6   Police services

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Attachment tables

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this Indigenous Compendium by an 'A' suffix (for example, in this chapter, table 6A.3). As the data are directly sourced from the 2011 Report, the Compendium also notes where the original table, figure or text in the 2011 Report can be found. For example, where the Compendium refers to '2011 Report, p. 6.15' this is page 15 of chapter 6 of the 2011 Report, and '2011 Report, table 6A.2' is attachment table 2 of attachment 6A of the 2011 Report. A full list of attachment tables is provided at the end of this chapter, and the attachment tables are available from the Review website at www.pc.gov.au/gsp.

The Police services chapter (chapter 6) in the *Report on Government Services 2011* (2011 Report) reports on the performance of police services in Australia. Data are reported for Indigenous people for a subset of the performance indicators reported in that chapter — those data are compiled and presented here.

Police services are the principal means through which State and Territory governments pursue the achievement of a safe and secure environment for the community. This is through the investigation of criminal offences, response to life threatening situations, provision of services to the judicial process and provision of road safety and traffic management. Police services also respond to more general

needs in the community — for example, working with emergency management organisations and a wide range of government services and community groups, and advising on general policing and crime issues. Additionally, police are involved in various activities which aim to improve public safety and prevent crime.

Police services reported in the 2011 Report comprise operations of the police agencies of each State and Territory government. Performance is reported against four activity areas: community safety; crime; road safety; and judicial services. Some equity-access, effectiveness, efficiency and outcomes indicators are reported in a general section, which combines all the activity areas. The national policing function of the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and other national non-police law enforcement bodies (such as the Australian Crime Commission) are not included in the 2011 Report.

A major improvement in reporting on police services in the 2011 Report is that data are reported for all jurisdictions for the first time for the access indicator 'Indigenous staffing'.

Indigenous data in the Police services chapter

The Police services chapter in the 2011 Report contains the following data for Indigenous people:

- Indigenous staffing
- proportion of police staff from Indigenous backgrounds relative to the proportion of the general population who are from Indigenous backgrounds, 2009-10
- deaths in police custody and Indigenous deaths in custody 2005–2009.

