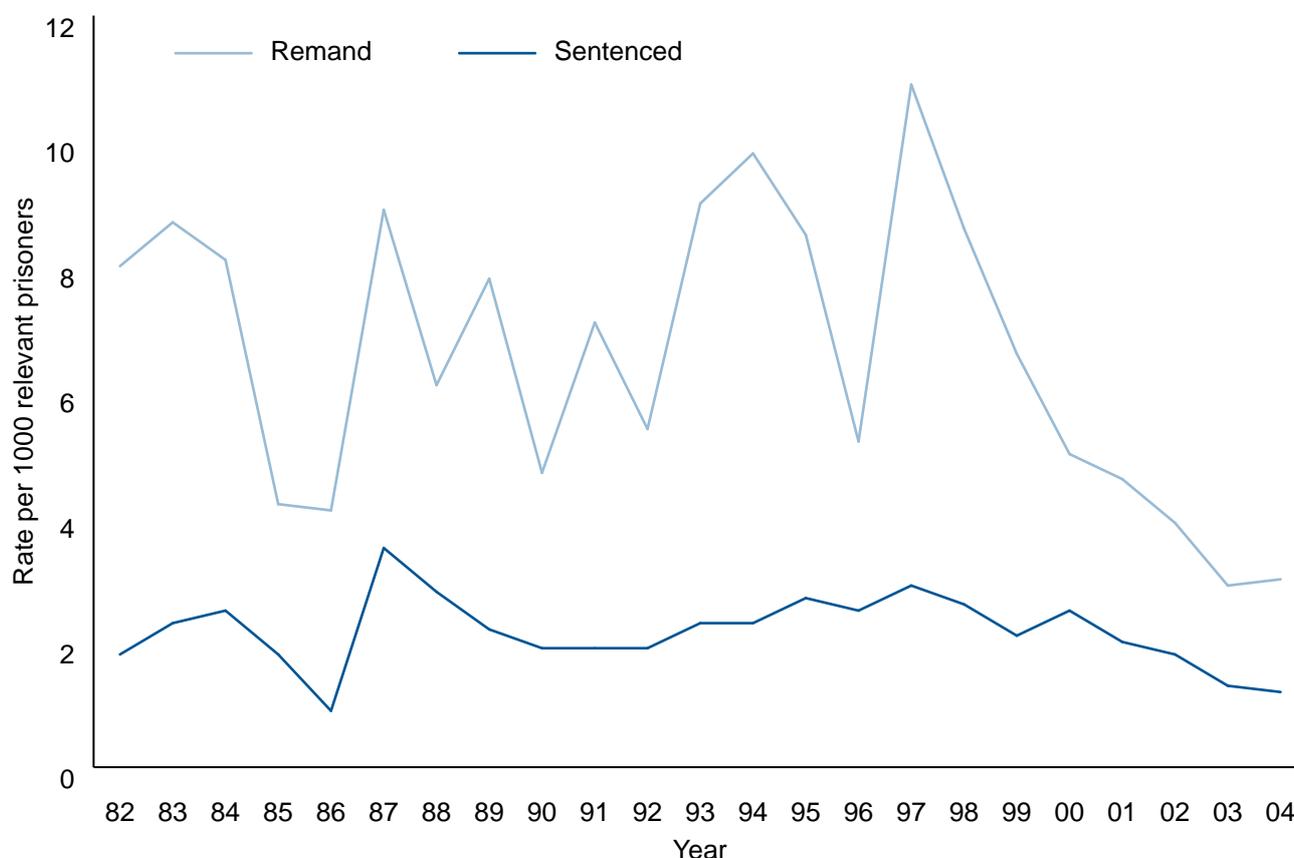


Deaths in prison custody: sentenced and remand prisoners

The National Deaths in Custody Program (NDICP) is responsible for monitoring the extent and nature of deaths in police, prison and juvenile custody. There were 39 deaths in prison custody in 2004, the same number as recorded in 2003. Overall there has been a decline in numbers of deaths in prison custody since 1995 but the trend lines vary for sentenced and unsentenced prisoners. In 2004 twenty-four deaths were of sentenced prisoners and the remaining 15 deaths were of unsentenced prisoners on remand. The rate of deaths of unsentenced prisoners has been consistently higher than the rate of deaths of sentenced prisoners. The death rate for unsentenced prisoners (3 deaths per 1,000 unsentenced prisoners) in 2004 was more than double the death rate for sentenced prisoners (1.2 deaths per 1,000 sentenced prisoners). Over time the death rate for sentenced prisoners has been relatively stable while the rate of deaths of unsentenced prisoners showed some degree of fluctuation up until 2000. Since 1997 the rate has been trending downward.

Figure 1: Deaths in prison custody by legal status, 1982–2004



Source: Joudo J & Veld M 2005. *Deaths in custody in Australia: 2004 National Deaths in Custody Program annual report*. Technical and background paper series no 19. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology

Full report available on the AIC web site: <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tbp/tbp019/>