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05

**National Deaths in
Custody Program:
Deaths in custody in
Australia 2013–14
and 2014–15**

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Acronyms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AIC	Australian Institute of Criminology
MSO	most serious offence
MVP	motor vehicle pursuit
NDICP	National Deaths in Custody Program
RCIADIC	Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody
SCRGSP	Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision

Executive summary

The National Deaths in Custody Program (NDICP) collects information on deaths that occurred in prison, in police custody and in custody-related operations throughout Australia. This report presents data on the number of deaths in custody that occurred during 2013–14 and 2014–15 and trend data on deaths in prison custody (from 1979–80) and police custody and custody-related operations (from 1989–90). As no deaths occurred in youth detention during the reporting period, these data are not presented.

Overview of findings for 2013–14 and 2014–15

Between 1 July 2013 and 30 June 2015, 115 deaths occurred in prison custody (54 deaths in 2013–14 and 61 deaths in 2014–15). A further 34 deaths occurred in police custody and custody-related operations (13 deaths in 2013–14 and 21 in 2014–15).

Prison custody

Of the 115 deaths in prison custody that occurred during 2013–14 and 2014–15:

- One hundred and eleven deaths (97%) involved male prisoners and four (3%) were of female prisoners.
- Over half (52%; n=60) of the deaths occurred among those aged under 55 years.
- Twenty-five (22%) were Indigenous and 90 (78%) were non-Indigenous.
- The rate of Indigenous prison deaths per 100 prisoners increased from 0.11 in 2013–14 to 0.16 in 2014–15. Despite this increase, the rate of Indigenous prison deaths in 2014–15 (0.16 per 100 prisoners) was lower than the rate of non-Indigenous deaths (0.18 per 100 prisoners).
- Three-quarters of prison deaths (75%; n=85) were of sentenced persons and a quarter (25%; n=28) were of unsentenced persons (on remand).
- Of the 114 prison deaths for which offence information was recorded, over two-thirds (68%; n=77) of deceased persons were in custody for violent offences as their most serious offence. Just under a fifth (18%) were in custody for theft-related offences.
- The majority (71%; n=80) of all deaths in prison custody resulted from natural causes. Just under a quarter (22%; n=25) were caused by hanging, including the deaths of two Indigenous prisoners and 23 non-Indigenous prisoners.
- Prison cells were the most common location in which prison deaths occurred (40%; n=46), followed by prison hospitals (27%; n=31) and public hospitals (27%; n=31).

Police custody

Of the 34 deaths that occurred in police custody and custody-related operations during 2013–14 and 2014–15:

- Twenty-one (62%) were classified as Category 1 (close contact) and 13 (38%) were classified as Category 2 (operational/detainment-related) deaths.
- Thirty deaths were of males (88%) and four deaths were of females (12%).
- Deaths most commonly occurred among those aged 40–54 years (n=14). The mean age at death in police custody was considerably younger for Indigenous persons (36.5 years) than for non-Indigenous persons (42 years).
- Twenty-five deaths were of non-Indigenous persons (81%) and six were of Indigenous persons (19%).
- Nearly half of all deaths in police custody and custody-related operations occurred among those with a violent offence as their most serious offence (47%; n=16).
- Half of police custody deaths were caused by gunshot wounds (50%; n=17). Seven deaths (21%) occurred during motor vehicle pursuits (MVP). Four of the MVP deaths involved those suspected of traffic offences, two involved those suspected of theft offences and one involved a person suspected of drug offences.
- Of the 17 gunshot wound deaths, 13 (76%) were police shootings and four (24%) were self-inflicted shootings. The majority of those who died were non-Indigenous (n=15) and male (n=16).

Overview of long-term trends

Since 1979–80, a total of 2,608 deaths in custody have occurred in Australia, with 1,600 deaths occurring in prison (61%) and 985 deaths occurring in police custody and custody-related operations (38%). There have been 18 (0.7%) deaths in youth detention or welfare facilities and five (0.2%) deaths in other criminal justice settings—for example, while being apprehended by Australian Federal Police officers. Of the 2,608 people who have died in custody since 1979–80, 500 were Indigenous and 2,104 were of non-Indigenous background. (The Indigenous status of four persons was unknown.)

Prison custody

- From 1997–98 to 2005–06 the rate of prison deaths declined steadily from 0.44 to 0.11 per 100 prisoners, and has since fluctuated.
- Seventeen percent of deaths (n=277) were of Indigenous persons. From 1993–94 to 2005–06 the rate of Indigenous prison deaths declined notably from 0.43 to 0.05 deaths per 100 prisoners, and has since fluctuated.
- In 2014–15 the number of Indigenous deaths in prison custody (n=15) was the highest recorded since 1979–80, comprising a quarter of all prison deaths (25%). The Indigenous prison population in 2014–15 was the highest recorded in the same period.
- The largest proportion of deaths were of people aged 25–39 years (37%; n=593) with a consistent increase in prison custody deaths among prisoners aged 55 years and over.

- From 1997–98 to 2005–06 the rate of prison death among unsentenced persons declined fairly sharply and it has since levelled out.
- Since 1979–80 over half of persons who have died in prison custody had a violent offence as their most serious offence (54%; n=859).
- From 1997–98 to 2005–06 the proportion of prison deaths caused by hanging declined markedly and it has since fluctuated, while deaths from natural causes have shown a consistent upward trend since 1979–80.

Police custody

The NDICP has collected and recorded information on police custody and custody-related operations deaths occurring since 1989–90. During this 26 year period:

- There have been 782 deaths in police custody and custody-related operations. Of these, 153 (20%) were of Indigenous persons.
- After an initial decline in the early 1990s, Category 1 (close contact) deaths fluctuated in the nine years to 2014–15, while Category 2 (operational and detainment) deaths have generally declined since 2003–04.
- Since 1989–90, 93 percent of all people who have died in police custody and custody-related operations have been male (n=727) and seven percent female (n=55).
- Police custody deaths have most frequently occurred among those aged 25–39 years (43%; n=333).
- Violent offences were associated with one-third of all police custody and custody-related operations deaths (33%; n=253).
- External/multiple trauma (33%; n=253) narrowly exceeded gunshot wounds (29%; n=226) as the most common cause of death in police custody and custody-related operations, with hanging deaths being one of the least common causes (7%; n=55).
- A quarter of all deaths in police custody and custody-related operations have occurred during motor vehicle pursuits (26%; n=206). MVP deaths have declined steadily since 2008–09.

Introduction

In 1987 the Australian Government established the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) in response to concerns about the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people dying in custody (RCIADIC 1991). For the purposes of this report, the term *Indigenous* is used to refer to persons of an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background.

The royal commission found that Indigenous persons were not more likely to die in custody than non-Indigenous persons but were significantly over-represented in custody. Recent figures show that the over-representation of Indigenous persons in custody remains a problem in Australia and that rates of over-representation continue to increase (ABS 2016).

The royal commission also noted the lack of reliable statistics available on deaths in custody in Australia. To fill this information gap, the RCIADIC recommended the establishment of a program to monitor deaths of Indigenous and non-Indigenous persons occurring in prison, police custody and youth detention centres (Recommendation 41). In response, the National Deaths in Custody Program (NDICP) was established at the Australian Institute of Criminology in 1992. Since then, the NDICP has collected and recorded comprehensive data on all individuals:

- who died in prison custody, police custody or youth detention;
- who died attempting to escape from prison, police custody or youth detention, regardless of where the death occurred;
- whose death was caused or contributed to by traumatic injuries sustained, or by lack of proper care, while in such custody or detention, regardless of where the death occurred; or
- who died or were fatally injured in the process of police or prison officers attempting to detain that person.

As the NDICP was established solely to monitor deaths that occur in police, juvenile and prison custody, it does not consider deaths in immigration detention centres.

Compiling the National Deaths in Custody database

The information held in the NDICP database comes from two main sources:

- NDICP data collection forms completed by state and territory police and corrective services; and
- Coronial reports including toxicology reports, police reports, post-mortem accounts and court proceeding and findings transcripts.

The NDICP collects data on 88 variables. These data relate to the circumstances and characteristics of each death and demographic information about each deceased person. The NDICP uses the National Coronial Information System to confirm the primary data provided by state and territory police and corrective services.

Definitions

The definitions used to determine whether an individual’s death should be included as a death in custody are based on recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (see Box 1). The definition of a death in police custody was expanded following a resolution of the Australasian Police Ministers Council to include other close contact deaths that occurred during police operations (Category 1b) and deaths that occurred during custody-related police operations that did not involve close contact with the deceased (Category 2). Prior to this change, only deaths in institutional settings were recorded (Category 1a).

Deaths occurring in the following circumstances are excluded from the NDICP:

- deaths during rescue-related police operations such as search and rescues and evacuations;
- deaths during police operations to prevent a suicide attempt, where the purpose was not to detain the deceased due to a breach of the law; and
- deaths of innocent bystanders in police operations, including pedestrians or vehicle passengers.

However, persons in the above circumstances may be retrospectively included as a death in custody if it is later discovered that the deceased had committed or was involved in an offence.

Defining deaths in custody

Deaths in prison custody

Deaths in prison custody include deaths that occur in prison or youth justice facilities. This also includes the deaths that occur during transfer to or from these custody settings, or in medical facilities following transfer from adult and youth detention centres (RCIADIC 1991: 189–190).

Deaths in police custody

Deaths in police custody are divided into two categories:

Category 1

1a: Deaths in institutional settings (eg police stations or lockups, police vehicles or hospitals), during transfer to or from such institutions, or following transfer from an institution.

1b: Other deaths in police operations where officers were in close contact with the deceased. This includes most deaths linked to police raids and shootings by police. However, it would not include most deaths occurring in sieges where a perimeter was established around a premise but officers did not have such close contact with the person that they were able to significantly influence or control the person’s behaviour.

Category 2

Other deaths during custody-related police operations. This includes most sieges and cases where officers were attempting to detain a person—for example, during a pursuit. This would cover situations where officers did not have such close contact with the person that they were able to significantly influence or control the person’s behaviour.

Classification of cases

The NDICP uses the definition of a death in custody recommended by the royal commission as a guide when deciding which cases should be included in the NDICP database. While most cases are straightforward and clearly fall within the definition, every year there are some cases where it is unclear whether the death should be classified as a death in custody. For the purposes of the NDICP, a person is considered to be in custody when they are not free to leave the detention or arrest of police or corrections officials. As outlined in Box 1, this includes deaths that occur in hospitals if the injuries or illness suffered while in custody caused or contributed to that death. In cases where police were clearly in the process of detaining or attempting to detain a person immediately prior to death, such as in shootings, sieges, raids and pursuits, the person is considered to have been in custody at the time of death. In all of these cases, the question of inclusion in this report centres on whether the deceased was in custody at the time of death.

Any borderline cases that were identified for the data collection period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2015 that could not be further clarified have been excluded until further information about the case is obtained, which often occurs via a coronial finding. Such cases may be excluded for several years, as cases may not be heard by the coroner for months or years, or a coroner's findings may be appealed. Despite this, relying on coronial decisions ensures the integrity and reliability of the NDICP over the longer term, as coronial findings are legally binding determinations based on all available evidence. It is important to note that this means the total number of deaths may be revised in future reports as the inclusion or exclusion of borderline cases is resolved. Cases that are retrospectively included in the database are identified clearly, with any necessary adjustments to findings made in subsequent reports. Finally, each year NDICP data are cross-checked with the relevant custodial authorities to ensure accuracy. Where information is missing from reports to the NDICP, these are checked against coronial findings and necessary revisions made to the dataset.

Indigenous status

When reporting statistics on Indigenous people it is important to note, as with the criminal justice system more generally, Indigenous status is not always collected and, when it is, the recording is not always consistent. Moreover, the way in which Indigenous status is determined varies between jurisdictions. The recording of Indigenous status may be based on a subjective assessment of physical appearance or self-report. As a result, the number of Indigenous people engaged with the criminal justice system may be underestimated. This potential undercounting should be kept in mind when interpreting the data in this report.

Calculating death rates

Prison population rates in this report are calculated using data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) series *Prisoners in Australia* (ABS 2015a) and *Corrective Services, Australia* (ABS 2015b) and data from the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision (SCRGSP 2016). Trends in rates are presented from 1981–82, as prison census data did not exist prior to that financial year. For each analysis, population data sources are chosen based on the availability of detailed data. For this reason rates may be slightly different across each analysis.

Trends in police custody rates are not presented due to the absence of reliable data on the number of people placed in police custody and the frequency of interactions with police each year.

Differences in the number of cases for particular variables may exist in the subsequent analyses. This is due to coronial data not being available or complete at the time of report preparation.

Report content

This report presents information on all deaths that occurred in prison custody or police custody or custody-related operations for the 2013–14 and 2014–15 financial years. Trend data from 1979–80 for deaths in prison and from 1989–90 for deaths in police custody are also reported. The relevant statistics for each year are displayed in the appendices of this report.

No youth detention deaths or deaths in other criminal justice settings were recorded in 2013–14 or 2014–15. Since 1979–80 the NDICP has recorded a small number of youth detention deaths (n=18; 0.7%) and deaths occurring in other criminal justice settings (n=5; 0.2%)—for example, while being apprehended by Australian Federal Police officers. Because these numbers are small, youth detention deaths and deaths occurring in other criminal justice settings are excluded from this report.

Deaths in prison custody

Between 1 July 2013 and 30 June 2015, 115 deaths occurred in prison custody. Fifty-four deaths occurred in 2013–14 and 61 deaths in 2014–15. The number of deaths recorded in each jurisdiction is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction, 2013–14 to 2014–15 (n)



Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]; Table A1

Prison populations vary across states and territories, which affects the number of deaths recorded in each jurisdiction and changes in prison deaths between years. The rates of prison deaths for each jurisdiction are shown in Table 1. Rates are calculated per 100 prisoners relative to each jurisdiction's prison population on an average day. In 2013–14 jurisdictional rates were similar to the national rates, except for the rates of the two territories (NT and ACT). In 2014–15 rates varied across the jurisdictions, with the ACT and Tasmania having the highest rate of deaths in custody per 100 prisoners.

