
13 CORRECTIVE SERVICES

13.1 Introduction

The focus in this Report is on three categories of corrective services. These are differentiated by the degree to which a person's liberty and activities are restricted:

- *prison* — a legally proclaimed facility (other than a police prison) which holds offenders;
- *community custody* — orders which deprive offenders of their liberty by confining their physical location to a facility, dwelling or property that is not a proclaimed prison; and
- *community supervision* — orders imposed by a lawful authority on persons under the supervision of an adult correctional agency in the community.

Community custody and community supervision may include the supervision of adult prisoners on home detention, community custody, parole or other post-prison release programs, and of adult persons serving a range of community based corrections orders imposed by courts.

Corrective services not included in the Report include:

- juvenile correction services — generally the responsibility of community services agencies;
- Commonwealth Government facilities such as immigration and military detention centres;
- institutions providing psychiatric care (generally the responsibility of health services); and
- detention in police cells.

Following review of the collection of performance indicator information in the 1995 Report, the data set has been revised and hospitalisation rates for prisoners (a measure of prisoner care) has been deleted. Some jurisdictions were able to update previous years' information for some of the revised indicators, but this was not possible in all cases. Care needs to be taken in comparing jurisdictions based on information provided for previous years, or in analysing trends within jurisdictions over time.

13.2 Profile of the Sector

All jurisdictions, with the exception of the ACT, maintained prison facilities for sentenced as well as remand prisoners. In the ACT prisoners were held in remand only; the ACT's sentenced prisoners were held in NSW facilities under contractual arrangements with the NSW Government and were included in the NSW figures. Three jurisdictions (Queensland, NSW and SA) operated private prisons in 1995–96. Only NSW and the ACT provided for periodic detention of prisoners and periodic detainees have not been included in the data comparisons.¹ Community based sanctions varied across jurisdictions, with all jurisdictions operating community supervision options, while NSW, Queensland, SA and the NT also provided options defined as community custody (Section 13A.2).

There are strong links among policing, courts and prison operations. Corrective service agencies operate to give effect to court orders. The corrections environment is influenced by police priorities, police numbers and practices, changes in the volume of persons brought before a court, the ratio of successful to unsuccessful prosecutions, and court sentencing policies and practices.

13.2.1 Prisoner population

The average national prisoner population in 1995–96 comprised about 16 000 prisoners, 50 000 persons on community based sentences or orders and 1500 periodic detainees (Figure 13.1). Prisons are categorised as open or secure.² Excluding periodic detainees, 67 per cent of prisoners 1995–96 were detained in secure prisons.

There were 104 prisons and periodic detention facilities in Australia in 1995–96, with assets valued at about \$1800 million. Government operated corrective services employed about 12 000 staff.

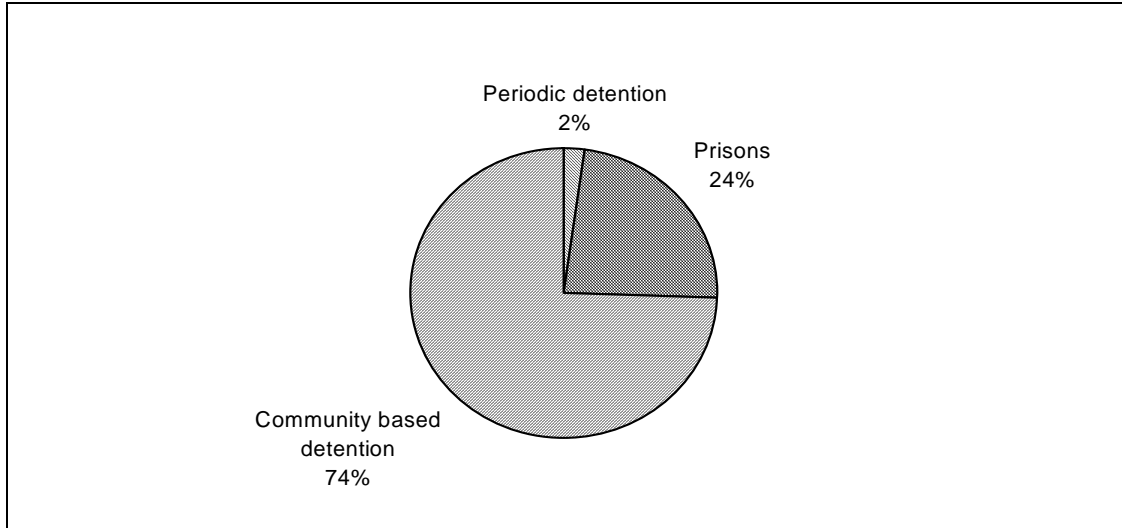
Numbers per 100 000 adults for each of the three types of offender categories differed significantly among jurisdictions in 1995–96. Imprisonment rates ranged from 49 in the ACT to 377 in the NT; community custody rates ranged

¹ Periodic detention in NSW is defined in relation to a person in respect of whom an order for periodic detention is in force. It means detention in prison for such number of detention periods as there are in the person's sentence of imprisonment.

² Open prisons are prisons used to contain prisoners previously classed as low security in the Australian Institute of Criminology's (AIC) National System for the security classification of prisoners (AIC 1993). Secure prisons are prisons used to contain prisoners previously classed as high and medium security in the AIC classification (AIC 1993).

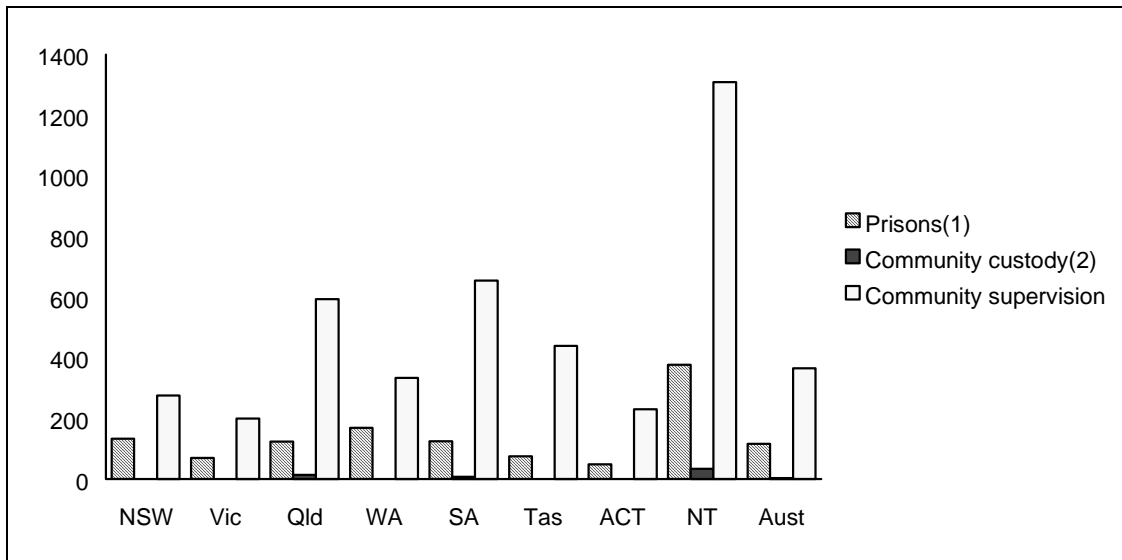
from less than one offender in NSW to 33 in the NT; and community supervision rates ranged from 200 in Victoria to 1310 in the NT (Figure 13.2).

Figure 13.1: Offenders by type of detention, 1995–96 (per cent)



Source: Table 13A.1

Figure 13.2: Offenders per 100 000 adults held in each type of detention, 1995–96 (number)



1 The ACT rate included prisoners held in NSW prisons, but excluded periodic detainees. The NSW rate also excluded periodic detainees.

