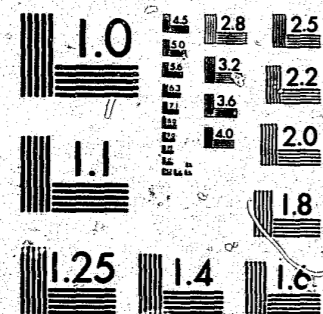


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BURGLARY IN VICTORIA: THE OFFENCE

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99954

prepared by
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BURGLARY IN VICTORIA

THE OFFENCE

R. Braybrook
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M. Welsh

June, 1983.

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SUMMARY

A survey of all burglaries reported to police in Victoria between 12th February, 1982 and 11th August, 1982, is described in this report.

In general, burglary occurred more often in metropolitan Melbourne than would be expected from the population distribution in the State. About 60% of offences were discovered between 8.00 a.m. and 8.00 p.m. and in 86% the premises had been vacant for over two hours.

The average value of property stolen was \$608.00. This figure includes 23% of cases in which nothing was taken and a further 49% of cases which involved goods valued at less than \$500.00. The most frequent item stolen was money, followed by jewellery and television sets.

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

Residential burglary made up 59% of all offences surveyed. Houses were more subject to this offence than flats and it can be calculated that 3.6% of city dwellings and 1.4% of rural dwellings were subject to burglary in 1982. Dwellings in the central city area were more frequently burgled than could be expected from the proportion of residential buildings in the area.

In most cases the times of discovery and periods the premises were vacant were consistent with the offences taking place during daylight hours. In 75% of cases entry was gained through a door or window.

The average value of property taken in residential burglaries was \$744.00 including 18% of cases in which nothing was stolen. More offences involving houses, flats and holiday homes resulted in loss of property worth more than \$500.00 than those involving other types of buildings.

NON RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

Non residential burglary accounted for 41% of the offences surveyed. It occurred relatively more frequently in rural Victoria than metropolitan Melbourne compared with residential burglary and generally took place in premises which had been vacant overnight or longer. In over two thirds of cases, entry was gained through a door or window.

Shops accounted for 24% of non residential burglaries surveyed, followed by offices and schools. The average value of items taken was \$425.00, including 24% of offences where nothing was stolen. About 1% of these offences involved property valued at over \$5,000.00.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After theft, burglary is the most frequently reported offence in Victoria and there is a body of evidence from both Australia and overseas to suggest that many victims do not report the entry of their premises to the police. This could lead to underestimates of around 30% in the frequency of crime. Non reporting appears to be associated with particular characteristics of the offence such as low or negligible property loss and a better picture of burglary in Victoria therefore needs to be established.

A survey of victims is urgently needed to establish the real cost of burglary to the community and identify those factors which predispose people to not reporting illegal entry of their premises to the police.

The characteristics of burglary offences included in this survey point strongly to opportunity as the most reported factor in the commission of these crimes.

In so far as prevention of burglary depends on the physical characteristics of the buildings involved, increased surveillance of frequently empty buildings seems most likely to reduce the incidence of burglary. Security alarms may further reduce the frequency with which burglars successfully remove property from premises which they enter.

It is therefore recommended that the public be encouraged to co-operate in reducing the period of time for which buildings remain obviously unprotected by providing security inspections or alarms or improved neighbourhood surveillance.

Property other than money which is taken in successful burglaries usually includes easily transportable and disposable items such as jewellery and televisions. Disposal of these goods relies on an effective method for redistributing these goods.

It is therefore recommended that activities directed specifically at breaking the distribution network for stolen goods be given high priority.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.B.S.	-	Australian Bureau of Statistics
\$	-	Dollars
Fig.	-	Figure
M.M.B.W.	-	Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works
£	-	Pounds
%	-	Percent
Prop.	-	Proportion
N=	-	Sample Size
S.E.	-	Standard Error

DEFINITIONS

Burglary	-	Entering a Building Unlawfully
Commercial Premises	-	Non-Residential Premises used for gain including Banks, Factories, Offices, Service Stations, Shops (Smash & Grab), Shops (Other), Stores and Warehouses, Other Commercial Premises
Non-Commercial Premises	-	Non-Residential Premises not used for gain including Buildings under construction & unoccupied Buildings, Government, Public & Municipal Buildings, Recreation Premises, Scout Halls, Sports Grounds, Schools and Other Educational Buildings, Other Buildings

Non-Residential Burglary

- Unlawful entry of Building other than Residential, including Banks, Factories, Offices, Service Stations, Shops (Smash & Grab), Shops (Other), Stores & Warehouses, Other Commercial Premises, Buildings under construction & unoccupied Buildings, Government, Public & Municipal Buildings, Recreation Premises, Scout Halls, Sports Grounds, Schools & Other Educational Buildings, Other Buildings.

Residential Burglary

- Aggravated Burglary, Unlawful Entry of Dwelling House or Flat, Garages, Sheds, Holiday Homes, Residential parts of Hotels/Motels, Guest Houses, Hostels, Homes (Other), Homes (Aggravated Burglary) and Other Dwellings.

INTRODUCTION

1.0. This report will describe the characteristics of burglaries reported to police in Victoria during 1982. The research project was undertaken by the Crime Statistics Section, Victoria Police, in response to community concern, expressed particularly by the insurance industry, about the incidence and solution rates of burglary. Retail burglary alone has been estimated to result in a monetary loss of \$10.2 million a year in Victoria (Challinger, 1982).

Burglary accounts for 27% of all offences reported to police in Victoria (Victoria Police, 1982a) and the per capita incidence of the offence in the State is second only to that in South Australia (Biles, 1983). The number of incidents has increased each year for over five years (Victoria Police, 1980, 1982b) but their relative contribution to the workload of the Force has remained fairly constant.

The crime of burglary is defined by the Crimes Act 1958 S.76 as unlawful entering of a building with intent to steal or commit other offences. It evolved under the basic societal concept that a man's home is his castle and originally covered only breaking and entering of buildings which took place at night (Cocke, 1969). Protection of property has now become more important and burglary is therefore generally categorised as a property crime.

1.1. Police - Reported Burglary

Information about burglaries and offenders in the literature has mainly been obtained from police records or from surveys of victims of these offences although there have been two American studies which incorporated interviews with known burglars (Scarr, 1973; Maguire, 1982). These include interpretations of information about the offences in terms of the motivation of the offender.

A survey of victims of crime in Australia which was undertaken in 1975 has suggested that burglary is not reported to police in about one-third of cases known to the victim (A.B.S., 1979) and a recent survey of Victoria retailers (Challinger, 1982) has supported this figure by demonstrating that police reports can under-report offences in shops by about 28%. Canadian figures show that a similar one third of residential burglaries in that country are not reported to police (Waller & Okihiro, 1978).

Similarly victim surveys conducted in the Netherlands have shown that about 20% of their burglaries are not reported to police and this figure remained fairly constant over five years while the overall reporting of crime declined by about 20% (Van Dijk, 1979).