Table 1: Deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction and Indigenous status, 2013–14 to 2014–15						
	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous		Total	
	n	rate	n	rate	n	rate ^a
2013–14						
NSW	1	0.04	12	0.15	13	0.13
Vic	0	0.00	11	0.21	11	0.19
Qld	4	0.19	7	0.15	11	0.16
WA	1	0.05	6	0.20	7	0.14
SA	0	0.00	4	0.22	4	0.17
Tas	0	0.00	1	0.25	1	0.21
NT	4	0.31	1	0.49	5	0.33
ACT	0	0.00	2	0.75	2	0.62
Total	10	0.11	44	0.19	54	0.17
2014–15						
NSW	5	0.19	16	0.19	21	0.19
Vic	1	0.20	14	0.24	15	0.24
Qld	3	0.13	4	0.08	7	0.10
WA	1	0.05	3	0.09	4	0.07
SA	1	0.17	6	0.31	7	0.27
Tas	0	0.00	3	0.76	3	0.64
NT	3	0.22	0	0.00	3	0.19
ACT	1	1.47	0	0.00	1	0.30
Total	15	0.16	46	0.18	61	0.17

a: Rate per 100 prisoners on an average day for 2013–14 and 2014–15 (SCRGSP 2016)

Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]

Since 1979–80, 1,600 deaths have occurred in Australian prisons. Rates of prison deaths have fluctuated since 1981–82 (see Figure 2), with an overall decline occurring after 1997–98, the year in which the highest rate of prison deaths was recorded (0.44 per 100 prisoners). The lowest rate was recorded in 2005–06, at 0.11 deaths per 100 prisoners, but this was followed by a general increase in rates over the nine years to 2014–15. The rates of prison custody deaths in 2013–14 and 2014–15 (0.16 and 0.17 per 100 prisoners respectively) were similar to rates recorded in the previous two years (0.14 in 2011–12 and 0.17 in 2012–13).

The Australian prison population has increased each year since 1981–82, except for 1983–84, 1992–93 and 2010–11, when the prison population decreased. From 30 June 2013 to 30 June 2015 the prison population increased by approximately 17 percent (ABS 2015a). During the same period, the number of prison deaths in Australia increased by 15 percent (from 53 to 61).

Figure 2: Deaths in prison custody, 1981–82 to 2014–15 (rate per 100 prisoners)^a



a: Rate per 100 prisoners at 30 June of financial year (ABS 2015a; 2014)

Note: Prison population data prior to 1981–82 are not available. The 2013–14 prison custody death rate differs from the rate presented in Table 1 due to different prison population counts used by the ABS and SCRGSP sources respectively

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2015 [computer file]; Table A2

Demographic characteristics

Demographic information on the gender, age and Indigenous status of prisoners who died in prison custody is presented in Table 2.

Gender

Of the 54 persons who died in prison custody in 2013–14, 51 were males (94%) and three were females (6%). In 2014–15, 60 males (98%) and one female (2%) died in prison custody (see Table 2; Table A3). The high prevalence of male deaths in prison custody is representative of the prison population, with males making up 92 percent of the overall Australian prison population (SCRGSP 2016).

Since 1979–80, male prisoner deaths have generally outnumbered female prisoner deaths at a ratio of 23:1. During this time rates of death among all prisoners have been less than 0.5 per 100 prisoners. Trends in male prison death rates have generally remained consistent, although there was a clear decrease between 1997–98 and 2005–06. Trends in female prison death rates have fluctuated markedly due to the numbers being small; however, female rates are now generally lower than those recorded in the early 1980s (see Figure 3).

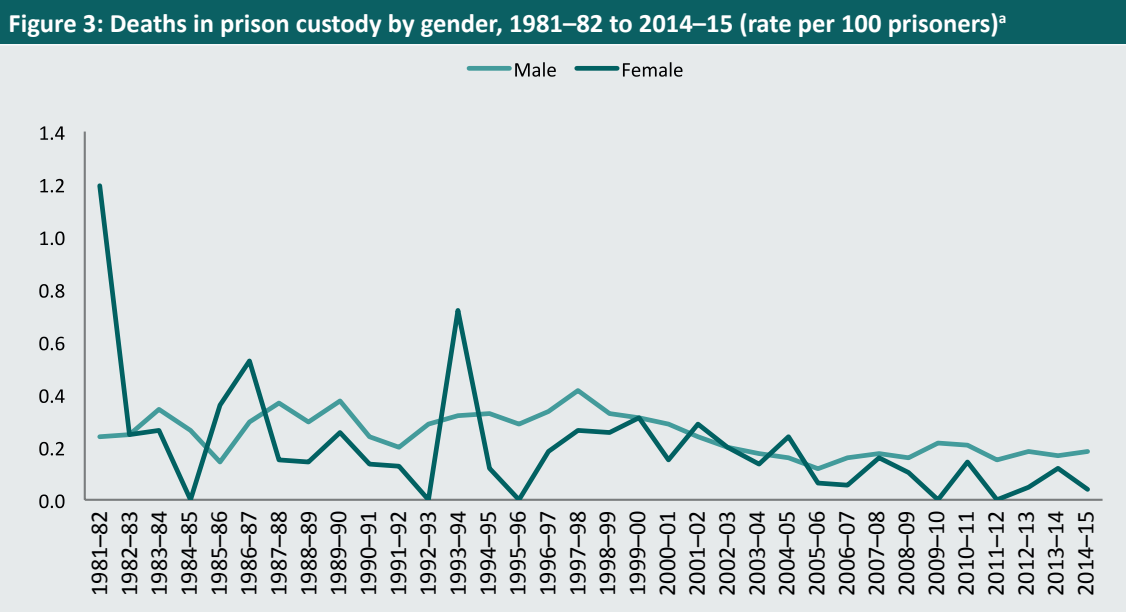
Table 2: Prison custody deaths by gender, age and Indigenous status, 2013–14 and 2014–15

	2013–14		2014–15		Total
	n	rate	n	rate	n
Gender^a					
Male	51	0.17	60	0.19	111
Female	3	0.12	1	0.04	4
Age^b					
Under 25	0	0	1	0.02	1
25–39	9	0.05	14	0.08	23
40–54	21	0.25	15	0.17	36
55 and over	24	1.01	31	1.19	55
Median (mean)	52.5 (54.6)		55 (54.8)		54 (54.7)
Indigenous status^a					
Indigenous	10	0.11	15	0.16	25
Non-Indigenous	44	0.19	46	0.18	90
Total	54	0.17	61	0.18	115

a: Rate per 100 prisoners on an average day for 2013–14 and 2014–15 (SCRGSP 2016)

b: Rate per 100 prisoners at 30 June (ABS 2015a; 2014)

Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]



a: Rate per 100 prisoners on an average day for 2013–14 and 2014–15 (SCRGSP 2016)

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2015 [computer file]

Age

The median age of prisoners who died in prison custody during 2013–14 and 2014–15 was 54 years (see Table 2). The median age at death was lower for Indigenous prisoners (49 years) than for non-Indigenous prisoners (56 years). In 2013–14 and 2014–15, those aged 55 years and over experienced the highest rate of prison death, making up almost half of all deaths in prison (48%; n=55). Only one death occurred among those aged under 25 years (1%). The age of prisoners who died in prison custody ranged from 21 to 94 years of age.

Of all deaths that have occurred in prison custody since 1979–80, just over one-third were of prisoners aged 25 to 39 years (37%; n=593; see Table A4). A quarter of deaths were of prisoners aged 40 to 54 years (24%; n=378), a fifth were of prisoners aged 55 years and over (22%; n=358) and just under a fifth were of prisoners aged under 25 years (17%; n=271). However, over the 10 years to 2014–15, the 55 and over age group has consistently recorded the highest number of deaths, despite representing the lowest proportion of the total prison population. This coincides with the ageing of the prison population. During this time the 55 and over age group experienced an average of 20 deaths per year (range=10–31 per year). Over the same 10 years, the proportion of all deaths that occurred among those aged 55 and over increased from 21 percent in 2004–05 to 51 percent in 2014–15.

Examining the rates per 100 prisoners presents a more accurate picture of deaths in each age category. Prisoners aged 55 years and over had the highest rates of death for each year since 1981–82 (see Figure 4). Rates of death were much lower among other age groups and have showed greater consistency. Compared with the previous reporting period, rates of death increased for prisoners aged 55 years and over (from 0.87 in 2012–13 to 1.19 in 2014–15) but decreased among 40–54 year old prisoners (0.29 to 0.17 per 100 prisoners) and stayed approximately the same for the younger age groups.

Historically, Indigenous prisoners who die in prison are younger than the non-Indigenous prisoners who die in prison (see Table 3). This is consistent with the lower life expectancy and lower median age of Indigenous Australians compared to the general population (ABS 2013).

Figure 4: Deaths in prison custody by age category, 1981–82 to 2014–15 (rate per 100 prisoners)^a



a: Rate per 100 prisoners at 30 June of financial year (ABS 2015a; 2014)

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2015 [computer file]

Table 3: Deaths in prison custody by age group and Indigenous status, 1981–82 to 2014–15

	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous	
	n	%	n	%
Under 25 years	58	21	213	16
25–39 years	123	44	469	35
40–54 years	73	26	305	23
55 and over	23	8	335	25
Total	277		1,322	

Note: Excludes one case where Indigenous status was not recorded
 Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2015 [computer file]

Indigenous status

Indigenous prisoners accounted for 28 percent of the average Australian daily prisoner population in the 2013–14 (n=9,027) and 2014–15 (n=9,644) financial years. The number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous prisoners each increased by seven percent over the two years (SCRGSP 2016).

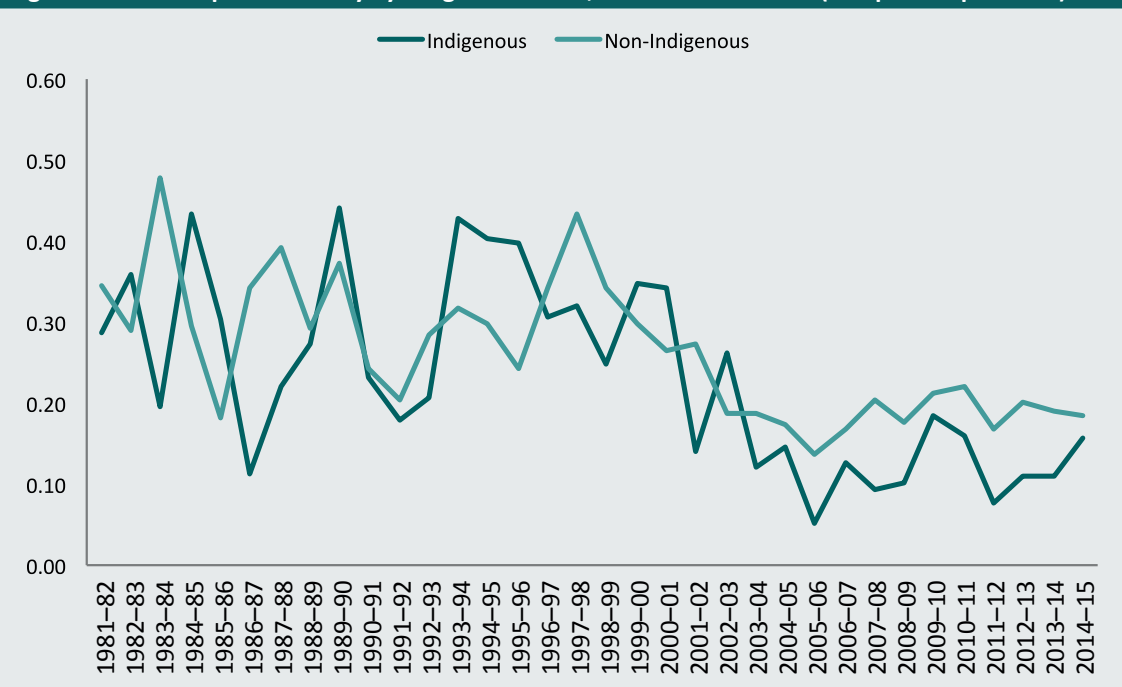
Between 2013–14 and 2014–15 the number of Indigenous persons who died in prison custody increased from 10 to 15, or from 19 to 25 percent respectively of all recorded deaths. In 2014–15 Indigenous deaths in prison custody were proportionate to the average Indigenous prison population (25% vs 28%). In 2013–14 a lower proportion of Indigenous deaths were recorded compared with the prison population: 19 percent of deaths were Indigenous, whereas Indigenous prisoners made up 28 percent of the prison population (SCRGSP 2016). The rate of prison death for Indigenous prisoners was 0.11 per 100 prisoners in 2013–14 and 0.16 per 100 prisoners in 2014–15.

Non-Indigenous deaths increased slightly from 44 to 46 over the same period, making up 81 percent of all deaths in 2013–14 and 75 percent in 2014–15. Non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody reflect the non-Indigenous proportion of the total prison population for the 2013–14 (71%) and 2014–15 (72%) financial years (SCRGSP 2016). The rate of non-Indigenous deaths decreased from 0.19 per 100 prisoners in 2013–14 to 0.18 per 100 prisoners in 2014–15.

Since 1979–80, 277 Indigenous people have died in prison custody, accounting for approximately 17 percent of all prison deaths. The largest number of Indigenous deaths in prison custody (n=15) occurred in 2014–15, from a low of two deaths occurring on three occasions (1980–81, 1983–84 and 1986–87; see Table A5). While this increase in Indigenous deaths is likely due to a range of factors unable to be investigated in this report, 2014–15 also recorded the largest Indigenous prison population since the NDICP commenced (SCRGSP 2016).

For non-Indigenous prisoners, the rate of prison deaths has shown an overall decline, albeit there has been a small but steady increase since 2005–06 (see Figure 5). For Indigenous prisoners the trend has been more variable, but rates of prison deaths appeared to decline from 1999–2000 to 2005–06 and have since fluctuated (see Figure 5). Since 2003–04 rates of Indigenous prison deaths have been consistently lower than rates of non-Indigenous prison deaths.

Figure 5: Deaths in prison custody by Indigenous status, 1981–82 to 2014–15 (rate per 100 prisoners)^a



a: Rate per 100 prisoners on an average day for 2013–14 and 2014–15 financial years (SCRGSP 2016)

Note: Excludes one case where Indigenous status was not recorded

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2015 [computer file]

Legal status of prisoners who died in custody

Of the 115 people who died in prison custody during 2013–14 and 2014–15, the legal status of 113 prisoners (98%) was known. Of these, 85 were sentenced persons (75%) and 28 were unsentenced (25%; see Table 4). This is reflective of the sentenced and unsentenced prison population recorded at 30 June 2015, of which 73 percent (n=26,100) were classified as sentenced and 27 percent (n=9,743) were unsentenced and on remand (ABS 2015b).

However, the rates in Table 4 should be interpreted with some caution as they are calculated using census data rather than annual population data. Rates are particularly affected for the remand population, which is more variable.

Rates of death among the unsentenced (remand) prisoner population have varied greatly since 1981–82 (see Figure 6). From 1997–98 rates of prison death among unsentenced persons declined fairly sharply before levelling out since 2005–06. In 2012–13 the rate fell to a lower rate than that of sentenced persons (0.16 vs 0.18 per 100 prisoners) for the first time since 1984–85. Rates of prison death among sentenced persons have followed a more stable pattern, remaining lower than 0.30 per 100 prisoners throughout the 36 years.

