

Statistical Bulletin

Crime and Justice Series

A National Statistics Publication for Scotland

RECORDED CRIMES AND OFFENCES INVOLVING FIREARMS, SCOTLAND, 2008-09
27 October 2009



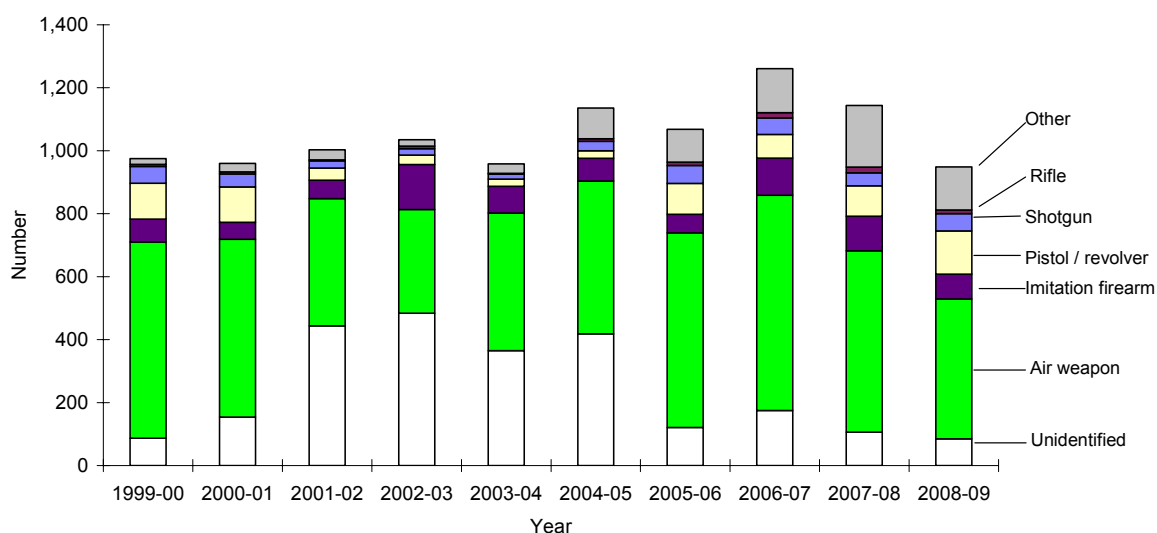
1. Introduction

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

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

From 2005-06, and particularly for 2006-07 onwards, the figures are expected to provide more extensive coverage of crimes and offences from all police forces. This follows discussions with the police forces regarding the scope of the data collection and clarification regarding what should be included in the statistical returns. This clarification is not considered to impact on the major crimes and offences, but is expected to result in an increase in some of the more minor categories. (See [Annex 5.13 – 5.17](#))

Chart 1 - Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by main firearm used, 1999-00 to 2008-09



(1) See Annex 5.13 - 5.15.

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

2. Main Points

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

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

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

- In 2008-09, the Scottish police recorded 949 offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used, a decrease of 17 per cent from the total of 1,144 recorded in 2007-08. ([Table 1](#))
- There was a decrease in the number of offences of reckless conduct with a firearm, from 294 in 2007-08 to 229 in 2008-09 with the figure remaining higher than that recorded in 2005-06 and earlier. The number of 'other crimes and offences' decreased from 234 in 2007-08 to 191 in 2008-09. ([Table 1](#))
- The number of vandalism offences was 127 in 2008-09, almost unchanged from 124 in 2007-08. The number of minor assaults was 142 in 2008-09, down 29 per cent from 201 in 2007-08. The number of robberies involving the use of a firearm rose from 65 in 2007-08 to 91 in 2008-09. ([Table 1](#))
- The use of firearms in criminal activity continued to constitute only a small proportion of all offences recorded by the police in 2008-09; 2.0 per cent of recorded homicides (two offences), 3.2 per cent of recorded attempted murders (23 offences), and 3.1 per cent of recorded robberies (91 offences). In each of the remaining three categories, less than 0.4 per cent of offences involved the alleged use of a firearm. ([Table 2](#))
- Air weapons accounted for 47 per cent (444) of all offences involving firearms in 2008-09, compared to 50 per cent (576) in 2007-08. ([Table 3](#))
- The number of offences in which a firearm was fired, and which subsequently killed or caused injury to a person, decreased from 212 in 2007-08 to 138 in 2008-09. ([Table 5](#))
- Of the 138 main victims injured in recorded offences in which a firearm was fired, 102 (74 per cent) were male and 36 (26 per cent) were female. There were no reported offences in which police officers were shot causing injury. Twenty-five main victims (18 per cent) were aged between 11-15 years of age and 21 victims (15 per cent) were aged 10 years or under. ([Table 10](#))
- In 2008-09, 59 per cent of all offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used were cleared up, a decrease from 64 per cent cleared up in 2007-08. ([Table 11](#))
- The Strathclyde police force area contained 43 per cent of the estimated population in Scotland in 2008 and accounted for 47 per cent (445) of all offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used in 2008-09. ([Table 13](#))

3. Commentary

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

Crime/offence type (Tables 1, 1A)