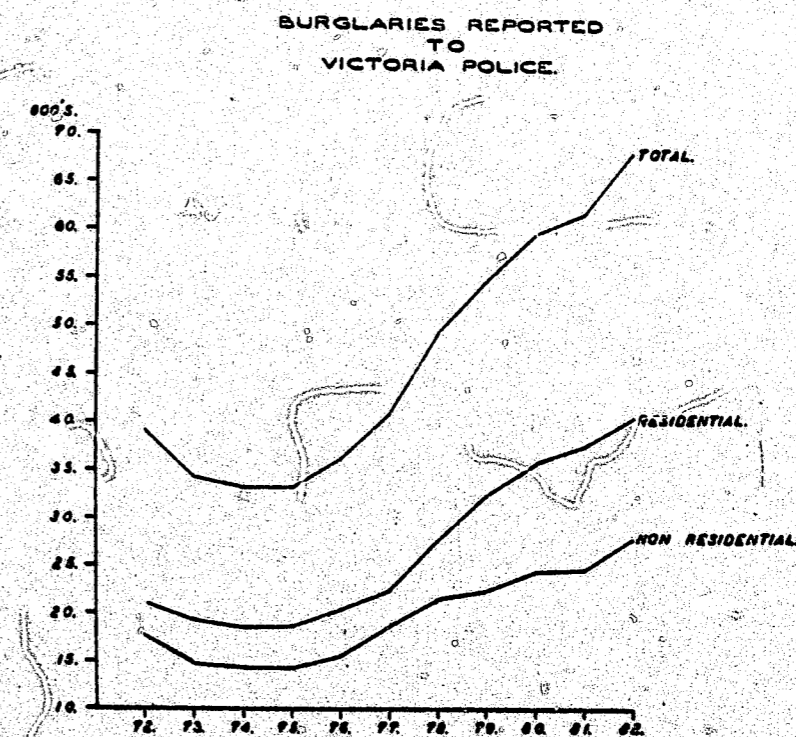
In Great Britain about 80% of residential burglaries were reported to the police immediately the victims returned home (Maguire, 1982). However it is possible that, in some British Police Forces, up to 50% of these reported offences are not officially recorded by police (Sparks et al, 1977). One in two male householders in Great Britain say that they would rather deal with a burglar themselves than send for the police (Gallup Poll, 1982).

Most insurance companies require that the police be informed of the offence (Insurance Council of Australia, 1983) and this will inevitably lead to bias in reporting the crime against those in which nothing or low value items were stolen. This is consistent with Dutch research which suggests that reporting of burglary increased with the value of articles taken (Buikhuisen, 1978).

The influence of this apparent under-reporting of figures derived from police data compared with victim surveys has been taken into account in this review of the literature about burglaries.

1.2. Residential & Non Residential Burglary

There seems to be a general consensus among criminological research into burglary that residential and non-residential offences are distinct from one another and these differences can be seen in both the characteristics of the offence and in the motivation of the offenders. For example, the incidence of residential burglaries in Victoria has been climbing steadily since 1974 while the increase in non-residential burglaries has been less consistent (e.g. Victoria Police, 1981a) (Fig. 1).



1.2.1. Residential Burglary

Many studies concern themselves only with residential burglaries. These offences comprise about 60% of all burglaries reported to police (Scott, 1973; Pope, 1977; Victoria Police 1982b) and nearly 10% of the ten offences most frequently reported by victims in the Netherlands (Van Dijk & Steinmetz, 1980). Most known studies of residential burglary have been undertaken in the United States, Canada, Great Britain and the Netherlands.

In the United States breaking and entering of houses and flats normally occur during the day on weekdays (Clarke, 1972; Scott, 1973; Repetto, 1974). However, it has been suggested that this information may be influenced by the previously documented selection of data into police records because a victim survey carried out in Toronto suggested that nearly 40% of residential burglaries occurred at night while the same information from comparable police records suggested that 24% happened at night (Waller & Okihiro, 1978). Further, the Toronto victim survey found a slight over-representation of weekend dwelling house breakings and these figures are in accord with those from other studies in Canada and in New England (Chimbos, 1973; Conklin & Bittner, 1973). In the Netherlands, victims report that one quarter of residential burglaries took place during the day (Van Dijk & Steinmetz, 1980).

There is some evidence that residential burglary occurs more often in the summer months (Chimbos, 1973; Waller & Okihiro, 1978), but these statistics are not consistent with other work which suggests that no significant seasonal variation occurs (Conklin & Bittner, 1973; Scarr, 1973; Pope, 1977).

Residential burglaries appear to occur more in areas of low socioeconomic status and black households in the United States are more often subjected to multiple breakings (Hindeland, 1976).

Most burglars enter residential buildings through the door and this figure is as high as 75% in victims surveys, compared with 50% to 70% from analysis as police records. In many cases the door was unlocked or even open with only one quarter of door entries requiring force or breaking (Scarr 1973; Pope, 1977; Waller & Okihiro, 1978; Van Dijk & Steinmetz, 1980).

Property stolen from houses and flats in 1970 was estimated at \$400 million in the United States, for police reported offences alone (U.S.A., F.B.I., 1971). British insurance companies paid out £108.8 million in respect to residential burglary in the first half of 1982 (Gallup Poll, 1982). However, the value of each offence is generally low. Overseas studies indicate burglaries where nothing is stolen can vary from 4% up to 80% (Scarr, 1973; Waller & Okihiro, 1978). Money is stolen in about one third of residential burglaries in the Netherlands and jewellery in one case of every eight (Van Dijk & Steinmetz, 1980). The type of property involved seems to vary from place to place, according to availability (Maguire, 1982) but there is a general consensus that:-

"Most (residential) burglary losses are of moderate value and include goods that are easily converted to cash" (Pope, 1977).

Residential burglary has a universally low solution rate even when estimates are based on only police reported offences. The figure of 15% in Victoria (Victoria Police, 1983) is lower than for any other offence in the Major Crime Index and American figures range from 19% to 40%. In Canada 14% of burglary offenders are caught while in London the figure is below 10% (Scarr, 1973; Repetto, 1974; Pope, 1977; Mark, 1978). The solution of burglary appears to be most strongly influenced by the period that premises were vacant (Braybrook, et al., 1982).

To summarise, there seem to be only two consistent pieces of information arising from overseas research into residential burglaries. Entry in these offences is mostly effected through the door of the premises and there is always a very low arrest rate compared with other criminal offences reported to police. Information about the times that offences most often take place is contradictory and, while in general the property which is taken seems to be low in value, the proportion of house breakings which result in anything being stolen at all appears to vary from study to study.

1.2.2. Non-Residential Burglary

Studies of burglaries involving factories, shops and other non-residential buildings are less prolific than those describing similar residential offences and nearly all of the available data comes from the United States of America.

Non-residential burglary in America appears to involve mostly business premises and there is evidence that factory and school breakings occur less frequently (Scarr, 1973; Pope, 1979).

It seems that, in general, non-residential burglaries are more likely to be committed at night and on weekends than residential offences (Scarr, 1973; Conklin & Bittner, 1973, Pope, 1977) and less than half of the buildings involved were entered through the door with a similar proportion requiring breaking of glass in a window or door (Scarr, 1973; Pope, 1977).

The property stolen in American non-residential burglaries is of higher average value than that stolen in residential burglaries and very few of these breakings do not result in anything being taken (Scarr, 1973; Pope, 1977). In Victoria, a survey of burglaries of retail premises has shown that the value of goods stolen differs for different types of shops with department and clothing stores suffering the greatest average losses (Challinger, 1982).

The reported arrest rates for non-residential burglaries overseas range from 19% to 39% (Pope, 1977; Scarr, 1977) while in Victoria the arrest rate for these offences is about 20% (Victoria Police, 1982b).

1.2.3. Summary

In summary, non-residential burglaries appear to be generally different from residential burglaries in temporal characteristics, in means of entry by the burglars and in the value of property taken. Differences in the arrest rates for the two types of offence are small and are almost certainly affected by factors such as the time the building was vacant more than by the type of building burglarised.

These apparent differences between the characteristics of residential and non-residential burglaries will be reflected in this report and information will be presented to allow the two types of offence to be considered separately as well as under the general heading of burglaries in Victoria.

