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# **National Deaths in Custody Program: Deaths in custody in Australia 2016–17**

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# Acronyms and abbreviations

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

# Introduction

The National Deaths in Custody Program (NDICP) monitors the extent and nature of deaths occurring in prison, police custody and youth detention since 1980. The Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) has coordinated the NDICP since its establishment in 1992, the result of a recommendation made by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) the previous year. The final report of the RCIADIC outlined the types of deaths that would require notification to the NDICP (recommendation 41, RCIADIC 1991). 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.

This report is divided into two sections: *Deaths in prison custody* and *Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations*. Definitions for these distinctions are presented in Box 1.



### 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 and youth detention centres (RCIADIC 1991).

#### Deaths in police custody

Deaths in police custody are divided into two main categories:<sup>a</sup>

##### Category 1

- (a) Deaths in institutional settings (eg police stations or lockups, 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 premise 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 resolution of the Australasian Police Ministers' Council in 1994. Category 1(a) deaths have been included in the NDICP since 1980, whereas police operational deaths (category 1(b) and category 2 deaths) have only been collected by the NDICP since 1990.

The NDICP draws upon data from all state and territory police services and correctional departments. The NDICP also uses coronial records from the National Coronial Information System. More information about the NDICP and its methodology is in *Appendix A*.

This report examines the extent and nature of deaths in prison and police custody and custody-related operations in financial year 2016–17, and compares these findings to longer term trends. No deaths occurred in youth detention in 2016–17.

# Deaths in prison custody

## 2016–17 findings

In 2016–17, there were 74 deaths in prison custody in Australia, nine fewer than in the previous year (Table C1). The death rate also decreased in 2016–17, from 0.21 to 0.18 per 100 prisoners. Despite this, the 2016–17 death rate was similar to the average for the previous decade (0.17 per 100 prisoners for 2006–07 to 2015–16). The 2016–17 death rate was 55 percent lower than its peak in 1997–98 (0.40 per 100 prisoners; Figure 1).

The decrease in the number of deaths in prison custody in 2016–17 was mostly due to the decrease in South Australia (–11; Table C1). Decreases were also recorded in New South Wales (–2), Tasmania (–1) and the Northern Territory (–1). Western Australia (+3), Queensland (+2) and Victoria (+1) recorded an increase and the Australian Capital Territory remained the same in 2016–17.

The highest number of deaths in prison custody in 2016–17 was recorded in New South Wales (n=21), followed by Victoria (n=20), Western Australia (n=14) and Queensland (n=12; Table B1). Together, these four jurisdictions accounted for 91 percent of the national total. However, of these four jurisdictions, the death rate of prisoners was highest for Victoria (0.28 per 100), followed by Western Australia (0.21 per 100), New South Wales (0.16 per 100) and Queensland (0.14 per 100).

## Indigenous status

In 2016–17, 16 of the 74 deaths in prison custody were deaths of Indigenous persons (Table B1), three less than in the previous year. Indigenous people accounted for 22 percent of all deaths in prison custody in 2016–17, which is similar to the previous year (23%). Based on prison population estimates from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS 2017), at 30 June 2017 there were 41,202 prisoners in Australia; of these, 27 percent (n=11,307) were Indigenous.

Across the jurisdictions, the highest number of Indigenous deaths in prison custody in 2016–17 was recorded in Western Australia (n=5), followed by Queensland (n=4) and the Northern Territory (n=3; Figure 2). Together, these three jurisdictions accounted for 75 percent of the national total. Of these, the death rate of Indigenous prisoners was highest for the Northern Territory (0.22 per 100), followed by Western Australia (0.20 per 100) and Queensland (0.15 per 100; Table B1).

The death rate of Indigenous prisoners in 2016–17 decreased by 22 percent from the previous year (0.14 and 0.18 per 100 respectively; Figure 3). This was due to a decrease in the death rate of Indigenous male prisoners. There were six fewer Indigenous male deaths in prison custody in 2016–17 (13 vs 19 in 2015–16), resulting in a 35 percent decrease in the death rate of Indigenous male prisoners (0.13 vs 0.20 per 100 in 2015–16). In contrast, there were three Indigenous female deaths in 2016–17 (compared with none in the previous five years; Table C4), representing a death rate of 0.27 per 100 Indigenous female prisoners.

The death rate of Indigenous prisoners was lower than the death rate of non-Indigenous prisoners in 2016–17 (0.14 and 0.19 per 100 respectively). Death rates of Indigenous prisoners have been consistently lower than death rates of non-Indigenous prisoners since 2003–04 (Figure 3).

## Gender

In 2016–17, 68 males and six females died in prison custody, although the rates were the same (0.18 per 100 prisoners; Table B1). The numbers of male deaths in prison custody have consistently been higher than the numbers of female deaths since 1979–80 (Table C4). This reflects the gender composition of the total Australian prisoner population (ABS 2000–2017).

## Age

The median age for all prisoners in Australia as at 30 June 2017 was 34.5 years (ABS 2017). The median age at time of death for prisoners in 2016–17 was 54 years (Table B1). The median age at death was lower for Indigenous prisoners (46 years) than for non-Indigenous prisoners (54 years), which is consistent with previous years. Deaths in prison custody were most commonly of prisoners aged 55 and over (47%; n=35; Table B1).

Deaths of prisoners aged 55 and over decreased in number and rate in 2016–17 (Table C7 and Table C8 respectively). The death rate was 1.14 per 100 prisoners aged 55 and over, a 26 percent decrease from the rate in 2015–16. Despite this, prisoners aged 55 and over have had the highest death rate for each year since prison population data became available in 1981–82 (Table C8). Death rates for those aged under 55 have been relatively low and constant over this period.

## Legal status of prisoner deaths in custody

At 30 June 2017 (ABS 2017), 68 percent (n=28,199) of all prisoners were serving a sentence and 31 percent (n=12,911) were unsentenced prisoners on remand. Of the 74 deaths that occurred in 2016–17, 54 (73%) were sentenced prisoners and 20 (27%) were unsentenced prisoners (Table B1). The death rate of sentenced prisoners in 2016–17 was higher (0.19 per 100) than the death rate of unsentenced prisoners (0.15 per 100; Figure 4).

The death rate of unsentenced prisoners in 2016–17 was 87 percent lower than the peak death rates recorded in 1983–84 and 1997–98 (1.16 and 1.15 per 100 respectively; Figure 4). For the last 12 years, death rates of unsentenced prisoners have been relatively similar to death rates of sentenced prisoners, largely due to a notable decrease in the death rate of unsentenced prisoners from 1997–98 to 2005–06 (1.15 to 0.11 per 100). Prior to this, death rates of unsentenced prisoners were generally much higher than death rates of sentenced prisoners, at an average ratio of three to one.

## Cause of death

The most common cause of death in prison custody in 2016–17 where the cause of death was known was natural causes (n=45; 67%), exceeding hangings (n=14; 21%) for the 16th year in a row (Table C11). In 2016–17, prisoners aged 55 and over made up most deaths resulting from natural causes (n=29; 64%), while prisoners aged less than 55 accounted for almost all hanging deaths (n=13; 93%).

The rate of death from natural causes in 2016–17 was 27 percent lower than the previous year (0.11 vs 0.15 per 100 prisoners in 2015–16; Figure 5), which may be partly explained by the decrease in the number of deaths of prisoners aged 55 and over (–8; Table C7). However, the 2016–17 rate of death from natural causes was similar to the average of the previous 10 years (0.12 per 100 prisoners). The rate of death due to hanging remains at record lows (0.03 per 100 prisoners; Figure 5).

The rate of death from natural causes in 2016–17 was higher for sentenced prisoners compared with unsentenced prisoners (0.13 vs 0.05 per 100), while the rate of death from hanging was higher for unsentenced prisoners (0.06 vs 0.02 per 100).

Natural causes were the most common cause of death for Indigenous and non-Indigenous prisoners in 2016–17 (Table B1). The rate of death from natural causes was higher for non-Indigenous prisoners compared with Indigenous prisoners (0.12 vs 0.08 per 100), while the rate of death due to hanging was similar across the two groups (0.03 vs 0.04 per 100 respectively). Indigenous prisoner death rates from hanging have been the same or lower than rates of non-Indigenous prisoners in all but two of the 16 years since 2001–02 (Figure 6).

Of the 14 hanging deaths in prison custody in 2016–17 (Table B1), bed sheets or blankets were the objects most commonly used (n=7), which is consistent with previous years. The most common hanging points were fittings in the cell other than bars, such as doors and ceiling vents (n=10). Cell bars were used in just two hanging deaths. Cell bar hanging deaths have decreased markedly in the last decade, accounting for no more than three hanging deaths each year.

Of the nine Indigenous deaths from natural causes in 2016–17, four were due to cancer, four were due to heart disease or related ailments, and one was due to an ‘other’ disease (ie kidney disease). Of the 35 non-Indigenous deaths resulting from natural causes where the type of natural cause death was known, 15 were due to cancer and seven were due to heart disease.

## Manner of death

The NDICP collects information on both the cause and the manner of each death. Cause of death information relates to the direct cause of death. Manner of death is a related variable, but it refers to the accountability or responsibility for the death (see *Appendix A*).

The most common manner of death in prison custody in 2016–17 was natural causes (n=45), exceeding self-inflicted deaths (n=19) for the 14th year in a row (Table C14). Two deaths were deemed to be the result of an unlawful homicide from prisoner-on-prisoner violence.

The rate of death from natural causes was higher for non-Indigenous prisoners compared with Indigenous prisoners (0.11 vs 0.08 per 100), while the rate of self-inflicted deaths were similar across the two groups (0.05 vs 0.04 per 100 respectively).

## Most serious offence

The NDICP collects information on the most serious offence (MSO) leading to custody (see *Appendix A*). In 2016–17, the majority (55%) of Australian prisoners had been incarcerated for violent offences as their MSO (ABS 2017). Of the 73 persons who died in prison custody in 2016–17 where the MSO was recorded, 58 (79%) had been incarcerated for violent offences (Table B1). Most Indigenous (67%; n=10) and non-Indigenous (83%; n=48) persons who died in prison custody had been incarcerated for violent offences. Each year since 1993–94, violent offences have consistently been the most common MSO committed by the deceased prior to their incarceration (Table C16).

## Location of death

In 2016–17, most deaths in prison custody occurred in a prison cell or a public hospital:

- prison cell: 36 of the 74 deaths in total, including 6 of the 16 Indigenous and 30 of the 58 non-Indigenous deaths; and
- public hospital: 28 of the 74 deaths in total, including 8 of the 16 Indigenous and 20 of the 58 non-Indigenous deaths.

Other locations for deaths in prison custody include prison and psychiatric hospitals (Table B1).

Cells were the most common location for prison deaths in all but seven years over the 38-year reference period (Table C17).

## Type of prison

In 2016–17, 53 of the 74 deaths in prison custody occurred while the prisoner was in the custody of a government-run prison; the remainder (n=21) occurred while the prisoner was in the custody of a privately run prison (Table B1). Based on prison population estimates from the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision (SCRGSP 2018), the rate of death in privately run prisons was 0.28 per 100 prisoners, and the rate of death in government-run prisons was 0.16 per 100 prisoners.