- As with the previous three publications, minor Firearms Act 1968 offences, mainly relating to possession, handling and distribution of weapons and ammunition, are no longer included in the main tables. Totals for these offences are presented in [Table 15](#). (See [Annex 5.2](#))
- In 2008-09, the police recorded 949 offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used, a decrease of 17 per cent from the total of 1,144 recorded in 2007-08. It is thought that at least part of the previous increase in 2006-07 was due to a clarification in the scope of the firearms offences return (See [Annex 5.13-5.17](#)).
- The largest category of offence involving the use of a firearm in 2008-09 was 'reckless conduct with firearms', which constituted 24 per cent of all recorded firearms offences. Previous increases in this category since 2005-06 were mainly due to a change in recording practices (see [Annex 5.15](#)), which saw the inclusion of incidents involving air weapons where no injury or damage was caused. Such incidents were previously excluded from the figures. The large increase in the 'other crimes and offences' category in 2006-07 and 2007-08 was also partly due to a clarification of the counting rules. (See [Annex 5.13-5.17](#)).
- In 2008-09 there were two homicides involving the use of a firearm, a decrease from four the previous year. The number of attempted murders decreased from 33 in 2007-08 to 23 in 2008-09. The number of recorded serious assaults fell from 37 in 2007-08 to 16 in 2008-09. The number of robberies increased by 40 per cent from 65 to 91, in 2008-09.
- When offences involving air weapons and unidentified weapons are excluded the number of offences fell from 462 in 2007-08 to 420 in 2008-09.
- The pattern of offences, once those involving unidentified firearms or air weapons are excluded, shows the largest single category of offences are 'other crimes and offences', followed by 'Firearms Act 1968 offences' and 'minor assault'. ([Table 1A](#))

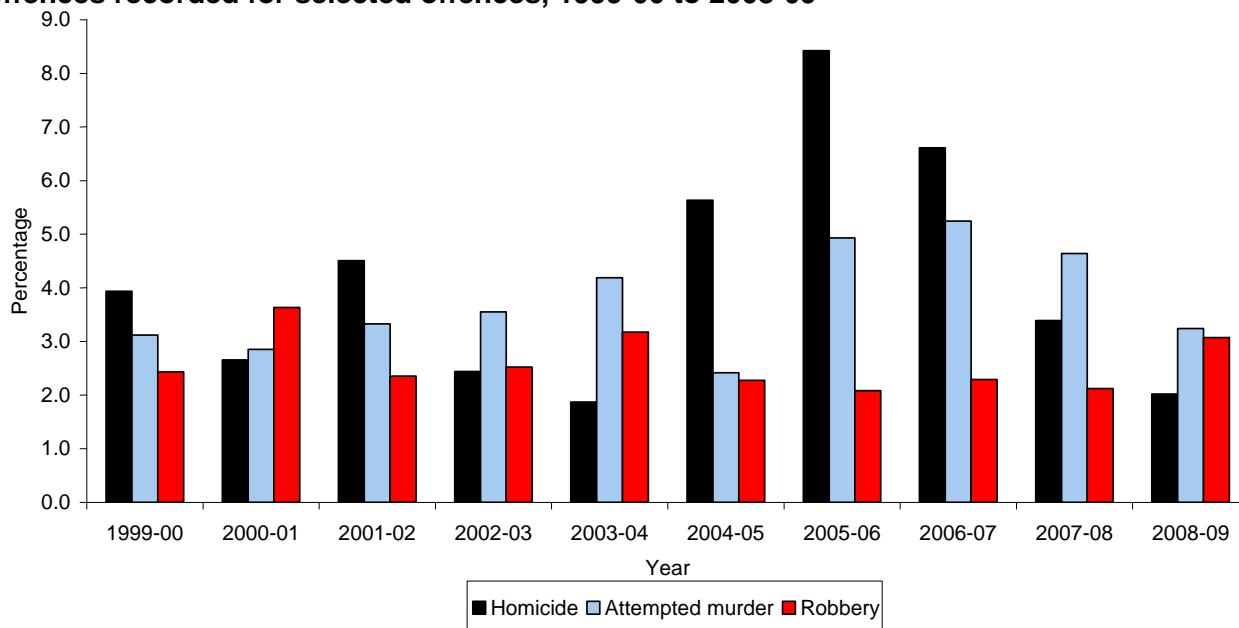
Proportion of crimes/offences involving firearms (Table 2 and Chart 2)

- The use of firearms in criminal activity constituted only a small proportion of all offences recorded by the police in 2008-09; 2.0 per cent of recorded homicides (two offences), 3.2 per cent of recorded attempted murders (23 offences), and 3.1 per cent of recorded robberies (91 offences). Less than 0.4 per cent of recorded serious assaults (16 offences), recorded minor assaults (142 offences) and recorded vandalism offences (127 offences) involved the alleged use of a firearm.

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

- There have been changes in the way the type of main firearm used has been recorded, which impacts mainly on the numbers of air weapons and unidentified weapons recorded (see [Annex 5.13](#)). From 2005-06 onwards, all police forces agreed to identify weapons where possible, resulting in an increase in the alleged use of air weapons (and other identified weapons) and a decrease in the alleged use of unidentified firearms. Furthermore, from 2006-07, all forces were asked to include incidents involving air weapons where no injury or damage was caused. It is likely that this increased the number of recorded offences involving air weapons.
- The number of offences involving unidentified weapons decreased from 106 in 2007-08 to 85 in 2008-09. This represents 9 per cent of all offences involving firearms in 2008-09.
- Air weapons accounted for 47 per cent of all offences involving firearms in 2008-09, compared to 50 per cent in 2007-08.
- Although many firearms that might previously have been logged as ‘unidentified’ are now recorded as air weapons, the other categories of firearms would also be expected to increase as a result of the change in reporting practice. This proved to be the case, with all identified categories except air weapons above pre-2005-06 levels.
- In comparison to 2007-08, the number of offences involving the alleged use of a pistol/revolver was up 41 per cent from 97 to 137, in 2008-09. There was an increase in the use of shotguns, from 41 in 2007-08 to 55 in 2008-09.
- Other firearms were used in 14 per cent of recorded offences in 2008-09. This category includes all other weapons covered by the Firearms Act 1968 not separately identified – such as starting guns, taser guns and pepper sprays.

