

Deaths in Custody in Australia

2001 National Deaths in Custody Program
(NDICP) Annual Report

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Lisa Collins



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From the Director of the AIC

Monitoring the extent and nature of deaths in custody in Australia has been made possible through the National Deaths in Custody Program (NDICP). Established in 1992, the NDICP collects data on all deaths that have occurred in police, prison or juvenile custody in Australia since 1980. The NDICP provides an important role in the monitoring, research and dissemination of information on deaths in custody and is thought to be the only such program in the world.

This report presents detailed tabulated information on deaths in custody in Australia for the year 2001 and also provides jurisdictional breakdowns for comparative purposes. During 2001 there was a total of 87 deaths in police and prison custody. The majority occurred in prison custody (n=56), with the remaining 31 deaths taking place in police custody. There was a total of 19 Indigenous deaths during the period under review, the majority of which were deaths in prison custody (n=14). There were no deaths in juvenile detention in Australia during 2001.

When compared to 2000, the overall number of deaths in custody has remained relatively stable; however, during 2001 the number of prison deaths decreased from 64 to 56, whereas the number of police custodial deaths increased from 25 to 31. Of the 31 deaths in police custody, 24 were during the course of custody-related police operations and seven occurred in “close” police custody (the highest and lowest figures, respectively, recorded in 12 years).

Overall, the leading cause of death in prison custody was death due to natural causes (accounting for 54 per cent of deaths), while fatal trauma injuries were the leading cause of death in police custody (accounting for 66 per cent of deaths)—the majority of which were the result of fatal motor vehicle accidents.

Adam Graycar
Director
Australian Institute of Criminology

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Abbreviations

AIC	Australian Institute of Criminology
NCIS	National Coronial Information System
NDICP	National Deaths in Custody Program
RCIADIC	Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody

Disclaimer

This research paper does not necessarily reflect the policy position of the Commonwealth Government.

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NDICP: 2001 Summary

Background and Function of the NDICP

The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) recommended in 1991 that an ongoing program was required to monitor Indigenous and non-Indigenous deaths in prison, police custody and juvenile detention.

It was recommended that such a program perform the following functions:

- maintain a statistical database relating to deaths in custody of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal persons;
- report annually to the Commonwealth Parliament; and
- negotiate with all custodial agencies with a view to formulating a nationally agreed standard form of statistical input and a standard definition of deaths in custody.

In response, the National Deaths in Custody Program (NDICP) was established at the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) in 1992 and continues to provide comprehensive, timely and authoritative data on all deaths which occur in custody and custody-related police operations. Although the NDICP began recording information in 1992, data on all custodial deaths between 1980 and 1992 were collected retrospectively, placing the NDICP in the unique position of holding detailed information on custodial deaths in Australia that spans 22 years.

The NDICP examines the circumstances of deaths in prison and police custody and juvenile detention around Australia on an ongoing basis. The purpose of monitoring deaths in custody is to provide accurate, up-to-date information that will contribute to public policy discussion in this important area, and to increase public understanding of the issues. It also allows for the monitoring of long-term trends and patterns in police custody and custody-related police operations.

The final report of the royal commission outlined the types of deaths that would require notification to the NDICP (Recommendation 41). They are:

- a death, wherever occurring, of a person who is in prison custody, police custody or detention as a juvenile;
- a death, wherever occurring, of a person whose death is caused or contributed to by traumatic injuries sustained, or by lack of proper care, whilst in such custody or detention;

- a death, wherever occurring, of a person who dies, or is fatally injured, in the process of police or prison officers attempting to detain that person; or
- a death, wherever occurring, of a person attempting to escape from prison, police custody or juvenile detention (RCIADIC 1991, p. 190).

Methodology

The information held in the NDICP database is based on three main data sources:

- NDICP data collection forms completed by all state and territory police services and correctional departments in Australia and sent to the AIC directly whenever a death occurs (including additional information such as offence records and police narratives);
- state coronial records, such as transcripts of proceedings and findings, as well as toxicology and post-mortem reports; and
- information gleaned from national press clippings tailored to the NDICP requirements and provided on a daily basis by Media Monitors.

NDICP data collection forms allow information to be recorded on approximately 40 variables relating to the circumstances and characteristics of each death in custody. All relevant information from the completed data collection forms is then entered into the NDICP database.

Coronial data used in the NDICP data collection process (including coronial rulings and findings, and toxicology and pathology reports) are accessed through the National Coronial Information System (NCIS). NCIS has recently been developed and is managed by Monash University's National Centre for Coronial Information (MUNCCI). The NDICP submitted an ethics application to MUNCCI in order to obtain access to the NCIS. The AIC was granted access to the system in July 2001 on a fee-for-service basis. In certain jurisdictions data will no longer be available from coroners on an individual basis. Where jurisdictions do not provide information to the NCIS, data is obtained by liaising directly with the contact in that area upon completion of the inquest on a case-by-case basis.

The current data set of the NDICP covers a 22-year period, from 1980 to 2001. The data set contains details relating to 1,532 individual custodial deaths which include:

- 549 deaths in police custody (and custody-related police operations);
- 967 deaths in prison custody; and
- 16 juvenile detention and juvenile welfare deaths.

The majority of deaths recorded in the NDICP are of non-Indigenous persons (n=1,238), with Indigenous persons accounting for approximately 20 per cent of all custodial deaths (n=291).

Definitions

Deaths in Prison Custody

Deaths in prison custody include those deaths that occur in prisons or juvenile detention facilities. This also includes the deaths that occur during transfer to or from prison or juvenile detention centres, or in medical facilities following transfer from adult and juvenile detention centres (RCIADIC 1991, pp. 189–90).

Deaths in Police Custody

Deaths in police custody are divided into two main categories.¹

Category 1

- a. Deaths in institutional settings (for example, police stations or lockups, police vehicles, during transfer to or from such an institution, or in hospitals following transfer from an institution).
- b. Other deaths in police operations where officers were in close contact with the deceased. This would include most raids and shootings by police. However, it would not include most sieges where a perimeter was established around a premise but officers did not have such close contact with the person to be able to significantly influence or control the person's behaviour.

Category 2

Other deaths during custody-related police operations. This would cover situations where officers did not have such close contact with the person to be able to significantly influence or control the person's behaviour. It would include most sieges, as described above, and most cases where officers were attempting to detain a person, for example, during a pursuit.

NDICP Review Committee

The NDICP uses the definition of a “death in custody” as recommended by the RCIADIC as a guide as to which cases should or should not be included in the NDICP database. While most of the cases are clear-cut and fall within the definition, there are some where it is not clear as to whether or not the death should be classified as a death in custody according to the definition. As a result, the NDICP established an internal review committee which comprises a lawyer and several researchers who work in this area. The NDICP Review Committee was formed to examine those cases where uncertainty exists regarding the classification of the death as a “death in custody”. The committee considers each case individually and makes a determination based on their interpretation of the definition and the available information.

A total of 11 deaths that occurred during 2001 were considered by the review committee as borderline. Three deaths were considered to be “deaths in custody” and the remaining eight deaths were considered to fall outside of the NDICP definition, and were therefore excluded from the database. In addition, during 2001 there were four deaths in custody-related police operations that have been excluded from the following analysis. This is due to the fact that

¹ This definition of a “death in police custody” is based on a resolution of the Australasian Police Ministers' Council, made in 1994.

they were also considered borderline cases and a decision regarding their inclusion or exclusion in the NDICP database has been deferred pending upcoming determinations by a coroner in each case. Three of these deaths occurred in Victoria (police pursuits) and one in Tasmania (police pursuit).

Australian Deaths in Custody 2001

What follows is a summary of findings relating to deaths in custody in 2001 for all custodial deaths, deaths in prison custody and deaths in police custody and custody-related police operations, with particular regard to demographic factors and the circumstances surrounding the deaths.