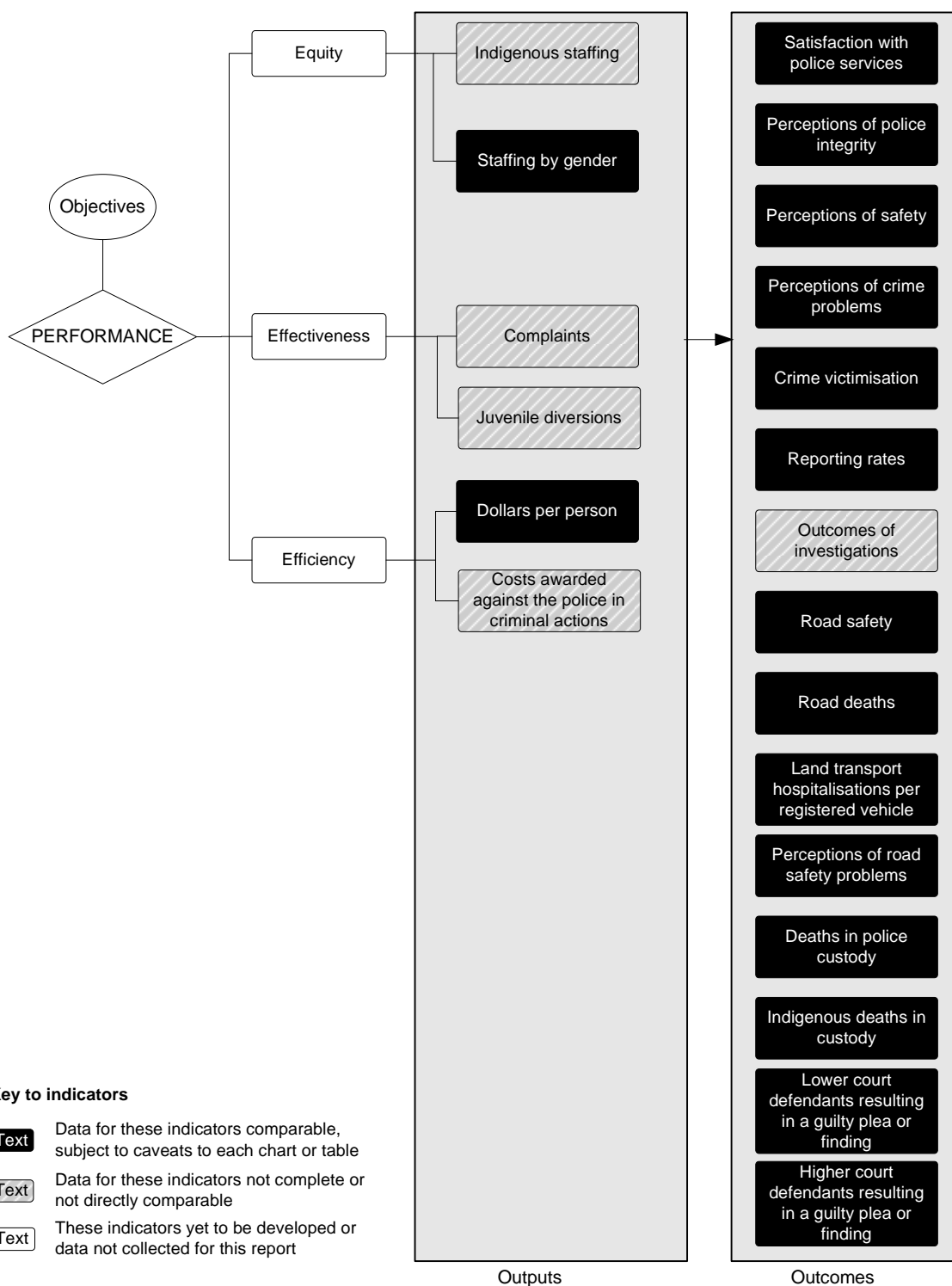## Framework of performance indicators

The Police services performance indicator framework outlined in figure 6.1 identifies the principal police activity areas considered in the 2011 Report. Data for Indigenous people are reported for a subset of the performance indicators and are presented here. It is important to interpret these data in the context of the broader performance indicator framework. The framework shows which data are comparable. For data that are not considered directly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary.

Indicator boxes presented throughout the chapter provide information about the reported indicators. As these are sourced directly from the 2011 Report, they might

include references to data not reported for Indigenous people and therefore not included in this Compendium.

The 2011 Report's statistical appendix contains data that may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter. These data cover a range of demographic and geographic characteristics, including age profile, geographic distribution of the population, income levels, education levels, tenure of dwellings and cultural heritage (including Indigenous and ethnic status) (appendix A).

Figure 6.1   **General performance framework for the police services sector**

Source: 2011 Report, figure 6.4, p. 6.12.

Indigenous staffing

'Indigenous staffing' is an indicator of governments' objective that provision of services occurs in an equitable manner (box 6.1). Indigenous people might feel more comfortable in 'accessing' police services when they are able to deal with Indigenous police staff.

Box 6.1 Indigenous staffing

'Indigenous staffing' is defined as the proportion of police staff (operational plus non-operational) from Indigenous backgrounds compared to the proportion of people aged 20–64 years who are from Indigenous backgrounds. These data are used because a significantly larger proportion of the Indigenous population falls within the younger non-working age groupings compared with the non-Indigenous population. Readily available ABS population projections of people aged 20–64 years provide a proxy for the estimated working population.