Chart 2 - Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used as a percentage of all offences recorded for selected offences, 1999-00 to 2008-09



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

- In 2008-09, one out of two recorded homicides that involved the alleged use of a firearm involved an unidentified weapon. The remaining homicide involved a pistol/revolver.
- In 2008-09, the firearm could not be identified in four of the 23 attempted murders. The highest recorded identified weapon was the shotgun, which was used in 10 attempted murders, followed by the pistol/revolver which was used in six.
- In 2008-09, air weapons were used in 110 of the 127 offences (87 per cent) of vandalism involving firearms. An air weapon was also the weapon used in 66 per cent (152) of offences of reckless conduct with firearms, 42 per cent (59) of minor assaults, and 44 per cent (7) of serious assaults.

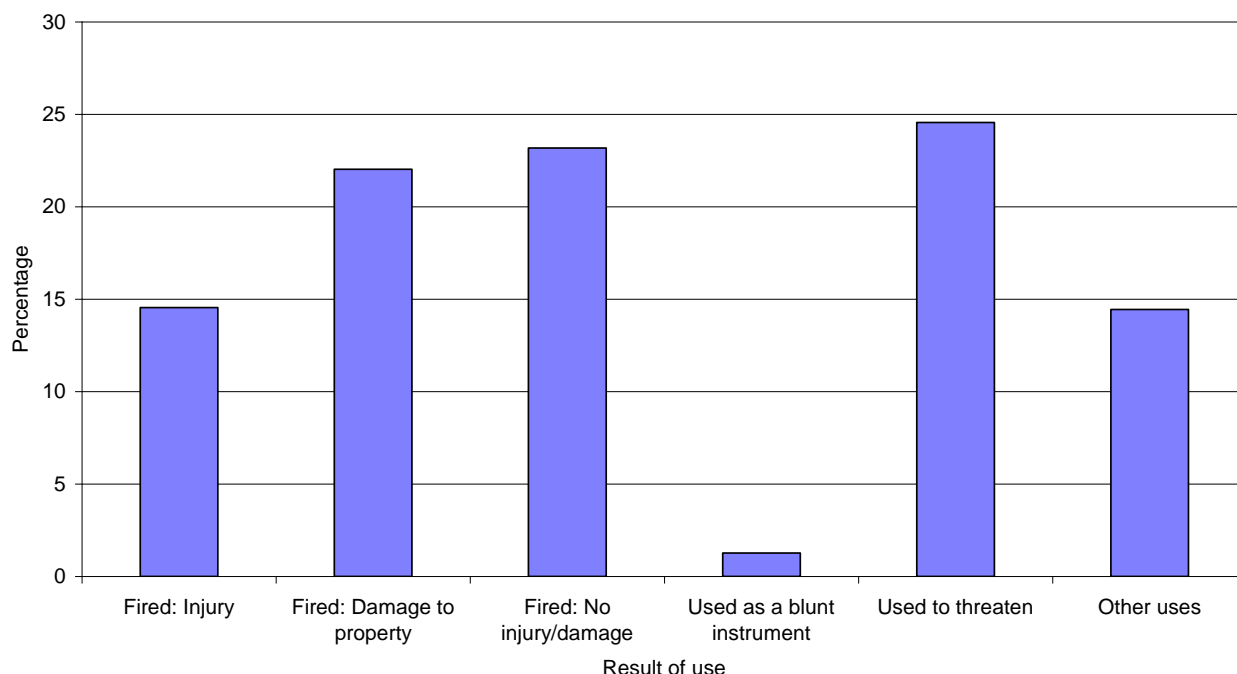
Result of the use of a firearm ([Table 5](#) and [Chart 3](#))

- Of the 949 offences involving the use of a firearm in 2008-09, 567 (60 per cent) involved the actual discharge of the firearm.
- The number of offences in which a firearm was fired and killed or caused injury to a person decreased from 212 in 2007-08 to 138 in 2008-09, down by 35 per cent.
- The number of cases in which a firearm was fired causing neither injury nor damage to property decreased from 286 in 2007-08 to 220 in 2008-09. Property damage resulting from the discharge of a firearm fell 6 per cent from 223 in 2007-08 to 209 in 2008-09.
- The number of offences where the firearm was used to threaten decreased 12 per cent from 266 in 2007-08 to 233 in 2008-09, while the number of other uses also decreased from 147 in 2007-08 to 137 in 2008-09. However, this is still substantially more than were recorded in 2005-06 (78); it is thought that the clarification in guidance to forces regarding which weapons to include in the firearms return may have impacted on these figures (see [Annex 5.16–5.17](#)).

Result of use of firearm by main firearm used ([Table 6](#))

- Of the 567 offences in which a firearm was actually fired, 64 per cent (362) involved the use of an air weapon. Of the offences involving an air weapon, zero resulted in death, 67 resulted in non-fatal injury to a person and 156 resulted in damage to property.
- Where the main firearm used was unidentified, one offence resulted in fatal injury and 10 offences caused non-fatal injury.
- In the majority of cases that involved a pistol/revolver (75 per cent), the firearm was used to threaten.

Chart 3 - Offences Involving a Firearm: Result of Use, 2008-09



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

- Of the 142 minor assaults involving a firearm, 76 involved the weapon being fired and causing injury. This represents over half (56 per cent) of all the recorded offences in which a firearm was fired and caused injury. In serious assaults involving a firearm, the firearm was fired and caused injury in 10 out of 16 cases (63 per cent).
- Of the 91 robberies, a firearm was used to threaten in 85 (93 per cent) offences, reflecting the nature of such crimes. In the majority of Firearms Act 1968 offences the firearm was used to threaten or for 'other uses'.
- Of the 216 offences of reckless conduct with firearms in which the weapon was fired, 137 (63 per cent) of them resulted in no injury or damage to property.