All Custodial Deaths

In 2001 a total of 87 deaths occurred in police and prison custody in Australia. During this time there were no deaths recorded in juvenile detention. New South Wales recorded the highest number of custodial deaths with a total of 34 deaths, followed by Queensland with 19 deaths. Western Australia recorded 13 deaths during 2001, Victoria recorded 10 deaths, South Australia recorded eight deaths and the Northern Territory three deaths. There were no custodial deaths recorded in Tasmania or the Australian Capital Territory during this period.

Demographics

Similar to previous years, males accounted for the majority of persons who died in custody during 2001 (n=84) (see Collins & Mouzos 2001). There were three female deaths during 2001 of which one occurred in South Australia and two in Western Australia. Of the 87 deaths in custody, 78 per cent were of non-Indigenous persons (n=68). Overall, the mean age of persons who died in custody during 2001 was 38 years. For non-Indigenous persons the mean age of death was 39 years; Indigenous persons were slightly younger at time of death with a mean age of 34 years. (The median age of death for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous persons was 34 years.)

Circumstances Surrounding the Deaths

In terms of the cause and manner of death, self-inflicted hangings and deaths due to natural causes were the most common causes of death during 2001. For Indigenous persons the leading cause of death was hanging, followed by death due to natural causes (42% and 32% respectively). For non-Indigenous persons, death due to natural causes was the leading cause of death (38%) followed by hanging deaths (26%) and death caused by external or multiple trauma (24%).

“Manner of death” examines accountability for the death. When the manner of death is classified as “accident”, this includes deaths that result from toxicity of drugs and/or alcohol, head injuries, burn injuries, drowning, and fatal injuries following a motor vehicle

accident. It also includes hangings where the coroner has found the incident to be accidental. It is important to note that some alcohol and drug-related deaths are classified as accidental deaths unless the coroner has clearly stated that the death was intentional and therefore a self-inflicted suicide.

Overall, self-inflicted death was the leading manner of all deaths in 2001. Forty-two per cent of the deaths of Indigenous persons, and 38 per cent of the deaths of non-Indigenous persons were self-inflicted. While self-inflicted death was the leading “manner” of death for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous persons, death due to natural causes was also a significant manner in which people died in custody.

The NDICP collects information on the most serious offence leading to custody. The Australian Bureau of Statistics’ Australian National Offence Classification scheme is used to group offences into six categories: violent, theft-related, good order, drug-related, traffic, other/unknown. For the purposes of the NDICP, “violent offence” includes homicide, assault, sex offences, other offences against the person, and robbery; “theft-related offence” includes break and enter, other theft, property damage and fraud; “good order offences” include public drunkenness offences, protective custody for intoxication in jurisdictions where public drunkenness is not an offence, justice procedure offences, breaches of sentences (including fine default) and other offences against good order (for example, prostitution, betting and gambling, disorderly conduct, vagrancy, offensive behaviour); “drug-related offences” include possess, use, deal, traffic, manufacture/grow drugs; “traffic offence” includes road traffic, driving and license offences; and “other/unknown” includes other offences not elsewhere classified or where most serious offence is unknown.

During 2001 the majority of people who died in custody were being detained immediately prior to their death for violent offences or theft-related offences. For Indigenous persons, almost half were in custody at the time of death for violent offences (47%) followed by theft-related offences (32%). Non-Indigenous persons were also most likely to have been in custody prior to death for violent offences (39%), followed by theft-related offences (22%).

An examination of the environment in which persons died in custody during 2001 indicates that for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous persons, the most common location of death was in a cell. Almost half of the Indigenous deaths and more than one-third of the non-Indigenous deaths occurred at this location. Non-Indigenous persons were found to be more likely than Indigenous persons to die in a public hospital (31% versus 16%).

Deaths in Prison Custody

During 2001 there was a total of 56 deaths in prison custody in Australia, 14 of which involved Indigenous persons. The majority of prison deaths occurred in New South Wales (34%), followed by Queensland (27%) and Western Australia (18%). There were no deaths recorded in juvenile detention in Australia during 2001.

Demographics

Of the 56 deaths that occurred in prison during 2001, the youngest person who died was aged 19 years and the oldest person was aged 82 years (the mean and median age for prison custody deaths was 43 and 39 years, respectively). Non-Indigenous persons who died in prison were older than their Indigenous counterparts (a mean age of 44 years versus a mean age of 37 years). During 2001, both women who died in prison were Indigenous. Of the 54 male deaths in prison custody, there were 42 of non-Indigenous persons and 12 deaths involving persons of Indigenous origin.

Circumstances Surrounding the Deaths

The majority of prison deaths that occurred during 2001 were as a result of natural causes (54%) while hanging was the second leading cause of death (45%). There was only one other death in prison and this was attributed to multiple causes. The majority of non-Indigenous prison deaths were due to natural causes (57%), whereas the majority of Indigenous deaths were due to hanging (57%).

In terms of manner of death, just over half of all prison deaths were due to natural causes (54%). A further 45 per cent were due to self-inflicted death. One death was classified as accidental. Fifty-seven per cent of Indigenous deaths were self-inflicted while this was the case for only 42 per cent of non-Indigenous deaths.

When the most serious offence leading to custody is examined, the data reveal that over half of all Australian prisoners who died during 2001 were incarcerated for violent offences (homicide, assault and sex offences) (53%). Eighteen per cent of prisoners who died during 2001 had a theft-related offence as their most serious offence. These proportions are similar when comparing Indigenous and non-Indigenous deaths—50 per cent of Indigenous persons and 54 per cent of non-Indigenous persons were incarcerated for violent offences. However, a slightly higher proportion of Indigenous than non-Indigenous persons were incarcerated for theft-related offences prior to death (22% versus 18%).

The majority of persons who died in prison custody died in their prison cell; this was consistent for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous persons. A public hospital was the second most common environment of death during 2001. In terms of the type of prison in which deaths occurred, 86 per cent occurred in government-run prisons (n=48) and a further eight deaths occurred in privately run facilities.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics' figures on prisoners in Australia (ABS 2002) show that in 2001, 81 per cent of all prisoners were serving a sentence, while the remaining 19 per cent were unsentenced prisoners on remand. Of the 56 prison deaths in Australia during 2001, 64 per cent involved sentenced prisoners and 34 per cent were unsentenced, or remand, prisoners (n=19). This signifies a higher rate of death for unsentenced prisoners in Australian prisons.

Deaths in Police Custody and Custody-related Police Operations

Between January and December 2001 there was a total of 31 deaths in police custody and custody-related police operations across Australia. Fifteen deaths occurred in New South Wales, five in Victoria, four in both Queensland and South Australia, and three in Western Australia. There were no deaths recorded in Tasmania, the Northern Territory or the Australian Capital Territory.

Category 1 and Category 2 Deaths

Of the 31 deaths in police custody, 77 per cent were classified as Category 2 deaths; that is, deaths in custody-related police operations such as siege situations and pursuits (n=24). The remaining 23 per cent of police-custody deaths were Category 1 deaths—situations in which police officers would have had closer contact with the deceased prior to death, such as shooting deaths, raids and deaths in police stations (n=7) (see box on page 11 for a definition of deaths in police custody and custody-related police operations).

Demographics

There was one female and 30 male persons who died in police custody during 2001. Most of those who died in police custody were non-Indigenous (n=26), with five deaths of Indigenous persons. Persons who died in police custody were much younger than those who died in prison custody. For example, the mean age of persons who died in police custody was 30 years, whereas the mean age of persons who died in prison was 43 years. Non-Indigenous persons who died in police custody also tended to be older than Indigenous persons at the time of death (a mean age of 31 years versus 24 years).

