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Australian Institute of Criminology

Homicide in Australia: 2006–07 National Homicide Monitoring Program annual report

Jack Dearden
Warwick Jones

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Foreword

With the strong support and commitment of all state and territory homicide squads, the Australian Institute of Criminology's National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP) monitors trends and patterns in homicide in Australian jurisdictions.

The NHMP allows policymakers and law enforcers to see short-term changes in the context of longer-term trends. It provides an increasingly stable basis for discerning what remains constant and what changes in homicide circumstances, methods, and motivations and thus in the risks of becoming a victim or an offender. With each year of data collection, the NHMP data set contributes a fuller understanding to efforts to minimise homicide.

This report presents findings from and an overview of key characteristics of the 18th annual collection of homicide data (2006–07), the most comprehensive collection on homicide in Australia, including details on victims, offenders, and incident circumstances.

Australia wide, 260 incidents of homicide occurred in the year, taking 266 victims and involving 296 offenders. This was a decrease of 23 incidents and 45 victims from the previous year and is consistent with a significant long-range trend toward fewer incidents both per capita and absolutely since inception of the NHMP. In that period, male offender rates have fallen from a peak of 3.8 per 100,000 to 2.3 per 100,000, and female offender rates have

remained relatively unchanged at around 0.5 per 100,000.

The 2006–07 data also reflected the general trend toward a lower proportion of homicides using firearms (11%) and a higher proportion using knives and other sharp instruments (44%), respectively the lowest and highest proportions to date since monitoring began and in contrast to a maximum proportion by firearm of 29% in 1993 and a minimum by knife and other sharp instrument of 30% in 2000.

The majority of victims continue to be male, with nearly two-thirds killed by non family members. Females are far more likely than males to be victims of domestic-related homicides. As in previous years, nearly one-quarter of all homicides in 2006–07 involved intimate partners, with women constituting the majority of victims. A small number of victims (10% of all victims) were children aged under 15, and nearly all of them were killed by parents.

The Institute has released a number of publications based on the NHMP data since the last NHMP annual report, all of which are located at <http://www.aic.gov.au/research/projects/0001-docs.html>.

Judy Putt
General Manager, Research

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The Institute extends special thanks also to the numerous individual police officers, analysts and statistical support staff of each state's and territory's police service for their assistance in compiling the data. Their efforts to ensure that the data provided were accurate and complete are greatly appreciated.



National Homicide Monitoring Program

The National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP) is a national monitoring program that commenced in 1989. Homicide is the most serious of all criminal offences, which is why it is important to understand all associated circumstances and factors. Without collections such as the NHMP, such knowledge would not be possible. With more than 18 years of data on incidents, victims, and offenders of homicide in Australia and numerous research reports on its various facets, our understanding of this most serious crime has increased. Consequently, law enforcers, policymakers and the general public are better informed in relation to its occurrence. The NHMP chiefly disseminates this knowledge through the compilation of annual reports and other papers. The current report depicts homicide in Australia for the period 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007.

2006–07 summary



- Homicide rates in Australia have fallen by a third in the last six years. The rate for 2006–07 was 1.2 per 100,000, amongst the lowest for a century. The significant factor has been a decrease since the late nineties in the number of males, especially Indigenous males, killing friends and acquaintances.
- In 2006–07, there were 260 homicide incidents, involving 266 victims and 296 offenders. Of the victims, 185 were male and 81 were female. Of the offenders, 242 were male and 54 were female. The male offender rate was 2.3 per 100,000; the female rate was 0.5 per 100,000.
- Females were victims of homicide at a greater rate than they were offenders in 2006–07 (0.8, compared with 0.5, per 100,000).
- Firearm homicides showed further decline in 2006–07, continuing a decade-long trend. 2006–07 saw the lowest percentage of firearm incidents since the inception of the NHMP, with only 11 percent of homicide victims being killed by a firearm. This is a four percent decrease from 2005–06. The vast majority of firearms used in homicide were unregistered and unlicensed.
- Rates of intimate-partner homicide remained constant in 2006–07, with 22 percent of homicides occurring in this context. Of intimate-partner homicide, 23 males and 42 females were victims.
- Forty-three percent of homicides between intimates in 2006–07 had a domestic-violence history with the police in some form prior to the homicide incident.
- Twenty-seven children under the age of 15 years were killed in 2006–07, the overwhelming majority by a parent (84%).

- Thirteen percent of homicides in 2006–07 were committed in the course of another crime. In more than two-thirds of incidents, theft in its various forms (burglary, robbery, etc.) was the precipitating crime.
- In 2006–07, Indigenous men were seven times as likely to be offenders as were non-Indigenous males. This was well down from the early 1990s, when Indigenous males were offending at rates of fourteen times or more of those of non-Indigenous males. Indigenous women offended at nearly fourteen times the rate of non-Indigenous females; this ratio has stayed relatively constant since 1990. Indigenous women were also nine times as likely as their non-Indigenous counterparts to be a victim of homicide.
- Indigenous homicide also exhibits significantly different sex ratios from non-Indigenous homicide. In 2006–07, Indigenous men and women were equally likely to become homicide victims. The ratio of male to female Indigenous offenders was less than three to one in 2006–07, whereas in non-Indigenous populations the ratio was five to one.

About the NHMP



Purpose

Homicide can never be fully prevented, but the NHMP can contribute to the development of relevant strategies that limit it by:

- making appropriate resource allocations
- guiding key strategies, tactics, and operations (particularly of the police and related agencies)
- providing the foundation for policy-development directions
- identifying key knowledge shortfalls in order to direct future research.

Definition of homicide

The term *homicide* refers in this paper to a person killed (unlawfully); a *homicide incident* is an event in which one or more persons are killed at the same place and time. Homicide is defined by the criminal law of each Australian state and territory, resulting in varying definitions between states and territories in terms of degree, culpability, and intent. The definition of homicide in the NHMP is the operational definition used by police throughout Australia. As such, the NHMP collects data on the following incidents:

- all cases resulting in a person or persons being charged with murder or manslaughter (including the charge of 'dangerous act causing death', which applies to the Northern Territory). This excludes other driving-related fatalities, except those that immediately follow a criminal event such as armed robbery or motor vehicle theft;
- all murder-suicides classed as murder by the police;

- all other deaths classed by the police as homicides (including infanticides), whether or not an offender has been apprehended.

Attempted murder is excluded, as are violent deaths such as industrial accidents involving criminal negligence (unless a charge of manslaughter is laid). Lawful homicide, including that by police in the course of their duties, is also excluded.

Methodology

There are two key sources of data for the NHMP:

- **offence** records derived from each Australian state and territory police service, supplemented where necessary by information provided directly by investigating police officers and/or associated staff
- **state coronial** records such as toxicology and postmortem reports. As of 1 July 2001, the National Coroners Information System (NCIS) enabled online access to toxicology reports. The data are further supplemented by press clippings, which are sorted according to incident and filed with the offence report. Newspaper media nationwide are monitored daily by staff at the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC).

Compilation of this report begins with obtaining hard copies of police offence reports, forwarded directly to the AIC during late August and September. The NHMP data set created from them uses 77 variables, and the relevant information pertaining to these variables is extracted for each homicide incident and entered into the NHMP database. The information is divided into key areas:

- an incident file, which describes the case and its circumstances (for instance, location, date, and time of the incident; status of investigation; whether the incident occurred during the course of another crime)
- a victim file, which contains socio-demographic information relating to the victim(s), details of the cause of death and the type of weapon used to kill the victims, and alcohol and illicit prescription-drug use
- an 'offender' file, which details persons who have been charged and includes data on the socio-demographic characteristics of the offender; his/her previous criminal history; alcohol/illicit drug use; mental health status; and relationship to the victim (at all times, the term 'offender' refers to suspected offenders only, and not to convicted persons, unless otherwise stated)
- a merged incident, victim, and offender file, combining details from all three data sets.

It is important to note that not all information collected by the NHMP is available in police offence reports. In many instances, staff of homicide squads or major crime units track down the missing information through other information sources (usually contacting the investigating officer, or accessing other information reports) and supply it to the NHMP. Without this information, there would be many shortfalls and unanswered questions. Ultimately, the collection of annual homicide data in Australia is a team effort and is made possible by continual support from all state and territory police services. For more information concerning NHMP data collection and quality control, please see Appendix A.



Homicide in Australia: overall trends

The NHMP holds details of every recorded homicide in Australia for 18 years (1 July 1989 to 30 June 2007). Included in the data set are 5,486 homicide incidents; 5,883 victims; and 6,063 offenders. The data in this publication may differ slightly from previously published figures, because of updates to the data files.

In 2006–07, there were 260 homicide instances, involving 266 victims and 296 offenders.

Rate of homicide

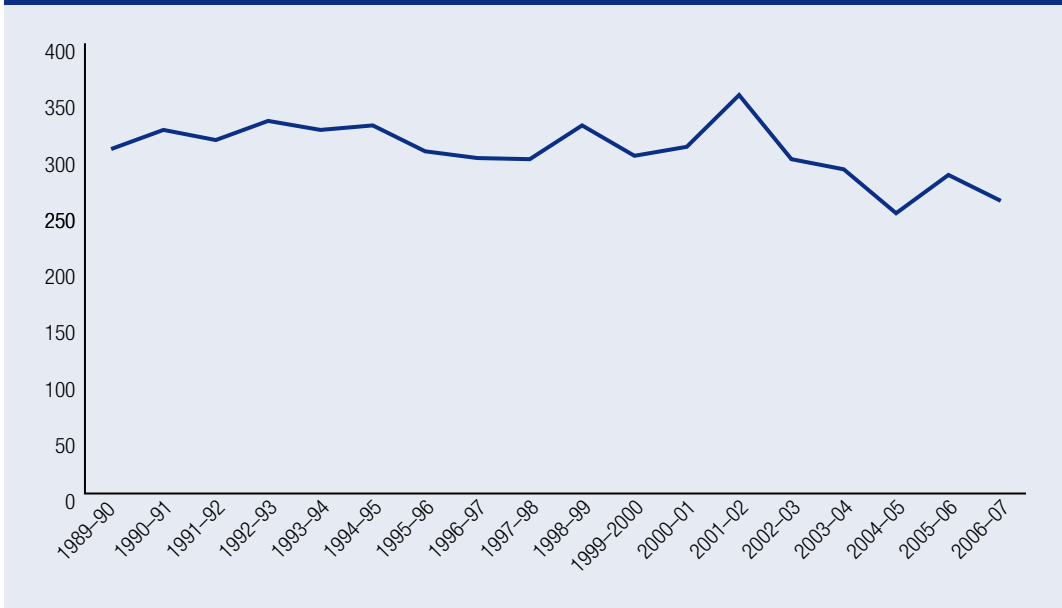
Figure 1 shows that although there have been fluctuations from year to year, the number of homicide incidents has shown a steady decline since the inception of the NHMP in 1989. 2006–07 saw the second-lowest number of homicide incidents in the collection period.

As a rate per 100,000 per year, homicide incidents decreased from 1.9 in 1990–91 and 1992–93 to the second-lowest recorded rate, of 1.3, in 2006–07 (see Figure 1).

Most serious charge

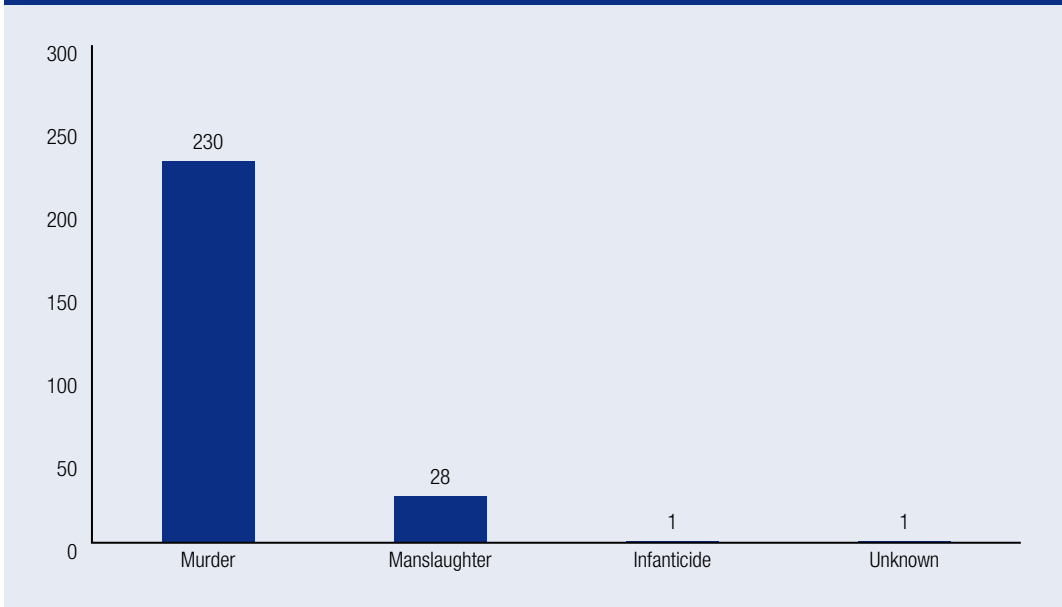
Murder is the predominant charge and has been throughout the 18-year data-collection period. In 2006–07, there were 230 murder charges, 28 manslaughter charges, one infanticide charge, and one unknown (see Figure 2). The type of charge against an offender may change once the incident proceeds through the judicial process.

Figure 1: Homicide incidents from 1989–90 to 2006–07 (number)



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

Figure 2: Most serious charge in 2006–07 (number)



Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Victim characteristics



The number of homicide victims has declined steadily at a rate similar to that of homicide incidents. There were 266 victims in 2006–07, and 351 victims in 1990–91.

Looking at homicide victimisation by rate per 100,000 per year instead of at incident rate makes apparent a more significant decline. The homicide victimisation rate peaked at 2.0 in 1992–93 and saw another noticeable increase to 1.9 in 2001–02. The 2006–07 rate of 1.3 is the lowest ever recorded.

Sex of victim

A trend that is consistently observed in the NHMP and in international homicide research is that males are victimised at a significantly higher rate than females (see for example Brookman 2005; Polk 1994; Mouzos 2000, 2002a, 2003b; Mouzos & Segrave 2004; Flowers 2002; Miethe & Regoeczi 2004). The 2006–07 year was no exception, with 185 male victims and 81 female ones.

Figure 3 shows that the homicide victimisation rate per 100,000 per year of each sex has decreased by similar rates. The rate for males in 2006–07 was 1.8, after a peak rate of 2.6 in 1995–96 (the year of the Port Arthur massacre), a decline of 0.8. The female victimisation rate was 0.8 in 2006–07, after a peak of 1.7 in 1990–91, a decline of 0.9.