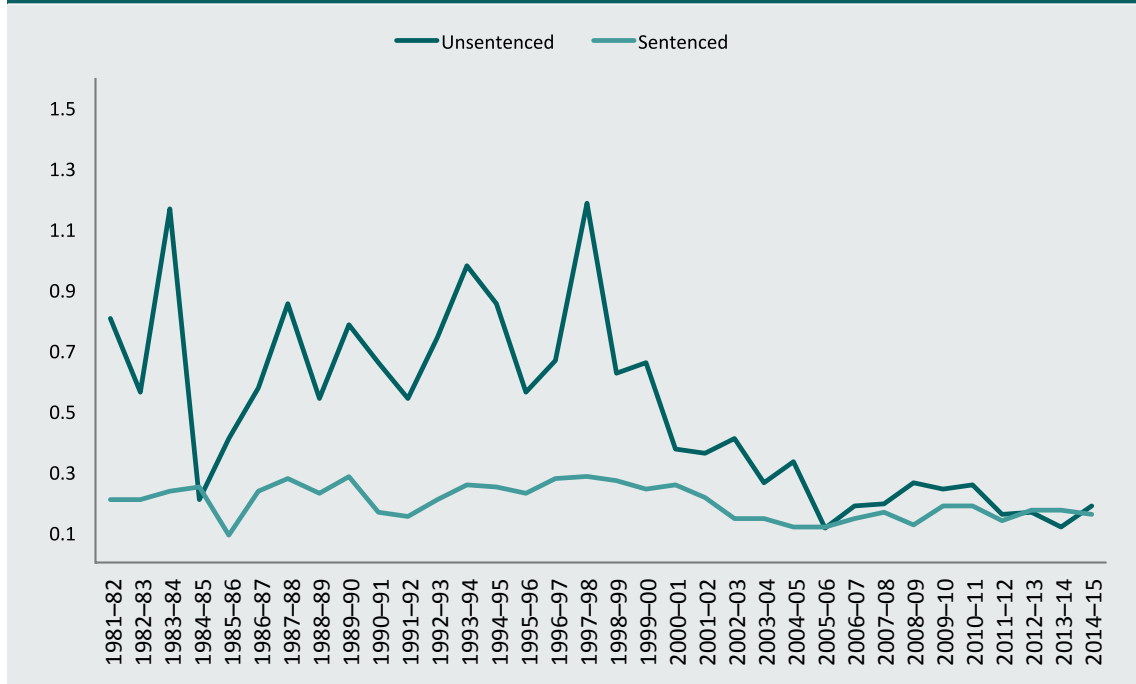
Table 4: Deaths in prison custody by legal status, 2013–14 and 2014–15					
	2013–14		2014–15		Total
	n	rate ^a	n	rate ^a	n
Sentenced					
Indigenous	9	0.13	14	0.19	23
Non-Indigenous	34	0.19	28	0.15	62
All persons	43	0.17	42	0.16	85
Unsentenced					
Indigenous	1	0.04	1	0.04	2
Non-Indigenous	9	0.14	17	0.24	26
All persons	10	0.11	18	0.18	28
Total	53		60		113

a: Rate per 100 prisoners at 30 June of each financial year (ABS 2015b)

Note: Excludes two cases where legal status was not recorded

Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]

Figure 6: Deaths in prison custody by legal status, 1981–82 to 2014–15 (rate per 100 prisoners)^a



a: Rate per 100 prisoners at 30 June of financial year (ABS 2015a; 2014)

Note: Excludes 16 cases where legal status was not recorded

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2015 [computer file]

Most serious offence

The NDICP records information relating to the offences for which deceased persons were sentenced to prison. Each offence is grouped into one of six categories based on severity:

- violent offences—includes homicide, assault, sex offences, other offences against the person and robbery;
- theft-related offences—includes break and enter, other theft, property damage and fraud;
- drug-related offences—includes possessing, using, dealing, trafficking and manufacturing/growing drugs;
- traffic-related offences—includes road, traffic, driving and licence offences;
- good order offences—includes public drunkenness, 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 (eg prostitution, betting and gambling, disorderly conduct, vagrancy and offensive behaviour); and
- other/unknown—includes offences not elsewhere classified or where the most serious offence is unknown.

In instances where multiple offences were committed by the deceased, for the purpose of analysis, only the most serious offence is recorded. To determine the most serious offence for each case, the NDICP uses the Australia and New Zealand Standard Offence Classification.

The most serious offence (MSO) was recorded for all but one of the 115 prisoners who died in prison custody during 2013–14 and 2014–15. Of these, 77 prisoners (68%) had a violent offence as their MSO (see Table 5). A further 20 individuals (18%) were in prison custody for a theft-related offence. The remaining deceased persons were in prison custody for a drug-related offence (n=8; 7%), other offence (n=5; 4%) or a good order offence (n=3; 3%).

One prisoner was in prison custody for a traffic-related offence. Violent offences were the most common offences recorded for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous persons who died in prison custody (n=16; 64% and n=61; 69% respectively).

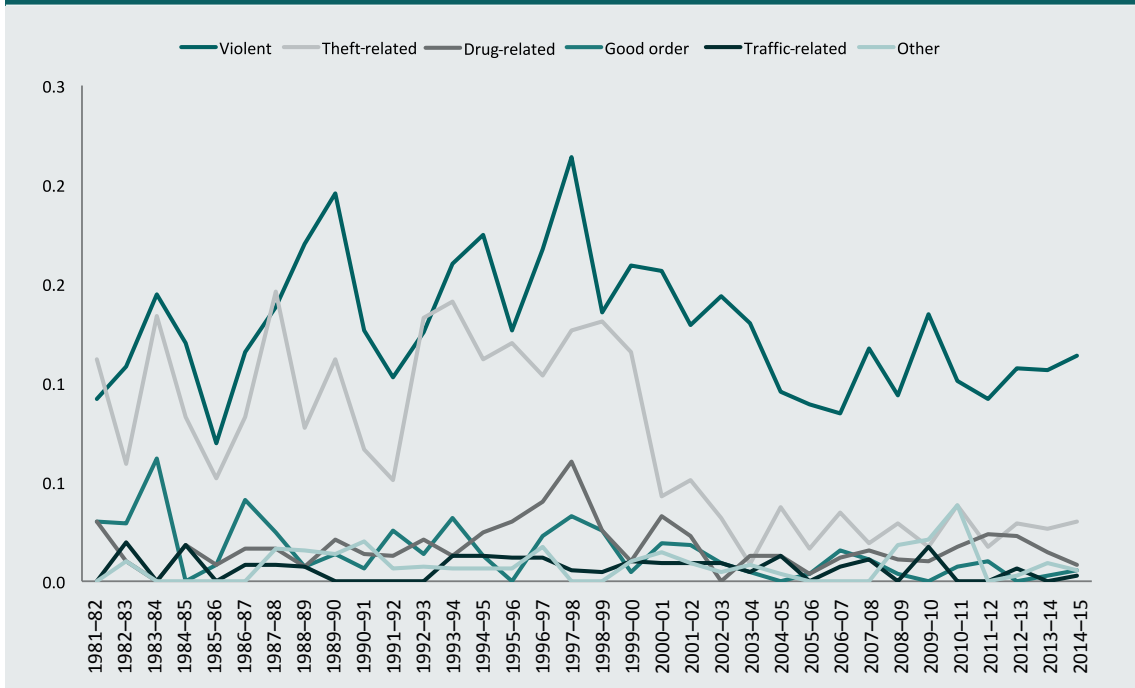
Since 1979–80 just over half of persons who died in prison custody had a violent offence as their MSO (54%; n=859; see Table A7). Death rates among violent offenders have fluctuated over the 36 year period, but over the 10 years to 2014–15 the rates were generally lower than before 2004–05 (see Figure 7). Similar variability in death rates was observed among prisoners whose MSO was theft-related offences before 1999–2000, when death rates declined markedly.

Table 5: Deaths in prison custody by most serious offence and Indigenous status, 2013–14 and 2014–15

	2013–14			2014–15			Total	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	n	%
	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	%
Violent	7	29	36	9	32	41	77	68
Theft-related	2	7	9	4	7	11	20	18
Drug-related	0	5	5	0	3	3	8	7
Good order	0	1	1	1	1	2	3	3
Traffic-related	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Other	1	2	3	1	1	2	5	4
Total	10	44	54	15	45	60	114	100

Note: Excludes one case where MSO was not recorded
 Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]

Figure 7: Deaths in prison custody by most serious offence, 1981–82 to 2014–15 (rate per 100 prisoners)^a



a: Rate per 100 prisoners on an average day for 2013–14 and 2014–15 financial years (SCRGSP 2016)
 Note: Excludes 18 cases where MSO was not recorded
 Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2015 [computer file]

Cause of death

Cause of death information was not available for three prison deaths that occurred in 2013–14 and 2014–15. Of the 112 deaths where the cause of death was known, natural causes accounted for almost three-quarters—72 percent (n=39) in 2013–14 and 71 percent (n=41) in 2014–15 (see Table 6). Of those 80 deaths of natural causes, the type of natural cause was known for 75 cases. One-third of prisoners who died of natural causes in 2013–14 and 2014–15 whose type of natural cause was known died from heart disease or related cardiac ailments (35%; n=26; see Table 7). Over half of Indigenous prisoner deaths in 2013–14 and 2014–15 that were due to natural causes were related to heart disease (57%; n=10). Heart disease and cancer were the leading causes of death among non-Indigenous prisoners whose type of natural cause had been determined—28 percent (n=16) and 30 percent (n=17) respectively.

The second leading cause of death among prisoners in 2013–14 and 2014–15 was hanging—20 percent (n=11) in 2013–14 and 24 percent (n=14) in 2014–15. Overall, just under a quarter of prison deaths (22%; n=25) resulted from hanging, including the deaths of two Indigenous prisoners and 23 non-Indigenous prisoners. Of the 22 hanging deaths for which information on method of hanging was available, hanging points categorised as ‘other fittings in the cell’ such as door handles and vents (32%; n=7) and shower fixtures (27%; n=6) were the most commonly used. Sheets (59%; n=13) were the most common material prisoners used to hang themselves, followed by rope/cord (18%; n=4) or a belt (9%; n=2). Shoelaces, other clothing and ‘other’ material were used in one hanging death each. Information on the type of hanging point and materials used was missing for three cases.

Overall, natural causes accounted for 82 percent (n=18) of Indigenous deaths in prison custody during 2013–14 and 2014–15 compared with 69 percent (n=62) of non-Indigenous deaths. A larger proportion of hanging deaths occurred among non-Indigenous prisoners than Indigenous prisoners (26%; n=23 vs 9%; n=2).

	2013–14			2014–15			Total	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	n	%
Hanging	0	11	11	2	12	14	25	22
Natural causes	9	30	39	9	32	41	80	71
Head injury	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
External/multiple trauma	0	2	2	1	0	1	3	3
Drugs	1	1	2	0	1	1	3	3
Other/multiple causes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	10	44	54	12	46	58	112	100

Note: Excludes three cases where cause of death was not recorded
Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]

Table 7: Deaths of natural causes in prison by Indigenous status, 2013–14 and 2014–15

	2013–14			2014–15			Total	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	n	%
Heart disease	5	9	14	5	7	12	26	35
Cancer	4	9	13	0	8	8	21	28
Stroke	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
Respiratory illness	0	2	2	2	6	8	10	13
Digestive illness	0	1	1	0	1	1	2	3
Infectious disease	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Other disease	0	3	3	1	2	3	6	8
Multiple	0	3	3	1	3	4	7	9
Undetermined	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
Total	9	29	38	9	28	37	75	100

Notes: Excludes five cases where natural cause was not recorded. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding
 Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]

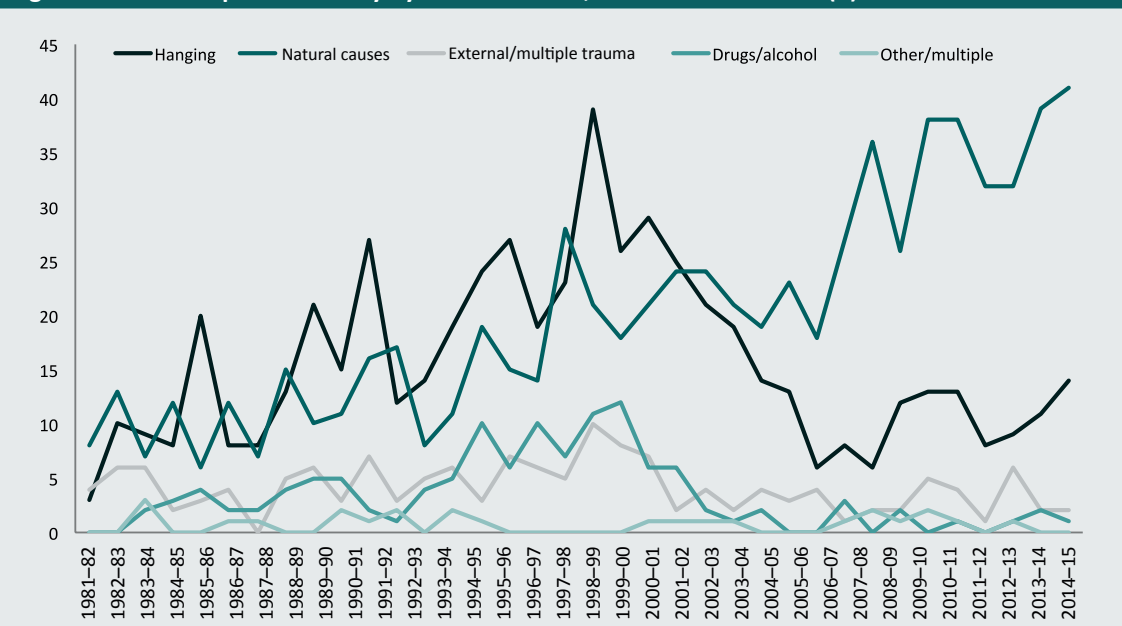
Of the deaths in prison custody between 1979–80 and 2014–15, 46 percent (n=725) were attributable to natural causes. Another 36 percent were due to hanging (n=565), eight percent due to external/multiple trauma (n=121) and eight percent due to drugs and alcohol (n=122). For each year from 1979–80 to 2000–01, the leading cause of death among prisoners was either natural causes or hanging (see Figure 8).

For each year since 2001–02 prison deaths resulting from natural causes have exceeded hanging deaths. The proportion of natural cause deaths generally increased in the 13 years to 2013–14, whereas the proportion of hanging deaths declined from 43 percent to 26 percent or less of all deaths. Since 2013–14 the proportion of natural cause deaths decreased by two percentage points and the proportion of hanging deaths increased by four percentage points.