Circumstances Surrounding the Deaths

When the cause of death of persons in police custody is examined, the majority of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous deaths were due to external or multiple trauma (60% and 67% respectively). Following this, the manner or accountability for the death was most commonly “accidental death” (60% and 58% respectively). Eight in 10 accidental deaths involved fatal motor vehicle accidents.

In contrast to the finding that most persons who died in prison custody had been incarcerated for violent offences, persons who died in police custody were more likely to be in custody for theft-related offences. This was a characteristic of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous persons who died in police custody.

Most deaths in police custody occurred in a public place (80 per cent of Indigenous deaths and 58 per cent of non-Indigenous deaths). Two deaths occurred within a police cell, representing only six per cent of all police custody deaths. In addition, just over eight in 10 police custody deaths occurred while police were attempting to detain the individual (81%), with around half of these attempts involving motor vehicle pursuits (48%) or other pursuits, such as on foot (28%). About three per cent of deaths occurred while the person was attempting to escape police custody. Similarly, few deaths occurred during police raids or in institutional settings.

Data Usage

The monitoring of the circumstances of all deaths in prison and police custody (and custody-related police operations) and deaths in juvenile detention in Australia has the potential to impact on the formation of policy in several key areas, including the correctional management of women prisoners, Indigenous prisoners and prisoners from different cultural backgrounds, and police operational practices.

The provision of timely and accurate information is essential in assisting stakeholders to identify shifts in “at risk” populations and to monitor the effects of changes in policy and operational standards.

For example, the findings of the NDICP may impact on procedures for holding persons in custody. The data may also help to identify the type of people who are at most risk of suicide or other types of deaths whilst in custody, and the circumstances and environmental factors that may contribute to such deaths. The most important function of the NDICP is to provide an annual report in order to communicate information gathered on custodial deaths to its key stakeholders (police and corrections authorities), other government organisations, non-government organisations and the general public. During the 10 years since the program was established at the AIC there have been many additional requests for data. Some examples of data usage follow.

Selected Published Material

(see <http://www.aic.gov.au/research/dic/index.html>)

“Australian deaths in custody and custody-related police operations, 2000”, *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 217, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 2001, Lisa Collins and Jenny Mouzos.

“Deaths in custody: 10 years on from the Royal Commission”, *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 203, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 2001, Paul Williams.

“Deaths in private prisons and public prisons in Australia: A comparative analysis”, *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, vol. 34, no. 3, 2001, pp. 293–301, David Biles and Vicki Dalton.

“Australian deaths in custody and custody-related police operations, 1999”, *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 153, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 2000, Vicki Dalton.

“Aboriginal deaths in prison, 1980 to 1998: National overview”, *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 131, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 1999, Vicki Dalton.

“Suicide in prison, 1980 to 1998: National overview”, *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 126, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 1999, Vicki Dalton.

“Deaths in private prisons 1990–99: A comparative study”, *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 120, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 1999, David Biles and Vicki Dalton.

“The deaths of offenders serving community corrections orders”, *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 107, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 1999, David Biles, Richard Harding and John Walker.

“Prison homicide in Australia: 1980 to 1998”, *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 103, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 1999, Vicki Dalton.

“Australian deaths in custody and custody-related police operations, 1998”, *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 105, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 1999, Vicki Dalton.

Examples of agencies and organisations that have requested data

- Police services in all Australian states and territories
- Correctional services departments in all Australian states and territories
- Commonwealth Attorney-General’s Department
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Australian Federal Police
- United States Mission to Australia
- Victorian Institute of Forensic Pathology
- Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
- Office of the New Zealand Commissioner of Police
- Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services Secretariat
- Aboriginal Services Division, South Australian Department of Human Services
- United Nations
- National Police Research Unit
- *The Age*
- Productivity Commission

“Police custody and self-inflicted firearms deaths”, *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 94, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 1998, Vicki Dalton.

“Police shootings 1990 to 1997”, *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 89, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 1998, Vicki Dalton.

“Prison deaths 1980–97: National overview and state trends”, *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 81, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 1998, Vicki Dalton.

“Australian deaths in custody and custody-related police operations, 1997”, *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, no. 80, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 1998, Vicki Dalton.

Presentations

“Monitoring Indigenous and non-Indigenous deaths in custody”, *Best Practice Interventions in Corrections For Indigenous People Conference*, Australian Institute of Criminology and New South Wales Department of Corrective Services, Sydney, October 2001, Lisa Collins.

“Australian deaths in custody: 1980–1998”, *Third National Outlook Symposium on Crime in Australia: Mapping the Boundaries of Australia’s Criminal Justice System*, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, March 1999, Vicki Dalton.

“Prison homicide in Australia: National overview 1980–1998”, *Minimising the Harm: Health in Prisons, Public Health Association Conference*, Sydney, February 1999, Vicki Dalton.

2001 NDICP Findings

Methodological Note

Where rates are presented in the tables that follow, they have been calculated using the annual Prisoners in Australia results of the National Prisoner Census (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002).

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

The Australian Capital Territory is not included in any of the following tables (excluding trend figures) as there were no recorded deaths in custody in that jurisdiction in 2001. Similarly, there were no recorded deaths in police or prison custody in Tasmania in 2001, and there were no recorded deaths in police custody or custody-related police operations in the Northern Territory in 2001.



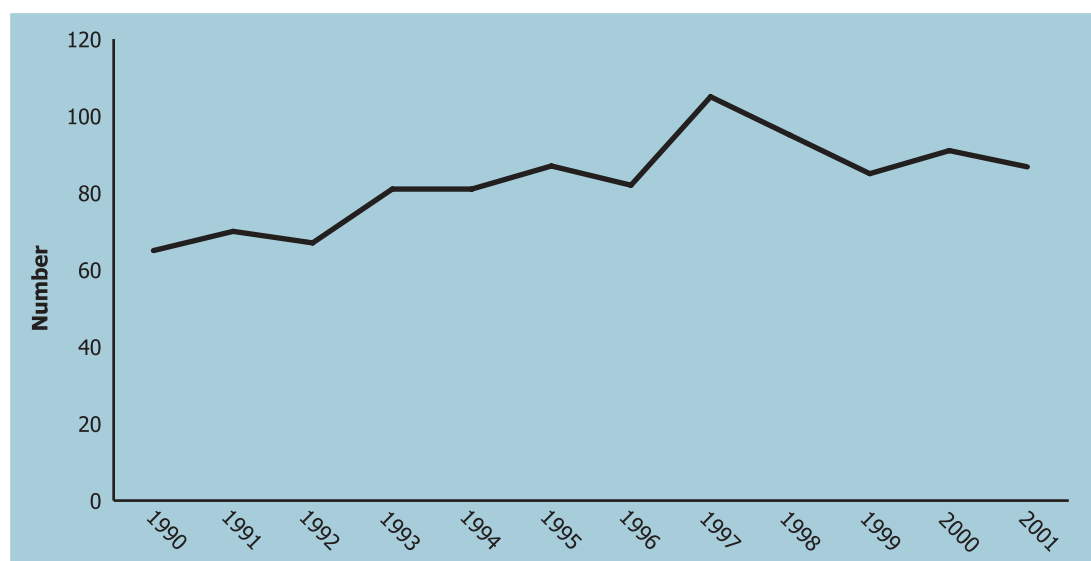
ALL CUSTODIAL DEATHS

Trends in all custodial deaths in Australia by Indigenous status

Year of death	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Total n
1990	10	55	65
1991	13	57	70
1992	9	58	67
1993	10	71	81
1994	14	67	81
1995	21	66	87
1996	18	64	82
1997	15	90	105
1998	16	79	95
1999	19	66	85
2000	17	74	91
2001	19	68	87
Total	181	815	996

