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Australian Institute of Criminology

Homicide in Australia: 2007–08 National Homicide Monitoring Program annual report

Marie Virueda
Jason Payne

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Foreword

Through the National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP), the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) monitors trends and patterns in homicide across Australian jurisdictions. The NHMP data are the most comprehensive collection on homicide in Australia, providing details of victims, offenders and the circumstances of the incident. This is only made possible through the strong support and commitment to the Program provided by all state and territory homicide squads.

This report presents findings of the nineteenth year of homicide data collection (2007–08) and provides an overview of key characteristics. During 2007–08, there were 260 incidents of homicide resulting in 273 victims and committed by 308 offenders. Since 2001–02, there has been a decrease in the incidence of homicide.

The rate of homicide in 2007–08 remained stable at 1.2 incidents per 100,000 of the population—the same as was recorded in 2006–07. Similarly, the homicide victimisation rate was equivalent to the previous year at 1.3 victims per 100,000 Australians, which remains the lowest recorded since the inception of the NHMP.

With regard to the gender of victims, there were some notable findings. Female victimisation increased from 0.8 per 100,000 females in 2006–07 (n=81) to 1.0 per 100,000 females (n=112) in 2007–08. The proportion of female victims by type of homicide stayed relatively consistent with the previous year. The most prominent change was a decrease in the proportion of females killed in an acquaintance-type homicide in 2007–08 (11%) compared with 2006–07 (16%).

In contrast, there was an overall decrease in male victimisation from 1.8 per 100,000 males in 2006–07 (n=185) down to 1.5 per 100,000 males in 2007–08 (n=161). Further, while there was an increase in the

proportion of both acquaintance-type homicides from 2006–07 (36%) to 2007–08 (42%), and family-type homicides from 2006–07 (15%) to 2007–08 (24%), male victimisations in stranger-type homicides decreased to 16 percent in 2007–08 (from 25% in 2006–07).

In general, most homicide incidents in 2007–08 were domestic homicides involving one or more victims who shared a family or domestic relationship with the offender. Intimate partner homicides comprised the largest proportion of domestic homicides (60%).

The proportion of homicide incidents in 2007–08 involving a firearm increased modestly to 12 percent (n=30), an increase from nine percent (n=24) in 2007–08. Despite this increase, the involvement of firearms in homicide incidents remains at an historical low. The majority of firearms used in 2007–08 were identified as being either unregistered and/or unlicensed.

While annual fluctuations in the patterns of homicide are quiet common, the continued monitoring of these trends is important. The resource investment in monitoring serious crimes bears fruit by identifying changes over time and just as importantly, by placing short-term changes in a broader context. It also provides the opportunity to identify changes in risk markers associated with incidents, victims and offenders. Such information allows policymakers and law enforcement practitioners to better target intervention and prevention policies to have the most impact.

Throughout the year, the AIC has released a number of publications using NHMP data and these are available on the internet. A full reference list of NHMP publications can be located at http://www.aic.gov.au/crime_types/violence/homicide.aspx.

Adam Tomison
Director

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

Fellow AIC staff including Director Dr Adam Tomison and Senior Research Manager Warwick Jones, are also gratefully acknowledged for their constructive comments throughout the drafting process.



National Homicide Monitoring Program

The National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP) is a national monitoring program that commenced on 1 July 1989. As homicide is the most serious of all criminal offences, it is important to understand all associated circumstances and factors. Without collections such as NHMP, knowledge on the subject of homicide in Australia would be seriously constrained. With more than 19 years of data on incidents, victims and offenders of homicide in Australia and numerous research reports on various elements of homicide, understanding of this serious crime has improved. Consequently, law enforcers, policymakers and the general public are better informed in relation to its occurrence. NHMP primarily circulates this knowledge through the compilation of annual reports and other papers. The current report depicts homicide in Australia for the period of 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008.

2007–08 summary

- In 2007–08, there were 260 homicide incidents involving 273 victims and 308 offenders. Of the victims, 161 were male and 112 were female. Of the offenders, 269 were male and 38 were female. The sex of one offender was unknown.
- The rate of homicide victimisation was 1.3 per 100,000 Australians. This rate is equal to the previous year and remains the lowest recorded since NHMP first began collecting data in 1989–90.
- The victimisation rate for males in 2007–08 was 1.5 per 100,000; the victimisation rate for females was 1.0 per 100,000.
- Thirty-eight homicide victims in 2007–08 were identified as Indigenous Australians (16 male and 22 female victims). The rate of Indigenous victimisation was seven times higher than non-Indigenous victimisation. The rate of Indigenous victimisation also varied significantly by gender, with Indigenous males (9 per 100,000) six times as likely and Indigenous females (6.1 per 100,000) seven times as likely to be victims than their non-Indigenous counterparts.
- In 2007–08, the proportion of homicide incidents involving a firearm increased modestly to 12 percent (n=30), up from nine percent (n=24) in 2006–07. Despite this small increase, firearm involvement in homicide remains at an historical low.
- The majority of firearms used in homicides in 2007–08 were unregistered and/or unlicensed.
- Most homicides in 2007–08 were domestic homicides involving one or more victims who shared a family or domestic relationship with the offender. Intimate partner homicides comprised the largest proportion of domestic homicides (60%).
- Forty children aged 17 years and younger were killed in 2007–08.
- Seven percent of homicides in 2007–08 were committed during the course of another crime. Robbery was the most common precipitating crime.



About the National Homicide Monitoring Program

Purpose

Homicide is among the most serious of all crimes. Preventing homicide and other lethal violence remains a key priority for Australian criminal justice and law enforcement agencies. NHMP and its comprehensive collection of data is Australia's only national system with the capacity to monitor homicide rates and facilitate detailed analysis of homicide types and trends. This analysis provides an important foundation for the development and implementation of evidence-based policy at both the national and local level.

Definition of homicide

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

- all cases resulting in a person or persons being charged with murder or manslaughter. This excludes other driving-related fatalities, except those that immediately follow a criminal event such as armed robbery or motor vehicle theft;
- all murder–suicides classed as murder by police; and
- all other deaths classed by police as homicides (including infanticides), whether or not an offender has been apprehended.

Excluded from this definition are attempted murder and violent deaths, such as industrial accidents involving criminal negligence (unless a charge of manslaughter is laid). Lawful homicide, including that by police during the course of their duties, is also excluded.

Methodology

There are two key sources of data for NHMP:

- offence records derived from each Australian state and territory police service, supplemented where necessary with information provided directly by investigating police officers and/or associated staff; and

- state Coronial records such as toxicology and post-mortem reports.

As of 1 July 2001, the National Coroners Information System (NCIS) enabled online access to toxicology reports. The data are further supplemented by newspaper clippings, which are sorted according to incident and filed with the offence report. Newspaper media nationwide are monitored daily by staff at the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC).

Compilation of this report begins with obtaining police offence reports, forwarded directly to the AIC. The NHMP dataset created from the report is based on 77 distinct variables and the relevant information pertaining to these variables is extracted for each homicide incident and entered into NHMP's database. The information is divided into key areas:

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

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



Homicide in Australia, 2007–08

Homicide incidents

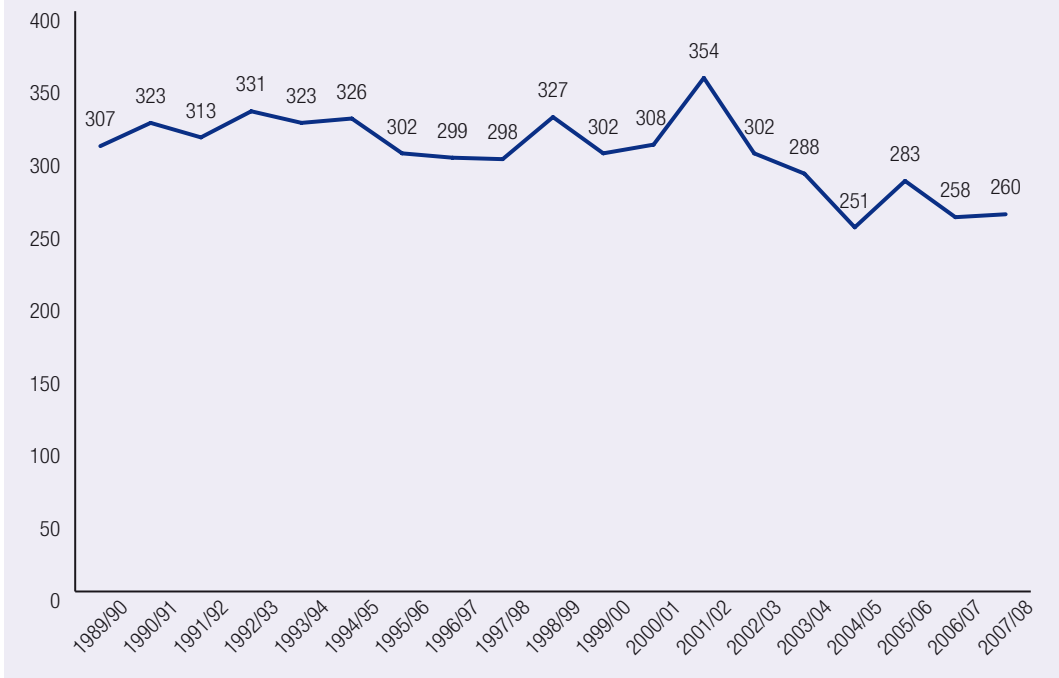
In 2007–08, there were 260 homicide incidents involving the deaths of 273 victims. Not all homicide incidents were solved at the time of writing, but of those that were, a total of 307 offenders were identified. The number of victims and offenders exceeds the number of incidents because some incidents involved the death of more than one victim (n=11, 4%) or the actions of more than one offender (n=35, 13%). Only one homicide in 2007–08 involved multiple victims and multiple offenders, while at the time of writing, 15 incidents had no identified offender.

The total number of homicide incidents recorded in 2007–08 is marginally higher than recorded in the previous year (n=258 in 2006–07; Figure 1). In trend terms, however, the rate at which homicide occurs in Australia remains at an historical low. In 2007–08, there were an estimated 1.2 homicide incidents per 100,000 Australians, which is equal to the previous year, but around 35 percent lower than was estimated in the first few years of NHMP's implementation (Figure 2). The highest recorded homicide incident

rate was 1.9 per 100,000 in both 1992–93 and 1990–91.

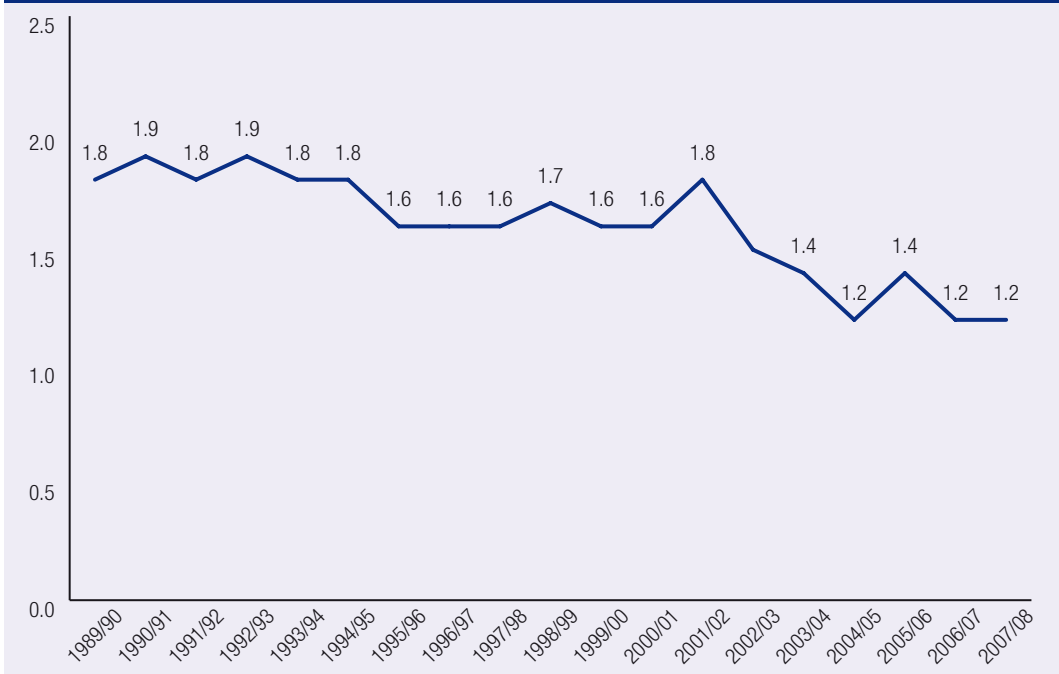
By jurisdiction, New South Wales recorded the largest number of homicides (n=88) in 2007–08, followed by Queensland (n=54), Victoria (n=44), Western Australia (n=30), South Australia (n=18) and the Northern Territory (n=18; Table 1). Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory recorded the lowest number, with five and three homicides, respectively. Standardising the number of homicides by the estimated population in each jurisdiction tells a somewhat different story about homicide across Australia. The Northern Territory, for example, while having the third lowest number of homicides in 2007–08 had by far the highest rate of homicide per 100,000 of the population (8.2 per 100,000 compared with the national rate of 1.2 per 100,000). Conversely, New South Wales, despite recording the highest number of homicides over the year, had a homicide rate similar to the national average (1.3 per 100,000). Victoria was the jurisdiction with the lowest homicide rate in 2007–08—estimated at 0.8 homicide incidents per 100,000.

Figure 1 Homicide incidents, 1989–90 to 2007–08 (n)



Source: ABS 2002–08a; AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2007–08 [computer file]

Figure 2 Homicide incident rate, 1989–90 to 2007–08 (rate per 100,000)



Source: ABS 2002–08a; AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2007–08 [computer file]

Table 1 Homicide incidents rate by jurisdiction, 2007–08 (rate per 100,000)

	n	Rate per 100,000
NSW	88	1.3
Vic	44	0.8
Qld	54	1.3
WA	30	1.4
SA	18	1.1
Tas	5	1.0
NT	18	8.2
ACT	3	0.9
National	260	1.2

Source: ABS 2002–08a; AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Homicide incident classification

There are many different methods for classifying homicide. Some methods are based on the qualitative nature of the event (such as who kills who, how the homicide was committed, or whether the homicide occurred in the context of another crime), while others are based on more specific quantitative measures (such as how many victims were killed or how many offenders were involved). In any event, the triangulation of various victim, offender and incident characteristics complicates the development of typologies such that, with the exception of specific legal definitions (such as infanticide), there is no universally agreed method for classification. As such, typologies are informed by research purpose and may or may not have specific pragmatic value.