STUDY METHOD

2.0. This project surveyed Modus Operandi forms concerning burglaries which were submitted to the Statistics Section of the Information Bureau, Victoria Police, between 12th February and the 11th August, 1982. During this period a sample of one in every ten non-arrest reports (N = 3074) and one in every five arrest reports (N = 1142) for burglary was surveyed.

2.1. Statistical Analysis

Data from the study sample were recorded and converted to coding for statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (Nie et al, 1975). Appropriate weighting factors have been used throughout. Missing data has been excluded from all analyses and this had led to some inconsistencies in sample sizes between tables.

Differences between categorical variables have been tested for statistical significance using the Chi-Square Test and differences between continuous variables were tested using Student's t-test. These differences are reported throughout this report as:-

significant at the 5% level
very significant at the 1% level, and
highly significant at the 0.1% level.

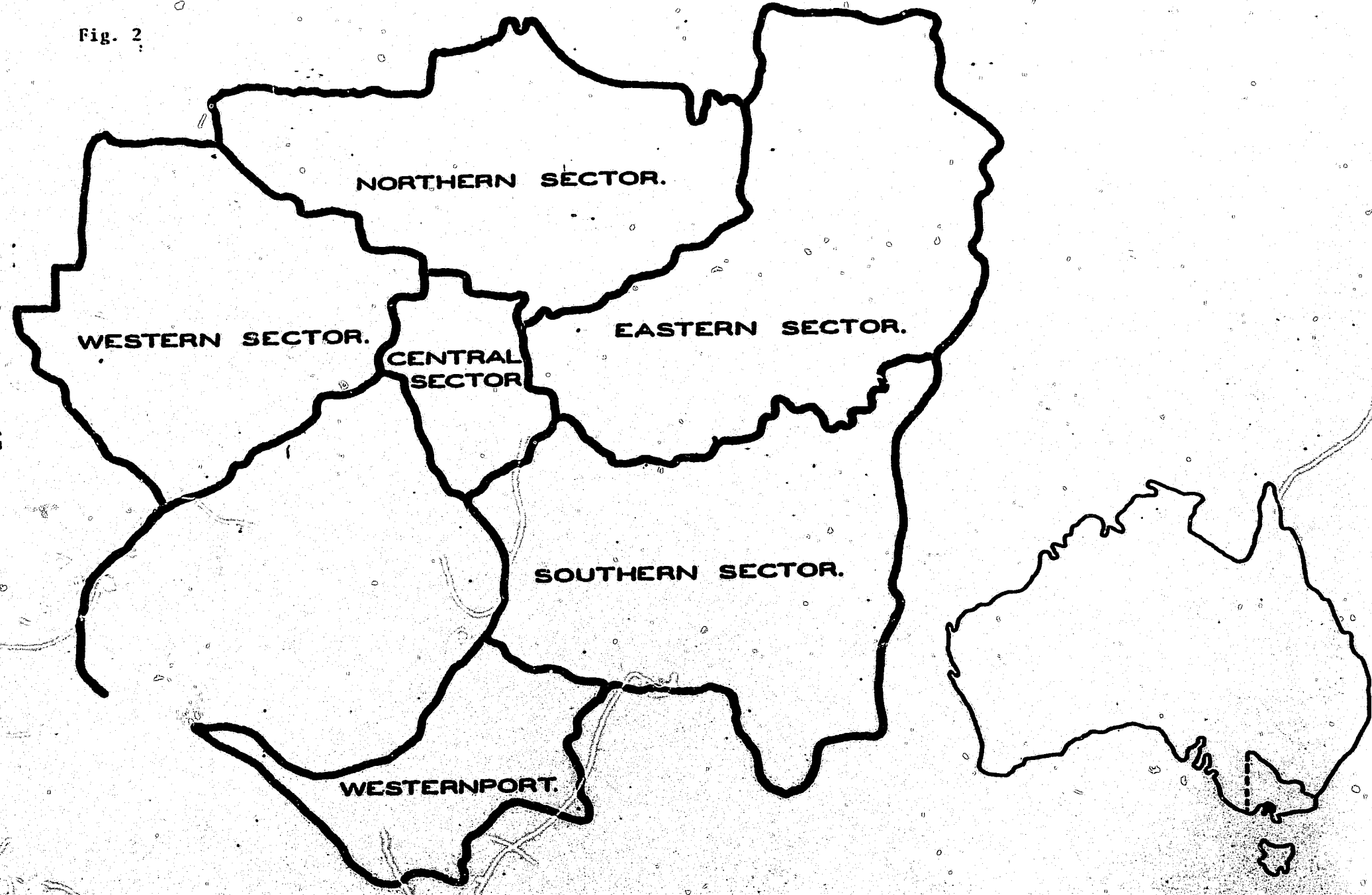
This means that conservative measures of significance have been recognised and it is possible that some differences which may be significantly related have been reported as random.

2.2. Geographic Breakdowns

The Melbourne Metropolitan area has been divided geographically according to the M.M.B.W. (1981) Sectors as shown in Fig. 2.

METROPOLITAN MELBOURNE, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA.

Fig. 2



17

RESULTS

3.0. This chapter of the report described the results of the survey of burglaries reported to Victoria Police between February and August, 1982, in terms of:-

- 1) General characteristics of burglaries in Victoria.
- 2) Comparison of residential and non-residential burglaries in Victoria.
- 3) Non-residential burglaries in Victoria.
- 4) Residential burglaries in Victoria.

3.1. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF BURGLARIES IN VICTORIA

Burglary in Victoria is more likely to occur in Central Melbourne than in any other area. Nearly all burglaries take place in premises which have been vacant more than two hours and money is the most frequently reported item stolen, followed by jewellery and television sets. In half of the offences property taken was valued at less than \$100.00.

3.1.1. Place of Burglaries

Burglaries in Victoria occurred in quite different geographic distribution of the population (Table 1).

Rural Victoria was less subject to burglary than metropolitan Melbourne and, within the city, the Central area had the highest relative incidence of the offence while the involvement of other parts of Melbourne approximately matched the distribution of the population.

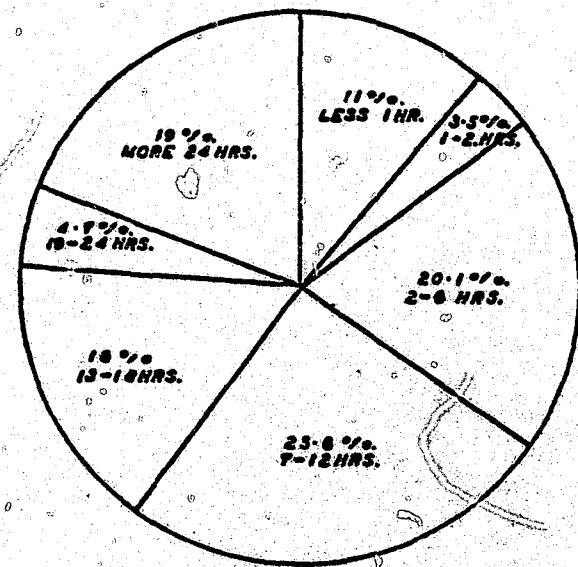
Table 1. Place of Burglary in Victoria

	<u>Burglary Offences</u> (N=6965)	<u>Population</u> (A.B.S., 1981; M.M.B.W., 1981) (N=3832443)
Central Melbourne	17.7%	7.3%
Western Suburbs	10.5%	9.9%
Northern Suburbs	15.7%	15.0%
Eastern Suburbs	18.8%	19.6%
Southern Suburbs	20.5%	19.2%
Rural Victoria	16.8%	29.0%
	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

3.1.2. Period Premises Vacant

About 84% of burglaries took place in buildings which had been vacant more than two hours (Fig. 3).