Victim age

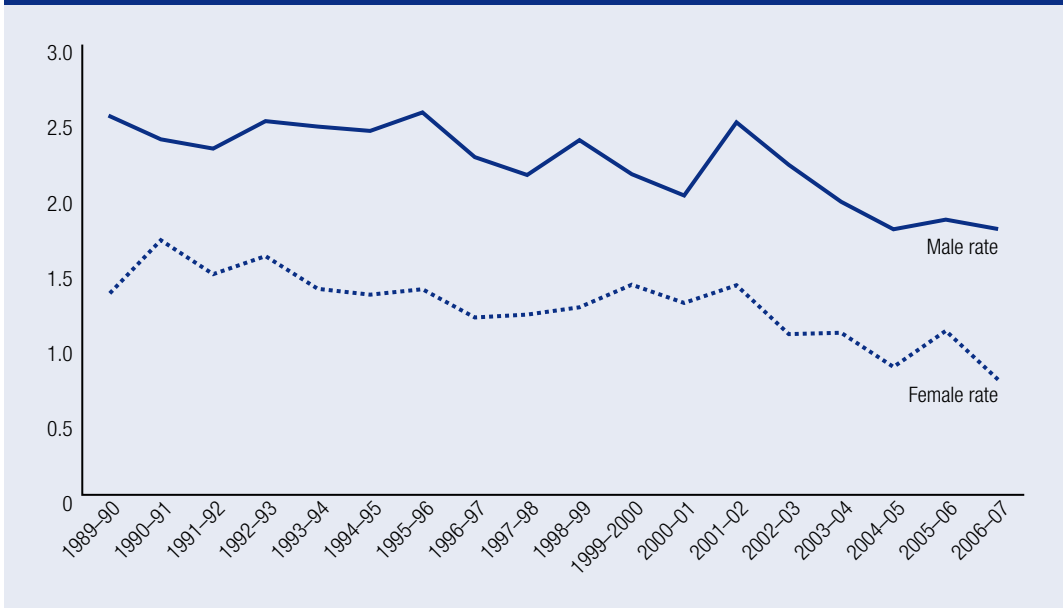
As Figure 4 shows, the age groups of peak risk of a male's becoming a homicide victim in 2006–07 were 20 to 24 (3.5 per 100,000) and 35 to 39 (3.3 per 100,000). This has remained much the same since monitoring began.

The age group of females' peak risk was 35 to 39 (1.7 per 100,000). This too has been the case since monitoring began. In more recent years, 40 to 44 has emerged as another high-risk age bracket for women.

Relationship between victim and offender

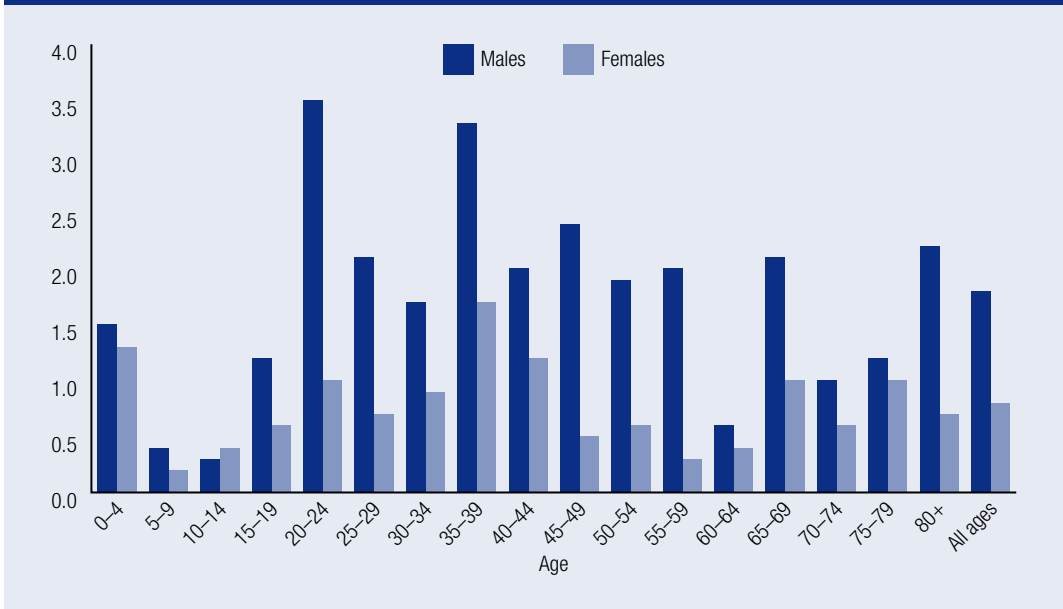
Homicide literature identifies that one of the most important factors in determining a homicide incident is the relationship between the victim and the offender(s). That said, defining the relationship between two people is not always simple. For example the definition of the term intimate partner is not clearcut, as there is some debate concerning whether a boy- or girlfriend should be included under this term. For the purposes of the NHMP, intimate partners include: spouse, separated spouse, divorced spouse, de facto, ex-de facto, extramarital lover, former extramarital lover,

Figure 3: Victimisation rate from 1989–90 to 2006–07, by sex (per 100,000 per year)



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

Figure 4: Victimisation rate in 2006–07, by age and sex (per 100,000 per year)



Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

boyfriend, former boyfriend, girlfriend, former girlfriend, homosexual relationship, and former homosexual relationship.

There are significant differences between the sexes in the relationship between the victim and offender.

In males, the most significant risks of homicide were outside the family. More than two-thirds met their deaths at the hands of non family members (see Figure 5).

In females, the pattern was quite different. As Figure 6 shows, nearly three-quarters were killed by an intimate partner or family member.

Child victims

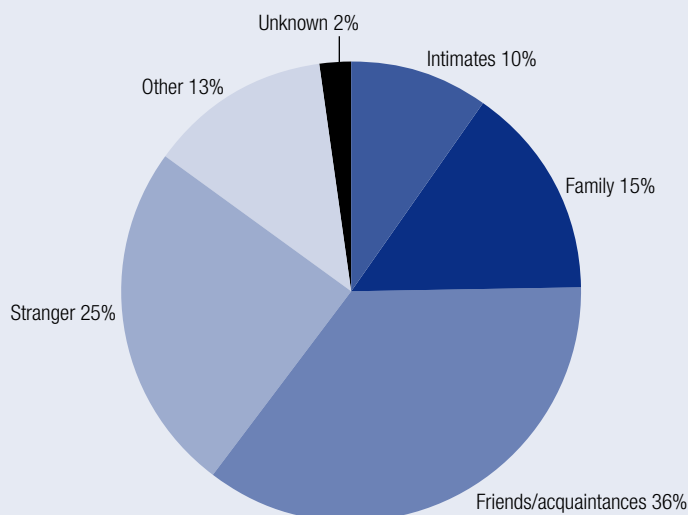
Child homicide has its own particular pattern. Twenty-seven children under the age of 15 years were killed in 2006–07. Variation between the sexes was insignificant: 15 of the 27 children killed were male, and 12 were female. Three were Indigenous, the same number as in the previous year. Eleven were infants (aged less than one year), also the same as in 2005–06. Half the incidents involved two or more victims under the age of 15.

The overwhelming majority of child homicides (85%) were committed by a parent (see Figure 7). Eleven homicides involved the mother killing her child, and 11 were committed by male family members. One other offender was living with the victim at the time of incident. Ninety-six percent of all child victims knew their killer well. Importantly, no child victims were killed by a complete stranger in 2006–07. The trend for child homicide victims to have been killed by family and those best known to them is much stronger in child victims than in adult ones. This has been a stable difference over the years of the NHMP data collection.

Of the 14 offenders who committed suicide following the 2006–07 homicide incident, four (29%) had had child victims. In all four cases, the offender was the custodial parent of the victim (two mothers; two fathers).

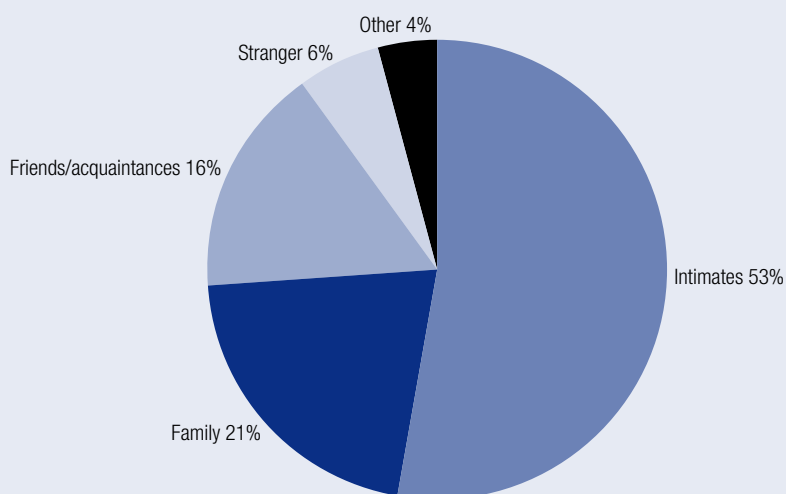
In 2006–07, 81 percent of child victims were murdered in a private residence. Seventy-four percent of these were murdered in their own home. Most children (30%) were beaten to death, whereas for the general population stabbing was the most common method.

Figure 5: Relationship between male victim and offender in 2006–07 (percent recorded relationships)



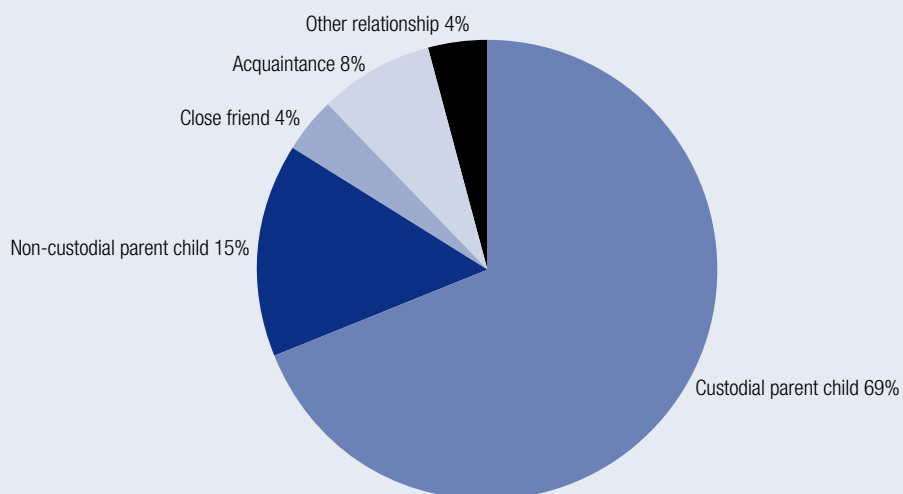
Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 222

Figure 6: Relationship between female victim and offender in 2006–07 (percent recorded relationships)



Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 80

Figure 7: Relationship between child victim and offender in 2006–07 (percent recorded relationships)



Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 26



Offender characteristics

The number of homicide offenders has decreased more than the number of homicide incidents, because of a small relative increase in the number of multiple-offender homicides. There were 296 offenders in 2006–07, after a peak of 385 in 1994–95.

The decrease in offending rates is more marked per 100,000 of the population per year. Offending rates peaked at 2.1 in 1993–94 and fell to 1.4 in 2006–07, the lowest yet recorded in the NHMP (see Figure 8).

The male offender rate per 100,000 per year in 2006–07 was 2.3, and the female rate was 0.5. Females were victims of homicide at a greater rate (0.8) in Australia than they were offenders (0.5), and males were more likely to be offenders (2.3) than victims (1.8). Male homicide offender rates have steadily decreased since 1989–90, whereas female homicide offender rates have stayed constant, reductions in offender rates consisting of a decrease in male offenders.

The age of offenders (Figure 9) is a stronger predictor of homicide than the age of victims (Figure 4) in 2006–07. In males, there is a steep rise in homicide offending rates until they are in their mid twenties, followed by a gradual falling off through life. In females, the offending rates

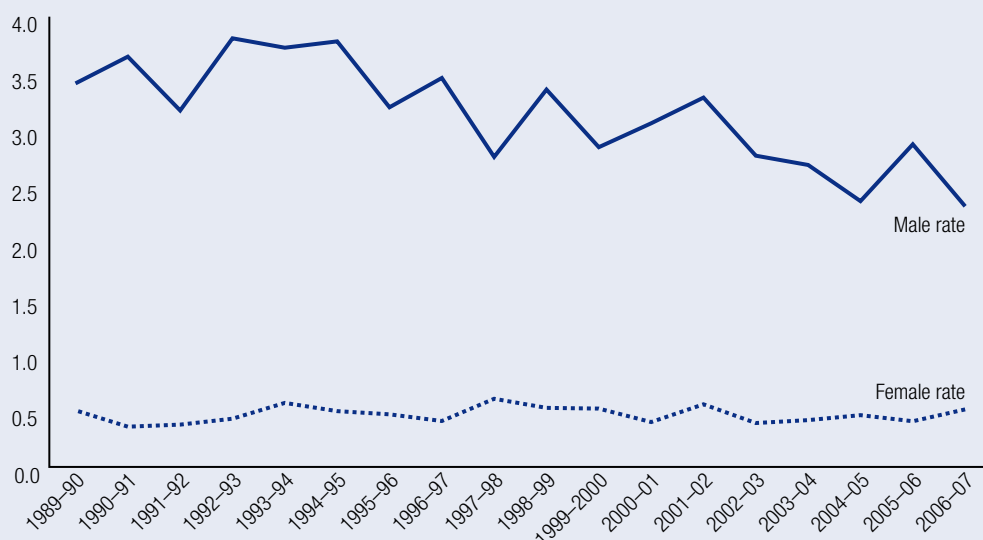
are highest and relatively constant between ages 20 and 50. These age patterns have stayed constant since monitoring began.

Relationship between offender and victim

In 2006–07, a third of all homicides for which a male was charged involved a friend or acquaintance as a victim; another third of the victims were intimate partners or family members; and around a quarter were strangers. The other relationships included employer, employee, landlord, and tenant. (See Figure 10.) Strangers accounted for 23 percent of male offenders' relationships to their victims, with these incidents usually occurring in the context of a precipitating crime (for example case nos. 009/07, 118/07 and 173/07) or an argument, often fuelled by alcohol (for example case nos. 042/07, 126/08 and 166/07).

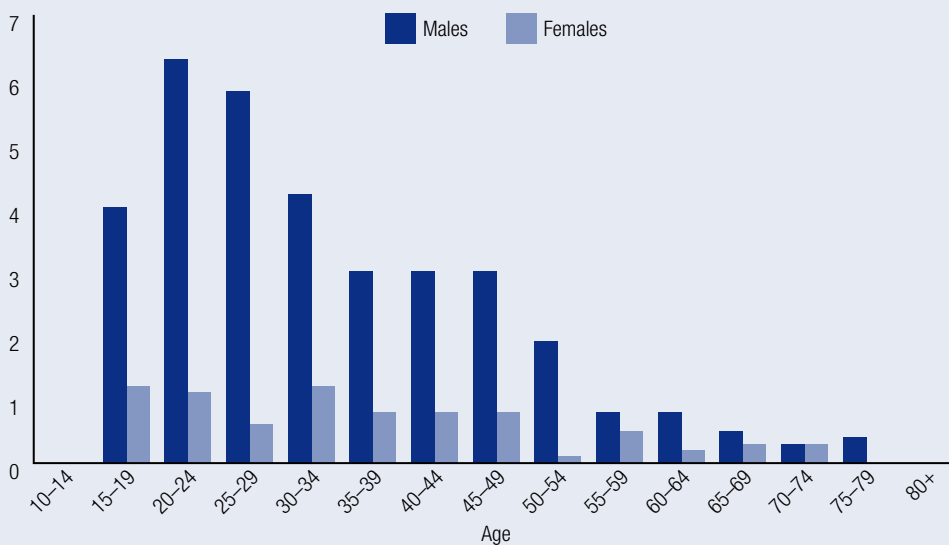
As Figure 11 shows, the pattern of victimisation by female homicide offenders is quite different. They are twice as likely as males to have been charged with killing an intimate partner or a family member. A woman killing a stranger is relatively rare. Even though females are more likely to kill an intimate partner, male offenders murder intimates in greater numbers.