In this report, homicide incidents are classified into three primary categories according to the principle relationship shared between the victim and the offender. The categories are:

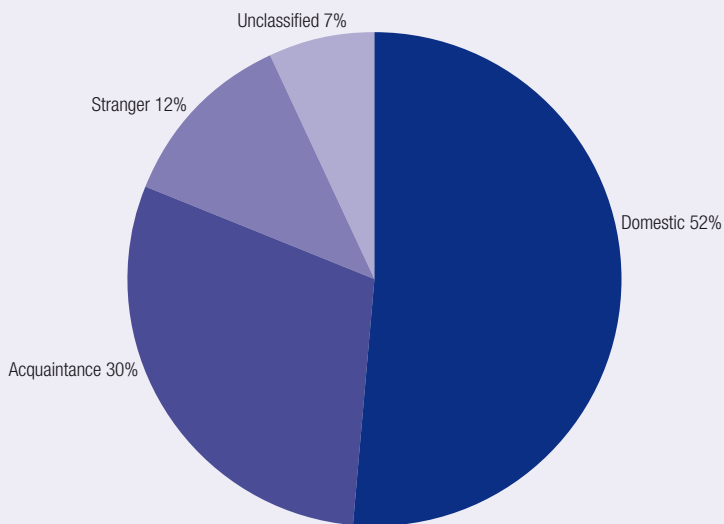
- *domestic homicide*—an incident involving the death of a family member or other person from a domestic relationship. Includes:
 - *intimate partner homicide*—where the victim and offender share a current or former intimate relationship, including homosexual and extramarital relationships;
 - *infanticide*—where a mother suffering post-natal mental health issues kills an infant under one year of age;

- *filicide*—where a custodial or non-custodial parent (including step-parent) kills a child (not including infanticide);
- *parricide*—where a child kills a custodial or non-custodial parent or step-parent;
- *siblicide*—where one sibling kills another; and
- *other family homicide*—where the victim and offender are related by family, but are not otherwise classified above (such as the death of a cousin, aunt, grandparent etc);
- *acquaintance homicide*—an incident involving a victim and offender, who were known to each other but who were not related to each other, nor living in a domestic relationship; and
- *stranger homicide*—all other incidents in which the victim and offender were not known to each other.

For single victim/offender homicides, incident classification using the principle relationship is relatively straightforward since only one relationship exists per incident. For multiple victim and/or multiple offender homicide incidents, however, such a process is complicated by the presence of two or more relationships (1 for each unique victim and offender pair). In these incidents, the principle relationship is taken to be the closest known relationship between any one victim and offender pair. A homicide involving the death of two victims and one offender will have two known relationships, however, the closest relationship will be used to classify the incident. For example, using this classification system, a homicide involving the death of an intimate partner and a bystander (presumably a stranger) would be classified as a domestic homicide and sub-classified as an intimate partner homicide. Where an incident involves two victims (and two relationships) within the same category, the closest relationship is chosen for classification. Incidents involving the death of an intimate partner and children will be classified as an intimate partner homicide for the purposes of this report.

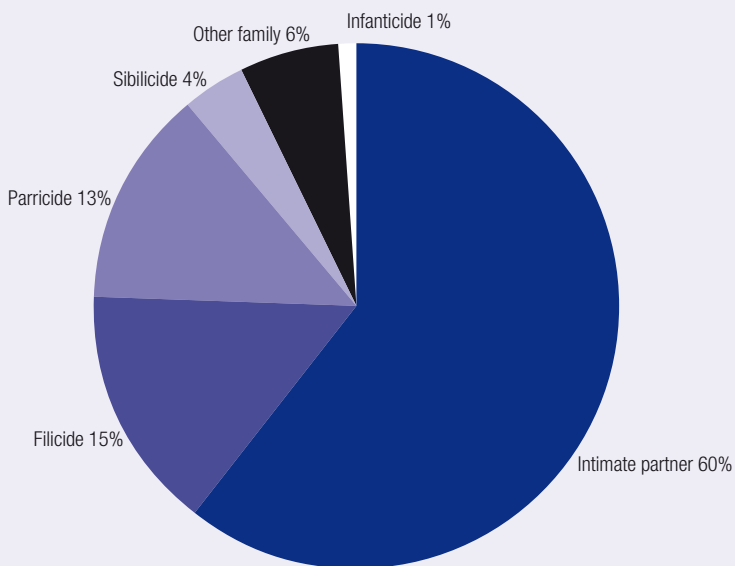
Of the 260 homicide incidents recorded in 2007–08, 134 (52%) were classified as domestic homicides, 79 (30%) as acquaintance homicides and 30 (12%) as stranger homicides (Figure 3). The remaining 17 homicides (7%) could not be classified either because an offender had not yet been identified or because the relationship between the victim and offender had not yet been recorded by the police.

Figure 3 Homicide incident classification, 2007–08 (%)



Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Figure 4 Domestic homicide incident sub-classification, 2007–08 (%)



Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

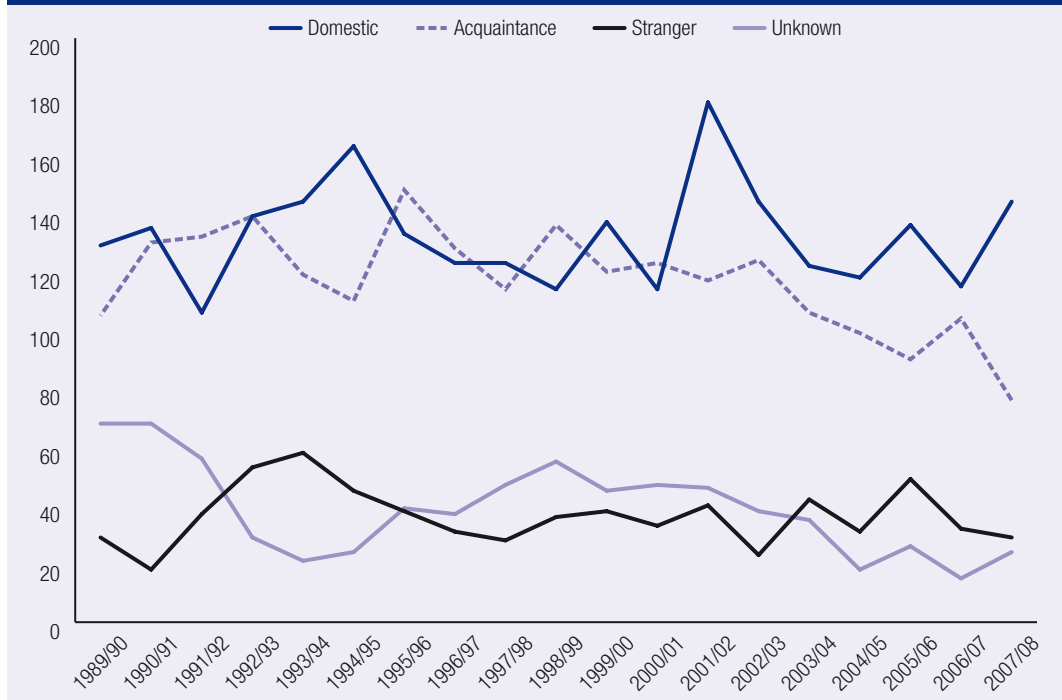
Of the 134 domestic homicides in 2007–08, 80 were sub-classified as intimate partner homicides (60%), 20 as filicides (15%), 18 as parricides (13%), eight as other family homicides (6%), six as siblicides (4%) and two as infanticides (1%; Figure 4). Finally, as this classification takes into account only the principle relationship in each incident, it is worth noting that one of the intimate partner homicides also involved the death of a child, while another involved the death of two other family members (not children) in the same incident.

The continued decline in homicide incidents over the past few years appears primarily driven by a decline in the number homicides between friends or acquaintances. For example, the breakdown in Figure 5 shows that in 2007–08, the number of such homicides was lower than at any other time since 1989–90. This marked the continuation of a general downward trend that commenced in 2003–04 and has, with one exception (2006–07), seen a yearly decrease. In trend terms, the number of domestic and stranger homicides has remained stable.

The proportion of homicides classified as ‘domestic’ varies by jurisdiction (Table 2). In the Northern Territory, Western Australia and Queensland, for

example, around 60 percent of homicide incidents in 2007–08 were domestic homicides. This compares with New South Wales (49%), Victoria (45%), South Australia (44%), Tasmania (20%) and the Australian Capital Territory (33%) where less than half were classified as domestic. Stranger homicides were more prevalent in South Australia (17%), Tasmania (20%) and the Australian Capital Territory (33%) than in the other jurisdictions. Acquaintance homicides were disproportionately represented in Tasmania (60%), South Australia (39%) and Victoria (39%). The results for both Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory should, however, be considered with caution as the actual number of homicides in these jurisdictions were fewer than 10. Finally, New South Wales had the highest proportion of unclassified homicides (10%). This was followed equally by Victoria and Western Australia (7%), Northern Territory (6%) and Queensland (4%). South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory were the only jurisdictions to have all possible offender and victim relationships known. Unclassified homicide incidents are those where either an offender has not yet been identified or where the relationship between the offender and the victim was unknown at the time of data collection.

Figure 5 Type of homicide, 1989–90 to 2007–08 (n)



Source: ABS 2002–08a; AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2007–08 [computer file]

Table 2 Homicide type by jurisdiction, 2007–08 (%)^a

	NSW (n=88)	Vic (n=44)	Qld (n=54)	WA (n=30)	SA (n=18)	Tas (n=5)	NT (n=18)	ACT (n=3)	National (n=260)
Domestic	49	45	59	60	44	20	61	33	52
Acquaintance	30	39	26	20	39	60	28	33	30
Stranger	11	9	11	13	17	20	6	33	12
Unclassified	10	7	4	7	0	0	6	0	7

a: percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

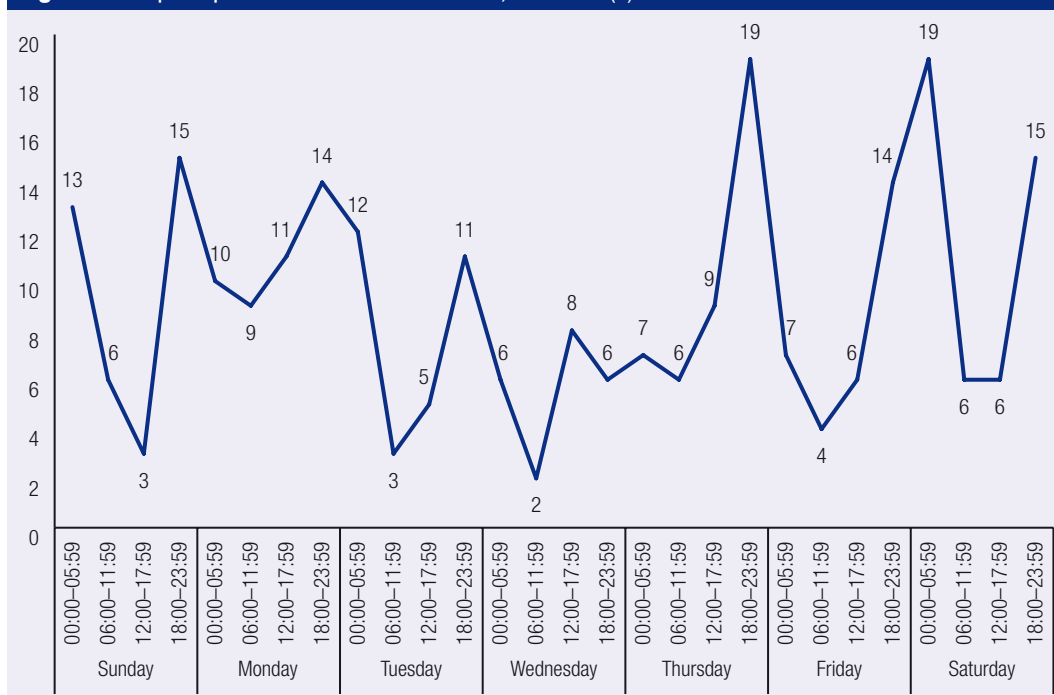
Temporal characteristics

Most homicides in 2007–08 occurred between the hours of 6 pm and 6 am (n=166, 64%). Of these, a greater proportion occurred between 6 pm and midnight (n=93) than between midnight and 6 am (n=73; Figure 6 and Table 3). Finally, the hours between 6 am and noon recorded the fewest homicides in 2007–08 (n=31).

Saturday and Monday were the two days of week which had the highest number of homicides recorded throughout 2007–08 (n=45). This was followed closely by Thursday (n=42) and Sunday

(n=38). Wednesday had the fewest homicides recorded (n=24), however, consistent with previous years, the distribution of homicides across the week showed no remarkable pattern.

Examining the joint distribution between the time of day and day of week shows that between midnight and 6 am on Saturday and between 6 pm and midnight on Thursday were the two periods in which the highest number of recorded homicides were recorded for 2007–08 (n=19 respectively). Conversely, between 6 am and noon on Wednesdays and Fridays had the lowest recorded number of homicide incidents (n=2 respectively).