A proportion of police staff from Indigenous backgrounds closer to the proportion of people aged 20–64 years who are from Indigenous backgrounds represents a more equitable outcome.
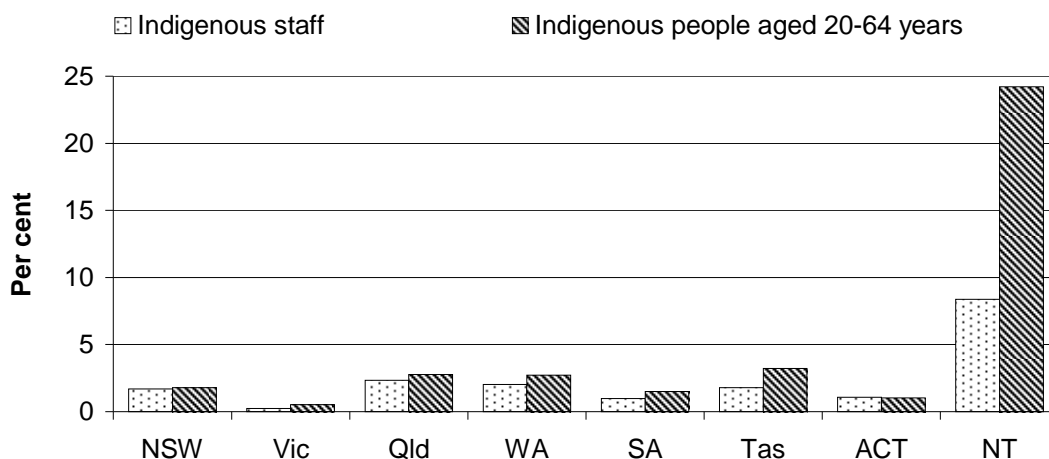
The process of identifying Indigenous staff members generally relies on self-identification as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Where Indigenous people are asked to identify themselves, the accuracy of the data will partly depend on how they perceive the advantages (or disadvantages) of identification and whether these perceptions change over time. Many factors will influence the willingness of Indigenous people to access police services, including familiarity with procedures for dealing with police and confidence in the effectiveness of police services.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

The proportion of Indigenous police staff in 2009-10 was similar to the representation of Indigenous people in the population aged 20–64 years for most jurisdictions (figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2   **Proportions of Indigenous staff in 2009-10 and Indigenous population aged 20–64 years[a, b, c, d]**

a Indigenous staff numbers relate to those staff who self-identify as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent. Indigenous staff are reported as the sum of both the operational and non-operational categories. **b** Information on Indigenous status is collected only at the time of recruitment. **c** The introduction of a new human resources system in Victoria has supported initial capture of data relating to Indigenous status. In this first year of reporting, the data are indicative only. Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff were unable to be separated in Victoria prior to 2009-10. **d** Data comprise all FTE staff except in the NT, where data are based on a headcount at 30 June.

Source: ABS (2009) *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Indigenous population aged 20–64 years* Cat. no. 3238.0 (Series B); State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 6A.9; 2011 Report, figure 6.6, p. 6.16.

Time series data for police Indigenous staffing are reported for 6 years in tables 6A.1–6A.8 and 6A.9.

Deaths in police custody and Indigenous deaths in custody

'Deaths in police custody', and 'Indigenous deaths in police custody' are indicators of governments' objective to provide safe custody for alleged offenders, and ensure fair and equitable treatment for both victims and alleged offenders (box 6.2).

Box 6.2   **Deaths in police custody, and Indigenous deaths in police custody**

'Deaths in police custody' and 'Indigenous deaths in police custody' are defined as the number of non-Indigenous and Indigenous deaths in police custody and custody-related operations.

A low or decreasing number of deaths in custody and custody-related operations is desirable.

Data reported for these indicators are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, there were 15 deaths in police custody and custody-related operations in 2009 (down from 32 in 2008 and 29 in 2007). This total comprised 10 non-Indigenous deaths and 5 Indigenous deaths (table 6.1).