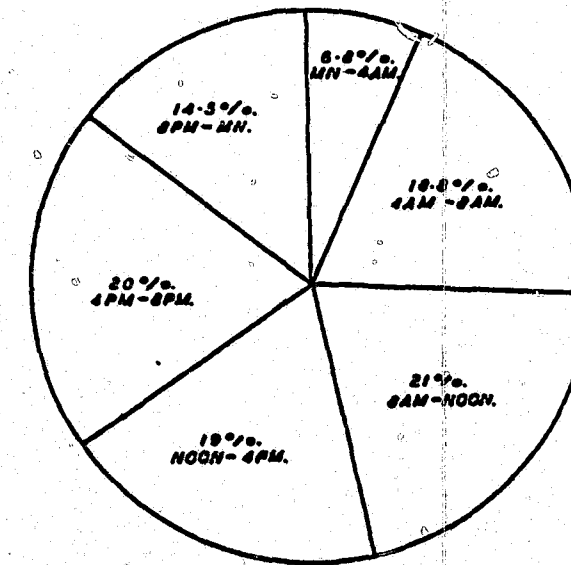
PERIOD PREMISES VACANT.



3.1.3. Times Burglaries Discovered

Burglary offences were discovered at times about equally distributed through the day. (Fig. 4).

TIME OF DISCOVERY OF BURGLARY.



3.1.4. Type of Property Taken

Over 23% of all burglaries in Victoria were not associated with stealing of any property (Table 2). A further 17% involved stealing of only money while jewellery and televisions are the next most popular items for burglars to take.

In up to 75% of burglaries which involved jewellery/portable radios, cassettes/other electronic equipment/food, other property was also involved. Yet in half of the money offences only the single item was taken.

Table 2. Property Taken in Burglaries

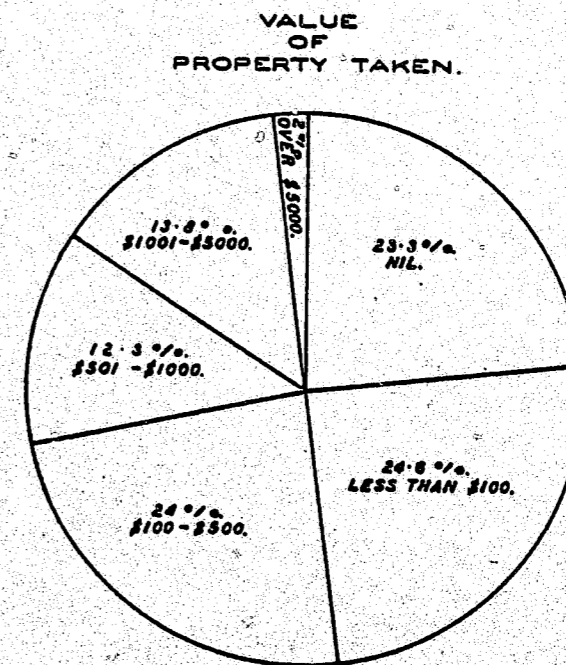
<u>Property Type</u>	<u>Proportion of Item Alone</u> (N=4395)	<u>Proportion of Item with Other Property*</u> (N=3736)	<u>All Reported Burglaries**</u> (N=7068)
Nil	100.0%	-	23.3%
Drugs	-	100.0%	-
Money	53.0%	47.0%	28.6%
Jewellery	33.2%	66.8%	9.6%
Firearms	7.1%	92.9%	2.6%
Televisions	40.0%	60.0%	7.2%
Food	33.4%	66.6%	3.4%
Stereo Equipment	25.7%	74.3%	2.7%
Portable Cassettes, Radios etc.	29.2%	70.8%	4.8%
Other	62.0%	38.0%	30.8%

* Chi Square Test - Highly Significant

** Total equals more than 100% because of offences involving more than one item.

3.1.5. Value of Property Taken

The average value of property taken in Victorian burglaries was \$608.06 (+ \$24.68 S.E.). Over two thirds of those offences which involved the stealing of property were valued at less than \$500.00 and only a very small proportion offences involved goods worth over \$5,000.00 (Fig. 5).



3.1.6. Type of Burglaries

Residential burglaries comprised 59.1% of all burglaries included in this study. This figure is slightly higher than that reported by Statistical Review of Crime (Victoria Police, 1983) for the entire year 1982 but this difference is not statistically significant (Table 3).

Table 3 Residential & Non-Residential Burglaries

	<u>This Survey</u> (N=6965)	<u>Official Statistics</u> (N=67588)
Residential	59.1	58.6
Non-Residential	40.9	41.4
	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Chi Square Test -
Not Significant

3.1.7. Discussion

To summarise the general characteristics of burglaries reported to police in Victoria:-

- . Burglaries were more likely to occur in Metropolitan Melbourne than in rural Victoria relative to the distribution of the population across the State. Within the City, the highest relative incidence of burglary occurred in Central Melbourne.

- . 85% of the premises which were entered had been vacant for more than two hours.
- . 79% of burglaries were discovered between 4.00 a.m. and 8.00 p.m.
- . 23% of burglaries did not involve the stealing of property. A further one third involved stealing of money, 11% involved jewellery and 8% involved televisions.
- . Firearms, jewellery and portable electronic equipment were often taken with other types of property.
- . Two thirds of property taken was valued at less than \$500.00.
- . Over half the burglaries in Victoria involved the entering of residential premises.

3.2. COMPARISON OF RESIDENTIAL AND NON RESIDENTIAL BURGLARIES IN VICTORIA

The characteristics of residential and non-residential burglaries reported to police will be compared in this section of the report to enable comparison with overseas research in the area.

3.2.1. Place of Residential and Non-Residential Burglaries

Residential burglaries were more likely to be reported in the Northern and Eastern Sectors of metropolitan Melbourne while non-residential burglaries formed a great proportion of the offences reported in the Southern Sector of Melbourne and in rural Victoria (Table 4).

Table 4. Place of Residential and Non-Residential Burglaries

Place	Type of Burglary	
	Residential (N=4046) %	Non-Residential (N=2919) %
Central City	17.4	18.2
Western Sector	10.2	10.9
Northern Sector	18.1	12.3
Eastern Sector	21.5	14.9
Southern Sector	18.5	23.4
Rural Victoria	14.3	20.3
	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Chi Square Test -
Highly Significant

3.2.2. Time of Discovery of Residential & Non-Residential Burglaries in Victoria

Three quarters of residential burglaries were discovered in the afternoon and evening while a similar proportion of non-residential burglaries were discovered between 4.00 a.m. and noon (Table 5).

Table 5. Time of Discovery of Residential & Non-Residential Burglaries

Time of Discovery	Type of Burglary	
	Residential (N=3936)	Non-Residential (N=2580)
Midnight to 4.00 a.m.	5.8	11.3
4.01 a.m. to 8.00 a.m.	5.3	30.7
8.01 a.m. to Noon	13.2	27.8
Noon to 4.00 p.m.	26.5	11.9
4.01 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	28.8	9.3
8.01 p.m. to Midnight	20.4	9.0
	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Chi Square Test -
Highly Significant

3.2.3. Period Premises Vacant in Residential & Non-Residential Burglaries

Nearly one half of non-residential burglaries occurred in premises which have been vacant between 7 and 18 hours, and in a further one quarter of offences the premises were vacant over 24 hours (Table 6). In contrast, 60% of residential burglaries took place in dwellings that have been vacant between 2 and 12 hours, and in fewer of these offences the building had been vacant over 12 hours.