Figure 6 Temporal pattern of homicide incidents, 2007–08 (n)

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table 3 Summary of temporal pattern of homicide incidents, 2007–08

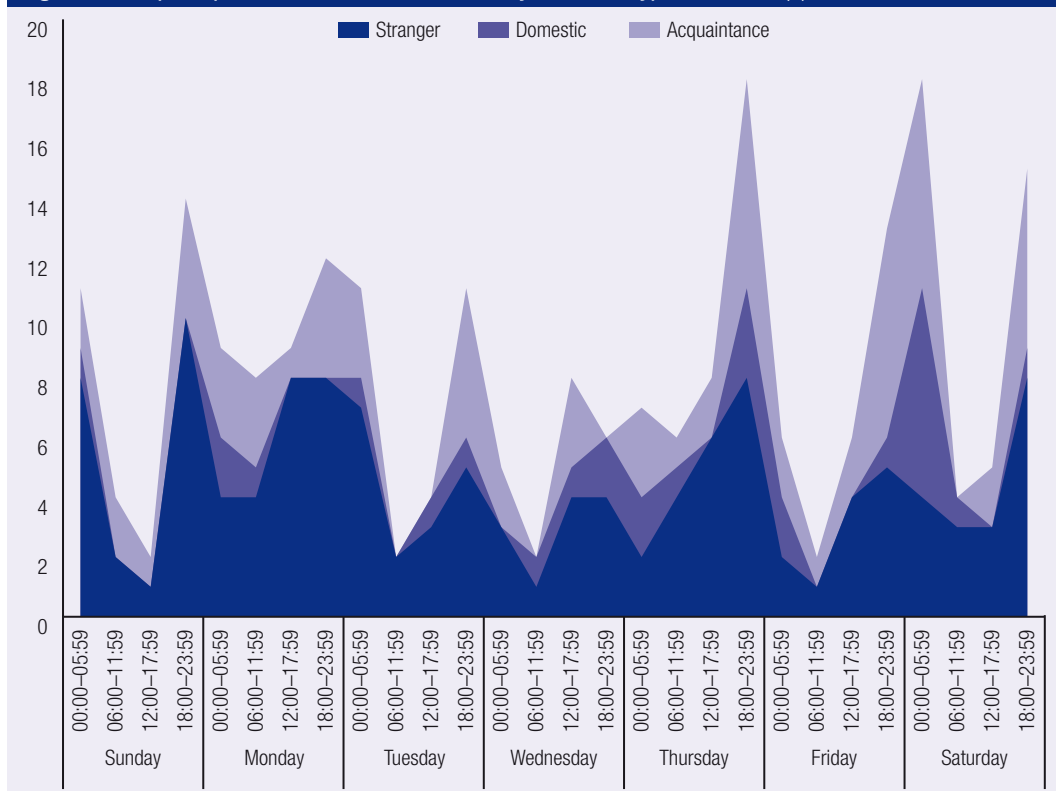
	n	%
Time of day		
00:00–05:59	73	28
06:00–11:59	31	12
12:00–17:59	44	17
18:00–23:59	93	36
Unknown	19	7
Day of week		
Sunday	38	15
Monday	45	17
Tuesday	30	12
Wednesday	24	9
Thursday	42	16
Friday	30	12
Saturday	45	17
Unknown	6	2

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Finally, it is notable that the hours between 6 pm and midnight was the peak time period for homicides on all days except Saturday, Wednesday and Tuesday. On Tuesday and Wednesday, there was a relatively equal number recorded for between midnight and 6 am, and 6 pm and midnight, whereas on Saturday, the number of homicides occurring between midnight and 6 am exceeded those recorded between 6 pm and midnight (n=19 vs n=15).

Different homicide types have different temporal characteristics (Figure 7). For example, half of all stranger homicides (52%) recorded in 2007–08 occurred specifically on Thursday to Saturday evenings (from 6 pm to 6 am on each day). Although not as great, a similarly sizable proportion (42%) of acquaintance homicides also occurred within these specific time periods. These temporal characteristics for stranger and acquaintance homicides reflect typical patterns of social interaction, with Thursday nights though to Sunday mornings being periods when individuals generally interact with others

Figure 7 Temporal pattern of homicide incidents by homicide type, 2007–08 (n)



Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

in social (not employment-related) activities. This, however, is in contrast to domestic homicides where only 19 percent occurred on Friday and Saturday evenings. Instead, a larger proportion of domestic homicides occurred during the day and early evenings on weekdays and on Sundays which undoubtedly reflects the typical periods family members are most likely to interact.

Given that homicide is a social interaction requiring two or more people coming together, it is highly probable that days with increased social interactions are also those which a homicide is most likely to occur (Mouzos & Houliaras 2006). The link between homicide in Australia and routine activities is well documented (Carcach & Conroy 2001) and is again confirmed by this data.

Location

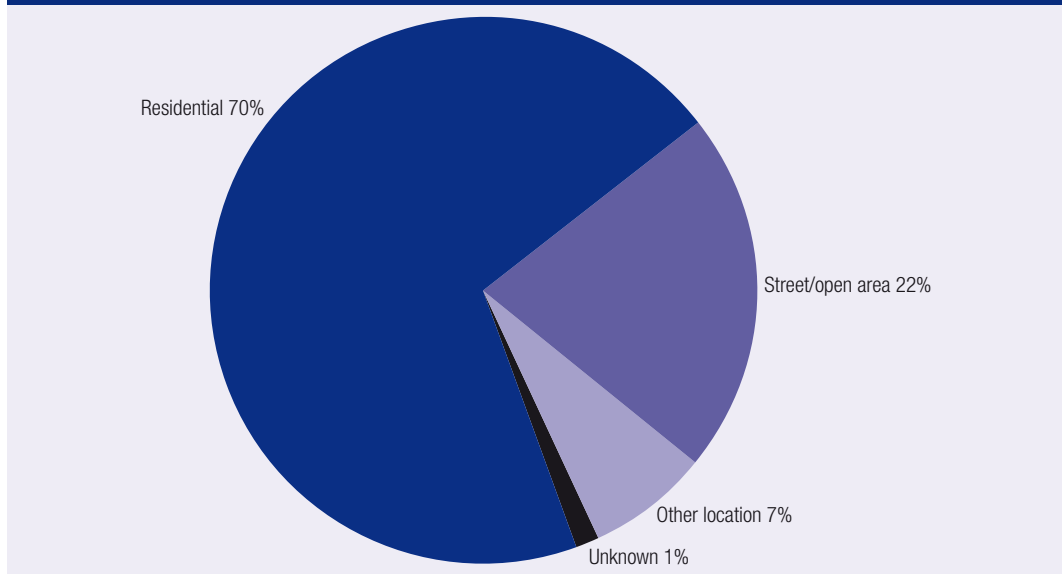
Most Australian homicides in 2007–08 occurred in a residential location (n=182, 70%)—most often the victim’s home (n=139), but occasionally in the offender’s (n=20) or some other person’s home (n=23; Figure 8). These results should, however, be interpreted with some caution because homicide

incidents that occur in a dwelling shared by both the victim and the offender will be recorded in NHMP as the victim’s home. Only if the offender and victim live separately and the homicide occurred in the offender’s residence will the homicide location be recorded as the offender’s home.

Most other homicides in 2007–08 (n=57, 22%) occurred in open areas or public spaces such as on a street, road or highway (n=35), in parks or waterways (n=13), in carparks or public garages (n=5), or at sporting ovals or related facilities (n=3).

The location of a homicide is largely influenced by the type of homicide, with residential locations accounting for a larger proportion of domestic homicides (n=113, 84%), rather than acquaintance (n=53, 67%) or stranger homicides (n=7, 23%; Table 4). Conversely, a greater proportion of stranger homicides (n=21, 70%) occurred in open areas or public spaces, in particular on a street, road or highway (n=17). Only one homicide occurred at a recreational venue (bars, pubs and clubs) and involved a friend or acquaintance. Homicides occurring at recreational venues are most likely to have involved alcohol consumption by either the victim or the offender (Deaden & Payne 2009).

Figure 8 Location of homicide incidents, 2007–08 (%)



Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table 4 Summary of location of homicide incidents by homicide type, 2007–08

	Domestic homicide (n=134)		Acquaintance homicide (n=79)		Stranger homicide (n=30)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Residential						
Victim's home	100	75	27	34	5	17
Offender's home	7	5	12	15	1	3
Other home	6	4	14	18	1	3
Subtotal ^a	113	84	53	67	7	23
Street or open area						
Open area/waterway	8	6	1	1	0	0
Street/road/highway	5	4	12	15	17	57
Sporting oval/facility	0	0	1	1	2	7
Public transport	0	0	0	0	1	3
Car park/garage	1	1	2	3	1	3
Subtotal ^a	14	10	16	20	21	70
Other						
Hospital/health care	2	1	3	4	0	0
Shopping mall	1	1	1	1	1	3
Recreation venue	0	0	2	3	1	3
Workplace	1	1	1	1	0	0
Private motor vehicle	1	1	0	0	0	0
Other/not stated/unknown	2	1	3	4	0	0
Subtotal ^a	7	5	10	1	2	7

a: excludes unclassified homicides. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Cause of death

More homicide victims in 2007–08 died from stab wounds than from any other single cause of death (n=114, 43%; Table 5). The number of victims killed as a result of a stab wound was nearly twice that of the next highest cause of death—beatings—from which 64 victims died. Although not as frequent, 30 victims died as a result of a gunshot wound, 18 were strangled or suffocated, eight were poisoned or given a drug overdose, four were pushed from a high place (eg a cliff) and two died from smoke inhalation or burns. Finally, eight victims died as a result of criminal neglect or negligence, while 13 died by other causes, such as being hit by a car.

It is important to note that the cause of death is specific to each unique victim within a homicide incident and for multiple victim homicides the cause of death may be different for different victims. As such, the information presented in Table 5 provides both a victim and incident count. The latter is a count of the number of incidents for which each cause of death was identified and incidents may be double counted where there were multiple different causes of death. In 2007–08, there was only one incident in which two victims died from two separate causes—a domestic homicide in which the intimate partner was stabbed and a child was drowned.

Table 5 Cause of death in homicide incidents, victim and incident, 2007–08

	Victims (n)	Incidents (n)	Incidents (%) ^a
Stab wounds	114	111	43
Beatings	64	62	24
Gunshot wounds	30	30	12
Criminal neglect	8	7	3
Pushed from high place	4	4	2
Strangulation/suffocation	18	18	7
Poisoning	8	5	2
Smoke inhalation/burns	2	1	<1
Shaking	1	1	<1
Other (eg hit by car)	13	12	5
Drowning	1	1	<1
Not stated/unknown	10	8	3

a: percentages may not sum to 100 due to double counting

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

The vast majority of victims who died as a result of a stab wound in 2007–08 were stabbed with a knife (n=105, 92%). The remaining nine victims (8%) were stabbed with some other sharp object, such as broken glass. Gunshot victims were most likely to have been shot with a single or double barrel shotgun (n=13, 52% of cases where the firearm type was known). This was followed by rifles (n=7, 28%) and handguns (n=5, 20%). The category of rifles includes air, rimfire, muzzle-loading, automatic and break action shotgun/rifle combination.

The most prominent single cause of death recorded for domestic and acquaintance homicides was stab wounds (43% and 52% respectively; Table 6). For stranger homicides, however, the most frequently recorded cause of death was beatings (53%). Other differences existed between the homicide types, namely:

- suffocation and/or strangulation was more common in domestic homicides (n=16, 12%), than in acquaintance (n=2, 3%) or stranger homicides (n=0, 0%);
- gunshot wounds were slightly more likely to be recorded for acquaintance homicides (n=13, 16%) than for domestic (n=14, 10%) or stranger homicides (n=2, 7%), although because of the small number of firearm homicides, these differences were not statistically significant (Fisher p=0.46); and

- one in five stranger homicides (n=6, 20%) involved other causes, most notably negligent driving or other road traffic-related incidents in which the offender was prosecuted for murder or manslaughter.

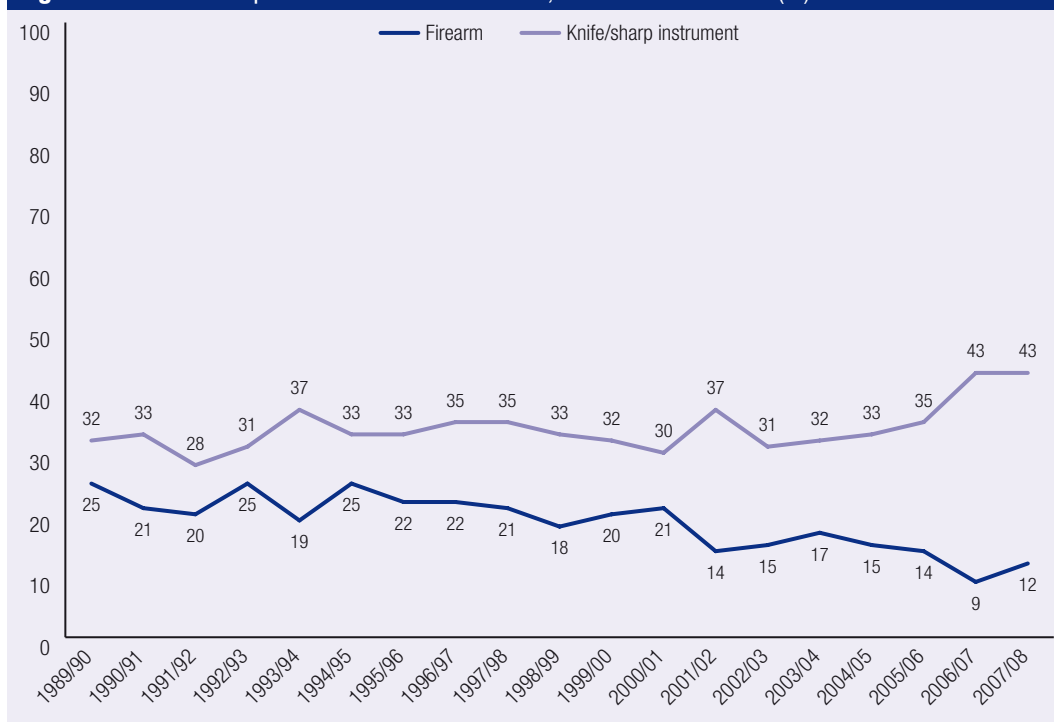
Since monitoring began, homicides involving the use of firearms have decreased by more than half. For example, 25 percent of homicides in 1989–90 (n=76) were known to have involved the use of a firearm, while in 2007–08, firearms were known to have been used in 12 percent (n=30) of homicide incidents. Conversely, the number of homicides involving knives has remained relatively unchanged since 1989–90, although owing to the decline in firearm homicides, knife-related homicides make up a larger proportion of homicides recorded in the more recent data (Figure 9).

Finally, continuing a recent trend, in 2007–08 handgun use decreased as a proportion of all firearms used in Australian homicides (Figure 10), accounting for one in five (20%) of the firearms used in homicides in 2007–08, down from 45 percent in 2006–07 and 54 percent in 2005–06.