**Figure 1: Deaths in prison custody, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 prisoners)**



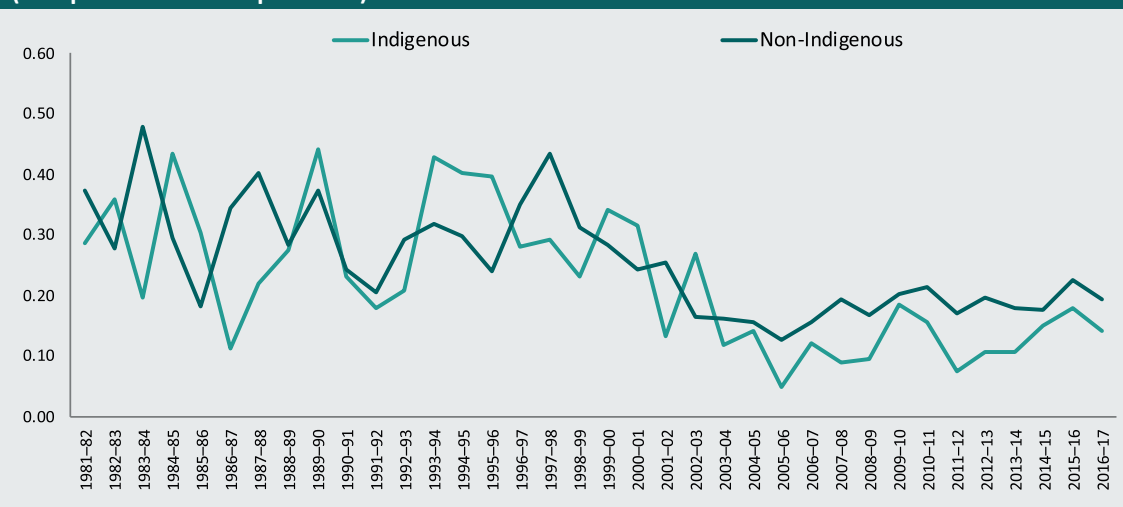
Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2017 [computer file]; Table C5

**Figure 2: Deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction and Indigenous status, 2016–17 (n)**



Source: AIC NDICP 2016–2017 [computer file]; Table B1

**Figure 3: Deaths in prison custody by Indigenous status, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 relevant prisoners)**



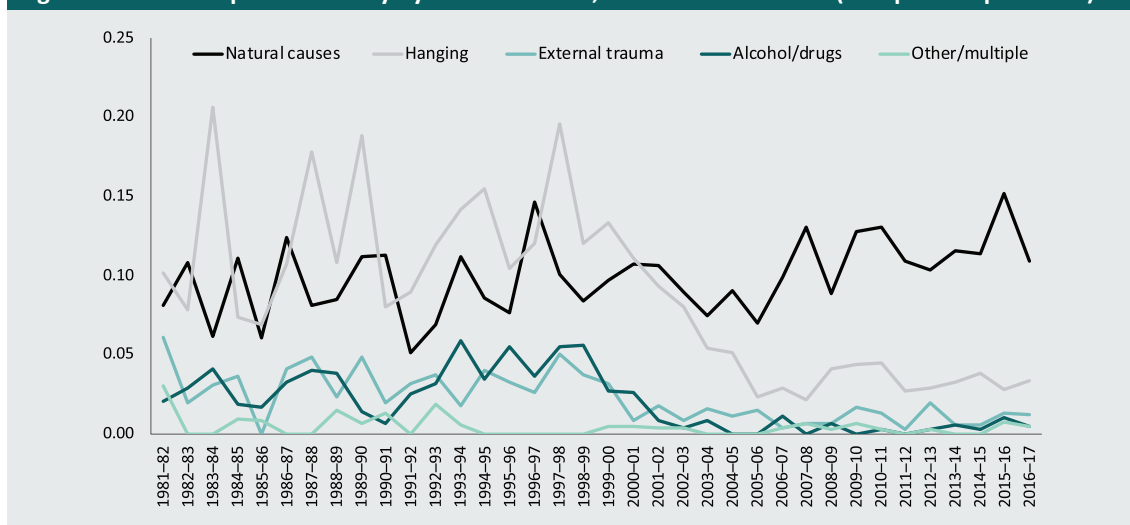
Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2017 [computer file]; Table C5

**Figure 4: Deaths in prison custody by legal status, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 relevant prisoners)**



Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2017 [computer file]; Table C10

**Figure 5: Deaths in prison custody by cause of death, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 prisoners)**

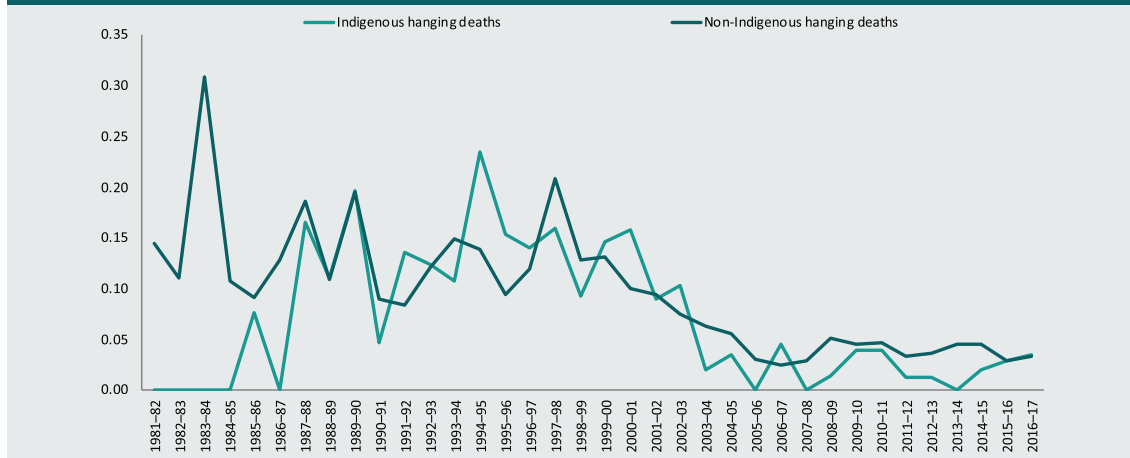


Note: External trauma includes head injuries and gunshot wounds

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2017 [computer file]; Table C12

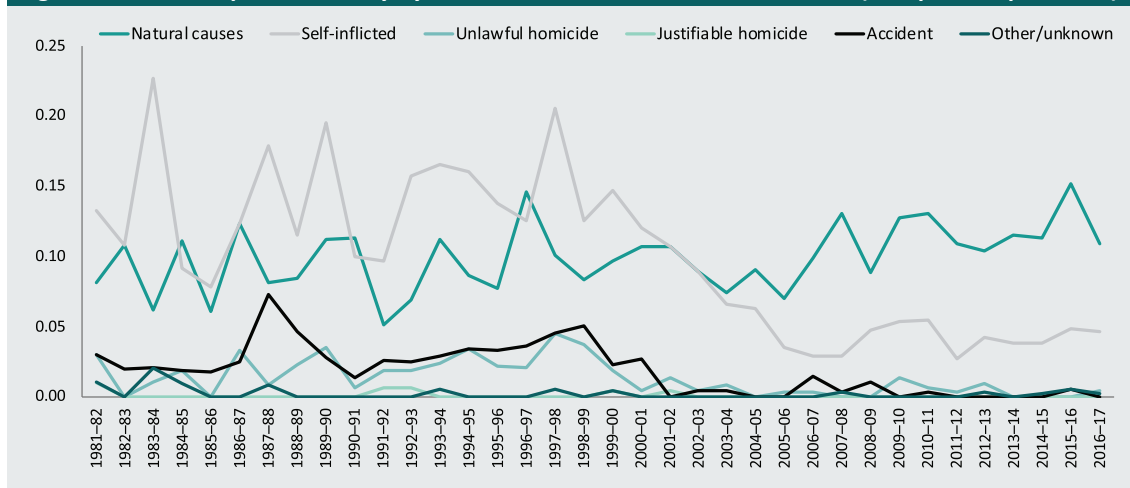


**Figure 6: Hanging deaths in prison custody by Indigenous status, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 relevant prisoners)**



Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2017 [computer file]; Table C13

**Figure 7: Deaths in prison custody by manner of death, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 prisoners)**



Note: Self-inflicted includes self-harm, whether intentional, unintentional or unknown, and accidental hangings. Excludes one case where manner of death was recorded as excusable homicide

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2017 [computer file]; Table C15

# Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations

## 2016–17 findings

In 2016–17, 17 deaths occurred in police custody and custody-related operations (hereafter referred to as police custody) in Australia, three fewer than in the previous year (Table B2). The number of deaths in 2016–17 was 60 percent lower than the peak number recorded in 2003–04 (n=42; Table C19). Rates of death in police custody cannot be calculated, due to the lack of corresponding population data.

Across the states and territories, New South Wales recorded six deaths in police custody, South Australia recorded five deaths, and Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory each recorded two deaths (Table B2). There were no deaths in police custody in Victoria, Tasmania or the Australian Capital Territory in 2016–17.

During 2016–17, 10 of the 17 deaths in police custody were classified as category 1 deaths (Table B2)—that is, deaths occurring during close police contact with the deceased, such as deaths in police stations, and most police shootings and raids (see *Introduction*). The remaining seven were classified as category 2 deaths (Table B2), during non-close police contact, such as most sieges and motor vehicle pursuits (MVPs).

## Indigenous status

Across Australia, there were six Indigenous deaths and nine non-Indigenous deaths in police custody in 2016–17 (Table B2). The Indigenous status was unknown for two deaths. Since 1989–90, non-Indigenous deaths in police custody have been consistently higher than Indigenous deaths in police custody (Figure 9).

## Gender

In 2016–17, 16 males and one female died in police custody (Table B2). All Indigenous deaths were male (n=6). The numbers of both male and female deaths have remained relatively constant over the years (Table C24). Male deaths have consistently outnumbered female deaths each year.

## Age

The median age at time of death in police custody in 2016–17 was 36 years (Table B2). The median age at death was higher for Indigenous persons (37.5 years) than for non-Indigenous persons (35 years). Deaths in police custody most commonly involved persons aged between 25 and 39 (n=7), followed by persons aged between 40 and 54 (n=5) and less than 25 (n=4). Over the years of data collection, deaths have generally been more likely to involve persons aged 39 and younger (Table C25). Deaths of persons aged 55 and over have remained low, with just one death occurring in this age group in 2016–17.

## Cause of death

Most deaths in police custody in 2016–17 resulted from external trauma injuries and gunshot wounds (n=5 each; Figure 10). The cause of death for the six Indigenous persons was evenly spread across natural causes (n=2), external trauma injuries (n=2), and other or multiple causes (n=2). Since 1989–90, the majority of deaths each year have been caused primarily by external trauma and gunshot wounds (Table C26). However, deaths from external trauma have decreased overall since 2001–02 (–20).

There was one hanging death in police custody in 2016–17. The hanging point used was a fitting in a caged police vehicle, and a shoelace was used as the hanging material. Hanging deaths are characterised by an overall decrease in the number of deaths between 1989–90 and 2010–11 (from 7 to 0), with either one or no hanging deaths each year since 2006–07 (Table C26).

## Manner of death

In 2016–17, of the 17 deaths in police custody, four were self-inflicted, four were the result of a justifiable homicide, four were accidental, three resulted from natural causes and two had an ‘other’ or unknown manner of death (Table B2; see *Appendix A* for details of manner of death).

Of the six Indigenous deaths in police custody, two resulted from natural causes and two were accidental (in the two remaining cases, the manner of death was other/unknown). Of the nine non-Indigenous deaths in police custody, four were self-inflicted, two were the result of a justifiable homicide, two were accidental, and one resulted from natural causes. As noted earlier, the Indigenous status was unknown for two deaths.

Despite year to year fluctuation, both accidental and self-inflicted deaths have generally decreased over the last decade. Deaths resulting from an unlawful homicide have been extremely low, and no unlawful homicides have occurred since 2011–12 (Table C27).

## Most serious offence

Commonly, non-Indigenous persons who died in police custody were suspected of having committed an MSO (see *Appendix A*) that was violent in nature (n=4; Table B2). This was also the case for Indigenous persons who died in police custody (n=2).

