



**The Hon Michael Keenan MP
Minister for Justice**

MEDIA RELEASE

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Counting the cost of crime in Australia

Counting the Costs of Crime in Australia: A 2011 estimate is the fifth report in a series from the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC).

The comprehensive snapshot from 2011 estimates the total cost of crime to the community was \$47.6 billion.

The majority of the costs related to operating criminal justice agencies such as police, courts and corrections, as well as assisting victims and crime prevention measures.

In 2011, the most costly crimes to the community were:

- fraud \$6 billion
- drug abuse \$3 billion
- assault \$3 billion
- criminal damage (vandalism and graffiti) \$2.7 billion; and
- arson \$2.3 billion

The Coalition Government was elected on a platform to help make our streets and communities safer through tough and effective steps to assist fighting and preventing crime.

Since coming to Government we have fast-tracked new anti-gang squads to help state and territory authorities tackle criminal gangs, and their illegal trades including drug trafficking, drug manufacturing, extortion, prostitution and firearms trafficking.

We have a roadmap to tackle the growing threat of fraud – particularly identity crime – which was recently released.

We also have a \$50 million Safer Streets program which is being used to support a range of community safety commitments to improve security on the ground in communities around Australia.

We know only safe communities can be strong and prosperous, and the best way to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour is to prevent it happening.

In 2011 there was:

- 463 **homicides**, including 274 cases of murder and manslaughter and 189 cases of driving causing death. The total cost for homicide was estimated at \$2.7 million per incident, totalling \$1.3 billion.
- An estimated 1.2 million **assaults** with a cost of \$2,600 per assault. The estimated medical costs of an assault requiring hospitalisation was \$11,600 with a total medical cost of \$379 million overall.

- An estimated 198,000 **sexual assaults**, the vast majority of which were against women. The average medical cost for those injured was \$950 per incident. The estimated total cost of sexual assault, including those not reported to police was \$775 million.
- A total estimated cost of **robbery** of \$372.4 million, on average representing approximately \$5,118 per victim.
- An estimated 1.3 million incidents of **shop theft** nationally in Australia. Victoria Police estimates an average cost per incident of shop theft of \$70, which results in an estimated property loss of \$90.9m. (Based on the most recent comparable estimates of shop theft by the UK Home Office that only 6.2 percent is reported officially, the national number of incidents of shop theft would have been 1.3 million in 2011.)
- \$6 billion in **fraud** losses including: fraud against the Commonwealth (including welfare fraud plus internal fraud) \$96.5 million, personal/consumer fraud \$1.4 billion, serious fraud \$657 million; and police-recorded fraud \$2.1 billion, with a further \$1.7 billion in indirect costs of fraud.
- An estimated total cost of **arson** to be \$2.3 billion, of which the largest component was property loss estimated to be \$971 million.

Complete information on how the costs were estimated is in the AIC's Report which is available at www.aic.gov.au

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Background

The AIC has produced a number of costs of crime estimates, and each time the AIC recalibrates its costings in order to create a more accurate estimation by taking into account changes in statistical multipliers, costs of crime methods used overseas and better baseline data.