For sentenced prisoners, the primary cause of death since 1979–80 was natural causes (n=618; 57%). Conversely, the majority of unsentenced prison deaths were the result of hangings (n=300; 62%). Unsentenced Indigenous (65% vs 22%) and non-Indigenous persons (62% vs 24%) were more likely to die from hangings than their sentenced counterparts.

The largest proportion of hanging deaths since 1979–80 involved hanging points categorised as ‘other fitting in the cell’ (39%; n=158), consistent with the current reporting period (2013–14 and 2014–15). Cell bars were used in a third of hanging deaths (34%; n=139). Cell bar hanging deaths have decreased markedly in the last decade, accounting for no more than three hanging deaths each year. The average number of cell bar hanging deaths per year over the 36 years was five.

Figure 8: Deaths in prison custody by cause of death, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)



Note: Excludes 12 cases where cause of death was not recorded. External trauma includes head injuries and gunshot wounds
Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]; Table A8

Manner of death

Manner of death relates to the accountability for the death as recorded by the coroner or prison authorities. There are six classifications relating to manner of death: self-inflicted, natural causes, justifiable homicide, unlawful homicide, accidental, and other.

Although similar, differences do exist between manner and cause of death. For example, when a person dies of a heart attack in prison, both the cause and manner of death will be labelled as natural causes. Conversely, where the cause of death is categorised as hanging, the manner of death is recorded as either self-inflicted or accidental.

Of the 108 deaths in 2013–14 and 2014–15 where the manner of death was known, the only categories where responses were recorded were natural causes, self-inflicted and other. That is, there were no prison deaths due to justifiable homicide, unlawful homicide or accident. In 2013–14 and 2014–15, natural causes accounted for 80 (74%) deaths in prison custody (see Table 8). Twenty-seven prisoners (25%) died from self-inflicted causes (see Table 8) and one (1%) from an ‘other’ cause.

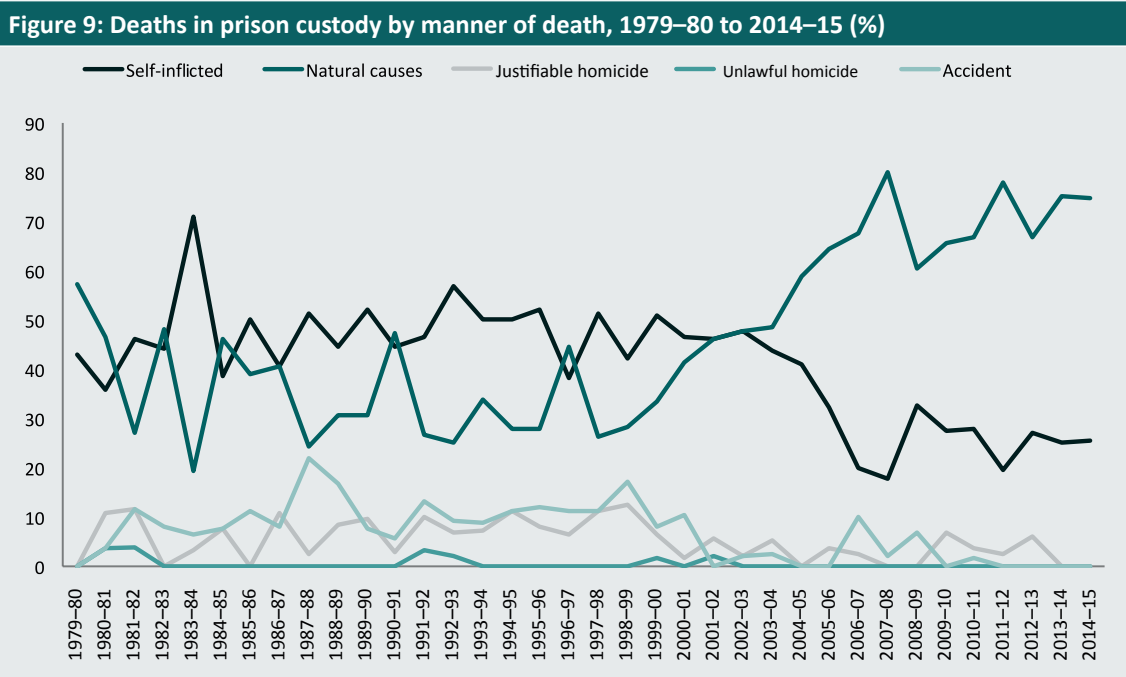
Natural cause deaths surpassed self-inflicted deaths as the leading manner of death in prison custody after 2003–04. The proportion of self-inflicted deaths, of which 87 percent (n=558) were hangings, declined between 2002–03 and 2007–08, contributing to between 20 and 33 percent of prison custody deaths each year (see Figure 9).

The proportion of lawful and unlawful homicide deaths has been consistently low, at around 10 percent or less of all prison custody deaths. Accidental deaths declined after 2000–01, with no accidental deaths having occurred since 2010–11.

Table 8: Deaths in prison custody by manner of death and Indigenous status, 2013–14 and 2014–15

	2013–14			2014–15			Total	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	n	%
Self-inflicted	1	12	13	3	11	14	27	25
Natural causes	9	30	39	9	32	41	80	74
Justifiable homicide	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unlawful homicide	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Accident	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Total	10	42	52	12	44	56	108	100

Note: Excludes seven cases where manner of death was not recorded
 Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]



Note: Excludes 17 cases where manner of death was not recorded
 Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Location of death

During 2013–14 and 2014–15 deaths in prison custody most commonly occurred in prison cells (40%; n=46). A quarter of deaths occurred in prison hospitals (27%; n=31) and another quarter in public hospitals (27%; n=31; see Table 9).

Table 9: Deaths in prison custody by location of death and Indigenous status, 2013–14 and 2014–15

	2013–14			2014–15			Total	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	n	%
Public hospital	6	15	21	3	7	10	31	27
Prison hospital	1	12	13	2	16	18	31	27
Cell	3	14	17	10	19	29	46	40
Custodial setting	0	3	3	0	2	2	5	4
Other	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	2
Total	10	44	54	15	46	61	115	100

Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]

Since 1979–80, just over half of prison deaths where the location of death is known occurred in a cell (53%; n=810). Cells were the most common location for prison deaths in all but five years of the 36 year reference period. Another 30 percent of deaths (n=461) occurred while the prisoner was in a public hospital and 11 percent when the prisoner was in a prison hospital (n=161). While the proportion of Indigenous and non-Indigenous deaths in prison cells were similar (54% vs 53%), the proportion of Indigenous deaths in public hospitals was higher than that of non-Indigenous deaths (36% vs 29%). Comparatively, the proportion of non-Indigenous deaths occurring in prison hospitals was higher than the proportion of Indigenous deaths (12% vs 5%). See Table A10 for more detail.

Type of prison in which death occurred: government or private

During 2013–14 and 2014–15, 91 prison deaths (79%) occurred in government prisons, while 24 (21%) occurred in privately operated prisons (see Table 10). The larger number of deaths occurring in government prisons is representative of the larger number of individuals serving sentences in government prisons versus private prisons.

Data on the type of prison (private or public) are available from 1992–93 onwards. Since this time:

- Non-Indigenous persons made up 90 percent (n=159) of private and 80 percent (n=805) of government prison deaths.
- Natural causes were the leading cause and manner of death in both private and government prisons—57 percent (n=100) and 48 percent (n=483) respectively.
- The largest proportion of all private prison deaths occurred among persons aged 55 years and over (35%; n=62), while the largest proportion of government prison deaths occurred among persons aged 25 to 39 years (37%; n=376).
- The majority of deaths that occurred in both private (65%; n=115) and government (70%; n=707) prisons involved sentenced inmates.

Table 10: Deaths in prison custody by type of prison and Indigenous status, 2013–14 and 2014–15					
	2013–14		2014–15		Total
	n	rate ^a	n	rate ^a	n
Private					
Indigenous	0		1		1
Non-Indigenous	11		12		23
All persons	11	0.18	13	0.20	24
Government					
Indigenous	10		14		24
Non-Indigenous	33		34		67
All persons	43	0.16	48	0.17	91
All prisons	54		61		115

a: Rate per 100 prisoners on an average day for 2013–14 and 2014–15 financial years (SCRGSP 2016)

Note: Rate of Indigenous prisoner deaths by type of prison is unavailable

Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]

Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations

Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations are grouped into two categories:

Category 1: deaths in institutional settings and deaths in police operations where officers were in close contact with the deceased.

Category 2: deaths during custody-related police operations where police were not in close contact with the deceased.

It is important to note that no reliable measurement of the overall number of police arrests or custody operations is available. Consequently, it is not possible to calculate the rates of deaths in police custody using the total population of arrestees. Percentages presented in this section of the report are derived from relatively low numbers of deaths in police custody recorded in the NDICP dataset, and should therefore be viewed with caution. Greater attention should be focused on the overall number of deaths.

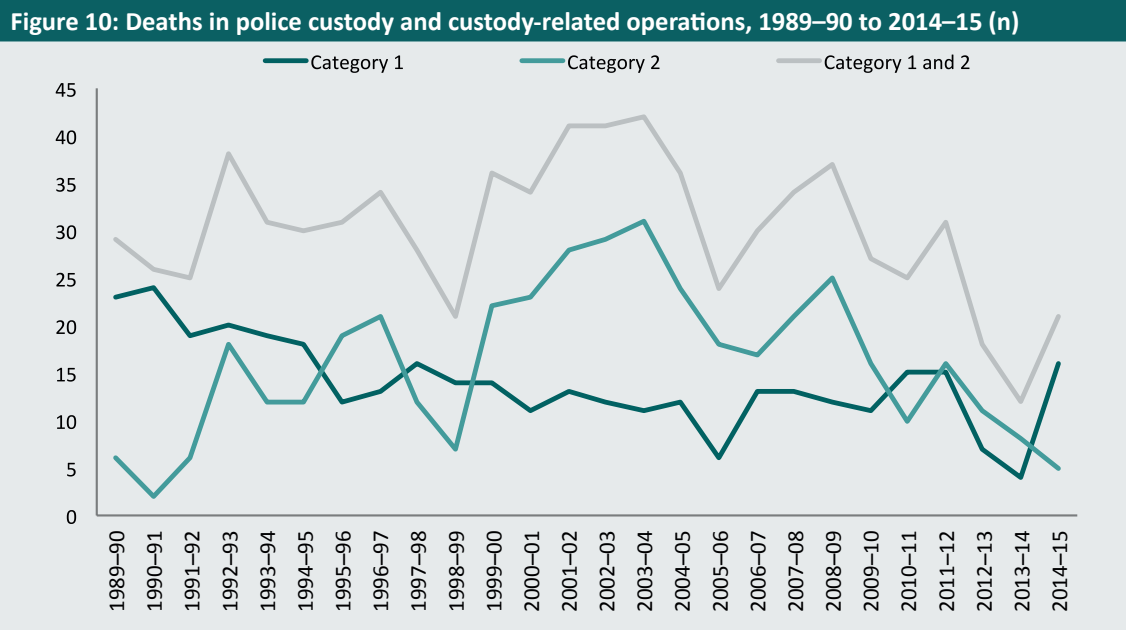
Although data on deaths in police custody have been recorded since 1979–80, details of Category 1b (non-institutional close contact) and Category 2 deaths were not collected prior to 1990. Thus trends in police custody deaths are analysed from 1989–90 onwards.

In 2013–14 and 2014–15, 34 deaths occurred in police custody and custody-related operations (see Table 11). There were 13 such deaths in 2013–14 and 21 in 2014–15. This is 14 fewer deaths than reported in the previous two year period, 2011–12 and 2012–13 (n=48).

Since 1989–90, 782 deaths have occurred in police custody and custody-related operations. Of these, just under half (46%; n=363) were classified as Category 1 deaths and just over half (54%; n=419) were classified as Category 2 deaths. The number of Category 1 deaths decreased from 23 in 1989–90 to six in 2005–06 before fluctuating in the nine years to 2014–15. Category 2 deaths followed an overall increase (with some declines) to 2003–04 and then an overall decrease to 2014–15 (see Figure 10). The lowest number of Category 1 deaths (n=5) was recorded in 2013–14 and the second lowest number of Category 2 deaths (n=5) in 2014–15.

Table 11: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by jurisdiction and Indigenous status, 2013–14 to 2014–15					
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Unknown		Total
	n	n	n	n	%
2013–14					
NSW	0	1	0	1	8
Vic	0	5	0	5	38
Qld	0	2	1	3	23
WA	0	1	0	1	8
SA	0	2	0	2	15
Tas	0	0	0	0	0
NT	1	0	0	1	8
ACT	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1	11	1	13	100
2014–15					
NSW	0	7	0	7	33
Vic	0	2	0	2	10
Qld	1	2	2	5	24
WA	2	2	0	4	19
SA	0	1	0	1	5
Tas	0	0	0	0	0
NT	2	0	0	2	10
ACT	0	0	0	0	0
Total	5	14	2	21	100

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding
 Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]



Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2015 [computer file]; Table A12

Demographic characteristics

Gender

Of the 34 people who died in police custody and custody-related operations in 2013–14 and 2014–15, four (12%) were female and 30 (88%) were male (see Table 12). Two of the females (6%) and four of the males (12%) were identified as Indigenous.

As with prison deaths, males continue to outnumber females in police custody and custody-related operation deaths (see Figure 11). Although police custody population figures are not available, this gender ratio among police custody deaths likely represents the gender ratio among arrestees. Since 1989–90, 93 percent of all police custody and custody-related operation deaths involved males (n=727) and seven percent involved females (n=55). The number of male deaths reached a high of 40 in 2003–04, falling to 17 in 2014–15. Female deaths have consistently remained low since 1989–90, and at three time points in the last 10 years no females died in police custody and custody-related operations. The average number of female deaths per year from 1989–90 to 2014–15 was 2.1, while the average for male deaths during this time was 28.

Table 12: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by gender, age and Indigenous status, 2013–14 and 2014–15 (n)			
	2013–14	2014–15	Total
Gender			
Male	13	17	30
Female	0	4	4
Age			
Under 25 years	0	5	5
25–39 years	4	6	10
40–54 years	7	7	14
55 and over	2	3	5
Total	13	21	34
Indigenous status^a			
Indigenous	1	5	6
Non-Indigenous	11	14	25

a: Excludes three cases where Indigenous status was not recorded
 Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]

Figure 11: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by gender, 1989–90 to 2014–15 (%)



Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2015 [computer file]; Table A14

Age

During 2013–14 and 2014–15, deaths in police custody and custody-related operations most commonly occurred among those aged 40–54 years (n=14; 41%; see Table 12). Ten deaths (29%) occurred among those aged 25–39 years, five deaths (15%) among those aged under 25 years, and five deaths (15%) among those aged 55 years and over (see Table 12). The median age of Indigenous persons who died in police custody and custody-related operations in 2013–14 and 2014–15 was 36.5 years, while the median age of non-Indigenous deaths was 42 years.