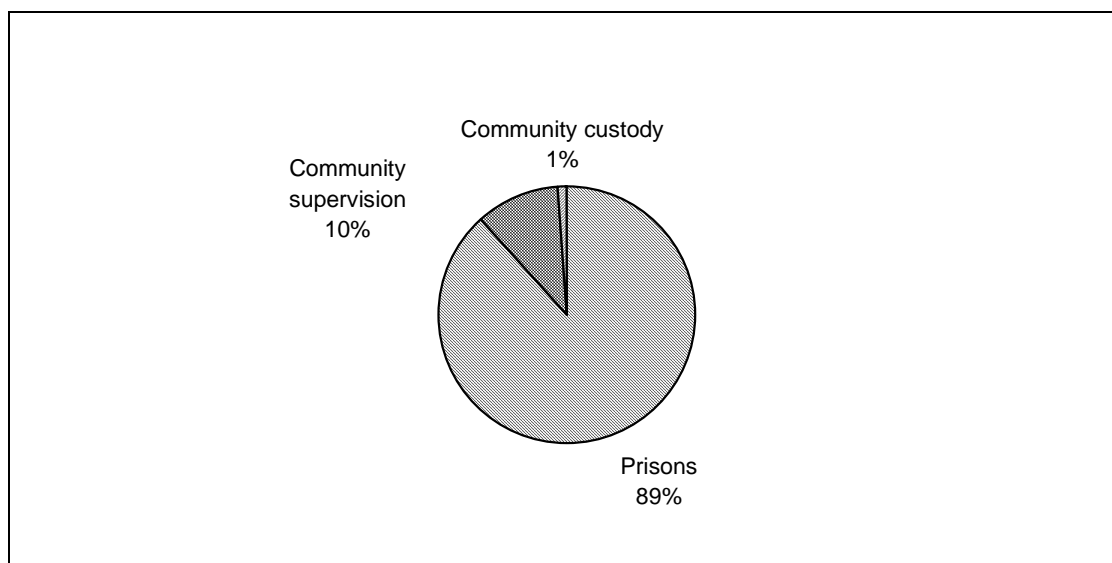
2 Victoria, WA, Tasmania, and the ACT did not use community custody as a sentencing option. NSW did not use community custody but ran a community custody pilot program in 1995–96.

Source: Table 13A.2

13.2.2 Expenditure

National recurrent expenditure on corrective services amounted to about \$980 million in 1995–96, comprising \$865 million (89 per cent) for prisons, \$12 million (1 per cent) for community custody and \$102 million (10 per cent) for community supervision (Figure 13.3).

Figure 13.3: Recurrent expenditure by type of detention or sanction, 1995–96 (per cent)



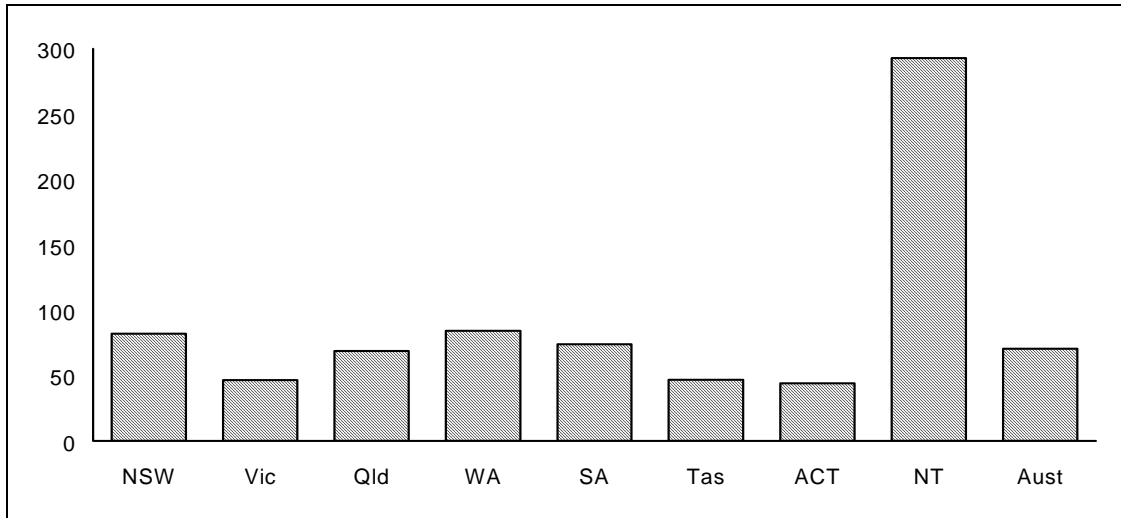
Source: Table 13A.3

Ninety-five per cent of the prison population is male. Male and female prisoners are normally held in separate facilities. This necessitates the maintenance of separate facilities or secure parts of facilities in each jurisdiction to accommodate relatively small numbers of female prisoners, with implications for resource management.

Total recurrent corrective services expenditure per head of adult population ranged from \$44 in the ACT to \$290 in the NT in 1995–96 (Figure 13.4).³

³ Adult was defined as 17 years and over.

Figure 13.4: Recurrent expenditure per head of adult population, 1995–96 (\$)



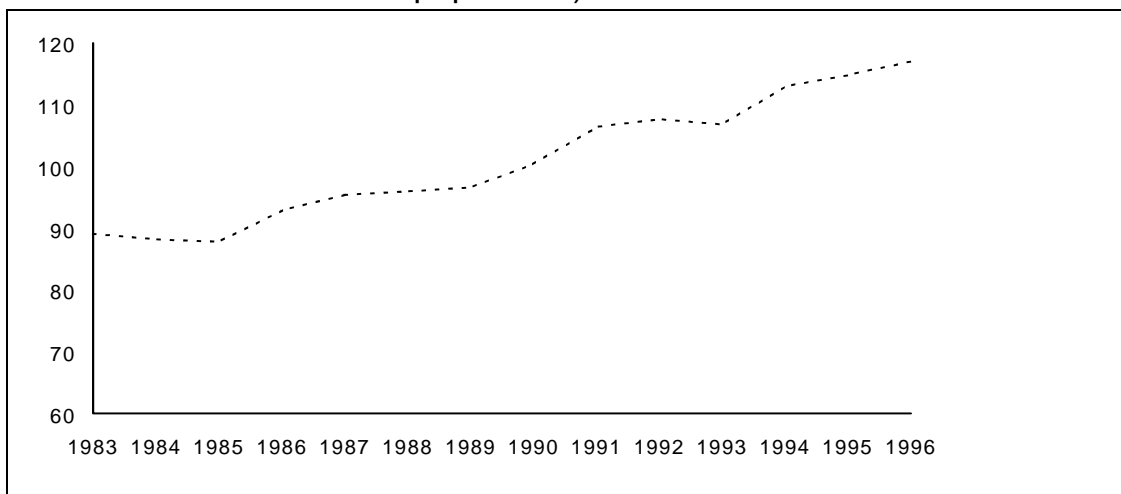
Source: Table 13A.4

13.3 Recent developments

13.3.1 Imprisonment rates

The task facing corrective services is determined by a number of factors, many of which are outside their influence. The interaction of crime trends, policing priorities, courts' sentencing practices, government policy and legislation, and available accommodation has produced a corrections environment of high prisoner numbers relative to prison capacity, and a decade of steady increase in the Australian imprisonment rate (Figure 13.5).