## Location of death

Seven of the 17 deaths that occurred in police custody took place in a public place, followed by five on private property, four in a public hospital, and one in a cell (Table B2). Of the six Indigenous deaths in police custody, three occurred in a public place, two in a public hospital, and one on private property.

Public places have been the most common location for deaths in police custody in all but eight years over the 28-year reference period (Table C29). While cell deaths peaked in 1989–90 with 11 deaths, there have been relatively few since then.

## Circumstances of custodial period

In 2016–17, 13 of the 17 deaths in police custody occurred while police were in the process of detaining, or attempting to detain, the individual (Table B2). Of these, six involved non-Indigenous persons and five involved Indigenous persons. The Indigenous status for two of these deaths was unknown. Four deaths in police custody occurred in police lock-up or during transfer to a police station or hospital. In each year since 1992–93, deaths occurring while police were in the process of detaining an individual have been more frequent than deaths in any other type of custody (Table C30).

## Motor vehicle pursuit deaths

Of the 13 deaths in police custody where police were in the process of detaining or attempting to detain the individual in 2016–17, four resulted from an MVP (Figure 11). Three deaths occurred in New South Wales and one death occurred in South Australia. The number of MVP deaths remains at record lows, compared with the peak number recorded in 2001–02 (n=18; Table C31).

Of the four MVP deaths in 2016–17:

- two were of Indigenous persons. Indigenous persons have been involved in 52 of the 232 MVP deaths since 1989–90. Non-Indigenous deaths have outnumbered Indigenous deaths every year except for six (1989–90, 1990–91, 1995–96, 2010–11, 2015–16 and 2016–17);
- all involved males. Males have accounted for the vast majority of MVP deaths since 1989–90, outnumbering female deaths in every year; and
- two involved persons suspected of committing a traffic offence as their MSO and two involved persons suspected of committing a theft-related offence as their MSO. MVP deaths of persons suspected of committing a traffic offence have generally been more frequent than other types of offences since 2006–07.

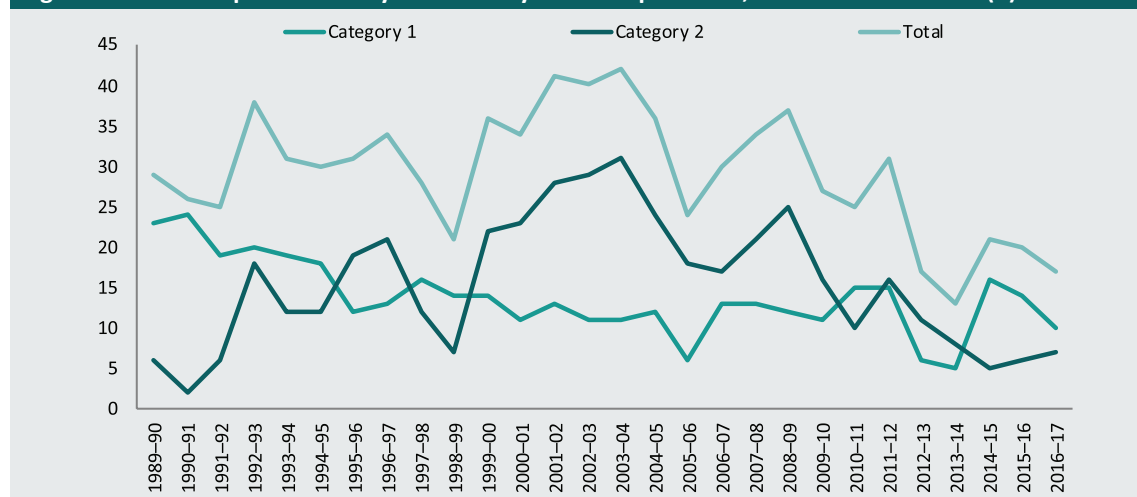
## Shooting deaths

Five shooting deaths in police custody occurred across Australia in 2016–17 (Figure 12). Two deaths occurred in Queensland and one death occurred in each of New South Wales, Western Australia and South Australia. Four of the five shooting deaths involved people who had been shot by police, and one death involved the person shooting themselves. Since 1989–90, 131 shooting deaths were persons shot by police, while a further 104 persons shot themselves (Table C33).

Of the four shooting deaths resulting from police shootings in 2016–17:

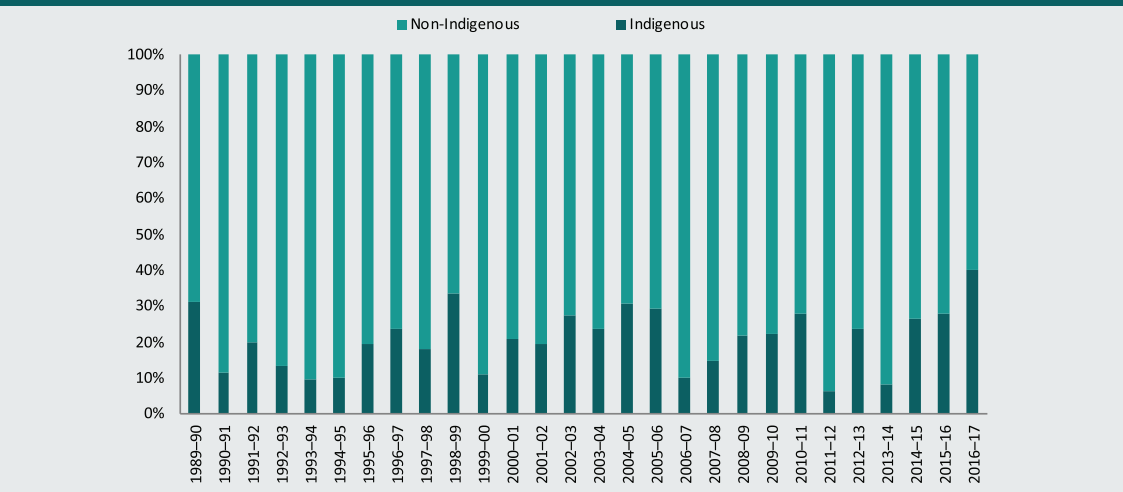
- two were of non-Indigenous persons. The Indigenous status was unknown for two deaths. Police shootings of non-Indigenous persons have consistently outnumbered those of Indigenous persons each year since 1990–91;
- all were of males. In all years but four, all persons shot by police were males (the four exceptions were 1993–94, 1994–95, 1995–96 and 2014–15);
- the median age at time of death for persons shot by police was 38 years. Forty-nine percent of total police shooting deaths between 1989–90 and 2016–17 were of people aged between 25 and 39 years;
- three were of persons suspected of committing a violent offence as their MSO (in the one remaining case, the MSO was classified as ‘other’). Shooting deaths of persons suspected of committing a violent offence have generally outnumbered other offence types each year since 1989–90; and
- two deaths occurred in each of a private property and a public place. Since 1989–90, the majority of shooting deaths resulting from police shootings each year have primarily occurred on private property and in public places.

**Figure 8: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**



Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]; Table C22

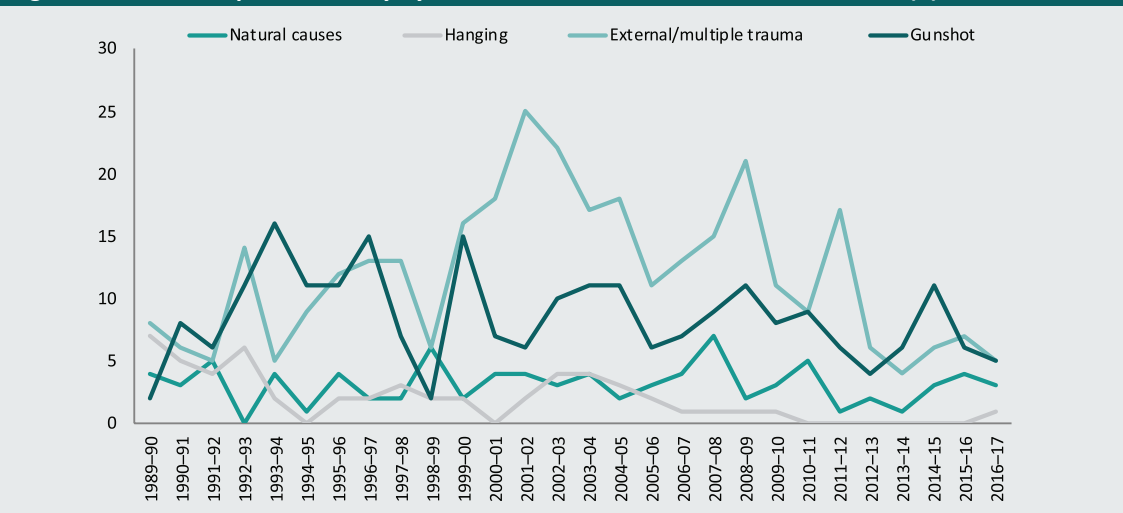
**Figure 9: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by Indigenous status, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (%)**



Note: Excludes seven cases where Indigenous status was not recorded

Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]; Table C23

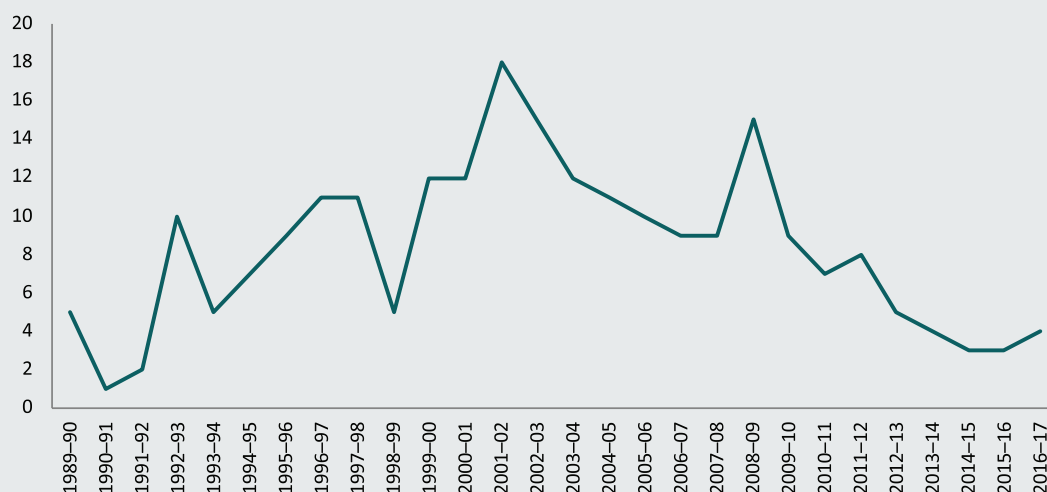
**Figure 10: Deaths in police custody by select cause of death, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**



Notes: External trauma includes head injury. Excludes deaths caused by alcohol/drugs and other/multiple due to small numbers

Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]; Table C26

**Figure 11: Motor vehicle pursuit deaths, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**



Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]; Table C31

**Figure 12: Shooting deaths, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**



Note: Excludes one case where shooting death status was not recorded  
Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]; Table C33

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# Appendix A: Methodology

## Background and function of the NDICP

The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody recommended in its final report (1991) that an ongoing program be established to monitor Indigenous and non-Indigenous deaths in prison, police custody and youth detention.

In response, the National Deaths in Custody Program was established at the Australian Institute of Criminology in 1992 and continues to provide comprehensive and authoritative data on all deaths which occur in custody and custody-related police operations. Although the NDICP began recording information in 1992, data on all custodial deaths between 1980 and 1992 were collected retrospectively, placing the NDICP in the unique position of holding detailed information on custodial deaths in Australia spanning 38 years. As all data in this report are presented by financial year rather than calendar year, 1979–80 financial year covers data from 1 January 1980 to 30 June 1980 only.

