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Deaths in custody in Australia 2023–24

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AIC	Australian Institute of Criminology
MSO	most serious offence
NCIS	National Coronial Information System
NDICP	National Deaths in Custody Program
RCIADIC	Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody

Abstract

The National Deaths in Custody Program has monitored the extent and nature of deaths occurring in prison, police custody and youth detention in Australia since 1980. The Australian Institute of Criminology has coordinated the program since its establishment in 1992, the result of a recommendation made the previous year by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. In 2023–24, there were 104 deaths in custody: 76 in prison custody, 27 in police custody or custody-related operations and one in youth detention. In total, there were 24 Indigenous deaths and 80 non-Indigenous deaths in custody. This report contains detailed information on these deaths and compares the findings with longer term trends.

Introduction

The National Deaths in Custody Program (NDICP) monitors the extent and nature of deaths occurring in prison, police custody and youth detention in Australia. The NDICP was established at the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) in 1992 in response to recommendation 41 of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC):

“

that statistics and other information on Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal deaths in prison, police custody and juvenile detention centres, and related matters, be monitored nationally on an ongoing basis ... within the Australian Institute of Criminology.

The final report of the RCIADIC (1991, recommendation 41) outlined the types of deaths that would require notification to the NDICP. They are:

- a death, wherever occurring, of a person who is in prison custody, police custody or youth detention;
- a death, wherever occurring, of a person whose death is caused or contributed to by traumatic injuries sustained, or by lack of proper care, while in such custody or detention;
- a death, wherever occurring, of a person who dies, or is fatally injured, in the process of police or prison officers attempting to detain that person; or
- a death, wherever occurring, of a person attempting to escape from prison, police custody or youth detention.

Between 1 July 1991 and 30 June 2024, the NDICP recorded 568 Indigenous deaths in custody (ie prison custody, police custody and custody-related operations and youth detention; see Table B2).

Definition of a death in custody

NDICP definitions of a death in prison custody or in police custody and custody-related operations are shown in Box 1. There are several key differences between the scope of the NDICP and legislated definitions of deaths in custody for coronial purposes. Thus, deaths that may require notification to the coroner under state or territory legislation may not fall within the scope of the NDICP.

Box 1: Definitions of deaths in custody

Deaths in prison custody

Deaths in prison custody include deaths that occur in prison or youth detention facilities. This also includes the deaths that occur during transfer to or from prison or youth detention centres, or in medical facilities following transfer from adult or youth detention centres (RCIADIC 1991).

Deaths in police custody

Deaths in police custody are divided into two main categories:^a

Category 1

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

Category 2

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

a: This definition of a 'death in police custody' is based on a 1994 resolution of the Australasian Police Ministers' Council. Category 1(a) deaths have been included in the NDICP since 1980, whereas data on police operational deaths (category 1(b) and category 2 deaths) have been collected by the NDICP since 1990

Data collection

The NDICP holds data on deaths in prison custody and police custody and custody-related operations since 1979–80. The information held in the NDICP database comes from two main sources:

- NDICP notification forms completed by all state and territory police services, correctional departments and youth justice agencies in Australia; and
- coronial records, such as police narratives, toxicology reports, autopsy reports, and coronial findings from the National Coronial Information System (NCIS).

Data from notification forms are cross-referenced with coronial records sourced from the NCIS. The AIC has access to open cases (those for which the coronial investigation has not been finalised) and closed cases (those for which the coronial investigation has been finalised and the coroner has made a finding) from all jurisdictions.

NDICP data are verified twice during the reporting cycle. Key data items published on the Deaths in custody in Australia quarterly dashboard (<https://www.aic.gov.au/statistics/deaths-custody-australia-quarterly>) are cross-referenced with available information on the NCIS and verified with data providers at the end of each quarter. NDICP data are further verified with NCIS records and data providers at the end of the financial year in preparation for the yearly report.

For more information on the data items used in this report, please see *Appendix A* on page 33.

Scope

The NDICP collects information about the incidence and circumstances of deaths of people who are detained, who are in the process of being detained or who are escaping or have escaped. Therefore, the NDICP only monitors deaths of people who are in custody or who are alleged offenders. The NDICP uses the definition of a death in custody recommended by the RCIADIC in determining whether deaths should or should not be included in the NDICP database. For the purposes of the NDICP, a person is considered to be in custody when they are under arrest or not free to leave the detention of police or correctional officers. As outlined in Box 1, this includes deaths that occur in a hospital if the injury 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 their death (such as during shootings, sieges, raids and pursuits), the person is considered to have been in custody at the time of death. In all cases, the question of inclusion centres on whether the deceased was in custody at the time of death.

Borderline deaths

While most deaths are straightforward and clearly fall within the definition, every year there are some deaths where it is unclear whether the death should be classified as a death in custody. These deaths are classified as borderline and are excluded from analysis pending their coronial outcome. This can mean a delay of several years before data on those particular deaths are included, as it may take months or years for a case to be heard in the relevant coroner's court. 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 deaths is resolved.

In 2023–24, five deaths reported to the NDICP were classified as borderline. These deaths are not included in the data presented in this report. Borderline deaths will be classified as in-scope or out-of-scope when coronial findings become available.

Out-of-scope deaths

The program does not include deaths of people who are clients of police services or innocent bystanders who die in the course of a police operation. Consequently, deaths in the following circumstances are not recorded in the NDICP as a death in police custody:

- deaths during operations such as search and rescue, and evacuations, where the deceased was not being detained or in the process of being detained for breaching the law;
- deaths during operations to prevent a suicide, where the purpose was not to detain the deceased due to a breach of the law—for example, where police were responding to a concern for welfare notice and were attempting to stop a person suiciding, and the person was not threatening harm to others or not otherwise being sought by police; and
- deaths of innocent bystanders killed during a police operation (eg a pedestrian or passenger the police were not seeking to detain who dies as a result of a motor vehicle pursuit). If the deceased passenger was involved in committing an offence such as an armed robbery or motor vehicle theft prior to the pursuit commencing, the death falls within the scope of the NDICP.

In 2023–24, five deaths reported to the NDICP were classified as out-of-scope.

Considerations

The purpose of the NDICP is to monitor annual and trend information on the nature and extent of deaths in Australian prison and police custody. This function is performed through the collation and cross-referencing of quantitative data from police services, correctional departments and the NCIS on the characteristics of the deceased and the circumstances of the death. Compiling qualitative data from coronial findings sits outside the scope of the NDICP and these data are not routinely reported in the *Deaths in custody in Australia* series. These contextual data are instead collated for individual studies examining specific population groups or categories of deaths.

The annual *Deaths in custody in Australia* Statistical Report is finalised within six months of the end of the reference period to meet government and community expectations around the timeliness of deaths in custody data. This time frame can limit the availability of coronial records to the NDICP, and consequently the completeness of data items such as cause and manner of death. Data may be missing at the time of reporting or are preliminary and subject to change once coronial findings are released. Historical data are reviewed and updated annually.

The publication time frame also affects the availability of contextual information, such as the nature of health care and medical intervention preceding natural cause deaths, which is largely derived from coronial findings. The initiation and length of coronial inquiries vary but it may be several years before a coronial finding is available. As such, material from coronial findings is not captured in the NDICP for annual reporting but may be examined in separate studies.

Changes from previous report

As of 1 August 2023, the age of criminal responsibility in the Northern Territory was raised from 10 to 12 years. This change has been incorporated in police custody death rates calculated for this report.

In July 2024 the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) published an updated release of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Estimates and Projections population data series based on the 2021 Census of Population and Housing (ABS 2024c). Relevant population rates were calculated using the new population data series (ABS 2024c) and customised data provided by the ABS (ABS 2024b). These rates may not be directly comparable to rates reported in previous publications of *Deaths in custody in Australia*.

Deaths in custody 2023–24

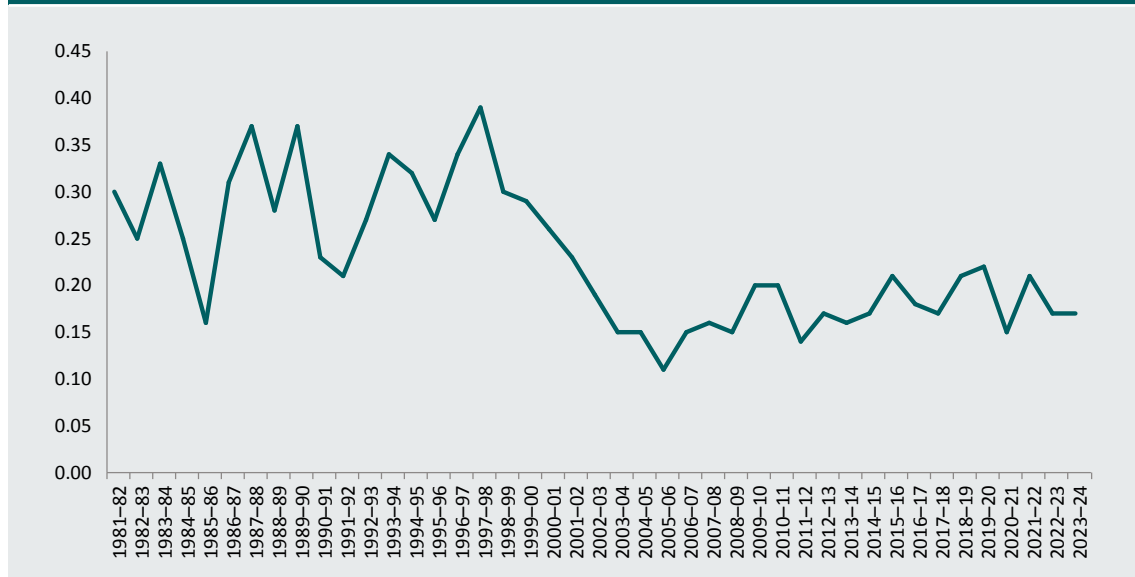
There were 104 deaths in prison custody, police custody and custody-related operations and youth detention in 2023–24.

Deaths in prison custody

Between 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024 there were 76 deaths in prison custody, six more than in 2022–23 (see Table B1). Despite this increase, the death rate remained the same, at 0.17 per 100 prisoners in 2022–23 and 2023–24 (see Figure 1). Since 1979–80, there was an average of 51 deaths in prison custody each year (range: 15–89).

In 2023–24, there was one death in youth detention, the first in 14 years. Overall, there have been 19 deaths in youth detention since 1979–80. The death in youth detention is not included in the following discussion to respect the privacy of this individual.