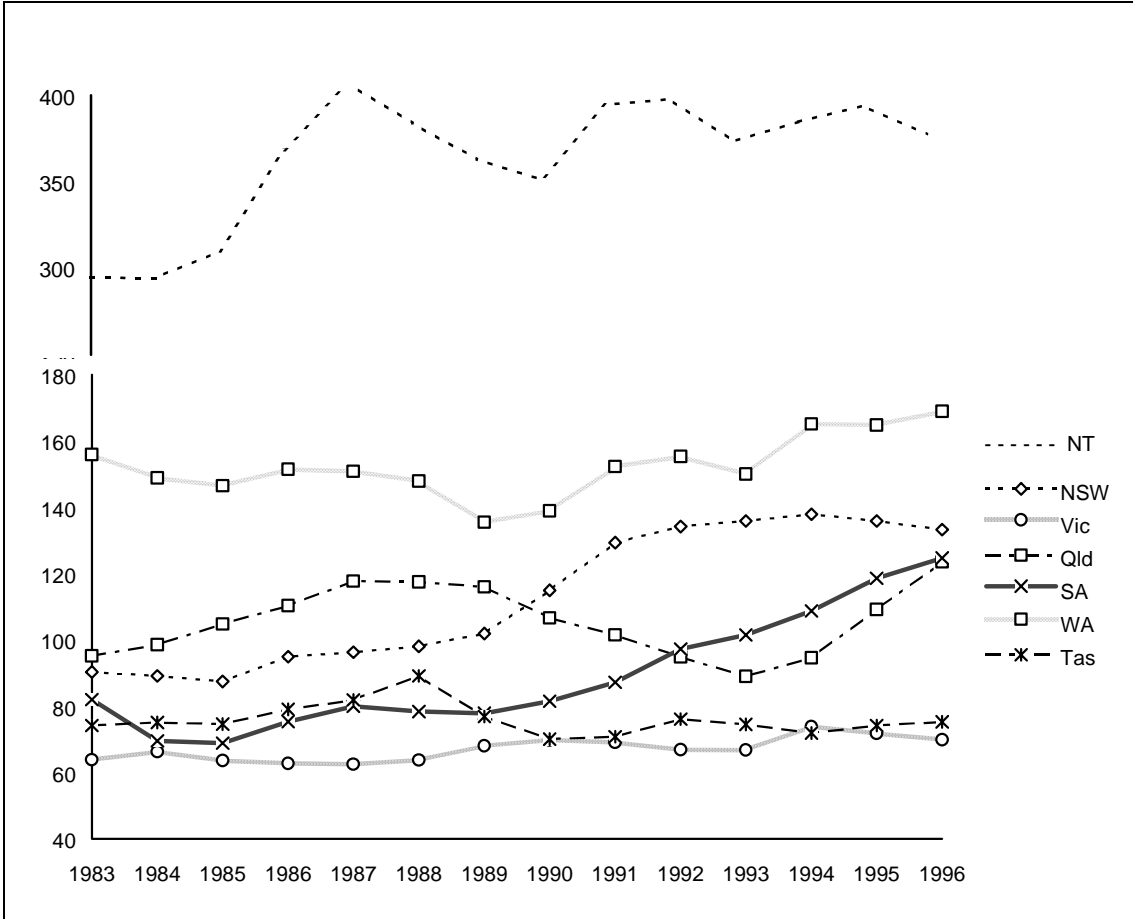
Figure 13.5: Imprisonment rate — Australia, 1983 to 1996 (prisoners per 100 000 adult population)



Source: Table 13A.5

Imprisonment rates generally increased between 1983 and 1996 in NSW, WA, SA and the NT, but trends were less clear in the other jurisdictions (Figure 13.6).⁴ Imprisonment rates in 1995–96 were highest in the NT, WA and NSW, and lowest in the ACT, Victoria and Tasmania (Figure 13.6).

Figure 13.6: Imprisonment rates — States and Territories, 1983 to 1996 (prisoners per 100 000 adults)



Source: Table 13A.5

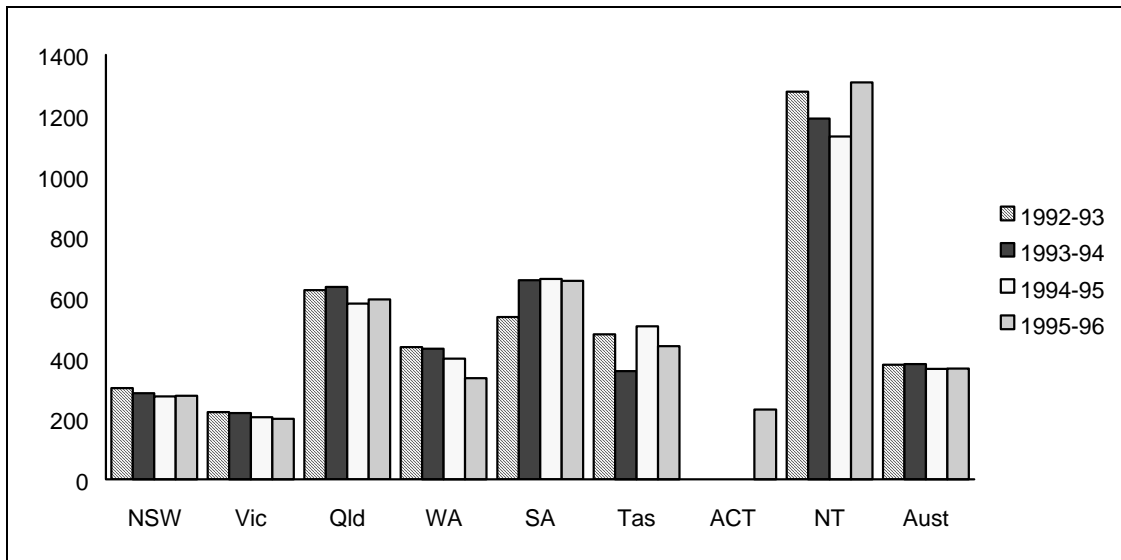
There have been significant prison construction programs in some states and territories, but prison utilisation rates remained high (Section 13.6.2).

Community supervision numbers declined as a proportion of the adult population over the four years to 1995–96. However, caution should be

⁴ ACT sentenced prisoners have been included in NSW prisoner numbers. ACT remandees and prisoners held in NSW showed an imprisonment rate for the ACT of 40 prisoners per 100 000 adults for 1992–93 to 1994–95 and a rate of 49 prisoners per 100 000 adults for 1995–96 (Attachment 13A.3.7).

exercised in drawing conclusions based on only four years of data. Declines occurred in NSW, Victoria, Queensland and WA (Figure 13.7).⁵

Figure 13.7: Community supervision offenders per 100 000 adults, 1992–93 to 1995–96 (number)



Source: Table 13A.7

The trends of increasing imprisonment rates and declining community supervision rates reflected recent changes in sentencing policies and practices across jurisdictions, as well as the effects of enforcement practices on fine default imprisonment and community supervision orders.

13.3.2 Private prison services

The expansion of privately operated or owned prisons continues to be one of the major policy changes in the sector. Only one jurisdiction (Queensland) showed a significant proportion of prisoners (32 per cent) held in privately managed prisons in 1995–96, but other jurisdictions including Victoria and SA will be expanding or developing this aspect. For example, it is expected that over 40 per cent of Victorian prisoners will be held in privately owned and operated prisons by the end of 1997. NSW also utilised a private prison at Junee.

⁵ In WA fine default legislation introduced in 1994–95 reduced the number of offenders managed by community corrections from 13 394 in 1993–94 to 470 in 1995–96.

13.3.3 Prisoner management practices

There is a growing focus on targeting programs and tailoring orders to individual requirements. This has been facilitated by developments in risk assessment to ensure that programs targeted to individual requirements are consistent with community safety. In some jurisdictions this is reflected in a formal case management approach to offender management.

The availability of a greater range of sentencing options — particularly alternatives to imprisonment such as suspended sentences and greater flexibility in applying programs within the parameters of the court — has helped to match treatment to prisoner needs. For example, corrections agencies in some jurisdictions can determine community based post-prison programs that are exclusively the province of court determinations in others.

13.4 Framework for performance indicators

The performance indicator framework has been revised slightly to more accurately reflect the categorisation of key result areas and the relationship of specific indicators to particular objectives. For example, containment and supervision has been combined across the three areas of prison services, community custody and community supervision.

Indicators of effectiveness and efficiency are reported against five key result areas based on the common objectives for corrective services.