Table 6. Period Premises Vacant in Residential & Non-Residential Burglaries

Period Vacant	Type of Burglary	
	Residential (N=3912)	Non-Residential (N=2750)
	%	%
Less than 1 hour	10.5	11.7
1 to 2 hours	4.8	1.7
3 to 6 hours	29.3	7.2
7 to 12 hours	29.7	19.8
13 to 18 hours	6.9	28.9
19 to 24 hours	3.3	6.7
Over 24 hours	15.5	24.0
	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Chi Square Test -
Highly Significant

3.2.4. Property Taken and Value of Property in Residential & Non-Residential Burglaries

In about one quarter of both residential and non-residential burglaries nothing was taken by the offenders (Table 7).

Table 7. Burglaries Involving Stealing of Property

	Residential Burglaries (N=3862)	Non-Residential Burglaries (N=2683)
	%	%
Nothing Stolen	17.9	24.3
Items Stolen	82.1	75.7
	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Chi Square Test -
Highly Significant

There was also a significant difference between residential and non-residential burglaries in the average value of items stolen. In residential burglaries the average value of property stolen, as reported by police, was \$743.79 (+ \$23.51 S.E.) while in non-residential burglaries the average value of property stolen was \$425.12 (+ \$26.25 S.E.) (t-test - highly significant).

3.2.5. Method of Entry in Residential & Non-Residential Burglaries

Over half of residential burglaries reported to police involved window entry of the dwelling and 41% involved entry through the door (Table 8). By comparison, only 43% of buildings involved in non-residential burglaries were entered through the window and there were many more entries through the roof or wall of the building. Information about whether the doors or windows used to enter the building were secure has not been presented because it may be influenced by insurance requirements.

Table 8. Method of Entry in Residential & Non-Residential Burglaries

Method of Entry	Type of Burglary	
	Residential (N=3942)	Non-Residential (N=2911)
	%	%
Window	53.9	43.2
Door	41.1	26.1
Roof	0.5	9.8
Wall	0.4	2.8
Had Inside	-	0.3
Other	0.3	14.1
No Sign of Forced Entry	3.8	3.7
	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Chi Square Test -
Highly Significant

3.2.6. Discussion

In summary, residential burglaries and non-residential burglaries reported to police in Victoria differed from each other in their geographic location, in the times they were discovered, in the period the premises were vacant, in the frequency with which no property was taken, in the value of property taken and in the more usual methods of entry.

Residential burglaries comprised a greater proportion of metropolitan burglaries than rural burglaries. They occurred more often in the Northern and Eastern Suburbs while non-residential burglaries were more likely to occur in the Southern Sector of the City.

Non-residential burglaries were often discovered in the morning in premises which had been vacant between 7 and 18 hours or over 24 hours. This is consistent with their being entered at night or over the weekend when business premises are more usually unattended.

In contrast, burglary of dwellings was more likely to be discovered in the afternoon and evening in premises which had been vacant between 2 and 12 hours. These facts point to a high proportion of residential burglaries occurring during the day.

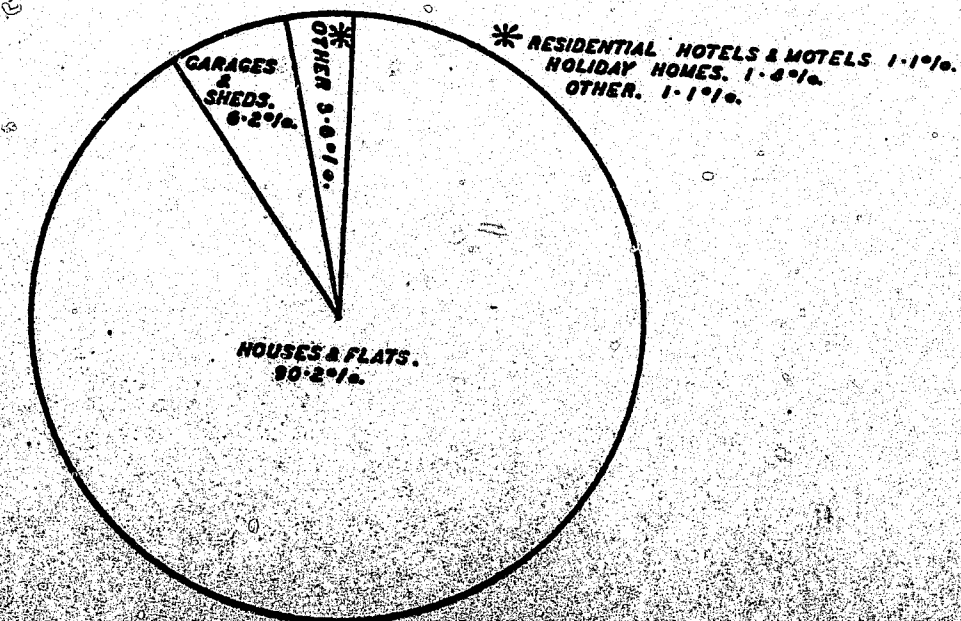
Non-residential breakings were less likely to involve stealing of property and were more likely to involve entry through the roof or wall of the building while residential burglaries involved a higher average value of property taken and buildings were more often entered through the door or window.

3.3. RESIDENTIAL BURGLARIES IN VICTORIA

About 40,000 residential burglaries were reported to Victoria Police in 1982 (Victoria Police, 1983) and it can be calculated that 2.9% of private dwellings were known to be subject to burglary in that year (A.B.S., 1981).

Most buildings entered in these residential burglaries were permanent residences, i.e., houses or flats, but a further 6.2% of these offences involved garages and sheds and 1.4% involved holiday homes (Fig. 6).

PREMISES INVOLVED
IN
RESIDENTIAL BURGLARIES.



Over 90% of permanent dwellings entered in residential burglaries in Melbourne involved breaking and entering of private houses. This is a greater proportion than these buildings contribute to dwellings in the metropolitan area (Table 9).

Table 9. Type of Dwelling involved in Metropolitan Residential Burglaries

	<u>Residential Burglaries</u> (N=5594*)	<u>Dwellings in Melbourne</u> (M.M.B.W., 1981) (N=901523**)
	%	%
House	94.5	75.9
Flat	5.5	24.1
	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

* Includes only houses and flats.

** Calculated from 1980 figures and dwellings commenced in 1979-1980.

3.3.1. Places of Residential Burglaries

The distribution of residential burglaries within the metropolitan area was only slightly different from the distribution of dwellings (Table 10).

Residential burglaries in the Central area were more frequent than expected from the proportion of residences in the area while burglaries in the Southern Sector under represent the proportion of dwellings there.

Table 10. Places of Metropolitan Residential Burglaries

	<u>Residential Burglary</u> <u>Offences</u> (N=3540)	<u>Proportion of</u> <u>Households</u> (M.M.B.W., 1981) (N=813402)
	%	%
Central City	19.8	12.1
Western Sector	11.7	13.3
Northern Sector	20.7	20.1
Eastern Sector	24.6	26.8
Southern Sector	23.2	27.7
	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Garage and shed burglaries were important in the Northern, Eastern and Southern Sectors (Table 11) while nearly half of burglaries of residential hotels and motels and two thirds of burglaries involving holiday homes occurred in rural Victoria. Holiday houses were also important in the Southern Sector and hotel and motel offences were frequent in the city.