Figure 1: Deaths in prison custody, 1981–82 to 2023–24 (rate per 100 prisoners)



Note: Rates were calculated using *Prisoners in Australia* data (ABS 2000–2020) for the years 1981–82 to 2019–20 and *Corrective services, Australia – June quarter data* (ABS 2021, 2022, 2023b, 2024a) for the years 2020–21 to 2023–24

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2024 [computer file]; see Appendix C, Table C4

New South Wales recorded the largest number of deaths in prison custody ($n=20$), followed by Queensland ($n=19$; see Table B4). Western Australia recorded 12 deaths in prison custody. There were 11 deaths in prison custody in both Victoria and South Australia, two deaths in the Northern Territory and one in the Australian Capital Territory. There were no deaths in prison custody in Tasmania in 2023–24. The highest prison custody death rate was in South Australia (0.33 per 100 prisoners), followed by the Australian Capital Territory (0.24 per 100 prisoners).

In 2023–24, 74 male prisoners (97%) and two female prisoners (3%) died (see Appendix C, Table C3). The death rate for male prisoners was 0.18 per 100 male prisoners, similar to the rate reported in 2022–23 (0.17; see Table C5). The death rate for female prisoners decreased from 0.12 per 100 female prisoners in 2022–23 to 0.06 in 2023–24. Males comprised most persons in full-time custody at June 2024 (92%, $n=40,578$; ABS 2024a).

The median age at time of death for prisoners in 2023–24 was 52.5 years (range: 22–86), lower than the median of 57.0 years recorded in 2022–23. The median age of death for prisoners in Australia has increased each decade for the last 40 years, from 30.0 years between 1984–85 and 1993–94, to 54.0 years from 2014–15 and 2023–24. Death rates by age were not calculated for this report due to relevant prison population data not being available at the time of reporting (see pages 36–37 in *Appendix A* for more detail).

Most deaths in prison custody in 2023–24 were of sentenced prisoners (59%, $n=45$; see Table C10). Since 1979–80 over two-thirds of prison custody deaths have been of sentenced prisoners (69%, $n=1,579$) with an average of 35 deaths each year. In both 2023–24 and the previous year, 59 percent of prison custody deaths were of sentenced prisoners. There were 29 deaths of unsentenced prisoners (38%) in 2023–24, the third largest number of deaths of unsentenced prisoners since 1979–80. There has been an average of 16 deaths of unsentenced prisoners each year since 1979–80. Two deaths in prison custody in 2023–24 were of prisoners classified as ‘other’—for example, those serving a detention order. The proportion of sentenced and unsentenced prisoners who died in custody in 2023–24 was similar to the overall proportion of sentenced and unsentenced prisoners at 1 June 2024 (60%, $n=26,195$ and 40%, $n=17,625$ respectively; ABS 2024a).

Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations

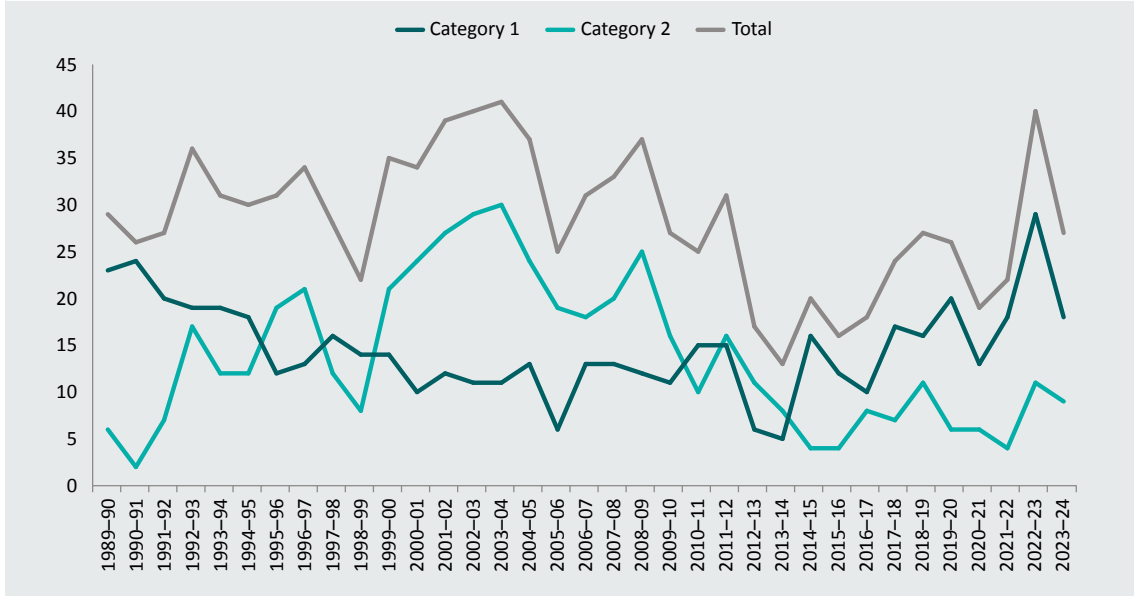
There were 27 deaths in police custody and custody-related operations (hereafter referred to as police custody) in 2023–24 (see Table B1), 13 fewer than in 2022–23 ($n=40$; see Figure 2). Since 1989–90 there have been an average of 29 deaths in police custody each year (range: 13–41).

Twenty-five males died in police custody in 2023–24, a decrease from the 38 male deaths in 2022–23. There were two female deaths in police custody in 2023–24, the same as in 2022–23. The median age at time of death in police custody was 33.0 years (range: 16–59).

Queensland recorded the largest number of deaths in police custody in 2023–24 ($n=8$), followed by New South Wales ($n=7$), Western Australia ($n=6$) and Victoria ($n=5$). There was one death in police custody in Tasmania, while no deaths in police custody were recorded in South Australia, the Northern Territory or the Australian Capital Territory.

Two-thirds of the deaths in police custody were category 1 deaths (67%, $n=18$; see Figure 2 and Appendix D, Table D3). Category 1 deaths are those occurring during close police contact where the police significantly influence or control the person’s behaviour (see *Introduction* for further information on classification). The remaining one-third of police custody deaths in 2023–24 occurred during non-close police contact (33%, $n=9$). Category 1 deaths have exceeded category 2 deaths each year since 2014–15.

Figure 2: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, 1989–90 to 2023–24 (n)



Note: For a definition of these categories, see Box 1 in the *Introduction*
 Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2024 [computer file]; see Appendix D, Table D3

Indigenous deaths in custody 2023–24

Between 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024, 24 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died in custody (see Table B2). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accounted for 23 percent of all deaths in custody in 2023–24.

Indigenous deaths in prison custody

There were 18 deaths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in prison custody (see Tables 1 and B2), and one death in youth detention in 2023–24 (see Table B2). The death in youth detention is not included in the following discussion to respect the privacy of this individual.

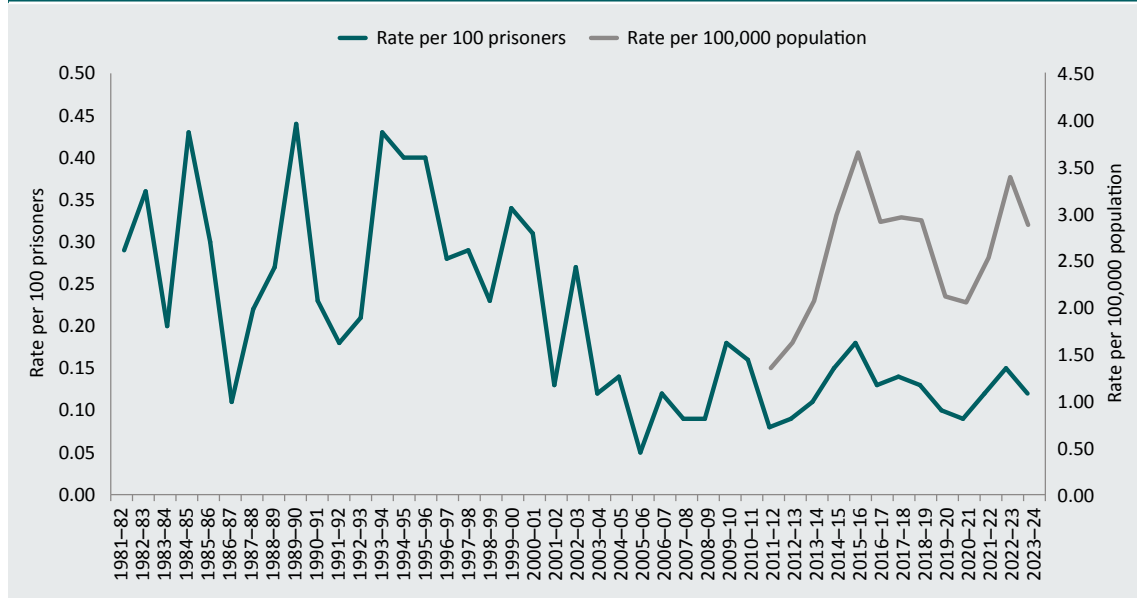
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoner deaths accounted for 24 percent of all deaths in prison custody in 2023–24. Thirty-five percent of the Australian prisoner population in the June quarter 2024 were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners (ABS 2024a). The proportion of Indigenous deaths in prison custody in 2023–24 exceeds the average of 18 percent recorded since 1979–80 for the second consecutive year. The NDICP has recorded 371 Indigenous deaths in prison custody in the 33 years since the RCIADIC (1 July 1991 to 30 June 2024; see Table B2).

Queensland and Western Australia recorded the highest number of Indigenous deaths in prison custody in 2023–24 ($n=5$ each; see Table 1), followed by New South Wales ($n=4$). Queensland ($n=4,243$) and New South Wales ($n=3,915$) had the largest Indigenous prison populations in the June quarter 2024, followed by Western Australia ($n=3,386$). South Australia and the Northern Territory each recorded two Indigenous deaths in prison custody. There were no Indigenous deaths in prison custody recorded in Victoria, Tasmania or the Australian Capital Territory in 2023–24.

The death rate among the Indigenous prisoner population in 2023–24 was 0.12 per 100 Indigenous prisoners (see Table 1), a decrease from the death rate of 0.15 per 100 Indigenous prisoners in 2022–23 (see Figure 3 and Appendix C, Table C4). The death rate of Indigenous prisoners was highest in South Australia (0.23 per 100 prisoners), followed by Western Australia (0.15 per 100 prisoners) and Queensland (0.12 per 100 prisoners (see Table 1). The death rate among Indigenous prisoners in the most recent two decades has been less than half that of the preceding two decades.

The prison custody death rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was 2.87 per 100,000 population aged 18 years and over (at 30 June 2023). This was a decrease from 3.43 per relevant 100,000 population aged 18 years and over recorded in 2022–23. The death rate in prison custody per relevant 100,000 population was highly variable between 2011–12 and 2023–24 (range: 1.30–3.69; see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Indigenous deaths in prison custody, 1981–82 to 2023–24



Note: Rates per 100 prisoners were calculated using *Prisoners in Australia* data (ABS 2000–2020) for the years 1981–82 to 2019–20 and *Corrective services, Australia – June quarter data* (ABS 2021, 2022, 2023b, 2024a) for the years 2020–21, 2021–22, 2022–23 and 2023–24. Rates per relevant 100,000 population were calculated using population data from *Estimates and projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (ABS 2024c). Relevant Indigenous population data are not available for years prior to 2011–12.