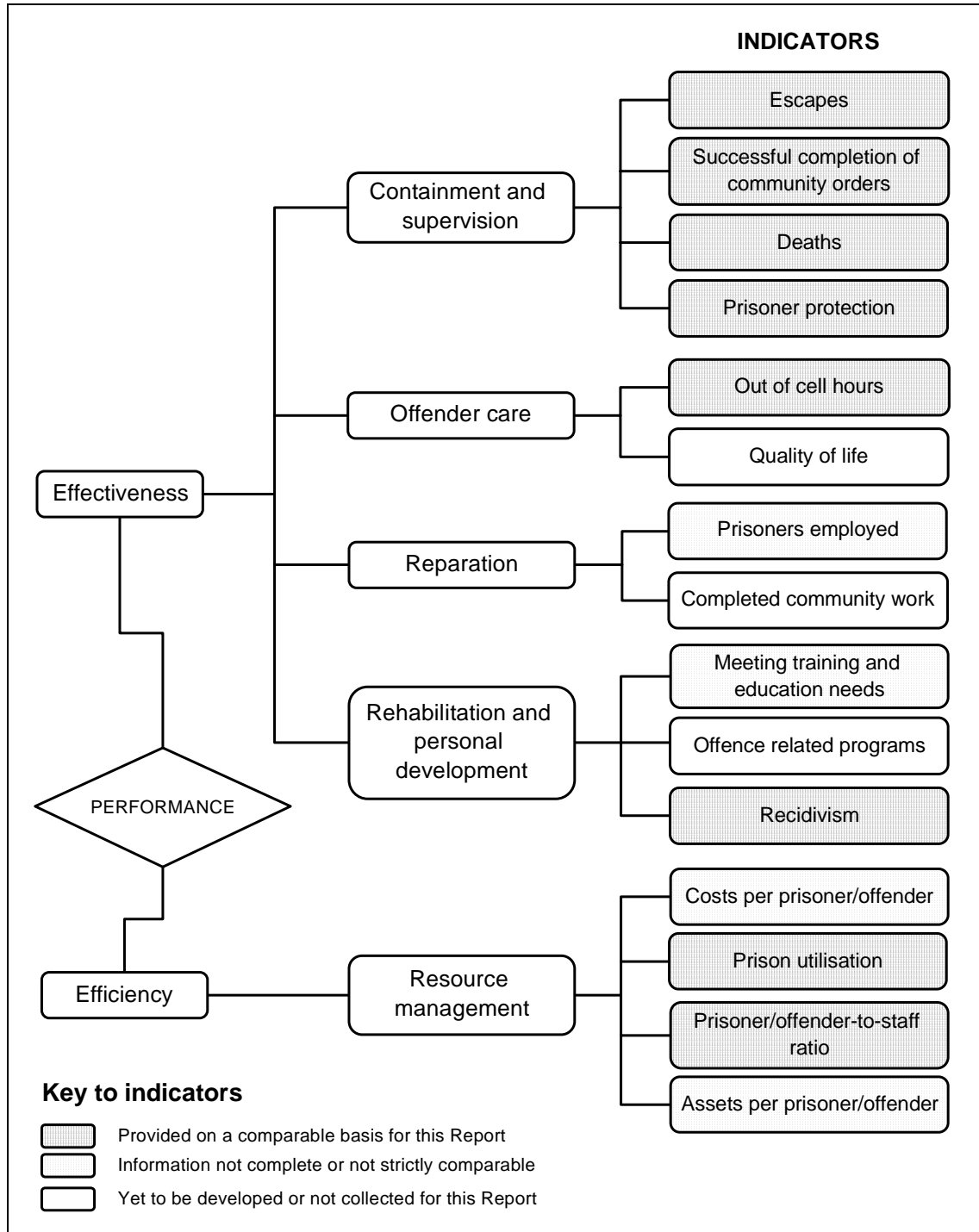
Effectiveness indicators relate to the objectives of:

- containment and supervision — to protect the community by the sound management of offenders commensurate with the risks they pose to the community;
- offender care — to ensure the environment in which prisoners are managed enables them to achieve an acceptable quality of life consistent with community norms and that this is facilitated for community based offenders through referral to social support agencies;
- reparation — to ensure that work undertaken by offenders benefits the community either directly or indirectly (by reducing costs to the taxpayer); and
- rehabilitation and personal development — to provide programs and opportunities that address the causes of offending and maximise the chances of offenders' successful integration into the community.

Efficiency indicators relate to the objective of resource management — to maximise outputs with available inputs (Figure 13.8).

A description of all indicators is provided in Attachment 13A.

Figure 13.8: Framework of performance indicators for corrective services



13.5 Future directions

The focus for the immediate future will continue to be on enhancing inter-jurisdictional comparability by refining data definitions and clarifying categories to be included in specific indicators of performance.

The complex interactions of the corrective services sector with other criminal justice areas and its links to other service providers such as health and education also needs to be accounted for in further development of corrective services indicators. For example, recidivism is now presented as an indicator of the performance of the wider criminal justice system, as well as measuring the performance of corrective services.

A number of short term and longer term strategies are being pursued to address specific issues. The focus in 1997 will be on refining existing indicators by improving and clarifying current data definitions and addressing issues arising from the expansion of privately managed facilities. For example, definitional problems were encountered with some indicators in the 1995–96 data collection (including prisoner education, community supervision work orders and counting of orders). These issues will be resolved for implementing in the next Report.

Appropriate information collections will be developed in 1998 for identified indicators for which data are not currently collected. These include indicators which exist within jurisdictions but for which common definitions and counting rules are not yet agreed — for example, indicators of containment and supervision (such as assaults) and rehabilitation and personal development (such as therapeutic programs). It is expected that these indicators will be reported on in the 1999 Report.

The aim in the longer term is to identify and develop a range of additional indicators and to fill gaps in the current data collection: for example, indicators which measure quality of life, customer satisfaction, offence based programs and reparations. These new indicators will be developed for introduction from 2000 onwards.

State and Territory Governments have established a National Corrections Practitioners Group to agree on data collection standards and further develop appropriate indicators. Thus, Governments have committed to a major benchmarking exercise intended to improve the quality of indicators and provide more extensive performance information to identify best practices.

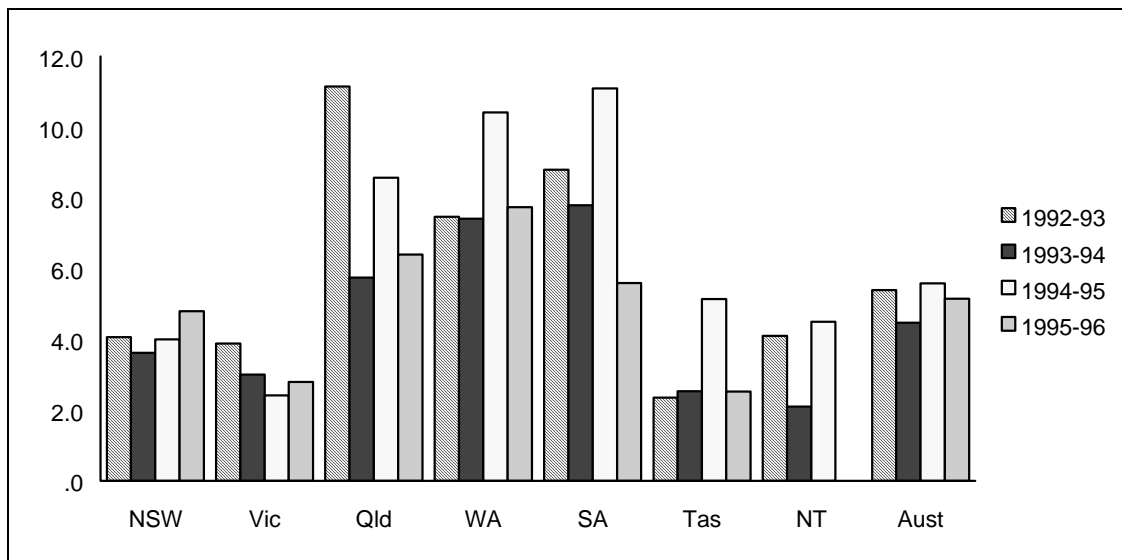
13.6 Key results

13.6.1 Effectiveness

Prisons — Containment and Supervision

In 1995–96, escapes per 100 prisoner years by prisoners classified as open security ranged widely from zero in the NT to 7.7 for WA (Figure 13.9). Relative and absolute levels were similar to previous years. Given the relatively small number of cases in each jurisdiction, comparisons across jurisdictions and years should be made with care and it is too early to report any trends in individual jurisdictions.