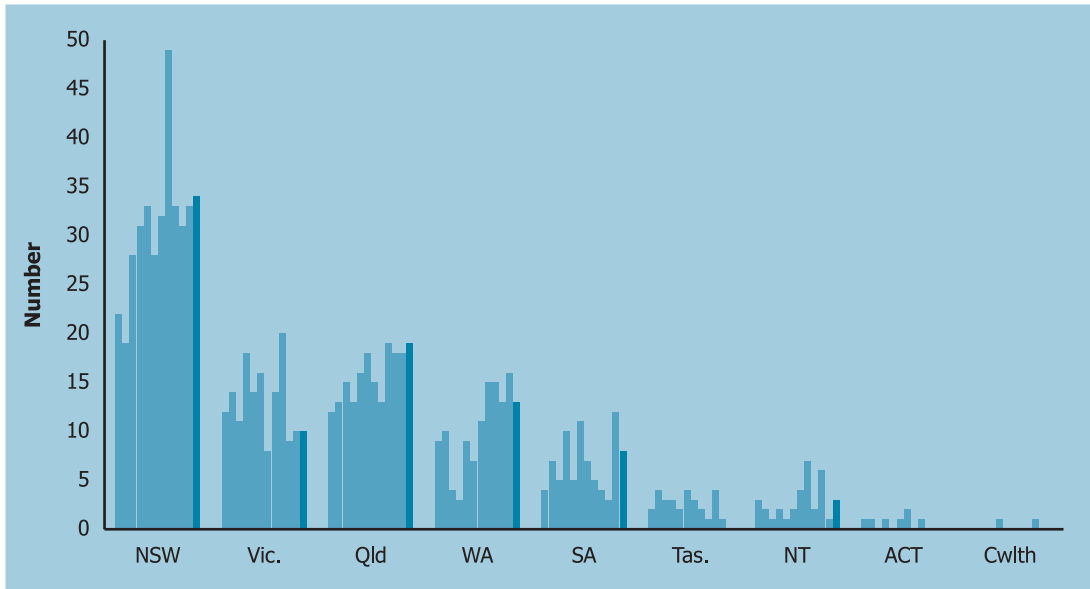
Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 1990–2001 [computer file]

Trends in all custodial deaths in Australia, 1990–2001



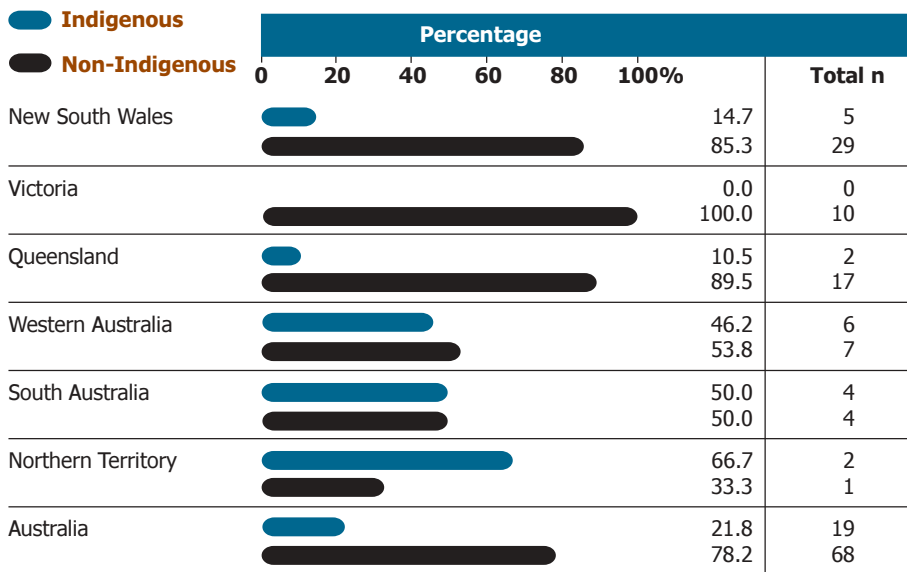
Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 1990–2001 [computer file]

Trends in all custodial deaths, by jurisdiction, 1990–2001

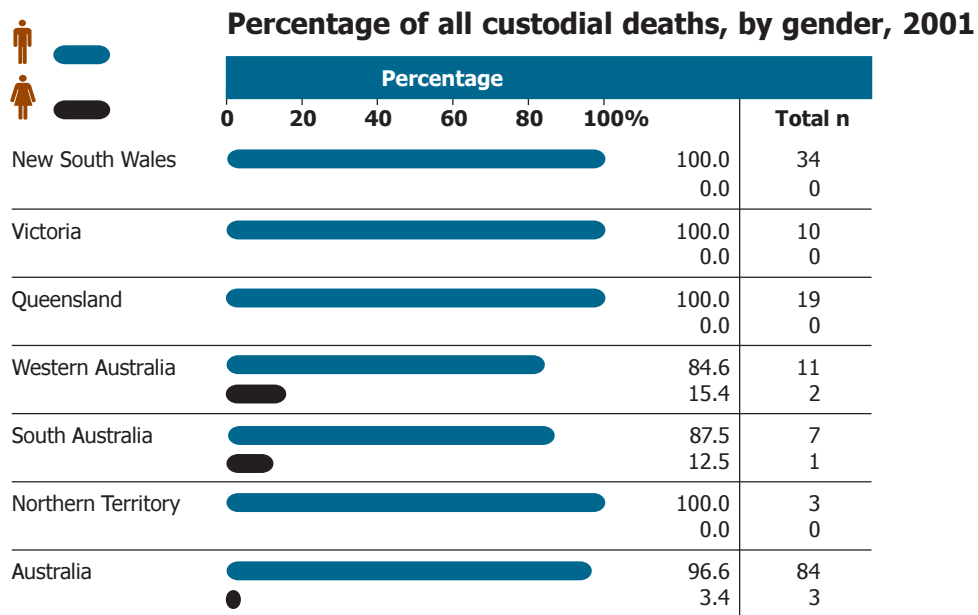


Note: "Commonwealth" refers to prisoners held in federal custody (excluding asylum-seeker deaths).
 Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 1990–2001 [computer file]

Percentage of all custodial deaths, 2001



Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]



Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Mean age at death, 2001

	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous		Persons	
	Total n	Mean age	Total n	Mean age	Total n	Mean age
New South Wales	5	42.6	29	37.9	34	38.6
Victoria	0	0.0	10	38.2	10	38.2
Queensland	2	41.5	17	39.8	19	40.0
Western Australia	6	23.2	7	38.7	13	31.5
South Australia	4	32.3	4	43.5	8	37.8
Northern Territory	2	38.5	1	57.0	3	44.7
Australia	19	33.7	68	39.1	87	37.9

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Number of all custodial deaths, by age at time of death, 2001

		<24	25–39	40–54	55+
New South Wales	Indigenous	1	2	1	1
	Non-Indigenous	7	11	4	7
Victoria	Indigenous	0	0	0	0
	Non-Indigenous	3	3	2	2
Queensland	Indigenous	0	1	1	0
	Non-Indigenous	4	6	3	4
Western Australia	Indigenous	3	3	0	0
	Non-Indigenous	1	4	1	1
South Australia	Indigenous	1	2	1	0
	Non-Indigenous	1	1	1	1
Northern Territory	Indigenous	0	1	1	0
	Non-Indigenous	0	0	0	1
Australia	Indigenous	5	9	4	1
	Non-Indigenous	16	25	11	16

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of all custodial deaths by cause of death, 2001

	Hanging		Natural causes		Head injury		Gunshot		External/multiple trauma		Alcohol		Other	
	Indige-nous	Non-Ind.	Indige-nous	Non-Ind.	Indige-nous	Non-Ind.	Indige-nous	Non-Ind.	Indige-nous	Non-Ind.	Indige-nous	Non-Ind.	Indige-nous	Non-Ind.
NSW	40.0	20.7	60.0	31.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.3	0.0	37.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Vic.	0.0	11.1	0.0	44.4	0.0	11.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	22.2	0.0	11.1	0.0	0.0
Qld	100.0	37.5	0.0	43.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5
WA	50.0	28.6	16.7	42.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.3	14.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.3
SA	25.0	50.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	25.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
NT	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Aust. ^(a)	42.1	25.8	31.6	37.9	0.0	1.5	10.5	4.5	15.8	24.2	0.0	1.5	0.0	4.5
Total n	8	17	6	25	0	1	2	3	3	16	0	1	0	3

(a) Excludes two deaths where cause of death is unknown/not stated (Victoria and Queensland).