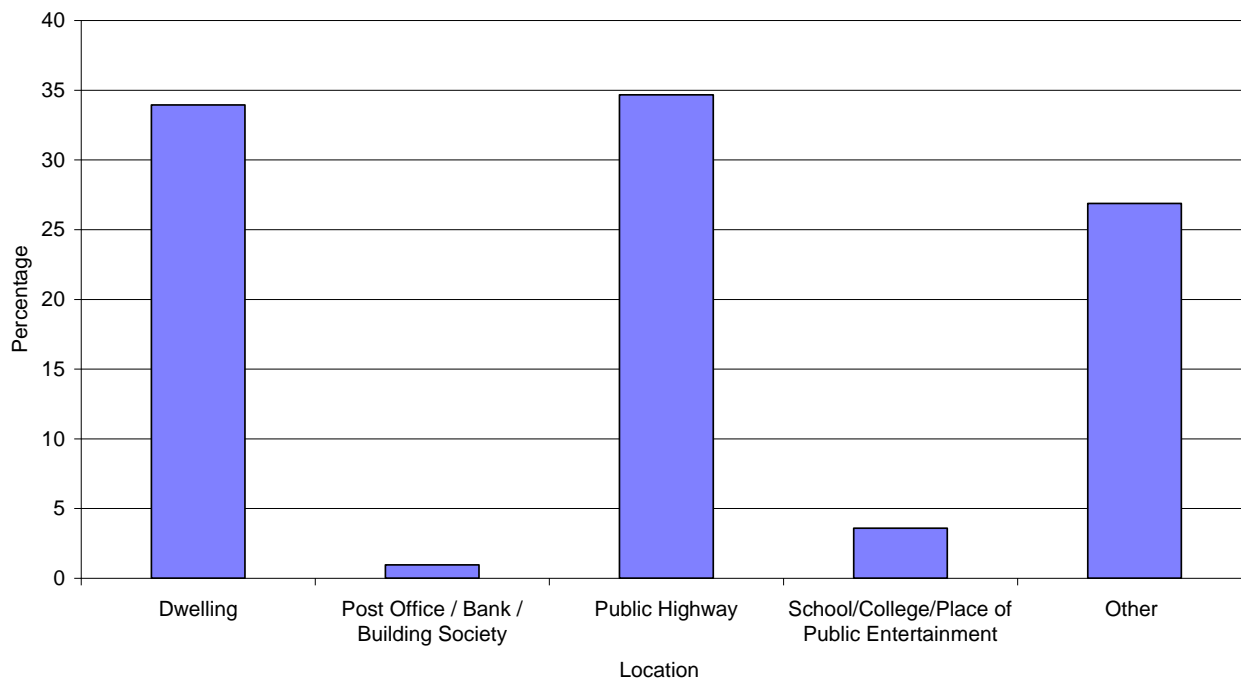
Location of use ([Table 8](#) and [Chart 4](#))

- In 2008-09, 322 offences involving the alleged use of a firearm occurred in a dwelling, compared to 386 offences in 2007-08. This accounted for 34 per cent of the total offences in each year.
- There was a decrease (21 per cent) in recorded offences occurring on public highways (including roads and footpaths), from 416 in 2007-08 to 329 in 2008-09. This figure remained higher than the 253 offences in 2005-06. This change was due mainly to an increase in recorded reckless conduct with a firearm and the rise in other offences.
- Twenty three offences involving the alleged use of a firearm occurred in a school/college, an increase of 35 per cent from 2007-08 when there were 17 offences.

Victim characteristics ([Table 10](#))

- Of the 138 main victims injured in recorded offences in which a firearm was fired in 2008-09, 102 (74 per cent) were male and 36 (26 per cent) were female. There were no reported offences in which police officers were shot causing injury (see [Annex 5.8](#)).
- In 2008-09, 25 (18 per cent) of main victims were aged between 11 and 15 years and 21 victims (15 per cent) were aged 10 years or under. Seventy six (55 per cent) were aged 21 or over.

Chart 4 - Recorded Crimes and Offences Involving a Firearm: Location of Use, 2008-09



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

Clear - up rates ([Table 11](#))

- In 2008-09, 59 per cent of all offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used were cleared up, a decrease from 64 per cent in 2007-08 which was the highest recorded in the 10 year period covered by this bulletin.
- The clear-up rate for attempted murder was down from 58 per cent in 2007-08 to 52 per cent in 2008-09, while the clear-up rate for serious assault with firearms decreased from 54 per cent in 2007-08 to 44 per cent in 2008-09.
- Due to the nature of the offence, clear-up rates for vandalism have historically been low. In 2008-09, the clear-up rate was 10 per cent, down from 13 per cent in 2007-08.

Accused characteristics ([Table 12, 12A](#))

- The total number of offences cleared up, in which there was an accused, decreased by 24 per cent from 734 in 2007-08 to 560 in 2008-09.
- The number of offences cleared up in 2008-09 where the main accused was aged 15 years or under was 98, representing 18 per cent of offences cleared up. The main accused was aged 16 to 20 years in 125 cases (22 per cent), and was aged 21 or over in 337 (60 per cent) of these cases.
- Fifty-two per cent (51) of firearm offences involving young persons aged 15 or under related to the use of an air weapon, rising to 57 per cent (71) for those aged 16 to 20 and falling to 36 per cent (121) for those accused aged 21 or over.

Analysis by police force area ([Table 13](#))

- The Strathclyde police force area, which contained 43 per cent of the estimated population in Scotland in 2008, accounted for 47 per cent (445) of all offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used in 2008-09. This is a decrease from 52 per cent the previous year.
- More specifically, one of the two homicides, 48 per cent (11) of attempted murders, 63 per cent (10) of serious assaults, 82 per cent (75) of recorded robberies, and 50 per cent (71) of minor assaults in which a firearm was alleged to have been used, took place in Strathclyde. Eighty-three per cent of the recorded vandalism offences involving a firearm took place in Lothian and Borders police force area.

