



## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: INFORMATION AND FACTS 2014-15

According to the Victorian *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*, family violence is behaviour by a person towards a family member that is physically or sexually abusive; emotionally or psychologically abusive; economically abusive; threatening; coercive; or in any other way controls or dominates the family member, causing them to fear for their safety or wellbeing or that of another family member; or behaviour by a person that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of behaviour referred to above.

Whittlesea has a population of 179,261, of which 89,864 are women (59,901 are women aged 25 and over) and 61,574 are children and young people aged 24 years and under (29,963 female).<sup>1</sup>

In Whittlesea, family violence incidents increased from 2,349<sup>2</sup> in 2013-14 to 2,755 (an increase of 17.3%) and the rate increased from 1,256.1 per 100,000 to 1,392.3 per 100,000.<sup>3</sup> In comparison, in Victoria, family violence incidents increased by 8.8% from 65,180<sup>4</sup> in 2013-14 to 70,906 in 2014-15, and the rate increased from 1,115.8<sup>5</sup> per 100,000 to 1,191.5 per 100,000.

In the 12-month period of 2014-15, in Whittlesea, family violence was the context for more than half (59%) of all recorded assaults. Family violence was the context for 38% of all sexual offences.

### OFFENCES ARISING FROM FAMILY VIOLENCE REPORTED INCIDENTS IN WHITTLESEA, 2014-15

	Number of offences from family violence	Proportion of all corresponding Whittlesea offences
Assault and related offences	693	59%
Rape and Indecent Assault offences	68	39%

Source: LEAP Database provided by the Crime Statistics Agency.

## FAMILY VIOLENCE IN WHITTLESEA

This section presents of family violence statistics for Whittlesea obtained from Victoria Police records of reported incidents during 2014–15.<sup>6</sup>

Many women experiencing family violence do not report this to the police; therefore, the Local Government Area (LGA) figures from Victoria Police are likely to underestimate the extent of the problem.

### Whittlesea Family Violence Reported Incidents for 2014–15

- On average, 53 incidents of family violence are reported to police every week.
- The total number of incidents reported in Whittlesea was 2,755. The total number of reported incidents in the Northern Metropolitan Region (NMR)<sup>7</sup> was 11,586 and 70,906 in Victoria.
- This is a rate of 1,392.3 per 100,000 population, compared to 1,720.0 per 100,000 for the NMR and 1,191.5 per 100,000 for Victoria.<sup>8</sup>
- Females (75%) were the majority of victims.
- Males (79%) were the majority of perpetrators.
- Where Whittlesea family violence victims reported that they were fearful or very fearful, 83% (1,038) were female.
- 70% of victimised women were aged between 15 and 44 years.
- Children were present at 1,090 reported incidents (40%) – a rate of 550.9 per 100,000, compared to 406.0 for the NMR and 410.6 in Victoria.<sup>9</sup>
- Charges were laid in 1,757 cases, giving a rate of 887.9 per 100,000 (compared to 735.8 in the NMR and 454.7 in Victoria). A combined total of 890 Family Violence Intervention Orders (IVOs) and Family Violence Safety Notices (FVSNs) were issued, giving a rate of 449.8 per 100,000 (compared to 361.5 in the NMR and 349.5 in Victoria).<sup>10</sup>

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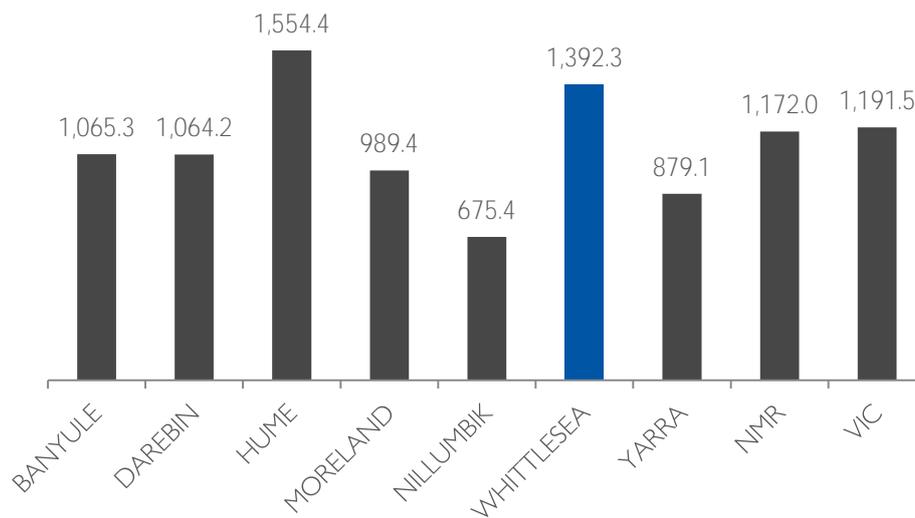
## INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Although the proportions of male victims and female perpetrators of family violence seem to correspond, it is incorrect to assume that this represents males victimised by their female partners as:<sup>11</sup>