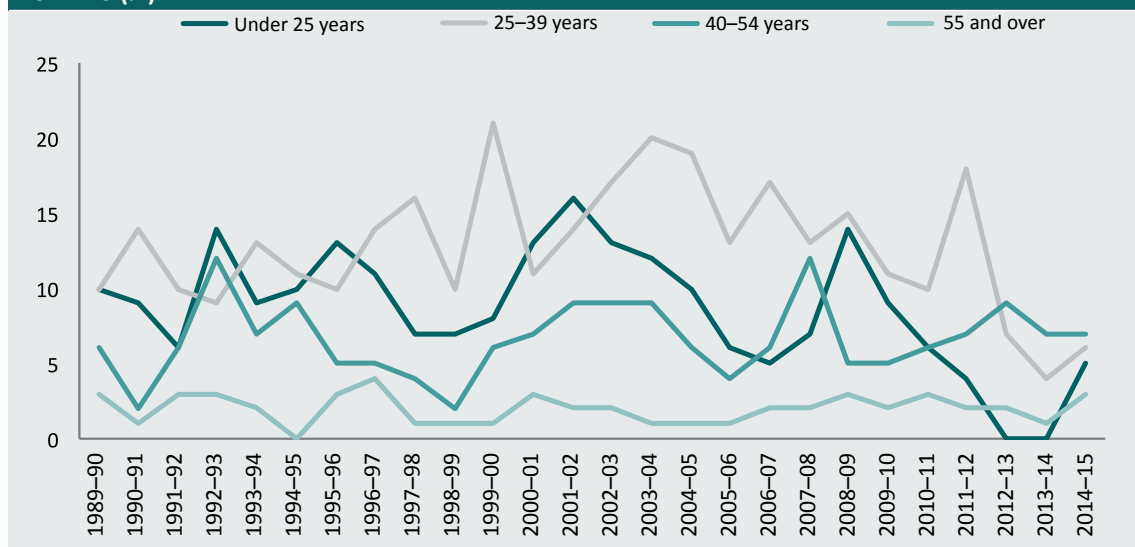
Forty-three percent (n=333) of the 782 people who have died in police custody since 1989–90 were aged 25–39 years (see Table A15). The number of deaths among this age group declined from 18 in 2011–12 to six in 2014–15, contributing to an overall decline in police custody and custody-related operation deaths during this time (see Figure 12). The lowest number of deaths on record in the 25–39 year age category occurred in 2013–14 (n=4).

Deaths among those aged under 25 years (n=224; 29%) were the next most common during the 25 year reporting period. A marked decrease in the number of police custody deaths of persons 25 years or younger began in 2009–10, with no deaths in this age group occurring in 2012–13 or 2013–14. Five deaths occurred in 2014–15, although this number is still lower than the numbers of deaths recorded prior to 2008–09.

Police custody deaths have remained relatively stable among those aged 40–54 years (n=171; 22%) and 55 years and over (n=53; 7%).

Since 1989–90 there have been distinct differences in the number of police custody deaths in each age group between Indigenous and non-Indigenous persons. While non-Indigenous deaths tend to occur more frequently among those aged 25–39 years, non-Indigenous deaths tend to occur more frequently in the youngest age group, under 25 years (see Table 13).

Figure 12: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by age category, 1989–90 to 2014–15 (%)



Note: Excludes one case where age was not recorded

Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2015 [computer file]

Table 13: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by age category and Indigenous status, 1989–90 to 2014–15

	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous	
	n	%	n	%
Under 25 years	64	42	160	26
25–39 years	57	37	274	44
40–54 years	28	18	142	23
55 and over	4	3	49	8
Total	153	100	626	100

Note: Excludes three cases where Indigenous status was not recorded. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding
 Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2015 [computer file]

Indigenous status

Indigenous status was known for 31 of the 34 deaths in police custody and custody-related operations in 2013–14 and 2014–15. Six were Indigenous (19%) and 25 (81%) were non-Indigenous (see Table 12).

Indigenous people comprised one-fifth (20%; n=153) of all police custody and custody-related operation deaths between 1989–90 and 2014–15 (range= 1–11; see Figure 13). The largest number of Indigenous deaths in police custody (n=11) occurred in 2002–03 and 2004–05 and the lowest (n=1) in 2013–14. The lowest number of non-Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations was also recorded in 2013–14 (n=11). As the numbers of Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations are generally small, no consistent pattern in the number of deaths is apparent over the 26 years to 2014–15 (see Table A16).

Figure 13: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by Indigenous status, 1989–90 to 2014–15 (%)



Note: Excludes three cases where Indigenous status was not recorded
 Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2015 [computer file]

Most serious offence

It is important to note that persons who died in police custody and custody-related operations were suspected of committing a crime but their offence(s) had not yet been proven in the courts. Therefore, in this section 'most serious offence' refers to the most serious offence the deceased persons were suspected of committing prior to their death.

Of the 34 persons who died in police custody during 2013–14 and 2014–15, half were suspected of committing a violent offence as their most serious offence (47%; n=16; see Table 14). These were followed by traffic-related offenders (15%; n=5) and offenders who committed 'other' offences (15%; n=5). Among those suspected of having committed drug-related offences, theft-related offences or good order offences, there were two deaths (6%) for each offence type. Information on the most serious offence was missing for two cases (6%).

One-third of all individuals who died in police custody and custody-related operations since 1989–90 had committed a violent offence as their most serious offence (32%; n=253). Although trends have fluctuated over the 26 year reporting period, most persons who died in police custody each year had violent offences as their most serious offence.

Over the same period, a fifth (20%; n=159) of deaths involved persons suspected of theft-related offences. The frequency of traffic-related offences (15%; n=118) and good order offences (15%; n=116) as a most serious offence among persons who died in police custody have also greatly fluctuated over the years (see Table A17). Drug-related offences have generally been one of the least common offences committed by persons prior to their death in police custody (3%; n=22). Similarly, 'other' offences committed by persons prior to their death in police custody (12%; n=90) have remained consistently low.

Table 14: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by most serious offence and Indigenous status, 2013–14 to 2014–15

	2013–14			2014–15			Total	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	n ^a	%
Violent	0	5	5	1	8	9	16	47
Theft-related	0	1	1	0	1	1	2	6
Drug-related	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	6
Good order	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	6
Traffic-related	1	2	3	1	1	2	5	15
Other	0	2	2	1	1	2	5	15
Not recorded	0	1	1	0	1	1	2	6
Total	1	11	12	5	14	19	34	100

a: Includes four cases where Indigenous status was not recorded

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]

Cause of death

During 2013–14 and 2014–15 cause of death information was available for 33 of the 34 deaths. The majority of these deaths occurring in police custody and custody-related operations were caused by gunshot wounds (50%; n=17; see Table 15). Of the 17 gunshot wound deaths, 13 (76%) were police shootings and four (24%) were self-inflicted shootings. External/multiple trauma (including strangulations, stabbings and injuries sustained during motor vehicle pursuits) was the next most frequent cause of death, accounting for eight deaths (24%). This was followed by police custody deaths resulting from natural causes (n=4; 12%), head injuries (n=2; 6%), drugs/alcohol (n=1) and other/multiple causes (n=1). No hanging deaths in police custody and custody-related operations occurred during the 2013–14 and 2014–15 reporting period.

Of the six Indigenous persons who died in police custody and custody-related operations during 2013–14 and 2014–15, two deaths resulted from external/multiple trauma, two from natural causes, one from a head injury and one from a gunshot wound.

Since 1989–90, external/multiple trauma (n=253; 33%) has narrowly exceeded gunshot wounds (n=226; 29%) as the most common cause of death in police custody and custody-related operations. Other causes contributed to 10 percent or fewer of all police custody deaths: natural causes contributed to 81 (10%), head injury to 67 (9%), drugs/alcohol to 57 (7%), hanging to 55 (7%) and other/multiple causes to 39 (5%). See Table A18 for more detail.

Hanging deaths have decreased since 1992–93. Since 2010–11, no hanging deaths have occurred in police custody. Of the 55 hanging deaths that have occurred in police custody throughout the 26 year reporting period in total, 15 (27%) were of Indigenous persons.

Table 15: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by cause of death and Indigenous status, 2013–14 to 2014–15

	2013–14			2014–15			Total	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	n ^a	%
Hanging	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Natural causes	0	1	1	2	1	3	4	12
Head injury	0	1	1	1	0	1	2	6
Gunshot	0	6	6	1	9	10	17	50
External/multiple trauma	1	1	2	1	3	4	8	24
Drugs	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3
Alcohol	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other/multiple	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	3
Not recorded	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	3
Total	1	11	12	5	14	19	34	100

a: Includes three cases where Indigenous status was not recorded

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]

Motor vehicle pursuit deaths

Seven police custody deaths occurred during motor vehicle pursuits—four in 2013–14 and three in 2014–15. MVP deaths constituted approximately a fifth (21%) of the total police custody and custody-related operational deaths during this reporting period, where cause of death was known. Of the seven MVP deaths:

- two were of Indigenous persons;
- six were of males;
- two persons were aged under 25 years, four were aged 25–39 years and one was aged 40–54 years;
- four involved persons suspected of traffic-related offences, two involved those suspected of theft-related offences and one involved a person suspected of drug-related offences;
- the median pursuit time was three minutes;
- the median top speed was 115 km/h;
- five deaths were attributed to external/multiple causes; and
- three crashes occurred with at least one passenger in the vehicle.

A quarter of all deaths in police custody and custody-related operations since 1989–90 occurred during an MVP (26%; n=206).

The number of MVP deaths peaked in 2001–02 (n=18) and again in 2008–09 (n=15) before declining steadily to three deaths recorded in 2014–15 (see Figure 14).

Of the 206 MVP deaths that have occurred since 1989–90:

- 50 (24%) were of Indigenous persons;
- 191 (93%) were male;
- 123 (60%) were aged under 25 years, 67 (33%) were 25–39 years, 12 (6%) were 40–54 years and four (2%) were 55 years or over; and
- 96 (47%) involved persons suspected of traffic-related offences and 80 (39%) involved those suspected of theft-related offences.

Most MVP deaths resulted from external/multiple trauma (78%; n=161). A fifth died from a head injury (21%; n=43) and just one died from other/multiple causes (0.5%). Cause of death information was missing for one person.

Figure 14: Motor vehicle pursuit deaths, 1989–90 to 2014–15 (n)



Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2015 [computer file]

Shooting deaths

During 2013–14 and 2014–15, 17 shooting deaths occurred in police custody and custody-related operations, of which 13 (76%) were police shootings and four (24%) were self-inflicted gunshot wounds. Of the 17 shooting deaths:

- 15 (88%) were of non-Indigenous persons;
- 16 (94%) were male;
- 10 were aged 40–54 years (59%), three were aged 25–39 years (18%), two were aged under 25 years (12%) and two were aged 55 years or over (12%);
- 13 (76%) had a violent offence as their MSO, and two (12%) had committed ‘other’ offences (MSO information was missing for two cases); and
- nine deaths (53%) occurred on private property, five (29%) in a public place, two (12%) in a public hospital and one (6%) in an environment classified as ‘other’.

Since 1989–90, 227 shooting deaths have taken place during police custody and custody-related operations, of which 123 (54%) were police shootings and 103 (45%) were self-inflicted. Just one fatal shooting involved the deceased being shot by someone other than themselves or the police.

There has been no clear trend in police or self-inflicted shooting deaths, nor has one category of shooting death consistently exceeded the other (see Figure 15). Between 2011–13 and 2013–15 the number of police-shootings increased from five to 13, and the number of self-inflicted shootings decreased from six to four. The number of police shooting deaths in 2014–15 (n=10) is the second highest recorded since 1989–90.

The vast majority of shooting deaths in police custody involved males (97%; n=220) and non-Indigenous persons (93%; n=212). Deceased persons aged 25–39 years (n=98; 43%) outnumbered those in all other age groups in shooting deaths.

Violent offences were associated with two-thirds of shooting deaths (67%; n=152), followed by 'other' offences (11%; n=24), theft-related offences (10%; n=23), good order offences (7%; n=17), drug-related offences (2%; n=4) and traffic-related offences (1%; n=3). The most common locations in which shooting deaths in police custody occurred were 'private places' and 'public places' (39%; n=89 each). Less frequent locations included public hospitals (17%; n=39), 'other' environments (4%; n=8) and custodial settings (1%; n=2).

Figure 15: Shooting deaths, 1989–90 to 2014–15 (n)



Note: Excludes 25 cases where shooting death status was not recorded
Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2015 [computer file]

Manner of death

Of the 34 police custody and custody-related operation deaths in 2013–14 and 2014–15, 13 (38%) were categorised as justifiable homicides, nine (26%) as self-inflicted, seven (21%) as accidents, four (12%) as having natural causes and one (3%) death was classified as 'other' (see Table 16). Two of the six Indigenous deaths in police custody had natural causes, two were accidental, one was classified as justifiable homicide and one was a self-inflicted death. Justifiable homicide (n=11; 44%) was the most common manner of death for non-Indigenous persons who died in police custody.

Overall, accidents (n=303; 39%) have been the most common manner of death in police custody and custody-related operations since 1989–90 (see Table 17; Table A19). Self-inflicted deaths were the next most common manner of death (n=245; 31%).

Table 16: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by manner of death and Indigenous status, 2013–14 to 2014–15

	2013–14			2014–15			Total	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	n ^a	%
Self-inflicted ^b	1	3	4	0	3	3	9	27
Natural causes	0	1	1	2	1	3	4	9
Justifiable homicide	0	3	3	1	8	9	13	39
Unlawful homicide	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Accident	0	3	3	2	2	4	7	21
Other	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	3
Total	1	11	12	5	14	19	34	100

a: Includes three cases where Indigenous status was not recorded

b: Includes self-harm, whether intentional, unintentional or unknown, and accidental hangings

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]

Table 17: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by manner of death and Indigenous status, 1989–90 to 2014–15

	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n ^a	%
Self-inflicted ^b	29	19	214	34	245	31
Natural causes	33	22	49	8	82	10
Justifiable homicide	7	5	109	17	117	15
Unlawful homicide	8	5	7	1	15	2
Accident	71	46	232	37	303	39
Unknown homicide	5	3	3	0.1	8	1
Otherwise unspecified	0	0	8	1	8	1
Not recorded	0	0	4	1	4	1
Total	153	100	626	100	782	100

a: Includes three cases where Indigenous status was not recorded

b: Includes self-harm, whether intentional, unintentional or unknown, and accidental hangings

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2015 [computer file]

Location of death

Of the 34 deaths in police custody during 2013–14 and 2014–15, 13 (38%) occurred in a public place, 11 (32%) on private property and five (15%) at a public hospital (see Table 18).

