



Australian Government

Australian Institute of Criminology

Deaths in custody in Australia quarterly dashboard

Quarter 4 2022 update

The National Deaths in Custody Program (NDICP) has monitored the extent and nature of deaths occurring in prison, police custody and youth detention since 1980. The NDICP was established at the Australian Institute of Criminology in 1992 in response to recommendation 41 by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

There have been **540 Indigenous deaths in custody** since the Royal Commission.

- There were **34** deaths in custody between 1 October and 31 December 2022—**13** Indigenous deaths and **21** non-Indigenous deaths.
- There were **114** deaths in custody between 1 January and 31 December 2022—**33** Indigenous deaths and **80** non-Indigenous deaths. The Indigenous status of one person was unknown.

Quarter 4 2022 findings

Data presented for deaths in custody occurring in Quarter 4 2022 (1 October to 31 December 2022) are based on preliminary data and may be subject to further revisions.

Indigenous deaths in custody

Deaths in prison custody

- There were **nine** Indigenous deaths in prison custody between 1 October and 31 December 2022 (see Table 1). Of these, **seven** were male and **two** were female.
- **Five** of the deaths were of sentenced prisoners and **four** were of unsentenced prisoners.
- The manner of death was known for **six** of the deceased. All were from natural causes.

Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations

- There were **four** Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations between 1 October and 31 December 2022 (see Table 1). All deceased were male.
- Of these, **one** was self-inflicted and **two** were justifiable homicides. The manner of one death was unknown.
- **Two** deaths occurred during the process of detainment, both of these during a siege.