The NDICP examines the circumstances of deaths in prison, police custody and youth detention around Australia on an ongoing basis. The purpose of monitoring deaths in custody is to provide accurate, up-to-date information that will contribute to public policy discussion in this important area, and to increase public understanding of the issues. It also allows for the monitoring of long-term trends and patterns in custody and police custody-related operations.

## Data source

The information held in the NDICP database is based on two main data sources:

- NDICP data collection forms completed by all state and territory police services and correctional departments in Australia; and
- coronial records, such as transcripts of proceedings and findings, as well as toxicology and post-mortem reports.

NDICP data collection forms allow information to be recorded on approximately 80 variables relating to the circumstances and characteristics of each death. Coronial data are accessed through the National Coronial Information System and are primarily used to confirm the cause and manner of death.

## Borderline cases

The NDICP uses the definition of a death in custody recommended by the RCIADIC as a guide to which cases should or should not be included in the NDICP database. While most of the cases are straightforward and clearly fall within the definition, every year there are some cases where it is unclear whether the death should be classified as a death in custody.

For the purposes of the NDICP, a person is considered to be in custody when they are not free to leave the detention or arrest of police or corrections officials. As outlined in the definitions provided in Box 1 in the *Introduction*, this includes deaths that occur in a hospital if the injuries or illness suffered while in custody caused or contributed to that death. In cases where police were clearly in the process of detaining or attempting to detain a person immediately prior to death, such as shootings, sieges, raids and pursuits, the person is considered to have been in custody at the time of death. In all these cases, the question of inclusion centres on whether the deceased was in custody at the time of death.

Any borderline cases are excluded from analysis pending their coronial outcome. This may result in a delay of several years to collect data regarding those particular borderline cases, as they may not be heard in their jurisdiction's coroner's court for months or years. 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 numbers of deaths may be revised in future reports as the inclusion or exclusion of borderline cases is resolved.

## Cause versus manner of death

The NDICP collects information on both the cause and manner of each death. Cause of death information relates to the direct cause of death as reported by the coroner or by police and prison authorities. Manner of death is a related variable, but it refers to the accountability or responsibility for the death as reported by the coroner or by police and prison authorities. Therefore, in some cases cause and manner will correspond; for example, where a person dies as a result of natural causes, their death will be recorded as natural causes for both cause and manner of death. In other cases, cause and manner of death will differ; for example, where a person dies after hanging themselves, the cause of death will be recorded as hanging and the manner of death will be recorded as either self-inflicted or accidental hanging.

## Most serious offence

The NDICP collects information on the most serious offence leading to custody. The ABS Australian and New Zealand Standard Offence Classification (ABS 2011) scheme is used to group offences into six categories: violent, theft-related, drug-related, traffic, good order and other/unknown (in order from most to least serious).

Where information on more than one offence is provided, only the most serious of those is assigned to the case. Therefore, if a person had been charged with a violent offence and a property (theft-related) offence, the violent offence would take precedence. For the purposes of the NDICP these groups 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 possess, use, deal, traffic, manufacture/grow 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 prostitution, betting and gambling, disorderly conduct, vagrancy, offensive behaviour); and
- **other/unknown** includes other offences not elsewhere classified or where the MSO is unknown.

## Calculation of death rates

Where rates are presented in this report (unless otherwise stated), they have been calculated using the annual *Prisoners in Australia* results of the National Prisoner Census (ABS 2000–2017), which counts all prisoners who are in legal custody in each jurisdiction as at midnight, 30 June. Further, where trends in rates of death are presented, the rates are calculated back to 1982, as prison census data are not available prior to 1982.

Rates of police custody deaths are not presented in this report because there is no reliable data source for the numbers of people who are placed into police custody each year and the numbers of people who come into contact with police in custody-related operations.

# Appendix B: Deaths in custody 2016–17 key findings: Data tables

**Table B1: Deaths in prison custody, 2016–17<sup>a</sup>**

	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous			Total
	n	rate	n	rate	n	rate
Jurisdiction						
NSW	1	0.03	20	0.20	21	0.16
Vic	2	0.33	18	0.28	20	0.28
Qld	4	0.15	8	0.14	12	0.14
WA	5	0.20	9	0.21	14	0.21
SA	1	0.14	1	0.04	2	0.07
Tas	0	0.00	1	0.21	1	0.17
ACT	0	0.00	1	0.29	1	0.22
NT	3	0.22	0	0.00	3	0.19
Gender						
Male	13	0.13	55	0.20	68	0.18
Female	3	0.27	3	0.14	6	0.18
Age group (years)						
Less than 25	1	0.04	4	0.10	5	0.08
25–39	5	0.08	11	0.07	16	0.08
40–54	3	0.13	15	0.18	18	0.17
55+	7	2.42	28	1.00	35	1.14
Median (mean)	46 (49.3)		54 (53.3)		54 (52.4)	
Legal status						
Sentenced	9	0.12	45	0.22	54	0.19
Unsentenced	7	0.20	13	0.14	20	0.15

Table B1: Deaths in prison custody, 2016–17 <sup>a</sup>						
	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous		Total	
	n	rate	n	rate	n	rate
Cause of death <sup>b,c</sup>						
Natural causes	9	0.08	36	0.12	45	0.11
Hanging	4	0.04	10	0.03	14	0.03
External trauma <sup>d</sup>	0	0.00	5	0.02	5	0.01
Alcohol/drugs	0	0.00	2	0.01	2	<0.00
Other/multiple	1	0.01	0	0.00	1	<0.01
Manner of death <sup>b,c</sup>						
Natural causes	9	0.08	36	0.12	45	0.11
Self-inflicted	4	0.04	15	0.05	19	0.05
Accident	1	0.01	1	<0.01	2	<0.00
Other/unknown	0	0.00	1	<0.01	1	<0.01
Most serious offence <sup>e</sup>						
Violent	10	-	48	-	58	-
Theft-related	2	-	3	-	5	-
Drug-related	1	-	1	-	2	-
Good order	1	-	3	-	4	-
Traffic	1	-	0	-	1	-
Other	0	-	3	-	3	-
Location of death						
Public hospital	8	-	20	-	28	-
Prison hospital	1	-	7	-	8	-
Cell	6	-	30	-	36	-
Custodial setting	0	-	1	-	1	-
Other	1	-	0	-	1	-
Type of prison <sup>f</sup>						
Private	4	-	17	-	21	0.28
Government	12	-	41	-	53	0.16
Total						
	16	0.14	58	0.19	74	0.18

a: Rates (unless otherwise specified) have been calculated using ABS (2017) population estimates

b: Excludes seven cases due to information not recorded

c: Rates based on total prison population by Indigenous status

d: External trauma includes head injury

e: Excludes one case due to information not recorded

f: Rates have been calculated using SCRGSP (2018) population estimates

Note: Rates per 100 relevant prisoners

Source: AIC NDICP 2016–17 [computer file]

Table B2: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, 2016–17 (n)			
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Total <sup>a</sup>
Jurisdiction			
NSW	2	4	6
Vic	0	0	0
Qld	0	0	2
WA	1	1	2
SA	2	3	5
Tas	0	0	0
ACT	0	0	0
NT	1	1	2
Category of death			
Category 1	3	6	10
Category 2	3	3	7
Gender			
Male	6	8	16
Female	0	1	1
Age group (years)			
Less than 25	1	3	4
25–39	3	4	7
40–54	2	2	5
55+	0	0	1
Median (mean)	37.5 (37.7)	35 (32.7)	36 (36.8)
Cause of death			
Natural causes	2	1	3
Hanging	0	1	1
External trauma <sup>b</sup>	2	3	5
Gunshot wound	0	3	5
Alcohol/drugs	0	1	1
Other/multiple	2	0	2
Manner of death			
Natural causes	2	1	3
Self-inflicted	0	4	4
Justifiable homicide	0	2	4
Accident	2	2	4
Other/unknown	2	0	2

Table B2: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, 2016–17 (n)			
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Total <sup>a</sup>
Most serious offence			
Violent	2	4	7
Theft-related	1	1	2
Drug-related	0	0	0
Good order	1	1	2
Traffic	1	1	2
Other	1	2	4
Location of death			
Public hospital	2	2	4
Cell	0	1	1
Private property	1	2	5
Public place	3	4	7
Circumstances of custodial period			
Institution	1	3	4
Detaining	5	6	13
Total			
	6	9	17

a: Includes two cases where Indigenous status was not recorded

b: External trauma includes head injury

Source: AIC NDICP 2016–17 [computer file]

# Appendix C: Data tables

## Deaths in prison custody, 1979–80 to 2016–17

Table C1: Deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)									
	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	5	0	0	0	24
1983–84	12	14	4	2	1	0	0	0	33
1984–85	10	5	5	5	2	0	0	0	27
1985–86	6	2	7	1	0	0	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	2	11	4	5	3	0	0	31
1992–93	20	7	6	6	4	0	0	1	44
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	5	1	0	0	63
1997–98	29	13	11	16	6	1	1	3	80
1998–99	27	9	19	6	1	1	0	1	64
1999–2000	23	3	14	15	4	5	0	0	64



Table C1: Deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)									
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
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	1	0	1	40
2007–08	11	13	8	8	4	2	0	0	46
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
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
Total	632	297	331	238	151	48	10	50	1,757

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2017 [computer file]

Table C2: Indigenous deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (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

Table C2: Indigenous deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)									
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
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
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	2	1	2	2	0	1	0	1	9
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	2	4	5	1	0	0	3	16
Total	82	12	72	77	25	3	2	39	312

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2017 [computer file]

Table C3: Non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (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	3	0	0	0	20
1983–84	11	14	4	1	1	0	0	0	31

Table C3: Non-Indigenous deaths in prison custody by jurisdiction, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)									
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
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	2	10	3	5	2	0	0	27
1992–93	18	6	4	6	4	0	0	1	39
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	4	1	0	0	53
1997–98	26	13	10	12	5	1	1	1	69
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	1	0	0	32
2007–08	10	13	7	4	4	2	0	0	40
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
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	18	8	9	1	1	1	0	58
Total	550	285	259	161	126	45	8	11	1,445

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2017 [computer file]

Table C4: Deaths in prison custody by Indigenous status and gender, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)									
	Indigenous			Non-Indigenous			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1979–80	4	0	4	11	0	11	15	0	15
1980–81	2	0	2	26	0	26	28	0	28
1981–82	2	1	3	23	3	26	25	4	29
1982–83	4	0	4	19	1	20	23	1	24
1983–84	2	0	2	30	1	31	32	1	33
1984–85	5	0	5	22	0	22	27	0	27
1985–86	4	0	4	12	2	14	16	2	18
1986–87	2	0	2	32	3	35	34	3	37
1987–88	4	0	4	40	1	40	43	1	44
1988–89	5	0	5	30	1	31	35	1	36
1989–90	9	0	9	42	2	44	51	2	53
1990–91	5	0	5	29	1	30	34	1	35
1991–92	4	0	4	26	1	27	30	1	31
1992–93	5	0	5	39	0	39	44	0	44
1993–94	11	1	12	40	5	45	51	6	57
1994–95	12	0	12	42	1	43	54	1	55
1995–96	13	0	13	36	0	36	49	0	49
1996–97	9	1	10	52	1	53	61	2	63
1997–98	11	0	11	67	2	69	78	2	80
1998–99	9	1	10	52	2	54	61	3	64
1999–2000	14	0	14	46	4	50	60	4	64
2000–01	13	1	14	43	1	44	56	2	58
2001–02	5	1	6	43	3	46	48	4	52
2002–03	13	0	13	28	3	31	41	3	44
2003–04	5	1	6	31	0	31	36	1	37
2004–05	5	3	8	30	1	31	35	4	39
2005–06	3	0	3	24	1	25	27	1	28
2006–07	8	0	8	31	1	32	39	1	40
2007–08	6	0	6	37	3	40	43	3	46
2008–09	7	0	7	34	2	36	41	2	43
2009–10	14	0	14	44	0	44	58	0	58
2010–11	10	2	12	45	1	46	55	3	58
2011–12	6	0	6	36	0	36	42	0	42
2012–13	9	0	9	43	1	44	52	1	53