Table 6.1   **Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations[a, b]**

	NSW[c]	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Non-Indigenous deaths									
2005	3	5	6	–	2	–	–	–	16
2006	8	3	2	2	2	–	1	–	18
2007	5	7	3	4	4	–	–	2	25
2008	4	6	4	10	2	–	–	2	28
2009	–	3	1	3	3	–	–	–	10
Indigenous deaths									
2005	1	–	1	6	–	–	–	–	8
2006	–	1	1	2	1	–	–	1	6
2007	–	–	2	–	2	–	–	–	4
2008	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	3	4
2009	–	–	1	–	2	–	–	2	5
Total Indigenous deaths 2005–09[c]	1	1	5	9	5	–	–	6	27
Total deaths									
2005	4	5	7	6	2	–	–	–	24
2006	8	4	3	4	3	–	1	1	24
2007	5	7	5	4	6	–	–	2	29
2008	4	6	4	11	2	–	–	5	32
2009	–	3	2	3	5	–	–	2	15
Total deaths 2005–09	21	25	21	28	18	–	1	10	124

a Deaths in police custody include: deaths in institutional settings (for example, police stations/lockups and police vehicles, or during transfer to or from such an institution, or in hospitals following transfer from an institution); and other deaths in police operations where officers were in close contact with the deceased (for example, most raids and shootings by police). Deaths in custody-related operations cover situations where officers did not have such close contact with the person as to be able to significantly influence or control the person's behaviour (for example, most sieges and most cases where officers were attempting to detain a person, such as pursuits). **b** The AIC deaths in police custody and custody-related operations data for 2009 are preliminary (unpublished) and final data in other publications might differ. Data for historic years were revised during 2010 by the AIC and might differ from those in earlier reports. **c** In 2006, two deaths occurred in NSW for which Indigenous status has not been determined. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: AIC (various years, unpublished) *Deaths in Custody*, Australia; table 6A.44; 2011 Report, table 6.4, p. 6.67.

Time series data for deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, and Indigenous deaths in custody and custody related operations are reported for 6 years in table 6A.10.

Definitions of key terms and indicators

Death in police custody and custody-related incident
Death of a person who was in police custody; death caused or contributed to by traumatic injuries while in custody; death of a person who was fatally injured when police officers attempted to detain that person; or death of a person who was fatally injured when escaping or attempting to escape from police custody.

Indigenous staff
Number of staff who are identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

Non-operational full time equivalent staff
Any person who does not satisfy the operational staff criteria, including functional support staff only. Functional support full time equivalent staff include any person (sworn or unsworn) not satisfying the operational or operational support staff criteria (for example, finance, policy, research, personnel services, building and property services, transport services, and management above the level of station and shift supervisors).

Offender
In the Police Services chapter, the term 'offender' refers to a person who is alleged to have committed an offence. This definition is not the same as the definition used in chapter 8 (Corrective services).

Operational staff
An operational police staff member (sworn or unsworn) is any member of the police force whose primarily duty is the delivery of police or police related services to an external customer (where an external customer predominately refers to members of the public but may also include law enforcement outputs delivered to other government departments).

Operational staff include: general duties officers, investigators, traffic operatives, tactical officers, station counter staff, communication officers, crime scene staff, disaster victim identification, and prosecution and judicial support officers.

List of attachment tables

Attachment tables for data within this chapter are contained in the attachment to the Compendium. These tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 6A.3 is table 3). Attachment tables are provided on the Review website (www.pc.gov.au/gsp).

Table 6A.1   Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, NSW

Table 6A.2   Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, Victoria

Table 6A.3   Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, Queensland

Table 6A.4   Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, WA

Table 6A.5   Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, SA

Table 6A.6   Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, Tasmania

Table 6A.7   Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, ACT

Table 6A.8   Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, NT

Table 6A.9   Indigenous, sworn and unsworn police staff

Table 6A.10   Number of deaths in police custody and custody-related operations, 2004 to 2009