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

- During 2008-09 the Scottish police recorded nine offences in which a firearm other than an air weapon was stolen, a decrease from 25 offences in 2007-08.
- The number of incidents where shotguns were stolen fell from six in 2007-08 to three in 2008-09. Rifles were stolen in two incidents in 2008-09, compared to nine in 2007-08.

Minor Firearms Act 1968 Offences ([Table 15](#))

- The number of minor Firearms Act 1968 offences, mainly relating to the possession, handling and distribution of weapons and ammunition, decreased by 10 per cent from 863 in 2007-08 to 774 in 2008-09. (see [Annex 5.2](#))

4. Appendix of tables

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

Table 1. Firearm offences, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Table 1A. Offences in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was used, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Table 2. Firearm offences, as a percentage of all offences recorded for selected crimes, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Table 3. Firearms offences by main firearm used, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09⁽¹⁾

Table 3A. Firearms offences by main firearm used, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09⁽¹⁾ - Percentage of Total Offences

Table 4. Firearm offences by crime/offence type and main firearm used, Scotland, 2008-09

Table 5. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by how used, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Table 5A. Offences in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been used by how used, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Table 6. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used, by main firearm used, by how used, Scotland, 2008-09

Table 7. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by offence and how used, Scotland, 2008-09

Table 7A. Offences in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been used by offence and how used, Scotland, 2008-09

Table 8. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by location of use, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Table 8A. Offences in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been used, by location of use, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Table 9. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been fired causing fatal or other injury, by main firearm used, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09⁽¹⁾

Table 10. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been fired causing fatal or other injury, by age and sex of main victim, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Table 10A. Offences in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been fired causing fatal or other injury, by age and sex of main victim, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Table 11. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used, by percentage of crimes cleared up, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Table 12. Offences cleared up by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used and an accused was identified, by age of main accused, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Table 12A. Offences cleared up by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used and an accused was identified, by age of main accused and main firearm used, Scotland, 2008-09

Table 13. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by police force area, Scotland, 2008-09

Table 13A. Offences in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been used by police force area, Scotland, 2008-09

Table 14. Offences in which a firearm was stolen, by main firearm stolen (excluding air weapons), Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Table 15. Miscellaneous firearms offences ^{(1),(2)} by police force area, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Table 1. Firearm offences, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Crime/offence	Number & Percentage										
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	% change 07-08 to 08-09
Homicide	5	3	5	3	2	8	8	8	4	2	-50
Attempted murder	22	17	24	27	31	20	35	43	33	23	-30
Serious assault	45	50	47	39	67	48	20	19	37	16	-57
Robbery	120	156	108	117	132	85	74	82	65	91	40
Vandalism	277	238	280	276	345	408	396	204	124	127	2
Reckless conduct with firearms	168	140	158	148	137	169	123	293	294	229	-22
Firearms Act 1968 offences ⁽¹⁾	122	106	125	153	115	120	152	196	152	128	-16
Minor assault	183	205	216	230	104	229	143	200	201	142	-29
Other crimes & offences	33	45	40	42	25	49	117	216	234	191	-18
Total	975	960	1,003	1,035	958	1,136	1,068	1,261	1,144	949	-17

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

Table 1A. Offences in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was used, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Crime/offence	Number & Percentage										
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	% change 07-08 to 08-09
Homicide	3	3	-	-	1	2	5	4	2	1	-50
Attempted murder	17	13	9	-	4	13	19	21	24	18	-25
Serious assault	7	4	4	9	16	3	3	3	13	6	-54
Robbery	82	90	25	33	29	24	56	50	41	68	66
Vandalism	4	2	4	4	3	15	27	19	23	9	-61
Reckless conduct with firearms	21	13	5	14	11	10	42	52	58	51	-12
Firearms Act 1968 offences ⁽¹⁾	84	61	54	104	59	62	80	85	87	82	-6
Minor assault	29	34	36	34	21	77	52	72	100	81	-19
Other crimes & offences	18	21	18	24	12	26	45	96	114	104	-9
Total	265	241	155	222	156	232	329	402	462	420	-9

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

Table 2. Firearm offences, as a percentage of all offences recorded for selected crimes, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Crime/offence	Percentage ⁽¹⁾									
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Homicide	3.9	2.7	4.5	2.4	1.9	5.6	8.4	6.6	3.4	2.0
Attempted murder	3.1	2.9	3.3	3.6	4.2	2.4	4.9	5.2	4.6	3.2
Serious assault	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	1.0	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.3
Robbery	2.4	3.6	2.4	2.5	3.2	2.3	2.1	2.3	2.1	3.1
Vandalism	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1
Minor assault	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2

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

Table 3. Firearms offences by main firearm used, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09⁽¹⁾

Main firearm used	Number & Percentage										
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	% change 07-08 to 08-09
Shotgun	53	41	23	21	16	30	57	52	41	55	34
Rifle	7	7	3	8	2	8	11	17	18	12	-33
Pistol/revolver	114	112	39	30	23	24	98	75	97	137	41
Air weapon	623	565	404	329	437	486	618	684	576	444	-23
Imitation firearm	73	54	58	143	85	72	59	118	110	79	-28
Unidentified	87	154	444	484	365	418	121	175	106	85	-20
Other	18	27	32	20	30	98	104	140	196	137	-30
Total identified excluding air weapons	265	241	155	222	156	232	329	402	462	420	-9
Total	975	960	1,003	1,035	958	1,136	1,068	1,261	1,144	949	-17

(1) See Annex 5.13 - 5.15

Table 3A. Firearms offences by main firearm used, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09⁽¹⁾ - Percentage of Total Offences