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of all custodial deaths by manner of death, 2001

	Self-inflicted		Natural causes		Justifiable homicide		Accident ^(a)	
	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.
New South Wales	40.0	48.3	60.0	31.0	0.0	3.4	0.0	17.2
Victoria	0.0	11.1	0.0	44.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	44.4
Queensland	100.0	37.5	0.0	43.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	18.8
Western Australia	50.0	28.6	16.7	42.9	0.0	0.0	33.3	28.6
South Australia	25.0	50.0	0.0	25.0	50.0	0.0	25.0	25.0
Northern Territory	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Australia ^(b)	42.1	37.9	31.6	37.9	10.5	1.5	15.8	22.7
Total n	8	25	6	25	2	1	3	15

(a) Refer to page 12 for definition of "accident".

(b) Excludes two deaths where manner of death is unknown/not stated (Victoria and Queensland).

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of all custodial deaths by most serious offence, 2001

	Violent		Theft-related		Good order		Drug-related		Traffic		Other/unknown	
	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.
NSW	80.0	32.1	0.0	14.3	0.0	7.1	20.0	7.1	0.0	17.9	0.0	21.4
Vic.	0.0	30.0	0.0	40.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0
Qld	0.0	43.8	50.0	25.0	0.0	6.3	50.0	0.0	0.0	6.3	0.0	18.8
WA	33.3	42.9	66.7	28.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.3	0.0	14.3	0.0	0.0
SA	50.0	66.7	25.0	0.0	25.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
NT	50.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0
Australia ^(a)	47.4	38.5	31.6	21.5	5.3	7.7	10.5	6.2	0.0	10.8	5.3	15.4
Total n	9	25	6	14	1	5	2	4	0	7	1	10

(a) Excludes three deaths where full details are not yet available (New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia).

Note: Refer to page 13 for a definition of these offence categories.

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of all custodial deaths by location, 2001

	Public hospital		Cell		Other custodial setting		Private property		Public place	
	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.
New South Wales	40.0	34.5	40.0	31.0	20.0	3.4	0.0	3.4	0.0	27.6
Victoria	0.0	20.0	0.0	30.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	30.0
Queensland	0.0	29.4	50.0	52.9	50.0	5.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.8
Western Australia	16.7	14.3	50.0	42.9	0.0	14.3	0.0	0.0	33.3	28.6
South Australia	0.0	50.0	25.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	50.0	25.0
Northern Territory	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Australia	15.8	30.9	47.4	36.8	10.5	5.9	5.3	2.9	21.1	23.5
Total n	3	21	9	25	2	4	1	2	4	16

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]



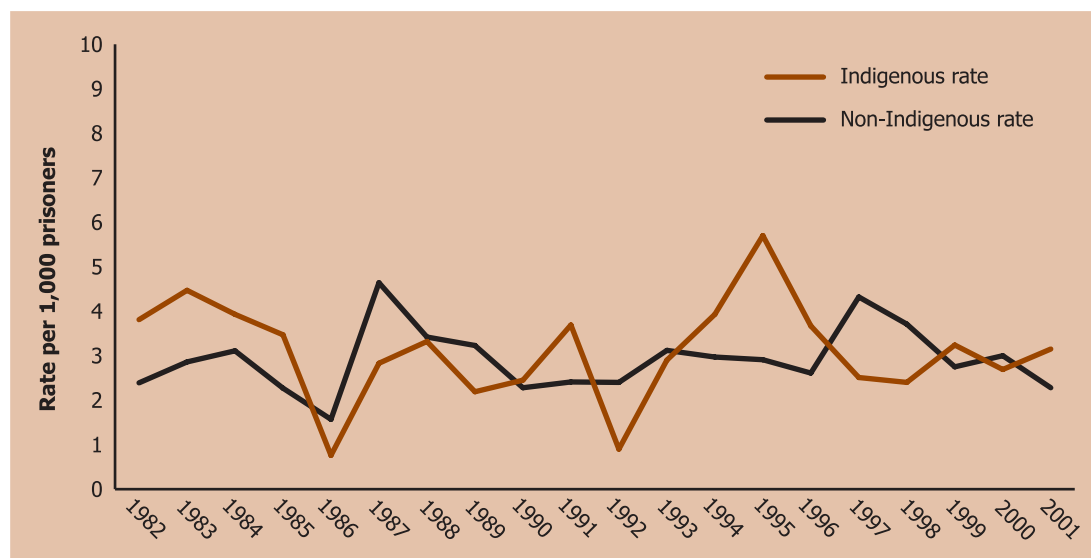
DEATHS IN PRISON CUSTODY

Trends in prison custody deaths by Indigenous status

Year of death	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Total n
1990	5	28	33
1991	8	31	39
1992	2	34	36
1993	7	42	49
1994	11	42	53
1995	17	42	59
1996	12	40	52
1997	9	67	76
1998	9	60	69
1999	13	46	59
2000	11	53	64
2001	14	42	56
Total	118	527	645

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 1990–2001 [computer file]

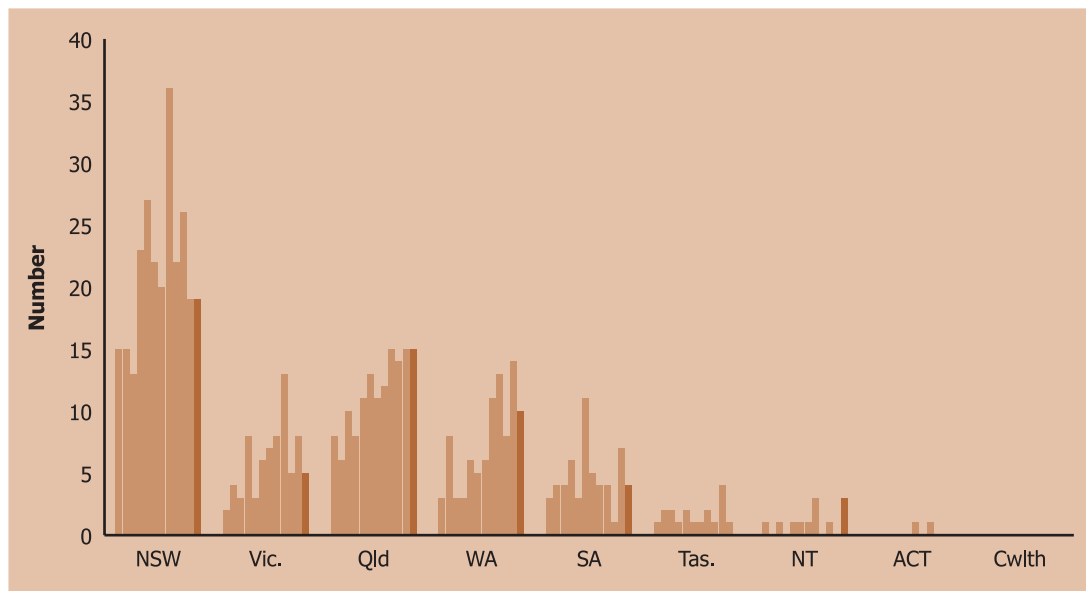
Trends in prison custody deaths, 1982–2001