Table 11. Place of Premises entered in Residential Burglaries

<u>Place</u>	<u>Building entered</u>					<u>Prop. Of Total</u>
	<u>Houses & Flats</u>	<u>Garages & Schools</u>	<u>Residential Hotels/Motels</u>	<u>Holiday Homes</u>	<u>Other</u>	
	(N=3830) %	(N=263) %	(N=48) %	(N=61) %	(N=44) %	
Central City	17.7	3.8	35.4	-	4.5	16.6
Western Sector	10.4	6.8	8.3	-	4.5	10.0
Northern Sector	18.4	18.6	4.1	3.3	-	17.8
Eastern Sector	22.0	16.0	6.3	6.6	4.5	21.1
Southern Sector	19.5	25.1	4.2	23.0	31.8	20.0
Rural Victoria	11.9	29.7	41.7	65.6	54.5	14.5

Chi Square Test -
Highly Significant

3.3.2. Time Discovered & Period Premises Vacant of Residential Burglaries

Nearly all household burglaries were discovered in the afternoon and evening (Table 12) in buildings which have been vacant between 3 and 6 hours or 7 and 12 hours (Table 13). These factors indicate daylight burglary activity.

In contrast nearly two thirds of holiday houses and one third of garages and sheds had been unattended for over 24 hours and the time these offences were discovered lay within the normal times in which they would be needed by their owners. Over 30% of unoccupied dwellings in Victoria at any one time are holiday homes (A.B.S.,1981).

Table 12. Time of Discovery of Residential Burglaries

	<u>Type of Building</u>				
	<u>Houses & Flats</u> (N=3550) %	<u>Garages & Sheds</u> (N=244) %	<u>Residential Hotels/Motels</u> (N=44) %	<u>Holiday Homes</u> (N=55) %	<u>Other</u> (N=43) %
Midnight to 4.00 a.m.	5.8	2.8	18.8	2.3	10.5
4.01 a.m. to 8.00 a.m.	4.0	20.1	41.7	-	15.8
8.01 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.	11.6	35.6	-	38.6	36.8
12.01 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.	27.2	21.9	8.3	27.3	10.5
4.01 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	29.9	14.6	22.9	22.7	10.5
8.01 p.m. to Midnight	21.5	5.0	8.3	9.1	15.8

Chi Square Test -
Highly Significant

Table 13. Period Premises Vacant in Residential Burglaries

	<u>Building</u>				
	<u>House & Flats</u>	<u>Garages & Sheds</u>	<u>Residential Hotel/Motel</u>	<u>Holiday Homes</u>	<u>Other</u>
	(N=3528) %	(N=244) %	(N=43) %	(N=55) %	(N=43) %
Less than 1 hour	10.9	9.2	29.2	17.0	10.5
1 to 2 hours	5.0	1.7	-	-	5.3
3 to 6 hours	30.7	15.1	16.7	8.5	26.3
7 to 12 hours	30.8	15.5	35.4	-	7.9
13 to 18 hours	6.1	18.1	6.3	-	13.2
19 to 24 hours	2.7	9.7	-	14.9	5.3
Over 24 hours	13.6	30.7	12.5	59.6	31.6

Chi Square Test - Highly Significant

3.3.3. Value of Property Stolen in Residential Burglaries

The value of goods in residential burglaries showed distinct patterns which were related to the type of buildings entered.

About 20% of burglaries involving house, flats and holiday homes resulted in no loss and in a further 40% the property stolen from these premises was worth over \$500.00 (Table 14). In contrast, over half of the garages, sheds and hotel and motel breakings resulted in loss valued between \$100.00 and \$500.00.

Table 14. Value of Property Stolen in Residential Burglaries

<u>Value of Goods Stolen</u>	<u>Type of Building</u>				
	<u>Houses & Flats</u>	<u>Garages & Sheds</u>	<u>Residential Hotel/Motel</u>	<u>Holiday Homes</u>	<u>Other</u>
	(N=3362) %	(N=231) %	(N=42) %	(N=52) %	(N=40) %
Nil	22.5	5.4	10.4	19.6	11.4
\$1-\$100	20.4	24.7	20.8	19.6	29.5
\$101-\$500	22.1	51.0	52.1	21.4	45.5
\$501-\$1000	14.6	9.3	10.4	7.1	9.1
\$1001-\$5000	17.9	8.9	2.1	32.1	4.5
Over \$5000	2.5	0.8	4.2	-	-

Chi Square Test - Highly Significant

3.3.4. Discussion

In summary, houses seem more attractive to burglars than flats and the Central City is more prone to residential burglary than the number of dwellings warrants. Breaking and entering of hotel rooms is more prevalent in the Central City and in Rural Victoria while holiday houses are more at risk in the Southern Sector of Melbourne and the country.

These factors appear to be associated with opportunity as they reflect the geographic distribution of different sorts of accommodation. This is also in accord with the high frequency of daylight breakings which occur in dwellings vacant for between 3 and 12 hours and the high frequency of holiday homes and garage offences involving buildings left unattended for an extended period of time.

The value of goods stolen in residential burglaries again reflects those transportable items available to be stolen. Garages and sheds and hotel and motel rooms were more likely to provide items in the \$101 to \$500 range while 20% of offences involving houses and holiday houses involved no loss and a further 40% involved property valued at over \$500.00.

3.4. NON-RESIDENTIAL BURGLARIES IN VICTORIA

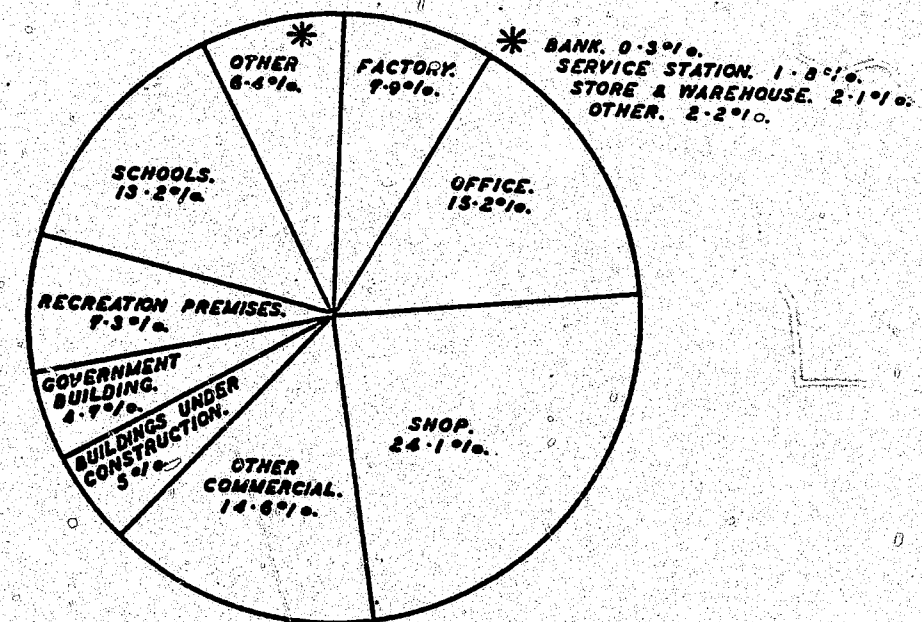
Non-residential burglaries comprised 40.9% of burglaries which occur in Victoria; they contributed to a greater proportion of burglaries that took place in rural Victoria than those reported in metropolitan Melbourne. In general, non-residential burglaries occurred in premises which had been vacant overnight or on the weekend. In nearly one quarter of these breakings no property was stolen. Entry was gained through the door or window in 69% of non-residential burglary cases but through the roof or wall in a further 12% of these offences.

In this section of the report non-residential burglaries will be described in detail with particular reference to the types of building involved and the characteristics of offences which occurred there.