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2024 [computer file]

Sex and age

All Indigenous deaths in prison custody in 2023–24 were male, representing a death rate of 0.13 per 100 Indigenous male prisoners (see Table 1). This is a slight decline from the death rate reported for Indigenous male prisoners in 2022–23 (0.15 per 100 relevant prisoners). The prison custody death rate of Indigenous males per 100,000 population aged 18 years and over was 5.81 in 2023–24 (at 30 June 2023; see Table C1), a decrease from 6.29 in 2022–23.

In 2023–24 the median age at time of death for Indigenous prisoners was 42.5 years (range: 23–70; see Table 2). An equal number of Indigenous deaths in prison custody were of prisoners aged 25 to 39 years and 40 to 54 years ($n=6$ each). Just over one-quarter were aged 55 years or over (28%, $n=5$), while one Indigenous prisoner was aged under 25 years.

Legal status and time spent in custody

Over half of Indigenous deaths in prison custody in 2023–24 were of unsentenced prisoners (56%, $n=10$) compared with one-third which were of sentenced prisoners (33%, $n=6$; see Table 1). There were two Indigenous deaths in prison custody where the individual was serving a continuing detention order and their legal status was ‘other’.

The proportion of unsentenced Indigenous deaths in prison custody was higher than the proportion of unsentenced Indigenous prisoners at 1 June 2024 (43%, $n=6,612$; ABS 2024a). There has been an average of three deaths of unsentenced Indigenous prisoners each year since 1979–80 (range: 0–11). The proportion of unsentenced Indigenous deaths in 2023–24 is the highest recorded since 1979–80, and the number is the second highest in this 45-year period (see Appendix C, Table C10).

The death rate of unsentenced Indigenous prisoners exceeded the death rate of sentenced Indigenous prisoners in 2023–24 (0.15 vs 0.07 per 100 prisoners), as it did in 2022–23 (0.19 vs 0.12 per 100 Indigenous prisoners; see Table 1).

The median length of time spent in custody prior to death was one year and five months (mean=1 year and 5 months) for sentenced Indigenous prisoners. Among unsentenced Indigenous prisoners, the median length of time spent in custody prior to death was approximately two months (mean=5 months).

Most serious offence

The NDICP collects information on the most serious offence (MSO) leading to the most recent period of custody (see *Appendix A* on page 35 for details of the offence categories).

All but two of the 18 Indigenous prisoners who died in 2023–24 had been incarcerated for a violent offence (89%; see Table 1). Five of the sentenced prisoners (83%) and nine of the unsentenced prisoners (90%) who died in prison custody were incarcerated for a violent offence. Since 1979–80 most Indigenous prisoners who died in prison custody had been incarcerated for a violent offence (70%, $n=292$).

Cause of death

Cause of death relates to the direct cause of death certified by the coroner. Provisional cause of death data are provided to the NDICP by the custodial authority and confirmed following a coronial finding. See *Appendix A* for further information on verification of cause of death data.

Cause of death information was available at the time of reporting for 15 of the 18 Indigenous deaths in prison custody. Of these, eight (53%) were due to natural causes and seven (47%) were due to hanging and related complications (see Table 1). This is the equal highest number of hanging related Indigenous deaths in prison custody since 1979–80 (see Appendix C, Table C13) and the highest proportion since 2001–02. Since 1979–80 there has been an average of three Indigenous deaths in prison custody each year where the cause of death was attributed to hanging and related complications (range: 0–7).

The cause of death was known for six of the eight Indigenous prisoners who died of natural causes in prison custody in 2023–24. Causes of death included diseases of the circulatory and respiratory systems and cancer. Where cause of death was known, half of all Indigenous deaths in prison custody since 1979–80 have been caused by a disease of the circulatory system such as ischaemic heart disease (50%, $n=120$).

In 2023–24, cause of death information was known for five of the six sentenced prisoners. Four (80%) of these deaths were attributed to natural causes, representing a death rate of 0.05 per 100 sentenced prisoners. The remaining death of a sentenced Indigenous prisoner was due to hanging and related complications.

Information on cause of death was available for eight of the 10 unsentenced Indigenous prisoners. Of those where the cause was known, six (75%) were due to hanging and related complications, while two (25%) were of natural causes. The hanging death rate of unsentenced prisoners was 0.09 per 100 unsentenced Indigenous prisoners.

Manner of death

Manner of death refers to the accountability or responsibility for the death and is determined by the coroner. In the absence of a coronial finding, manner of death is provisionally based on information from the custodial authority and available coronial documents on NCIS. See *Cause versus manner of death* in *Appendix A* on page 34 for further information.

Manner of death information was available at time of reporting for 15 of the 18 Indigenous deaths in prison custody in 2023–24. Of these, the most frequently recorded manner of death was natural causes (53%, $n=8$), followed by self-inflicted deaths (47%, $n=7$; see Table 1). One of the seven self-inflicted deaths was recorded as intentional, while the intent of the remaining six was still to be determined by the coroner. All seven self-inflicted deaths were due to hanging and related complications (see Table C2). This is the equal highest number of self-inflicted Indigenous deaths in prison custody since 1979–80, and the highest number since 2000–01 (see Table C18).

In 2023–24 the rates of natural cause and self-inflicted deaths were both 0.05 per 100 Indigenous prisoners. These rates were similar to the natural cause and self-inflicted death rates recorded in 2022–23 (0.06 per 100 prisoners and 0.04 per 100 prisoners respectively).

Table 1: Indigenous deaths in prison custody, 2023–24

	<i>n</i>	%	Rate per 100 prisoners
Jurisdiction			
NSW	4	22	0.10
Vic	0	0	0.00
Qld	5	28	0.12
WA	5	28	0.15
SA	2	11	0.23
Tas	0	0	0.00
ACT	0	0	0.00
NT	2	11	0.10
Sex			
Male	18	100	0.13
Female	0	0	0.00
Age group (years)			
18–24	1	6	–
25–39	6	33	–
40–54	6	33	–
55+	5	28	–
Median (mean)	42.5 (45.1)		
Legal status			
Sentenced	6	33	0.07
Unsentenced	10	56	0.15
Other	2	11	–
Most serious offence			
Violent	16	89	–
Theft-related	1	6	–
Drug-related	1	6	–
Traffic-related	0	0	–
Good order	0	0	–
Other	0	0	–

Table 1: Indigenous deaths in prison custody, 2023–24 (cont.)			
	<i>n</i>	%	Rate per 100 prisoners
Cause of death^a			
Natural causes	8	53	0.05
Hanging and related complications	7	47	0.05
Head injury	0	0	0.00
External trauma	0	0	0.00
Gunshot wound	0	0	0.00
Alcohol/drugs	0	0	0.00
Other/multiple	0	0	0.00
Unascertained	0	0	0.00
Manner of death^b			
Natural causes	8	53	0.05
Self-inflicted ^c	7	47	0.05
Unlawful homicide	0	0	0.00
Justifiable homicide	0	0	0.00
Accident or misadventure	0	0	0.00
Other	0	0	0.00
Not determined	0	0	0.00
Location of death			
Cell	10	56	–
Other custodial setting	0	0	–
Public hospital	7	39	–
Prison hospital	1	6	–
Psychiatric hospital	0	0	–
Private property	0	0	–
Public place	0	0	–
Other	0	0	–
Type of prison			
Private	2	11	–
Government	16	89	–
Total	18		0.12

a: Excludes 3 deaths where cause of death information was not available

b: Excludes 3 deaths where manner of death information was not available

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

Note: Excludes 1 death in youth detention. Rates (unless otherwise specified) have been calculated using *Corrective services, Australia – June quarter 2024 data* (ABS 2024a). Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Source: AIC NDICP 2023–24 [computer file]

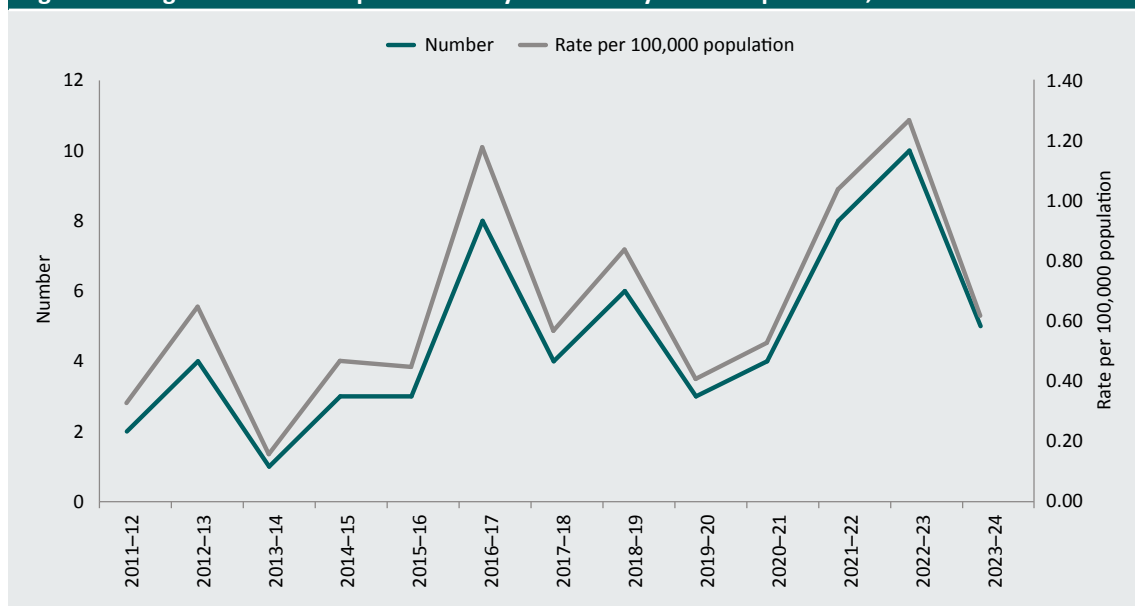
Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations

Five Indigenous people died in police custody in 2023–24 (see Figure 4 and Table 2). This is half the number of Indigenous deaths recorded in 2022–23 ($n=10$) and lower than the average number of deaths each year since 1989–90 ($n=6$, range: 1–12; see Table B2).

The NDICP has recorded 192 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths in police custody and custody-related operations in the 33 years since the RCIADIC (1 July 1991 to 30 June 2024; see Table B2).

New South Wales and Queensland each recorded two deaths, while one death was recorded in Victoria (see Table B8). No Indigenous deaths in police custody were recorded in the other states or territories in 2023–24. The death rate of Indigenous people in police custody was 0.62 per 100,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population aged 10 years and over (12 years and over in the Northern Territory; at 30 June 2023; see Appendix D, Table D1). This is less than half the rate of Indigenous deaths in police custody recorded in 2022–23 (1.27 per relevant population).