Main firearm used	Percentage									
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Shotgun	5	4	2	2	2	3	5	4	4	6
Rifle	1	1	*	1	*	1	1	1	2	1
Pistol/revolver	12	12	4	3	2	2	9	6	8	14
Air weapon	64	59	40	32	46	43	58	54	50	47
Imitation firearm	7	6	6	14	9	6	6	9	10	8
Unidentified	9	16	44	47	38	37	11	14	9	9
Other	2	3	3	2	3	9	10	11	17	14
Total identified excluding air weapons	27	25	15	21	16	20	31	32	40	44
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

(1) See Annex 5.13 - 5.15

Table 4. Firearm offences by crime/offence type and main firearm used, Scotland, 2008-09

Crime/offence	Main firearm used							Number	
	Shotgun	Rifle	Pistol/		Air weapon	Imitation	Unidentified	Other	TOTAL
			Revolver						
Homicide	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	2	
Attempted murder	10	1	6	1	-	4	1	23	
Serious assault	-	-	3	7	1	3	2	16	
Robbery	8	1	53	9	5	14	1	91	
Vandalism	-	1	-	110	-	8	8	127	
Reckless conduct with firearms	13	5	5	152	5	26	23	229	
Firearms Act 1968 offences ⁽¹⁾	8	1	31	36	30	10	12	128	
Minor assault	3	-	11	59	12	2	55	142	
Other crimes & offences	13	3	27	70	26	17	35	191	
Total	55	12	137	444	79	85	137	949	

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

Table 5. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by how used, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

How used	Number & Percentage										
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	% change
	07-08 to 08-09										
Fired - fatal injury	5	3	5	3	2	8	8	8	4	2	-50
- causing injury	259	320	326	340	239	316	189	240	208	136	-35
- damage to property	363	301	341	334	416	500	499	314	223	209	-6
- no injury/damage	41	12	22	45	26	61	68	233	286	220	-23
Used as a blunt instrument	16	12	18	9	6	14	10	18	10	12	20
Used to threaten	202	222	186	170	183	202	216	318	266	233	-12
Other uses	89	90	105	134	86	35	78	130	147	137	-7
Total	975	960	1,003	1,035	958	1,136	1,068	1,261	1,144	949	-17

Table 5A. Offences in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been used by how used, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

How used	Number & Percentage										
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	% change
	07-08 to 08-09										
Fired - fatal injury	3	3	-	-	1	2	5	4	2	1	-50
- causing injury	18	32	26	37	31	73	61	74	104	59	-43
- damage to property	27	16	8	12	9	19	40	32	46	30	-35
- no injury/damage	20	4	9	12	10	23	34	63	72	67	-7
Used as a blunt instrument	9	11	3	3	1	3	6	10	6	9	50
Used to threaten	127	122	61	69	64	91	133	156	154	177	15
Other uses	61	53	48	89	40	21	50	63	78	77	-1
Total	265	241	155	222	156	232	329	402	462	420	-9

Table 6. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used, by main firearm used, by how used, Scotland, 2008-09

How used	Main firearm used							Number
	Shotgun	Rifle	Pistol/		Imitation	Unidentified	Other	TOTAL
			Revolver	Air weapon				
Fired - fatal injury	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	2
- causing injury	5	1	6	67	1	10	46	136
- damage to property	8	8	-	156	-	23	14	209
- no injury/damage	14	1	6	139	10	14	36	220
Used as a blunt instrument	1	-	4	3	4	-	-	12
Used to threaten	22	2	103	29	33	27	17	233
Other uses	5	-	17	50	31	10	24	137
Total	55	12	137	444	79	85	137	949

Table 7. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by offence and how used, Scotland, 2008-09

Crime/offence	How firearm was used							Number
	Fired - fatal injury	Fired - causing injury	Fired - damage to property	Fired - no injury/damage	Blunt instrument	Used to threaten	Other uses	TOTAL
Homicide	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Attempted murder	-	15	-	8	-	-	-	23
Serious assault	-	10	-	-	3	3	-	16
Robbery	-	3	-	1	2	85	-	91
Vandalism	-	-	127	-	-	-	-	127
Reckless conduct with firearms	-	22	57	137	-	1	12	229
Firearms Act 1968 offences ⁽¹⁾	-	7	-	10	1	53	57	128
Minor assault	-	76	-	33	6	27	-	142
Other crimes & offences	-	3	25	31	-	64	68	191
Total	2	136	209	220	12	233	137	949

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

Table 7A. Offences in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been used by offence and how used, Scotland, 2008-09

Crime/offence	How firearm was used							Number
	Fired - fatal injury	Fired - causing injury	Fired - damage to property	Fired - no injury/damage	Blunt instrument	Used to threaten	Other uses	TOTAL
Homicide	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Attempted murder	-	12	-	6	-	-	-	18
Serious assault	-	1	-	-	2	3	-	6
Robbery	-	-	-	-	2	66	-	68
Vandalism	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	9
Reckless conduct with firearms	-	2	14	31	-	1	3	51
Firearms Act 1968 offences ⁽¹⁾	-	-	-	4	1	44	33	82
Minor assault	-	42	-	11	4	24	-	81
Other crimes & offences	-	2	7	15	-	39	41	104
Total	1	59	30	67	9	177	77	420

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

Table 8. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by location of use, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Location of use	Number & Percentage										
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	% change 07-08 to 08-09
Dwelling	323	274	306	296	331	411	450	378	386	322	-17
Post Office	12	6	7	9	15	12	3	9	2	6	200
Bank / Building society	14	9	2	11	10	7	13	7	3	3	-
Public highway ⁽¹⁾	322	352	353	391	272	301	253	439	416	329	-21
School / College	22	20	20	23	23	26	19	27	17	23	35
Place of Public Entertainment	4	6	7	12	5	4	6	10	13	11	-15
Other locations	278	293	308	293	302	375	324	391	307	255	-17
Total	975	960	1,003	1,035	958	1,136	1,068	1,261	1,144	949	-17

