



Australian Government
Australian Institute of Criminology

A geography of Australian homicide

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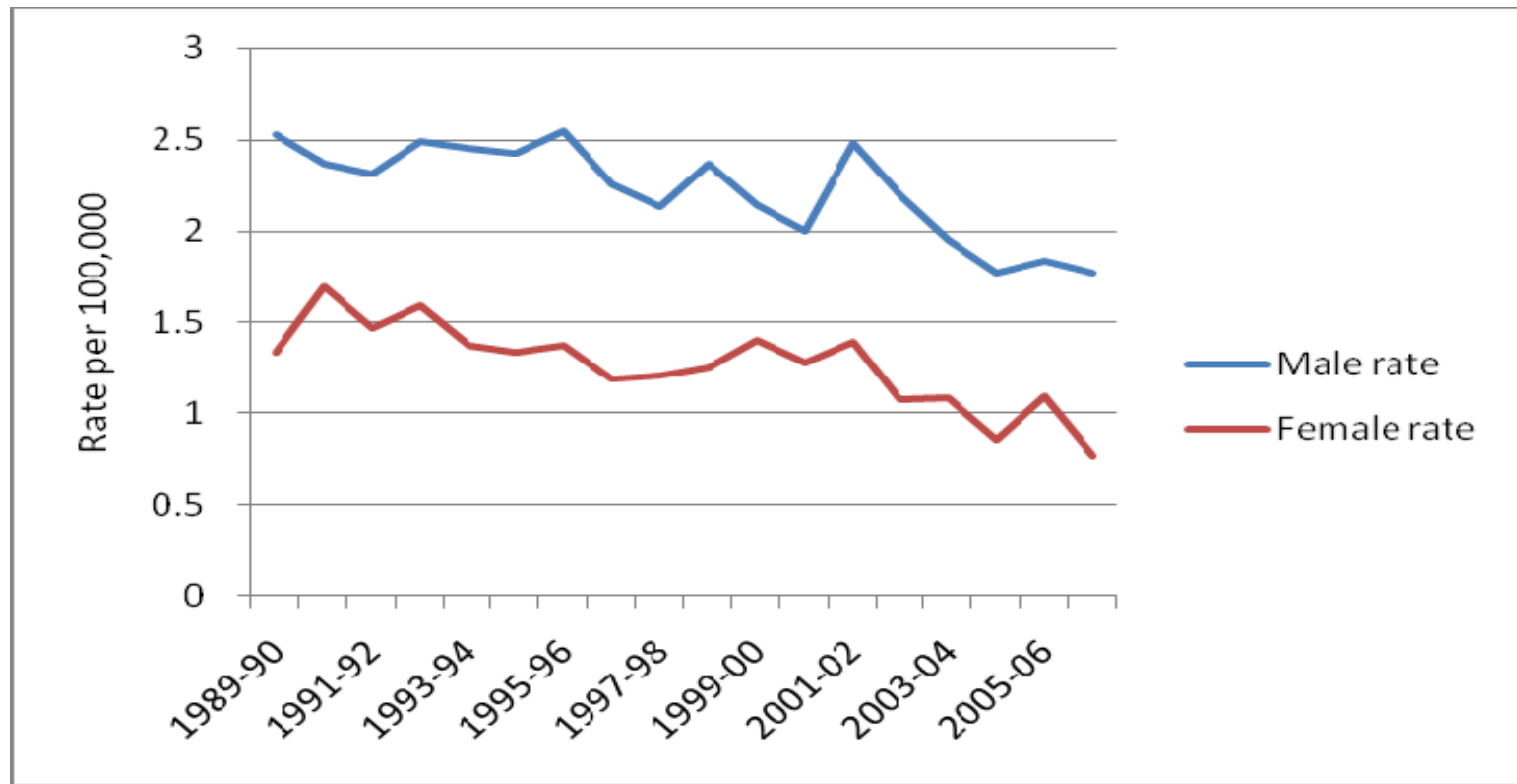