Figure 13.9: Escape rate of open security prisoners, 1992–93 to 1995–96 (escapes per 100 prisoner years)¹



¹ ACT sentenced prisoners classified as open security were held in NSW prisons.

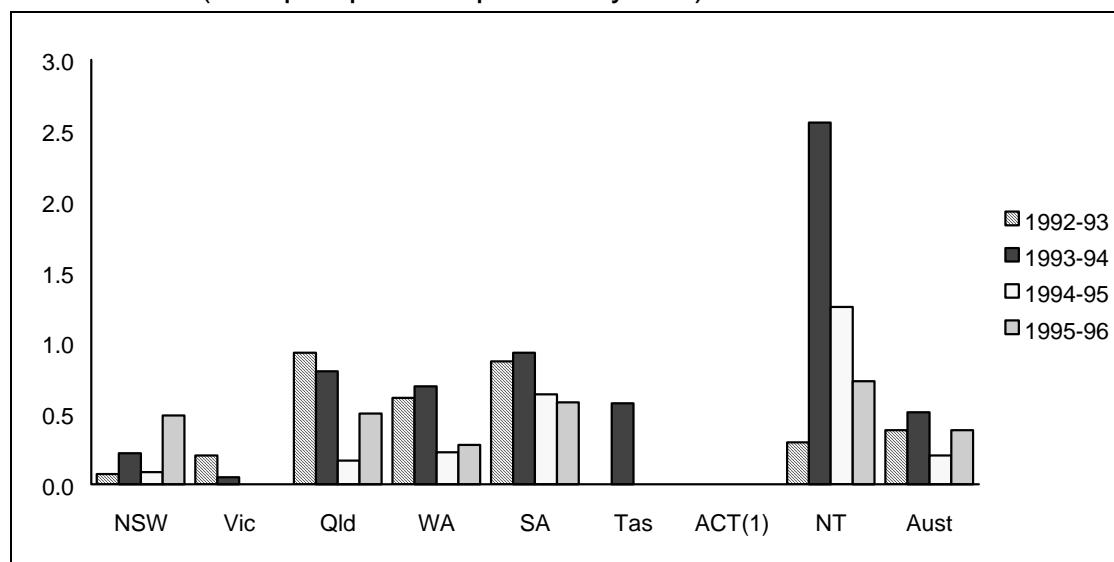
Source: Table 13A.8

Escapes by secure prisoners were much lower than for open security prisoners in 1995–96. They ranged from zero in Victoria, Tasmania and the ACT to over 0.7 per 100 prisoner years in the NT (Figure 13.10).

An important indicator of effective prisoner supervision is prisoner safety. The proportion of prisoners on protection ranged from 3.4 per cent in NT to 23.5 per

cent in Victoria (Figure 13.11).⁶ They do not include prisoners segregated for disciplinary or medical reasons. Such variation was at least partly the result of different policies on risk assessment.

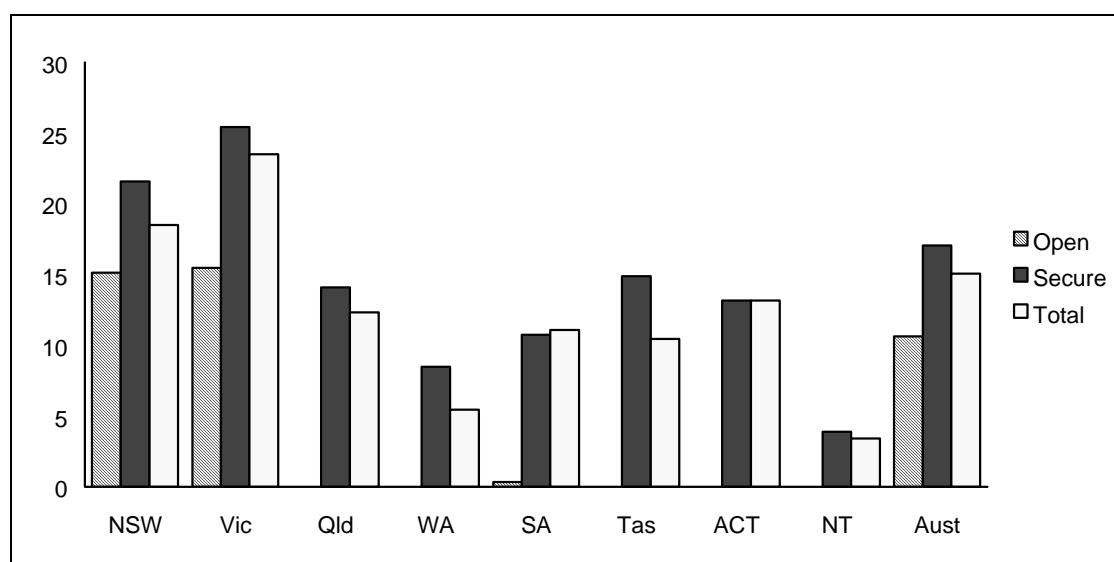
Figure 13.10: Escape rate of secure prisoners, 1992–93 to 1995–96 (escapes per 100 prisoner years)



1 ACT had no escapes by prisoners held on remand in the ACT.

Source: Table 13A.9

Figure 13.11: Proportion of prisoners on protection, 1995–96 (per cent)



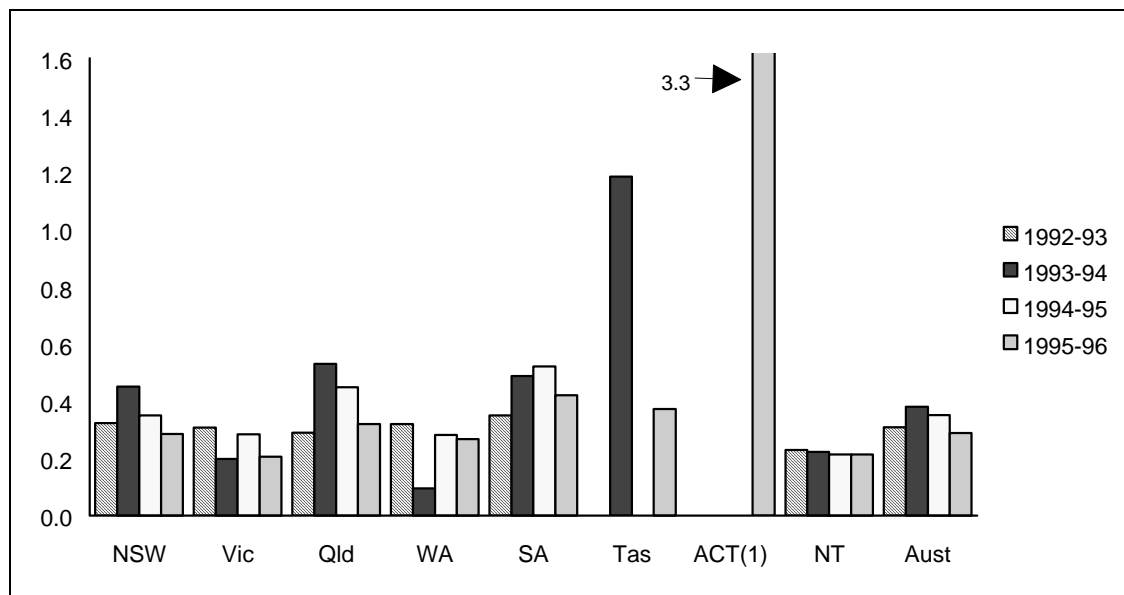
Source: Table 13A.10

⁶ Prisoners on protection are separated from the general prison population for their own safety.

Another indicator of effective prisoner supervision was whether responses to prisoners in special circumstances (such as ill-health or emotional crisis) were timely and effective. The only indicator for which data were available was the number, rate, and cause of deaths in custody. Again, the relatively small number of cases in each jurisdiction means that cross-jurisdictional comparisons should be treated with caution.

Rates of prison deaths were relatively similar among jurisdictions, ranging from 0.2 to 0.4 per 100 prisoner years (Figure 13.12). The exception was in the ACT, but here the rate (3.3) should be seen in the context of its small overall prisoner population (one death in a prison population that averaged 30 remand prisoners in 1995–96).