- the definition of family violence is broader than 'intimate partner violence' (IPV) and includes a range of relationships such as elder, father-to-son, and mother-in-law to daughter-in-law abuse, and
- where women do perpetrate violence against their intimate partner, the violence is not an equal violence.<sup>12</sup>

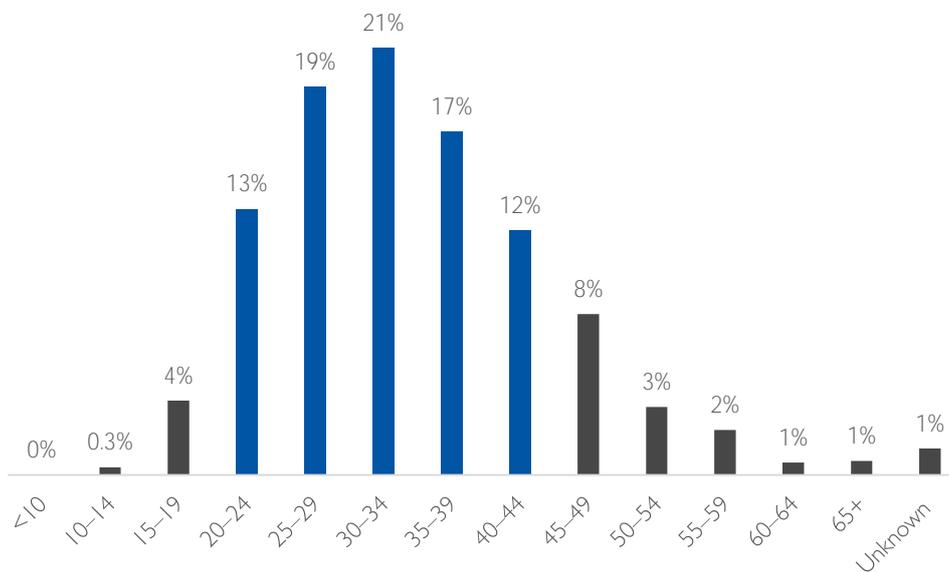
When Victoria Police family violence statistics are limited to IPV,<sup>13</sup> in four out of every five incidents, the perpetrator is male and the victim female. In 2014–15, in the NMR, 14,144 persons were involved in IPV. Almost half, or 7,067, were noted as the Affected Family Member (AFM), of whom 80.9% were female. The other half were noted as the 'other party' (or perpetrator) and 80.9% of these were male. Totals include 2 AFMs and 13 other parties whose sex is not specified. In Whittlesea, 1,348 males were perpetrators (82%) and 1,343 females were victims (82%).

CHART 1: 2014–15 FAMILY VIOLENCE REPORTED INCIDENTS RATE PER 100,000



Source: Crime Statistics Agency (2015). Data tables – Family Incidents.

CHART 2: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF FEMALE VICTIMS IN WHITTLESEA, 2014-15



Source: LEAP Database provided by the Crime Statistics Agency.

<sup>1</sup> Population data in this factsheets accessed 12/10/2015 from: (Cat. 3218.0) Regional population growth, Australia, 2013-14.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@nsf/DetailsPage/3218.02012-13?OpenDocument> (Cat. 3101) Australian demographic statistics, December 2013.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@nsf/DetailsPage/3101.0Dec%202013?OpenDocument> (Cat. 3235) Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Crime Statistics Agency LEAP data is subject to variation from year to year due to QA measures and outcomes from the justice system.

<sup>5</sup> In order to be consistent with the population data used by the Crime Statistics Agency, all rates are calculated using figures from the Victoria In Futures program, June 2015. The population figure for Whittlesea in this data is 63,074.