Homicide in Australia

- Australia has amongst the lowest homicide rates in the world.
- It is now probably amongst the lowest its been for a century.
- For the vast majority of the population, the risk of becoming a homicide victim is very low



Victimisation rate 1989-90 to 2006-07



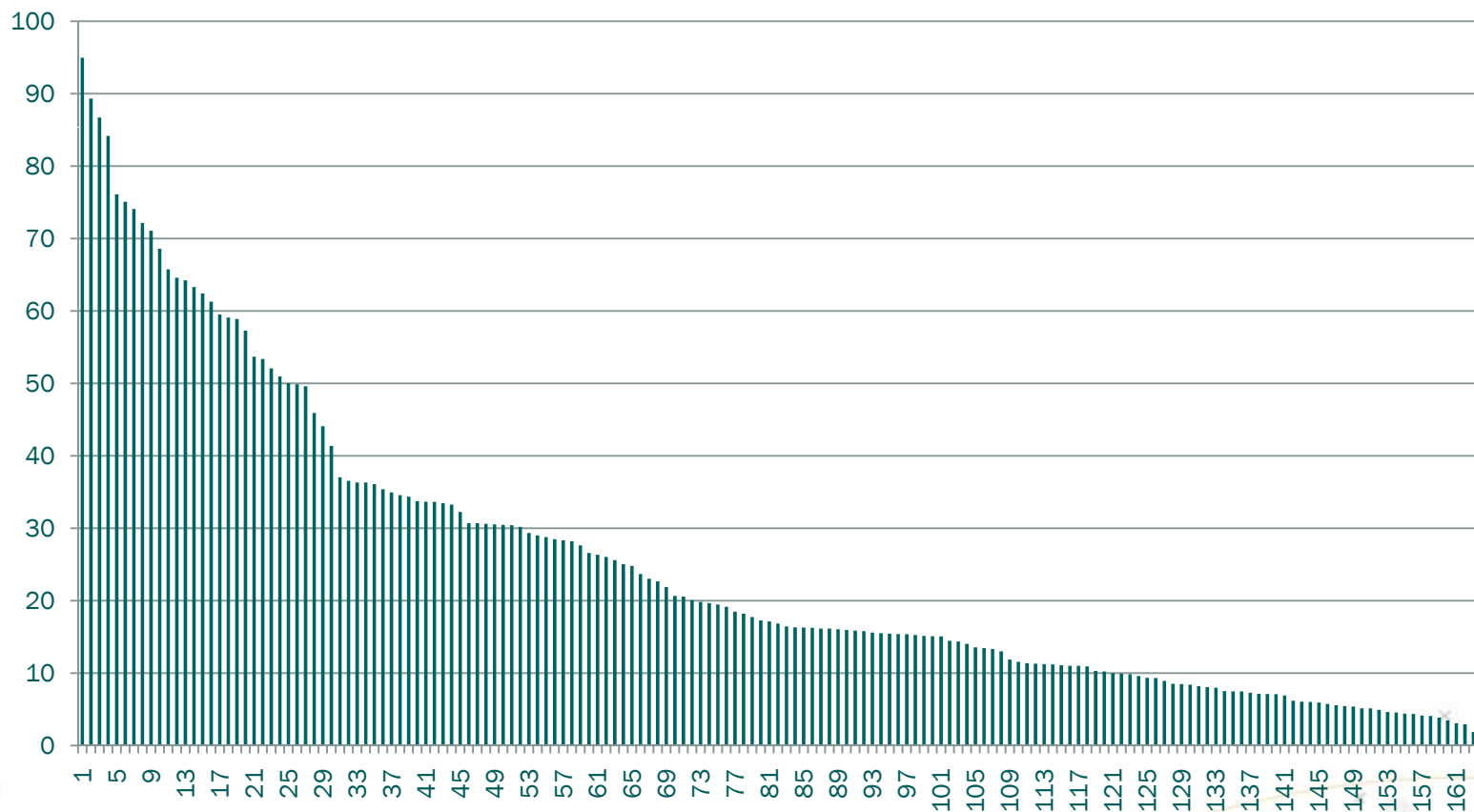


The risk is not the same for everybody.