Figure 13.12: Prisoner death rate, 1992–93 to 1995–96 (deaths per 100 prisoner years)



1 The rate for the ACT (3.3) reflects one death in a total prisoner population of 30.

Source: Table 13A.11

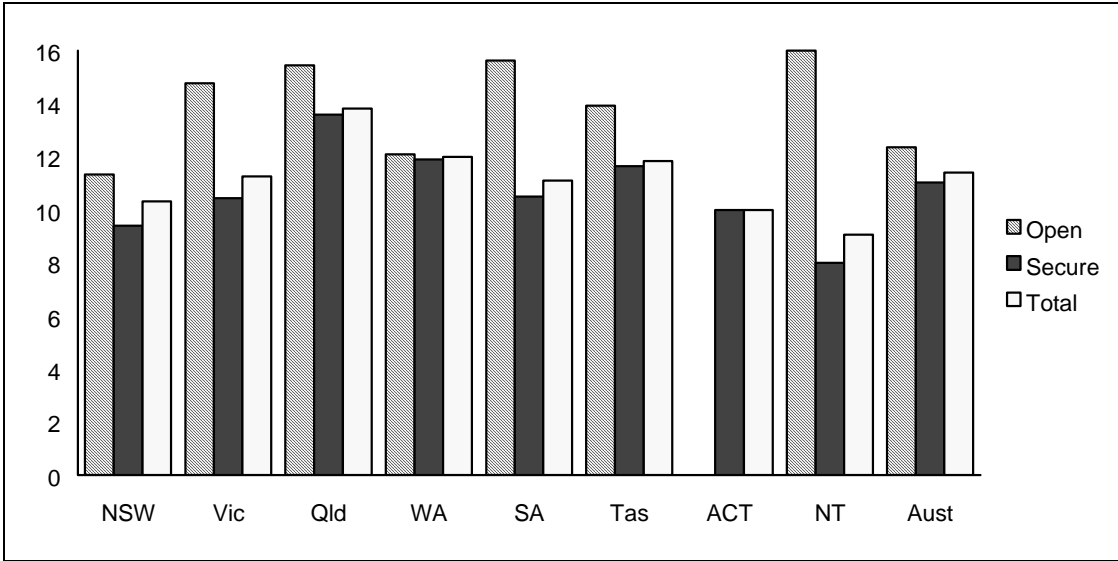
Prisons — offender care

An aspect of offender care that should be balanced against secure containment is ensuring that court sentences are met in a manner that allows an acceptable quality of life for prisoners. Performance measures in this area are limited because quality of life is difficult to assess. The measure developed for this objective was the number of hours per day during which prisoners are not restricted to cells.

Average out-of-cell hours per day for all prisoners varied among jurisdictions from 9.1 hours in the NT to 13.8 hours in Queensland in 1995–96. The averages

also varied within jurisdictions between open and secure prisoners. The NT reported the lowest out-of-cell hours for secure prisoners (8 hours) but had the highest average for open security prisoners (16 hours). The highest average out-of-cell hours per day for secure prisoners (13.6 hours) was in Queensland, and the lowest open security prisoner average out-of-cell hours per day (11.3 hours) was in NSW (Figure 13.13).⁷

Figure 13.13: Average out-of-cell hours by type of prisoner, 1995–96 (hours per prisoner per day)



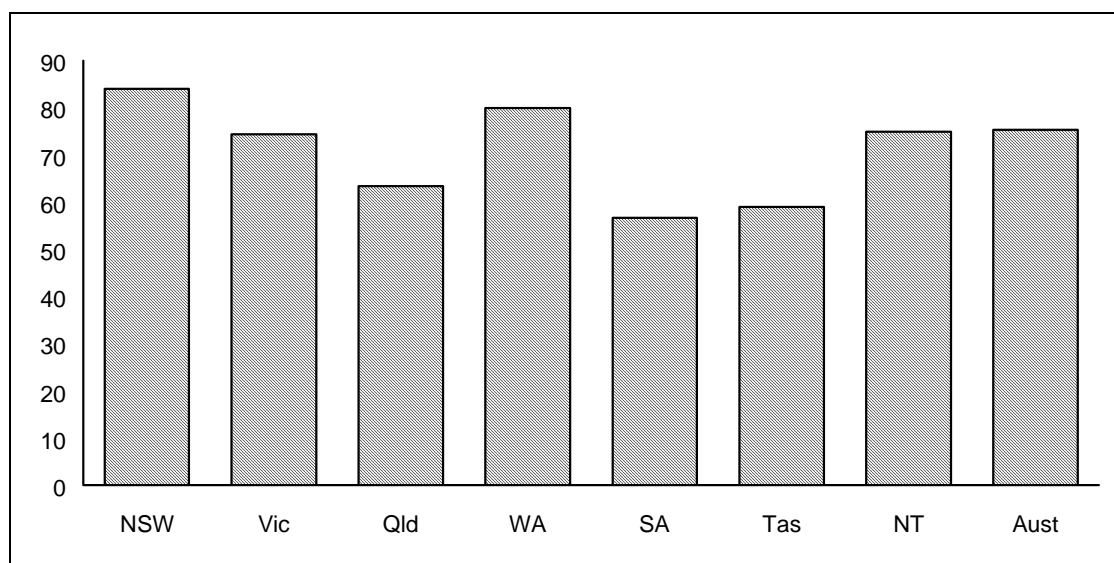
Source: Table 13A.12

Prisons — reparation

The objective of reparation is considered to be met through prisoner work which either generates income or reduces expenditure by corrections agencies. In 1995–96 NSW showed the highest proportion of prisoners employed (84 per cent) and SA had the lowest (57 per cent) (Figure 13.14).

⁷ Average out-of-cell hours were lower in the NT in 1995–96 than in 1994–95 as a result of the impact of the transition between the closing of an open facility and the opening of a new corrections centre. This significantly affected available accommodation and utilisation rates and, therefore the capacity for extended out-of-cell hours.

Figure 13.14: Proportion of prisoners employed, 1995–96 (per cent)¹



1 The ACT was not included because it had remand prisoners only.

Source: Table 13A.13

Prisons — rehabilitation and personal development — vocational training and education

Enhancing employment opportunities through vocational training and education is a key element in successfully reintegrating prisoners and offenders into the community and reducing the risk of their reoffending. It is considered more important for prisoners than for offenders on community based orders for whom such employment links may not have been disrupted to as great an extent.

Although most jurisdictions reported on this measure, the information provided was not strictly comparable. Some jurisdictions reported on education services alone while others included a range of personal development courses. This issue will be addressed in the 1996–97 data collection. Given the lack of comparability, no jurisdictional comparisons have been made in this Report.

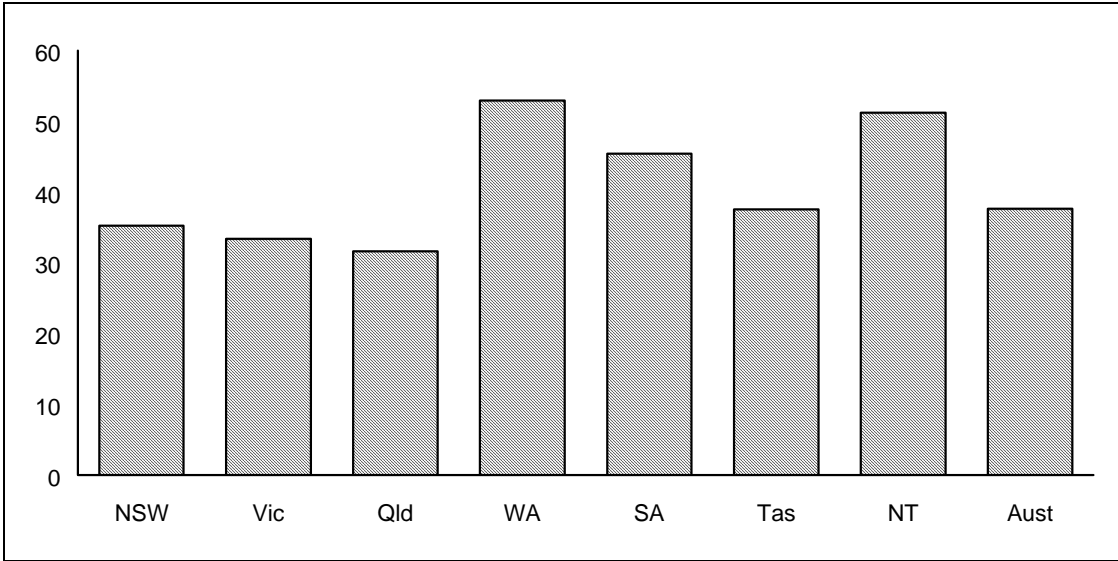
Prisons — rehabilitation and personal development — recidivism

Recidivism — the extent to which persons passing through the justice system reoffend — is an indicator of the effectiveness of efforts to rehabilitate prisoners, although a wide range of factors outside the control of corrective services also influence both the real incidence of recidivism and indicators

purporting to measure it.⁸ Such factors could include police arrest rates, court conviction rates and court sentencing practices. Given this, recidivism should also be considered as a measure of performance for the wider criminal justice system.