Figure 4: Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, 2011–12 to 2023–24



Note: Rates per relevant 100,000 population were calculated using population data from *Estimates and projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (ABS 2024c)

Source: AIC NDICP 2011–2024 [computer file]

Sex and age

All five Indigenous deaths in police custody were male (see Table 2). This represents a death rate of 1.26 per 100,000 male population aged 10 years and over (12 years and over in the Northern Territory; see Appendix D, Table D1). In 2023–24, Indigenous males comprised 19 percent of all deaths in police custody, similar to the proportion of all Indigenous male deaths in police custody since 1989–90 (18%, $n=179$; see Table D5).

The median age of Indigenous people who died in police custody in 2023–24 was 28.0 years (range: 21–32; see Table 2). Three of the deaths were of individuals aged 25 to 39 years, while two were of persons aged under 25 years. The death rate of Indigenous people who died in police custody aged 25 to 39 years was 1.40 per 100,000 relevant population, followed by a rate of 0.66 per 100,000 relevant population for those aged under 25 years (see Table D1).

Most serious offence

In 2023–24, two Indigenous persons who died in police custody were suspected of having committed a violent offence and two were suspected of committing a good order offence (see Table 2). One Indigenous person who died in police custody was suspected of committing a traffic-related offence. Since 1989–90, a third (33%, $n=55$) of Indigenous people who died in police custody were suspected of having committed a theft-related offence, 32 percent ($n=53$) were suspected of a violent offence and 22 percent ($n=37$) were suspected of a good order offence (see Table D16).

Circumstances of custodial period

Deaths in police custody can occur in institutional settings such as a police station, during transfer to or between facilities, or while police are detaining or attempting to detain the person.

Of the five Indigenous police custody deaths in 2023–24, four occurred during the process of detaining or attempting to detain the person, and one occurred in an institutional setting (see Table 2). All four deaths which occurred during the process of detaining the person occurred during a pursuit, either a motor vehicle pursuit or an ‘other’ pursuit ($n=2$ each). Almost two-thirds (63%, $n=81$) of Indigenous deaths in police custody since 1989–90 where the person was being detained occurred during either a motor vehicle pursuit ($n=56$) or an ‘other’ pursuit ($n=25$; see Table D25).

Just under one-third of Indigenous deaths in police custody since 1989–90 occurred in an institutional setting (31%, $n=64$), while 63 percent occurred during the process of detainment ($n=128$; see Table D22).

Cause of death

Cause of death information was available for three of the five Indigenous deaths in police custody in 2023–24 (see Table 2). Of these, two were due to external or multiple trauma, and one was due to multiple causes. External or multiple trauma has been the most common cause of death of Indigenous people in police custody since 1989–90 (32%, $n=63$; see Appendix D, Table D10).

Manner of death

In 2023–24, manner of death information was available for three of the five Indigenous deaths in police custody (see Table 2). Two of the deaths were due to an accident or misadventure, and one was due to other or unknown circumstances.

Since 1989–90, accident or misadventure has been the most common manner of death for Indigenous people in police custody (46%, $n=90$). This was followed by natural causes (21%, $n=41$), self-inflicted deaths (17%, $n=34$) and justifiable homicides (8%, $n=16$; see Table D13). There were no Indigenous deaths as a result of a police shooting in 2023–24.

Location of death

Location of death relates to the location at time of death only. It therefore does not capture the location of any events that preceded the death, if this differs from where the individual ultimately died. For example, where a person is shot on private property and later dies in a public hospital as a result of the gunshot wound, the location of death is recorded as public hospital.

Three of the five Indigenous deaths in police custody in 2023–24 occurred in a public hospital and two occurred in a public place (see Table 2). The cause of death was external trauma for the two Indigenous deaths in custody which occurred in a public place. Two-thirds of Indigenous deaths in police custody since 1989–90 which occurred in a public place and cause of death was known were due to head injury or external or multiple trauma (66%, $n=51$).

Table 2: Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, 2023–24		
	<i>n</i>	%
Jurisdiction		
NSW	2	40
Vic	1	20
Qld	2	40
WA	0	0
SA	0	0
Tas	0	0
ACT	0	0
NT	0	0
Category of death		
Category 1	1	20
Category 2	4	80
Sex		
Male	5	100
Female	0	0
Age group (years)		
10–24	2	40
25–39	3	60
40–54	0	0
55+	0	0
Median (mean)	28.0 (26.2)	
Most serious offence		
Violent	2	40
Theft-related	0	0
Drug-related	0	0
Traffic-related	1	20
Good order	2	40
Other	0	0
Circumstances of custodial period		
Institution	1	20
Detaining	4	80
Escaping	0	0
Other	0	0

Table 2: Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, 2023–24 (cont.)		
	<i>n</i>	%
Cause of death^a		
Natural causes	0	0
Hanging	0	0
Head injury	0	0
External trauma	2	67
Gunshot wound	0	0
Alcohol/drugs	0	0
Other/multiple	1	33
Unascertained	0	0
Manner of death^b		
Natural causes	0	0
Self-inflicted ^c	0	0
Unlawful homicide	0	0
Justifiable homicide	0	0
Accident or misadventure	2	67
Other	1	33
Not determined	0	0
Location of death		
Cell	0	0
Other custodial environment	0	0
Public hospital	3	60
Prison hospital	0	0
Psychiatric hospital	0	0
Private property	0	0
Public place	2	40
Other	0	0
Total	5	100

a: Excludes 2 deaths where cause of death information was not available

b: Excludes 2 deaths where manner of death information was not available

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

Note: The legal age of criminal responsibility was 10 years in all states and territories except the Northern Territory, where the legal age of criminal responsibility was 12 years

Source: AIC NDICP 2023–24 [computer file]

Non-Indigenous deaths in custody 2023–24

Eighty non-Indigenous people died in custody between 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024 (see Table B3). Non-Indigenous deaths accounted for 77 percent of all deaths in custody in 2023–24.

Non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody

In 2023–24, there were 58 non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody (see Table 3), accounting for 76 percent of deaths in prison custody over the 12-month period. Sixty-five percent of the Australian prisoner population in the June quarter 2024 were non-Indigenous prisoners (ABS 2024a). The number of non-Indigenous deaths in 2023–24 and their proportion of all prison custody deaths was higher than that reported in 2022–23 (70%, $n=49$; see Table B3).

The largest number of non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody in 2023–24 occurred in New South Wales ($n=16$; see Table 3), followed by 14 deaths in Queensland and 11 deaths in Victoria. Fewer than 10 non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody occurred in South Australia ($n=9$), Western Australia ($n=7$) and the Australian Capital Territory ($n=1$). No non-Indigenous deaths occurred in Tasmania or the Northern Territory in 2023–24. New South Wales had the largest non-Indigenous prison population ($n=8,911$) at June 2024, followed by Queensland ($n=6,612$) and Victoria ($n=5,273$; ABS 2024a).

The death rate of non-Indigenous prisoners was 0.20 per 100 non-Indigenous prisoners in 2023–24, an increase from the death rate of 0.17 per 100 in 2022–23 (see Figure 5 and Appendix C, Table C4). South Australia (0.36 per 100 non-Indigenous prisoners) and the Australian Capital Territory (0.35 per 100 non-Indigenous prisoners) recorded the highest death rates per 100 prisoners in 2023–24. The lowest death rate for non-Indigenous prisoners was in Western Australia (0.17 per 100 prisoners). The rate of prison custody deaths per 100 non-Indigenous prisoners for states and territories which recorded deaths in 2023–24 increased from 2022–23 in all jurisdictions except South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory.

The prison custody death rate among the non-Indigenous population increased from 0.25 per 100,000 relevant population aged 18 years and over in 2022–23 to 0.29 in 2023–24 (at 30 June 2023; see Figure 5). The death rate for non-Indigenous prisoners per 100,000 population between 2011–12 and 2023–24 has ranged from 0.21 in 2011–12 to 0.39 in 2018–19 and 2019–20.

Figure 5: Non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody, 1981–82 to 2023–24



Note: Rates per 100 prisoners were calculated using *Prisoners in Australia* data (ABS 2000–2020) for the years 1981–82 to 2019–20 and *Corrective services, Australia – June quarter data* (ABS 2021, 2022, 2023b, 2024a) for the years 2020–21, 2021–22, 2022–23 and 2023–24. Rates per relevant 100,000 population were calculated using population data from *National, state and territory population* (ABS 2023c) and *Estimates and projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (ABS 2024c). Relevant Indigenous population data are not available for years prior to 2011–12.

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2024 [computer file]

Sex and age

Fifty-six male and two female non-Indigenous prisoners died in prison custody in 2023–24. This represents a death rate of 0.21 and 0.11 per 100 non-Indigenous male and female prisoners respectively (see Table 3), or 0.56 and 0.02 per 100,000 relevant non-Indigenous population aged 18 years and over respectively (at 30 June 2023; see Appendix C, Table C1). The death rate of non-Indigenous males per relevant 100,000 population increased from 2022–23 (0.49).

The median age at time of death for non-Indigenous prisoners in 2023–24 was 58.0 years old (range: 22–86; see Table 3), lower than the average of 67.0 years recorded in 2022–23. Just over half (53%, $n=31$) of non-Indigenous deaths were of prisoners aged 55 years and over. This is a decrease from the 65 percent of all non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody reported in 2022–23. Twenty-two percent ($n=13$) of non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody were of prisoners aged 40 to 54 years, 19 percent ($n=11$) were 25 to 39 years and five percent ($n=3$) were under 25 years. Since 1979–80, one-third (34%, $n=630$) of non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody were of prisoners aged 55 years and over and just under one-third were aged 25 to 39 years (30%, $n=568$; see Appendix C, Table C8).

Legal status and time spent in custody

In 2023–24, 67 percent ($n=39$) of non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody were of sentenced prisoners (see Table 3). This is an increase from the proportion reported in 2022–23 (63%, $n=31$; see Table C10). Since 1979–80, approximately two-thirds (69%, $n=1,282$) of non-Indigenous prison custody deaths were of sentenced prisoners. In 2023–24, the median length of time these prisoners spent in custody was approximately six years and nine months. The mean length of time was approximately nine years and three months.

A third (33%, $n=19$) of non-Indigenous prisoners who died in prison custody in 2023–24 were unsentenced. This is the same proportion as reported in 2022–23 (33%, $n=16$) and similar to the total proportion of unsentenced prisoners who have died in prison custody since 1979–80 (31%, $n=577$). Of the unsentenced non-Indigenous prisoners who died in 2023–24, the median length of time spent in custody was approximately one and a half months (49 days) and the mean was approximately six months (177 days). Unsentenced non-Indigenous prisoners were under-represented among those who died in prison, making up 33 percent of deaths but 39 percent ($n=11,013$) of the prison population (ABS 2024a).

In 2023–24, the death rate of sentenced non-Indigenous prisoners was higher than that of unsentenced prisoners (0.22 and 0.17 per 100 respectively; see Table 3).