Postcodes by average homicide rates per 100,000 1989-90 to 2006-07

Source: AIC NHMP 1989-90 to 2006-07 [computer file]



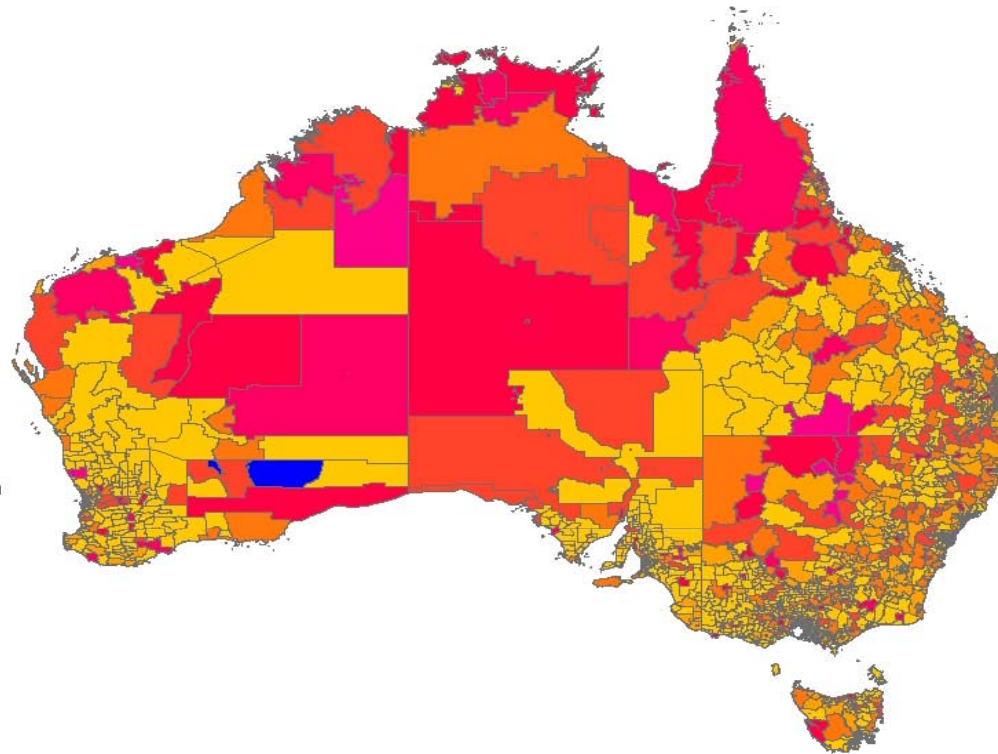


Postcodes by average homicide rates per 100,000 1989-90 to 2006-07

Source: AIC NHMP 1989-90 to 2006-07 [computer file]

