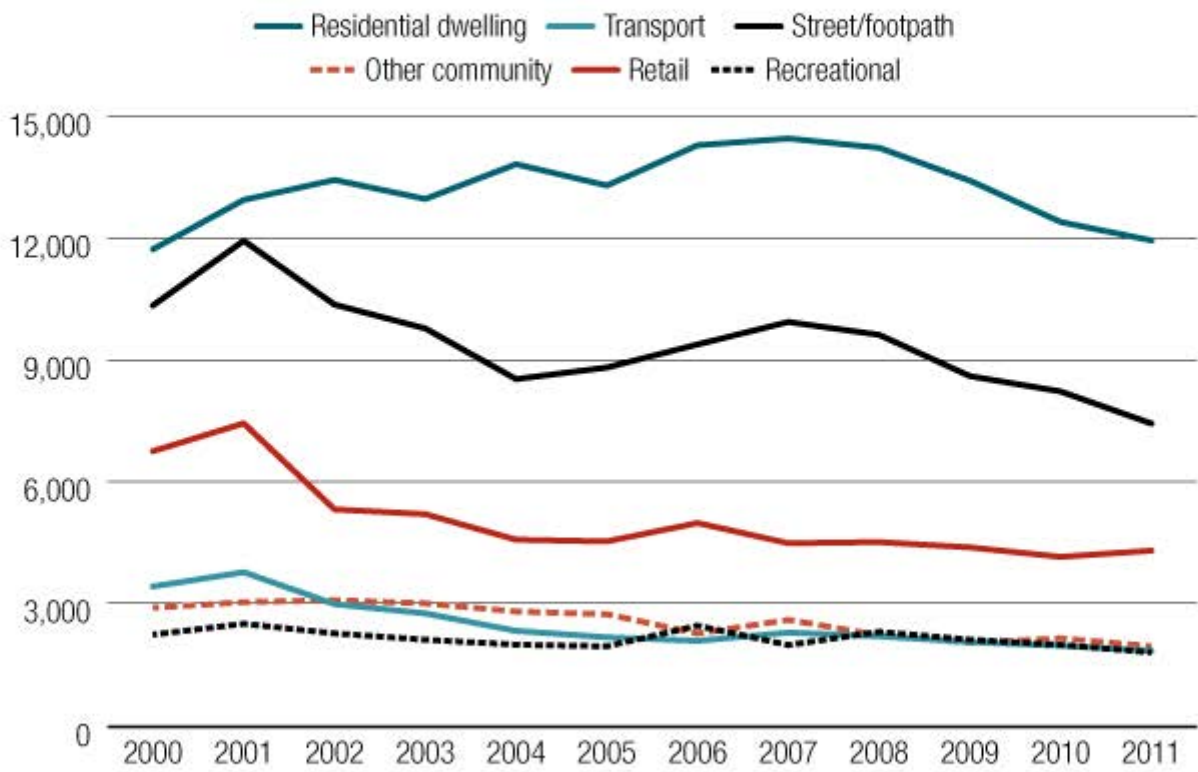
Source: QPS Annual Statistical Review 2011-2012

Trends in Australian crime: Property offences by type 1996-2011



Source: Australian Institute of Criminology *Australian Crime Facts & Figures 2012*

Trends in Australian crime: Offences against the person by location 1996-2011



A recent article posits that the crime drop experienced in Western democracies in over last two decades is due to increased security. This figure shows the date of introduction of mandatory car immobilisers in Australia, which ushered in substantial falls in crime.