Note: Prison census data not available prior to 1982

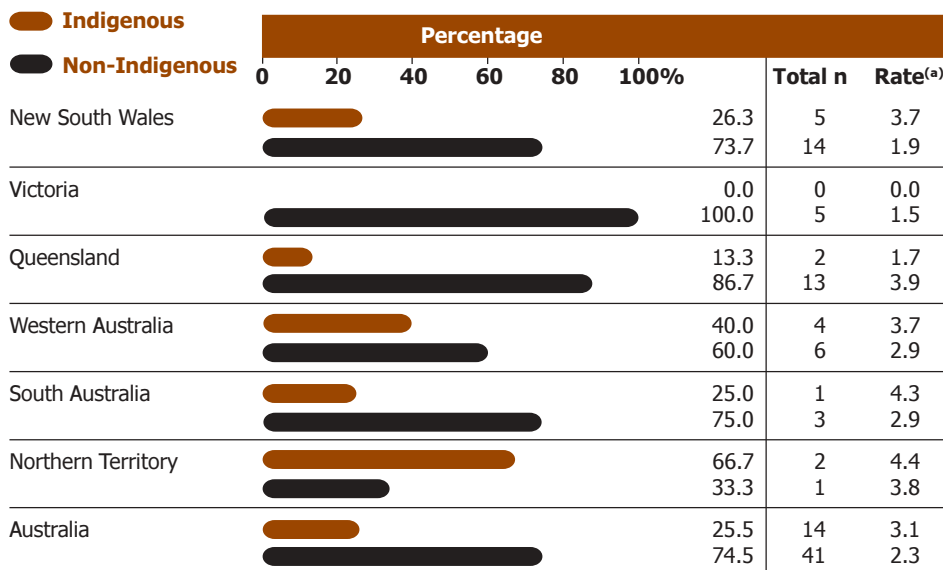
Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 1982–2001 [computer file]

Trends in prison custody deaths, by jurisdiction, 1990–2001



Note: "Commonwealth" refers to prisoners held in federal custody (excluding asylum-seeker deaths).
 Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 1990–2001 [computer file]

Percentage of prison custody deaths, 2001

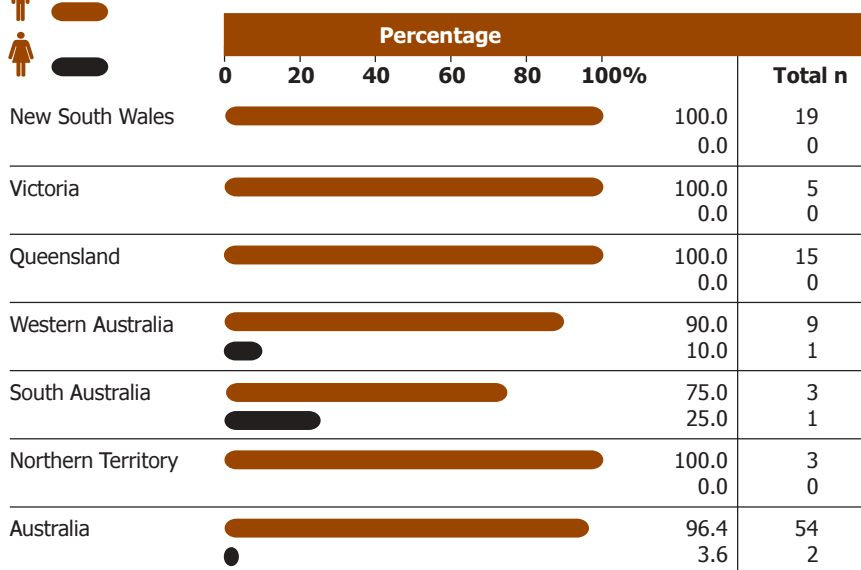


(a) Rate per 1,000 prisoners

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]



Percentage of prison custody deaths, by gender, 2001



Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Mean age at death, 2001

	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous		Persons	
	Total n	Mean age	Total n	Mean age	Total n	Mean age
New South Wales	5	42.6	14	42.8	19	42.7
Victoria	0	0.0	5	45.2	5	45.2
Queensland	2	41.5	13	43.7	15	43.4
Western Australia	4	27.0	6	42.0	10	36.0
South Australia	1	38.0	3	52.3	3	38.3
Northern Territory	2	38.5	1	57.0	3	44.7
Australia	14	37.1	42	44.3	55	42.5

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Number of prison custody deaths, by age at time of death, 2001

		<24	25–39	40–54	55+
New South Wales	Indigenous	1	2	1	1
	Non-Indigenous	1	6	3	4
Victoria	Indigenous	0	0	0	0
	Non-Indigenous	0	3	1	1
Queensland	Indigenous	0	1	1	0
	Non-Indigenous	3	3	3	4
Western Australia	Indigenous	1	3	0	0
	Non-Indigenous	0	4	1	1
South Australia	Indigenous	0	1	0	0
	Non-Indigenous	0	1	1	1
Northern Territory	Indigenous	0	1	1	0
	Non-Indigenous	0	0	0	1
Australia	Indigenous	2	8	3	1
	Non-Indigenous	4	17	9	12

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of prison custody deaths by cause of death, 2001

	Hanging		Natural causes		Multiple causes	
	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.
New South Wales	40.0	42.9	60.0	57.1	0.0	0.0
Victoria	0.0	20.0	0.0	80.0	0.0	0.0
Queensland	100.0	46.2	0.0	53.8	0.0	0.0
Western Australia	75.0	33.3	25.0	50.0	0.0	16.7
South Australia	100.0	66.7	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0
Northern Territory	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Australia	57.1	41.5	42.9	57.1	0.0	2.4
Total n	8	17	6	24	0	1

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of prison custody deaths by manner of death, 2001

	Self-inflicted		Natural causes		Accident ^(a)	
	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.
New South Wales	40.0	42.9	60.0	57.1	0.0	0.0
Victoria	0.0	20.0	0.0	80.0	0.0	0.0
Queensland	100.0	46.2	0.0	53.8	0.0	0.0
Western Australia	75.0	33.3	25.0	50.0	0.0	16.7
South Australia	100.0	66.7	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0
Northern Territory	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Australia	57.1	41.5	42.9	57.1	0.0	2.4
Total n	8	17	6	24	0	1

(a) Refer to page 12 for definition of "accident".

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of prison custody deaths by most serious offence, 2001

	Violent		Theft-related		Good order		Drug-related		Traffic		Other/unknown	
	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.
NSW	80.0	42.9	0.0	14.3	0.0	7.1	20.0	14.3	0.0	7.1	0.0	14.3
Vic.	0.0	60.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Qld	0.0	53.8	50.0	23.1	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	7.7	0.0	15.4
WA	50.0	50.0	50.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SA	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
NT	50.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0
Australia ^(a)	50.0	53.7	21.5	17.5	7.1	5.0	14.3	10.0	0.0	5.0	7.1	10.0
Total n	7	22	3	7	1	2	2	4	0	2	1	4

(a) Excludes one death where most serious offence is unknown/not stated (South Australia).

Note: Refer to page 13 for a definition of these offence categories.

