



## **civilian secretariat for police service**

Department:  
Civilian Secretariat for Police Service  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**



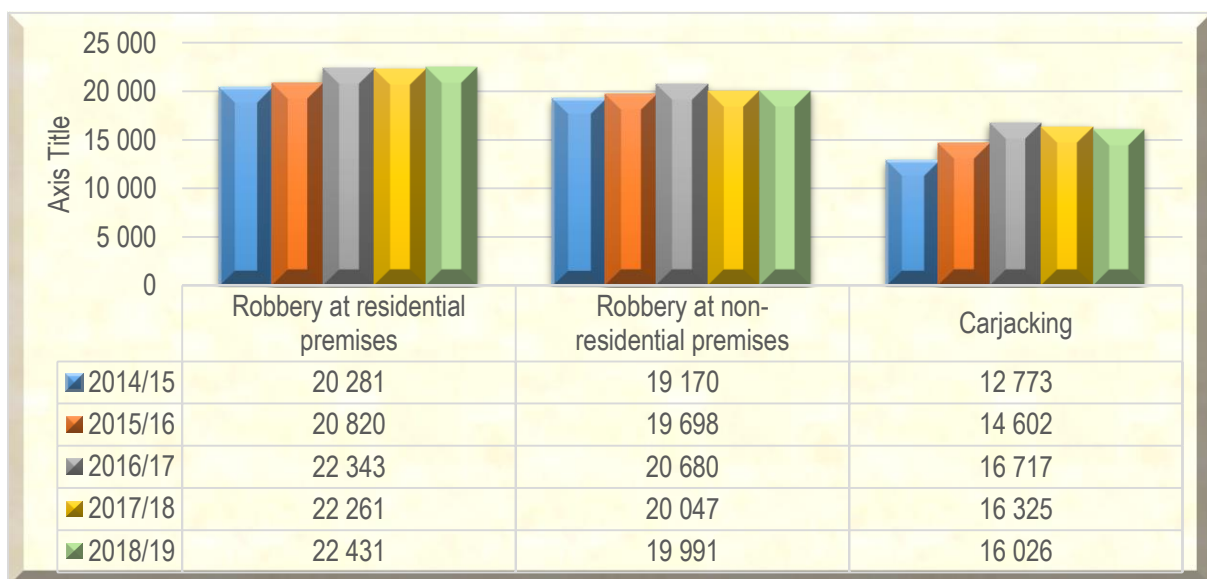
# **SAPS INTERVENTIONS FOR TRIO CRIMES: A FIVE-YEAR TRENDS ANALYSIS**

**NOVEMBER 2020**

## National and provincial picture of Trio crimes

Figure 1 below provides the total number of recorded Trio crimes nationally from the years 2014/15 to 2018/19. A total number of 284 165 cases of Trio crimes were recorded in the period under review. All the sub-categories of Trio crimes had a significant percentage contribution to the overall Trio crimes. Robbery at residential premises contributed 38% (108 136) to the total number of cases, followed by robbery at non-residential premises with 35% (99 586) and carjacking cases contributed to 27% (76 443) of the overall Trio crimes.

Figure 1: Total number of recorded Trio crimes between 2014/15 to 2018/19



CSPS diagram using the SAPS Annual Reports and crime statistics (2014/15 to 2018/19)

The five-year trend shows that Trio crimes nationally has been steadily increasing since 2014/15. Carjacking cases increased by 25.5% from 12 773 in 2014/15 to 16 026 in 2018/19, followed by robbery at residential premises, which recorded an increase of 11% (20 281 cases to 22 431 cases), and robbery at non-residential premises increased by 4% (19 170 to 19 991 cases).

Specific to this is the significant increases in the crimes recorded between **2015/16 and 2016/17**. Carjacking increased by 14.4%, followed by robbery at residential premises with a 7.3% increase, and robbery at non-residential premises increased by 4%.

## **What are the stats saying about the SAPS?**

Trio crimes are crimes that are intended for the acquisition of property. Criminals benefit through obtaining vehicles and items such as electronics and jewellery. During the commission of the crimes, violence becomes the associated feature. While Trio crimes may be opportunistic, in most cases it is organised. Organised crime means the availability of weapons, grand schemes, easier and faster communication, abundant resources and movement of finances.

Trio crimes have been plaguing the SAPS over the years as the statistics show. As mentioned, the SAPS has implemented various strategies to deal with Trio crimes with little success. This raises questions about the effectiveness and sustainability of the Trio crimes strategies and interventions.

One such strategy is 'hotspot' policing or the high intensity stabilisation and normalisation strategy, which is premised on evidence-based policing; utilising crime analysis to deploy resources, and involves targeting people, places and behaviours that are commonly associated with crime.<sup>1</sup>

Hotspot policing is resource intensive. SAPS have deployed desk based SAPS Act administrative and senior officers to the streets to conduct crime operations in provinces with the intention to reduce Trio crime.<sup>2</sup> Despite these costly operations, there were slight decreases in Trio crimes over the years.

Some authors argue that hotspot policing alone is not sufficient to significantly reduce crime; rather a combination of proactive policing with problem-oriented policing conducted to comprehensively understand the area and its problems is more effective.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Edelstein, I., Arnott, R and Faull, A. 2020. Hotspot Policing for Murder and Robbery: A Cape Town Case Study, Institute for Security Studies.

<sup>2</sup> South African Police Service. 2018. Speaker Notes by the Minister of Police, Minister Bheki Cele on the Stabilization Approach on the Crime in South Africa, 20 October 2020; Available at: <https://www.saps.gov.za/newsroom/msspeechdetail.php?nid=16018>

<sup>3</sup> Edelstein, I., Arnott, R and Faull, A. 2020. Hotspot Policing for Murder and Robbery: A Cape Town Case Study, Institute for Security Studies.