WA and NT prisoners showed the highest return rates to corrective services (53 per cent and 51 per cent respectively) in 1995–96 and Queensland and Victoria the lowest rates (32 per cent and 33 per cent respectively) (Figure 13.15).

Figure 13.15: Recidivism rate for prison custody, 1995–96 (per cent)¹



¹ ACT sentenced prisoners were held in NSW prisons.
 Source: Table 13A.14

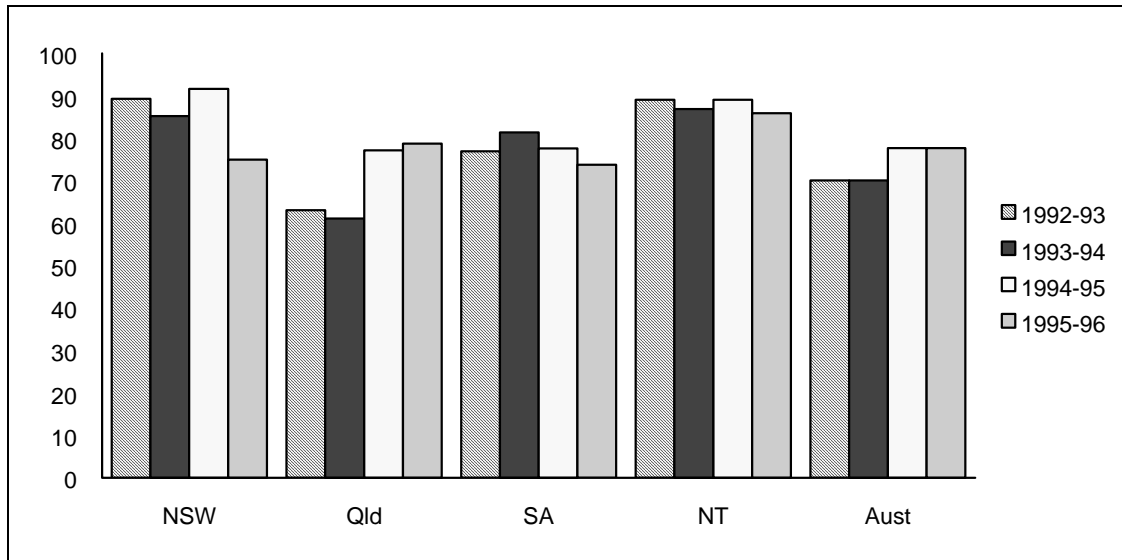
Community custody and supervision — completion of court orders

A priority for the supervision of offenders serving community based sentences is the successful completion of the court order. This means maximising the likelihood of offenders complying with the conditions of the order, and identifying and taking necessary action where there is a breach of the order.

The four jurisdictions which provided community custody options (NSW, Queensland, SA and the NT) showed similar levels of completion of community custody orders in 1995–96 — ranging from 74 per cent in SA to 86 per cent in the NT (Figure 13.16). It should be noted that relatively small numbers of offenders were involved in these programs.

⁸ The recidivism measure used was the proportion of sentenced prisoners — not subject to further supervision upon release — who return to corrective services within two years of completing a gaol sentence.

Figure 13.16: Completion rate for community custody, 1992–93 to 1995–96 (per cent)¹

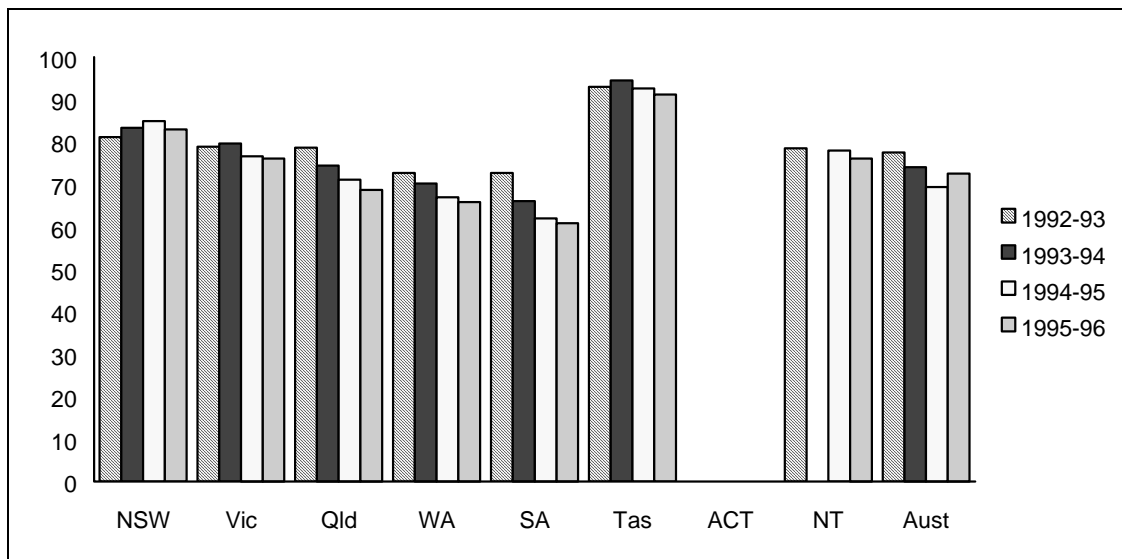


¹ Victoria, WA, Tasmania, and the ACT did not use community custody as a sentencing option.

Source: Table 13A.15

All jurisdictions used community supervision. Completion rates for supervision orders differed among jurisdictions in 1995–96 — from 61 per cent in SA to 91 per cent in Tasmania. In all jurisdictions except NSW the rate declined between 1992–93 and 1995–96 (Figure 13.17).

Figure 13.17: Completion rate for community supervision orders, 1992–93 to 1995–96 (per cent)¹



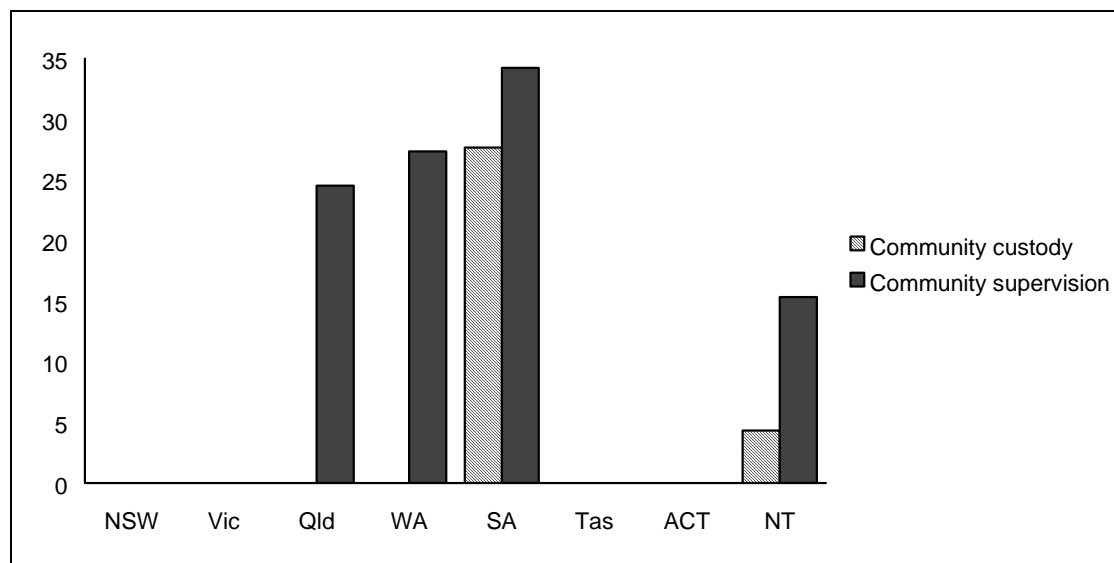
¹ Data were not available for the NT for 1993–94 or for the ACT for 1992–93 to 1995–96.