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of prison custody deaths by location, 2001

	Public hospital		Cell		Other custodial setting ^(a)		Public place	
	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.
New South Wales	40.0	28.6	40.0	64.3	20.0	7.1	0.0	0.0
Victoria	0.0	40.0	0.0	40.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.0
Queensland	0.0	30.8	50.0	61.5	50.0	7.7	0.0	0.0
Western Australia	25.0	16.7	75.0	50.0	0.0	16.7	0.0	16.7
South Australia	0.0	66.7	100.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Northern Territory	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Australia	21.4	33.3	64.3	56.1	14.3	9.8	0.0	2.4
Total n	3	14	9	23	2	4	0	1

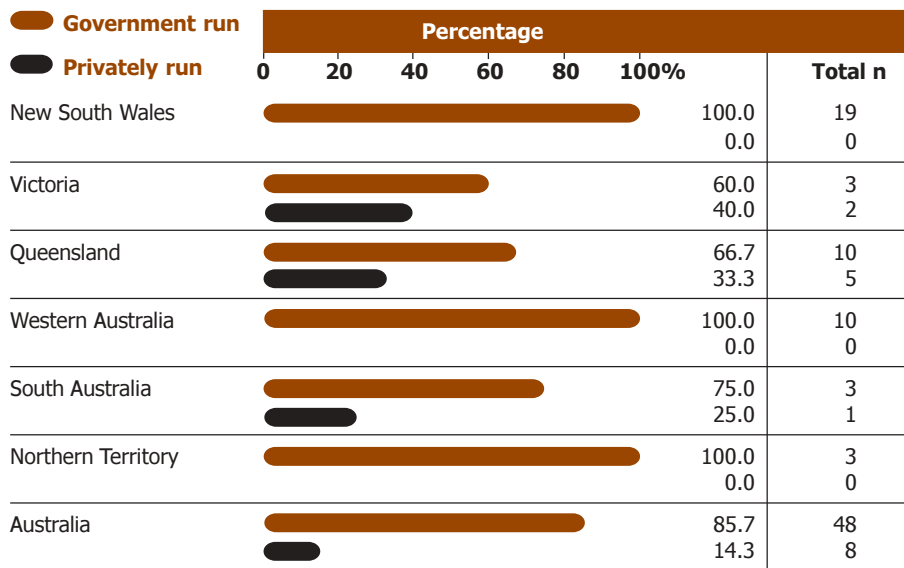
(a) "Other custodial setting" includes other locations within the prison complex, for example, the exercise yard.
Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of prison custody deaths by legal status of deceased, 2001

	Sentenced		Unsentenced		Other ^(a)	
	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.
New South Wales	60.0	71.4	40.0	25.6	0.0	0.0
Victoria	0.0	80.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
Queensland	50.0	53.8	50.0	46.2	0.0	0.0
Western Australia	50.0	83.3	50.0	16.7	0.0	0.0
South Australia	0.0	33.3	100.0	66.7	0.0	0.0
Northern Territory	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Australia	57.1	66.7	42.9	31.7	0.0	2.4
Total n	8	28	6	13	0	1

(a) "Other" includes those persons detained in prison awaiting deportation.
Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of deaths by prison type, 2001



Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]



DEATHS IN POLICE CUSTODY

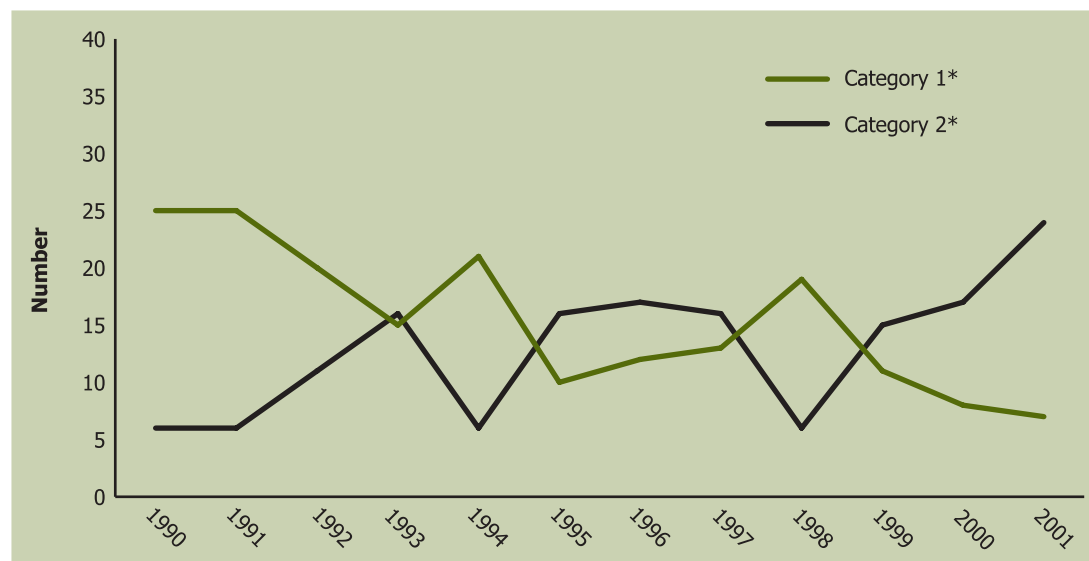
AND CUSTODY-RELATED POLICE OPERATIONS

Trends in deaths in police custody and custody-related police operations by Indigenous status

Year of death	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Total n
1990	5	26	31
1991	5	26	31
1992	7	24	31
1993	3	28	31
1994	3	24	27
1995	4	22	26
1996	6	23	29
1997	6	23	29
1998	6	19	25
1999	6	20	26
2000	5	20	25
2001	5	26	31
Total	61	281	342

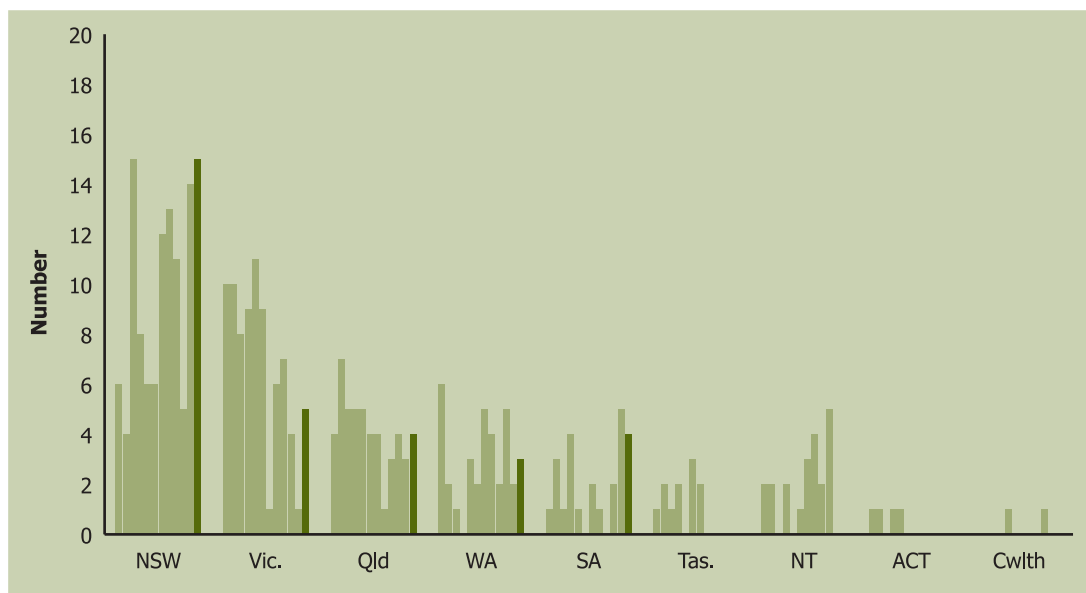
Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 1990–2001 [computer file]

Trends in deaths in police custody and custody-related police operations, 1990–2001



* See page 11 for a definition of Category 1 and 2 deaths in police custody and custody-related police operations.
Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 1990–2001 [computer file]