Figure 8: Offending rate from 1989–90 to 2006–07, by sex (per 100,000 per year)



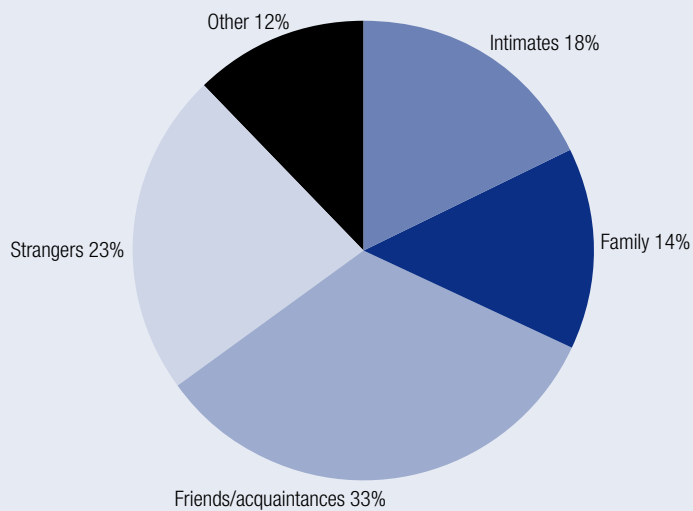
Source: AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2006–07 [computer file]

Figure 9: Offending rate in 2006–07, by age and sex (per 100,000 per year)



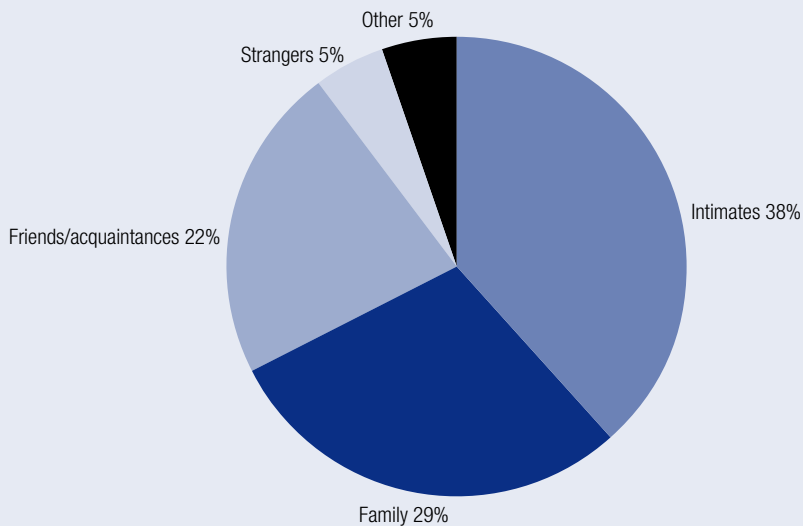
Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Figure 10: Male offenders' relationships with victims in 2006–07 (percent recorded relationships)



Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 243

Figure 11: Female offenders' relationships with victims in 2006–07 (percent recorded relationships)

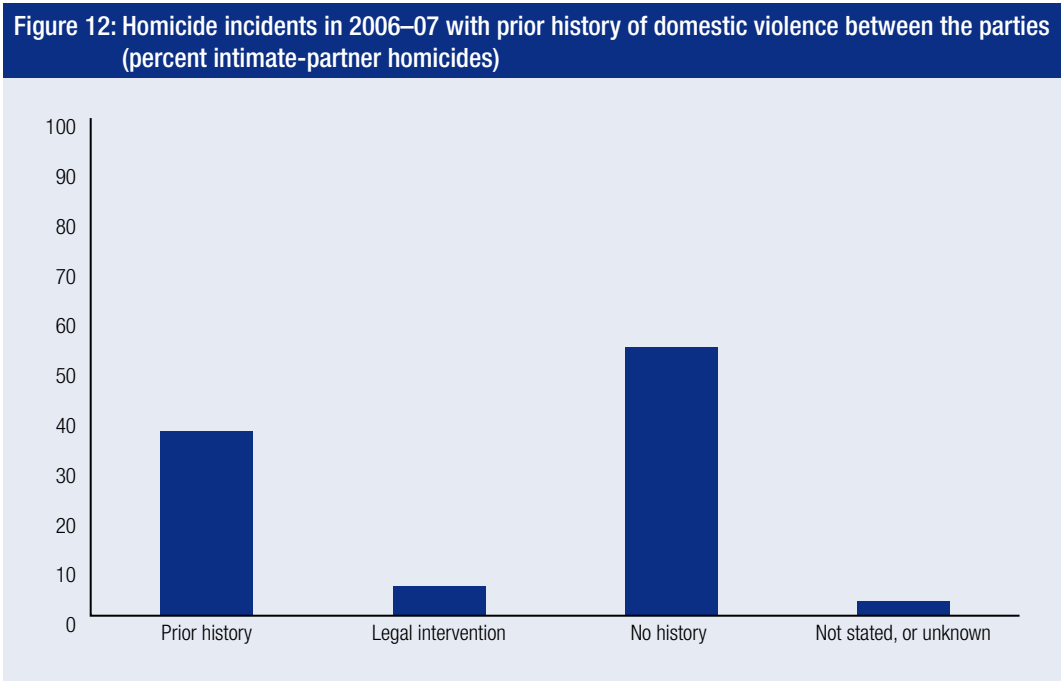


Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 55

The distributions of relationships of offenders to victims outlined in the two figures above has changed little since monitoring began. The only significant change has been a decrease in the number of males, especially Indigenous males, killing friends and acquaintances since the late nineties. This has been the main contributor to the fall in homicide rates.

As Figure 12 shows, in 43 percent of homicides between intimates in 2006–07, the parties had prior

domestic violence history in some form with the police, suggesting that, in many of these cases, the homicide incident is a tragic end to a cycle of domestic violence. In 2006–07, 23 percent of offenders who killed an intimate were married, 48 percent were in a de facto relationship, 17 percent were separated and 11 percent had never married or lived with their victim.



Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 65

Life circumstances of victims and offenders

Employment status

Examination of individual homicide incidents shows that they usually occur between people of similar life circumstances (see Polk 1994; Chamlin & Cochran 2005). This is clearly the case again in 2006–07. One indicator of this similarity is the employment status of victims and offenders.

Offenders and victims are very similarly distributed in most categories (see Figure 13). The exception is aged-care or retired pensioner, with victims being more than three times as likely to be an aged-care or retired pensioner as were offenders.

Unemployed persons are highly over-represented in homicide incidents, both as victims and as offenders. Thirty-five percent of victims and 41 percent of offenders were unemployed at the time of the homicide incident. Although the percentage of unemployment of homicide victims and offenders has fluctuated over the past 18 years, the rates have always been much higher than the national average.

During 2006–07, the unemployment rate in Australia ranged between 4.8 percent and 4.3 percent (ABS 2006 & ABS 2007), meaning that the unemployed are six or seven times over-represented amongst homicide victims, and about eight times over-represented amongst homicide offenders, in comparison with the general population.

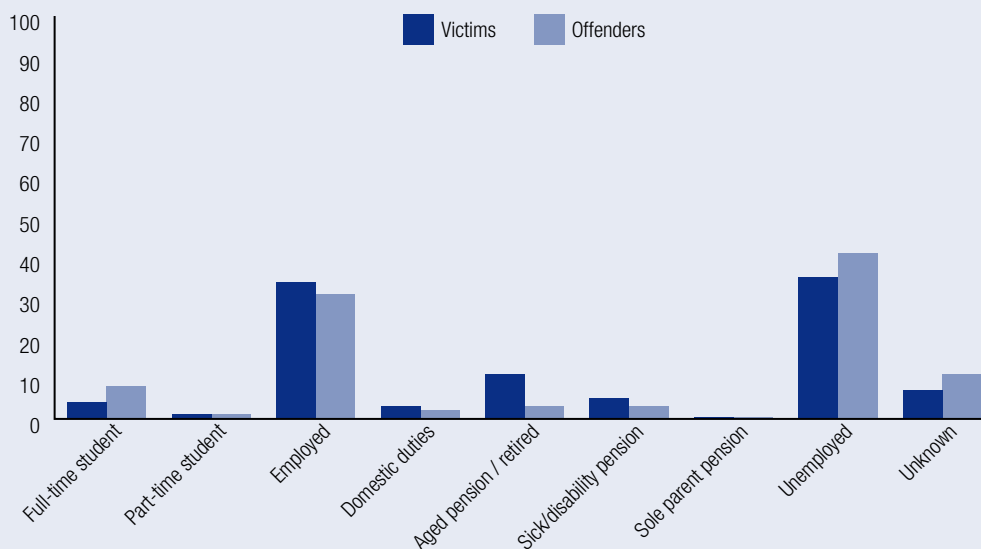
Marital status

Offenders and victims shared similar distributions of marital status (see Figure 14). Offenders were slightly more likely (45%) never to have been married than were victims (40%), but the overall distributions were alike.

Distributions of victims' and offenders' marital status differ by sex (see Figures 15 and 16). Forty-nine percent of male victims and 22 percent of female ones had never married. Female victims were more likely (54%) than male ones (41%) to be in a long-term relationship (married or in a de facto relationship). Females were also more likely (18%) to be separated/divorced than males (8%).

Half of male offenders and one quarter of female offenders had never been married. More than half of female offenders, and one-third of male ones, were married or in a de facto relationship. Both male homicide offenders and male homicide victims are more likely than female homicide offenders and female homicide victims to have never married and to be single. On the other hand, female victims and, more so, female homicide offenders are more likely than males to be in a long-term relationship.

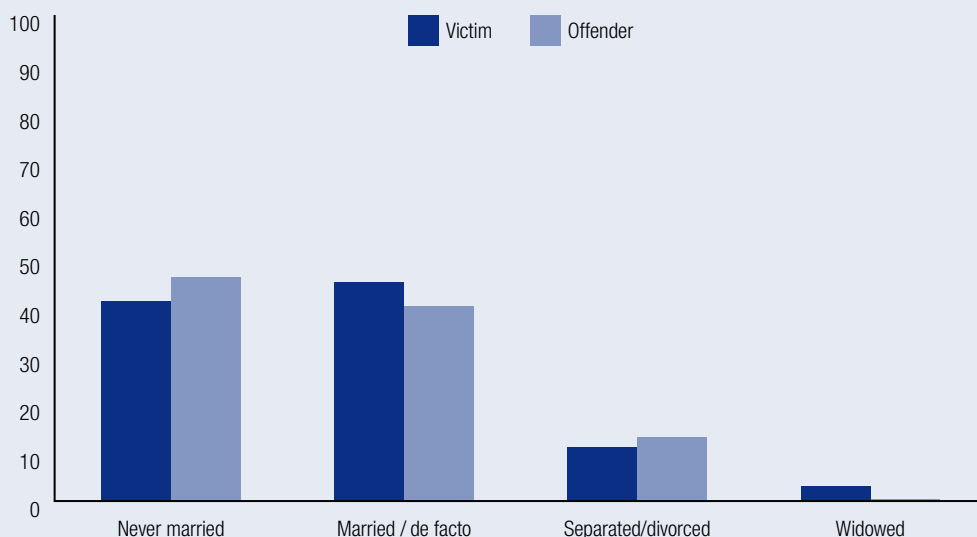
Figure 13: Victim and offender employment status in 2006–07 (percent)



Note: Excludes 27 victims aged less than 15 years

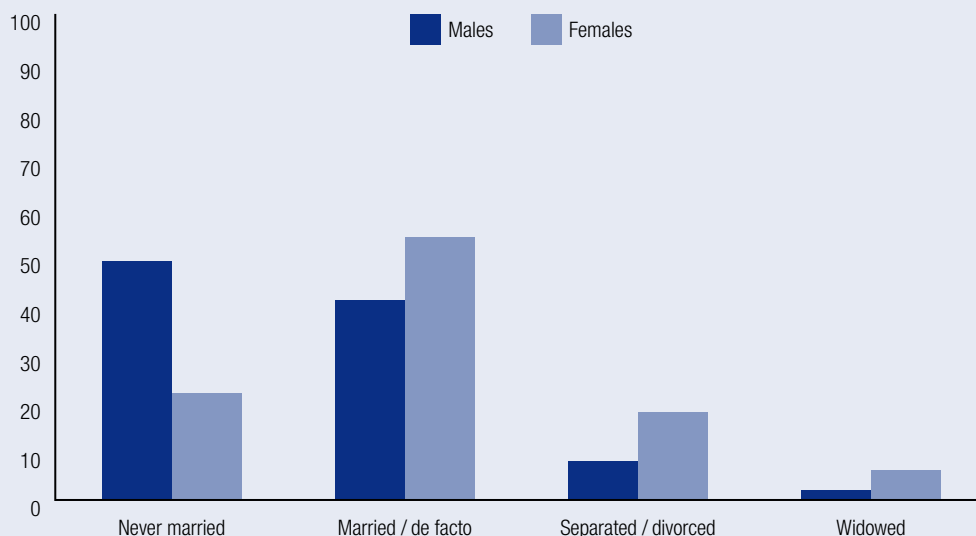
Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], victims n = 239, offenders n = 294

Figure 14: Victims' marital status and offenders' marital status in 2006–07 (percent of each of known marital status)



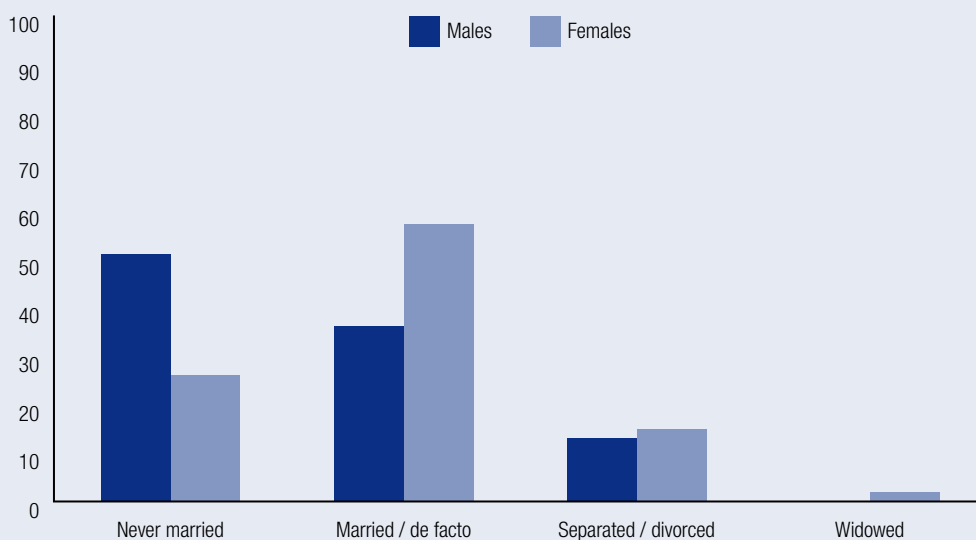
Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], victims n = 221, offenders n = 243

Figure 15: Victims' marital status in 2006–07, by sex (percent victims of known marital status)