⁽¹⁾ Includes roads and footpaths

Table 8A. Offences in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been used, by location of use, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Location of use	Number & Percentage										
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	% change 07-08 to 08-09
Dwelling	74	60	33	36	31	45	96	71	126	117	-7
Post Office	10	6	-	4	3	6	2	7	1	4	300
Bank / Building society	11	3	-	7	3	2	11	3	3	1	-67
Public highway ⁽¹⁾	84	70	56	91	44	75	90	156	195	162	-17
School / College	2	7	1	8	4	9	8	11	9	13	44
Place of Public Entertainment	1	2	2	3	4	1	2	4	6	5	-17
Other locations	83	93	63	73	67	94	120	150	122	118	-3
Total	265	241	155	222	156	232	329	402	462	420	-9

⁽¹⁾ Includes roads and footpaths

Table 9. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been fired causing fatal or other injury, by main firearm used, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09⁽¹⁾

Main firearm used	Number & Percentage										
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	% change 07-08 to 08-09
Shotgun	6	5	4	3	2	6	11	14	11	5	-55
Rifle	1	1	-	-	1	3	-	3	2	1	-50
Pistol / Revolver	9	7	6	-	-	2	11	10	10	7	-30
Air weapon	233	268	162	149	100	96	121	145	94	67	-29
Imitation	1	4	3	27	12	11	2	5	6	1	-83
Unidentified	10	20	143	157	109	153	10	25	12	11	-8
Other	4	18	13	7	17	53	42	46	77	46	-40
Total identified excluding air weapons	21	35	26	37	32	75	66	78	106	60	-43
Total	264	323	331	343	241	324	197	248	212	138	-35

⁽¹⁾ See Annex 5.13 - 5.15

Table 10. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been fired causing fatal or other injury, by age and sex of main victim, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Age and sex of main victim	Number & Percentage										
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	% change 07-08 to 08-09
All victims ⁽¹⁾	264	323	331	343	241	324	197	248	212	138	-35
10 or under	23	42	32	42	30	52	29	30	38	21	-45
11-15	121	119	107	112	73	92	47	60	46	25	-46
16-20	32	40	50	49	30	46	21	37	21	16	-24
21 or over	87	122	142	140	108	134	100	121	107	76	-29
Unknown	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Male	183	229	238	255	175	208	132	190	154	102	-34
10 or under	14	35	22	31	24	36	18	22	29	15	-48
11-15	86	76	74	82	49	47	28	44	30	20	-33
16-20	20	34	37	40	24	27	11	29	14	10	-29
21 or over	62	84	105	102	78	98	75	95	81	57	-30
Unknown	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Female	81	93	92	87	64	116	64	57	57	36	-37
10 or under	9	7	10	11	6	16	11	8	9	6	-33
11-15	35	43	33	30	24	45	19	16	16	5	-69
16-20	12	6	13	9	6	19	10	8	7	6	-14
21 or over	25	37	36	37	28	36	24	25	25	19	-24
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Police Officer	-	1	1	1	2	-	1	1	1	-	-100

(1) Includes Male, Female and Police Officer categories

Table 10A. Offences in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been fired causing fatal or other injury, by age and sex of main victim, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Age and sex of main victim	Number & Percentage										
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	% change 07-08 to 08-09
All victims ⁽¹⁾	21	35	26	37	32	75	66	78	106	60	-43
10 or under	-	6	5	10	10	25	14	10	27	13	-52
11-15	5	14	7	13	15	21	14	20	24	9	-63
16-20	1	3	3	2	2	3	5	6	9	7	-22
21 or over	15	12	11	12	5	26	33	42	46	31	-33
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Male	15	28	23	25	22	43	46	64	82	46	-44
10 or under	-	5	5	7	9	17	8	9	21	11	-48
11-15	2	10	4	9	8	6	8	14	18	8	-56
16-20	1	3	3	2	1	1	1	5	7	3	-57
21 or over	12	10	11	7	4	19	29	36	36	24	-33
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Female	6	7	3	12	10	32	19	14	24	14	-42
10 or under	-	1	-	3	1	8	6	1	6	2	-67
11-15	3	4	3	4	7	15	6	6	6	1	-83
16-20	-	-	-	-	1	2	4	1	2	4	100
21 or over	3	2	-	5	1	7	3	6	10	7	-30
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Police Officer	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-

(1) Includes Male, Female and Police Officer categories

Table 11. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used, by percentage of crimes cleared up, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Crime/offence	Percentage ⁽¹⁾									
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Homicide	60	33	0	67	50	63	88	100	50	0
Attempted murder	27	76	38	22	48	40	66	40	58	52
Serious assault	67	50	53	38	57	35	55	47	54	44
Robbery	38	53	39	43	46	48	30	46	52	54
Vandalism	6	9	10	4	8	3	9	6	13	10
Reckless conduct with firearms	50	50	54	52	47	45	49	58	64	61
Firearms Act 1968 offences ⁽²⁾	92	95	91	94	90	83	88	90	86	93
Minor assault	57	53	54	58	57	58	64	62	67	66
Other crimes & offences	76	80	68	90	72	76	62	79	81	66
Total	44	48	44	46	40	38	43	58	64	59

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

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

Table 12. Offences cleared up by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used and an accused was identified, by age of main accused, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Age (years)	Number & Percentage										
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	% change 07-08 to 08-09
15 or under	114	117	120	132	69	110	104	136	176	98	-44
16-20	129	130	134	154	136	120	112	209	217	125	-42
21 or over	185	213	192	190	181	198	240	382	341	337	-1
Total	428	460	446	476	386	428	456	727	734	560	-24