<sup>6</sup> As Crime Statistics Agency LEAP data is subject to variation, the figure for 2013/14 provided in the current statistics is different to the 2013/14 figure in the police data provided in 2013/2014.

<sup>7</sup> As above.

<sup>8</sup> Purchased data extracted from Crime Statistics Agency LEAP on 21 July 2015 and subject to variation. Produced by Crime Statistics Agency, Victoria Police, September 2015.

<sup>9</sup> The NMR covers seven LGAs: Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Moreland, Whittlesea, Whittlesea and Yarra.

<sup>10</sup> Crime Statistics Agency (2015).

<sup>11</sup> Crime Statistics Agency (2015).

<sup>12</sup> Crime Statistics Agency (2015).

<sup>13</sup> VicHealth (2011). *Preventing Violence against Women in Australia: Research Summary*. Carlton South: VicHealth, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> There are very few indications that women subject their male partners to the same level of severe, continuing and escalating violence as that which men perpetrate against their female partners. World Health Organization (2002) *World Health Report on Violence and Health*. Geneva: WHO, p. 94.

<sup>15</sup> The term 'intimate partner' is defined by the Crime Statistics Agency in the data purchased in August 2015 as including 'Boyfriend/Girlfriend, De facto, Divorced, Married and Separated'.

<sup>16</sup> The Crime Statistics Agency (CSA's) definition of sexual offences is broad, including offences relating to sexting, pornography and child pornography.

# SEXUAL OFFENCES<sup>14</sup> IN WHITTLESEA 2014-2015

Police records of sexual assault offences (including offences relating to sexting, pornography and child pornography) are another measure of the extent of violence against women. As with family violence, recorded offences are likely to underestimate the extent of the problem. For the period 2014–15:

- On average, four sexual assault offences were recorded by police every week.
- Females (86%) were the majority of victims.
- 50% of female victims were aged less than 25 years.
- Males comprised 91% of alleged offenders.

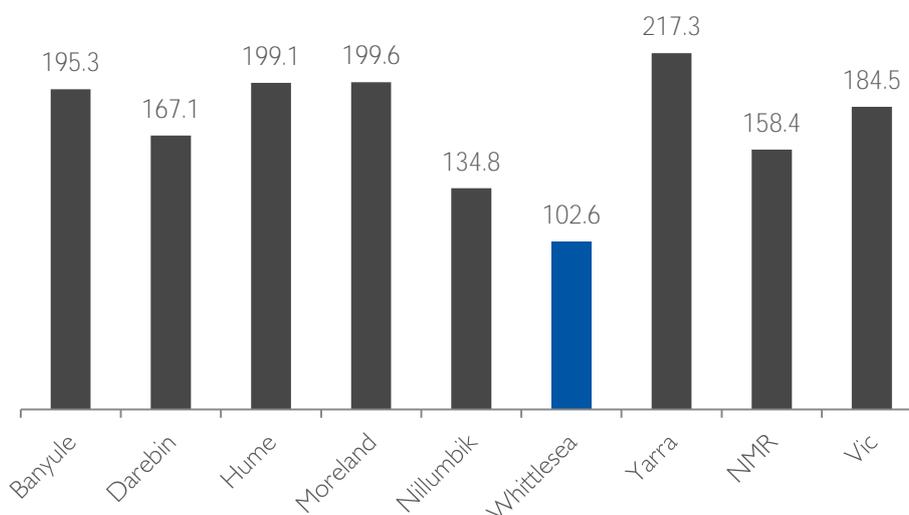
## Whittlesea Recorded Sexual Offences 2014–15

- There were 203 sexual offences recorded – this is a rate of 102.6 per 100,000 population, compared to 158.4 per 100,000 for the NMR and 184.5 per 100,000 for Victoria.
- The total number of recorded sexual offences in the NMR was 1,566, and 10,980 in Victoria.

## Rape and Indecent Assault in Whittlesea 2014-15

- On average, 3.3 rape and indecent assault offences were recorded by police every week.
- Females (88%) were the majority of victims.
- 49% of female victims were aged less than 25 years.
- Males comprised 95% of alleged offenders.

CHART 3: 2014–15 SEXUAL OFFENCES RATE PER 100,000



Source: LEAP Database provided by the Crime Statistics Agency.