Table 6 Summary of cause of death in homicide incidents by homicide type, 2007–08

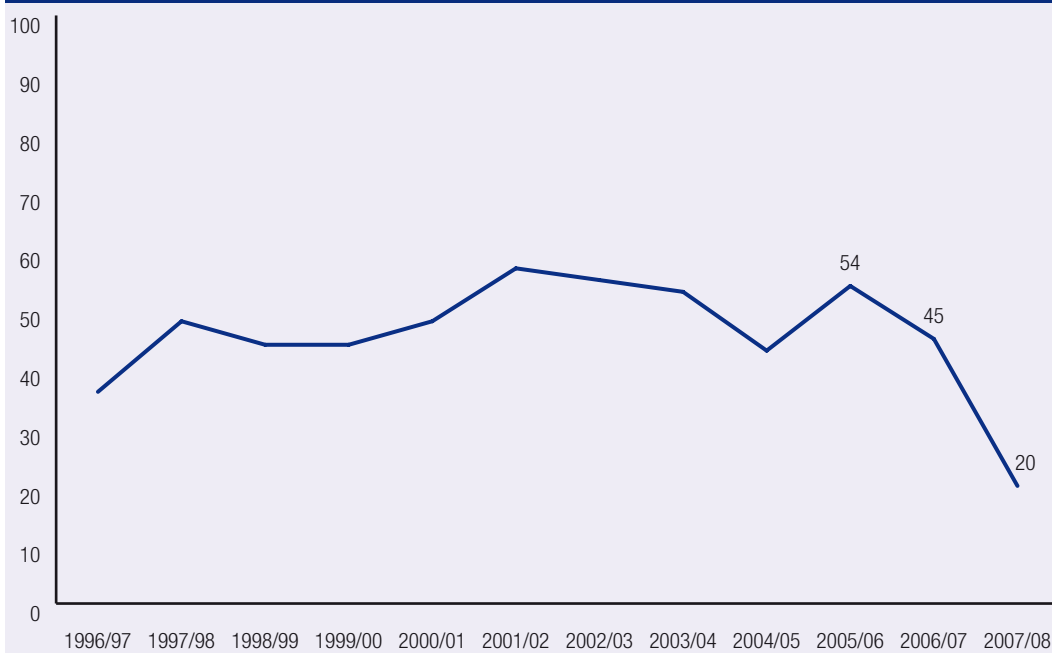
	Domestic homicide (n=134)		Acquaintance homicide (n=79)		Stranger homicide (n=30)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Stab wounds	58	43	41	52	6	20
Beatings	26	19	15	19	16	53
Gunshot wounds	14	10	13	16	2	7
Criminal neglect	6	4	0	0	0	0
Pushed from high place	4	3	0	0	0	0
Strangulation/suffocation	16	12	2	3	0	0
Poisoning	4	3	1	1	0	0
Smoke inhalation/burns	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other (eg hit by car/shaking)	2	1	4	5	6	20
Drowning	1	1	0	0	0	0
Not stated/unknown	3	2	3	4	0	0

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Figure 9 Trends in weapon use in homicide incidents, 1989–90 to 2007–08 (%)

Source: AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2007–08 [computer file]

Figure 10 Trends in firearm use in homicide incidents, 1989–90 to 2007–08 (%)



Source: AIC NHMP 1996–97 to 2007–08 [computer file]

Motive

Assigning a single reason or motive to a homicide incident is difficult because the reasons, or lack thereof, may be varied and complicated. However, the objective of ascribing motivation is to better understand the factors or situations that are likely to have precipitated a homicide event.

In 2007–08, where a motive was known, unspecified domestic arguments were the most commonly recorded motive in NHMP (25%), although this is not surprising given that domestic homicides were the largest category of homicide (Table 7). Alcohol-related arguments (11%) and other unspecified arguments (12%) were the next most frequently recorded motives, followed by revenge (8%), arguments over money (5%) and relationship termination or desertion (4%). It is important to note that nearly one in three homicide incidents had no apparent or identifiable motive (29%).

Table 8 illustrates differences in the known motives for domestic, acquaintance and stranger homicides:

- unspecified domestic arguments were most commonly recorded for domestic homicides, with one in four domestic homicides recorded as having no apparent motive;
- revenge, alcohol-related arguments and other unspecified arguments were commonly recorded for homicides involving friends and acquaintances;
- although few in number ($n=2$), all known mercy killings in 2007–08 were domestic homicides;
- nine domestic homicides were motivated by the termination of a relationship;
- three homicides were known to have occurred as a result of racial vilification—two of which involved friends and acquaintances and one involved strangers;
- seven homicides occurred as a result of the offender suffering from delusions. Four of these homicides were domestic homicides, three were acquaintance homicides; and
- eleven homicides occurred after what was known to be an argument or disagreement over money; most ($n=5$) were acquaintance homicides.

Table 7 Apparent motive in homicide incidents, victim and incident, 2007–08

	Victims (n)	Incidents (n)	Incidents (%) ^a
Revenge	24	22	8
Jealousy	8	8	3
Desertion/termination	11	11	4
Domestic argument	66	66	25
Money	12	12	5
Drugs	4	4	2
Racial vilification	3	3	1
Alcohol-related argument	28	28	11
Other argument	31	31	12
Sexual gratification	2	2	1
Mercy killing	2	2	1
Mental health (delusional)	7	7	3
No apparent motive/unknown/not recorded	75	75	29

a: percentages may not total 100 due to double counting

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table 8 Apparent motive by homicide type, 2007–08

	Domestic homicide (n=134)		Acquaintance homicide (n=79)		Stranger homicide (n=30)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Revenge	7	5	12	15	3	10
Jealousy	4	3	4	5	0	0
Desertion/termination	9	7	1	1	0	0
Domestic argument	62	46	3	4	0	0
Money	2	1	5	6	4	13
Drugs	0	0	1	1	0	0
Racial vilification	0	0	2	3	1	3
Alcohol-related argument	9	7	14	18	5	17
Other argument	7	5	15	19	7	23
Sexual gratification	1	1	0	0	1	3
Mercy killing	2	1	0	0	0	0
Mental health (delusional)	4	3	3	4	0	0
No apparent motive/unknown/not recorded	27	20	19	20	9	30

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Other situational factors

In 2007–08, six percent (n=15) of homicide incidents occurred during the course of, or as a result of, another crime. Robbery was the most prominent other crime, accounting for half of all such cases (n=8), followed by sexual assault (n=4) and other violent crimes (n=3; see Table 9).

Alcohol was identified as having preceded two in five homicides in 2007–08 (n=116, 45%). This includes alcohol consumption either by the victim (n=90, 35%) or by the offender (n=91, 35%). In most cases, however, both the victim and the offender had been drinking (n=65). By homicide type (Figure 11), alcohol consumption by the victim was more

commonly recorded for acquaintance homicides (46%) than for stranger (33%) or domestic (29%) homicides.

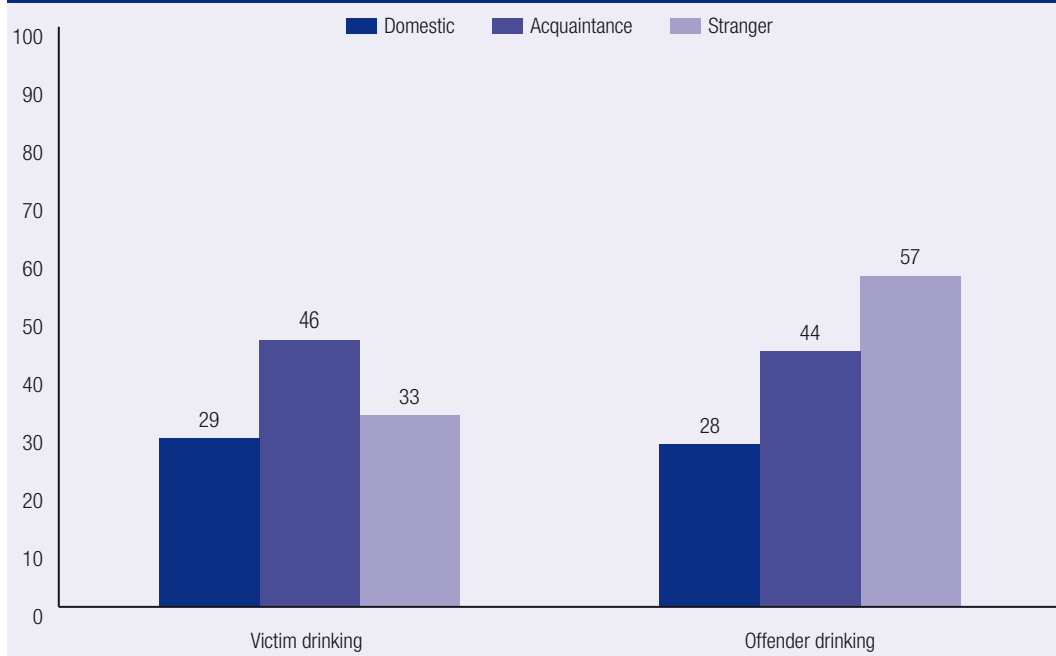
Illicit drug use was known to have preceded one in five homicide incidents in 2007–08 (n=60, 23%), however, the victim's use of illicit drugs (n=42, 16%) was more frequently identified than the offender's (n=23, 9%). This difference is most likely to be an artefact of the data collection methodology, where for victims, illicit drug consumption is confirmed through post-mortem toxicological tests, whereas for the offender, it is based on the subjective assessment of the investigating officers for which there is not usually any toxicological information.

Table 9 Summary of situational factors in homicide incidents, 2007–08

	n	%
Alcohol		
Victim drinking	90	35
Offender drinking	91	35
Any alcohol use	116	45
Drugs		
Victim used drugs	42	16
Offender used drugs	23	9
Any drug use	60	23
Precipitating crime		
Robbery	8	3
Sexual assault	4	2
Other violent crime	3	1
Any precipitating crime	15	6

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Figure 11 Alcohol involvement in homicide incidents, by homicide type, 2007–08 (%)



Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Homicide victims

Of the 260 homicide incidents recorded in 2007–08, a total of 273 people were killed. In all, 11 homicide incidents involved the death of more than one victim – nine incidents involved two victims and two incidents involved three victims.

Victim gender

In 2007–08, there were 161 male (59%) and 112 female (41%) homicide victims. This over-representation of men as victims of homicide has been a consistent finding since the commencement of NHMP and is consistent with the international homicide literature (Brookman 2005; Flowers 2002; Miethé & Regoeczi 2004; Polk 1994).

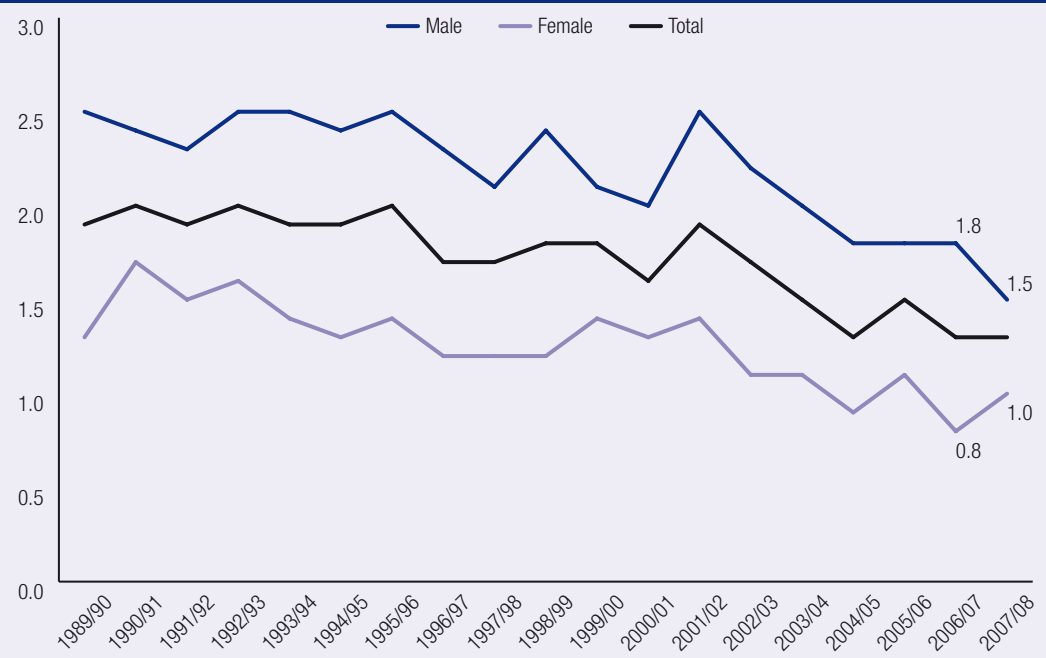
Standardisation reveals that in 2007–08, there were 1.5 male and 1.0 female homicide victims per 100,000 of the population (Figure 12). The female victimisation rate has increased slightly since the previous year (0.8 per 100,000), but remains consistent with the historical trend. The rate of male

victimisation has fallen in 2007–08 from 1.8 per 100,000 in the previous year.

The representation of male and female homicide victims varies depending on the type of homicide (Table 10). In 2007–08, 144 victims were killed by an offender with whom they shared a principle domestic relationship. Sixty percent of these victims ($n=87$) were female, while 40 percent ($n=57$) were males. Within the category of domestic homicide, female over-representation was greatest in intimate partner homicides ($n=62$, 78%), whereas male representation was highest in siblicides ($n=6$, 86%). Of those victims killed by an acquaintance or stranger, the overwhelming majority were males ($n=92$, 84%).

Within-gender analysis shows that 78 percent of female victims ($n=87$) of homicide in 2007–08 were killed by an offender with whom they shared a domestic relationship. This was not the case for of male victims who were actually more likely to have been killed by an acquaintance or stranger ($n=92$, 84%) than by someone with whom they shared a domestic relationship ($n=57$, 35%).

Figure 12 Victimisation rate by gender, 1989–90 to 2007–08 (rate per 100,000)



Source: ABS 2002–08a; AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2007–08 [computer file]

Table 10 Homicide victim gender by homicide type, 2007–08

	Male		Female	
	n	%	n	%
Domestic				
Intimate partner	18	23	62	78
Infanticide	1	50	1	50
Filicide	16	62	10	38
Parricide	11	61	7	39
Siblicide	6	86	1	14
Other family homicide	5	45	6	55
Subtotal	57	40^a	87	60^a
Acquaintance homicide	67	85	12	15
Stranger homicide	25	81	6	19
Unclassified	12	63	7	37

a: percentages calculated from subtotal and associated n total value

Note: percentages are calculated for the gender differences within in each incident type (row percent)

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Victim age

Homicide victims in 2007–08 had an average age of 36 years (Table 11). The youngest victim was under one year of age and the oldest was 92 years. The age groups with the largest number of homicide victims were the 35–49 (n=70, 26%) and 25–34 (n=55, 20%) year groups.

Forty children under the age of 18 years were killed in 2007–08, most of whom were aged between one and nine years (n=23, 8%). Nineteen homicide victims (7%) were aged 65 years and over.