Table 12A. Offences cleared up by the police in which a firearm was alleged to have been used and an accused was identified, by age of main accused and main firearm used, Scotland, 2008-09

Age (years)	Main firearm used							Number	
	Shotgun	Rifle	Pistol/ Revolver		Air weapon	Imitation	Unidentified	Other	TOTAL
			Revolver	Air weapon					
15 or under	-	-	3	51	8	-	36	98	
16-20	3	1	17	71	11	1	21	125	
21 or over	22	9	70	121	54	22	39	337	
Total	25	10	90	243	73	23	96	560	

Table 13. Offences in which a firearm was alleged to have been used by police force area, Scotland, 2008-09

Crime/offence	Number								SCOTLAND
	Central	Dumfries & Galloway	Fife	Grampian	Lothian & Borders	Northern	Strathclyde	Tayside	
Homicide	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	2
Attempted murder	-	-	-	-	11	1	11	-	23
Serious assault	-	-	1	-	2	-	10	3	16
Robbery	-	-	3	-	8	1	75	4	91
Vandalism	-	5	-	1	105	2	5	9	127
Reckless conduct with firearms	14	8	8	13	34	10	123	19	229
Firearms Act 1968 offences ⁽¹⁾	3	-	6	3	20	12	71	13	128
Minor assault	1	6	3	2	35	1	71	23	142
Other crimes & offences	3	7	3	7	74	6	78	13	191
Total	21	26	24	26	290	33	445	84	949

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

Table 13A. Offences in which an identified firearm other than an air weapon was alleged to have been used by police force area, Scotland, 2008-09

Crime/offence	Number								SCOTLAND
	Central	Dumfries & Galloway	Fife	Grampian	Lothian & Borders	Northern	Strathclyde	Tayside	
Homicide	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Attempted murder	-	-	-	-	10	-	8	-	18
Serious assault	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	6
Robbery	-	-	1	-	6	-	57	4	68
Vandalism	-	-	-	-	6	1	-	2	9
Reckless conduct with firearms	2	6	2	-	14	3	17	7	51
Firearms Act 1968 offences ⁽¹⁾	-	-	4	3	15	10	41	9	82
Minor assault	-	6	1	1	24	1	28	20	81
Other crimes & offences	3	3	1	4	44	5	36	8	104
Total	5	15	9	8	120	20	190	53	420

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

Table 14. Offences in which a firearm was stolen, by main firearm stolen (excluding air weapons), Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Main firearm stolen	Number & Percentage										% change 07-08 to 08-09
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	
Shotgun	17	9	12	13	9	5	10	1	6	3	-50
Rifle	4	8	5	6	1	1	-	1	9	2	-78
Pistol/revolver	3	6	1	2	3	1	-	-	2	-	n/a
Other firearms	9	5	11	5	5	6	2	8	8	4	-50
Total	33	28	29	26	18	13	12	10	25	9	-64

Table 15. Miscellaneous firearms offences ^{(1),(2)} by police force area, Scotland, 1999-00 to 2008-09

Crime/offence	Number & Percentage										% change 07-08 to 08-09
	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	
Central	64	55	51	37	40	71	50	51	21	29	38
Dumfries & Galloway	40	34	21	35	37	32	22	29	36	37	3
Fife	29	45	64	21	19	36	26	56	33	38	15
Grampian	56	85	69	62	66	80	88	72	58	46	-21
Lothian & Borders	27	26	36	35	59	102	136	160	142	132	-7
Northern	50	71	66	74	62	69	73	95	50	59	18
Strathclyde	420	385	407	327	321	481	461	444	478	402	-16
Tayside	66	57	41	69	60	76	60	40	45	31	-31
Total	752	758	755	660	664	947	916	947	863	774	-10

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

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

5. Annex : Notes on statistics used in this bulletin

Returns

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

5.2 A return is submitted for each incident where a crime or offence in which a firearm is alleged to have been involved. Miscellaneous firearms offences relating mainly to possession, handling and distribution of firearms and ammunition are excluded from the main tables. Prior to 2005-06, returns were submitted for miscellaneous firearms offences, but in discussions with police forces it became apparent that not all such incidents were included. Therefore it was decided to remove such incidents from the main tables, and add another table (Table 15) giving totals for these offences based on separate Recorded Crime returns. Because of the wide ranging nature of the relevant crime code, the numbers included in the Recorded Crime data collection dwarf those that were thought suitable for inclusion in the firearms return by police forces, as shown in the following table:

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

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

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

Legislation

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

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

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

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

Statistical issues

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

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

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

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

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

5.13 There have been various changes in the way the type of firearm used has been recorded over the years. In Strathclyde, prior to 2001, and Lothian and Borders, prior to 2002, if a weapon was not seen or seen but not established, an assumption was made about what type of weapon this was. It was usually assumed that it was an air weapon and was

recorded as such in the statistical return. However, there was a change in this recording practice such that if a weapon was not seen or seen but not established, it was recorded as such and no assumption was made about what the weapon was. This had the effect of increasing the number of incidents involving an unidentified firearm and reducing those involving an air weapon.

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

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

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

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

Crimes and offences cleared up

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

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

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

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

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

Classification

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

Category	Notes
Homicide	- Comprises murder and culpable homicide.
Attempted Murder	
Serious assault	
Robbery	- Includes assault with intent to rob.
Vandalism	- Includes malicious mischief.
Reckless conduct with firearms	
Firearms Act 1968 offences	- Includes possessing a firearm with intent to endanger life, commit crime or resist arrest.
Minor assault	
Other crimes and offences	- Includes carrying an offensive weapon, Prevention of Crimes Act 1871, poaching and protection of wildlife legislation.

Other

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

- = Nil

* = less than 0.5

n/a = data not available or calculation not applicable

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

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