Table C4: Deaths in prison custody by Indigenous status and gender, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)									
	Indigenous			Non-Indigenous			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2013–14	10	0	10	41	3	44	51	3	54
2014–15	15	0	15	45	1	46	60	1	61
2015–16	19	0	19	63	1	64	82	1	83
2016–17	13	3	16	55	3	58	68	6	74
Total	297	15	312	1,389	56	1,445	1,686	71	1,757

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2017 [computer file]

Table C5: Deaths in prison custody by Indigenous status, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 relevant prisoners)			
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Total
1981–82	0.29	0.37	0.30
1982–83	0.36	0.28	0.24
1983–84	0.20	0.48	0.34
1984–85	0.43	0.29	0.25
1985–86	0.30	0.18	0.16
1986–87	0.11	0.34	0.31
1987–88	0.22	0.40	0.37
1988–89	0.27	0.28	0.28
1989–90	0.44	0.37	0.37
1990–91	0.23	0.24	0.23
1991–92	0.18	0.20	0.20
1992–93	0.21	0.29	0.28
1993–94	0.43	0.32	0.34
1994–95	0.40	0.30	0.32
1995–96	0.40	0.24	0.27
1996–97	0.28	0.35	0.33
1997–98	0.29	0.43	0.40
1998–99	0.23	0.31	0.30
1999–2000	0.34	0.28	0.29
2000–01	0.31	0.24	0.26
2001–02	0.13	0.26	0.23
2002–03	0.27	0.17	0.19
2003–04	0.12	0.16	0.15
2004–05	0.14	0.16	0.15

Table C5: Deaths in prison custody by Indigenous status, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 relevant prisoners)			
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Total
2005–06	0.05	0.13	0.11
2006–07	0.12	0.16	0.15
2007–08	0.09	0.19	0.17
2008–09	0.09	0.17	0.15
2009–10	0.18	0.20	0.20
2010–11	0.16	0.21	0.20
2011–12	0.08	0.17	0.14
2012–13	0.11	0.20	0.17
2013–14	0.11	0.18	0.16
2014–15	0.15	0.18	0.17
2015–16	0.18	0.23	0.21
2016–17	0.14	0.19	0.18

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2017 [computer file]

Table C6: Deaths in prison custody by gender, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 relevant prisoners)		
	Male	Female
1981–82	0.26	1.19
1982–83	0.23	0.25
1983–84	0.34	0.26
1984–85	0.26	0.00
1985–86	0.15	0.36
1986–87	0.29	0.53
1987–88	0.38	0.15
1988–89	0.28	0.15
1989–90	0.38	0.26
1990–91	0.24	0.14
1991–92	0.20	0.13
1992–93	0.29	0.00
1993–94	0.32	0.72
1994–95	0.33	0.12
1995–96	0.28	0.00
1996–97	0.34	0.18
1997–98	0.42	0.18
1998–99	0.30	0.22

Table C6: Deaths in prison custody by gender, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 relevant prisoners)		
	Male	Female
1999–2000	0.30	0.29
2000–01	0.27	0.13
2001–02	0.23	0.27
2002–03	0.19	0.19
2003–04	0.16	0.06
2004–05	0.15	0.23
2005–06	0.11	0.05
2006–07	0.15	0.05
2007–08	0.17	0.15
2008–09	0.15	0.09
2009–10	0.21	0.00
2010–11	0.20	0.15
2011–12	0.15	0.00
2012–13	0.18	0.04
2013–14	0.16	0.12
2014–15	0.18	0.03
2015–16	0.23	0.03
2016–17	0.18	0.18

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2017 [computer file]

Table C7: Deaths in prison custody by age category, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)					
	Under 25 years	25–39 years	40–54 years	55 years and over	Total
1979–80	4	4	5	2	15
1980–81	5	14	7	2	28
1981–82	9	11	7	2	29
1982–83	5	12	3	4	24
1983–84	14	12	4	3	33
1984–85	5	14	4	4	27
1985–86	3	9	1	5	18
1986–87	10	16	8	3	37
1987–88	16	20	5	4	45
1988–89	10	15	8	3	36
1989–90	16	23	8	6	53
1990–91	8	12	5	10	35

**Table C7: Deaths in prison custody by age category, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Under 25 years	25–39 years	40–54 years	55 years and over	Total
1991–92	7	12	8	4	31
1992–93	14	20	5	5	44
1993–94	12	27	10	8	57
1994–95	16	21	12	6	55
1995–96	12	21	11	5	49
1996–97	10	26	21	6	63
1997–98	25	30	16	9	80
1998–99	9	35	11	9	64
1999–2000	14	28	10	12	64
2000–01	7	32	6	13	58
2001–02	5	19	17	11	52
2002–03	6	17	12	9	44
2003–04	2	12	15	8	37
2004–05	4	16	11	8	39
2005–06	1	8	6	13	28
2006–07	3	9	11	17	40
2007–08	2	14	12	18	46
2008–09	1	16	16	10	43
2009–10	5	10	18	25	58
2010–11	5	18	15	20	58
2011–12	3	8	11	20	42
2012–13	2	10	22	19	53
2013–14	0	9	21	24	54
2014–15	1	14	15	31	61
2015–16	5	16	19	43	83
2016–17	5	16	18	35	74
Total	281	626	414	436	1,757

Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2017 [computer file]

**Table C8: Deaths in prison custody by age category, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 relevant prisoners)**

	Under 25 years	25–39 years	40–54 years	55 years and over
1981–82	0.23	0.24	0.66	1.01
1982–83	0.12	0.25	0.27	1.92
1983–84	0.38	0.25	0.38	1.53



Table C8: Deaths in prison custody by age category, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 relevant prisoners)				
	Under 25 years	25–39 years	40–54 years	55 years and over
1984–85	0.12	0.27	0.34	1.99
1985–86	0.07	0.16	0.07	2.18
1986–87	0.23	0.27	0.53	1.15
1987–88	0.37	0.33	0.31	1.50
1988–89	0.23	0.23	0.45	1.24
1989–90	0.34	0.32	0.41	1.99
1990–91	0.16	0.16	0.24	3.04
1991–92	0.14	0.15	0.36	1.05
1992–93	0.29	0.25	0.21	1.09
1993–94	0.24	0.31	0.37	1.45
1994–95	0.32	0.24	0.40	0.98
1995–96	0.23	0.23	0.36	0.73
1996–97	0.18	0.27	0.63	0.82
1997–98	0.46	0.29	0.47	1.11
1998–99	0.16	0.31	0.29	1.02
1999–2000	0.25	0.25	0.26	1.25
2000–01	0.12	0.27	0.15	1.30
2001–02	0.09	0.16	0.41	1.06
2002–03	0.11	0.14	0.28	0.77
2003–04	0.04	0.09	0.31	0.62
2004–05	0.08	0.12	0.21	0.57
2005–06	0.02	0.06	0.11	0.88
2006–07	0.06	0.06	0.18	1.10
2007–08	0.04	0.10	0.19	1.05
2008–09	0.02	0.11	0.24	0.56
2009–10	0.09	0.07	0.26	1.33
2010–11	0.09	0.12	0.21	1.00
2011–12	0.06	0.05	0.15	0.97
2012–13	0.04	0.06	0.29	0.87
2013–14	0.00	0.05	0.25	1.01
2014–15	0.02	0.08	0.17	1.19
2015–16	0.08	0.08	0.19	1.54
2016–17	0.08	0.08	0.17	1.14

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2017 [computer file]

Table C9: Deaths in prison custody by legal status, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)			
	Sentenced	Unsentenced	Total
1979–80	11	4	15
1980–81	20	7	27
1981–82	19	9	28
1982–83	18	6	24
1983–84	20	13	33
1984–85	23	3	26
1985–86	9	6	15
1986–87	25	9	34
1987–88	29	15	44
1988–89	26	8	34
1989–90	35	15	50
1990–91	22	13	35
1991–92	21	10	31
1992–93	29	15	44
1993–94	38	19	57
1994–95	38	17	55
1995–96	36	13	49
1996–97	46	17	63
1997–98	48	32	80
1998–99	45	19	64
1999–2000	41	23	64
2000–01	43	15	58
2001–02	36	16	52
2002–03	24	20	44
2003–04	24	13	37
2004–05	22	17	39
2005–06	22	6	28
2006–07	29	11	40
2007–08	34	12	46
2008–09	26	17	43
2009–10	42	16	58
2010–11	41	17	58
2011–12	31	11	42
2012–13	41	12	53
2013–14	43	10	53

Table C9: Deaths in prison custody by legal status, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)			
	Sentenced	Unsentenced	Total
2014–15	42	18	60
2015–16	63	20	83
2016–17	54	20	74
Total	1,216	524	1,740

Note: Excludes 17 cases where legal status was not recorded  
Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2017 [computer file]

Table C10: Deaths in prison custody by legal status, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 relevant prisoners)		
	Sentenced	Unsentenced
1981–82	0.22	0.90
1982–83	0.20	0.56
1983–84	0.23	1.16
1984–85	0.25	0.21
1985–86	0.09	0.41
1986–87	0.24	0.57
1987–88	0.27	0.92
1988–89	0.23	0.48
1989–90	0.28	0.78
1990–91	0.17	0.66
1991–92	0.15	0.54
1992–93	0.21	0.80
1993–94	0.25	0.98
1994–95	0.25	0.85
1995–96	0.23	0.56
1996–97	0.28	0.66
1997–98	0.28	1.15
1998–99	0.25	0.59
1999–2000	0.23	0.61
2000–01	0.24	0.35
2001–02	0.20	0.36
2002–03	0.13	0.42
2003–04	0.12	0.26
2004–05	0.11	0.33
2005–06	0.11	0.11
2006–07	0.14	0.18

**Table C10: Deaths in prison custody by legal status, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 relevant prisoners)**

	Sentenced	Unsentenced
2007–08	0.16	0.19
2008–09	0.11	0.27
2009–10	0.18	0.25
2010–11	0.18	0.25
2011–12	0.14	0.16
2012–13	0.18	0.16
2013–14	0.17	0.12
2014–15	0.16	0.18
2015–16	0.24	0.17
2016–17	0.19	0.15

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2017 [computer file]

**Table C11: Deaths in prison custody by cause of death, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Natural causes	Hanging	Head injury	External trauma	Gunshot	Alcohol/drugs	Other/multiple causes	Total
1979–80	8	3	1	3	0	0	0	15
1980–81	13	9	1	4	1	0	0	28
1981–82	8	10	0	5	1	2	3	29
1982–83	11	8	0	2	0	3	0	24
1983–84	6	20	0	2	1	4	0	33
1984–85	12	8	0	4	0	2	1	27
1985–86	7	8	0	0	0	2	1	18
1986–87	15	13	2	3	0	4	0	37
1987–88	10	22	0	6	0	5	0	43
1988–89	11	14	1	2	0	5	2	35
1989–90	16	27	0	6	1	2	1	53
1990–91	17	12	1	2	0	1	2	35
1991–92	8	14	2	2	1	4	0	31
1992–93	11	19	1	4	1	5	3	44
1993–94	19	24	0	3	0	10	1	57
1994–95	15	27	0	7	0	6	0	55
1995–96	14	19	1	5	0	10	0	49
1996–97	28	23	1	4	0	7	0	63
1997–98	20	39	0	10	0	11	0	80