Non-Indigenous deaths in custody

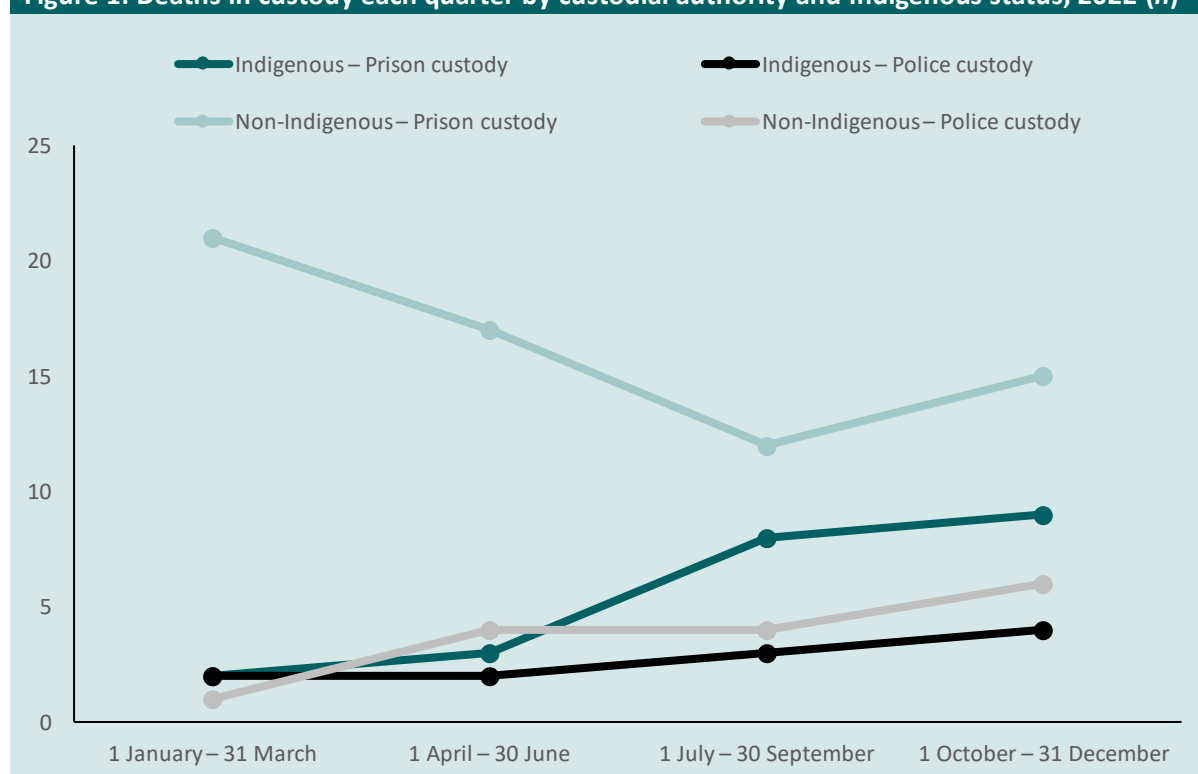
Deaths in prison custody

- There were **15** non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody between 1 October and 31 December 2022. **Fourteen** of these were male and **one** was female (see Table 2).
- **Ten** of the deaths were of sentenced prisoners and **five** were of unsentenced prisoners.
- Where manner of death was known ($n=10$), **nine** were due to natural causes and **one** was an unlawful homicide.

Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations

- There were **six** non-Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations between 1 October and 31 December 2022 (see Table 2). **Five** of these were male and **one** was female.
- Of the **four** deaths in police custody where manner of death was known, all were justifiable homicides.
- Where deaths occurred during the process of detainment ($n=5$), **two** occurred during a siege, **one** during an 'other' pursuit, and **two** were during other circumstances.

Figure 1: Deaths in custody each quarter by custodial authority and Indigenous status, 2022 (n)^a



a. Excludes one case where Indigenous status was unknown

Source: AIC NDICP 2022 [computer file]

Table 1: Indigenous deaths in custody, Quarter 4 2022 (n)			
	Prison custody	Police custody	Total
Sex			
Male	7	4	11
Female	2	0	2
Age group (years)			
18–24	0	0	0
25–39	3	0	3
40–54	5	4	9
55+	1	0	1
Manner of death^a			
Natural causes	6	0	6
Self-inflicted	0	1	1
Unlawful homicide	0	0	0
Justifiable homicide	0	2	2
Accident	0	0	0
Legal status^b			
Sentenced	5	na	5
Unsentenced	4	na	4

Table 1: Indigenous deaths in custody, Quarter 4 2022 (n) continued

Method of detainment ^{cd}			
Motor vehicle pursuit	na	0	0
Other pursuit	na	0	0
Siege	na	2	2
Raid	na	0	0
Other	na	0	0
Total	9	4	13

a: Excludes 3 cases in prison custody and 1 case in police custody where manner of death was not known

b: Only applicable for deaths that occurred in prison custody

c: Only applicable for deaths that occurred in police custody

d: Includes detainment-related deaths that occurred in police custody

na = not applicable

Note: Data are based on preliminary data and may be subject to further revisions

Source: AIC NDICP 2022–23 [computer file]

Table 2: Non-Indigenous deaths in custody, Quarter 4 2022 (n)

	Prison custody	Police custody	Total
Sex			
Male	14	5	19
Female	1	1	2
Age group (years)			
18–24	1	2	3
25–39	3	2	5
40–54	2	1	3
55+	9	1	10
Manner of death^a			
Natural causes	9	0	9
Self-inflicted	0	0	0
Unlawful homicide	1	0	1
Justifiable homicide	0	4	4
Accident	0	0	0
Legal status^b			
Sentenced	10	na	10
Unsentenced	5	na	5

Table 2: Non-Indigenous deaths in custody, Quarter 4 2022 (n) continued

Method of detainment ^{cd}			
Motor vehicle pursuit	na	0	0
Other pursuit	na	1	1
Siege	na	2	2
Raid	na	0	0
Other	na	2	2
Total	15	6	21

a: Excludes 5 cases in prison custody and 2 cases in police custody where manner of death was not known

b: Only applicable for deaths that occurred in prison custody

c: Only applicable for deaths that occurred in police custody

d: Includes detainment-related deaths that occurred in police custody

na = not applicable

Note: Data are based on preliminary data and may be subject to further revisions

Source: AIC NDICP 2022–23 [computer file]