Weapon use in armed robbery

The inaugural annual report of the National Armed Robbery Monitoring program (NARMP) has been released. This program was established to identify and monitor trends in armed robbery, especially trends in weapon use, following the recommendation of the Australasian Police Ministers' Council. Police services in all Australian states and territories provide information about reported armed robbery victims, the offenders who robbed them, and other aspects of the attack, such as location. Data concerning the types of weapons used in armed robbery, even though subject to some limitations, are nonetheless informative. The majority of armed robbery victimisations (91%) involved a single type of weapon, the most common being a single knife (46% of all victims). Single firearms were listed for one-fifth of cases. The most frequently reported combination of weapon types was 'knife plus other weapon' (1%). The 'other weapon' category captures a wide variety of items, including implements whose primary purpose is not necessarily that of weaponry such as sledgehammers and other tools, sticks, rocks, bricks, and bottles. Victims robbed by offenders using only 'other weapons' made up 21% of all cases for 2003 contained in the NARMP.

Weapon combinations used in armed robbery, 2003

	Number	%
Firearms	**2,008**	**23**
Single firearm	1,812	20
Multiple firearms	36	<1
Firearm and knife	66	1
Firearm and 'other weapon'	86	1
Firearm, knife & 'other weapon'	8	<1
Knives	**4,336**	**49**
Single knife	4,122	46
Multiple knives	85	1
Knife and syringe	9	<1
Knife & 'other weapon'	120	1
Syringes	**376**	**4**
Single syringe	365	4
Multiple syringes	2	<1
Syringe & 'other weapon'	9	<1
Other weapons	**1,883**	**21**
Single 'other weapon'	1,768	20
Multiple 'other weapons'	115	1
No specific weapon types listed	**262**	**3**
Total	**8,865**	**100**

Note: Percentages may not total 100 because of rounding

Source: Borzycki M, Sakurai Y & Mouzos J 2005. *Armed robbery in Australia: 2003 National Armed Robbery Monitoring Program annual report*. Research and public policy series no 62. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology

Full report available on the AIC web site: http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/rpp/62/index.html