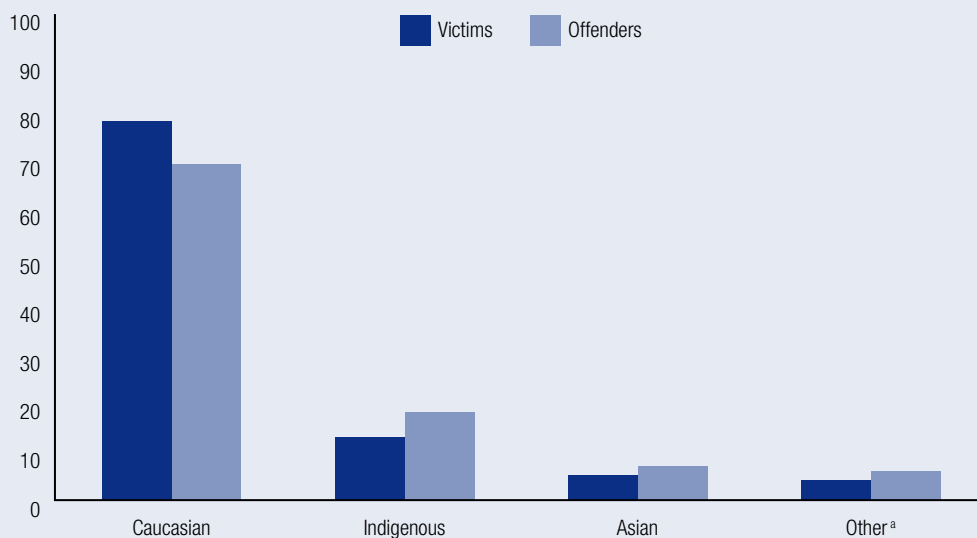
Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 239

Figure 16: Offenders' marital status in 2006–07, by sex (percent)



Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 294

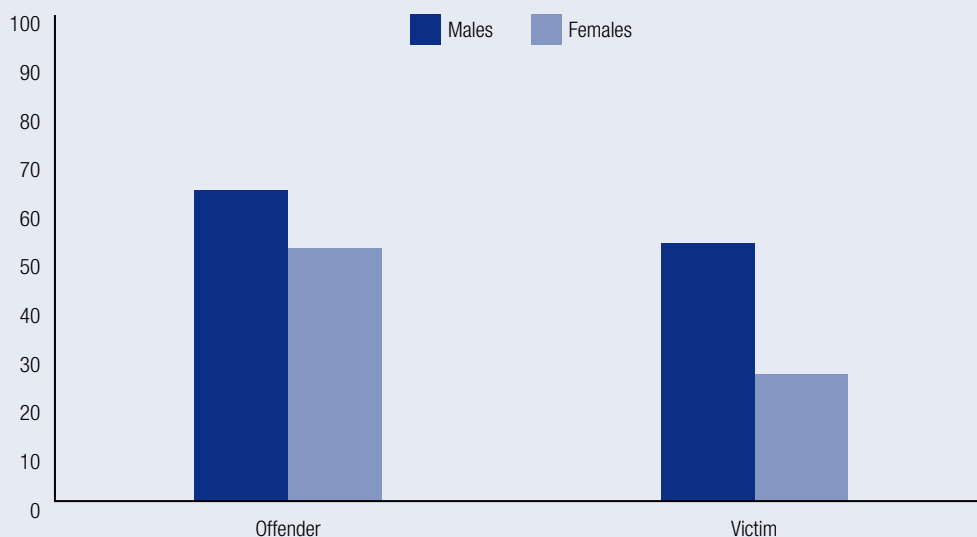
Figure 17: Racial appearance of victims and offenders in 2006–07 (percent)



a: Includes Maori / Pacific Islander, African-American and African

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], victims n = 262, offenders n = 295

Figure 18: Victims' and offenders' prior criminal history in 2006–07 (percent victims and offenders respectively)



Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], males n = 250, females n = 295

Racial appearance

The NHMP collects some information on the racial appearance of both victims and offenders. These data are derived from police records and are only indicative of the racial appearance of the victim (and offender), in most cases a subjective assessment by police. As a result, caution should be exercised in the interpretation of data in relation to racial appearance. Figure 17 indicates that the majority of homicide victims and of homicide offenders in Australia in 2006–07 were of Caucasian appearance (78% of victims; 69% of offenders), a finding that is consistent throughout the 18 years.

Criminal history

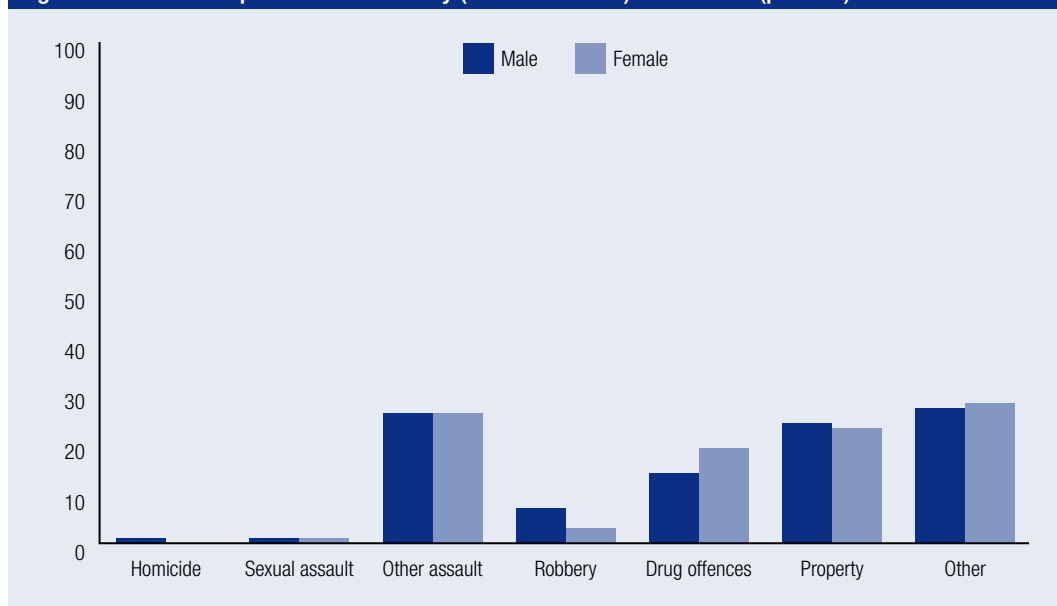
Figure 18 shows that in 2006–07, a significant proportion both of homicide offenders and of

homicide victims had a criminal history. Nearly two-thirds of male offenders and half of female offenders had a prior criminal history. Half of male victims too had a criminal history, as did a quarter of female victims. These ratios have changed little throughout the years of monitoring.

In 2006–07, the most common prior criminal history of offenders constituted ‘other assault’, property, and ‘other’ offences. ‘Other’ encompasses crimes such as fraud and traffic violations. Recidivist homicide offending was very low in 2006–07, with only two percent of offenders having a prior conviction of homicide.

The high incidence of a prior criminal history of ‘other assault’ suggests that homicide is often not an isolated incident of violence but part of a longer-term pattern of violent behaviour. Of interest, little difference exists between the sexes of homicide offenders in this respect.

Figure 19: Offenders’ prior criminal history (of those known) in 2006–07 (percent)



Note: Each offender's prior criminal offences are listed in a maximum of four offence categories, and only once in each category. 'Other' includes several categories and so may include more than one offence type per individual.

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], males n = 154, females n = 28; males' prior crimes n = 388, females' prior crimes n = 69



The homicide event

When (time of day & month)

Figure 20 shows that the majority of homicides whose timing is known happen between 6 pm and 6 am (with a polynomial $R^2 = 0.939$), indicating that homicide is mainly a night-time phenomenon with incidents often culminating in the early morning.

As reported elsewhere (see Mouzos 2005), there are contradictory findings on the link between homicide and seasonality (Anderson 1987; Cheatwood 1988, 1995; Land, McCall & Cohen 1990; Tennenbaum & Fink 1994). The lack, in Figure 21, of a significant monthly trend in homicides in 2006–07 may be due to confounding effects of the coexistence of several climate patterns in Australia.

Where (specific homicide location)

Residential locations made up the majority (61%) of homicide locations in 2006–07 (see Figure 22). Street and open areas accounted for almost a quarter of homicide locations, and five percent of homicides occurred in recreation venues or food venues, including pubs, bars, and nightclubs.

The most likely residential location of homicide was the victim's home, followed by the offender's home

(see Figure 23). Of note, the victim's home is also often the home of the offender; such cases are classified as being the victim's home.

How (cause of death and weapon used)

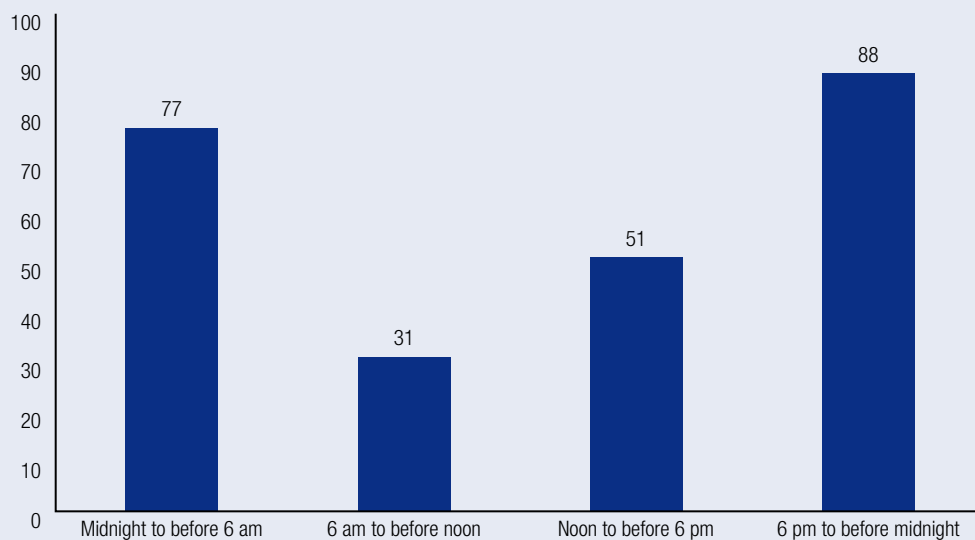
Three-quarters of male homicide victims were stabbed or beaten to death in 2006–07, and 10 percent were shot (see Figure 24).

As Figure 25 shows, the outstanding difference between males' and females' causes of death was females' many times greater likelihood of having been strangled or suffocated.

As Figure 26 demonstrates, there has been a pronounced change in the type of weapons used in homicide since monitoring began. Firearm use has declined by more than half since 1989–90 as a proportion of homicide methods, and there has been an upward trend in the use of knives and sharp instruments, which in 2006–07 accounted for nearly half of all homicide victims.

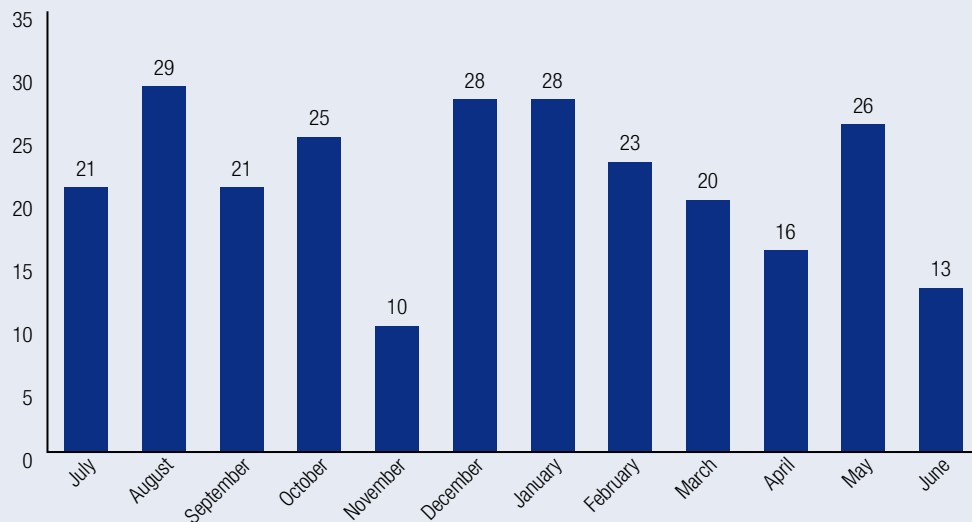
In 2006–07, firearm homicides were at their lowest as a percentage of all homicides since the inception of the NHMP, only 11 percent of homicide victims being killed by a firearm. This is a four percent

Figure 20: Homicides in 2006–07, by time of day (number)



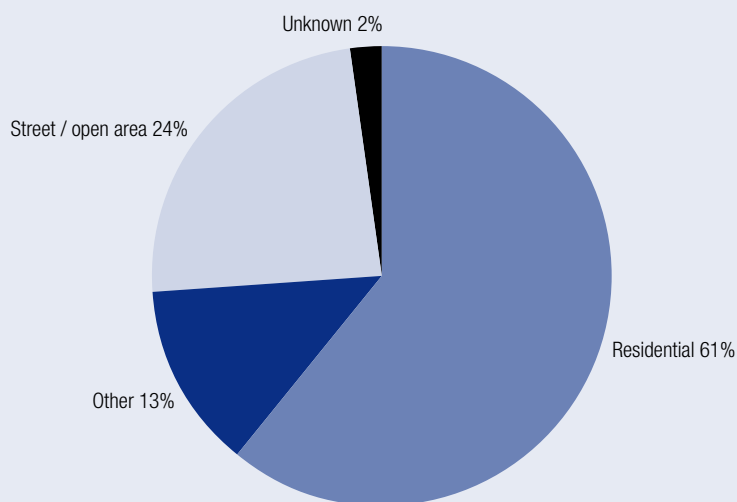
Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Figure 21: Homicides in 2006–07, by month of year (number)



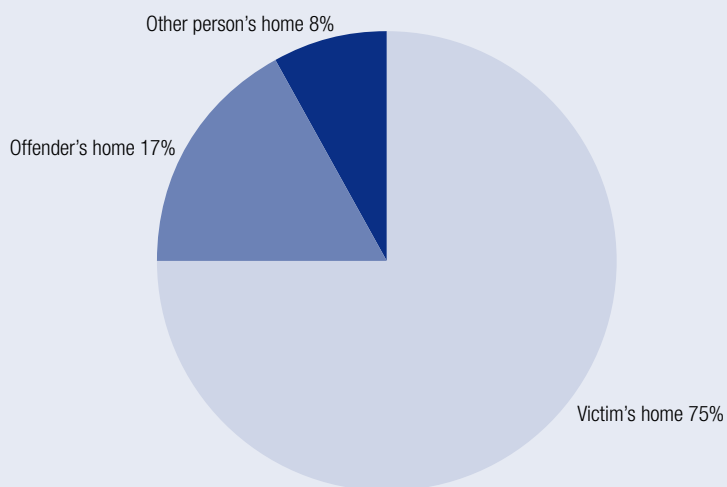
Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Figure 22: Incident location in 2006–07 (percent)



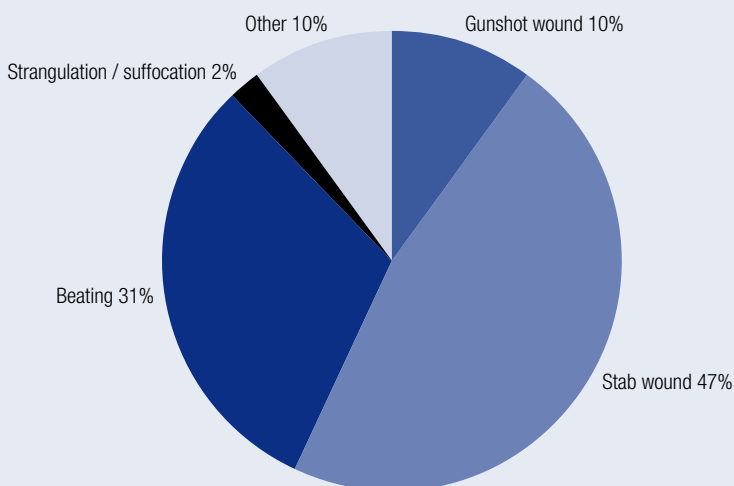
Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 260