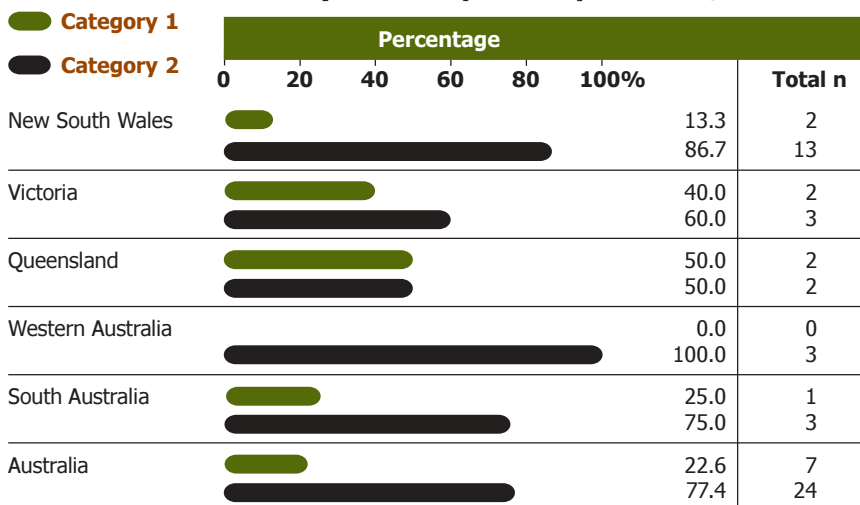
Trends in deaths in police custody and custody-related police operations, 1990–2001



Note: "Commonwealth" refers to prisoners held in federal custody (excluding asylum-seeker deaths).

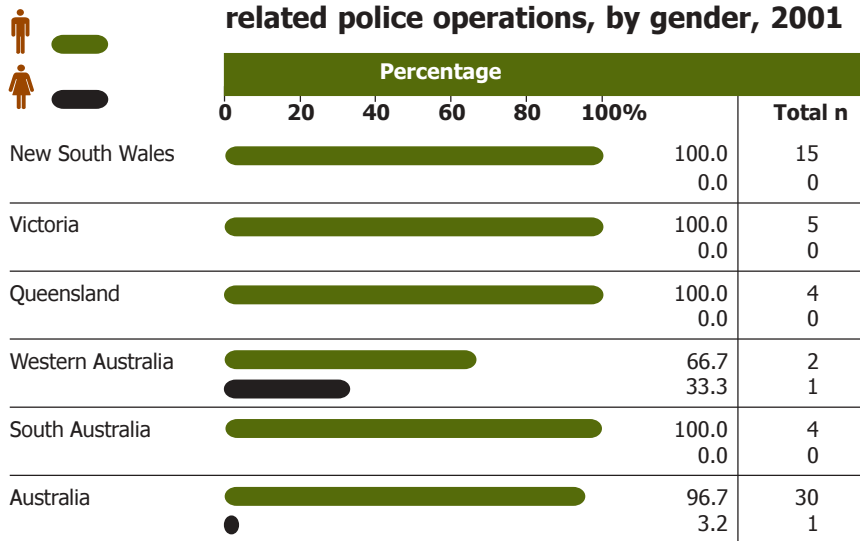
Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 1990–2001 [computer file]

Percentage of deaths in police custody and custody-related police operations, 2001



Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of deaths in police custody and custody-related police operations, by gender, 2001



Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Mean age at death, 2001

	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous		Persons	
	Total n	Mean age	Total n	Mean age	Total n	Mean age
New South Wales	0	–	15	33.3	15	33.3
Victoria	0	–	5	31.2	5	31.2
Queensland	0	–	4	27.3	4	27.3
Western Australia	2	15.5	1	19.0	3	16.7
South Australia	3	30.3	1	17.0	4	27.0
Australia	5	24.4	26	30.8	31	29.7

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Number of police custody deaths, by age at time of death, 2001

		<24	25–39	40–54	55+
New South Wales	Indigenous	0	0	0	0
	Non-Indigenous	4	5	1	3
Victoria	Indigenous	0	0	0	0
	Non-Indigenous	3	0	1	1
Queensland	Indigenous	0	0	0	0
	Non-Indigenous	1	3	0	0
Western Australia	Indigenous	2	0	0	0
	Non-Indigenous	1	0	0	0
South Australia	Indigenous	1	1	1	0
	Non-Indigenous	1	0	0	0
Australia	Indigenous	3	1	1	0
	Non-Indigenous	12	8	2	4

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of police-custody deaths by cause of death, 2001

	Natural causes		Head injury		Gunshot		External/ multiple trauma		Alcohol		Other	
	Indige- nous	Non- Ind.	Indige- nous	Non- Ind.	Indige- nous	Non- Ind.	Indige- nous	Non- Ind.	Indige- nous	Non- Ind.	Indige- nous	Non- Ind.
NSW	0.0	6.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	73.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Vic.	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0
Qld	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	66.7
WA	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SA	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	66.7	0.0	33.3	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Australia ^(a)	0.0	4.0	0.0	4.0	40.0	12.0	60.0	66.7	0.0	4.0	0.0	8.0
Total n	0	1	0	1	2	3	3	16	0	1	0	2

(a) Excludes two deaths where cause of death is unknown/not stated (Victoria and Queensland).

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of police-custody deaths by manner of death, 2001

	Self-inflicted		Natural causes		Justifiable homicide		Accident ^(a)	
	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.
New South Wales	0.0	53.3	0.0	6.7	0.0	6.7	0.0	33.3
Victoria	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Queensland	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Western Australia	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
South Australia	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	66.7	0.0	33.3	100.0
Australia ^(b)	0.0	32.0	0.0	4.0	40.0	4.0	60.0	58.3
Total n	0	8	0	1	2	1	3	14

(a) Refer to page 12 for definition of "accident".

(b) Excludes two deaths where manner of death is unknown/not stated (Victoria and Queensland).

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of police-custody deaths by most serious offence, 2001

	Violent		Theft-related		Good order		Traffic		Other/unknown	
	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.
New South Wales	0.0	21.4	0.0	14.3	0.0	7.1	0.0	28.6	0.0	28.6
Victoria	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0
Queensland	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.3	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.3
Western Australia	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
South Australia	66.7	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Australia ^(a)	40.0	12.0	60.0	28.0	0.0	12.0	0.0	20.8	0.0	24.0
Total n	2	3	3	7	0	3	0	5	0	6

(a) Excludes two deaths where most serious offence is unknown/not stated (New South Wales and Queensland).

Note: Refer to page 13 for a definition of these offence categories.

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of police-custody deaths by location, 2001

	Public hospital		Cell		Private property		Public place	
	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.	Indigenous	Non-Ind.
New South Wales	0.0	40.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.7	0.0	53.3
Victoria	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	60.0
Queensland	0.0	25.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0
Western Australia	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
South Australia	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.3	0.0	66.7	100.0
Australia	0.0	25.9	0.0	7.4	20.0	7.4	80.0	57.7
Total n	0	7	0	2	1	2	4	15

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of deaths in police custody and custody-related police operations, by type of custody, 2001

	Institution	Escaping	Detaining	Other
New South Wales	6.7	6.7	86.7	0.0
Victoria	20.0	0.0	60.0	20.0
Queensland	25.0	0.0	50.0	25.0
Western Australia	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
South Australia	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Australia	9.7	3.2	80.6	6.5
Total n	3	1	25	2

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

Percentage of police-custody deaths by method of detainment, 2001

	Motor vehicle pursuit	Other pursuit	Siege	Raid	Other/shooting
New South Wales	30.8	38.5	23.1	7.7	0.0
Victoria	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Queensland	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Western Australia	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
South Australia	25.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	50.0
Australia	55.2	24.1	10.3	3.4	6.9
Total n	12	7	3	1	2

Source: Australian Institute of Criminology, NDICP 2001 [computer file]

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