Female homicide victims were, on average, three years older than male victims (37.6 vs 34.5 years of age) and for both groups, the peak age category with the highest number of victims was the 35–49 year old group. There was a higher number male juvenile victims (n=24) than female juvenile victims

(n=16), however, the proportion of male and female victims that were under 18 years was equal (15%). There were twice as many female homicide victims aged 65 years and over (n=13) than there were male victims of the same age (n=6).

The average age of a homicide victim varied depending on the type of homicide (Figure 13). This is not surprising for infanticides and filicides which, by definition, involve the death of children (and in the specific case of infanticide, a child under one year of age). For other types of domestic homicide, the average age varied from as low as 32 years for victims of other family homicides, to as high as 55 years for parricides (children who kill their parents). The average age for other types of homicides were 40 years for intimate partner, 39 years for strangers, 36 years for sibilicides and 26 years for friends and acquaintances.

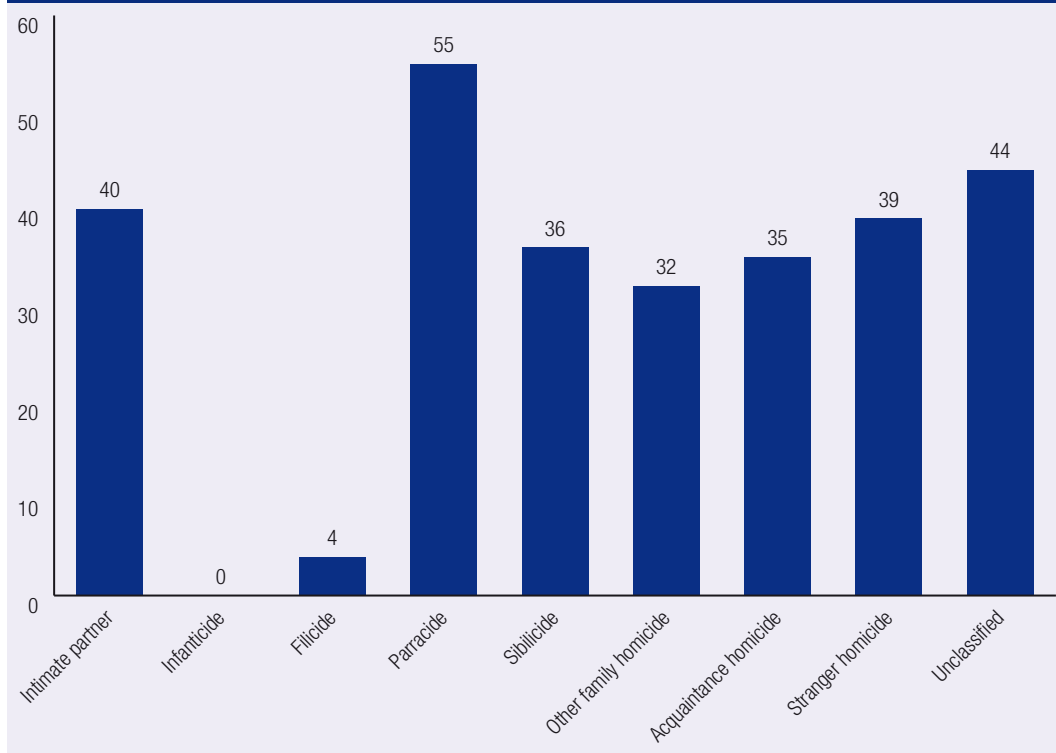
Table 11 Homicide victim age by gender, 2007–08^a

Years	Male victims (n=161)		Female victims (n=112)		All victims (n=273)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Under 1	2	1	3	3	5	2
1–9	16	10	7	6	23	8
10–14	0	0	4	4	4	1
15–17	6	4	2	2	8	3
18–24	26	16	13	12	39	14
25–34	32	20	23	21	55	20
35–49	38	24	32	29	70	26
50–64	35	22	15	13	50	18
65+	6	4	13	12	19	7
Total	161	100	112	100	273	100
Mean age		34.5		37.6		35.8
Median age		34		35.5		35

a: percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Figure 13 Homicide victim age in years by homicide type, 2007–08 (mean age in years)



Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Victim's Indigenous status

Just over one in 10 homicide victims in 2007–08 were identified as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (n=38, 14%). The majority of these victims (n=26, 68%) were killed in a domestic homicide, the most common sub-category being intimate partner homicide (n=16; Table 12). The remaining 12 victims were killed either by an acquaintance (n=10) or were killed by an offender for whom a relationship was not recorded by the police (n=2). In 2007–08, no Indigenous victims were killed by a stranger.

Twenty-two Indigenous homicide victims were female and 16 were male. Indigenous females represented more than half of all Indigenous victims in 2007–08—a larger proportion than non-Indigenous females who represent only 38 percent of non-Indigenous victims (n=90; Figure 14).

Regardless of gender, Indigenous Australians are over-represented as victims of homicide. In 2007–08, there were approximately seven Indigenous homicide victims per 100,000 of the Indigenous population (8 per 100,000 for women and 6 per 100,000 for men; Figure 15). This is seven times higher than the equivalent victimisation rate for non-Indigenous Australians (1 per 100,000). In terms of trend, the rate of Indigenous male victimisation continued to decline in 2007–08, whereas for Indigenous women, the rate of victimisation increased. This most recent year was the fourth consecutive increase in the rate of the female Indigenous victimisation since 2003–04. Further analysis reveals domestic homicides as the category with the highest percentage of victims (n=16, 73%) among Indigenous females.

Table 12 Homicide victim Indigenous status by homicide type, 2007–08

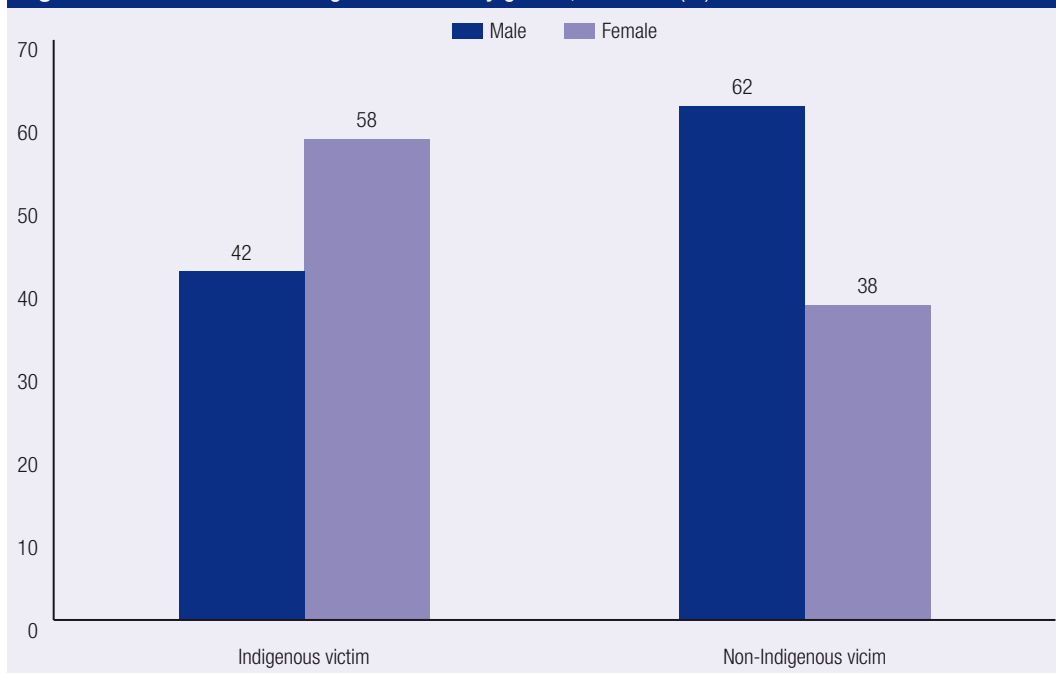
	Indigenous (n=38)		Non-Indigenous ^a (n=235)	
	n	%	n	%
Domestic				
Intimate partner	16	42	64	27
Infanticide	0	0	2	1
Filicide	4	11	22	9
Parricide	1	3	17	7
Siblicide	1	3	6	3
Other family homicide	4	11	7	3
Subtotal	26	68^b	118	50^b
Acquaintance homicide	10	26	69	29
Stranger homicide	0	0	31	13
Unclassified	2	5	17	7

a: includes victims where Indigenous status was not recorded

b: percentages calculated from subtotal and associated n total value

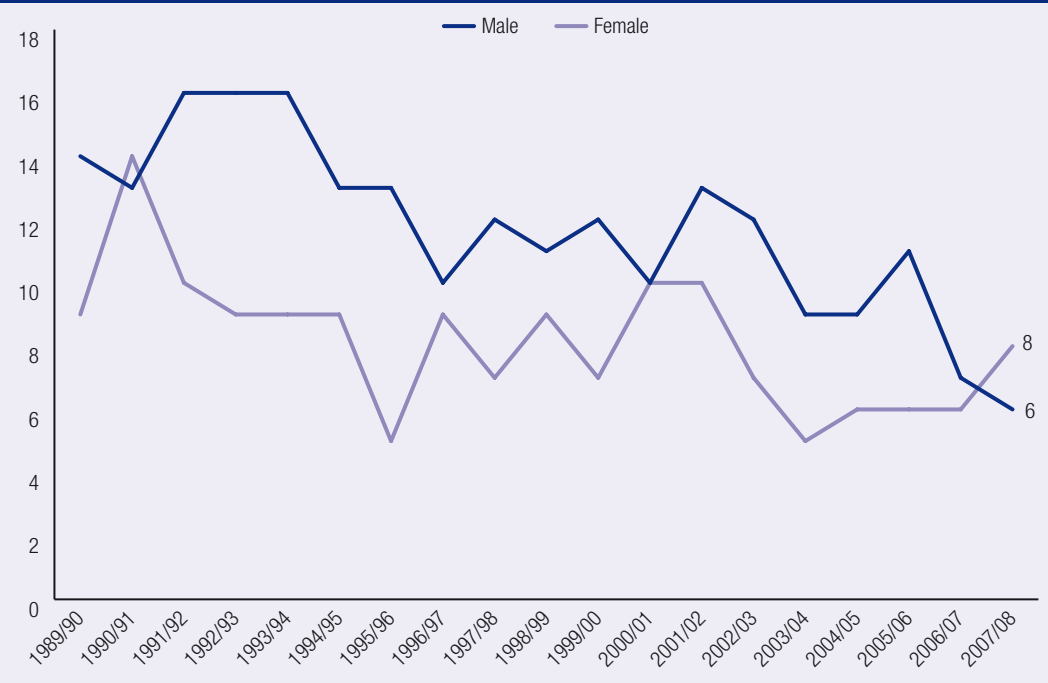
Note: percentages are calculated for the gender differences within in each incident type (row percent)

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Figure 14 Homicide victim Indigenous status by gender, 2007–08 (%)

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Figure 15 Rate of Indigenous homicide victimisation by gender, 1989–90 to 2007–08 (rate per 100,000)



Source: ABS 2002–08b, 2002–08c; AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2007–08 [computer file]

Victim's employment status

Information about employment status was known for 195 (71%) of the victims killed in 2007–08. Of these victims, more were employed (n=82, 42%) than unemployed (n=61, 31%), studying (n=14, 7%), or not working but receiving the aged or disability pension (n=27, 14%; Table 13).

Male victims were more likely than female victims to be employed (52% vs 28%) or studying (9% vs 5%), although unemployment in both groups was roughly

equal (30% vs 33%). Female victims were more likely to be recorded as undertaking domestic duties (n=11, 14%) or to have been receiving the aged or disability pension (n=17, 21%).

Unemployment among victims was highest in the 35–49 year age group (41%), whereas employment was highest in the 50–64 year age group (54%).

With the exception of one victim, all those who were not working but studying were aged between 17 and 24 years (Figure 16).

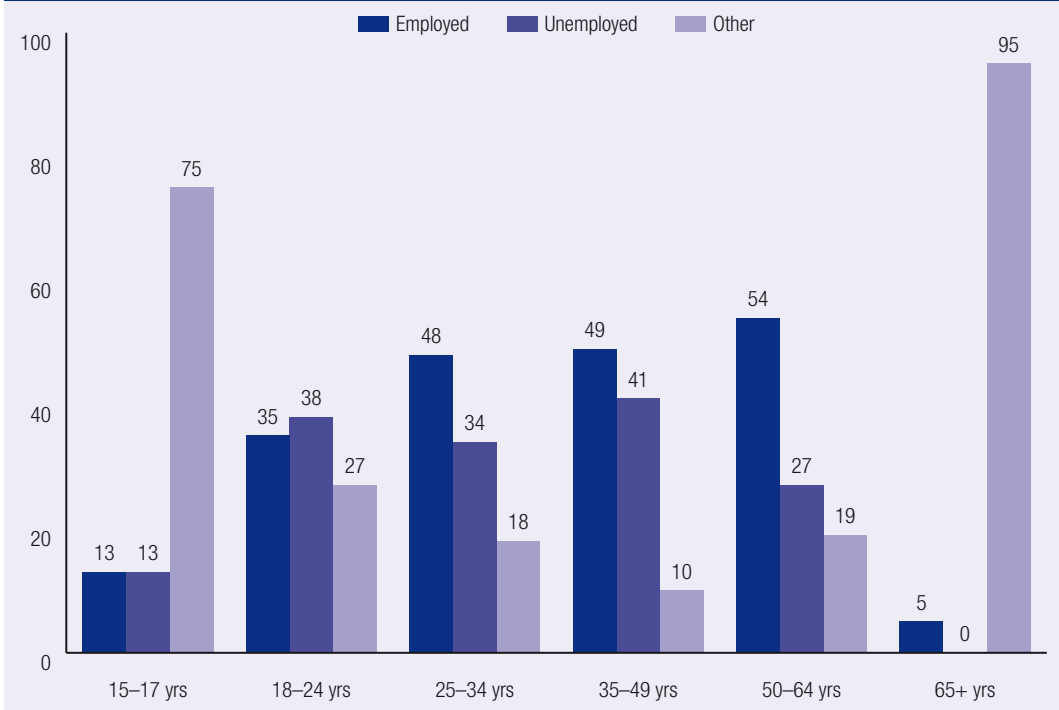
Table 13 Homicide victim employment status by gender, 2007–08

	Male victims (n=115)		Female victims (n=80)		All victims (n=195) ^a	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Studying	10	9	4	5	14	7
Unemployed	35	30	26	33	61	31
Home/domestic duties	0	0	11	14	11	6
Age or disability pension	10	9	17	21	27	14
Employed	60	52	22	28	82	42

a: employment status was not available 46 male and 32 female victims

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Figure 16 Homicide victim employment status by age group, 2007–08 (%)



Note: other includes studying, domestic duties and age or disability welfare recipients

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Homicide offenders

Of the 260 homicide incidents recorded in 2007–08, 15 were not yet solved or, as at the time of writing, had no identified offender. Of the remaining 245 incidents, 211 incidents (86%) had one offender, 21 incidents (9%) had two offenders and 14 incidents (6%) had three or more offenders. In all, the details of 308 offenders were recorded in the NHMP for homicides in 2007–08 (Table 14).