	Natural causes	Hanging	Head injury	External trauma	Gunshot	Alcohol/drugs	Other/multiple causes	Total
1998–99	18	26	0	8	0	12	0	64
1999–2000	21	29	1	6	0	6	1	64
2000–01	24	25	0	2	0	6	1	58
2001–02	24	21	0	3	1	2	1	52
2002–03	21	19	0	2	0	1	1	44
2003–04	18	13	1	3	0	2	0	37
2004–05	23	13	1	2	0	0	0	39
2005–06	18	6	1	3	0	0	0	28
2006–07	27	8	1	0	0	3	1	40
2007–08	36	6	0	2	0	0	2	46
2008–09	26	12	1	1	0	2	1	43
2009–10	38	13	1	4	0	0	2	58
2010–11	38	13	2	2	0	1	1	57
2011–12	32	8	0	1	0	0	0	41
2012–13	32	9	1	5	0	1	1	49
2013–14	39	11	0	2	0	2	0	54
2014–15	41	14	1	1	0	1	0	58
2015–16	59	11	1	4	0	4	3	82
2016–17	45	14	2	3	0	2	1	67
Total	829	590	25	128	7	128	30	1,737

Note: Excludes 20 cases where cause of death was not recorded  
Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2017 [computer file]

	Natural causes	Hanging	External trauma	Alcohol/drugs	Other/multiple
1981–82	0.08	0.10	0.06	0.02	0.03
1982–83	0.11	0.08	0.02	0.03	0.00
1983–84	0.06	0.21	0.03	0.04	0.00
1984–85	0.11	0.07	0.04	0.02	0.01
1985–86	0.06	0.07	0.00	0.02	0.01
1986–87	0.12	0.11	0.04	0.03	0.00
1987–88	0.08	0.18	0.05	0.04	0.00
1988–89	0.08	0.11	0.02	0.04	0.02

Table C12: Deaths in prison custody by cause of death, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 prisoners)					
	Natural causes	Hanging	External trauma	Alcohol/drugs	Other/multiple
1989–90	0.11	0.19	0.05	0.01	0.01
1990–91	0.11	0.08	0.02	0.01	0.01
1991–92	0.05	0.09	0.03	0.03	0.00
1992–93	0.07	0.12	0.04	0.03	0.02
1993–94	0.11	0.14	0.02	0.06	0.01
1994–95	0.09	0.15	0.04	0.03	0.00
1995–96	0.08	0.10	0.03	0.05	0.00
1996–97	0.15	0.12	0.03	0.04	0.00
1997–98	0.10	0.20	0.05	0.06	0.00
1998–99	0.08	0.12	0.04	0.06	0.00
1999–2000	0.10	0.13	0.03	0.03	<0.01
2000–01	0.11	0.11	0.01	0.03	<0.01
2001–02	0.11	0.09	0.02	0.01	<0.01
2002–03	0.09	0.08	0.01	<0.01	<0.01
2003–04	0.07	0.05	0.02	0.01	0.00
2004–05	0.09	0.05	0.01	0.00	0.00
2005–06	0.07	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.00
2006–07	0.10	0.03	<0.01	0.01	<0.01
2007–08	0.13	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.01
2008–09	0.09	0.04	0.01	0.01	<0.01
2009–10	0.13	0.04	0.02	0.00	0.01
2010–11	0.13	0.04	0.01	<0.01	<0.01
2011–12	0.11	0.03	<0.01	0.00	0.00
2012–13	0.10	0.03	0.02	<0.01	<0.01
2013–14	0.12	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.00
2014–15	0.11	0.04	0.01	<0.01	0.00
2015–16	0.15	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.01
2016–17	0.11	0.03	0.01	<0.01	<0.01

Note: External trauma includes head injuries and gunshot wounds

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2017 [computer file]

**Table C13: Hanging deaths in prison custody by Indigenous status, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 relevant prisoners)**

	Indigenous hanging deaths	Non-Indigenous hanging deaths
1981–82	0.00	0.14
1982–83	0.00	0.11
1983–84	0.00	0.31
1984–85	0.00	0.11
1985–86	0.08	0.09
1986–87	0.00	0.13
1987–88	0.17	0.19
1988–89	0.11	0.11
1989–90	0.20	0.19
1990–91	0.05	0.09
1991–92	0.13	0.08
1992–93	0.12	0.12
1993–94	0.11	0.15
1994–95	0.23	0.14
1995–96	0.15	0.09
1996–97	0.14	0.12
1997–98	0.16	0.21
1998–99	0.09	0.13
1999–2000	0.15	0.13
2000–01	0.16	0.10
2001–02	0.09	0.09
2002–03	0.10	0.07
2003–04	0.02	0.06
2004–05	0.04	0.06
2005–06	0.00	0.03
2006–07	0.05	0.02
2007–08	0.00	0.03
2008–09	0.01	0.05
2009–10	0.04	0.05
2010–11	0.04	0.05
2011–12	0.01	0.03
2012–13	0.01	0.04
2013–14	0.00	0.04
2014–15	0.02	0.05
2015–16	0.03	0.03
2016–17	0.04	0.03

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2017 [computer file]

Table C14: Deaths in prison custody by manner of death, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)							
	Natural causes	Self-inflicted	Unlawful homicide	Justifiable homicide	Accident	Other/unknown	Total
1979–80	8	6	0	0	0	0	14
1980–81	13	9	3	1	1	1	28
1981–82	8	13	3	1	3	1	29
1982–83	11	11	0	0	2	0	24
1983–84	6	22	1	0	2	2	33
1984–85	12	10	2	0	2	1	27
1985–86	7	9	0	0	2	0	18
1986–87	15	15	4	0	3	0	37
1987–88	10	22	1	0	9	1	43
1988–89	11	15	3	0	6	0	35
1989–90	16	28	5	0	4	0	53
1990–91	17	15	1	0	2	0	35
1991–92	8	15	3	1	4	0	31
1992–93	11	25	3	1	4	0	44
1993–94	19	28	4	0	5	1	57
1994–95	15	28	6	0	6	0	55
1995–96	14	25	4	0	6	0	49
1996–97	28	24	4	0	7	0	63
1997–98	20	41	9	0	9	1	80
1998–99	18	27	8	0	11	0	64
1999–2000	21	32	4	1	5	1	64
2000–01	24	27	1	0	6	0	58
2001–02	24	24	3	1	0	0	52
2002–03	21	21	1	0	1	0	44
2003–04	18	16	2	0	1	0	37
2004–05	23	16	0	0	0	0	39
2005–06	18	9	1	0	0	0	28
2006–07	27	8	1	0	4	0	40
2007–08	36	8	0	0	1	0	45
2008–09	26	14	0	0	3	0	43
2009–10	38	16	4	0	0	0	58
2010–11	38	16	2	0	1	0	57
2011–12	32	8	1	0	0	0	41



	Natural causes	Self-inflicted	Unlawful homicide	Justifiable homicide	Accident	Other/unknown	Total
2012–13	32	13	3	0	0	1	49
2013–14	39	13	0	0	0	0	52
2014–15	41	14	0	0	0	1	56
2015–16	59	19	0	0	2	2	82
2016–17	45	19	2	0	0	1	67
Total	829	681	89	6	112	14	1,731

Notes: The self-inflicted category includes self-harm, whether intentional, unintentional or unknown, and accidental hangings. Excludes 25 cases where manner of death was not recorded and one case classified as excusable homicide  
Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2017 [computer file]

	Natural causes	Self-inflicted	Unlawful homicide	Justifiable homicide	Accident	Other/unknown
1981–82	0.08	0.13	0.03	0.01	0.03	0.01
1982–83	0.11	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00
1983–84	0.06	0.23	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.02
1984–85	0.11	0.09	0.02	0.00	0.02	0.01
1985–86	0.06	0.08	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00
1986–87	0.12	0.12	0.03	0.00	0.02	0.00
1987–88	0.08	0.18	0.01	0.00	0.07	0.01
1988–89	0.08	0.12	0.02	0.00	0.05	0.00
1989–90	0.11	0.20	0.03	0.00	0.03	0.00
1990–91	0.11	0.10	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
1991–92	0.05	0.10	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.00
1992–93	0.07	0.16	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.00
1993–94	0.11	0.17	0.02	0.00	0.03	0.01
1994–95	0.09	0.16	0.03	0.00	0.03	0.00
1995–96	0.08	0.14	0.02	0.00	0.03	0.00
1996–97	0.15	0.13	0.02	0.00	0.04	0.00
1997–98	0.10	0.21	0.05	0.00	0.05	0.01
1998–99	0.08	0.13	0.04	0.00	0.05	0.00
1999–2000	0.10	0.15	0.02	<0.01	0.02	<0.01
2000–01	0.11	0.12	<0.01	0.00	0.03	0.00
2001–02	0.11	0.11	0.01	<0.01	0.00	0.00
2002–03	0.09	0.09	<0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table C15: Deaths in prison custody by manner of death, 1981–82 to 2016–17 (rate per 100 prisoners)						
	Natural causes	Self-inflicted	Unlawful homicide	Justifiable homicide	Accident	Other/unknown
2003–04	0.07	0.07	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
2004–05	0.09	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2005–06	0.07	0.03	<0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
2006–07	0.10	0.03	<0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
2007–08	0.13	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00	<0.01
2008–09	0.09	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00
2009–10	0.13	0.05	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
2010–11	0.13	0.05	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
2011–12	0.11	0.03	<0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
2012–13	0.10	0.04	0.01	0.00	0.00	<0.01
2013–14	0.12	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2014–15	0.11	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	<0.01
2015–16	0.15	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01
2016–17	0.11	0.05	<0.01	0.00	0.00	<0.01

Note: Self-inflicted includes self-harm, whether intentional, unintentional or unknown, and accidental hangings

Source: AIC NDICP 1981–2017 [computer file]

Table C16: Deaths in prison custody by most serious offence, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)							
	Violent	Theft-related	Drug-related	Good order	Traffic-related	Other	Total
1979–80	8	3	1	1	1	1	15
1980–81	9	7	3	5	2	1	27
1981–82	10	12	3	3	0	0	28
1982–83	11	5	1	3	2	1	23
1983–84	14	13	0	6	0	0	33
1984–85	13	9	2	0	2	0	26
1985–86	8	6	1	1	0	0	16
1986–87	14	10	2	5	1	0	32
1987–88	18	18	2	3	1	2	44
1988–89	21	10	1	1	1	2	36
1989–90	28	16	3	2	0	2	51
1990–91	19	10	2	1	0	3	35
1991–92	16	8	2	4	0	1	31
1992–93	18	19	3	2	0	1	43

Table C16: Deaths in prison custody by most serious offence, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)							
	Violent	Theft-related	Drug-related	Good order	Traffic-related	Other	Total
1993–94	25	22	2	5	2	1	57
1994–95	28	18	4	2	2	1	55
1995–96	21	20	5	0	2	1	49
1996–97	29	18	7	4	2	3	63
1997–98	38	23	11	6	1	0	79
1998–99	27	26	5	5	1	0	64
1999–2000	33	24	2	1	2	2	64
2000–01	33	9	7	4	2	3	58
2001–02	28	11	5	4	2	2	52
2002–03	32	7	0	2	2	1	44
2003–04	29	2	3	1	0	2	37
2004–05	23	9	3	0	3	1	39
2005–06	22	4	1	1	0	0	28
2006–07	22	9	3	4	2	0	40
2007–08	31	5	4	3	3	0	46
2008–09	26	8	3	1	0	5	43
2009–10	39	5	3	0	5	6	58
2010–11	29	11	5	2	0	11	58
2011–12	27	5	7	3	0	0	42
2012–13	33	9	7	0	2	1	52
2013–14	36	9	5	1	0	3	54
2014–15	41	11	3	2	1	2	60
2015–16	62	5	4	7	3	2	83
2016–17	58	5	2	4	1	3	73
Total	979	421	127	99	48	64	1,738