3.4.1. Buildings involved in Non-Residential Burglaries

About one quarter of non-residential burglaries involved shops (Fig. 7). This was almost twice the proportion contributed by any other type of building.

PREMISES INVOLVED
IN
NON-RESIDENTIAL BURGLARIES.



The types of buildings entered differed in different parts of the State (Table 15). Rural non-residential burglaries were unlikely to involve offices and factories while more non-residential burglaries in the Southern Sector involved shops. The buildings involved in Central City burglaries reflected the premises in that area with a high incidence of offices, government and other public buildings and other commercial buildings compared with a low incidence of schools and recreational premises. School breakings were most prevalent in the Western Sector.

Table 15. Places of Premises Entered in Non-Residential Burglaries

Building Entered	Place					
	Central City (N=530)	Western Sector (N=318)	Northern Sector (N=358)	Eastern Sector (N=435)	Southern Sector (N=684)	Rural Victoria (N=594)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Banks	0.3	-	0.5	-	-	0.9
Factory	7.7	7.0	1.3	11.3	8.8	2.2
Office	19.8	14.6	10.3	17.0	16.9	8.3
Service Station	1.4	1.2	2.1	3.4	1.3	1.6
Shop	26.4	22.9	22.7	25.0	29.5	24.6
Stores and Warehouses	2.2	3.4	1.0	2.2	1.5	2.0
Other Commercial	16.0	13.1	15.3	12.2	12.1	17.1
Building under Construction	4.7	5.8	6.9	4.4	3.8	4.3
Government, Public Municipal Buildings	7.6	5.2	7.4	1.5	2.8	6.1
Recreational Premises, Scout Hall & Sports Ground	2.5	10.6	6.3	4.3	7.8	14.2
Schools and Other Educational Buildings	8.8	18.6	14.8	16.8	13.4	15.7
Other	2.5	0.6	1.3	1.7	2.0	2.9
Proportion of Total	18.0	10.6	12.3	14.8	22.0	20.2

Chi Square Test - Highly Significant

3.4.2. Time of Discovery & Period Premises Vacant in Non-Residential Burglaries

In general the times reported for discovery of non-residential burglaries reflect the nature of the premises involved and the activities of security guards and devices (Table 16).

About three quarters of office, service station, store and warehouses and government or municipal buildings burglaries were discovered in the time periods 4.00 a.m. to 8.00 a.m. and 8.00 a.m. to noon, which includes the times when their occupants usually start work. In contrast, all bank burglaries and many shop burglaries were discovered before work hours for those premises and this can be explained by their special security arrangements. Nearly half of smash-grab robberies involving shops occurred in premises vacant less than 1 hour and 46% occurred between mid-night and 4 a.m.

Table 16. Time of Discovery of Non-Residential Burglaries

Time of Discovery	Type of Building					
	Bank (N=10)	Factory (N=219)	Office (N=422)	Service Station (N=50)	Shop (N=669)	Store and Warehouse (N=58)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Midnight to 4.00 a.m.	75.0	7.4	7.1	10.2	16.3	-
4.01 a.m. to 8.00 a.m.	25.0	54.2	32.6	74.9	26.0	52.5
8.01 a.m. to 12 noon	-	18.8	42.5	10.7	35.1	23.7
12.01 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.	-	5.2	6.8	-	7.0	13.6
4.01 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.	-	8.3	5.5	3.6	5.6	10.2
8.01 p.m. to Mid-night	-	6.1	5.5	5.5	7.0	-
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The times burglaries in different types of buildings were discovered can be interpreted in terms of the periods they were vacant (Table 17). Burglaries which were more often discovered during night time hours, that is in banks and shops, were more likely to have been vacant only a short time if at all. On the other hand, about one half of service station burglaries occurred in premises vacant between 7 and 12 hours while one third of offences involving factories, offices, stores and warehouses, construction sites and government buildings occurred in premises vacant 13 to 18 hours. This information is consistent with the burglaries occurring overnight and being discovered in the morning. Burglaries of schools and construction sites were more likely to occur in premises vacant over 24 hours, that is over the weekend or extended holiday breaks.

Table 16. Continued

	Type of Building					
	Other Commercial (N=405) %	Construction Sites (N=139) %	Government Buildings (N=130) %	Recreation (N=202) %	Schools (N=366) %	Other (N=104) %
	6.5	-	9.3	6.1	3.1	1.7
	37.9	43.8	47.0	22.8	39.4	15.3
	33.2	15.1	21.2	31.5	28.1	44.0
	4.2	24.5	10.6	20.6	11.3	16.9
	7.9	10.8	5.3	12.3	12.5	13.6
	10.3	5.8	6.6	6.7	5.6	8.5
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chi Square Test - Highly Significant

Table 17. Period Premises Vacant in Non-Residential Burglaries

Period Vacant	Type of Building					
	Bank (N=8) %	Factory (N=217) %	Service Station (N=49) %	Shop (N=663) %	Store and Warehouse (N=58) %	Other Commercial (N=401) %
Less than 1 hour	60.0	15.9	3.6	18.1	1.7	11.1
1 to 2 hours	-	1.8	3.6	2.7	-	3.2
3 to 6 hours	-	4.4	14.3	9.7	3.4	9.5
7 to 12 hours	-	15.5	57.1	26.2	16.9	17.9
13 to 18 hours	20.0	32.8	14.3	24.6	34.0	30.2
19 to 24 hours	-	4.4	-	5.5	20.3	7.9
Over 24 hours	20.0	25.2	7.1	13.2	23.7	20.2
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Chi Square Test - Highly Significant

3.4.3. Value of Property Stolen in Non-Residential Burglaries

Property stolen from commercial premises was twice as likely to be valued over \$1000 than the property stolen from non-commercial premises (Table 18).

This higher value can be attributed largely to offences valued at over \$1000 which involved a higher proportion of factory, shop and warehouse burglaries while service stations and office burglaries had a high proportion of burglaries valued at less than \$100.

Table 17. Continued

Type of Building

<u>Construction Sites</u> (N=138)	<u>Government Buildings</u> (N=129)	<u>Recreation</u> (N=201)	<u>Schools</u> (N=363)	<u>Other</u> (N=61)
%	%	%	%	%
7.1	16.1	20.4	18.1	1.8
-	1.3	0.9	1.4	3.6
-	6.0	5.5	1.9	9.1
4.7	16.1	21.7	12.9	3.6
32.3	31.7	21.7	20.9	29.2
11.0	6.7	7.7	8.9	10.9
44.9	22.1	22.1	35.9	41.8
<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Chi Square Test -
Highly Significant

Within the non-commercial premises group, construction sites were more open to offences involving goods valued at over \$500.00 while, in one half of burglaries of schools and recreational buildings, property valued under \$100.00 was stolen.

Table 18. Value of Property Stolen from Commercial and Non-Commercial Burglaries

	<u>Commercial Premises</u> (N=1914) %	<u>Non-Commercial Premises</u> (N=1019) %
Nil	25.2	27.0
Less than \$101	29.1	37.0
\$101 to \$500	24.1	21.7
\$501 to \$1000	9.8	8.8
\$1001 to \$5000	10.1	5.1
Over \$5000	1.7	0.4
	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Chi Square Test -
Highly Significant

3.4.4. Discussion

Shops contributed most to non-residential burglaries and these offences occurred more often in the Southern Sector of Melbourne than in other parts of the State. About 60% of shop burglaries were discovered in the periods 4.00 a.m. and 8.00 a.m. or 8.00 a.m. and noon in premises which have been vacant between 7 and 18 hours. This is consistent with offences which occur at night. However, a significant number of shop burglaries were discovered between mid-night and 4.00 a.m., presumably as a result of security systems. Most shop burglaries reported to police were valued at less than \$100.00. Challenger (1982) has pointed to about 30% under reporting of shop burglaries in Victoria and has indicated that the average estimated value of property stolen in shop burglaries is \$893.00. However, the average estimated value of

property stolen in shop burglaries reported to police in the current survey was \$574.99 (\pm \$50.06 S.E.), but the inconsistency in these two figures may reflect the inclusion of burglaries in which nothing was stolen in the calculations. Under-reporting to police is normally associated with lesser value offences (Buikhuisen, 1978) and this factor leads to the conclusion that the mean value of property taken in all shop burglaries is, in fact, less than \$574.00.