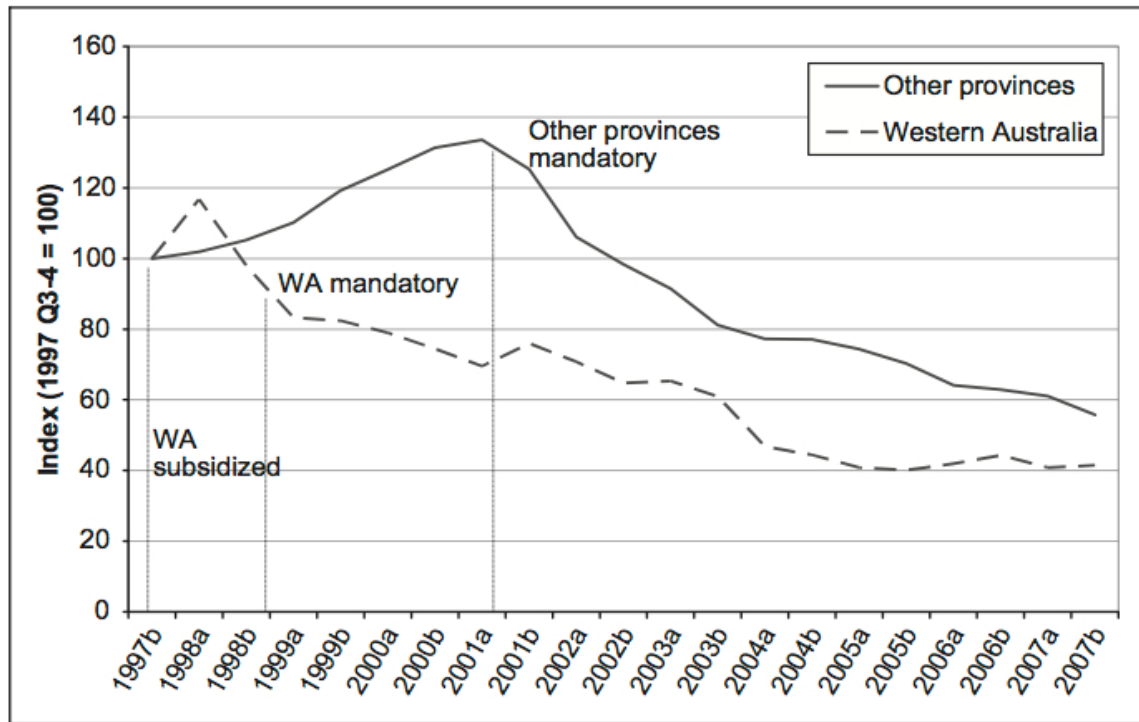
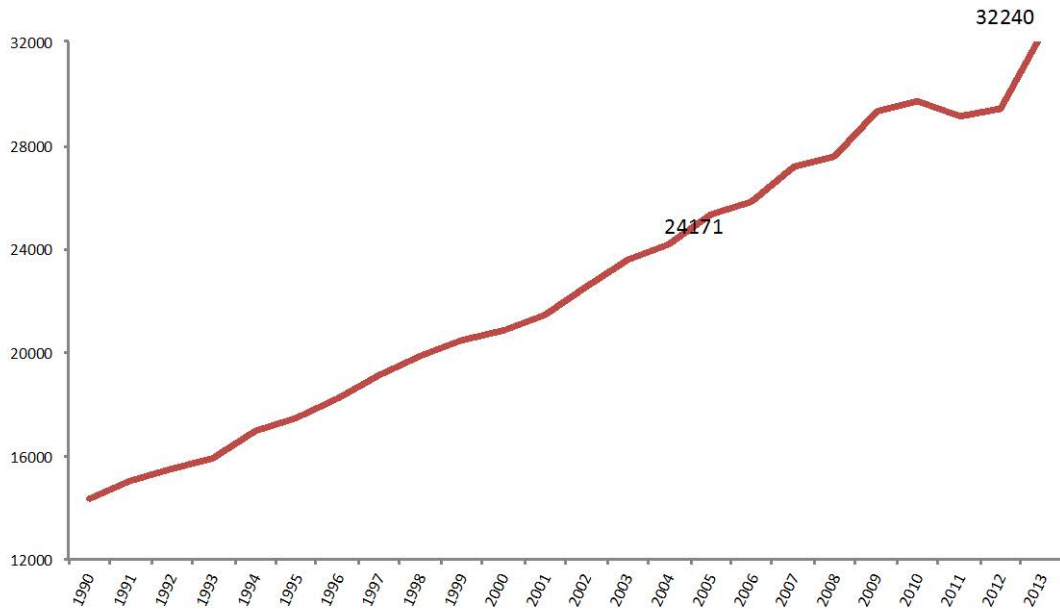


Figure 3. Vehicle theft in Australia 1997 to 2007 (Source: CARS). CARS = Comprehensive Autotheft Research System

Source: Farrell, G., Tilley, N., Tseloni, A., and Mailley, J. (2011). The Crime Drop and the Security Hypothesis. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 48(2):147–175.

Australian Prisoner Increases 1990-2013



Strategies to prevent and reduce criminal activity in Queensland

(ABS, 2013)

1

There is substantial research indicating that the drop in crime rate is, at best, only slightly related to the incapacitation or general/specific deterrence effects touted reasons to substantially increase prison populations. While a number of factors need to be considered, prison remains criminogenic.

Source: Bales, W., and Piquero, A. (2012). Assessing the impact of imprisonment on recidivism. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 8: 71-101.