Most serious offence

Most non-Indigenous prisoners who died in prison custody in 2023–24 had been incarcerated for a violent offence (82%, $n=47$; see Table 3). Of the non-Indigenous prisoners who died in prison custody who were incarcerated for a violent offence, the majority were sentenced (72%, $n=34$). Since 1979–80, most non-Indigenous prisoners who died in prison custody were incarcerated for a violent offence (68%, $n=1,268$; see Table C23).

Cause of death

Cause of death relates to the direct cause of death certified by the coroner. Provisional cause of death data are provided to the NDICP by the custodial authority and confirmed following a coronial finding.

The cause of death was available at the time of reporting for 52 of the 58 non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody in 2023–24. Of these, 35 (67%) were due to natural causes (see Table 3). Where the natural cause was known ($n=25$), cancer was the most common cause of death (44%, $n=11$). The other deaths were caused by a disease of the circulatory, respiratory or digestive system, stroke or another health condition. Twelve deaths (23%) were due to hanging and related complications, three to external trauma and one each to drugs and/or alcohol or other/multiple causes. Since 1979–80, 51 percent ($n=942$) of non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody were due to natural causes and 31 percent ($n=573$) were due to hanging and related complications (see Appendix C, Table C14).

Cause of death information was available for 35 of the 39 sentenced prisoners who died in prison custody in 2023–24. Of these, 89 percent ($n=31$) were due to natural causes and 11 percent ($n=4$) were due to hanging and related complications. The rate of natural cause deaths among sentenced prisoners increased from 0.14 in 2022–23 to 0.18 per 100 prisoners in 2023–24. Similar rates of death as a result of hanging and related complications were recorded in 2023–24 and 2022–23 (0.02 vs 0.01 per 100 prisoners respectively).

Cause of death information was available for 17 of the 19 deaths of unsentenced prisoners in 2023–24. Almost half of these (47%, $n=8$) were due to hanging and related complications and approximately one-quarter (24%, $n=4$) were due to natural causes. This represented a death rate of 0.07 and 0.04 per 100 prisoners respectively. The death rate for hanging related deaths increased and the rate for natural cause deaths decreased compared with 2022–23 (0.05 and 0.07 per 100 prisoners each). The remaining five deaths of unsentenced prisoners were due to external trauma ($n=3$), drugs and/or alcohol or other/multiple causes ($n=1$ each).

Manner of death

Manner of death refers to the accountability or responsibility for the death and is determined by the coroner. In the absence of a coronial finding, manner of death is provisionally based on information from the custodial authority and available in coronial documents on NCIS. See *Cause versus manner of death* in Appendix A on page 34 for further information.

In 2023–24, the manner of death was available for 53 of the 58 non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody. Of these, natural causes were the most common manner of death (64%, $n=34$), followed by self-inflicted deaths (30%, $n=16$; see Table 3). Two deaths were recorded as unlawful homicide and one as other. The death rate was 0.12 per 100 prisoners for natural cause deaths, 0.06 per 100 for self-inflicted deaths and 0.01 per 100 for deaths as a result of unlawful homicide (see Table 4). Natural causes have been the most common manner of death of non-Indigenous prisoners since 1979–80, accounting for half of these deaths in prison custody (51%, $n=941$; see Table C19).

Of the 16 self-inflicted deaths in prison custody, 12 were due to hanging and related complications, three were due to external trauma and one to other/multiple trauma (see Appendix C, Table C2). The intent of all self-inflicted deaths of non-Indigenous prisoners was still to be determined by the coroner at the time of reporting. Self-inflicted deaths were the second most common manner of death of non-Indigenous prisoners since 1979–80 (36%, $n=679$; see Table C19).

Table 3: Non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody, 2023–24

	<i>n</i>	%	Rate per 100 prisoners
Jurisdiction			
NSW	16	28	0.18
Vic	11	19	0.21
Qld	14	24	0.21
WA	7	12	0.17
SA	9	16	0.36
Tas	0	0	0.00
ACT	1	2	0.35
NT	0	0	0.00
Sex			
Male	56	97	0.21
Female	2	3	0.11
Age group (years)			
18–24	3	5	–
25–39	11	19	–
40–54	13	22	–
55+	31	53	–
Median (mean)	58.0 (56.7)		
Legal status			
Sentenced	39	67	0.22
Unsentenced	19	33	0.17
Other	0	0	–
Most serious offence^a			
Violent	47	82	–
Theft-related	2	4	–
Drug-related	3	5	–
Traffic-related	2	4	–
Good order	3	5	–
Other	0	0	–

Table 3: Non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody, 2023–24 (cont.)			
	<i>n</i>	%	Rate per 100 prisoners
Cause of death^b			
Natural causes	35	67	0.12
Hanging	12	23	0.04
Head injury	0	0	0.00
External trauma	3	6	0.01
Gunshot wound	0	0	0.00
Alcohol/drugs	1	2	<0.01
Other/multiple	1	2	<0.01
Unascertained	0	0	0.00
Manner of death^c			
Natural causes	34	64	0.12
Self-inflicted ^d	16	30	0.06
Unlawful homicide	2	4	0.01
Justifiable homicide	0	0	0.00
Accident or misadventure	0	0	0.00
Other ^e	1	2	<0.01
Not determined	0	0	0.00
Location of death			
Cell	31	53	–
Other custodial environment	1	2	–
Public hospital	20	34	–
Prison hospital	6	10	–
Psychiatric hospital	0	0	–
Private property	0	0	–
Public place	0	0	–
Other	0	0	–
Type of prison			
Private	11	19	–
Government	47	81	–
Total	58		0.20

a: Excludes 1 death where the most serious offence was unknown

b: Excludes 6 deaths where cause of death was not available

c: Excludes 5 deaths where manner of death was not available

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

e: Other includes voluntary assisted dying

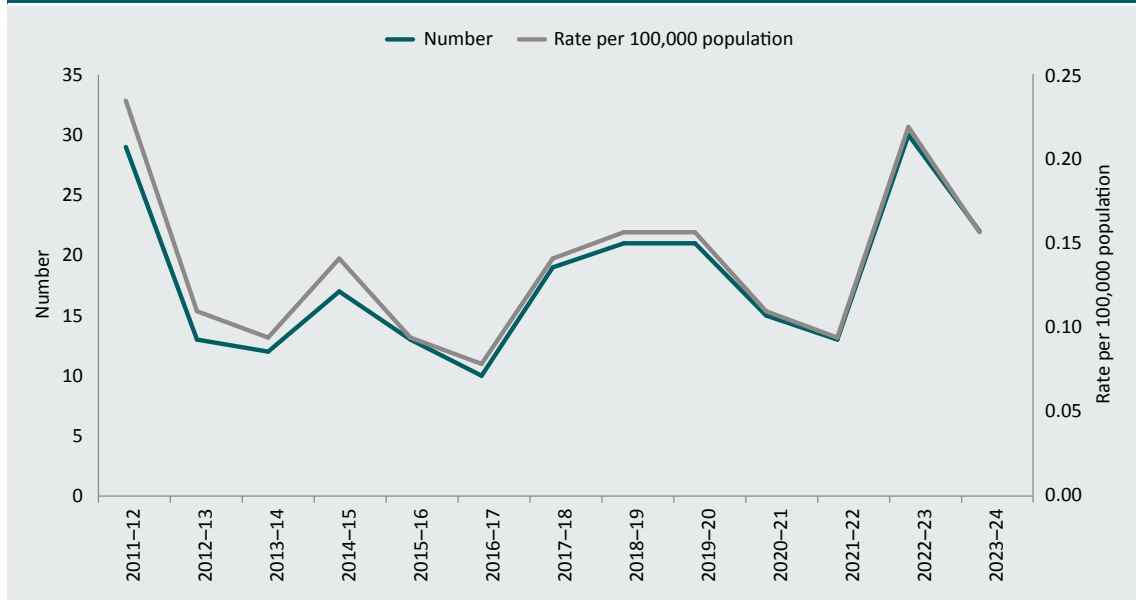
Note: Rates (unless otherwise specified) have been calculated using *Corrective Services, Australia – June quarter 2024 data* (ABS 2024a). Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Source: AIC NDICP 2023–24 [computer file]

Non-Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations

There were 22 non-Indigenous deaths in police custody in 2023–24, a decrease of eight deaths from 2022–23 ($n=30$) and similar to the average ($n=23$) since 1989–90 (range: 10–33). The death rate of non-Indigenous people in police custody was 0.10 per 100,000 relevant population aged 10 years and over (12 years and over in the Northern Territory; at 30 June 2023; see Figure 6 and Appendix D, Table D1), down from the rate of 0.14 per 100,000 relevant population in 2022–23. Six non-Indigenous deaths in police custody occurred in each of Queensland and Western Australia (see Table 4). Five non-Indigenous deaths in police custody occurred in New South Wales, four in Victoria and one in Tasmania. There were no police custody deaths in South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory or the Northern Territory.

Figure 6: Non-Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, 2011–12 to 2023–24



Note: Rates per relevant 100,000 population were calculated using population data from *National, state and territory population* (ABS 2024d) and *Estimates and projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (ABS 2024c)

Source: AIC NDICP 2011–2024 [computer file]

Sex and age

In 2023–24, 20 of the 22 non-Indigenous deaths in police custody were male and two were female (see Table 4). The death rate of non-Indigenous males decreased from 0.26 per 100,000 relevant population in 2022–23 to 0.18 in 2023–24. The death rate of non-Indigenous females was 0.02 per 100,000 relevant population (see Table D1).

The median age at time of death was 35.0 years (range: 16–59; see Table 4), lower than the median of 38.5 years recorded in 2022–23. Non-Indigenous deaths in police custody in 2023–24 most commonly involved people aged 25 to 39 years (55%, $n=12$), representing a death rate among this age group of 0.21 per 100,000 relevant population. This is the highest number of police custody deaths involving non-Indigenous people aged 25 to 39 years since 2011–12 (see Appendix D, Table D8). Five (23%) non-Indigenous deaths in police custody involved people aged 40 to 54 years. Of the remaining five deaths, two were of individuals aged under 25 years and three were of individuals aged 55 years and over.

Between 1989–90 and 2023–24, 43 percent ($n=342$) of non-Indigenous deaths in police custody involved people aged 25 to 39 years (see Table D8). One-quarter of deaths were of individuals aged 40 to 54 years (25%, $n=200$) while just under one-quarter were aged under 25 years (23%, $n=185$).

Most serious offence

Information on the MSO the deceased was suspected of committing was available for all 22 non-Indigenous deaths in police custody. Fourteen of the non-Indigenous persons who died in police custody (64%) were suspected of having committed a violent offence (see Table 4). Four (18%) were suspected of committing a good order offence and two (9% each) were suspected of committing either a theft-related offence or an ‘other’ offence. Violent offences have been the most commonly suspected offence type for non-Indigenous police custody deaths since 1989–90 (48%, $n=337$), followed by traffic offences and good order offences (15%, $n=109$ each; see Table D17).