Note: Excludes 19 cases where MSO was not recorded  
Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2017 [computer file]

**Table C17: Deaths in prison custody by location of death, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)**

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

Table C17: Deaths in prison custody by location of death, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)								
	Cell	Other custodial setting	Public hospital	Prison hospital	Psych. hospital	Public place	Other	Total
2013–14	17	3	21	13	0	0	0	54
2014–15	29	2	10	18	0	0	2	61
2015–16	25	1	38	18	0	0	1	83
2016–17	36	0	28	8	1	0	1	74
Total	871	80	527	187	2	5	9	1,681

Note: Excludes 76 cases where location of death was not recorded  
Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2017 [computer file]

Table C18: Deaths in prison custody by prison type, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)			
	Private	Government	Total <sup>a</sup>
1979–80	0	15	15
1980–81	0	28	28
1981–82	0	29	29
1982–83	0	24	24
1983–84	0	33	33
1984–85	0	27	27
1985–86	0	18	18
1986–87	0	37	37
1987–88	0	44	44
1988–89	0	36	36
1989–90	0	53	53
1990–91	0	35	35
1991–92	0	31	31
1992–93	3	41	44
1993–94	5	52	57
1994–95	2	53	55
1995–96	5	44	49
1996–97	4	59	63
1997–98	10	70	80
1998–99	10	54	64
1999–2000	5	59	64
2000–01	10	48	58
2001–02	7	45	52
2002–03	5	38	43

**Table C18: Deaths in prison custody by prison type, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Private	Government	Total <sup>a</sup>
2003–04	4	33	37
2004–05	6	33	39
2005–06	5	23	28
2006–07	4	36	40
2007–08	18	28	46
2008–09	11	32	43
2009–10	7	51	58
2010–11	12	46	58
2011–12	10	32	42
2012–13	9	44	53
2013–14	11	43	54
2014–15	13	48	61
2015–16	17	66	83
2016–17	21	53	74
Total	214	1,542	1,756

a: Excludes one case where prison type was not recorded  
Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2017 [computer file]

## Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, 1989–90 to 2016–17

**Table C19: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by jurisdiction, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
1989–90	5	7	7	5	2	1	1	1	29
1990–91	3	9	6	4	2	0	0	2	26
1991–92	4	9	5	0	2	3	1	1	25
1992–93	16	14	3	1	4	0	0	0	38
1993–94	8	10	7	0	1	2	1	2	31
1994–95	14	5	4	3	1	1	0	1	29
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	0	0	0	2	21
1999–2000	11	4	4	5	7	0	0	4	35
2000–01	17	4	3	4	5	0	0	1	34
2001–02	13	13	3	6	1	0	0	5	41

Table C19: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by jurisdiction, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)									
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2002–03	14	6	7	6	3	1	0	3	40
2003–04	15	6	9	6	2	0	1	3	42
2004–05	11	7	10	6	2	0	0	0	36
2005–06	6	2	4	6	4	0	1	1	24
2006–07	10	6	4	4	4	0	1	1	30
2007–08	7	8	5	4	4	1	0	5	34
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	4	1	0	0	2	21
2015–16	6	1	3	5	3	1	0	1	20
2016–17	6	0	2	2	5	0	0	2	17
Total	253	154	138	116	71	17	10	57	816

Note: Excludes two cases categorised as ‘Other Commonwealth’  
Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]

Table C20: Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by jurisdiction, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (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	0	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	5
1992–93	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	5
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
2001–02	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	5	8
2002–03	3	0	1	3	1	0	0	3	11

**Table C20: Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by jurisdiction, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2003–04	4	0	1	2	0	0	0	3	10
2004–05	2	1	2	5	1	0	0	0	11
2005–06	0	1	1	3	1	0	0	1	7
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	1	2	0	0	0	2	5
2015–16	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	1	5
2016–17	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	6
Total	28	7	22	51	17	2	0	37	164

Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]

**Table C21: Non-Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by jurisdiction, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (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
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	0	0	0	0	14
1999–2000	11	4	3	3	6	0	0	4	31
2000–01	15	4	3	2	3	0	0	0	27
2001–02	12	13	3	4	1	0	0	0	33
2002–03	11	6	6	3	2	1	0	0	29
2003–04	11	6	8	4	2	0	1	0	32



Table C21: Non-Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by jurisdiction, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)									
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2004–05	9	6	8	1	1	0	0	0	25
2005–06	6	1	3	3	3	0	1	0	17
2006–07	10	5	3	4	4	0	1	0	27
2007–08	7	8	4	4	2	1	0	3	29
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	2	1	2	0	0	0	11
2014–15	7	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	14
2015–16	6	0	3	2	2	0	0	0	13
2016–17	4	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	9
Total	225	146	111	65	54	14	10	20	645

Note: Excludes two cases categorised as 'Other Commonwealth'  
Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]

Table C22: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)			
	Category 1	Category 2	Total
1989–90	23	6	29
1990–91	24	2	26
1991–92	19	6	25
1992–93	20	18	38
1993–94	19	12	31
1994–95	18	12	30
1995–96	12	19	31
1996–97	13	21	34
1997–98	16	12	28
1998–99	14	7	21
1999–2000	14	22	36
2000–01	11	23	34
2001–02	13	28	41
2002–03	11	29	40
2003–04	11	31	42
2004–05	12	24	36

Table C22: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)			
	Category 1	Category 2	Total
2005–06	6	18	24
2006–07	13	17	30
2007–08	13	21	34
2008–09	12	25	37
2009–10	11	16	27
2010–11	15	10	25
2011–12	15	16	31
2012–13	6	11	17
2013–14	5	8	13
2014–15	16	5	21
2015–16	14	6	20
2016–17	10	7	17
Total	386	432	818

Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]

Table C23: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by Indigenous status, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)			
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Total
1989–90	9	20	29
1990–91	3	23	26
1991–92	5	20	25
1992–93	5	33	38
1993–94	3	28	31
1994–95	3	27	30
1995–96	6	25	31
1996–97	8	26	34
1997–98	5	23	28
1998–99	7	14	21
1999–2000	4	32	36
2000–01	7	27	34
2001–02	8	33	41
2002–03	11	29	40
2003–04	10	32	42
2004–05	11	25	36
2005–06	7	17	24
2006–07	3	27	30

**Table C23: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by Indigenous status, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Total
2007–08	5	29	34
2008–09	8	29	37
2009–10	6	21	27
2010–11	7	18	25
2011–12	2	29	31
2012–13	4	13	17
2013–14	1	11	12
2014–15	5	14	19
2015–16	5	13	18
2016–17	6	9	15
Total	164	647	811

Note: Excludes seven cases where Indigenous status was not recorded  
Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]

**Table C24: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by gender, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Male	Female	Total
1989–90	27	2	29
1990–91	25	1	26
1991–92	20	5	25
1992–93	34	4	38
1993–94	26	5	31
1994–95	28	2	30
1995–96	30	1	31
1996–97	34	0	34
1997–98	25	3	28
1998–99	18	3	21
1999–2000	36	0	36
2000–01	33	1	34
2001–02	36	5	41
2002–03	36	4	40
2003–04	40	2	42
2004–05	33	3	36
2005–06	22	2	24
2006–07	27	3	30
2007–08	32	2	34
2008–09	37	0	37

Table C24: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by gender, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)			
	Male	Female	Total
2009–10	26	1	27
2010–11	25	0	25
2011–12	30	1	31
2012–13	16	1	17
2013–14	13	0	13
2014–15	17	4	21
2015–16	19	1	20
2016–17	16	1	17
Total	761	57	818

Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]

Table C25: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by age category, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)					
	Under 25 years	25–39 years	40–54 years	55 years and over	Total
1989–90	10	10	6	3	29
1990–91	9	14	2	1	26
1991–92	6	10	6	3	25
1992–93	14	9	12	3	38
1993–94	9	13	7	2	31
1994–95	10	11	9	0	30
1995–96	13	10	5	3	31
1996–97	11	14	5	4	34
1997–98	7	16	4	1	28
1998–99	7	10	2	1	20
1999–2000	8	21	6	1	36
2000–01	13	11	7	3	34
2001–02	16	14	9	2	41
2002–03	13	16	9	2	40
2003–04	12	20	9	1	42
2004–05	10	19	6	1	36
2005–06	6	13	4	1	24
2006–07	5	17	6	2	30
2007–08	7	13	12	2	34
2008–09	14	15	5	3	37
2009–10	9	11	5	2	27

**Table C25: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by age category, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Under 25 years	25–39 years	40–54 years	55 years and over	Total
2010–11	6	10	6	3	25
2011–12	4	18	7	2	31
2012–13	0	7	8	2	17
2013–14	0	4	7	2	13
2014–15	5	6	7	3	21
2015–16	4	6	8	2	20
2016–17	4	7	5	1	17
Total	232	345	184	56	817

Note: Excludes one case where age was not recorded  
Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]

**Table C26: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by cause of death, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Natural causes	Hanging	Head injury	External trauma	Gunshot	Alcohol/ drugs	Other/ multiple causes	Total
1989–90	4	7	2	6	2	6	2	29
1990–91	3	5	3	3	8	2	2	26
1991–92	5	4	3	2	6	5	0	25
1992–93	0	6	6	8	11	4	3	38
1993–94	4	2	1	4	16	2	2	31
1994–95	1	0	4	5	11	7	2	30
1995–96	4	2	0	12	11	1	1	31
1996–97	2	2	3	10	15	2	0	34
1997–98	2	3	1	12	7	3	0	28
1998–99	6	2	0	6	2	4	1	21
1999–2000	2	2	3	13	15	1	0	36
2000–01	4	0	5	13	7	2	3	34
2001–02	4	2	8	17	6	1	3	41
2002–03	3	4	5	17	10	0	1	40
2003–04	4	4	1	16	11	3	3	42
2004–05	2	3	3	15	11	0	2	36
2005–06	3	2	6	5	6	2	0	24
2006–07	4	1	0	13	7	2	2	29
2007–08	7	1	2	13	9	1	1	34

**Table C26: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by cause of death, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Natural causes	Hanging	Head injury	External trauma	Gunshot	Alcohol/ drugs	Other/ multiple causes	Total
2008–09	2	1	4	17	11	1	1	47
2009–10	3	1	3	8	8	1	3	27
2010–11	5	0	0	9	9	2	0	25
2011–12	1	0	2	15	6	3	3	30
2012–13	2	0	0	6	4	1	3	16
2013–14	1	0	1	3	6	0	1	12
2014–15	3	0	1	5	11	1	0	21
2015–16	4	0	1	6	6	0	3	20
2016–17	3	1	0	5	5	1	2	17
Total	88	55	68	264	237	58	44	814

Note: Excludes four cases where cause of death was not recorded  
Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]

**Table C27: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by manner of death, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Natural causes	Self-inflicted	Unlawful homicide	Justifiable homicide	Accident	Other	Total
1989–90	4	9	1	1	13	0	28
1990–91	3	10	0	3	7	0	23
1991–92	5	9	0	4	7	0	25
1992–93	0	13	1	4	18	2	38
1993–94	4	11	0	9	6	1	31
1994–95	1	10	0	7	12	0	30
1995–96	4	12	0	4	11	0	31
1996–97	2	12	1	7	12	0	34
1997–98	2	8	1	5	12	0	28
1998–99	6	2	0	2	11	0	21
1999–2000	2	9	0	11	12	1	35
2000–01	4	8	1	2	19	0	34
2001–02	4	12	2	2	21	0	41
2002–03	3	16	1	4	15	0	39
2003–04	4	14	0	6	18	0	42
2004–05	2	12	3	6	12	0	35
2005–06	3	8	2	3	8	0	24
2006–07	4	10	0	3	12	0	29

