



Theft of Jewellery in Western Australia

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This bulletin examines jewellery theft in Western Australia from two main sources: (a) analysis of stealing offences recorded by police (as discussed fully in Ferrante & Clare, 2006b),¹ and (b) discussions with convicted burglars in Western Australia (as presented in Ferrante & Clare, 2006a). Jewellery has been selected for special examination here because it was identified as a highly desirable item for theft across these two separate research exercises. Generally, previous studies of theft and stolen goods (e.g., Clarke, 1999) have shown that property items, such as jewellery, are highly CRAVED (concealable, removable, available, valuable, enjoyable, and disposable).

Stolen Jewellery According to Police Records

Stealing is the largest category of crime reported to police (Ferrante, Loh, Maller, Valuri & Fernandez, 2005). In the 12-month period from July 2004 to June 2005, almost 75,000 stealing offences were reported to and recorded by WA Police. Of the more than 780,000 items that were reported stolen during this period to a value of over \$46 million, jewellery comprised approximately 2% of the quantity and 6% (\$2.7 million) of the value.²

Variations in Jewellery Theft Across Locations

From the findings reported by Ferrante and Clare (2006b) jewellery was in the top two most valuable goods reported stolen from dwellings – accounting for 11% of the total value of reported goods. However, as Figure 1 indicates, there was variation between the *quantity* and *value* of jewellery reported stolen across locations, with jewellery stolen from dwellings comprising 60% of the total value of all stolen jewellery, yet these items accounted for only 25% of the total amount of stolen jewellery. Conversely, jewellery stolen from retail outlets accounted for almost half of total amount of jewellery stolen but comprised only 20% of the total value of stolen jewellery. This demonstrates that jewellery taken from dwellings tends to be of high value but taken in small quantities, while jewellery stolen from retail outlets tends to be of lesser value but taken in greater quantities. This relationship was also identified for cash and office/computing equipment.

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Disclaimer: The findings and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policies or views of the government departments who supported the research.

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