Circumstances of custodial period

Nineteen of the 22 non-Indigenous deaths in police custody in 2023–24 occurred while police were detaining or attempting to detain the person (see Table 4). Three police custody deaths occurred in an institutional setting, half the number of institutional police custody deaths recorded in 2022–23 ($n=6$).

In 2023–24, most deaths (63%, $n=12$) that occurred while the person was being detained occurred during an ‘other’ method of detainment (eg police shooting). Of the remaining seven deaths that occurred while police were attempting to detain the individual, four occurred during a siege, two during an ‘other’ pursuit and one during a motor vehicle pursuit.

Eleven non-Indigenous people died following a police shooting in 2023–24. Ten of these events occurred during an ‘other’ method of detainment and one during a siege.

Forty-one percent ($n=254$) of detaining deaths since 1989–90 occurred during an ‘other’ method of detainment (see Table D26). Thirty percent ($n=185$) occurred during motor vehicle pursuits, most of which occurred prior to 2009–10 (79%, $n=146$).

Cause of death

The cause of death was available for 18 of the 22 non-Indigenous deaths in police custody in 2023–24. Fourteen (78%) were due to gunshot wounds (self-inflicted or from a police shooting) and two each (11%) to external trauma and alcohol or drugs (see Table 4). Since 1989–90, 39 percent ($n=298$) of non-Indigenous deaths in police custody were due to gunshot wounds (self-inflicted or from a police shooting) and 29 percent ($n=221$) were due to external trauma (see Appendix D, Table D11).

Manner of death

Manner of death information was available for 17 of the 22 non-Indigenous deaths in police custody. Twelve (71%) of these deaths were recorded as justifiable homicides (see Table 4). This is the equal highest number of deaths determined to be justifiable homicides since 1989–90 (see Table D14). Justifiable homicides accounted for approximately one-quarter (24%, $n=183$) of non-Indigenous deaths in police custody since 1989–90.

In 2023–24, 11 of the 12 justifiable homicides were police shootings. Police shootings account for 23 percent ($n=184$) of all non-Indigenous deaths in police custody since 1989–90 and 62 percent of all non-Indigenous shooting deaths in police custody (see Table D33).

Four non-Indigenous deaths in police custody in 2023–24 were self-inflicted (24%). Three of these were due to gunshot wounds and one was due to alcohol or drugs (see Table D2). One non-Indigenous death in police custody was due to accident or misadventure. Thirty-two percent of non-Indigenous deaths in police custody since 1989–90 where manner of death was ascertained were due to accident or misadventure ($n=252$) or were self-inflicted ($n=245$; see Table D14).

Location of death

Location of death relates to the location at the time of death only. It therefore does not capture the location of any events that immediately preceded or caused the death if this differs from where the individual ultimately died. For example, where a person experiences a medical event while housed at the watch house and later dies in a public hospital as a result of the event, the location of death is recorded as public hospital.

In 2023–24, nine (41%) non-Indigenous deaths in police custody occurred in a public place (see Table 4). Since 1989–90, the largest proportion (40%, $n=318$) of non-Indigenous deaths in police custody occurred in a public place (see Table D20). Seven deaths in 2023–24 (32%) occurred on private property, followed by four (18%) in a public hospital and two (9%) in a cell.

Table 4: Non-Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, 2023–24		
	<i>n</i>	%
Jurisdiction		
NSW	5	23
Vic	4	18
Qld	6	27
WA	6	27
SA	0	0
Tas	1	5
ACT	0	0
NT	0	0
Category of death		
Category 1	17	77
Category 2	5	23
Sex		
Male	20	91
Female	2	9
Age group (years)		
10–24	2	9
25–39	12	55
40–54	5	23
55+	3	14
Median (mean)	35.0 (37.1)	
Most serious offence		
Violent	14	64
Theft-related	2	9
Drug-related	0	0
Traffic-related	0	0
Good order	4	18
Other	2	9
Circumstances of custodial period		
Institution	3	14
Detaining	19	86
Escaping	0	0
Other	0	0

Table 4: Non-Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, 2023–24 (cont.)

	<i>n</i>	%
Cause of death^a		
Natural causes	0	0
Hanging	0	0
Head injury	0	0
External trauma	2	11
Gunshot wound	14	78
Alcohol/drugs	2	11
Other/multiple	0	0
Unascertained	0	0
Manner of death^b		
Natural causes	0	0
Self-inflicted ^c	4	24
Unlawful homicide	0	0
Justifiable homicide	12	71
Accident or misadventure	1	6
Other	0	0
Not determined	0	0
Location of death		
Cell	2	9
Other custodial environment	0	0
Public hospital	4	18
Prison hospital	0	0
Psychiatric hospital	0	0
Private property	7	32
Public place	9	41
Other	0	0
Total	22	

a: Excludes 4 deaths where cause of death information was not available

b: Excludes 5 deaths where manner of death information was not available

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

Note: The legal age of criminal responsibility was 10 years in all states and territories except the Northern Territory, where the legal age of criminal responsibility was 12 years. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Source: AIC NDICP 2023–24 [computer file]

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Appendix A: Methodology

Data items and coding

The following describes some of the data items and methods of coding used in this report. The categories used to describe cause of death, manner of death, method of detainment and most serious offence were derived at the inception of the National Deaths in Custody Program (NDICP) and have been retained to allow trend analysis. The Indigenous status variable was revised to meet the Indigenous status standard developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Indigenous status

Indigenous status is classified as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, or neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander. This information is cross-referenced with Indigenous status and Indigenous origin fields recorded on the National Coronial Information System (NCIS). This Indigenous origin field is completed based on the police report to the coroner and Indigenous status, introduced in 2019, from Births, Deaths and Marriages records. Where Indigenous status information from data providers and the NCIS do not correspond, the Australian Institute of Criminology engages with the data provider to determine evidence of Indigenous status. Where these data cannot be reconciled, Indigenous status is reported as not stated or unknown.

Cause versus manner of death

The NDICP collects information on both the cause and manner of each death. Cause of death relates to the direct cause of death certified by the coroner. Provisional cause of death data are provided to the NDICP by the custodial authority and confirmed following a coronial finding. Cause of death is categorised in the NDICP as:

- natural causes;
- hanging (which includes strangulation) and associated complications;
- head injury;
- gunshot wound;
- other external trauma/multiple trauma;
- alcohol and/or drugs;
- other/multiple causes;
- unascertained (could not be determined at autopsy); or
- unknown (no available information at the time of reporting).

These terms have been used since the establishment of the NDICP and are retained to enable trend analysis.

Manner of death is a related variable, but it refers to the accountability or responsibility for the death as determined by the coroner. In the absence of a coronial finding, manner of death is provisionally based on information from the custodial authority and available coronial documents on NCIS. Various factors can contribute to but not necessarily result in the death. Manner is categorised in the NDICP as:

- natural causes;
- self-inflicted;
- homicide (justifiable, excusable or unlawful);
- accident (or misadventure);
- other/not determined; or
- not stated or unknown.

These categories were derived at the inception of the NDICP based on coronial terminology. In some cases, cause and manner can correspond. In other cases, cause and manner of death will differ.

Most serious offence

The NDICP collects information on the most serious offence (MSO) leading to custody. The Australian and New Zealand Standard Offence Classification (ABS 2023a, 2011) is used to group offences into six categories. In order from most to least serious, these are: violent, theft-related, drug-related, traffic, good order and other/unknown offences. Where information on more than one offence is provided, only the most serious of those is assigned to the case. Therefore, if a person has been charged with a violent offence and a theft-related offence, the violent offence will take precedence. For the purposes of the NDICP, these categories are defined as follows:

- violent offence—includes homicide, assault, sex offences, other offences against the person and robbery;
- theft-related offence—includes break and enter, other theft, property damage and fraud;
- drug-related offence—includes possessing, using, dealing, trafficking or manufacturing/growing drugs;
- traffic offence—includes road traffic, driving and licence offences;
- good order offence—includes public drunkenness, protective custody for intoxication (in a jurisdiction where public drunkenness is not an offence), justice procedure offences, breaches of sentencing (including fine default) and other offences against good order (eg betting and gambling, disorderly conduct, vagrancy or offensive behaviour); and
- other—includes offences not elsewhere classified (eg weapons offences).

Historical checks to MSO data in the NDICP were undertaken prior to preparing the 2022–23 Statistical Report. These checks ensured all MSO data were aligned with the Australian and New Zealand Standard Offence Classification in effect at the time (ABS 2011). As such, numbers and proportions of MSO data presented in publications prior to 2022–23 may not be comparable to those presented in this and subsequent reports.

Types of custody

Type of custody categories are based on the types of death requiring notification to the NDICP, as recommended by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (see *Introduction*). They are:

- institutional—deaths that occur in prisons, youth detention facilities, police stations or lock-ups, during transfer to or from such an institution, or in medical facilities following transfer from an institution;
- escaping—deaths that occur while the person is in the process of escaping or attempting to escape from prison, a youth detention facility or police custody;
- detaining—deaths that occur during the process of police detaining or attempting to detain the person; and
- other—all other deaths not elsewhere classified.

Data revisions

NDICP data are verified quarterly with data providers and cross-referenced against the NCIS at the end of each quarter and at the end of the financial year. Where data are missing from the NDICP database, these are checked against up-to-date coronial findings and other available data, and any necessary revisions are made. Consequently, numbers and rates may differ between reports.

Calculation of death rates and population rates

Before 2021, death rates were calculated using the ABS *Prisoners in Australia* data (ABS 2000–20), a series which counts all prisoners in legal custody in each jurisdiction as at midnight on 30 June each year. As of 2020–21, the *Deaths in custody in Australia* Statistical Reports are finalised within six months of the end of the financial year. This change in the timing of the publication means the ABS *Prisoners in Australia* data, which is released in December, is not available at the time of report preparation. As such, rates of death in prison custody by prison population have been calculated using the *Corrective services, Australia – June* quarter data (ABS 2021, 2022, 2023b, 2024a). These data are provided to the ABS by corrective services agencies in each state and territory and refer to the average daily prisoner population throughout the month of June, or the prisoner population on 1 June. Death rates are calculated using these measures as it is currently the only information available. These data include a breakdown by legal status, custody type, Indigenous status and sex but not age. Death rates for prison population by age group could not be calculated for this report. For these reasons, care should be taken when comparing rates of death over time.

Rates of death in youth detention were not calculated for this report as data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's *Youth detention population in Australia* series for the June 2024 detention population was not available at the time of reporting.

Where trends in rates of death are presented, the rates are calculated back to 1982, as prison census data were not available until that year. The prison population is the standard denominator for calculating death rates in prison custody, reflecting changes in prison demographic composition. Rates of death in police custody are not presented in this report because there is no reliable data source for the number of people who are placed into police custody each year or who come into contact with police in custody-related operations.