Stranger homicides (those where the victim(s) and offender(s) were unknown to each other), were the type most likely to involve multiple offenders. In 2007–08, 11 stranger homicides (37%) were known to have involved more than one offender—four involved two offenders, while seven involved three or more offenders.

Domestic homicide incidents were those least likely to have involved multiple offenders ($n=10$, 7%). In particular, 100 percent of infanticides, parricides and siblicides in 2007–08 involved just one offender. Filicide, on the other hand, was the sub-category of domestic homicide most likely to involve multiple offenders. In 2007–08, five incidents of filicide involved two offenders, of which four cases involved both custodial parents, while one involved a custodial parent and another family member (aunt).

Offender gender

Of the 308 known offenders, 268 (87%) were male and 39 (13%) were female. The gender of one offender was not available in the database. Historically, males have comprised more than 80 percent of all known homicide offenders since data collection first began in 1989–90—the highest being

88 percent in 1994–95 and the lowest being 82 percent in 2006/07.

The rate of offending, calculated as the estimated number of known offenders per 100,000 of the population, shows relative stability in the female offending rate, but a declining trend in the male

offending rate (Figure 17). In 2007–08, there was an estimated 2.5 male homicide offenders per 100,000, down from its peak of 3.8 per 100,000 in 1992–93. This decline in the homicide offending rate for males has been the main driver of the decline in the national homicide rate.

Table 14 Number of offenders by principle incident classification, 2007–08

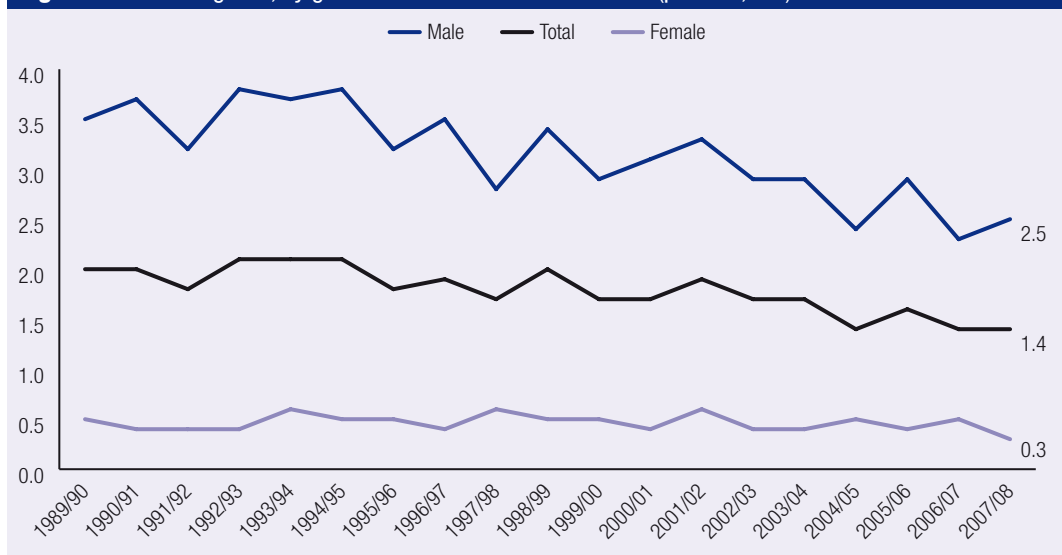
	One offender		Two offenders		Three or more offenders	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Domestic						
Intimate partner	76	95	2	3	2	3
Infanticide	2	100	0	0	0	0
Filicide	15	75	5	25	0	0
Parricide	18	100	0	0	0	0
Siblicide	6	100	0	0	0	0
Other family homicide	7	88	1	13	0	0
Subtotal	124	93	8	6	2	1
Acquaintance homicide	66	84	9	11	4	5
Stranger homicide	19	63	4	13	7	23
Total ^a	209	86	21	9	13	5

a: includes incidents that could not be classified because the relationship between the victim and the offender was unknown. Percentages are calculated for incidents where at least one offender was identified (n=245)

Note: an incident is classified by the principle relationship. For multiple offender homicides, this is the closest relationship between any one of the offenders and victims

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Figure 17 Offending rate, by gender from 1989–90 to 2007–08 (per 100,000)



Source: ABS 2000–08a; AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2007–08 [computer file]

Offender age

The average age of homicide offenders in 2007–08 was 31.8 years (Table 15). The distribution of offenders between the ages of 18 and 49 years was relatively even, with 27 percent of offenders aged between 18 and 24 years as well as 35 and 49 years, and 26 percent aged between 25 and 34 years. Nine offenders (3%) were aged 65 years or more. Despite some yearly variations, the average offender age has remained relatively consistent in the last 10 years, between a low of 30 years in 1996–97 and a high of 36 years in 1989–90.

In 2007–08, there were 29 juvenile offenders under the age of 18 years—all of whom were male, involving only one victim and with the majority (n=27) aged between 15 and 17 years. Nearly half of all juvenile homicide offenders (n=14, 48%) killed someone that was unknown to them, while 28 percent killed a family member and 24 percent killed a friend or acquaintance. Thirty-eight percent of homicide incidents involving a juvenile offender were due to the victim being beaten to death, this was followed by 31 percent of stabbing incidents and 23 percent of firearm incidents. There was only one homicide incident for which cause of death was unknown.

There was little age difference between female and male homicide offenders in 2007–08. For example, female offenders were aged 33.1 years on average compared with male offenders who had an average age of 31.7 years, although it is important to note that all homicide offenders under the age of 18 years were male, as were all offenders aged 65 years or over.

Offender Indigenous status

Historically, Indigenous Australians have been over-represented as homicide offenders (as well as victims) and 2007–08 was no exception. For example, in 2007–08 it was estimated that Indigenous Australians comprised 2.5 percent of the overall Australian population, yet in NHMP, Indigenous Australians made up 18 percent of homicide offenders (n=54).

Seventy-two percent of Indigenous homicide offenders in 2007–08 were male (n=39), while just over one in four were female (n=15, 28%). Both male and female Indigenous offenders were over-represented, however, the extent of over-representation was greatest among the Indigenous female population. In this most recent year of data

Table 15 Homicide offender age in years by gender, 2007–08^a

Years	Male offenders (n=267)		Female offenders (n=39)		All offenders (n=306) ^b	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Under 1	0	0	0	0	0	0
1–9	0	0	0	0	0	0
10–14	2	1	0	0	2	1
15–17	27	10	0	0	27	9
18–24	74	28	8	21	82	27
25–34	67	25	12	31	79	26
35–49	67	25	17	44	84	27
50–64	21	8	2	5	23	8
65+	9	3	0	0	9	3
Total	267	100	39	100	306	100
Mean age		31.7		33.1		31.8
Median age		29		33		29

a: percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

b: data excludes 3 offenders whose age was not reported

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

collection, there were approximately five female Indigenous homicide offenders per 100,000 of the population—roughly 25 times higher than the estimated offending rate among the non-Indigenous female population (0.2 per 100,000; Figure 18). For Indigenous males, there were approximately 15 offenders per 100,000—roughly eight times higher than the estimated offending rate among the non-Indigenous male population (2 per 100,000).

Despite these results, the rate of male Indigenous homicide offending has been decreasing over the past few years and in 2007–08, the rate remains at its lowest point since the collection of data in 1989–90. For Indigenous females, there was a slight decrease compared with the previous year (6 per 100,000), although this trend has been generally stable since 1989–90.

Most Indigenous offenders killed a victim who was also identified as Indigenous (n=34, 63%). This was higher for Indigenous female offenders (n=12, 80%) than for Indigenous male offenders (n=22, 56%). These gender differences are partly explained by the differences in homicide types, with Indigenous female offenders in almost all cases killing someone they were in a family or domestic relationship with (n=14, 93%). The types of homicides committed by Indigenous male offenders were more varied—of the

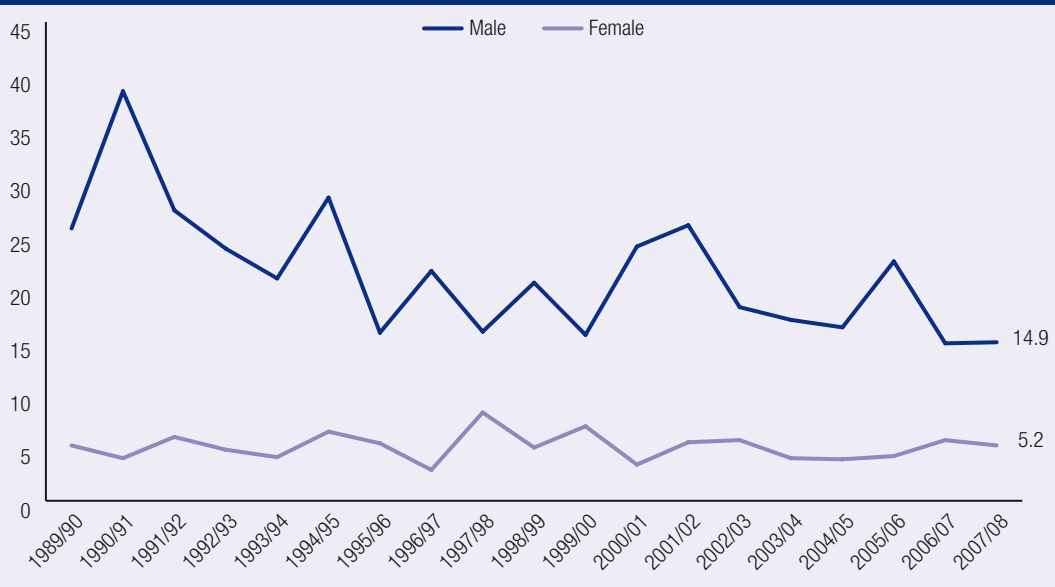
known relationships, 43 percent killed a family member, 31 percent killed a friend or acquaintance and 26 percent killed a stranger. Two homicides involving four male Indigenous offenders could not be classified because the relationship to the victim was not known.

Offender criminal history

Of the 308 homicide offenders recorded in 2007–08, nearly two-thirds were known to have had a prior criminal history involving at least one conviction (n=187, 61%; Table 16). The remaining 39 percent (n=121) had no recorded criminal history, although in 41 of these cases, information about the offender’s criminal history was not identified and therefore, not reported by the police.

Of those offenders with a prior criminal history, other assault was the single offence type most often recorded as the most serious conviction received (n=69, 37%). This was followed by other minor offences (n=42, 22%), drug offences (n=35, 11%) and property offences (n=27, 14%). Finally, two offenders were known to have had a history of sexual assault, while four had a prior history of murder, however, four had no known criminal history type.

Figure 18 Rate of Indigenous homicide offending by gender, 1989–90 to 2007–08 (rate per 100,000)



Source: ABS 2002–08b; 2002–08c AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2007–08 [computer file]

Male offenders were more likely than female offenders to have had prior criminal history (63% vs 44%). Similarly, prior criminal histories were more evident among younger offenders compared with older offenders (Figure 19). For example, offenders aged between 18 and 24 years were more likely

than offenders in any other age group to have a prior criminal history (72%). Conversely, with the exception of homicide offenders aged 10–14 years, those offenders aged 65 years or over were least likely to have a known criminal history (22%).

Table 16 Homicide offender prior criminal history by gender, 2007–08

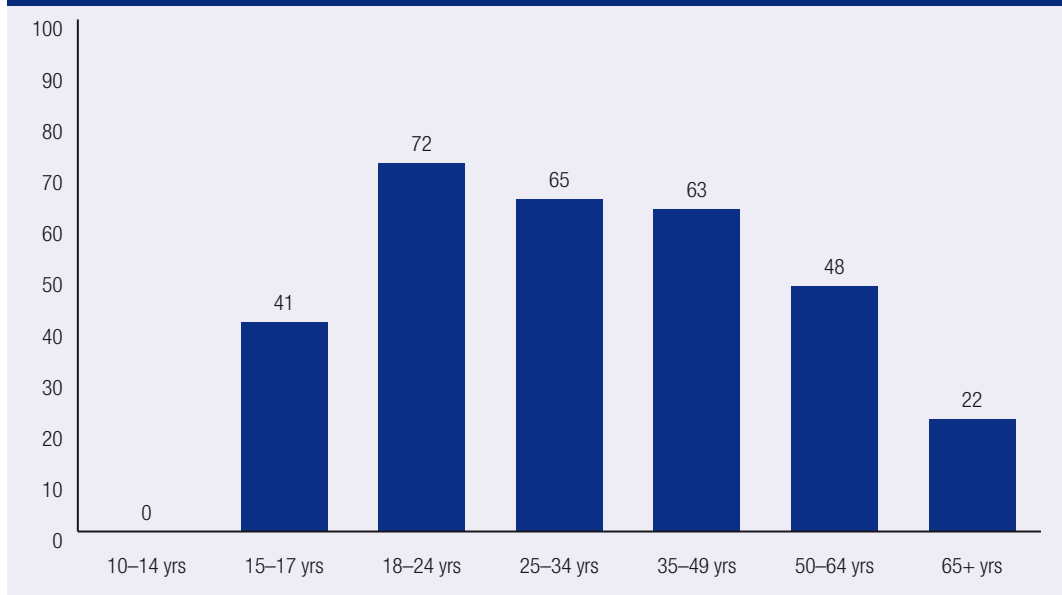
	Male offenders (n=268)		Female offenders (n=39)		All offenders (n=308)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Murder	4	1	0	0	4	1
Sexual assault	2	1	0	0	2	1
Assault	62	23	7	18	69	22
Robbery	4	1	0	0	4	1
Drug offences	32	12	3	8	35	11
Property offences	24	9	3	8	27	9
Other offences	38	14	4	10	42	14
Unspecified offence	4	1	0	0	4	1
Any criminal history	170	63	17	44	187	61
No known criminal history ^a	98	37	22	56	121	39

a: includes homicide offenders who had no stated and no prior criminal history

Note: percentages may not total due to rounding

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Figure 19 Homicide offenders with a prior criminal history by age group, 2007–08 (%)



Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Offender employment status

The employment status of 234 homicide offenders was recorded in 2007–08. For the remaining 71 offenders, employment status was not stated or unknown to the police. Of those with a known employment status, one in three were employed (n=82, 35%) but nearly half were known to be unemployed (n=112, 48%; Table 17). The remaining 40 offenders were not working and were not

unemployed—27 were studying (full- or part-time), four were undertaking primary domestic duties, four had retired or were receiving the aged pension, five were receiving a disability pension and five were listed as not in school but were too young to be employed.