Figure 23: Specific location of residential homicide incidents in 2006–07 (percent)



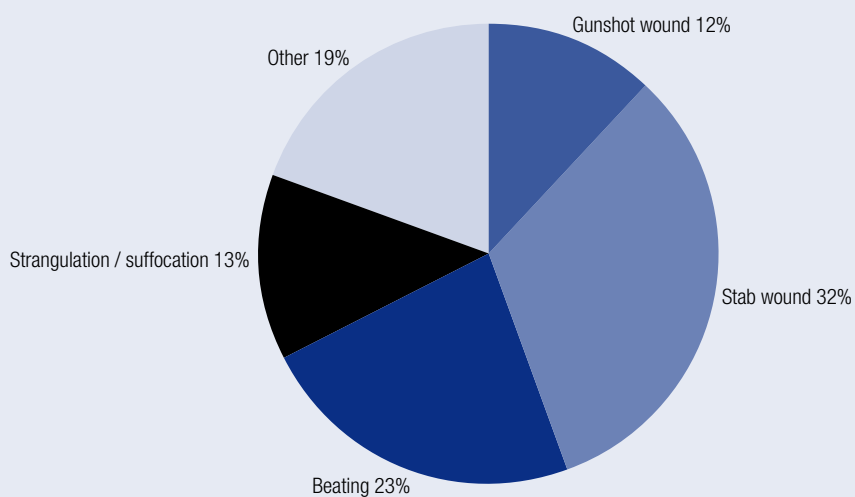
Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 158

Figure 24: Cause of death of male victims in 2006–07 (percent)



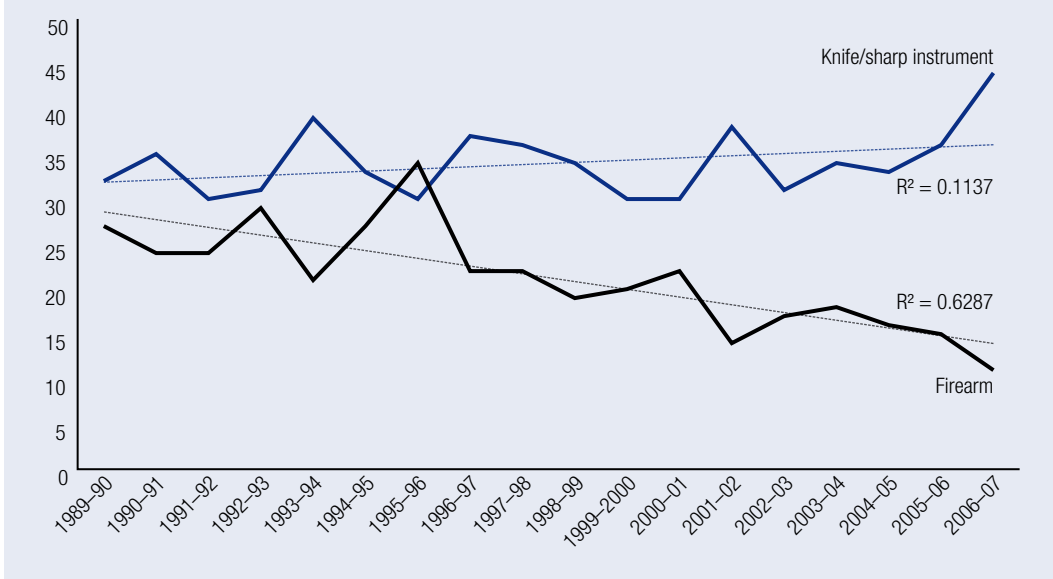
Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 183

Figure 25: Cause of death of female victims in 2006–07 (percent)



Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 77

Figure 26: Relative use of knife and firearm to commit homicide, from 1989–90 to 2006–07 (percent)



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

decrease from 2005–06, continuing a trend of gradual decline ($R^2 = 0.628$). The percentage of homicides in Australia that are committed using firearms is slightly higher than in England and Wales (8%) (Coleman 2008) but is much lower than in Canada (31%) (Li 2007) and the United States (68%) (CIUS 2006). None of these other nations is displaying such a strong decrease in firearm homicides over time as is Australia.

Firearm homicides primarily involve male offenders and victims. In 2006–07, 30 male homicide offenders and one female homicide offender used a firearm. Twenty-five male offenders murdered another male with a firearm, and eight males murdered a female. In 2006–07, no firearm homicides occurred between a female victim and female offender, the single female firearm offender taking a male victim. More than 93 percent of firearms used in homicides in 2006–07 were unlicensed and unregistered. Not surprisingly given the low level of legal ownership of firearms amongst those involved in homicide, 48 percent of firearm homicide offenders had a prior criminal history, compared with 37 percent of victims.

Handgun homicides

Handguns have made up the majority of firearm homicides in Australia in the past six years (see Figure 27). This has been increasing since the inception of the NHMP, and has remained steady in recent years. In 2006–07, 48 percent of firearm homicides were conducted with a handgun.

Handguns also make up the majority of firearm homicides in Canada and the United States (Li 2007; CIUS 2006).

Motive

It is difficult to ascribe a single reason or motive to a homicide when the reasons or lack thereof may be varied and complicated. The purpose of ascribing motivation is to chart broad trends.

The motive leading to the highest proportion of homicides is domestic argument, although, as Figure 28 shows, distinct differences exist between the sexes in distribution of motives to kill them. Female victims were most likely to have been

murdered as the result of a domestic altercation (44%), after which they were most commonly killed for no apparent motive (31%); for revenge (9%); and for money/drugs (7%). Males were most commonly killed for no apparent motive (28%); in alcohol-related arguments (21%); for money/drugs (17%); through domestic altercations (15%); and for revenge (12%). Arguments over money can occur in many situations. In one case, the offenders drugged the victim, who was suffering from severe dementia, after changing his will in order to make themselves primary beneficiaries (case no. 138/07). In another case, the offender killed both his parents after they decided not to sell the family farm (case no. 196/07).

Around 30 percent of cases have no apparent motive. In one such case, the offender killed the victim after he walked past and said 'Hey, what's going on?' (case no. 059/07). In another, the offender pushed over the elderly victim while walking past, causing him to stumble onto the road and be hit by a car. When asked later why he did this, the offender stated that he was angry due to another incident (case no. 080/07).

Alcohol and illicit drugs

Many homicide cases involved substance use. Sixty-seven percent of victims had alcohol, illicit drugs, or both in their blood system when they died (refer to Appendix D). One-third (35%) had alcohol only; 16 percent, illicit drugs only; and 16 percent, both alcohol and illicit drugs. Male and female victims were under the influence of multiple substances and illicit drugs at similar rates (see Figure 29). Male victims, however, were more likely (39%) than were female ones (24%) to be under the influence of alcohol only, and female victims were more likely (46%) than male ones (28%) to have no alcohol or illicit drugs in their blood system when killed, which may reflect their greater likelihood of having been killed in the context of a domestic dispute. Toxicology reports indicated that seven victims (4%) were using illicit drugs in combination with prescription drugs. Other victims had consumed:

- alcohol (0.10g/100ml), amphetamines (0.1mg/l), and methylamphetamines (1.3 mg/l) (case no. 026/07)
- alcohol and Subutex (buprenorphine, a heroin substitute) (case no. 182/07)
- cannabis, amphetamines, and methadone (case no. 015/07)
- MDMA ('ecstasy'), amphetamine, and methylamphetamines (case no. 041/07)
- cocaine, amphetamine, and a methylamphetamine (case no. 037/07)
- alcohol (0.092mg/L), cannabis, amphetamines, and heroin (case no. 097/07)
- Xanax (alprazolam, a benzodiazepine) and methadone (case no. 117/07)
- cocaine, cannabis, and diazepam (case no. 121/07)

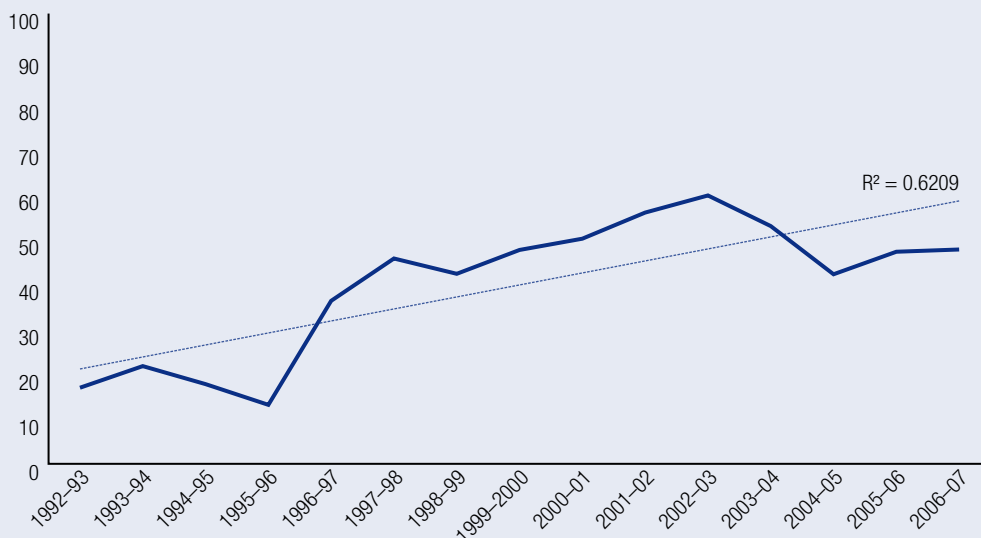
For information on how the NHMP collects alcohol and illicit-drug intake, please refer to Appendix A.

Precipitating crime

In 2006–07, as in other years, 13 percent of homicide incidents had a precipitating crime, with robbery being the most prominent (see Figure 30). The amount sought by the offender does not necessarily have to be substantial, as in the case in which a victim was bashed for his wallet after he bought the offenders each a pie (case no. 079/07). In another incident, the offenders stole the teenage victim's wallet and then demanded his bank card personal identification number (PIN), after which they killed him and dumped his body in a river (case no. 226/07).

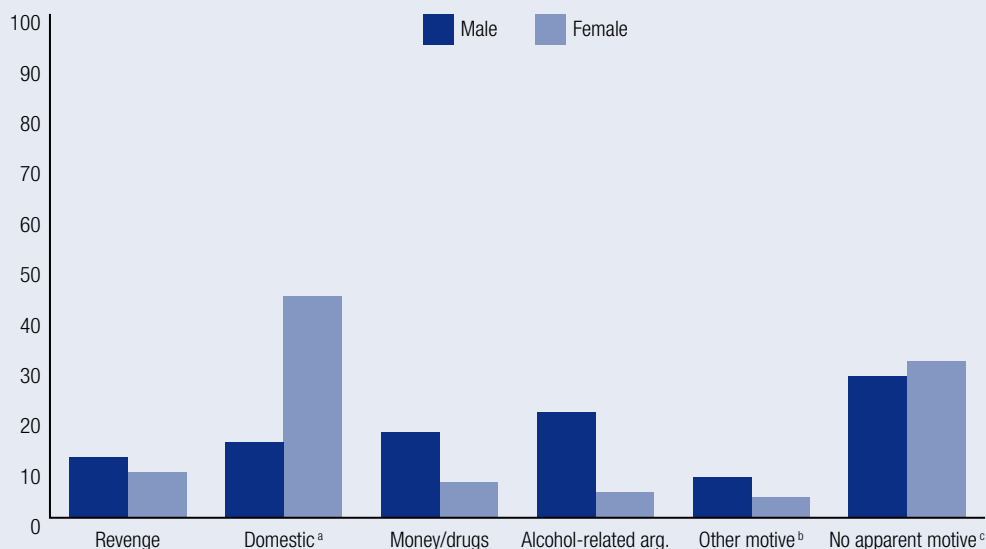
Theft and break & enter accounted for another significant portion of precipitating crimes. There was one sexual assault homicide in 2006–07. In this case, a 14-month-old baby was raped and beaten (case no. 175/07). There were no cases of homicides committed in the context of drugs and prostitution in 2006–07. That said, research suggests that both are risk factors in people going missing involuntarily (Foye 2006; James, Anderson & Putt 2008).

Figure 27: Handgun usage in firearm homicide from 1989–90 to 2006–07 (percent)



Source: AIC NHMP 1992–93 to 2006–07 [computer file]

Figure 28: Motive for incident in 2006–07, by sex of victim (percent)



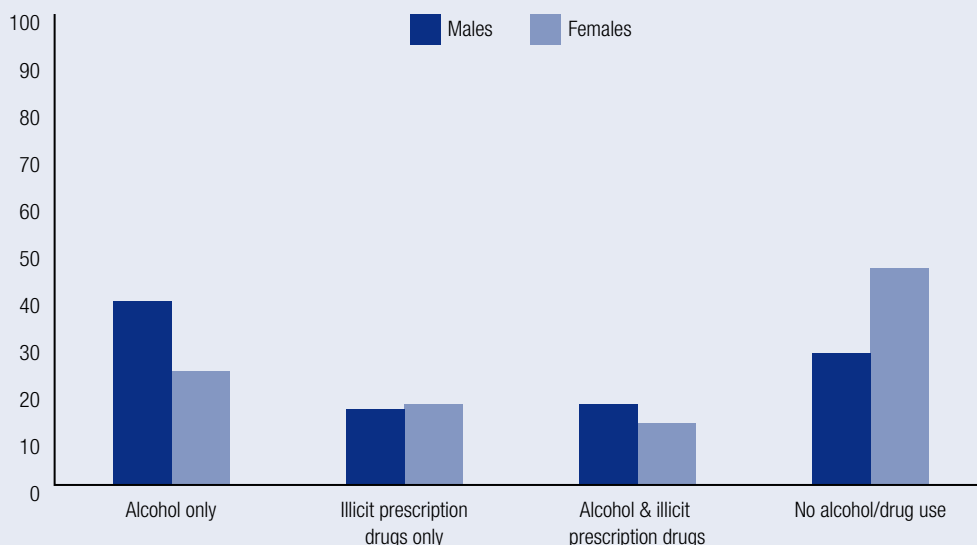
a: 'Domestic argument' includes jealousy, desertion/termination of a relationship, and arguments of a domestic nature

b: 'Other motive' includes racial/sexual vilification (hate crimes), sexual gratification, envy, and other motives

c: This includes cases in which the motive was not yet determined or remains unknown

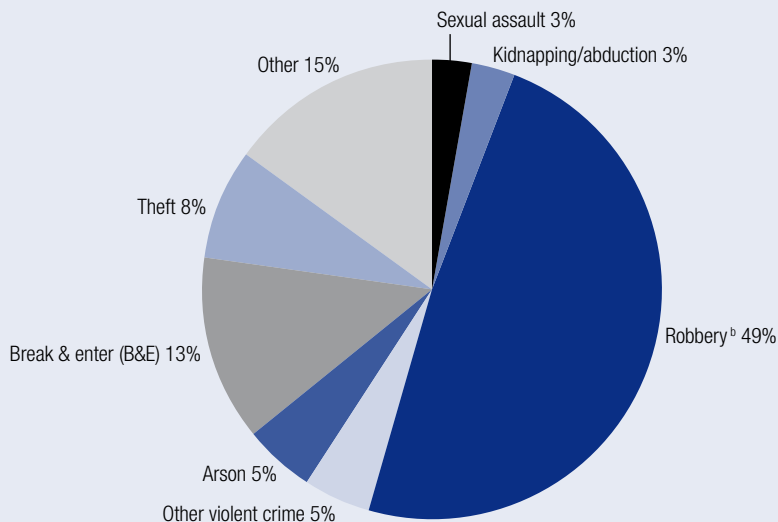
Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], males n = 185, females n = 81

Figure 29: Victims' alcohol and illicit prescription-drug usage in 2006–07 (percent)



Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], males n = 138, females = 54

Figure 30: Type of recorded precipitating crimes in 2006–07^a (percent)



a: Four cases in 2006–07 had two precipitating crimes occur within the incident: case no. 005/07 (arson and B&E), case no. 009/07 (other and theft), case no. 019/07 (arson and kidnapping), and case no. 257/07 (theft and B&E)

b: Includes more than one victim

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 39



Indigenous homicide

Victimisation patterns

For as long as monitoring has occurred, Indigenous Australians have been found to be at much greater risk of becoming a homicide victim than have others. In 2006–07, there were 33 Indigenous victims of homicide (17 male, 16 female), thirteen percent of all Australian victims, though the Indigenous population is less than two percent of the Australian population. In 2006–07, the victimisation rate of Indigenous males (6.1 per 100,000) was three and a half times that of non-Indigenous Australian males (1.6 per 100,000). Indigenous females were victimised at nine times the rate (5.7 per 100,000) of their non-Indigenous Australian counterparts (0.61 per 100,000).