Legend

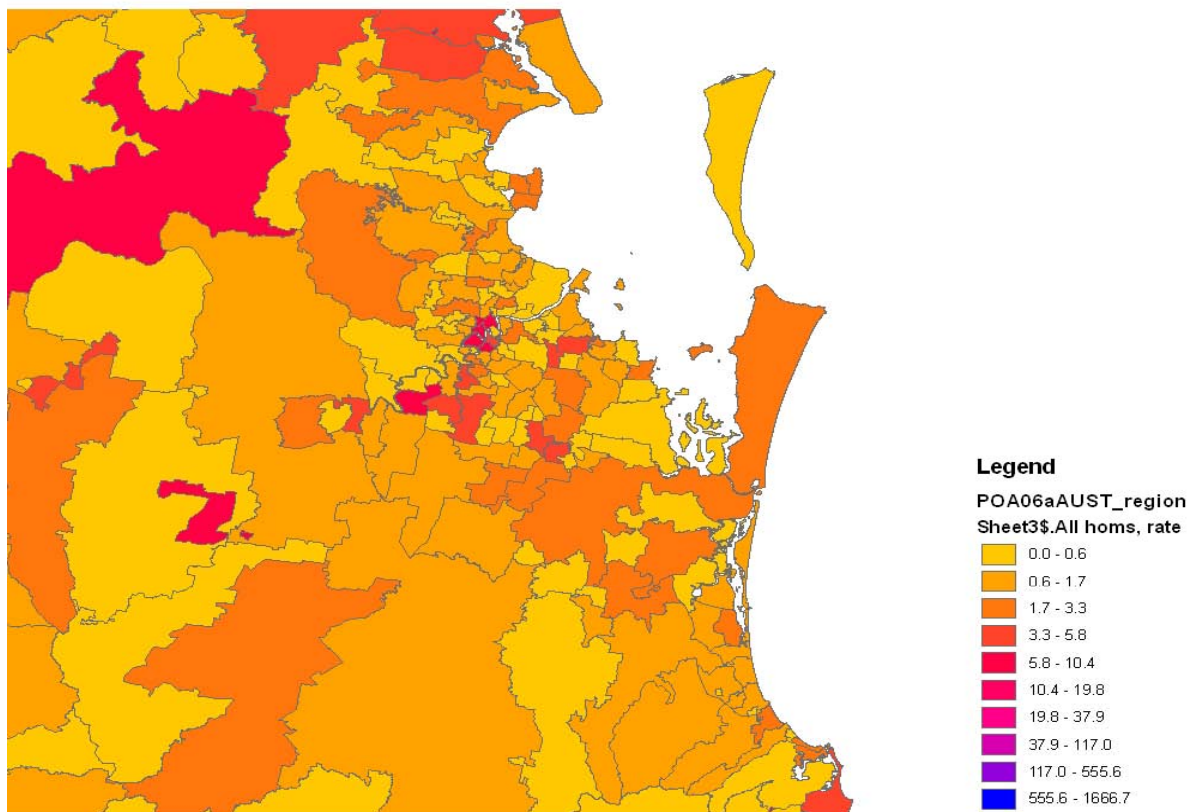
POA06aAUST_region
Sheet3\$.All homs, rate





Postcodes by average homicide rates per 100,000 Brisbane and Gold Coast 1989-90 to 2006-07

Source: AIC NHMP 1989-90 to 2006-07 [computer file]