Three deaths (9%) occurred in police cells and two in other unspecified environments (6%).

Of the six Indigenous deaths that occurred in police custody, two deaths occurred in a public hospital, two in a public place, one in a cell and one on private property. Non-Indigenous deaths occurred most frequently in public places (44%; n=11).

Since 1989–90, deaths in police custody or custody-related operations have most commonly occurred in public places (n=332; 42%), with minimal variance in this trend. The next most common locations were public hospitals (n=197; 25%) and private properties (n=127; 16%). Public hospitals outnumbered public places as the primary location of police custody deaths on six occasions over the previous 26 years. Police custody deaths less frequently occurred in police cells (n=74; 9%), other custodial settings (n=36; 5%) and ‘other’ environments (n=16; 2%). See Table A20 for more detail.

Table 18: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by location of death, 2013–14 to 2014–15

	2013–14			2014–15			Total	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	All persons	n	%
Public hospital	0	1	1	2	2	4	5	15
Cell	0	0	0	1	2	3	3	9
Custodial setting	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private property	0	4	4	1	3	4	11 ^a	32
Public place	1	5	6	1	6	7	13	38
Other	0	1	1	0	1	1	2	6
Total	1	11	12	5	14	19	34	100

a: Includes three cases where Indigenous status was not recorded
Source: AIC NDICP 2013–2015 [computer file]

Circumstances of custodial periods for deaths in police custody

The circumstances of the custodial periods relate to the type of custody in which the death occurred and the method used to detain the individual. Four types of police custody deaths exist:

- institutional—death occurred in a police lockup, prison or youth detention centre, or during transfer to or following transfer from one of these places to a hospital or other detention facility;
- escape—death occurred while the person was escaping or attempting to escape from police or prison custody or youth detention;
- detainment—death occurred while police or prison officers were attempting to detain the person, regardless of whether the person was under arrest or whether the officers intended to arrest the person; and
- other/marginal cases—for example, the death of a person detained under a state Mental Health Act while they were being conveyed via ambulance from a public hospital to a psychiatric institution under police escort.

The methods used to detain an individual include:

- motor vehicle pursuits;
- other pursuits (eg on foot);
- sieges;
- raids; and
- ‘other’ methods (eg shooting).

During 2013–14 and 2014–15, 29 deaths (85%) occurred while police were attempting to detain an individual. The remaining five (15%) deaths took place in institutional settings. During this time no deaths occurred while persons were attempting to escape from police custody, nor did they occur in the ‘other’ category. Three of the six Indigenous deaths occurred during detainment and three occurred in institutional settings. With the exception of two deaths in institutional settings, the majority of non-Indigenous deaths occurred during the detainment phase.

Just under half of detainment-related deaths (of which all but one resulted from shootings) were the result of ‘other’ methods (48%; n=14). MVPs accounted for seven deaths (24%), sieges for six deaths (21%) and raids for two deaths (7%).

Almost three-quarters of deaths in police custody between 1989–90 and 2014–15 happened during an attempt to detain a person (74%; n=575). Deaths in institutional settings outnumbered detainment-related deaths from 1989–90 to 1991–92 but since then, institutional deaths (n=176; 23%) have steadily declined (see Table A21). Police custody deaths in other settings (n=26; 3%) and while escaping (n=5; 1%) have consistently remained low over the 26 year recording period. The last recorded deaths in escape and other settings occurred in 2008–09 and 2012–13, respectively.

Among the detainment-related deaths, the most common were MVP deaths (n=225; 39%) followed by other/shooting deaths (n=166; 29%). While MVP deaths have varied over the years, there was a decline in number from 2008–09 (n=15) to 2014–15 (n=3). A similar pattern emerged for other/shooting deaths, with an overall decrease occurring from 2008–09 (n=11) to 2013–14 (n=4). However, unlike MVP deaths, other/shooting deaths increased again in 2014–15 (n=10). Police custody deaths occurring during sieges (n=92; 16%), other pursuits (n=53; 9%) and raids (n=39; 7%) have remained relatively stable since 1989–90. See Table A22 for more detail.

Conclusion

During 2013–14 and 2014–15, 149 deaths occurred in custody settings throughout Australia. This included 115 deaths in prison custody and 34 deaths in police custody and custody-related operations. The highest number of Indigenous prison custody deaths since 1979–80 was recorded in 2014–15. This corresponds to increases in imprisonment rates, but the rate of Indigenous prison custody deaths remained lower than the rate for non-Indigenous prisoners. Non-Indigenous deaths increased very slightly over 2013–14 and 2014–15, reflecting the non-Indigenous proportion of the total prison population over the two financial years. The most common cause of death in prison custody for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous persons was natural causes.

In 2013–14 the number of deaths in police custody and custody-related operations was the lowest in 26 years for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, with numbers increasing again slightly in 2014–15. There has been a notable decrease in operational/detainment-related police custody deaths since 2011–12 while close contact police custody deaths fluctuated over the last decade before increasing in 2014–15. The majority of police custody deaths in 2013–14 and 2014–15 resulted from gunshot wounds.

Since the NDICP began recording data, prison custody deaths, which are the majority of all deaths in custody, peaked in 1997–98 and have subsequently declined. Police custody and custody-related operations deaths, which on average comprise 37 percent of all deaths in custody, were more stable during this period. However, there has been a general decline in police custody deaths since 2003–04.

Although the overall number of prison custody deaths has declined notably since the late 1990s, Indigenous people continue to be over-represented in prisons, which was an observation of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. In the current reporting period the number of Indigenous prison deaths was the highest recorded in 36 years, which was proportionate to the Indigenous prison population. While the majority of Indigenous persons who die in prison custody die of natural causes, Indigenous persons tend to die younger than non-Indigenous persons.

Since 1989–90 the most significant changes in prison custody death trends relate to hanging deaths and deaths of unsentenced prisoners. Both categories of deaths have decreased markedly and contributed to the overall decline in prison deaths between 1997–98 and 2005–06. In 2013–14, the rate of death among unsentenced prisoners was lower than that of sentenced prisoners for the first time since 1984–85. Nevertheless, there is still scope to reduce the risk of death among unsentenced prisoners by understanding the characteristics and circumstances of these deaths, as the majority are self-inflicted.

Police custody deaths are less frequent than prison deaths, yet some distinct patterns have emerged since 1989–90. Motor vehicle pursuit deaths comprise a quarter of all police custody and custody-related operation deaths. In the majority of these deaths the deceased persons were under 25 years and suspected of traffic offences (which are graded as a relatively minor offence based on the Australia and New Zealand Standard Offence Classification) or, to a lesser extent, theft-related offences. A large proportion (78%) of motor vehicle pursuits also involved the presence of a passenger.

Gunshot wound deaths have different characteristics to motor vehicle pursuit deaths, with the majority occurring among slightly older age groups (25–39 and 40–54 years) and those suspected of violent offences. In 2014–15 the highest number of police shooting deaths (n=10) since 1999–2000 occurred. The predominant offence type among those who die in police shooting deaths (violent offences) is likely associated with the level of perceived danger these individuals pose to police and the community during police operations and therefore the decision to shoot. However, it is important to monitor this trend in case the number of police shootings continues to increase.

Information collected through the NDICP including on cause of death, manner of death, the number of Indigenous persons who die in custody and the age and gender of deceased persons is crucial to monitoring any changes that occur in trends in deaths in custody. This information can be used by policymakers and agencies in the criminal justice sector to develop initiatives to reduce the number of deaths that occur in police and prison custody.

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URLs correct as at April 2018

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Appendix

Table A1: Deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	Total
1979–80	3	2	3	1	5	0	1	0	15
1980–81	8	6	8	3	3	0	0	0	29
1981–82	7	7	8	5	1	1	0	0	27
1982–83	5	4	5	5	5	0	0	0	25
1983–84	12	14	4	2	1	0	0	0	33
1984–85	10	5	5	5	2	0	0	0	27
1985–86	6	2	7	1	0	0	2	0	18
1986–87	17	7	7	3	2	0	1	0	37
1987–88	13	18	6	3	2	2	0	1	44
1988–89	7	11	5	6	1	4	2	0	37
1989–90	28	4	12	3	5	1	0	0	53
1990–91	18	2	4	6	3	1	1	0	35
1991–92	6	2	11	4	5	3	0	0	31
1992–93	20	7	6	6	4	0	1	0	43
1993–94	29	5	11	2	6	3	1	0	57
1994–95	22	7	12	6	7	0	1	0	55
1995–96	18	5	10	6	6	2	1	1	49
1996–97	30	5	13	9	5	1	0	0	63
1997–98	29	13	11	16	6	1	3	1	81
1998–99	27	9	19	6	1	1	1	0	64
1999–2000	23	3	14	15	4	5	0	0	64
2000–01	18	11	11	9	7	0	2	0	58
2001–02	18	6	14	10	2	1	1	0	52
2002–03	16	5	7	8	5	1	2	0	44
2003–04	13	4	13	4	2	0	1	0	39
2004–05	15	4	4	7	6	2	1	0	39
2005–06	10	5	2	6	3	1	1	0	28
2006–07	22	3	6	3	4	1	1	0	40
2007–08	11	13	8	8	4	2	0	0	46

Table A1: Deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n) (continued)									
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	Total
2008–09	15	8	9	4	5	1	0	1	43
2009–10	21	8	10	8	5	3	2	1	58
2010–11	20	10	11	5	4	2	6	0	58
2011–12	18	4	6	7	4	1	2	0	42
2012–13	19	13	9	10	0	1	1	0	53
2013–14	13	11	11	7	4	1	5	2	54
2014–15	21	15	7	4	7	3	3	1	61
Total	588	258	309	213	136	45	43	8	1,600

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A2: Deaths in prison custody, 1981–82 to 2014–15 (rate per 100 prisoners) ^a	
1981–82	0.30
1982–83	0.24
1983–84	0.34
1984–85	0.25
1985–86	0.16
1986–87	0.31
1987–88	0.36
1988–89	0.28
1989–90	0.37
1990–91	0.23
1991–92	0.20
1992–93	0.31
1993–94	0.37
1994–95	0.34
1995–96	0.30
1996–97	0.36
1997–98	0.44
1998–99	0.32
1999–2000	0.31
2000–01	0.28
2001–02	0.24
2002–03	0.20
2003–04	0.16
2004–05	0.16
2005–06	0.11
2006–07	0.15
2007–08	0.17
2008–09	0.16

Table A2: Deaths in prison custody, 1981–82 to 2014–15 (rate per 100 prisoners)^a (continued)	
2009–10	0.20
2010–11	0.20
2011–12	0.14
2012–13	0.17
2013–14	0.16
2014–15	0.17

a: Discrepancies with previously presented rates are caused by differences in data sources used to calculate rates (ABS vs SCRGSP)
 Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A3: Deaths in prison custody by gender, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)			
	Male	Female	Total
1979–80	15	0	15
1980–81	28	0	28
1981–82	25	4	29
1982–83	23	1	24
1983–84	32	1	33
1984–85	27	0	27
1985–86	16	2	18
1986–87	34	3	37
1987–88	43	1	44
1988–89	35	1	36
1989–90	51	2	53
1990–91	34	1	35
1991–92	30	1	31
1992–93	44	0	44
1993–94	51	6	57
1994–95	54	1	55
1995–96	49	0	49
1996–97	61	2	63
1997–98	78	2	80
1998–99	61	3	64
1999–2000	60	4	64
2000–01	56	2	58
2001–02	48	4	52
2002–03	41	3	44
2003–04	36	1	37
2004–05	35	4	39
2005–06	27	1	28
2006–07	39	1	40
2007–08	43	3	46
2008–09	41	2	43
2009–10	58	0	58
2010–11	55	3	58
2011–12	42	0	42
2012–13	52	1	53
2013–14	51	3	54
2014–15	60	1	61
Total	1,536	64	1,600

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A4: Deaths in prison custody by age category, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)					
	Under 25 years	25–39 years	40–54 years	55 and over	Total
1979–80	4	4	5	2	15
1980–81	5	14	7	2	28
1981–82	9	11	7	2	29
1982–83	5	12	3	4	24
1983–84	14	12	4	3	33
1984–85	5	14	4	4	27
1985–86	3	9	1	5	18
1986–87	10	16	8	3	37
1987–88	16	20	5	4	45
1988–89	10	15	8	3	36
1989–90	16	23	8	6	53
1990–91	8	12	5	10	35
1991–92	7	12	8	4	31
1992–93	14	20	5	5	44
1993–94	12	27	10	8	57
1994–95	16	21	12	6	55
1995–96	12	21	11	5	49
1996–97	10	26	21	6	63
1997–98	25	30	16	9	80
1998–99	9	35	11	9	64
1999–2000	14	28	10	12	64
2000–01	7	32	6	13	58
2001–02	5	19	17	11	52
2002–03	6	16	13	9	44
2003–04	2	12	15	8	37
2004–05	4	16	11	8	39
2005–06	1	8	6	13	28
2006–07	3	9	11	17	40
2007–08	2	14	12	18	46
2008–09	1	16	16	10	43
2009–10	5	10	18	25	58
2010–11	5	18	15	20	58
2011–12	3	8	11	20	42
2012–13	2	10	22	19	53
2013–14	0	9	21	24	54
2014–15	1	14	15	31	61
Total	271	593	378	358	1,600

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A5: Deaths in prison custody by Indigenous status, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)			
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Total
1979–80	4	11	15
1980–81	2	26	28
1981–82	3	26	29
1982–83	4	20	24
1983–84	2	31	33
1984–85	5	22	27
1985–86	4	14	18
1986–87	2	35	37
1987–88	4	40	44
1988–89	5	31	36
1989–90	9	44	53
1990–91	5	30	35
1991–92	4	27	31
1992–93	5	38	44 ^a
1993–94	12	45	57
1994–95	12	43	55
1995–96	13	36	49
1996–97	11	52	63
1997–98	11	69	80
1998–99	10	54	64
1999–2000	14	50	64
2000–01	14	44	58
2001–02	6	46	52
2002–03	12	32	44
2003–04	6	31	37
2004–05	8	31	39
2005–06	3	25	28
2006–07	8	32	40
2007–08	6	40	46
2008–09	7	36	43
2009–10	14	44	58
2010–11	12	46	58
2011–12	6	36	42
2012–13	9	44	53
2013–14	10	44	54
2014–15	15	46	61
Total	277	1,322	1,600

a: Includes one case where Indigenous status was not recorded
Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A6: Deaths in prison custody by legal status, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)			
	Sentenced	Unsentenced	Total
1979–80	11	4	15
1980–81	20	7	27
1981–82	19	9	28
1982–83	18	6	24
1983–84	20	13	33
1984–85	23	3	26
1985–86	9	6	15
1986–87	25	9	34
1987–88	29	14	43
1988–89	26	8	34
1989–90	35	15	50
1990–91	22	13	35
1991–92	21	10	31
1992–93	29	15	44
1993–94	38	19	57
1994–95	38	17	55
1995–96	36	13	49
1996–97	46	17	63
1997–98	48	32	80
1998–99	45	19	64
1999–2000	41	23	64
2000–01	43	15	58
2001–02	36	16	52
2002–03	25	19	44
2003–04	24	13	37
2004–05	22	17	39
2005–06	22	6	28
2006–07	29	11	40
2007–08	34	12	46
2008–09	26	17	43
2009–10	42	16	58
2010–11	41	17	58
2011–12	31	11	42
2012–13	41	12	53
2013–14	43	10	53
2014–15	42	18	60
Total	1,100	483	1,583