Another important type of premises burglarised was offices. Office burglary was also particularly associated with night time offences but in nearly 70% of cases nothing was taken or stolen goods were valued at less than \$100.00.

Schools accounted for 13% of burglaries reported to police. One third of these offences occurred in buildings vacant over 24 hours, that is over weekends or school holidays. Nearly three quarters involved stealing of property valued under \$100.00 or nothing.

Perhaps the most interesting, if the least frequent non-residential burglary offences involved banks. These offences contributed to less than 1% of all burglaries reported to police in Victoria but it is significant that nearly all were detected during the night time hours in occupied premises and resulted in nothing stolen. These characteristics point directly to the usefulness of security systems in preventing burglars achieving their aims. However, the two bank offences surveyed in which the burglars were successful without being arrested within the survey period involved stealing of more than \$10,000.00 each.

The arrest rate for all bank burglaries is nearly zero and this may reflect the sophistication of burglars who attempt the big time.

4.0: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After theft, burglary is the crime, most frequently reported to police in Victoria (Victoria Police 1982a). Burglary therefore remains an offence which has a strong influence on public perception of police professionalism and competence. It is also the offence to which people appear to consider themselves most at risk (Van Dijk, 1978). It can be calculated that reported burglary in Victoria resulted in loss of \$42 million in property and involved 3.6% of metropolitan homes and 1.4% of rural homes in 1982 (A.B.S., 1981).

There is considerable evidence that crimes against the person are less likely to be reported to police than property offences such as burglary (e.g. Van Dijk and Steinmetz, 1980) but, among property offences, only around 60% to 80% of offences result in police reports (Buikhuisen, 1975; A.B.S., 1979; Challinger, 1982).

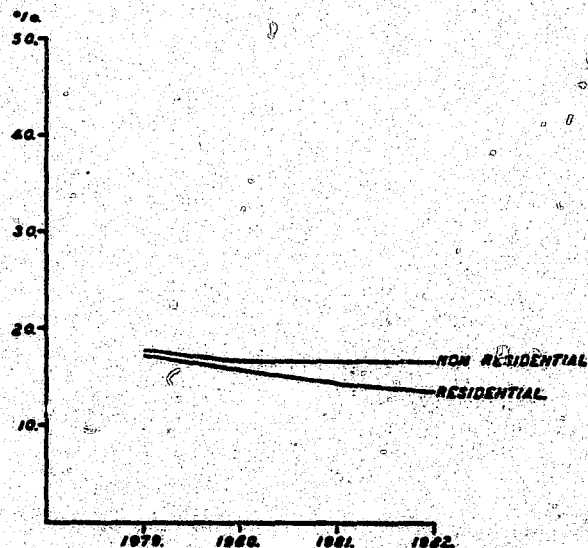
This means that studies of reported burglaries such as the current project must be interpreted carefully. Reporting of crime is directly related to the victims confidence in the police and increases of up to 30% in reported crime rates could therefore reflect improved perception of police effectiveness (Waller and Okihiro, 1978; Van Dijk, 1979). Other factors which can influence the reporting rate of burglaries include prosecution policy, the feeling of loss or invasion of privacy experienced by the victim and insurance requirements (Buikhuisen, 1975; Waller & Okihiro, 1978; Challinger, 1982).

It is therefore likely that the financial and emotional burdens which victims of burglary must carry are seriously underestimated in any survey such as this one based on police reported offences.

A survey of victims is urgently needed to establish the real cost of burglary to the community and to identify factors which predispose people to not reporting illegal entry of their premises to the police.

The solution rate for burglary is low and it has continued to decline over the last four years (e.g. Victoria Police, 1982b) (Fig. 8). Many experienced policeman and criminologists have expressed virtual powerlessness to anything about this, taking into account traditional police methods and available resources (Greenberg et al, 1973; Waller & Okihiro, 1978; Maguire, 1982).

SOLUTION RATES FOR BURGLARIES REPORTED BY POLICE IN VICTORIA.



To quote Sir Robert Mark (1978):

"The simple truth is that crimes against property are now so numerous that both police and courts are of little relevance for the point of view of the victim and the insurer.... I am suggesting quite bluntly that for the first time in this century the belief that the State can, or even wishes to, protect people effectively from burglary, breaking offences and theft should be abandoned, at least in the great cities, where inadequate numbers of police have other and more demanding priorities".

This being so, strategies directed toward prevention of burglary need to be given precedence, both within the police force and within the community it serves.

Burglary in Victoria is more likely to occur in the Central City area and less likely to occur in Rural Victoria than the population distribution would lead us to expect. This report consistently shows that factors associated with opportunity have the most important influence in commission of these crimes. Opportunity is associated with:-

- . Premises vacant over two hours.
- . Offences discovered at times usually associated with return after extended periods of time.
- . Easily transportable and disposable property.

Buildings which are more likely to be subject to sophisticated security arrangements, such as banks and some shops, have burglaries discovered more often in the middle of the night. Burglaries of other buildings, such as dwellings, government buildings and construction sites which are not usually protected by alarm or security systems were more likely to be found when work began for the day or when residents returned home in the evening.

Burglars clearly take advantage of obviously empty buildings. It is of course impossible to say how many potential offenders have been deterred by security alarms and other devices but American studies have shown that about 20% of non-residential burglaries occur in premises with active alarm and/or security inspection (Pope, 1977). It seems security arrangements probably reduce the frequency of property loss even if they have little proven effect on the likelihood of a burglary taking place.

Further, burglary of dwellings vacated during the day may be reduced through the operation of local co-operative surveillance networks such as the effective Neighbourhood Watch Programme which have been shown to be effective in Detroit and Manitoba (Humphrey, 1981; Smith, 1983).

It is therefore recommended that the public be encouraged to co-operate in reducing the period of time which buildings remain obviously unprotected by providing for security inspections, alarm systems or improved neighbourhood surveillance.

The availability of disposable and transportable property seems to be the other relevant factor which differentiates between whether a burglary results in property loss or not. Jewellery and television sets follow money as the most frequently stolen items.

These sorts of items will nearly always be available to the burglar but their usefulness to him depends on their value: if he cannot dispose of his goods he has nothing to gain from his behaviour.

Property owners could take the initiative by individually marking and registering items which may be attractive to the burglar. This would enable identification of stolen property and would improve the likelihood of successful prosecution of offenders and receivers. It could also act as a deterrent to the potential offender.

Further, police operations directed toward removing the "Fence" from the burglary chain (Scarr, 1973) appear to have great potential in reducing the average value of goods stolen by professional burglars.

Inevitably operations directed at this part of the burglary chain involve good intelligence about individual receivers and the organised criminal community together with effective police and prosecution responses to this information. Specialist groups such as Operation "Sting" in Washington and Operation "Fence" in New York are working examples of this sort of activity (Henderson, 1979).

It is therefore recommended that police activities directed specifically at breaking the distribution network for stolen goods be given high priority.

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