Non-Indigenous males are victimised at two and half times the rate of females, a ratio that has stayed relatively constant for eighteen years. Indigenous males and females, on the other hand, were victims of homicide at similar rates in 2006–07 (see Figure 31).

The rate per 100,000 per year of victimisation of Indigenous males has seen a substantial fall from the high point of 16.9 in 1993–94 to 6.1 in 2006–07. The victimisation rate of Indigenous females has also decreased, but more slowly ($R^2 = 0.541$). Their peak was 13.1, in 1990–91, but this has fallen to below six in recent years.

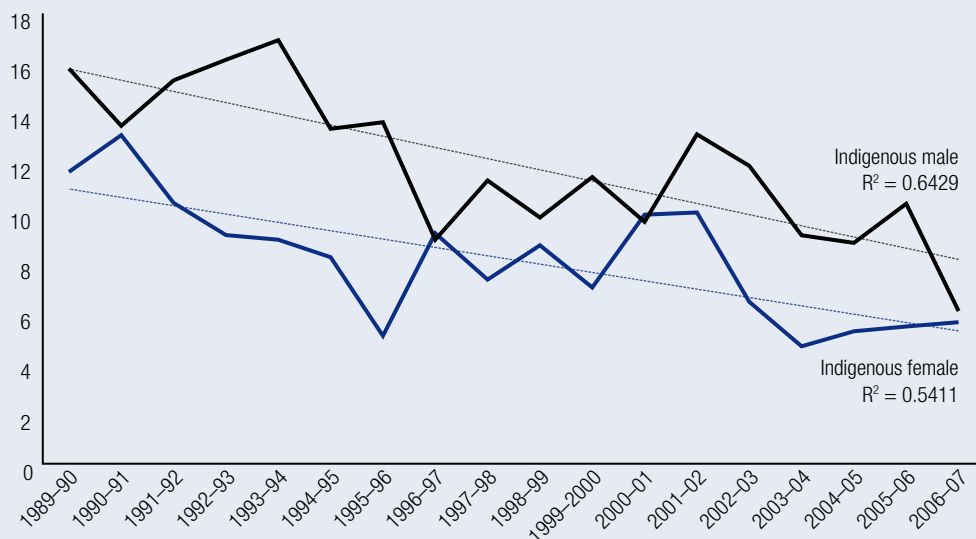
All Indigenous male victims in 2006–07 knew their attackers. In contrast, 25 percent of male victims were killed by strangers (see Figure 32).

As Figure 33 shows, all Indigenous females also knew their attackers in 2006–07. The most distinguishing factor of Indigenous female victims is that they are slightly more likely than non-Indigenous ones to have died at the hands of intimate partners: 53 percent of female homicide victims in the general population died this way, and 59 percent of Indigenous ones.

Offending rates

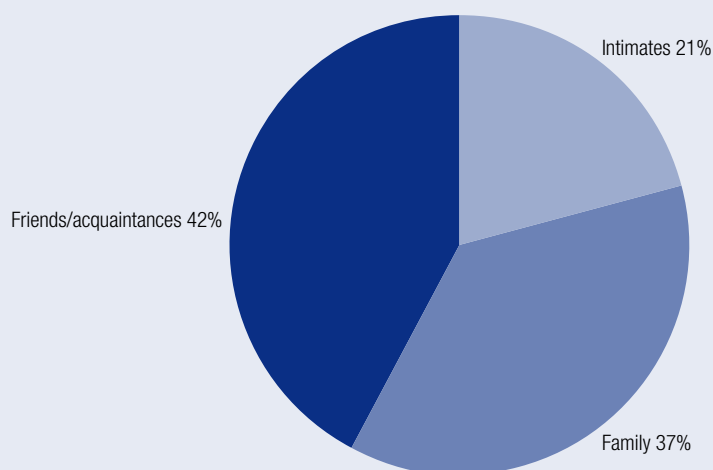
For as long as monitoring has occurred, Indigenous homicide-offender rates have been much higher than non-Indigenous ones. The offending rate per 100,000 Indigenous males in 2006–07 (14.0) was seven times that of non-Indigenous males (2.0) (see Figure 34). The 2006–07 homicide-offending rate of Indigenous females, 5.3, was nearly 14 times as high as the non-Indigenous female offending rate (0.4). The rate per 100,000 per year of Indigenous male homicide offenders has, however, fallen from its peak in 1990–1991 of 38.8 to 14.0 on the last measure, close to a third of what they have been.

Figure 31: Indigenous male and female victim rates from 1989–90 to 2006–07 (per 100,000 Indigenous males and females respectively per year)



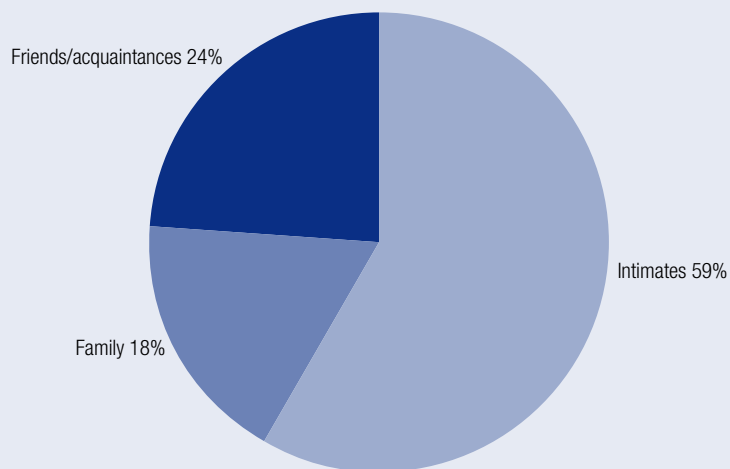
Source: AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2006–07 [computer file]

Figure 32: Relationship between Indigenous male victim and offender in 2006–07 (percent)



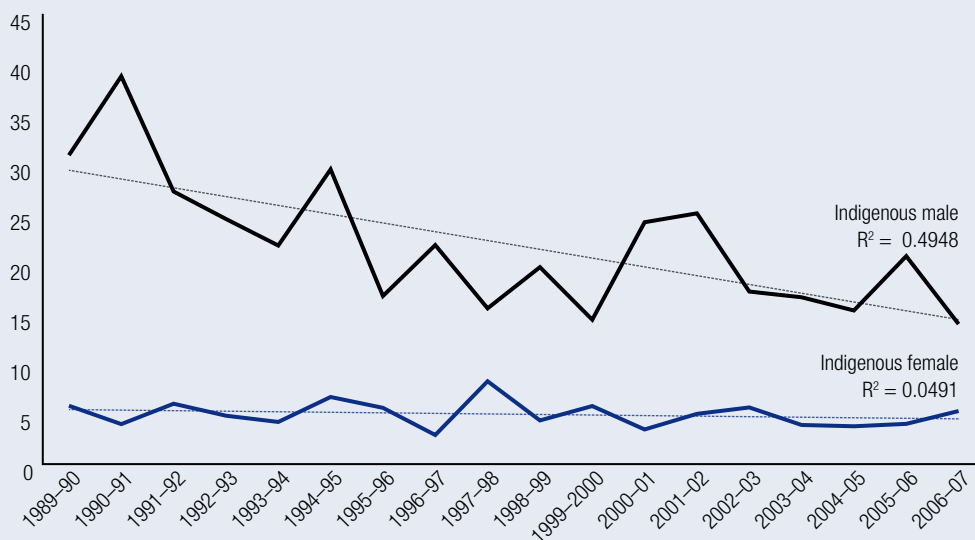
Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 19

Figure 33: Relationship between Indigenous female victim and offender in 2006–07 (percent)



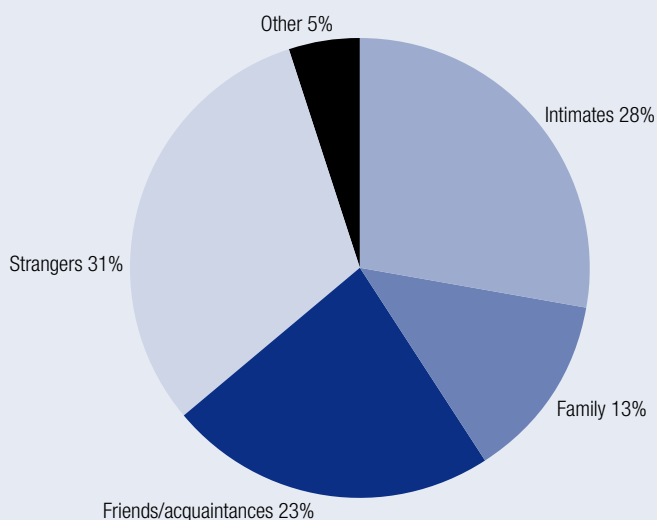
Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 17

Figure 34: Indigenous-offender rate from 1989–90 to 2006–07, by sex (per 100,000 per year)



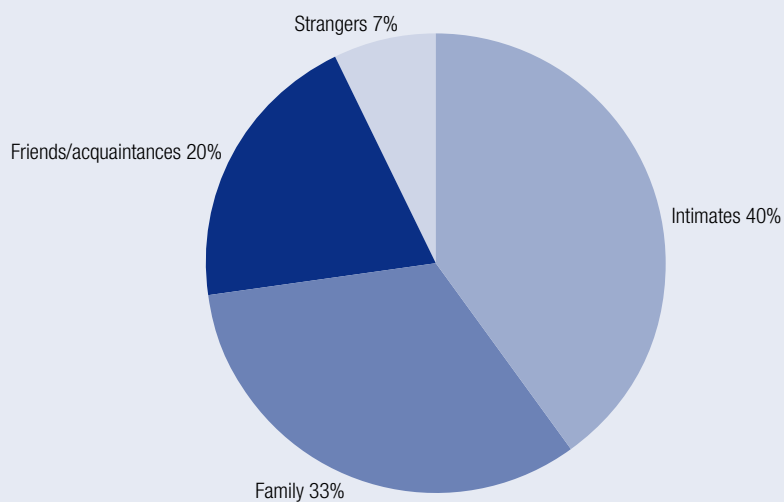
Source: AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2006–07 [computer file]

Figure 35: Relationship between Indigenous male offender and victim in 2006–07 (percent)



Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 39

Figure 36: Relationship between Indigenous female offender and victim in 2006–07 (percent)



Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], n = 15

This fall in Indigenous male offending has been a critical factor in lowering overall homicide rates in Australia.

The rate of Indigenous female homicide offenders, as with that of non-Indigenous females, has shown little change since monitoring began.

Indigenous offender's relationship with victim

The distribution of Indigenous offenders' relationships to their victims is largely comparable to what can be seen by Australian offenders as a whole. The major difference that the victimisation pattern in male Indigenous offenders shows from that in Australian offenders over all is that they are more likely to murder an intimate partner (28% rather than 18%) (see Figure 35). Female Indigenous offenders victimise in patterns similar to those of their non-Indigenous counterparts (see Figure 36).

Appendix A:

Data collection and quality control



Data concerning victims' alcohol and illicit-drug consumption have changed considerably since the inception of the NHMP. The law in each state and territory requires that all violent and unnatural deaths be reported to the Coroner. Consequently, as of 1 July 1996, additional information relating to the presence in the victim of alcohol or illicit prescription drugs at the time of the incident was also collected from coronial files from each state and territory.

Homicide being the most serious crime in any jurisdiction, it is important that the NHMP data be accurate in order to provide a precise picture of lethal violence in Australia. In order to ensure this, a rigorous quality-control process is undertaken.

The NHMP quality-control process involves crosschecking information contained in each police offence report of murder or manslaughter with information from the additional data sources. As outlined earlier, these supplementary sources include post-mortem reports, information provided by other agencies in the police service (statistical services, homicide squads or major crime units, firearms registries), and press clippings. If a discrepancy arises between information provided in the police offence report and one of the additional sources, then the police source is queried. Depending upon the reliability of the additional source and the information provided in response to the NHMP

query, the data relating to the homicide incident in the NHMP may accordingly be updated.

Other examples of deaths that may not be recorded in the NHMP as homicides are cases in which there is uncertainty as to whether the death is a murder or manslaughter and they have been referred for opinion to the OPP/DDP. If there is still no decision at the time of data collection, the incident will be excluded.

A report detailing the NHMP quality-control process, titled *Quality Control in the National Homicide Monitoring Program* (Mouzos 2002), provides a comprehensive examination of this process and cites examples of identified inconsistencies in the various data sources. The data discrepancies that arise include conflicting data, such as in employment status or age, and the identification of cases that have remained on file as they were originally recorded and investigated as homicides but have subsequently been found to be unsubstantiated or to involve no suspicious circumstances or third-party involvement (for example, cases in which an individual may have died of natural causes).

In addition to the possibility of discrepancies between the various data sources used in the NHMP, there are discrepancies between NHMP data and other homicide data produced by other agencies, such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics

(ABS). For a discussion on the results of a comparative analysis of the various data sources, see Mouzos (2003).

Categories

To avoid misinterpretation of the data, it is important to specifically outline what it is that certain categories include.

Modified longarms, such as sawn-off rifles, are classified as Category H firearms in some jurisdictions. Though Category H (restricted) firearms usually refers to handguns, any firearm under a specified length is classified as a concealable firearm and hence as a restricted weapon. For example, in Victoria, shotguns or rifles with a length of less than 75 centimetres are classified as Category E longarms (see s 3 *Firearms Act 1996* (Vic)). In Queensland, any firearm under 75cm in length is a Category H weapon (see s 7 *Weapons Categories Regulation 1997* (Qld)). The legislation acknowledges that offenders often illegally shorten firearms, including rifles and shotguns, in order to carry out armed robberies. When apprehended, these offenders face higher penalties for possession of a concealable firearm than the standard penalties for possession of a longarm. In one case the offender had a licence for the firearm, but also possessed numerous firearms for which he did not hold a licence (case no. 013/07).