Note: Excludes 17 cases where legal status was not recorded

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

	Violent	Theft-related	Drug-related	Good order	Traffic-related	Other	Total
1979–80	8	3	1	1	1	1	15
1980–81	9	7	3	5	2	1	27
1981–82	10	12	3	3	0	0	28
1982–83	11	5	1	3	2	1	23
1983–84	14	13	0	6	0	0	33
1984–85	13	9	2	0	2	0	26
1985–86	8	6	1	1	0	0	16
1986–87	14	10	2	5	1	0	32
1987–88	18	18	2	3	1	2	44
1988–89	21	10	1	1	1	2	36
1989–90	28	16	3	2	0	2	51
1990–91	19	10	2	1	0	3	35
1991–92	16	8	2	4	0	1	31
1992–93	18	19	3	2	0	1	43
1993–94	25	22	2	5	2	1	57
1994–95	28	18	4	2	2	1	55
1995–96	21	20	5	0	2	1	49
1996–97	29	18	7	4	2	3	63
1997–98	38	23	11	6	1	0	79
1998–99	27	26	5	5	1	0	64
1999–2000	33	24	2	1	2	2	64
2000–01	33	9	7	4	2	3	58
2001–02	28	11	5	4	2	2	52
2002–03	32	7	0	2	2	1	44
2003–04	29	2	3	1	0	2	37
2004–05	23	9	3	0	3	1	39
2005–06	22	4	1	1	0	0	28
2006–07	22	9	3	4	2	0	40
2007–08	31	5	4	3	3	0	46
2008–09	26	8	3	1	0	5	43
2009–10	39	5	3	0	5	6	58
2010–11	29	11	5	2	0	11	58
2011–12	27	5	7	3	0	0	42
2012–13	33	9	7	0	2	1	52
2013–14	36	9	5	1	0	3	54
2014–15	41	11	3	2	1	2	60
Total	859	411	121	88	44	59	1,582

Note: Excludes 18 cases where MSO was not recorded
Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A8: Deaths in prison custody by cause of death, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)

	Hanging	Natural causes	Head injury	Gunshot	External/multiple trauma	Alcohol/drugs	Other/multiple causes	Total
1979–80	3	8	1	0	3	0	0	15
1980–81	9	13	1	1	4	0	0	28
1981–82	10	8	0	1	5	2	3	29
1982–83	8	11	0	0	2	3	0	24
1983–84	20	6	0	1	2	4	0	33
1984–85	8	12	0	0	4	2	1	27
1985–86	8	7	0	0	0	2	1	18
1986–87	13	15	2	0	3	4	0	37
1987–88	22	10	0	0	6	5	0	43
1988–89	14	11	1	0	2	5	2	35
1989–90	27	16	0	1	6	2	1	53
1990–91	12	17	1	0	2	1	2	35
1991–92	14	8	2	1	2	4	0	31
1992–93	19	11	1	1	4	5	3	44
1993–94	24	19	0	0	3	10	1	57
1994–95	27	15	0	0	7	6	0	55
1995–96	19	14	1	0	5	10	0	49
1996–97	23	28	1	0	4	7	0	63
1997–98	39	20	0	0	10	11	0	80
1998–99	26	18	0	0	8	12	0	64
1999–2000	29	21	1	0	6	6	1	64
2000–01	25	24	0	0	2	6	1	58
2001–02	21	24	0	1	3	2	1	52
2002–03	19	21	0	0	2	1	1	44
2003–04	13	18	1	0	3	2	0	37
2004–05	13	23	1	0	2	0	0	39
2005–06	6	18	1	0	3	0	0	28
2006–07	8	27	1	0	0	3	1	40
2007–08	6	36	0	0	2	0	2	46
2008–09	12	26	1	0	1	2	1	43
2009–10	13	38	1	0	4	0	2	58
2010–11	13	38	2	0	2	1	1	57
2011–12	8	32	0	0	1	0	0	41
2012–13	9	32	1	0	5	1	1	49
2013–14	11	39	0	0	2	2	0	54
2014–15	14	40	1	0	1	1	0	57
Total	565	725	22	7	121	122	26	1,588

Note: Excludes 12 cases where cause of death was not recorded
 Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A9: Deaths in prison custody by manner of death, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)							
	Self-inflicted	Natural causes	Unlawful homicide	Justifiable homicide	Accident	Other/unknown	Total
1979–80	6	8	0	0	0	0	14
1980–81	9	13	3	1	1	1	28
1981–82	13	8	3	1	3	1	29
1982–83	11	11	0	0	2	0	25
1983–84	22	6	1	0	2	2	33
1984–85	10	12	2	0	2	1	27
1985–86	9	7	0	0	2	0	18
1986–87	15	15	4	0	3	0	37
1987–88	22	10	1	0	9	1	43
1988–89	15	11	3	0	6	0	35
1989–90	28	16	5	0	4	0	53
1990–91	15	17	1	0	2	0	35
1991–92	15	8	3	1	4	0	31
1992–93	23	11	3	1	4	0	44
1993–94	28	19	4	0	5	1	57
1994–95	28	15	6	0	6	0	55
1995–96	25	14	4	0	6	0	49
1996–97	24	28	4	0	7	0	63
1997–98	41	20	9	0	9	1	80
1998–99	27	18	8	0	11	0	64
1999–2000	32	21	4	1	5	1	64
2000–01	27	24	1	0	6	0	58
2001–02	24	24	3	1	0	0	52
2002–03	21	21	1	0	1	0	44
2003–04	16	18	2	0	1	0	37
2004–05	16	23	0	0	0	0	39
2005–06	9	18	1	0	0	0	28
2006–07	8	27	1	0	4	0	40
2007–08	8	36	0	0	1	0	45
2008–09	14	26	0	0	3	0	43
2009–10	16	38	4	0	0	0	58
2010–11	16	38	2	0	1	0	57
2011–12	8	32	1	0	0	0	41
2012–13	13	32	3	0	0	1	49
2013–14	13	39	0	0	0	0	52
2014–15	14	41	0	0	0	1	56
Total	643	725	87	6	110	12	1,583

Note: The self-inflicted category includes self-harm, whether intentional, unintentional or unknown, and accidental hangings. Excludes 17 cases where manner of death was not recorded and one case classified as justifiable homicide
Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A10: Deaths in prison custody by location of death, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)

	Public hospital	Prison hospital	Cell	Other custodial setting	Private property	Public place	Psych. hospital	Other	Total
1979–80	7	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	12
1980–81	6	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	20
1981–82	10	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	16
1982–83	7	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	20
1983–84	7	0	23	0	0	0	0	0	30
1984–85	10	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	20
1985–86	4	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	13
1986–87	14	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	29
1987–88	8	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	34
1988–89	11	0	19	1	0	0	0	0	31
1989–90	10	0	31	2	0	1	0	0	44
1990–91	14	0	21	0	0	0	0	0	35
1991–92	9	2	18	1	0	1	0	0	31
1992–93	13	3	26	2	0	0	0	0	44
1993–94	11	10	34	2	0	0	0	0	57
1994–95	11	7	33	3	0	0	0	1	55
1995–96	9	1	34	4	0	0	0	1	49
1996–97	20	5	32	4	0	1	0	1	63
1997–98	16	7	53	4	0	0	0	0	80
1998–99	9	5	41	8	0	0	1	0	64
1999–2000	14	7	38	5	0	0	0	0	64
2000–01	18	1	35	2	0	2	0	0	58
2001–02	18	1	26	7	0	0	0	0	52
2002–03	13	5	21	4	0	1	0	0	44
2003–04	9	4	22	2	0	0	0	0	37
2004–05	17	5	16	1	0	0	0	0	39
2005–06	7	3	14	4	0	0	0	0	28
2006–07	14	10	14	2	0	0	0	0	40
2007–08	16	12	12	5	0	0	0	1	46
2008–09	17	7	18	1	0	0	0	0	43
2009–10	18	11	24	4	0	0	0	1	58
2010–11	27	10	21	0	0	0	0	0	58
2011–12	15	9	17	1	0	0	0	0	42
2012–13	21	5	23	4	0	0	0	0	53
2013–14	21	13	17	3	0	0	0	0	54
2014–15	10	18	29	2	0	0	0	2	61
Total	461	161	810	78	0	6	1	7	1,524

Note: Excludes 76 cases where location of death was not recorded
 Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A11: Deaths in prison custody by prison type, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)			
	Private	Government	Total
1979–80	0	15	15
1980–81	0	28	28
1981–82	0	29	29
1982–83	0	24	24
1983–84	0	33	33
1984–85	0	27	27
1985–86	0	18	18
1986–87	0	37	37
1987–88	0	44	44
1988–89	0	36	36
1989–90	0	53	53
1990–91	0	35	35
1991–92	0	31	31
1992–93	3	41	44
1993–94	5	52	57
1994–95	2	53	55
1995–96	5	44	49
1996–97	4	59	63
1997–98	10	70	80
1998–99	10	54	64
1999–2000	5	59	64
2000–01	10	48	58
2001–02	7	45	52
2002–03	5	39	44
2003–04	4	33	37
2004–05	6	33	39
2005–06	5	23	28
2006–07	4	36	40
2007–08	18	28	46
2008–09	11	32	43
2009–10	7	51	58
2010–11	12	46	58
2011–12	10	32	42
2012–13	9	44	53
2013–14	11	43	54
2014–15	13	48	61
Total	176	1,424	1,600

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A12: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)			
	Category 1	Category 2	Total
1979–80	5	0	5
1980–81	12	0	12
1981–82	15	0	15
1982–83	22	0	22
1983–84	14	0	14
1984–85	20	1	21
1985–86	20	0	20
1986–87	42	0	42
1987–88	23	0	23
1988–89	29	0	29
1989–90	23	6	29
1990–91	24	2	26
1991–92	19	6	25
1992–93	20	18	38
1993–94	19	12	31
1994–95	18	12	30
1995–96	12	19	31
1996–97	13	21	34
1997–98	16	12	28
1998–99	14	7	21
1999–2000	14	22	36
2000–01	11	23	34
2001–02	13	28	41
2002–03	12	29	41
2003–04	11	31	42
2004–05	12	24	36
2005–06	6	18	24
2006–07	13	17	30
2007–08	13	21	34
2008–09	12	25	37
2009–10	11	16	27
2010–11	15	10	25
2011–12	15	16	31
2012–13	6	11	17
2013–14	5	8	13
2014–15	16	5	21
Total	565	420	985

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A13: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by jurisdiction, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)									
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	Total
1979–80	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	5
1980–81	3	1	2	4	0	0	2	0	12
1981–82	4	3	1	4	2	1	0	0	15
1982–83	6	3	4	3	4	2	0	0	22
1983–84	5	2	2	4	1	0	0	0	14
1984–85	5	4	5	5	0	0	2	0	21
1985–86	4	1	4	4	2	1	4	0	20
1986–87	13	11	9	3	4	0	2	0	42
1987–88	7	4	5	4	1	1	1	0	23
1988–89	10	6	6	4	3	0	0	0	29
1989–90	5	7	7	5	2	1	1	1	29
1990–91	3	9	6	4	2	0	2	0	26
1991–92	4	9	5	0	2	3	1	1	25
1992–93	16	14	3	1	4	0	0	0	38
1993–94	8	10	7	0	1	2	2	1	31
1994–95	14	5	4	3	1	1	1	0	30
1995–96	9	7	5	4	1	3	1	1	31
1996–97	16	2	2	6	2	1	5	0	34
1997–98	14	8	1	3	0	0	2	0	28
1998–99	6	4	6	3	0	0	2	0	21
1999–2000	11	4	4	5	7	0	4	0	36
2000–01	17	4	3	4	5	0	1	0	34
2001–02	13	13	3	6	1	0	5	0	41
2002–03	14	6	7	7	3	1	3	0	41
2003–04	15	6	9	6	2	0	3	1	42
2004–05	11	7	10	6	2	0	0	0	36
2005–06	6	2	4	6	4	0	1	1	24
2006–07	10	6	4	4	4	0	1	1	30
2007–08	7	8	5	4	4	1	5	0	34
2008–09	6	3	8	8	6	0	5	1	37
2009–10	5	6	6	3	1	1	4	1	27
2010–11	6	1	7	6	2	2	0	1	25
2011–12	11	3	7	5	3	0	2	0	31
2012–13	6	2	2	6	1	0	0	0	17
2013–14	1	5	3	1	2	0	1	0	13
2014–15	7	2	5	4	1	0	2	0	21
Total	298	188	174	147	80	21	65	10	983

Note: Excludes two cases categorised as 'Other Commonwealth'
Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A14: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by gender, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)			
	Male	Female	Total
1979–80	5	0	5
1980–81	10	2	12
1981–82	15	0	15
1982–83	19	3	22
1983–84	14	0	14
1984–85	21	0	21
1985–86	19	1	20
1986–87	41	1	42
1987–88	23	0	23
1988–89	24	5	29
1989–90	27	2	29
1990–91	25	1	26
1991–92	20	5	25
1992–93	34	4	38
1993–94	26	5	31
1994–95	28	2	30
1995–96	30	1	31
1996–97	34	0	34
1997–98	25	3	28
1998–99	18	3	21
1999–2000	36	0	36
2000–01	33	1	34
2001–02	36	5	41
2002–03	37	4	41
2003–04	40	2	42
2004–05	33	3	36
2005–06	22	2	24
2006–07	27	3	30
2007–08	32	2	34
2008–09	37	0	37
2009–10	26	1	27
2010–11	25	0	25
2011–12	30	1	31
2012–13	16	1	17
2013–14	13	0	13
2014–15	17	4	21
Total	918	67	985

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A15: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by age category, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)