Population rates are presented for deaths in prison and police custody. Population rates are calculated using June 2023 population data from the *National, state and territory population* (ABS 2024d), *Estimates and projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (ABS 2024c) and customised data provided by the ABS (ABS 2024b). June 2023 data are used because June 2024 population data from the *National, state and territory population* series (ABS 2024d) are not available at the time of reporting. Rates of death in prison custody are calculated using the population aged 18 years and over. Rates of death in police custody and custody-related operations for the years 2011–12 to 2022–23 are calculated based on the population aged 10 years and over, the age of criminal responsibility. The 2023–24 death rate is calculated based on the population aged 10 years and over for all states and territories except the Northern Territory, in which it is based on the population aged 12 years and over, the age of criminal responsibility in this jurisdiction.

Appendix B: Data tables

Table B1: Deaths in custody by custodial authority, 1979–80 to 2023–24 (n)

	Prison	Police ^a	Youth detention	Other	Total
1979–80	15	5	1	0	21
1980–81	28	12	1	0	41
1981–82	29	15	0	0	44
1982–83	25	22	0	0	47
1983–84	32	14	1	0	47
1984–85	27	21	0	0	48
1985–86	18	20	0	0	38
1986–87	37	42	1	0	80
1987–88	45	23	2	0	70
1988–89	36	29	0	0	65
1989–90	53	29	1	0	83
1990–91	35	26	1	0	62
1991–92	32	27	0	0	59
1992–93	43	36	0	0	79
1993–94	57	31	2	0	90
1994–95	55	30	0	0	85
1995–96	49	31	2	0	82
1996–97	65	34	1	0	100
1997–98	78	28	0	0	106
1998–99	64	22	1	1	88
1999–2000	64	35	1	0	100
2000–01	58	34	1	1	94
2001–02	52	39	0	1	92
2002–03	44	40	0	0	84
2003–04	37	41	0	0	78
2004–05	39	37	0	0	76

Table B1: Deaths in custody by custodial authority, 1979–80 to 2023–24 (n) (cont.)					
	Prison	Police ^a	Youth detention	Other	Total
2005–06	28	25	1	1	55
2006–07	41	31	0	0	72
2007–08	45	33	0	0	78
2008–09	43	37	0	0	80
2009–10	58	27	0	0	85
2010–11	58	25	1	0	84
2011–12	42	31	0	0	73
2012–13	53	17	0	0	70
2013–14	54	13	0	0	67
2014–15	61	20	0	0	81
2015–16	83	16	0	0	99
2016–17	74	18	0	0	92
2017–18	72	24	0	0	96
2018–19	89	27	0	0	116
2019–20	89	26	0	0	115
2020–21	66	19	0	0	85
2021–22	84	22	0	0	106
2022–23	70	40	0	0	110
2023–24	76	27	1	0	104
Total	2,303	1,201	19	4	3,527

a: Category 1(a) deaths have been included in the NDICP since 1980, whereas police operational deaths (category 1(b) and category 2 deaths) have been collected by the NDICP only since 1990. For more detail, see *Introduction*

Note: Includes 695 Indigenous deaths in custody, 2,822 non-Indigenous deaths in custody and 10 deaths where Indigenous status was not stated or unknown

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2024 [computer file]

Table B2: Indigenous deaths in custody by custodial authority, 1979–80 to 2023–24 (n)

	Prison	Police ^a	Youth detention	Other	Total
1979–80	4	1	1	0	6
1980–81	2	7	1	0	10
1981–82	3	2	0	0	5
1982–83	4	5	0	0	9
1983–84	2	3	0	0	5
1984–85	5	8	0	0	13
1985–86	4	5	0	0	9
1986–87	2	15	1	0	18
1987–88	4	6	1	0	11
1988–89	5	10	0	0	15
1989–90	9	9	0	0	18
1990–91	5	3	0	0	8
1991–92	4	7	0	0	11
1992–93	5	3	0	0	8
1993–94	12	3	0	0	15
1994–95	12	3	0	0	15
1995–96	13	6	0	0	19
1996–97	10	8	0	0	18
1997–98	11	5	0	0	16
1998–99	10	7	1	0	18
1999–2000	14	4	1	0	19
2000–01	14	7	0	0	21
2001–02	6	7	0	0	13
2002–03	13	12	0	0	25
2003–04	6	11	0	0	17
2004–05	8	11	0	0	19
2005–06	3	8	1	0	12
2006–07	8	3	0	0	11
2007–08	6	5	0	0	11
2008–09	7	8	0	0	15
2009–10	14	6	0	0	20
2010–11	12	7	1	0	20
2011–12	6	2	0	0	8
2012–13	8	4	0	0	12
2013–14	10	1	0	0	11

Table B2: Indigenous deaths in custody by custodial authority, 1979–80 to 2023–24 (n) (cont.)					
	Prison	Police ^a	Youth detention	Other	Total
2014–15	15	3	0	0	18
2015–16	19	3	0	0	22
2016–17	15	8	0	0	23
2017–18	16	4	0	0	20
2018–19	16	6	0	0	22
2019–20	12	3	0	0	15
2020–21	12	4	0	0	16
2021–22	15	8	0	0	23
2022–23	21	10	0	0	31
2023–24	18	5	1	0	24
Total since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991–92 to 2023–24)					
Total	371	192	5	0	568
Total for all years of data collection (1979–80 to 2023–24)					
Total	420	266	9	0	695

a: Category 1(a) deaths have been included in the NDICP since 1980, whereas police operational deaths (category 1(b) and category 2 deaths) have been collected by the NDICP only since 1990. For more detail, see *Introduction*

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2024 [computer file]

Table B3: Non-Indigenous deaths in custody by custodial authority, 1979–80 to 2023–24 (n)					
	Prison	Police ^a	Youth detention	Other	Total
1979–80	11	4	0	0	15
1980–81	26	5	0	0	31
1981–82	26	13	0	0	39
1982–83	21	17	0	0	38
1983–84	30	11	1	0	42
1984–85	22	13	0	0	35
1985–86	14	15	0	0	29
1986–87	35	27	0	0	62
1987–88	41	17	1	0	59
1988–89	31	19	0	0	50
1989–90	44	20	1	0	65
1990–91	30	23	1	0	54
1991–92	28	20	0	0	48
1992–93	38	33	0	0	71
1993–94	45	28	2	0	75
1994–95	43	27	0	0	70

Table B3: Non-Indigenous deaths in custody by custodial authority, 1979–80 to 2023–24 (n) (cont.)

	Prison	Police ^a	Youth detention	Other	Total
1995–96	36	25	2	0	63
1996–97	55	26	1	0	82
1997–98	67	23	0	0	90
1998–99	54	15	0	1	70
1999–2000	50	31	0	0	81
2000–01	44	27	1	1	73
2001–02	46	32	0	1	79
2002–03	31	28	0	0	59
2003–04	31	30	0	0	61
2004–05	31	26	0	0	57
2005–06	25	17	0	1	43
2006–07	33	28	0	0	61
2007–08	39	28	0	0	67
2008–09	36	29	0	0	65
2009–10	44	21	0	0	65
2010–11	46	18	0	0	64
2011–12	36	29	0	0	65
2012–13	44	13	0	0	57
2013–14	44	12	0	0	56
2014–15	46	17	0	0	63
2015–16	64	13	0	0	77
2016–17	59	10	0	0	69
2017–18	56	19	0	0	75
2018–19	73	21	0	0	94
2019–20	75	21	0	0	96
2020–21	52	15	0	0	67
2021–22	68	13	0	0	81
2022–23	49	30	0	0	79
2023–24	58	22	0	0	80
Total	1,877	931	10	4	2,822

a: Category 1(a) deaths have been included in the NDICP since 1980, whereas police operational deaths (category 1(b) and category 2 deaths) have been collected by the NDICP only since 1990. For more detail, see *Introduction*
 Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2024 [computer file]

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
1979–80	3	2	3	1	5	0	0	1	15
1980–81	8	6	8	3	3	0	0	0	28
1981–82	7	7	8	5	1	1	0	0	29
1982–83	5	4	5	5	6	0	0	0	25
1983–84	12	14	4	2	0	0	0	0	32
1984–85	10	5	5	5	2	0	0	0	27
1985–86	6	2	7	1	0	0	0	2	18
1986–87	17	7	7	3	2	0	0	1	37
1987–88	13	18	6	3	2	2	1	0	45
1988–89	7	11	5	6	1	4	0	2	36
1989–90	28	4	12	3	5	1	0	0	53
1990–91	18	2	4	6	3	1	0	1	35
1991–92	6	3	11	4	5	3	0	0	32
1992–93	20	6	6	6	4	0	0	1	43
1993–94	29	5	11	2	6	3	0	1	57
1994–95	22	7	12	6	7	0	0	1	55
1995–96	18	5	10	6	6	2	1	1	49
1996–97	30	5	13	9	7	1	0	0	65
1997–98	29	13	11	16	4	1	1	3	78
1998–99	27	9	19	6	1	1	0	1	64
1999–2000	23	3	14	15	4	5	0	0	64
2000–01	18	11	11	9	7	0	0	2	58
2001–02	18	6	14	10	2	1	0	1	52
2002–03	16	5	7	8	5	1	0	2	44
2003–04	13	4	13	4	2	0	0	1	37
2004–05	15	4	4	7	6	2	0	1	39
2005–06	10	5	2	6	3	1	0	1	28
2006–07	22	3	6	3	4	2	0	1	41
2007–08	11	13	8	8	4	1	0	0	45
2008–09	15	8	9	4	5	1	1	0	43
2009–10	21	8	10	8	5	3	1	2	58
2010–11	20	10	11	5	4	2	0	6	58
2011–12	18	4	6	7	4	1	0	2	42
2012–13	19	13	9	10	0	1	0	1	53
2013–14	13	11	11	7	4	1	2	5	54

Table B4: Deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction, 1979–80 to 2023–24 (n) (cont.)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2014–15	21	15	7	4	7	3	1	3	61
2015–16	23	19	10	11	13	2	1	4	83
2016–17	21	20	12	14	2	1	1	3	74
2017–18	27	17	11	11	2	1	0	3	72
2018–19	33	19	11	15	6	2	0	3	89
2019–20	42	13	11	12	7	0	0	4	89
2020–21	29	10	9	13	4	0	0	1	66
2021–22	34	18	9	13	6	2	1	1	84
2022–23	17	12	17	11	10	1	1	1	70
2023–24	20	11	19	12	11	0	1	2	76
Total	834	397	418	325	197	54	13	65	2,303

Note: Includes 420 Indigenous deaths in custody and 1,877 non-Indigenous deaths in custody and 6 deaths where Indigenous status was unknown. Excludes 19 deaths that occurred in youth detention

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2024 [computer file]