Female offenders were more likely than male offenders to be unemployed (63% vs 46%) or undertaking domestic duties (15% vs 0%). A larger

Table 17 Homicide offender employment status by gender, 2007–08^a

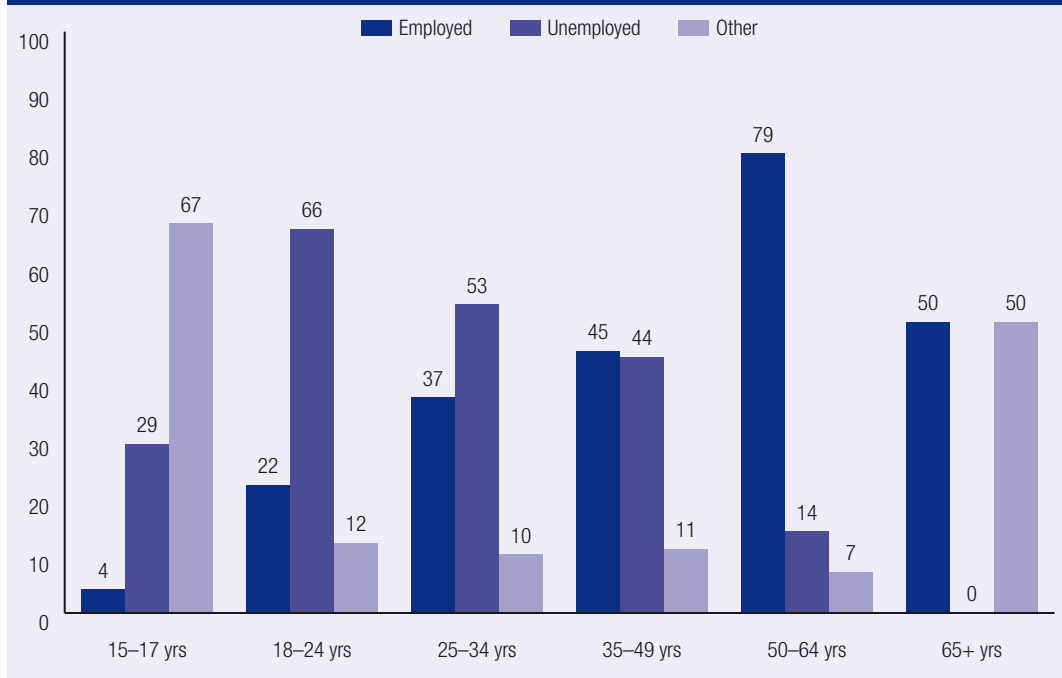
	Male offenders (n=207)		Female offenders (n=27)		All offenders (n=234) ^a	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Studying	26	13	1	4	27	12
Unemployed	95	46	17	63	112	48
Home/domestic duties	0	0	4	15	4	2
Age or disability pension	9	4	0	0	9	4
Employed	77	37	5	19	82	35

a: percentages may not total 100 due to rounding. Employment status was not available 59 male and 12 female victims

Note: percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Figure 20 Homicide offender employment status by age group, 2007–08 (%)



Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

proportion of male offenders were employed (37% vs 19%) or studying (13% vs 4%) at the time of the incident.

By age, younger offenders were more likely to be studying than any other age group, while older offenders were more likely to be employed; young adult offenders were more likely than older offenders to be unemployed at the time of the homicide (Figure 20). For example, of the offenders whose employment status was known, more than half aged between 15 and 17 years were studying (n=14, 58%), just over three-quarters of those aged between 50 and 64 years (n=11, 79%) were employed and two-thirds of offenders aged between 18 and 24 years were unemployed (n=42, 66%).

Offender suicide

Thirteen of the 308 offenders in 2007–08 committed suicide (4%). The vast majority (n=12) committed suicide prior to their arrest, while one offender committed suicide after being arrested—either in police custody or while on bail. Most of those who committed suicide did so following a domestic homicide (n=10), although two offenders committed suicide following an acquaintance homicide and one offender did so following a stranger homicide. Of those suicides that occurred following a domestic homicide, half (n=5) followed an intimate partner homicide, two followed a filicide, two followed a parricide and one followed a siblicide.

Familicide is a term used to describe a special case of domestic homicide where the offender not only kills the children in the family, but also their intimate partner and themselves (suicide). In 2007–08, there was one homicide involving the death of both an intimate partner and a child; in that case the offender did not commit suicide following the incident.

Of those offenders who committed suicide, two were female and 11 were male.

Conclusion

In 2007–08, there were 260 homicide incidents, involving 273 victims and 308 offenders. Of the victims, 161 were male and 112 were female and of the offenders, 269 were male and 38 were female.

When examined by rate, homicide victimisation (1.2 per 100,000 population) was equal with the previous year and remains the lowest recorded since NHMP first began collecting data in 1989–90. The male homicide victimisation rate in 2007–08 was 1.5 per 100,000, whereas female homicide victimisation rate was 1.0 per 100,000.

Of all homicide victims in 2007–08, 38 were identified as Indigenous Australians—16 males and 22 females. The rate of Indigenous homicide victimisation was seven times higher than for non-Indigenous Australians, although these results varied significantly by gender. Indigenous males, for example, (9 per 100,000) were six times as likely than non-Indigenous males to be victims of homicide. Indigenous females (6.1 per 100,000) were seven times as likely to be victims than non-Indigenous females.

In 2007–08, the majority of homicides (52%) were classified domestic homicides involving one or more victims who shared a family or domestic relationship with the offender. Of the domestic homicides, incidents involving intimate partners comprised the largest proportion (60%). Other analysis revealed that in 2007–08:

- six percent of homicide incidents were committed during the course of another crime. Robbery was the crime most likely preceding such homicides;
- forty homicide victims were children aged 17 years or younger;
- firearm involvement in homicide increased slightly (12%, up from 9% in the previous year), however, firearm involvement still remains at an historical low. The majority of firearms used in homicides were unregistered and/or unlicensed;
- most homicide offenders had a previous criminal conviction (61%). Male offenders were more likely to have a conviction history than female offenders;
- thirteen homicide offenders committed suicide following the homicide incident (4%), most committed suicide following domestic homicide; and
- twenty-nine offenders were children aged 17 years or younger. Most child homicide offenders committed the offence with at least one other offender.

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All URLs are correct at September 2010

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Appendixes

Appendix A: Data collection and quality control

Data relating to victims' alcohol and illicit-drug consumption has developed considerably since the commencement of NHMP. The law in each jurisdiction requires that all violent and unnatural deaths be reported to the Coroner. Consequently, as of 1 July 1996, additional information relating to the victim's alcohol and/or illicit prescription drug levels at the time of death was collected from coronial files in each state and territory.

As homicide is the most serious crime in any jurisdiction, it is important that NHMP data be accurate in order to provide a precise depiction of lethal violence in Australia. In order to ensure the accuracy of NHMP data, a rigorous quality-control process is undertaken; this involves cross-checking information contained in each police offence record from additional data sources. As outlined earlier, these supplementary sources include post-mortem reports, information provided by other agencies in the police services (statistical services, homicide squads or major crime units, firearms registries) and press clippings. For any discrepancies that may occur between information provided in the police offence report and one of the additional sources, the police source is queried to verify the circumstances. Depending on the reliability of the additional source and the information in response to NHMP query, the data relating to the homicide incident in NHMP may be updated accordingly.

A report detailing NHMP quality-control processes, titled *Quality Control in the National Homicide Monitoring Program* (Mouzos 2002), provides a comprehensive examination of this process and cites examples of identifying inconsistencies in the various data sources. The data discrepancies that arise include details of offender(s) and victim(s) employment status or age and the identification of cases that have remained on file as they were

originally recorded and investigated as homicides but have subsequently been found to be unsubstantiated or involve no suspicious circumstances or third-party involvement (eg cases in which an individual may have died of natural causes).

In addition to the possibility of discrepancies between the various data sources used in NHMP, there are discrepancies between NHMP data and homicide data produced by other agencies such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). For a discussion on the results of a comparative analysis of the various data sources see Mouzos (2003).

Categories

It is important to describe with precision some of the categories used in this report in order to decrease the chances of misinterpreting the data.

Firearms

Modified longarms, such as sawn-off rifles, are classified as Category H firearms in some jurisdictions. Although Category H (restricted) firearms usually refer to handguns, any firearm under a specified length is classified as a concealable firearm and hence as a restricted weapon. For example, in Victoria, shotguns or rifles with a length of less than 75 centimetres are classified as Category E longarms (see s 3 *Firearms Act 1996* (Vic)). In Queensland, any firearm under 75 centimetres in length is a Category H weapon (see s 7 *Weapons Categories Regulation 1997* (Qld)). The legislation acknowledges that offenders often illegally shorten firearms, including rifles and shotguns, in order to carry out armed robberies. When apprehended, these offenders face higher

penalties for possession of a concealable firearm than the standard penalties for possession of a longarm.

Alcohol and illicit drugs

There is some debate as to whether the consumption of alcohol and/or illicit drugs prior to the homicide incident can be considered a precipitating factor. Toxicology tests can determine whether the victim had consumed alcohol and/or illicit drugs prior to the homicide, but they cannot determine how the person was affected physiologically (unless the amount consumed was relatively high) or whether the person's alcohol or drug taking directly precipitated the homicide.

A prime example is cannabis metabolite (11-nor-9-carboxy-delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) in blood or urine; this can be detected in urine from several to 30 days on average after use (see Makkai 2000). Unless the offender suicided following the homicide incident, accurate measures of the offender's drug intake and/or intoxication are usually available only much later, when the offender has been arrested. For this reason, it is problematic to assume a causal relationship between the use of alcohol or illicit drugs and lethal violence.

Methodological note

As part of an internal review, an audit was conducted on all homicide incidents occurring between 1997–98 and 2007–08 collection periods—a total of 10 years. The auditing process involved assessing all hardcopy information and ensuring that it was represented correctly in the raw data coding. The types of information assessed included police records, NCIS reports, media information and additional information requests received from the law enforcement bodies. Raw information that required updating were then made and recorded. This report uses the recently audited data.

Rates are presented in the text and tables have been calculated using preliminary and updated 2008 population estimates contained in various issues of *Population by Age and Sex, Australian States and Territories* (ABS 2002–08a), except for those rates referring to specific age groups by gender, which have been calculated on the basis of *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS 2007).

All rates referring to Indigenous status have been calculated using *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1991 to 2021* (ABS 2009)

Appendix B: Data usage

Data provided by NHMP is an important source of homicide information that can be used for a variety of purposes. State or territory aggregated data, for example, give police and policymakers an indication of the extent of lethal violence in their jurisdiction. In addition, jurisdictions are also given access to longitudinal patterns in lethal violence. Specifically, the data may help to identify shifts in victimisation, offender trends, pattern changes surrounding the circumstances and characteristics of homicide incidents (such as a decrease in firearm homicides).

Data from NHMP also provide important guidance in the development of policy and strategic direction in diverse fields such as community services, policing, mental health, courts and correctional institutions. A key function of NHMP is the communication of the most current data and most recent results to key stakeholders, namely state and territory police services, local, state and federal level governments, non-government organisations, research agencies and the general public. NHMP records can further support jurisdictions by helping to develop an in-depth understanding of specific types of homicide.

Requests for NHMP data since monitoring began have steadily increased. NHMP has become a resource essential to a wide range of stakeholders. An indication of the ever-expanding audience to whom NHMP data have been communicated through publications and presentations is outlined in the list below.

Examples of agencies and organisations that have requested data

- Homicide squads/major crime units in all Australian states and territories;
- Other police units in all Australian states and territories;
- Australian Broadcasting Cooperation (ABC);
- ABC Radio;
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW);
- New South Wales Sentencing Council;
- Queensland Police Service State Crime Operations Command; and
- National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children.