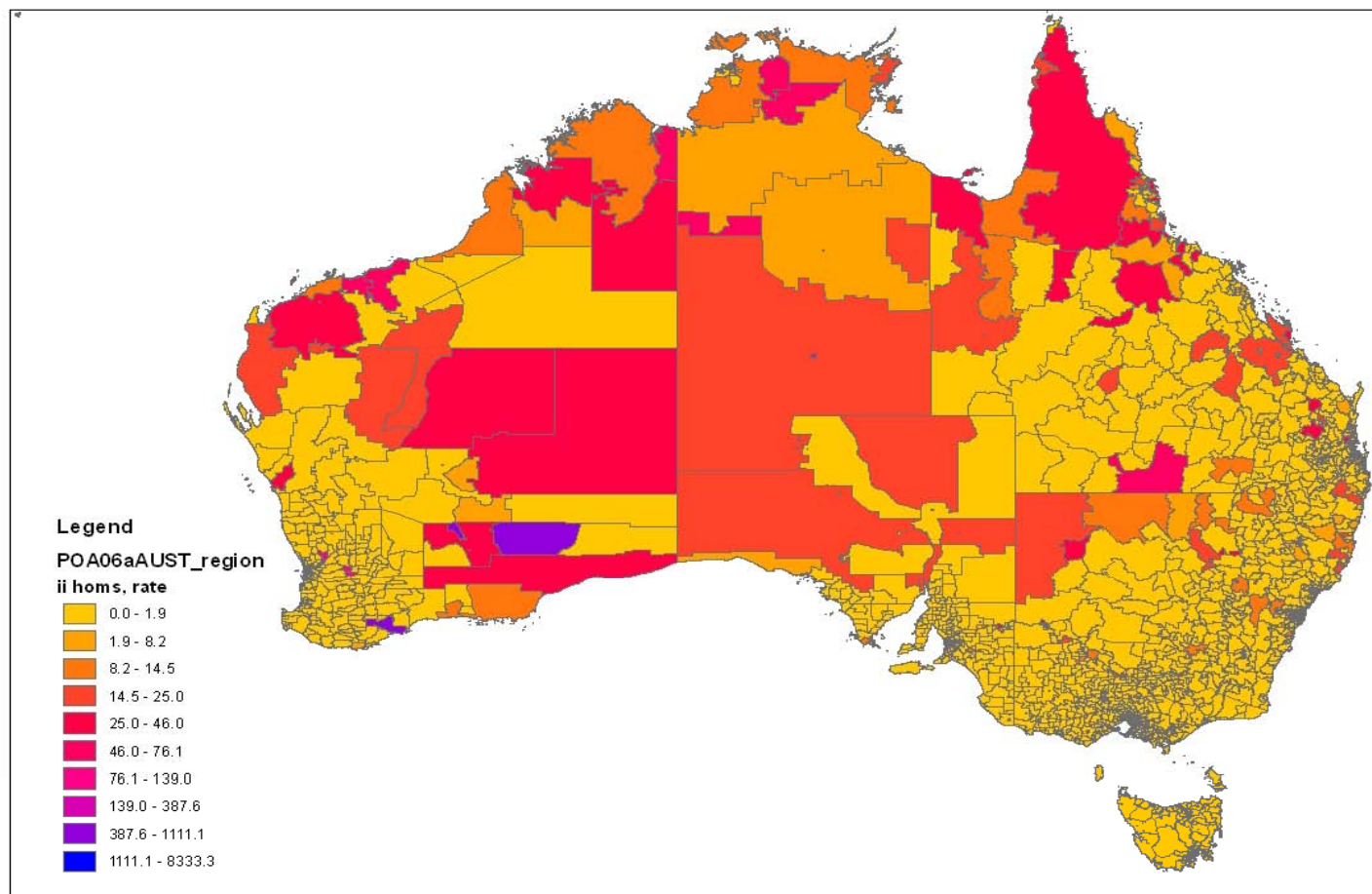
Postcodes by average Indigenous homicide rates per 100,000 1989-90 to 2006-07





Postcodes by average Indigenous homicide rates per 100,000 1989-90 to 2006-07

Source: AIC NHMP 1989-90 to 2006-07 [computer file]





What is the socio-economic context of high homicide rates?

- Using advantage/disadvantage measures is easy but it really does tell us what aspects of socio-economic conditions are important.
- AUSEG treats regions of Australia as functional units rather than as a hierarchy i.e. It deals with structure and movement.
- It divides regions into a typology of 17 different clusters using 36 variables over 4 Census periods.
- Nearly all high homicide regions fall into just two; cluster 1 and cluster 72.



What is similar between Cluster 1 and 7.2?

- They are by far the most socially stable of Australia's regions. They look much the same now as when homicide records started.
- This may explain why the structure of homicide is so stable.
- Both clusters have very high throughputs of people but the people moving in and out are much the same.
- Young age structure and unbalanced gender ratios.



What is different between cluster 1 and 7.2?

- Location; cluster 1 is located in mid ring metros while cluster 7.2 is in remote Australia.
- Proportion of indigenous; *all* cluster 7.2 have high Indigenous, all cluster 1s are low.
- Cluster 72 is basically decoupled from the economy while cluster 1 changes almost exactly with Gross Domestic Product.
- Gross Value Added has been stripped out of cluster 72 and concentrated in cluster 1.



Conclusion

- Homicide is spatially concentrated. Some parts of Australia have very high homicide rates while most Australian postcodes have not recorded a homicide in nearly two decades.
- There has been very little reduction in rates in high homicide areas. Homicide rates have fallen in areas where it was already low.
- Social stability and high population churn seem to be common characteristics of high homicide areas.



Conclusion cont'd

- *But* there are many areas that have these characteristics and do not have high rates
- If localities are viewed as parts of a river that contains the same type of people moving around the nation then high homicide areas may have unique characteristics.
- A possible explanation is the flow is turbulent in high homicide areas and laminar elsewhere.