There is some debate as to whether the consumption of alcohol and/or illicit drugs prior to the homicide incident can be considered a precipitating factor. Toxicology tests can determine whether the victim had consumed alcohol and/or

illicit drugs prior to the homicide, but they cannot determine how the person was affected physiologically (unless the amount consumed was relatively high) or whether the person's alcohol- or drug-taking directly precipitated the homicide. A prime example is cannabis. Toxicology reports may indicate the presence of a cannabis metabolite (11-nor-9-carboxy-delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) in blood or urine, but this can be detected in urine several days to 30 days on average post use (see Makkai 2000). Unless the offender suicided following the homicide incident, accurate measures of the offender's drug intake and/or intoxication are usually available only much later, when the offender has been arrested. For these reasons, it is problematic to assume a causal relationship between use of alcohol or illicit drugs and lethal violence.

Methodological note

Rates presented in the text and tables have been calculated using preliminary and updated 2007 population estimates contained in various issues of *Population by age and sex, Australian states and territories*, ABS cat. no. 3201.0, except for those rates referring to specific age groups by sex, which have been calculated on the basis of *Australian demographic statistics*, December quarter 2006, ABS cat. no. 3101.0.

All rates referring to Indigenous status have been calculated using *Experimental estimates and projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians*, ABS cat. no. 3238.0.

Some column percentages may not sum to 100, due to rounding.



Appendix B: Data usage

Homicide data can be used for a variety of purposes. Aggregated state or territory data provide, for example, police and policymakers with an indication of the extent of lethal violence in their jurisdiction, as well as access to longitudinal patterns in lethal violence. Specifically, the data may help to identify shifts in victimisation or offender trends or changes in the patterns of the circumstances and characteristics of homicide incidents (such as a decrease in firearm homicides).

The NHMP data can help numerous fields of governance develop policy and strategic direction. The NHMP can also give current homicide investigations context, by showing whether a particular homicide fits established patterns and modus operandi. A key function of the NHMP is the communication of the most-current data and most-recent results to key stakeholders, namely state and territory police services; local, state and federal governments; non-government organisations; research agencies; and the general public. NHMP records can further support jurisdictions by helping develop in-depth understanding of a specific type of homicide. Currently, NHMP records are forming the basis for two projects, looking at domestic-violence homicides and Indigenous homicides.

Requests for NHMP data since the NHMP's inception have steadily increased. The NHMP

has become a resource essential to a wide range of parties. An indication of the ever-expanding audience to whom NHMP data have been communicated through publications and presentations is outlined in the lists below.

Published material: 2006–07

(See <http://www.aic.gov.au/research/projects/0001-docs.html>)

Davies M & Mouzos J 2007. *Homicide in Australia: 2005–06 National Homicide Monitoring Program annual report*. Research and public policy series no. 77. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/rpp/77/>

Davies M & Mouzos J 2007. Fatal fires: fire-associated homicide in Australia, 1990–2005. *Trends & Issues in crime and criminal justice* no. 340. <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi2/tandi340.pdf>

Mouzos J & West D 2007. An examination of serial murder in Australia. *Trends & Issues in crime and criminal justice* no. 346. <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi2/tandi346.pdf>

The use of fire in homicide. *BushFIRE arson bulletin* no. 47. <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/bfab/bfab047.pdf>

Fire-associated homicides in Australia. *BushFIRE arson bulletin* no. 48. <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/bfab/bfab048.pdf>

Homicide incidents in Australia. *Crime facts info* no. 153. <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/cfi/cfi153.html>

Presentations

An overview of homicide in New South Wales and in Australia: Results from the 2005–06 NHMP Annual Report NSW Homicide Squad Advisory Council Meeting, Parramatta, June 2007

National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP): An Overview. NSW Homicide Squad Sydney, December 2006 Jenny Mouzos

National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP): An Overview. Thailand Ministry of Justice delegation Canberra, November 2006

Examples of agencies and organisations that have requested data

Homicide squads / major crime units in all Australian states and territories

Other police units in all Australian states and territories

Australian Broadcasting Cooperation (ABC)

ABC Radio

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)

New South Wales Sentencing Council

Queensland Police Service State Crime Operations Command

Queen Sofia Center for the Study of Violence, Spain

Appendix C: Incident characteristics, from NHMP findings

Trends in homicide incidents (number)	
Year	Australia
1989–90	306
1990–91	323
1991–92	314
1992–93	331
1993–94	323
1994–95	327
1995–96	304
1996–97	298
1997–98	297
1998–99	327
1999–2000	300
2000–01	308
2001–02	354
2002–03	297
2003–04	288
2004–05	249
2005–06	283
2006–07	260

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

Incidence of homicide		
	Percentage	Number
New South Wales	34	89
Victoria	19	49
Queensland	20	53
Western Australia	10	27
South Australia	5	12
Tasmania	3	8
Australian Capital Territory	2	4
Northern Territory	7	18
Australia	100	260

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Most serious offence (murder, manslaughter or infanticide)			
		Percentage	Number
New South Wales ^a	Murder	91	81
	Manslaughter	8	7
	Infanticide	0	0
Victoria	Murder	94	46
	Manslaughter	6	3
	Infanticide	0	0
Queensland	Murder	85	45
	Manslaughter	15	8
	Infanticide	0	0
Western Australia	Murder	85	23
	Manslaughter	15	4
	Infanticide	0	0
South Australia	Murder	83	10
	Manslaughter	8	1
	Infanticide	8	1
Tasmania	Murder	75	6
	Manslaughter	25	2
	Infanticide	0	0
Australian Capital Territory	Murder	75	3
	Manslaughter	25	1
	Infanticide	0	0
Northern Territory	Murder	89	16
	Manslaughter	11	2
	Infanticide	0	0
Australia	Murder	88	230
	Manslaughter	11	28
	Infanticide	0	1
	Total	100	259

a: One case most serious charge unknown

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Proportion of incidents solved ^a

	Percentage solved of total homicides	Number solved	Total homicides
New South Wales	91	81	89
Victoria	90	44	49
Queensland	100	53	53
Western Australia	96	26	27
South Australia	100	12	12
Tasmania	88	7	8
Australian Capital Territory	100	4	4
Northern Territory	100	18	18
Australia	94	245	260

a: Solved incidents include those for which an offender has been identified and charged, those in which the offender has suicided, and incidents otherwise cleared, such as by subsequent death of the offender, the death having been ruled not homicide

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Plurality of incident victims and offenders

	Percentage	Number
One victim, one offender	84	205
One victim, multiple offenders	14	34
Multiple victims, one offender	2	6
Multiple victims, multiple offenders	0	0
Total ^a	100	245

a: In which an offender has been identified: excludes 15 cases in which an offender has not been identified or formally charged

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Homicide incidents occurring during the course of another crime

Precipitating crime	Percentage	Number
Sexual assault	3	1
Kidnapping/abduction	3	1
Robbery ^a	49	19
Other violent crime	5	2
Arson	5	2
Break & enter	13	5
Theft	8	3
Other	15	6
Total	100	39

a: Includes more than one victim

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Time of day of incidents (percent)					
	(Total number) ^a	Midnight to 6am	6am to noon	Noon to 6pm	6pm to midnight
NSW	85	29	16	26	28
Vic	42	31	19	10	40
Qld	52	25	12	17	46
WA	26	38	4	23	35
SA	12	67	17	8	8
Tas	8	25	0	38	38
ACT	4	50	0	25	25
NT	18	22	0	28	50
Australia	247	31	13	21	36

a: Excludes 13 cases of which the exact time of the day of the incident was unknown or not stated

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Day of the week of incidents (percent)								
	(Total number) ^a	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
NSW	86	16	16	7	13	12	22	14
Vic	48	10	23	10	10	17	8	21
Qld	53	13	13	9	11	23	8	23
WA	26	23	12	8	15	19	15	8
SA	12	25	17	33	0	8	8	8
Tas	8	13	0	13	38	25	0	13
ACT	4	0	25	25	0	25	0	25
NT	17	12	12	12	12	12	35	12
Australia	254	15	16	10	12	16	15	16

a: Excludes six cases of which day of week unknown

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Month of incidents		
	Percentage	Number
July	8	21
August	11	29
September	8	21
October	10	25
November	4	10
December	11	28
January	11	28
February	9	23
March	8	20
April	6	16
May	10	26
June	5	13
Total	100	260


Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Location of incidents (percent)				
	(Total number) ^a	Residential premises	Street / open area	Other location ^b
NSW	88	56	27	17
Vic	47	64	21	15
Qld	53	72	19	9
WA	26	73	12	15
SA	12	83	8	8
Tas	8	25	63	13
ACT	4	75	0	25
NT	18	39	56	6
Australia	256	62	25	14

a: Omits four incidents whose location is unknown

b: Includes shops, shopping malls, banks / credit unions / post offices, car parks / public garages / service stations, workplaces, other commercial premises, public transport and related facilities, places of entertainment, and corrective/health institutions

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]



Appendix D: Victim characteristics, from NHMP findings

Number of victims per incident (percent)					
	(Total number)	One victim	Two victims	Three victims	Four or more victims
New South Wales	89	98	2	0	0
Victoria	49	100	0	0	0
Queensland	53	96	4	0	0
Western Australia	27	96	4	0	0
South Australia	12	100	0	0	0
Tasmania	8	88	12	0	0
Australian Capital Territory	4	100	0	0	0
Northern Territory	18	100	0	0	0
Australia	260	98	2	0	0

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

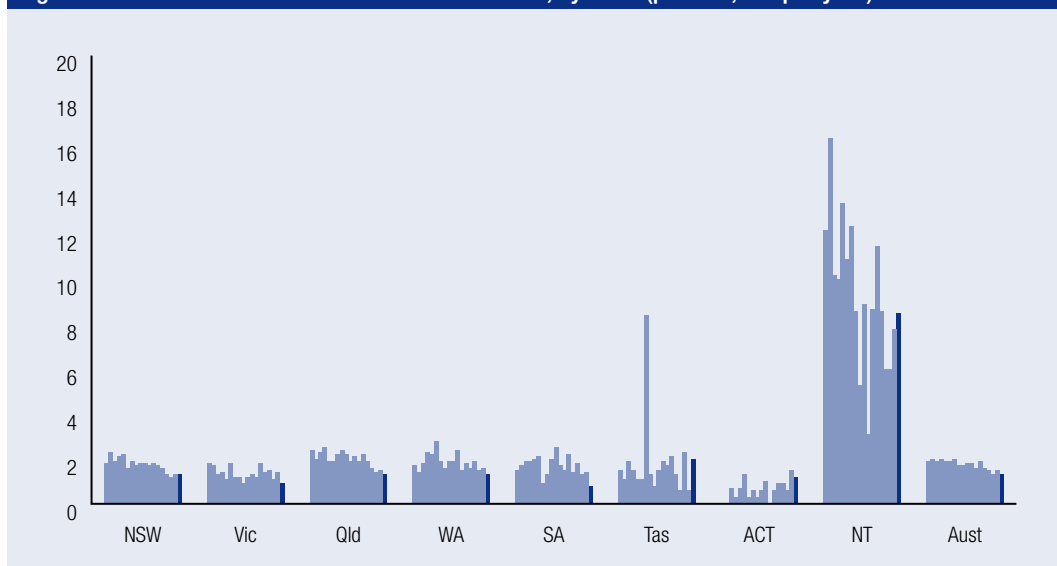
Trends in homicide victimisation (per 100,000 per year) ^a

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
1989–90	1.8	1.8	2.4	1.7	1.5	1.5	0.0	12.2	1.9
1990–91	2.3	1.7	2.0	1.4	1.7	1.1	0.0	16.3	2.0
1991–92	1.9	1.3	2.3	1.8	1.9	1.9	0.7	10.2	1.9
1992–93	2.1	1.4	2.5	2.3	1.9	1.5	0.3	10.0	2.0
1993–94	2.2	1.1	1.9	2.2	2.0	1.1	0.7	13.4	1.9
1994–95	1.6	1.8	1.9	2.8	2.1	1.1	1.3	10.9	1.9
1995–96	1.9	1.2	2.2	1.9	0.9	8.4	0.3	12.4	2.0
1996–97	1.7	1.2	2.4	1.6	1.3	1.3	0.6	8.6	1.7
1997–98	1.8	0.9	2.2	1.9	2.0	0.8	0.3	5.3	1.7
1998–99	1.8	1.2	1.9	1.9	2.5	1.5	0.6	8.9	1.8
1999–2000	1.7	1.3	2.1	2.4	1.7	1.9	1.0	3.1	1.8
2000–01	1.8	1.2	1.9	1.5	1.5	1.7	0.0	8.7	1.6
2001–02	1.7	1.8	2.2	1.8	2.2	2.1	0.6	11.5	1.9
2002–03	1.6	1.4	1.9	1.6	1.4	1.3	0.9	8.6	1.6
2003–04	1.3	1.5	1.6	1.9	1.8	0.6	0.9	6.0	1.5
2004–05	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.5	1.3	2.3	0.6	6.0	1.3
2005–06	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.4	0.6	1.5	7.8	1.5
2006–07	1.3	0.9	1.3	1.3	0.8	2.0	1.2	8.5	1.3

a: Includes one murder victim in Norfolk Island for the year 2001–02 and one for the year 2004–05

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

Figure 37: Homicide victims in 1989–90 to 2006–07, by state (per 100,000 per year) ^a



a: Includes one murder victim in Norfolk Island for the year 2001–02 and one for the year 2004–05

Source: AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2006–07 [computer file]. 2006–07 rates were calculated using estimated resident population (persons) as at December 2006 (ABS Australian Demographic Statistics, ABS cat. no. 3101.0)

Sex of victims in 2006–07				
		2006–07		
		Percentage	Number	Rate ^a
NSW	Males	78	71	2.1
	Females	22	20	0.6
Vic	Males	61	30	1.2
	Females	39	19	0.7
Qld	Males	67	37	1.8
	Females	33	18	0.9
WA	Males	82	23	2.2
	Females	18	5	0.5
SA	Males	58	7	0.9
	Females	42	5	0.6
Tas	Males	56	5	2.1
	Females	44	4	1.6
ACT	Males	100	4	2.4
	Females	0	0	0.0
NT	Males	44	8	7.2
	Females	56	10	9.8
Australia	Persons	100	266	1.3
	Males	69.5	185	1.8
	Females	30.5	81	0.8

a: per 100,000 of jurisdiction population

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Age of victims in 2006–07						
	Persons		Males		Females	
	Number	Mean age	Number	Mean age	Number	Mean age
NSW	91	40	71	40	20	42
Vic	49	38	30	37	19	39
Qld	55	39	37	41	18	33
WA	28	29	23	29	5	28
SA	12	35	7	41	5	25
Tas	9	52	5	46	4	59
ACT	4	49	4	49	0	n.a.
NT	18	33	8	34	10	32
Australia	266	38	185	38	81	37

Note: n.a. = not applicable

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Victimisation in 2006–07, by age and sex						
Age (years)	Males		Females		Persons	
	Number	Rate ^a	Number	Rate ^a	Number	Rate ^a
0–4	10	1.5	8	1.3	18	1.4
5–9	3	0.4	1	0.2	4	0.3
10–14	2	0.3	3	0.4	5	0.4
15–19	9	1.2	4	0.6	13	0.9
20–24	26	3.5	7	1.0	33	2.2
25–29	15	2.1	5	0.7	20	1.4
30–34	13	1.7	7	0.9	20	1.3
35–39	25	3.3	13	1.7	38	2.5
40–44	15	2.0	9	1.2	24	1.6
45–49	18	2.4	4	0.5	22	1.5
50–54	13	1.9	4	0.6	17	1.2
55–59	13	2.0	2	0.3	15	1.2
60–64	3	0.6	2	0.4	5	0.5
65–69	8	2.1	4	1.0	12	1.5
70–74	3	1.0	2	0.6	5	0.8
75–79	3	1.2	3	1.0	6	1.1
80+	6	2.2	3	0.7	9	1.2
All ages	185	1.8	81	0.8	266	1.3

a: per 100,000 of population

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Victims ^a with a prior criminal history in 2006–07		
	Percentage	Number
Males	53	96
Females	26	21
Persons	45	117

a: Excludes five victims (four male; one female) whose prior criminal history was unknown.