**Table C27: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by manner of death, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Natural causes	Self-inflicted	Unlawful homicide	Justifiable homicide	Accident	Other	Total
2007–08	7	12	0	3	12	0	34
2008–09	2	10	1	4	18	1	36
2009–10	3	7	0	3	13	1	27
2010–11	6	5	0	6	8	0	25
2011–12	1	11	1	4	11	1	29
2012–13	2	5	0	1	8	0	16
2013–14	1	5	0	3	3	1	13
2014–15	3	4	0	10	4	0	21
2015–16	4	4	0	5	3	4	20
2016–17	4	3	0	4	4	2	17
Total	89	252	15	126	310	14	806

Note: Excludes eight cases classified as excusable homicide and four cases where manner of death was not recorded. The self-inflicted category includes self-harm, whether intentional, unintentional or unknown, and accidental hangings

Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]

**Table C28: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by most serious offence, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Violent	Theft-related	Drug-related	Good order	Traffic-related	Other	Total
1989–90	4	6	0	15	3	1	29
1990–91	7	7	0	12	0	0	26
1991–92	5	2	1	11	2	4	25
1992–93	8	16	2	4	5	3	38
1993–94	14	7	0	4	3	3	31
1994–95	13	7	3	3	3	0	29
1995–96	13	9	0	4	4	1	31
1996–97	14	10	1	6	1	2	34
1997–98	6	6	0	9	4	1	26
1998–99	6	9	0	2	1	2	20
1999–2000	18	10	2	3	2	1	36
2000–01	9	7	0	7	6	5	34
2001–02	8	14	0	3	6	10	41
2002–03	7	8	1	4	9	10	39
2003–04	16	9	1	5	7	3	41
2004–05	16	8	3	2	5	1	35

**Table C28: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by most serious offence, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Violent	Theft-related	Drug-related	Good order	Traffic-related	Other	Total
2005–06	8	3	3	3	4	3	24
2006–07	9	3	1	0	6	7	26
2007–08	9	4	1	2	7	10	33
2008–09	10	3	0	4	12	5	34
2009–10	7	2	1	3	7	6	26
2010–11	9	3	0	3	7	0	22
2011–12	13	2	0	3	8	5	31
2012–13	7	2	0	2	1	2	14
2013–14	5	1	0	0	3	3	12
2014–15	11	1	2	2	2	2	20
2015–16	11	0	0	3	4	2	20
2016–17	7	2	0	2	2	4	17
Total	270	161	22	121	124	96	794

Note: Excludes 24 cases where MSO was not recorded

Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]

**Table C29: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by location of death, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Cell	Custodial setting	Public hospital	Private property	Public place	Other	Total
1989–90	11	5	6	1	6	0	29
1990–91	6	4	7	5	4	0	26
1991–92	5	3	11	3	3	0	25
1992–93	3	2	13	3	15	2	38
1993–94	2	2	8	5	13	1	31
1994–95	2	2	7	5	14	0	30
1995–96	3	0	11	7	8	2	31
1996–97	2	2	12	4	12	2	34
1997–98	6	1	7	3	10	1	28
1998–99	3	2	10	2	3	1	21
1999–2000	1	1	8	9	17	0	36
2000–01	5	0	8	3	18	0	34
2001–02	2	2	9	5	23	0	41
2002–03	2	2	7	4	24	1	40
2003–04	4	0	3	8	27	0	42



**Table C29: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by location of death, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Cell	Custodial setting	Public hospital	Private property	Public place	Other	Total
2004–05	1	3	7	6	18	1	36
2005–06	2	1	5	4	12	0	24
2006–07	2	1	7	5	14	1	30
2007–08	1	0	18	4	11	0	34
2008–09	2	0	8	7	19	1	37
2009–10	3	1	9	5	8	1	27
2010–11	1	0	3	8	13	0	25
2011–12	1	1	6	8	15	0	31
2012–13	1	0	2	2	12	0	17
2013–14	0	0	1	5	6	1	13
2014–15	3	0	4	6	7	1	21
2015–16	0	1	6	8	4	1	20
2016–17	1	0	4	5	7	0	17
Total	75	36	207	140	343	17	818

Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]

**Table C30: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by type of custody, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Institutional	Escape	Detainment	Other	Total
1989–90	20	0	9	0	29
1990–91	16	0	10	0	26
1991–92	13	0	11	1	25
1992–93	11	0	26	1	38
1993–94	8	0	21	2	31
1994–95	7	0	23	0	30
1995–96	7	0	24	0	31
1996–97	5	1	28	0	34
1997–98	10	0	18	0	28
1998–99	9	0	10	2	21
1999–2000	4	0	32	0	36
2000–01	6	0	27	1	34
2001–02	6	0	29	6	41
2002–03	6	1	30	3	40
2003–04	5	2	35	0	42

Table C30: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by type of custody, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)					
	Institutional	Escape	Detainment	Other	Total
2004–05	7	0	28	1	36
2005–06	5	0	19	0	24
2006–07	5	0	23	2	30
2007–08	4	0	30	0	34
2008–09	4	1	32	0	37
2009–10	5	0	21	1	27
2010–11	3	0	22	0	25
2011–12	3	0	23	5	31
2012–13	1	0	15	1	17
2013–14	1	0	12	0	12
2014–15	4	0	17	0	21
2015–16	5	0	13	2	20
2016–17	4	0	13	0	17
Total	184	5	601	28	818

Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]

Table C31: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by method of detainment, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)						
	Motor vehicle pursuit	Other pursuit	Siege	Raid	Shooting/ Other	Total
1989–90	5	1	0	0	3	9
1990–91	1	0	1	2	6	10
1991–92	2	2	1	0	6	11
1992–93	10	4	3	0	9	26
1993–94	5	1	4	1	10	21
1994–95	7	2	3	1	10	23
1995–96	9	0	3	1	11	24
1996–97	11	1	7	2	7	28
1997–98	11	1	2	0	4	18
1998–99	5	0	1	0	4	10
1999–2000	12	2	3	5	10	32
2000–01	12	6	6	2	1	27
2001–02	18	2	3	1	5	29
2002–03	15	4	3	1	7	30

**Table C31: Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations by method of detainment, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Motor vehicle pursuit	Other pursuit	Siege	Raid	Shooting/ Other	Total
2003–04	12	7	7	2	7	35
2004–05	11	4	2	1	10	28
2005–06	10	0	3	0	6	19
2006–07	9	2	4	0	8	23
2007–08	9	5	5	0	11	30
2008–09	15	1	5	3	8	32
2009–10	9	2	7	1	2	21
2010–11	7	2	5	5	3	22
2011–12	8	1	6	5	3	28
2012–13	5	3	2	4	1	15
2013–14	4	0	2	2	4	12
2014–15	3	0	4	0	10	17
2015–16	3	0	4	0	6	13
2016–17	4	1	1	1	6	13
Total	232	54	97	40	178	601

a: Includes detainment-related deaths only  
Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]

**Table C32: Motor vehicle pursuit deaths by Indigenous status and gender, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Indigenous			Non-Indigenous			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1989–90	2	1	3	2	0	2	4	1	5
1990–91	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
1991–92	0	0	0	2	1	2	2	0	2
1992–93	2	0	2	7	1	8	9	1	10
1993–94	0	0	0	4	0	5	4	1	5
1994–95	0	0	0	7	0	7	7	0	7
1995–96	5	0	5	4	0	4	9	0	9
1996–97	5	0	5	6	0	6	11	0	11
1997–98	0	0	0	11	0	11	11	0	11
1998–99	1	1	2	2	1	3	3	2	5
1999–2000	2	0	2	10	0	10	12	0	12
2000–01	2	0	2	10	0	10	12	0	12
2001–02	1	1	2	16	0	16	17	1	18

Table C32: Motor vehicle pursuit deaths by Indigenous status and gender, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)									
	Indigenous			Non-Indigenous			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2002–03	1	0	1	12	2	14	13	2	15
2003–04	2	0	2	10	0	10	12	0	12
2004–05	3	0	3	7	1	8	10	1	11
2005–06	3	1	4	6	0	6	9	1	10
2006–07	0	0	0	8	1	9	8	1	9
2007–08	0	1	1	8	0	8	8	1	9
2008–09	2	0	2	13	0	13	15	0	15
2009–10	2	1	3	6	0	6	8	1	9
2010–11	4	0	4	3	0	3	7	0	7
2011–12	1	0	1	7	0	7	8	0	8
2012–13	1	0	1	4	0	4	5	0	5
2013–14	1	0	1	3	0	3	4	0	4
2014–15	0	1	1	2	0	2	2	1	3
2015–16	1	1	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
2016–17	2	0	2	2	0	2	4	0	4
Total	44	8	52	173	7	180	217	15	232

a: Includes motor vehicle pursuit deaths only  
Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]

Table C33: Shooting deaths, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)				
	Shot by self	Shot by police	Shot by other person	Total
1989–90	0	2	0	2
1990–91	3	5	0	8
1991–92	2	4	0	6
1992–93	5	4	1	10
1993–94	7	9	0	16
1994–95	5	6	0	11
1995–96	7	4	0	11
1996–97	8	7	0	15
1997–98	2	5	0	7
1998–99	0	2	0	2
1999–2000	4	11	0	15
2000–01	4	3	0	7
2001–02	4	2	0	6

**Table C33: Shooting deaths, 1989–90 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Shot by self	Shot by police	Shot by other person	Total
2002–03	5	5	0	10
2003–04	5	6	0	11
2004–05	5	6	0	11
2005–06	3	3	0	6
2006–07	4	3	0	7
2007–08	6	3	0	9
2008–09	6	5	0	11
2009–10	5	3	0	8
2010–11	3	6	0	9
2011–12	2	4	0	6
2012–13	3	1	0	4
2013–14	3	3	0	6
2014–15	1	10	0	11
2015–16	1	5	0	6
2016–17	1	4	0	5
Total	104	131	1	236

a: Excludes one case where shooting death status was not recorded  
Source: AIC NDICP 1989–2017 [computer file]

## All deaths in custody, 1979–80 to 2016–17

**Table C34: Deaths in custody by custodial authority, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)**

	Police <sup>a</sup>	Prison	Youth justice	Other	Total
1979–80	5	15	1	0	21
1980–81	12	28	1	0	41
1981–82	15	29	0	0	44
1982–83	22	24	0	0	46
1983–84	14	33	1	0	48
1984–85	21	27	0	0	48
1985–86	20	18	0	0	38
1986–87	42	37	1	0	80
1987–88	23	45	2	0	70
1988–89	29	36	0	0	65
1989–90	29	53	1	0	83

Table C34: Deaths in custody by custodial authority, 1979–80 to 2016–17 (n)					
	Police <sup>a</sup>	Prison	Youth justice	Other	Total
1990–91	26	35	1	0	62
1991–92	25	31	0	0	56
1992–93	38	44	0	0	82
1993–94	31	57	2	0	90
1994–95	30	55	0	0	85
1995–96	31	49	2	0	82
1996–97	34	63	1	0	98
1997–98	28	80	0	0	108
1998–99	21	64	1	1	87
1999–2000	36	64	1	0	101
2000–01	34	58	1	1	94
2001–02	41	52	0	1	94
2002–03	40	44	0	0	84
2003–04	42	37	0	0	79
2004–05	36	39	0	1	76
2005–06	24	28	1	1	54
2006–07	30	40	0	0	70
2007–08	34	46	0	0	80
2008–09	37	43	0	0	80
2009–10	27	58	0	0	85
2010–11	25	58	1	0	84
2011–12	31	42	0	0	73
2012–13	17	53	0	0	70
2013–14	13	54	0	0	67
2014–15	21	61	0	0	82
2015–16	20	83	0	0	103
2016–17	17	74	0	0	91
Total	1,021	1,757	18	5	2,801

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 only been collected by the NDICP since 1990. For more detail, see *Introduction*  
Source: AIC NDICP 1979–2017 [computer file]

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