Appendix C: Homicide incidents, 2007–08

Table A1 Trends in incidents, 1989–90 to 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
1989–90	95	74	68	25	20	5	20	0	307
1990–91	118	72	56	22	22	5	28	0	323
1991–92	106	54	68	29	27	9	18	2	313
1992–93	111	59	73	34	30	6	17	1	331
1993–94	118	48	62	36	29	5	23	2	323
1994–95	90	73	59	46	29	5	20	4	326
1995–96	110	52	65	33	13	6	22	1	302
1996–97	100	51	80	23	22	3	18	2	299
1997–98	107	41	73	34	27	4	11	1	298
1998–99	111	54	64	33	38	7	18	2	327
1999–2000	106	62	58	34	23	9	7	3	302
2000–01	116	53	65	28	21	8	17	0	308
2001–02	97	82	75	33	31	9	24	3 ^a	354
2002–03	103	57	62	32	22	6	17	3	302
2003–04	81	68	58	36	28	3	11	3	288
2004–05	73	55	51	27	20	10	12	3 ^a	251
2005–06	85	67	56	30	21	3	16	5	283
2006–07	89	47	53	27	12	8	18	4	258
2007–08	88	44	54	30	18	5	18	3	260

a: includes one incident on Norfolk Island

Source: AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2007–08 [computer file]

Table A2 Most serious charge, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Murder	81	41	48	27	16	3	16	1	233
Manslaughter	7	2	4	3	2	2	2	2	24
Infanticide	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not stated	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3
Total	88	44	54	30	18	5	18	3	260

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table A3 Incident status at time of reporting, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Solved ^a	79	40	50	30	18	5	18	3	243
Not yet solved	9	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	17
Total	88	44	54	30	18	5	18	3	260

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

Source: AIC National Homicide Monitoring Program 1989–90 to 2007–08 [computer file]

Table A4 Plurality of homicide incidents, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
One victim, one offender	63	36	41	26	13	5	15	3	202
One victim, multiple offenders	11	5	8	3	5	0	3	0	35
Multiple victims, one offender	6	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	8
Multiple victims, multiple offenders	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Total ^a	81	41	52	29	18	5	18	3	247

a: cases in which an offender has been identified. Excludes 12 cases in which an offender has not been identified or formally charged

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table A5 Homicide incidents occurring during the course of another crime, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Sexual assault	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	4
Kidnapping/abduction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Robbery	2	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	8
Other violent crime ^a	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Arson	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Break and enter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Theft	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other property	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prostitution	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drug offences	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No precipitating crime	85	42	44	30	18	5	18	3	245
Total	88	44	54	30	18	5	18	3	260

a: Includes more than one victim

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table A6 Temporal characteristics of homicides, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Time of day									
Midnight to 6 am	24	12	10	10	6	3	7	1	73
6 am to noon	17	1	5	4	2	0	1	1	31
Noon to 6 pm	17	6	14	2	1	1	2	1	44
6 pm to midnight	24	24	18	9	9	1	8	0	93
Not stated	6	1	7	5	0	0	0	0	19
Day of week									
Sunday	10	4	10	8	5	1	0	0	38
Monday	19	5	9	5	3	0	4	0	45
Tuesday	9	6	5	5	2	0	2	1	30
Wednesday	6	5	7	2	0	0	4	0	24
Thursday	14	3	7	7	5	0	4	2	42
Friday	10	8	7	2	1	1	1	0	30
Saturday	16	11	9	1	2	3	3	0	45
Not stated	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Month of year									
January	4	4	2	1	1	2	0	1	15
February	10	7	4	1	2	0	1	0	25
March	9	4	4	4	2	0	0	0	23
April	4	4	3	3	1	0	2	0	17
May	9	0	2	0	3	0	4	0	18
June	7	4	9	1	2	0	2	0	25
July	5	3	6	3	3	0	4	0	24
August	6	2	4	3	2	0	0	1	18
September	7	5	5	1	0	1	1	0	20
October	9	0	9	4	0	0	1	0	23
November	7	6	2	4	0	1	2	1	23
December	10	5	4	5	2	1	1	0	28
No stated	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table A7 Homicide incidents occurring during the course of another crime, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Residential	60	33	40	21	12	2	13	1	182
Street/open area	17	6	9	6	3	3	3	1	48
Other location ^a	10	5	3	3	3	0	2	1	27
Not stated	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3

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

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Appendix D: Homicide victims, 2007–08

Table B1 Homicide victims, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
One victim	80	44	51	30	18	5	18	3	249
Two victims	6	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	9
Three victims	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Four or more victims	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total incidents	88	44	54	30	18	5	18	3	260
Total victims	98	44	57	30	18	5	18	3	273

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table B2 Homicide victims, 1989–90 to 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
1989–90	104	79	71	28	21	7	21	0	331
1990–91	134	77	59	23	25	5	28	0	351
1991–92	115	59	70	30	28	9	18	2	331
1992–93	125	62	79	39	30	7	17	1	360
1993–94	132	51	62	38	29	5	23	2	342
1994–95	95	79	61	47	31	5	20	4	342
1995–96	118	55	75	33	14	40	22	1	358
1996–97	108	56	81	24	24	6	18	2	319
1997–98	112	44	75	36	29	4	11	1	312
1998–99	117	56	68	35	38	7	18	2	341
1999–2000	113	63	75	44	26	9	7	3	340
2000–01	117	55	69	28	23	8	17	0	317
2001–02	111	86	79	35	33	10	24	3 ^a	381
2002–03	109	69	70	32	22	6	18	3	329
2003–04	85	73	63	38	28	3	12	3	305
2004–05	81	55	55	29	20	11	12	3 ^a	266
2005–06	89	73	60	33	22	3	16	5	301
2006–07	92	47	56	28	12	9	18	4	266
2007–08	98	44	57	30	18	5	18	3	273

a: includes one victim on Norfolk Island

Source: ABS 2000–08a; AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table B3 Homicide victim gender, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Male									
Number	61	28	33	13	14	3	8	1	161
Rate per 100,000	1.8	1.1	1.5	1.2	1.8	1.2	7.0	0.6	1.5
Female									
Number	37	16	24	17	4	2	10	2	112
Rate per 100,000	1.0	0.6	1.1	1.6	0.5	0.8	5.7	1.9	1.0

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table B4 Homicide victim age, 2007–08

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Male									
Mean age	36.8	31.0	30.8	40.5	31.4	22.0	44.0	41.0	34.5
Median age	37.0	31.5	30.0	49.0	30.5	17.0	48.5	41.0	34.0
Female									
Mean age	37.1	46.7	33.9	34.2	32.8	43.0	38.6	44.5	37.6
Median age	38.0	43.0	29.5	33.0	28.0	43.0	42.0	44.5	35.5
Persons									
Mean age	36.9	36.7	32.1	36.9	31.7	30.4	41.0	43.0	35.8
Median age	37.0	34.0	30.0	34.5	28.5	34.0	41.0	45.0	35.0

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table B5 Homicide victim prior criminal history, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Male									
Prior criminal history	24	12	11	6	8	1	5	1	68
No prior history	26	13	12	5	6	1	1	0	64
Unknown/not stated	11	3	10	2	0	1	2	0	29
Female									
Prior criminal history	6	3	4	7	1	2	4	0	27
No prior history	27	11	15	6	3	0	3	2	67
Unknown/not stated	4	2	5	4	0	0	3	0	18
Persons									
Prior criminal history	30	15	15	13	9	3	9	1	95
No prior history	53	24	27	11	9	1	4	2	131
Unknown/not stated	15	5	15	6	0	1	5	0	47

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table B6 Homicide victim employment status, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Male									
Employed ^a	25	11	8	6	6	1	3	0	60
Other	18	16	9	0	5	2	4	1	55
Unknown/not stated	18	1	16	7	3	0	1	0	46
Female									
Employed ^a	5	6	6	2	2	1	0	0	22
Other	23	10	10	4	1	1	7	2	58
Unknown/not stated	9	0	8	11	1	0	3	0	32
Persons									
Employed ^a	30	17	14	8	8	2	3	0	82
Other	41	26	19	4	6	3	11	3	113
Unknown/not stated	27	1	24	18	4	0	4	0	78

a: in full- or part-time employment

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table B7 Homicide victim Indigenous status, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Male									
Indigenous	2	0	5	3	1	0	5	0	16
Non-Indigenous	58	28	28	10	13	3	3	1	144
Female									
Indigenous	1	1	3	6	2	0	9	0	22
Non-Indigenous	36	15	21	11	2	2	1	2	90
Persons									
Indigenous	3	1	8	9	3	0	14	0	38
Non-Indigenous	94	43	49	21	15	5	4	3	234

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table B8 Homicide victim primary cause of death, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Gunshot	13	7	8	0	0	1	0	1	30
Stab wound	35	26	22	14	8	1	8	0	114
Beating	22	4	14	9	5	1	9	0	64
Strangulation/suffocation	5	5	5	2	1	0	0	0	18
Other ^a	18	2	6	4	2	2	1	2	37
Unknown/not stated	5	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	10

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

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table B9 Homicide victim motive, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Revenge	13	4	2	1	1	1	2	0	24
Domestic ^a	4	6	4	1	2	1	0	1	19
Money/drugs	3	5	6	0	2	0	0	0	16
Alcohol-related argument	11	6	1	4	1	0	5	0	28
Other argument	10	6	7	3	5	0	0	0	31
Other motive ^b	20	10	23	14	3	1	8	1	80
No apparent motive ^c	10	3	5	4	0	2	0	1	25

a: includes jealousy, desertion/termination

b: includes racial vilification, sexual vilification, political/sexual gratification

c: includes unknown, not stated

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table B10 Homicide victim alcohol and drug consumption, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Male									
Alcohol only	9	8	8	6	9	1	6	0	47
Drugs only	9	7	0	0	0	1	0	0	17
Alcohol and drugs	12	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	16
None	24	10	21	7	4	0	1	0	67
Unknown/not stated	7	1	4	0	1	0	1	0	14
Female									
Alcohol only	5	3	3	3	1	0	7	0	22
Drugs only	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	4
Alcohol and drugs	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	5
None	25	10	16	6	3	2	2	1	65
Unknown/not stated	4	0	3	8	0	0	1	0	16
Persons									
Alcohol only	14	11	11	9	10	1	13	0	69
Drugs only	10	8	2	0	0	1	0	0	21
Alcohol and drugs	14	4	0	0	0	1	0	2	21
None	49	20	37	13	7	2	3	1	132
Unknown/not stated	11	1	7	8	1	0	2	0	30

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Appendix E: Offender characteristics, from NHMP findings

Table C1 Homicide offenders, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
One offender	69	36	43	26	13	5	15	3	210
Two offenders	6	3	7	1	2	0	2	0	21
Three offenders	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	6
Four or more offenders	2	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	8
No known offender(s)	9	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	15
Total incidents	88	44	54	30	18	5	18	3	260
Total offenders	97	49	64	37	31	5	22	3	308

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table C2 Homicide offenders^a, 1989–90 to 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
1989–90	112	76	79	24	22	6	20	0	339
1990–91	116	74	60	22	24	5	45	0	346
1991–92	103	48	73	29	25	12	18	2	310
1992–93	118	64	92	35	37	7	18	2	373
1993–94	142	52	75	43	34	6	28	2	382
1994–95	101	82	75	61	30	6	25	4	384
1995–96	120	52	75	34	20	7	22	3	333
1996–97	117	63	88	25	39	3	18	5	358
1997–98	122	40	75	34	26	3	15	2	317
1998–99	109	56	73	40	64	11	18	3	374
1999–2000	109	55	69	37	28	13	7	4	322
2000–01	119	61	65	32	25	10	25	0	337
2001–02	104	79	82	38	42	9	25	2 ^b	381
2002–03	105	63	79	38	22	7	17	3	334
2003–04	89	76	67	37	40	5	18	2	334
2004–05	80	65	64	27	26	15	13	2 ^b	292
2005–06	113	70	62	32	23	3	28	7	338
2006–07	103	52	59	28	18	8	22	4	294
2007–08	97	49	64	37	31	5	22	3	308

a: known offenders

b: includes one offender on Norfolk Island

Source: ABS 2000–2008a; AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table C3 Homicide offender gender, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA ^a	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Male									
Number	87	43	57	31	27	5	15	3	268
Rate per 100,000	2.5	1.6	2.7	2.8	3.4	2.0	13.2	1.8	2.5
Female									
Number	10	6	7	5	4	0	7	0	39
Rate per 100,000	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.5	0	6.6	0	0.4

a: excludes one offenders whose gender was not recorded

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table C4 Homicide offender age, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Male									
Mean age	32.4	32.5	31.9	31.5	29.0	25.6	31.3	31.3	31.7
Median age	29.0	29.0	28.0	31.5	24.0	23.0	31.0	31.0	29.0
Female									
Mean age	35.3	27.0	34.9	30.6	32.5	n/a	35.4	n/a	33.1
Median age	36.5	23.5	33.0	28.0	32.0	n/a	41.0	n/a	33.0
Persons									
Mean age	32.7	31.8	32.2	31.4	29.5	25.6	32.6	31.3	31.8
Median age	31.0	29.0	28.5	31.0	25.0	23.0	36.0	31.0	29.0

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table C5 Homicide offender prior criminal history, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Male									
Prior criminal history	58	27	30	20	17	5	11	2	170
No prior history	25	15	11	2	9	0	3	1	66
Unknown/not stated	4	1	16	9	1	0	1	0	32
Female									
Prior criminal history	5	1	3	3	3	n/a	2	n/a	17
No prior history	4	5	2	1	1	n/a	1	n/a	14
Unknown/not stated	1	0	2	1	0	n/a	4	n/a	8
Persons									
Prior criminal history	63	28	33	23	20	5	2	13	187
No prior history	29	20	13	3	10	0	1	4	80
Unknown/not stated	5	1	18	11	1	0	0	5	41

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table C6 Homicide offender employment status, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Male									
Employed ^a	27	16	20	5	5	2	1	1	77
Other	43	26	20	2	21	3	13	2	130
Unknown/ not stated	17	1	17	24	1	0	1	0	61
Female									
Employed ^a	2	1	1	0	0	n/a	1	n/a	5
Other	4	5	4	0	4	n/a	5	n/a	22
Unknown/ not stated	4	0	2	5	0	n/a	1	n/a	12
Persons									
Employed ^a	29	17	21	5	5	2	2	1	82
Other	47	31	24	2	25	3	18	2	152
Unknown/ not stated	21	1	19	30	1	0	2	0	74

a: in full- or part-time employment

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table C7 Homicide offender Indigenous status, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Male									
Indigenous	7	1	4	12	3	0	12	0	39
Non-Indigenous	80	41	53	19	24	5	3	3	228
Unknown/ not stated	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Female									
Indigenous	0	0	3	3	2	n/a	7	n/a	15
Non-Indigenous	10	6	4	2	2	n/a	0	n/a	24
Unknown/ not stated	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	n/a	0
Persons									
Indigenous	7	1	7	15	5	0	19	0	54
Non-Indigenous	90	47	57	21	26	5	3	3	252
Unknown/ not stated	0	1	0	1 ^a	0	0	0	0	2

a: includes 1 offender whose indigenous status and gender was not stated

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

Table C8 Homicide offender alcohol and drug consumption, 2007–08 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	National
Male									
Alcohol only	16	17	13	7	6	2	12	1	74
Drugs only	1	3	4	1	0	0	0	1	10
Alcohol and drugs	0	3	1	3	0	3	1	1	12
None	30	14	27	7	8	0	0	1	87
Unknown/not stated	39	6	12	13	12	0	1	0	83
Female									
Alcohol only	1	1	2	3	1	n/a	4	n/a	12
Drugs only	1	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	n/a	1
Alcohol and drugs	1	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	n/a	1
None	5	5	3	2	1	n/a	3	n/a	19
Unknown/not stated	2	0	1	0	2	n/a	0	n/a	5
Persons									
Alcohol only	17	18	15	10	7	2	16	1	86
Drugs only	2	3	4	1	0	0	0	1	11
Alcohol and drugs	1	3	1	3	0	3	1	1	13
None	35	19	30	9	9	0	4	0	106
Unknown/not stated	41	6	13	14	14	0	1	0	89

Source: AIC NHMP 2007–08 [computer file]

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