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Marital status of victims^a in 2006–07 (percent)

	Never married		Married / de facto		Separated/divorced		Widowed	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
NSW	43	27	40	40	11	27	6	7
Vic	61	22	32	56	7	17	0	6
Qld	49	15	49	69	3	8	0	8
WA	39	25	50	75	11	0	0	0
SA	60	25	0	25	40	50	0	0
Tas	40	0	60	0	0	0	0	0
ACT	33	0	67	0	0	0	0	0
NT	71	22	29	67	0	11	0	0
Australia	49	22	41	54	8	18	2	6

a: Excludes 18 victims (16 male; two female) whose marital status information was unavailable and 27 victims (15 male; 12 female) aged less than 15 years

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Victims employed^a at the time of the incident in 2006–07^b

		Percentage	Number
New South Wales	Male	42	25
	Female	21	3
Victoria	Male	31	9
	Female	27	4
Queensland	Male	54	19
	Female	43	6
Western Australia	Male	38	6
	Female	0	0
South Australia	Male	14	1
	Female	0	0
Tasmania	Male	80	4
	Female	50	2
Australian Capital Territory	Male	25	1
	Female	0	0
Northern Territory	Male	17	1
	Female	0	0
Australia	Male	41	66
	Female	25	15

a: In full- or part-time employment

b: Excludes 15 male and 12 female victims aged less than 15 years and eight male and nine female victims whose employment status information was not available

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], males n = 162, females n = 60

Racial appearance of victims in 2006–07							
		Percentage	Caucasian	Indigenous	Asian	Other ^a	Total
New South Wales	Males	79	61	1	5	2	69
	Females	21	14	0	2	2	18
Victoria	Males	61	26	0	4	0	30
	Females	39	17	0	1	1	19
Queensland	Males	67	31	2	1	3	37
	Females	33	14	3	0	1	18
Western Australia	Males	82	15	8	0	0	23
	Females	18	4	1	0	0	5
South Australia	Males	58	5	0	1	1	7
	Females	42	3	2	0	0	5
Tasmania	Males	56	5	0	0	0	5
	Females	44	4	0	0	0	4
Australian Capital Territory	Males	100	3	0	0	1	4
	Females	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Territory	Males	44	2	6	0	0	8
	Females	56	0	10	0	0	10
Australia ^b	Males	70	148	17	11	7	183
	Females	30	56	16	3	4	79

a: Other includes Maori and Pacific Islander, African and African American

b: Excludes four (two male and two female) victims whose racial appearance was not stated

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Number of victims in 2006–07, by cause of death						
	Gunshot wound	Stab wound	Beating	Strangulation/suffocation	Other ^a	Unknown
NSW	3	46	24	3	13	2
Vic	9	16	11	5	5	3
Qld	10	16	18	4	7	0
WA	3	12	9	0	3	1
SA	1	4	5	0	2	0
Tas	1	3	2	1	2	0
ACT	0	4	0	0	0	0
NT	0	10	6	0	2	0
Australia	27	111	75	13	34	6

a: Includes: drug overdose, drowning/submersion, neglect, smoke inhalation / burns, shaking, push from a high place, and other cause of death

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Number of victims in 2006–07, by type of weapon						
	Firearm	Knife / sharp instrument	Blunt instrument	Hands/feet	Other ^a	Unknown / no weapon
NSW	3	46	8	18	11	5
Vic	9	16	3	11	6	4
Qld	10	16	2	16	9	2
WA	3	12	2	5	2	4
SA	1	4	2	3	1	1
Tas	1	3	2	1	2	0
ACT	0	4	0	0	0	0
NT	0	10	4	2	2	0
Australia	27	111	23	56	33	16

a: Includes: explosives, fire, poison, drugs, vehicles, and other weapons

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Victims in 2006–07, by type of weapon and sex of victim (percent victims of that sex)										
	Firearm		Knife / sharp instrument		Blunt instrument		Hands/feet		Other ^a	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
NSW	4	0	55	47	9	11	21	21	10	21
Vic	21	19	45	19	10	0	21	31	3	31
Qld	14	31	32	25	5	0	35	19	14	25
WA	10	33	52	33	10	0	19	33	10	0
SA	14	0	57	0	14	25	0	75	14	0
Tas	20	0	20	50	20	25	0	25	40	0
ACT	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NT	0	0	50	60	38	10	0	20	13	10
Australia	10	13	48	35	10	7	21	26	11	19
(Number) ^b	18	9	88	23	17	6	37	19	21	11

a: Includes: explosives, fire, poison, drugs, vehicles, and other weapons

b: Excludes 10 victims (six males; four females) in which type of weapon is unknown and six victims upon whom no weapon used (three male; three female)

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Number of victims killed with a handgun or other firearm ^a			
		Percentage of homicides in jurisdiction	Number
New South Wales	Handguns	0	0
	Other firearms	2	2
Victoria	Handguns	14	7
	Other firearms	0	0
Queensland	Handguns	0	0
	Other firearms	13	7
Western Australia	Handguns	7	2
	Other firearms	4	1
South Australia	Handguns	8	1
	Other firearms	0	0
Tasmania	Handguns	0	0
	Other firearms	11	1
Australia	Handguns	4	10
	Other firearms	4	11

a: Excludes six victims killed by firearm of which details were unavailable

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Victims in 2006–07, by alleged motive (percent)											
		NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia	Number
Revenge	Males	14	17	11	0	14	40	25	0	12	23
	Females	0	0	22	0	0	50	0	10	9	7
Domestic ^a	Males	13	10	16	35	0	0	0	13	15	30
	Females	45	47	28	60	60	25	0	60	44	33
Money/drugs	Males	17	17	22	4	43	0	0	25	17	30
	Females	10	5	11	0	0	25	0	0	7	7
Alcohol-related argument	Males	17	23	30	17	0	0	0	50	21	38
	Females	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	20	5	4
Other argument	Males	3	10	11	13	14	0	0	0	7	12
	Females	0	11	6	0	0	0	0	0	4	3
Other motive ^b	Males	0	3	0	0	0	0	25	0	1	2
	Females	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No apparent motive ^c	Males	37	20	11	30	29	60	50	13	28	56
	Females	45	37	22	40	40	0	0	10	31	21

a: Includes jealousy, desertion/termination of a relationship, and other domestic altercation

b: Includes: political/sexual vilification (hate crimes), sexual gratification, envy, and other motives

c: Also includes motives yet to be determined or unknown

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Victims, by victim's alcohol and/or illicit prescription-drug use, from 1989–90 to 2006–07 (percent)								
	Alcohol only		Illicit prescription drugs only		Alcohol and illicit prescription drugs		No alcohol/drug use	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
New South Wales	30	15	19	31	21	8	30	46
Victoria	23	11	37	17	17	17	23	56
Queensland	68	40	8	0	8	0	16	60
Western Australia	44	33	0	0	13	0	44	67
South Australia	14	0	14	50	14	0	57	50
Tasmania	40	0	0	0	0	0	60	0
Australian Capital Territory	25	0	0	0	50	0	25	0
Northern Territory	75	50	0	0	25	38	0	13
Australia	39	24	16	17	17	13	28	46
(Number) ^a	54	13	22	9	23	7	39	25

a: Excludes 74 victims (47 male; 27 female) whose alcohol and/or illicit prescription-drug use information was not available.

Sources: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]; National Coroners Information System (NCIS).

Appendix E: Offender characteristics, from NHMP findings

Sex of offenders in 2006–07				
		Percentage	Number	Rate per 100,000 per year
New South Wales	Males	84	85	2.5
	Females	16	16	0.5
Victoria	Males	93	52	2.0
	Females	7	4	0.2
Queensland	Males	76	45	2.2
	Females	24	14	0.7
Western Australia	Males	61	17	1.6
	Females	39	11	1.1
South Australia	Males	78	14	1.8
	Females	22	4	0.5
Tasmania	Males	100	8	3.3
	Females	0	0	0.0
Australian Capital Territory	Males	75	3	1.8
	Females	25	1	0.6
Northern Territory	Males	82	18	16.3
	Females	18	4	3.9
Australia	Males	83	242	2.3
	Females	17	54	0.5

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Sex of homicide offenders (row percent)		
	Males	Females
1989–90	87.4	12.6
1990–91	91.0	9.0
1991–92	88.7	11.3
1992–93	89.5	10.5
1993–94	86.7	13.3
1994–95	88.3	11.7
1995–96	87.1	12.9
1996–97	89.3	10.7
1997–98	81.7	18.3
1998–99	86.3	13.7
1999–2000	84.3	15.7
2000–01	88.3	11.7
2001–02	85.3	14.7
2002–03	87.5	12.5
2003–04	86.5	13.5
2004–05	83.6	16.4
2005–06	87.5	12.5
2006–07	81.8	18.2

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

Age of offenders in 2006–07, by state						
	Males		Females		Persons	
	Number	Mean age	Number	Mean age	Number	Mean age
NSW	85	33	16	39	101	34
Vic	52	32	4	35	56	33
Qld	45	34	14	35	59	34
WA	17	34	11	30	28	33
SA	14	34	4	25	18	32
Tas	8	32	0	n.a.	8	32
ACT	3	46	1	45	4	46
NT	18	29	4	43	22	32
Australia	242	33	54	35	296	33

Note: n.a. = not applicable

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Age and sex of offenders in 2006–07						
Age (years)	Males		Females		Persons	
	Number	Rate per 100,000	Number	Rate per 100,000	Number	Rate per 100,000
10–14	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
15–19	29	4.0	8	1.2	37	2.6
20–24	47	6.3	8	1.1	55	3.7
25–29	41	5.8	4	0.6	45	3.2
30–34	31	4.2	9	1.2	40	2.7
35–39	23	3.0	6	0.8	29	1.9
40–44	23	3.0	6	0.8	29	1.9
45–49	22	3.0	6	0.8	28	1.9
50–54	13	1.9	1	0.1	14	1.0
55–59	5	0.8	3	0.5	8	0.6
60–64	4	0.8	1	0.2	5	0.5
65–69	2	0.5	1	0.3	3	0.4
70–74	1	0.3	1	0.3	2	0.3
75–79	1	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.2
80+	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
All ages	242	2.4	54	0.5	296	1.4

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Offenders employed ^a at the time of the incident in 2006–07, by state			
		Percentage	Number ^b
New South Wales	Males	36	26
	Females	38	5
Victoria	Males	40	21
	Females	25	1
Queensland	Males	33	14
	Females	15	2
Western Australia	Males	35	6
	Females	20	2
South Australia	Males	7	1
	Females	n.a.	0
Tasmania	Males	43	3
	Females	n.a.	0
Australian Capital Territory	Males	67	2
	Females	n.a.	0
Northern Territory	Males	70	7
	Females	50	1
Australia	Males	37	80
	Females	23	11

a: In full- or part-time employment

b: Excludes 25 male offenders whose employment status information was unavailable and two whose employment status was inapplicable and excludes seven female offenders whose employment status information was unavailable

Note: n.a. = not applicable

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file], males n = 215, females n = 47

Marital status of offenders in 2006–07, by state ^a (percent)								
	Never married		Married / de facto		Separated/ divorced		Widowed	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
NSW	43	10	37	70	20	20	0	0
Vic	52	0	40	50	8	50	0	0
Qld	52	29	41	57	7	14	0	0
WA	44	45	44	55	13	0	0	0
SA	42	50	17	50	42	0	0	0
Tas	88	0	0	0	13	0	0	0
ACT	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NT	56	0	38	67	6	0	0	33
Australia	51	26	36	57	13	15	0	2

a: Excludes 53 offenders (46 male; 7 female) whose marital status information was unavailable

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Sex and racial appearance of offenders in 2006–07, by state (percent)						
		Number	Caucasian	Indigenous	Asian	Other ^a
NSW	Males	85	67	15	11	7
	Females	16	81	6	13	0
Vic	Males	51	80	2	10	8
	Females	4	100	0	0	0
Qld	Males	45	73	11	0	16
	Females	14	79	21	0	0
WA	Males	17	59	29	6	6
	Females	11	45	55	0	0
SA	Males	14	71	14	14	0
	Females	4	75	25	0	0
Tas	Males	8	100	0	0	0
	Females	0	0	0	0	0
ACT	Males	3	100	0	0	0
	Females	1	0	0	100	0
NT	Males	18	28	72	0	0
	Females	4	0	100	0	0
Australia ^b	Males	241	69	16	7	7
	Females	54	67	28	6	0

a: Includes Maori and Pacific Islander, African, and African-American

b: Excludes one offender (male) whose racial appearance was unknown or not stated

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Alcohol and illicit drug usage by offenders in 2006–07, by sex and state (percent)								
	Alcohol only		Illicit prescription drugs only		Alcohol and illicit prescription drugs		No alcohol/drug use	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
NSW	29	100	14	0	29	0	29	0
Vic	19	0	5	0	29	50	48	50
Qld	63	60	0	0	3	10	34	30
WA	54	20	0	0	15	20	31	60
SA	25	33	13	0	38	0	25	67
Tas	25	0	0	0	25	0	50	0
ACT	50	0	0	0	0	0	50	0
NT	100	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Australia	46	45	3	0	16	14	34	41
(Number) ^a	43	10	3	0	15	3	32	9

a: Excludes 181 (152 male; 29 female) whose alcohol and/or illicit prescription-drug use was not known

Appendix F: Offender–victim relationships, from NHMP findings

Offender relationship with victim in 2006–07, by state (percent)						
	Number	Intimates	Family	Friends/ acquaintances	Strangers	Other ^a
NSW	100	18	16	25	26	15
Vic	56	25	9	34	23	9
Qld	60	20	23	25	20	12
WA	29	31	24	31	3	10
SA	18	11	11	78	0	0
Tas	9	11	22	11	56	0
ACT	4	25	25	25	25	0
NT	22	36	14	36	9	5
Australia	298	22	17	31	20	10

a: 'Other' includes work colleagues, employee/employer, former employee/employer, gang members and former gang members

b: Excludes four cases in which the relationship between the offender and the victim is unknown

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

Relationship between victim and offender in 2006–07, by sex of offender and state (number)							
		Number	Intimates	Family	Friends/ acquaintances	Strangers	Other ^a
New South Wales	Males	83	11	11	22	24	15
	Females	17	7	5	3	2	0
Victoria	Males	52	12	5	18	12	5
	Females	4	2	0	1	1	0
Queensland	Males	46	7	10	13	12	4
	Females	14	5	4	2	0	3
Western Australia	Males	18	4	4	6	1	3
	Females	11	5	3	3	0	0
South Australia	Males	14	2	0	12	0	0
	Females	4	0	2	2	0	0
Tasmania	Males	9	1	2	1	5	0
	Females	0	0	0	0	0	0
Australian Capital Territory	Males	3	0	1	1	1	0
	Females	1	1	0	0	0	0
Northern Territory	Males	18	7	1	7	2	1
	Females	4	1	2	1	0	0
Australia		298	65	50	92	60	31
	Males	243	44	34	80	57	28
	Females	55	21	16	12	3	3

a: Includes work colleagues, employee/employer, former employee/employer, gang members, and former gang members

Note: excludes four cases in which the relationship between the offender and the victim is unknown

Source: AIC NHMP 2006–07 [computer file]

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