	Under 25 years	25–39 years	40–54 years	55 and over	Total
1979–80	1	3	1	0	5
1980–81	5	0	2	5	12
1981–82	4	4	6	1	15
1982–83	6	7	7	2	22
1983–84	4	3	3	4	14
1984–85	2	8	6	4	20
1985–86	4	10	4	2	20
1986–87	11	16	12	3	42
1987–88	6	9	5	3	23
1988–89	8	19	1	1	29
1989–90	10	10	6	3	29
1990–91	9	14	2	1	26
1991–92	6	10	6	3	25
1992–93	14	9	12	3	38
1993–94	9	13	7	2	31
1994–95	10	11	9	0	30
1995–96	13	10	5	3	31
1996–97	11	14	5	4	34
1997–98	7	16	4	1	28
1998–99	7	10	2	1	20
1999–2000	8	21	6	1	36
2000–01	13	11	7	3	34
2001–02	16	14	9	2	41
2002–03	13	17	9	2	41
2003–04	12	20	9	1	42
2004–05	10	19	6	1	36
2005–06	6	13	4	1	24
2006–07	5	17	6	2	30
2007–08	7	13	12	2	34
2008–09	14	15	5	3	37
2009–10	9	11	5	2	27
2010–11	6	10	6	3	25
2011–12	4	18	7	2	31
2012–13	0	7	8	2	17
2013–14	0	4	7	2	13
2014–15	5	6	7	3	21
Total	275	412	218	78	983

Note: Excludes two cases where age was not recorded
Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A16: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by Indigenous status, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Total
1979–80	1	4	5
1980–81	7	5	12
1981–82	2	13	15
1982–83	5	17	22
1983–84	3	11	14
1984–85	8	13	21
1985–86	5	15	20
1986–87	15	27	42
1987–88	6	17	23
1988–89	10	19	29
1989–90	9	20	29
1990–91	3	23	26
1991–92	5	20	25
1992–93	5	33	38
1993–94	3	28	31
1994–95	3	27	30
1995–96	6	25	31
1996–97	8	26	34
1997–98	5	23	28
1998–99	7	14	21
1999–2000	4	32	36
2000–01	7	27	34
2001–02	8	33	41
2002–03	11	30	41
2003–04	10	32	42
2004–05	11	25	36
2005–06	7	17	24
2006–07	3	27	30
2007–08	5	29	34
2008–09	8	29	37
2009–10	6	21	27
2010–11	7	18	25
2011–12	2	29	31
2012–13	4	13	17
2013–14	1	11	1
2014–15	5	14	19
Total	215	767	982

Note: Excludes three cases where Indigenous status was not recorded
 Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A17: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by most serious offence, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)							
	Violent	Theft-related	Drug-related	Good order	Traffic-related	Other	Total
1979–80	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1980–81	0	1	0	5	0	0	6
1981–82	2	0	0	3	1	2	15
1982–83	1	1	0	11	2	0	8
1983–84	0	4	0	4	0	0	9
1984–85	0	2	0	7	0	0	12
1985–86	0	2	0	8	2	0	20
1986–87	2	5	0	22	0	1	30
1987–88	1	4	1	7	0	1	14
1988–89	5	3	1	16	0	1	26
1989–90	4	6	0	15	3	1	29
1990–91	7	7	0	12	0	0	26
1991–92	5	2	1	11	2	4	25
1992–93	8	16	2	4	5	3	38
1993–94	14	7	0	4	3	3	31
1994–95	13	7	3	3	3	0	29
1995–96	13	9	0	4	4	1	31
1996–97	14	10	1	6	1	2	34
1997–98	6	6	0	9	4	1	26
1998–99	6	9	0	2	1	2	20
1999–2000	18	10	2	3	2	1	36
2000–01	9	7	0	7	6	5	34
2001–02	8	14	0	3	6	10	41
2002–03	8	8	1	4	9	10	40
2003–04	16	9	1	5	7	3	41
2004–05	16	8	3	2	5	1	35
2005–06	8	3	3	3	4	3	24
2006–07	9	3	1	0	6	7	26
2007–08	9	4	1	2	7	10	33
2008–09	10	3	0	4	12	5	34
2009–10	7	2	1	3	7	6	26
2010–11	9	3	0	3	7	0	22
2011–12	13	2	0	3	8	5	31
2012–13	7	2	0	2	1	2	14
2013–14	5	1	0	0	3	3	12
2014–15	11	1	2	2	2	2	20
Total	264	181	24	199	123	95	886

Note: Excludes 99 cases where MSO was not recorded
Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A18: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by cause of death, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)

	Hanging	Natural causes	Head injury	Gunshot	External/multiple trauma	Alcohol/drugs	Other/multiple causes	Total
1979–80	1	1	0	0	1	2	0	5
1980–81	2	5	3	1	0	1	0	12
1981–82	8	6	0	0	0	1	0	15
1982–83	6	9	4	0	0	3	0	22
1983–84	7	6	1	0	0	0	0	14
1984–85	6	10	1	0	0	3	0	20
1985–86	6	5	4	1	1	3	0	20
1986–87	22	11	0	2	3	3	0	41
1987–88	12	7	0	3	0	0	0	22
1988–89	13	4	1	4	2	3	1	28
1989–90	7	4	2	2	6	6	2	29
1990–91	5	3	3	8	3	2	2	26
1991–92	4	5	3	6	2	5	0	25
1992–93	6	0	6	11	8	4	3	38
1993–94	2	4	1	16	4	2	2	31
1994–95	0	1	4	11	5	7	2	30
1995–96	2	4	0	11	12	1	1	31
1996–97	2	2	3	15	10	2	0	34
1997–98	3	2	1	7	12	3	0	28
1998–99	2	6	0	2	6	4	1	21
1999–2000	2	2	3	15	13	1	0	36
2000–01	0	4	5	7	13	2	3	34
2001–02	2	4	8	6	17	1	3	41
2002–03	5	3	5	10	17	0	1	41
2003–04	4	4	1	11	16	3	3	42
2004–05	3	2	3	11	15	0	2	36
2005–06	2	3	6	6	5	2	0	24
2006–07	1	4	0	7	13	2	2	29
2007–08	1	7	2	9	13	1	1	34
2008–09	1	2	4	11	17	1	1	47
2009–10	1	3	3	8	8	1	3	27
2010–11	0	5	0	9	9	2	0	25
2011–12	0	1	2	6	15	3	3	30
2012–13	0	2	0	4	6	1	3	16
2013–14	0	1	1	6	3	0	1	12
2014–15	0	3	1	11	5	1	0	21
Total	138	145	81	237	260	76	40	977

Note: Excludes eight cases where cause of death was not recorded
 Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A19: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by manner of death, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)

	Self-inflicted	Natural causes	Unlawful homicide	Justifiable homicide	Accident	Other	Total
1979–80	1	1	1	0	2	0	5
1980–81	2	5	0	0	2	2	11
1981–82	8	6	0	0	1	0	15
1982–83	6	9	0	0	6	0	21
1983–84	7	6	0	0	0	0	14
1984–85	6	10	0	0	4	0	20
1985–86	7	5	0	0	4	1	18
1986–87	22	11	1	2	4	1	41
1987–88	12	7	0	3	0	0	22
1988–89	15	4	0	3	4	1	28
1989–90	9	4	1	1	13	0	29
1990–91	10	3	0	3	7	0	26
1991–92	9	5	0	4	7	0	25
1992–93	13	0	1	4	18	2	38
1993–94	11	4	0	9	6	1	31
1994–95	10	1	0	7	12	0	30
1995–96	12	4	0	4	11	0	31
1996–97	12	2	1	7	12	0	34
1997–98	8	2	1	5	12	0	28
1998–99	2	6	0	2	11	0	21
1999–2000	9	2	0	11	12	1	36
2000–01	8	4	1	2	19	0	34
2001–02	12	4	2	2	21	0	41
2002–03	17	3	1	4	15	0	41
2003–04	14	4	0	6	18	0	42
2004–05	12	2	3	6	12	0	36
2005–06	8	3	2	3	8	0	24
2006–07	10	4	0	3	12	0	29
2007–08	12	7	0	3	12	0	34
2008–09	10	2	1	4	18	1	36
2009–10	7	3	0	3	13	1	27
2010–11	5	6	0	6	8	0	25
2011–12	11	1	1	4	11	1	30
2012–13	5	2	0	1	8	0	16
2013–14	5	1	0	3	3	1	13
2014–15	4	3	0	10	4	0	21
Total	331	146	17	125	330	13	962

Note: Excludes 11 cases classified as excusable homicide and 12 cases where manner of death was not recorded. The self-inflicted category includes self-harm, whether intentional, unintentional or unknown, and accidental hangings
Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A20: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by location of death, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)

	Public hospital	Cell	Custodial setting	Private property	Public place	Other	Unknown	Total
1979–80	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
1980–81	2	0	0	0	0	0	10	12
1981–82	2	0	0	0	0	0	13	15
1982–83	4	0	0	0	0	0	18	22
1983–84	1	1	0	0	0	0	12	14
1984–85	2	1	0	0	1	0	17	21
1985–86	7	1	0	0	0	0	12	20
1986–87	2	1	1	1	1	0	36	42
1987–88	1	0	0	2	1	0	19	23
1988–89	4	12	3	2	1	0	7	29
1989–90	6	11	5	1	6	0	0	29
1990–91	7	6	4	5	4	0	0	26
1991–92	11	5	3	3	3	0	0	25
1992–93	13	3	2	3	15	2	0	38
1993–94	8	2	2	5	13	1	0	31
1994–95	7	2	2	5	14	0	0	30
1995–96	11	3	0	7	8	2	0	31
1996–97	12	2	2	4	12	2	0	34
1997–98	7	6	1	3	10	1	0	28
1998–99	10	3	2	2	3	1	0	21
1999–2000	8	1	1	9	17	0	0	36
2000–01	8	5	0	3	18	0	0	34
2001–02	9	2	2	5	23	0	0	41
2002–03	7	2	3	4	24	1	0	41
2003–04	3	4	0	8	27	0	0	42
2004–05	7	1	3	6	18	1	0	36
2005–06	5	2	1	4	12	0	0	24
2006–07	7	2	1	5	14	1	0	30
2007–08	18	1	0	4	11	0	0	34
2008–09	8	2	0	7	19	1	0	37
2009–10	9	3	1	5	8	1	0	27
2010–11	3	1	0	8	13	0	0	25
2011–12	6	1	1	8	15	0	0	31
2012–13	2	1	0	2	12	0	0	17
2013–14	1	0	0	5	6	1	0	13
2014–15	4	3	0	6	7	1	0	21
Total	222	90	40	132	336	16	149	985

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A21: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by type of custody, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)

	Institutional	Escape	Detainment	Other	Total
1979–80	5	0	0	0	5
1980–81	12	0	0	0	12
1981–82	15	0	0	0	15
1982–83	22	0	0	0	22
1983–84	14	0	0	0	14
1984–85	20	0	0	1	21
1985–86	20	0	0	0	20
1986–87	40	0	2	0	42
1987–88	20	0	3	0	23
1988–89	26	0	3	0	29
1989–90	20	0	9	0	29
1990–91	16	0	10	0	26
1991–92	13	0	11	1	25
1992–93	11	0	26	1	38
1993–94	8	0	21	2	31
1994–95	7	0	23	0	30
1995–96	7	0	24	0	31
1996–97	5	1	28	0	34
1997–98	10	0	18	0	28
1998–99	9	0	10	2	21
1999–2000	4	0	32	0	36
2000–01	6	0	27	1	34
2001–02	6	0	29	6	41
2002–03	7	1	30	3	41
2003–04	5	2	35	0	42
2004–05	7	0	28	1	36
2005–06	5	0	19	0	24
2006–07	5	0	23	2	30
2007–08	4	0	30	0	34
2008–09	4	1	32	0	37
2009–10	5	0	21	1	27
2010–11	3	0	22	0	25
2011–12	3	0	23	5	31
2012–13	1	0	15	1	17
2013–14	1	0	12	0	12
2014–15	4	0	17	0	21
Total	370	5	583	27	985

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A22: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by method of detainment, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)

	MVP	Other pursuit	Siege	Raid	Shooting/other	Total
1979–80	0	0	0	0	0	5
1980–81	0	0	0	0	0	11
1981–82	0	0	0	0	0	12
1982–83	0	0	0	0	0	19
1983–84	0	0	0	0	0	12
1984–85	0	0	0	0	1	17
1985–86	0	0	0	0	0	19
1986–87	0	0	0	1	1	33
1987–88	0	1	0	1	1	22
1988–89	0	0	1	0	3	26
1989–90	5	1	0	0	3	19
1990–91	1	0	1	2	6	16
1991–92	2	2	1	0	6	11
1992–93	10	4	3	0	9	26
1993–94	5	1	4	1	10	21
1994–95	7	2	3	1	10	23
1995–96	9	0	3	1	11	24
1996–97	11	1	7	2	7	28
1997–98	11	1	2	0	4	18
1998–99	5	0	1	0	4	10
1999–2000	12	2	3	5	10	32
2000–01	12	6	6	2	1	27
2001–02	18	2	3	1	5	29
2002–03	15	4	3	1	7	30
2003–04	12	7	7	2	7	35
2004–05	11	4	2	1	10	28
2005–06	10	0	3	0	6	19
2006–07	9	2	4	0	8	23
2007–08	9	5	5	0	11	30
2008–09	15	1	5	3	8	32
2009–10	9	2	7	1	2	21
2010–11	7	2	5	5	3	22
2011–12	9	1	6	5	7	28
2012–13	5	3	2	4	1	15
2013–14	4	0	2	2	4	12
2014–15	3	0	4	0	10	17
Total	225	54	93	41	170	583

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

Table A23: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by custodial authority, 1979–80 to 2014–15 (n)

	Police	Prison	Youth justice	Other	Total
1979–80	5	15	1	0	21
1980–81	12	28	1	0	41
1981–82	15	29	0	0	44
1982–83	22	24	0	0	46
1983–84	14	33	1	0	48
1984–85	21	27	0	0	48
1985–86	20	18	0	0	38
1986–87	42	37	1	0	80
1987–88	23	45	2	0	70
1988–89	29	36	0	0	65
1989–90	29	53	1	0	83
1990–91	26	35	1	0	62
1991–92	25	31	0	0	56
1992–93	38	44	0	0	82
1993–94	31	57	2	0	90
1994–95	30	55	0	0	85
1995–96	31	49	2	0	82
1996–97	34	63	1	0	98
1997–98	28	80	0	0	108
1998–99	21	64	1	1	87
1999–2000	36	64	1	0	101
2000–01	34	58	1	1	94
2001–02	41	52	0	1	94
2002–03	41	44	0	0	85
2003–04	42	37	0	0	79
2004–05	36	39	0	1	76
2005–06	24	28	1	1	54
2006–07	30	40	0	0	70
2007–08	34	46	0	0	80
2008–09	37	43	0	0	80
2009–10	27	58	0	0	85
2010–11	25	58	1	0	84
2011–12	31	42	0	0	73
2012–13	17	53	0	0	70
2013–14	13	54	0	0	67
2014–15	21	61	0	0	82
Total	985	1,600	18	5	2,608

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2015 [computer file]

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