Table B5: Indigenous deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction, 1979–80 to 2023–24 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
1979–80	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	4
1980–81	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
1981–82	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
1982–83	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	4
1983–84	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
1984–85	1	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	5
1985–86	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	4
1986–87	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
1987–88	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	4
1988–89	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	5
1989–90	5	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	9
1990–91	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	5
1991–92	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	4
1992–93	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	5
1993–94	4	1	3	2	1	0	0	1	12
1994–95	5	0	3	0	3	0	0	1	12
1995–96	4	0	3	2	3	0	0	1	13
1996–97	3	0	4	2	1	0	0	0	10
1997–98	3	0	1	4	1	0	0	2	11
1998–99	4	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	10

Table B5: Indigenous deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction, 1979–80 to 2023–24 (n) (cont.)									
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
1999–2000	7	0	1	6	0	0	0	0	14
2000–01	5	1	1	3	2	0	0	2	14
2001–02	1	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	6
2002–03	2	0	3	5	1	0	0	2	13
2003–04	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	1	6
2004–05	4	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	8
2005–06	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	3
2006–07	4	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	8
2007–08	1	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	6
2008–09	1	0	2	3	1	0	0	0	7
2009–10	4	1	4	4	0	0	0	1	14
2010–11	1	1	1	2	1	1	0	5	12
2011–12	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	6
2012–13	1	1	2	2	0	1	0	1	8
2013–14	1	0	4	1	0	0	0	4	10
2014–15	5	1	3	1	1	0	1	3	15
2015–16	2	1	3	6	3	0	1	3	19
2016–17	1	1	4	5	1	0	0	3	15
2017–18	5	3	3	3	0	0	0	2	16
2018–19	4	2	2	5	0	0	0	3	16
2019–20	4	1	2	3	1	0	0	1	12
2020–21	5	1	1	5	0	0	0	0	12
2021–22	5	1	3	3	2	0	0	1	15
2022–23	6	3	6	5	0	0	0	1	21
2023–24	4	0	5	5	2	0	0	2	18
Total	114	22	94	106	30	3	2	49	420

Note: Excludes 9 deaths that occurred in youth detention

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2024 [computer file]

Table B6: Non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction, 1979–80 to 2023–24 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
1979–80	2	2	2	0	5	0	0	0	11
1980–81	8	6	7	3	2	0	0	0	26
1981–82	7	7	8	2	1	1	0	0	26
1982–83	4	4	5	4	4	0	0	0	21
1983–84	11	14	4	1	0	0	0	0	30
1984–85	9	5	4	2	2	0	0	0	22
1985–86	6	2	5	0	0	0	0	1	14
1986–87	17	7	6	2	2	0	0	1	35
1987–88	12	18	5	2	1	2	1	0	41
1988–89	6	11	4	5	1	4	0	0	31
1989–90	23	4	10	3	3	1	0	0	44
1990–91	15	2	3	5	3	1	0	1	30
1991–92	5	3	10	3	5	2	0	0	28
1992–93	18	5	4	6	4	0	0	1	38
1993–94	25	4	8	0	5	3	0	0	45
1994–95	17	7	9	6	4	0	0	0	43
1995–96	14	5	7	4	3	2	1	0	36
1996–97	27	5	9	7	6	1	0	0	55
1997–98	26	13	10	12	3	1	1	1	67
1998–99	23	8	15	6	1	1	0	0	54
1999–2000	16	3	13	9	4	5	0	0	50
2000–01	13	10	10	6	5	0	0	0	44
2001–02	17	6	11	8	2	1	0	1	46
2002–03	14	5	4	3	4	1	0	0	31
2003–04	13	4	8	4	2	0	0	0	31
2004–05	11	4	4	4	6	2	0	0	31
2005–06	10	4	2	5	3	1	0	0	25
2006–07	18	3	5	1	4	2	0	0	33
2007–08	10	13	7	4	4	1	0	0	39
2008–09	14	8	7	1	4	1	1	0	36
2009–10	17	7	6	4	5	3	1	1	44
2010–11	19	9	10	3	3	1	0	1	46
2011–12	17	4	4	5	4	1	0	1	36
2012–13	17	12	7	8	0	0	0	0	44
2013–14	12	11	7	6	4	1	2	1	44

Table B6: Non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction, 1979–80 to 2023–24 (n) (cont.)									
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2014–15	16	14	4	3	6	3	0	0	46
2015–16	21	18	7	5	10	2	0	1	64
2016–17	20	19	8	9	1	1	1	0	59
2017–18	22	14	8	8	2	1	0	1	56
2018–19	29	17	9	10	6	2	0	0	73
2019–20	36	12	9	9	6	0	0	3	75
2020–21	23	8	8	8	4	0	0	1	52
2021–22	29	17	5	10	4	2	1	0	68
2022–23	11	9	11	6	10	1	1	0	49
2023–24	16	11	14	7	9	0	1	0	58
Total	716	374	323	219	167	51	11	16	1,877

Note: Excludes 10 deaths that occurred in youth detention

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2024 [computer file]

Table B7: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by jurisdiction, 1989–90 to 2023–24 (n)									
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total ^a
1989–90	5	7	7	5	2	1	1	1	29
1990–91	3	9	6	4	2	0	0	2	26
1991–92	5	9	5	1	2	3	1	1	27
1992–93	15	14	3	0	4	0	0	0	36
1993–94	8	10	7	0	1	2	1	2	31
1994–95	14	5	4	3	1	1	0	1	30
1995–96	9	7	5	4	1	3	1	1	31
1996–97	16	2	2	6	2	1	0	5	34
1997–98	14	8	1	3	0	0	0	2	28
1998–99	6	4	6	3	1	0	0	2	22
1999–2000	11	4	4	5	6	0	0	4	35
2000–01	17	4	3	4	5	0	0	1	34
2001–02	13	12	3	5	1	0	0	5	39
2002–03	14	6	7	6	3	1	0	3	40
2003–04	14	6	9	6	2	0	1	3	41
2004–05	10	7	10	7	2	0	0	0	37
2005–06	7	2	4	6	4	0	1	1	25
2006–07	11	6	4	4	4	0	1	1	31
2007–08	6	8	5	4	4	1	0	5	33

Table B7: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by jurisdiction, 1989–90 to 2023–24 (n) (cont.)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total ^a
2008–09	6	3	8	8	6	0	1	5	37
2009–10	5	6	6	3	1	1	1	4	27
2010–11	6	1	7	6	2	2	1	0	25
2011–12	11	3	7	5	3	0	0	2	31
2012–13	6	2	2	6	1	0	0	0	17
2013–14	1	5	3	1	2	0	0	1	13
2014–15	7	2	5	3	1	0	0	2	20
2015–16	5	1	3	2	3	1	0	1	16
2016–17	6	1	2	2	5	0	0	2	18
2017–18	7	5	5	3	3	0	1	0	24
2018–19	5	6	7	6	2	1	0	0	27
2019–20	7	6	7	2	0	2	0	2	26
2020–21	7	4	6	0	1	1	0	0	19
2021–22	9	5	6	1	1	0	0	0	22
2022–23	16	3	15	2	2	2	0	0	40
2023–24	7	5	8	6	0	1	0	0	27
Total	309	188	192	132	80	24	11	59	998

a: Includes 3 deaths categorised as ‘Other Commonwealth’

Note: Includes 204 Indigenous deaths in police custody, 790 non-Indigenous deaths in police custody and 4 deaths where Indigenous status was not stated or unknown

Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2024 [computer file]

Table B8: Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by jurisdiction, 1989–90 to 2023–24 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
1989–90	0	1	2	4	1	0	0	1	9
1990–91	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	3
1991–92	1	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	7
1992–93	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
1993–94	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
1994–95	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	3
1995–96	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	6
1996–97	2	0	0	3	0	1	0	2	8
1997–98	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	5
1998–99	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	2	7
1999–2000	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	4
2000–01	2	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	7

Table B8: Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by jurisdiction, 1989–90 to 2023–24 (n) (cont.)									
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2001–02	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	5	7
2002–03	3	0	1	4	1	0	0	3	12
2003–04	3	1	1	3	0	0	0	3	11
2004–05	1	1	2	6	1	0	0	0	11
2005–06	1	1	1	3	1	0	0	1	8
2006–07	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
2007–08	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	2	5
2008–09	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	4	8
2009–10	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	6
2010–11	1	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	7
2011–12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
2012–13	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	4
2013–14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
2014–15	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	3
2015–16	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
2016–17	3	1	0	1	2	0	0	1	8
2017–18	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
2018–19	1	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	6
2019–20	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	3
2020–21	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	4
2021–22	5	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	8
2022–23	4	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	10
2023–24	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	5
Total	43	11	36	54	19	2	0	39	204

Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2024 [computer file]

Table B9: Non-Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by jurisdiction, 1989–90 to 2023–24 (n)									
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
1989–90	5	6	5	1	1	1	1	0	20
1990–91	3	9	4	3	2	0	0	2	23
1991–92	4	7	3	0	1	3	1	1	20
1992–93	13	14	2	0	4	0	0	0	33
1993–94	8	10	6	0	1	1	1	1	28
1994–95	14	4	4	2	0	1	0	1	26
1995–96	7	7	4	2	1	3	1	0	25

Table B9: Non-Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by jurisdiction, 1989–90 to 2023–24 (n) (cont.)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
1996–97	14	2	2	3	2	0	0	3	26
1997–98	12	8	1	1	0	0	0	1	23
1998–99	4	4	4	2	1	0	0	0	15
1999–2000	11	4	3	3	5	0	0	4	30
2000–01	15	4	3	2	3	0	0	0	27
2001–02	12	12	3	4	1	0	0	0	32
2002–03	11	6	6	2	2	1	0	0	28
2003–04	11	5	8	3	2	0	1	0	30
2004–05	9	6	8	1	1	0	0	0	25
2005–06	6	1	3	3	3	0	1	0	17
2006–07	11	5	3	4	4	0	1	0	28
2007–08	6	8	4	4	2	1	0	3	28
2008–09	6	3	7	7	4	0	1	1	29
2009–10	3	6	6	1	1	1	1	2	21
2010–11	5	1	6	1	2	2	1	0	18
2011–12	11	3	7	5	3	0	0	0	29
2012–13	6	2	2	3	0	0	0	0	13
2013–14	1	5	3	1	2	0	0	0	12
2014–15	7	2	5	2	1	0	0	0	17
2015–16	5	1	3	1	2	1	0	0	13
2016–17	3	0	2	1	3	0	0	1	10
2017–18	5	4	4	3	2	0	1	0	19
2018–19	4	6	5	3	2	1	0	0	21
2019–20	7	6	6	1	0	1	0	0	21
2020–21	5	4	4	0	1	1	0	0	15
2021–22	3	5	3	1	1	0	0	0	13
2022–23	12	3	10	2	1	2	0	0	30
2023–24	5	4	6	6	0	1	0	0	22
Total	264	177	155	78	61	21	11	20	787

Note: Excludes 3 deaths categorised as ‘Other Commonwealth’

Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2024 [computer file]

AIC reports

Statistical Report

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