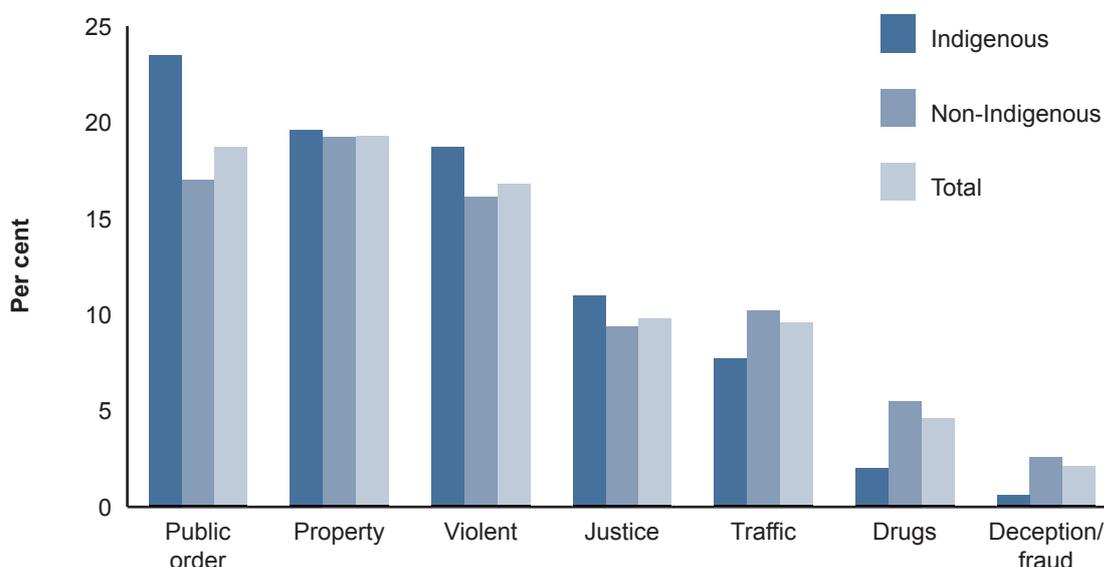


## Findings from the national police custody survey: offences

Arising from recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, the Australian Institute of Criminology conducted the fourth national police custody survey in October 2002 with the cooperation of each police jurisdiction in Australia. One of the variables recorded was the most serious offence for which the person was in custody. The figures show that people were most likely to be in custody for violent, property or public order offences. The most common offence for non-Indigenous persons was property offences. Among Indigenous persons just under one quarter of custody incidents were for public order offences. Indigenous persons were more likely than non-Indigenous persons to be in custody for public order, violent and justice offences while non-Indigenous persons were more likely than Indigenous persons to be in custody for traffic and drug offences. Indigenous persons have markedly lower incidences of drug and fraud offences than non-Indigenous persons. These figures refer only to incidents in which an offence was recorded and so exclude incidents of custody for public drunkenness where this is not an offence (New South Wales, Western Australia, South Australia, the Northern Territory, Tasmania and the ACT).

Selected most serious offence type associated with being in custody



Note: Violent offences include homicide, assault/intent to injure, sexual assault, abduction, and robbery/extortion. Property offences include break and enter, theft and property damage. Public order offences include trespass, offensive language, offensive behaviour, criminal intent, conspiracy, disorderly conduct, betting and gambling offences, liquor and tobacco offences, censorship offences, prostitution offences and other offences. Offences against justice include breaches of justice orders, subverting the course of justice, resisting or hindering police or government officials, offences against government security and operations. Excluded from this graph are other offences including weapons, dangerous acts, miscellaneous and non-defined offences, and incidents not associated with offences, such as protective custody.

SOURCE: Taylor N & Bareja M 2005. *2002 National police custody survey*. Technical and background paper no 13. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology

Full report available on the AIC web site: <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tbp/tbp013/>

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