Source: Table 13A.16

Community custody and supervision — recidivism

Two of the four jurisdictions which used community custody reported recidivism rates for this form of detention — 27.7 per cent in SA and 4.3 per cent in the NT. Queensland, WA, SA and the NT reported recidivism rates for community supervision. These ranged from 34.2 per cent in SA to 15.3 per cent in the NT (Figure 13.18).

Figure 13.18: Recidivism rates for community custody and supervision, 1995–96 (per cent)^{1,2}



1 NSW and Queensland did not report on recidivism for community custody.

2 NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and the ACT did not report on recidivism for community supervision.

Source: Table 13A.17

13.6.2 Efficiency

The efficiency information available for corrective services mainly related to recurrent costs per offender day, utilisation rates, asset values per offender, and offender-to-staff ratios. The Steering Committee is also exploring other ways of measuring efficiency (Box 13.1).

Box 13.1: DEA case study — NSW correctional centres

The Steering Committee is undertaking a case study using Data Envelopment Analysis to assess the technical efficiency of a sample of correctional centres. The technique is discussed in Chapter 2.

The efficiency of the correctional centres in the sample is being assessed in terms of their potential to reduce their inputs while maintaining the same level of output. The inputs and outputs used in the case studies are:

Inputs	Outputs
Full-time equivalent staff	Average daily number of inmates eligible for conditional leave of absence (as these inmates are relatively less resource intensive to manage)
Number of beds	Average daily number of other inmates
Non-salary recurrent expenditure	Number of inmate receptions
	Number of inmate hours in personal development programs.

A full discussion of the DEA methodology, the case studies and results will be contained in a paper being prepared by the Steering Committee.

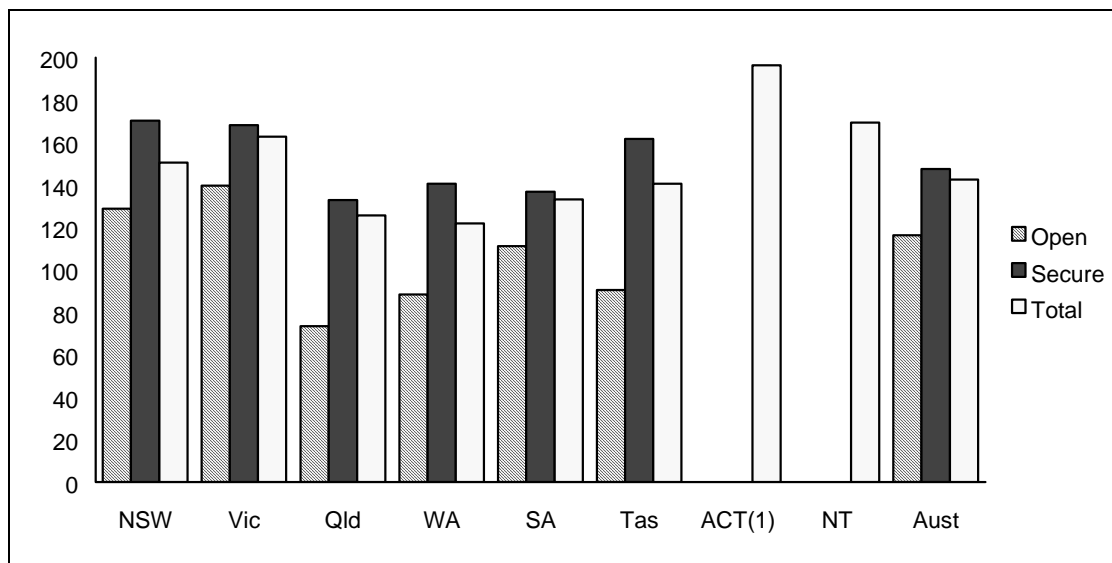
Unit costs

Prison costs are affected by a range of factors, including differences in the level of service provided, out-of-cell hours, security classifications of prisoners, the scale of operations, the capacity to take advantage of overheads in large facilities and industrial and workplace practices.

The refinement of indicators for the 1995–96 collection included calculating unit costs per prisoner utilising a more comparable and consistent treatment of overheads.

Average costs per prisoner per day for open and secure prisons combined ranged from \$122 in WA to \$196 in the ACT (Figure 13.19). NSW reported the highest cost per secure prisoner per day and Victoria reported the highest cost per open security prisoner.⁹ Differences in unit costs might result from differences in the level of service provided, from environmental differences, or from differences in efficiency.

Figure 13.19: Prison cost, 1995–96 (\$ per prisoner day)



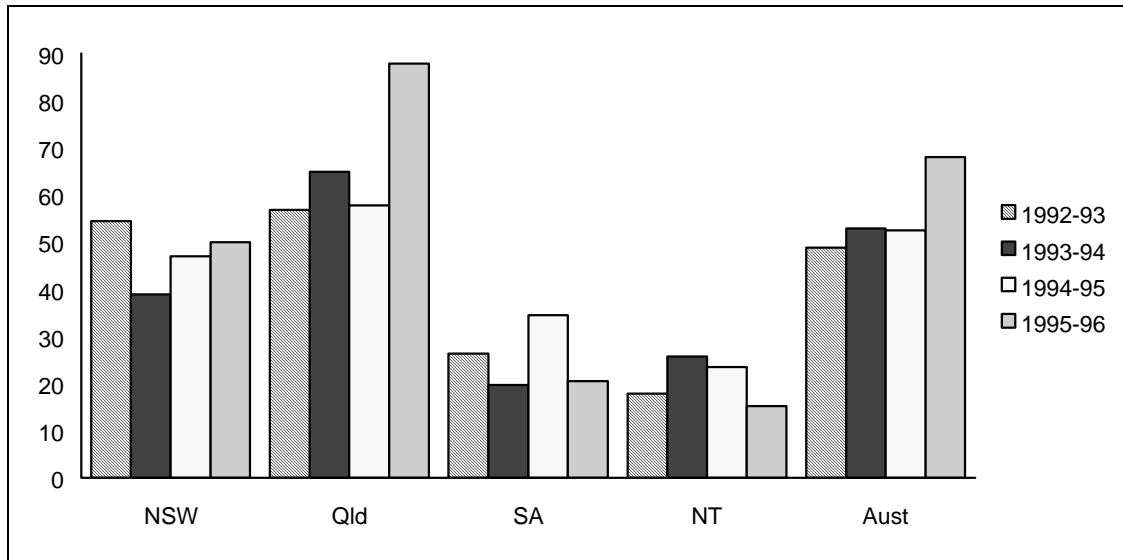
1 ACT costs include ACT prisoners held in NSW prisons.

Source: Table 13A.18

Costs for community custody in 1995–96 varied from \$88 per offender day in Queensland to \$15 in the NT (Figure 13.20). Again, it should be noted that relatively small numbers of offenders were involved in this program.

⁹ The NT did not report on separate unit costs for open and secure prisoners in 1995–96 because there was significant movement of prisoners between open and secure accommodation during the year arising from the closure and opening of facilities. The ACT cost per prisoner day included remand prisoners and sentenced prisoners held in NSW prisons.

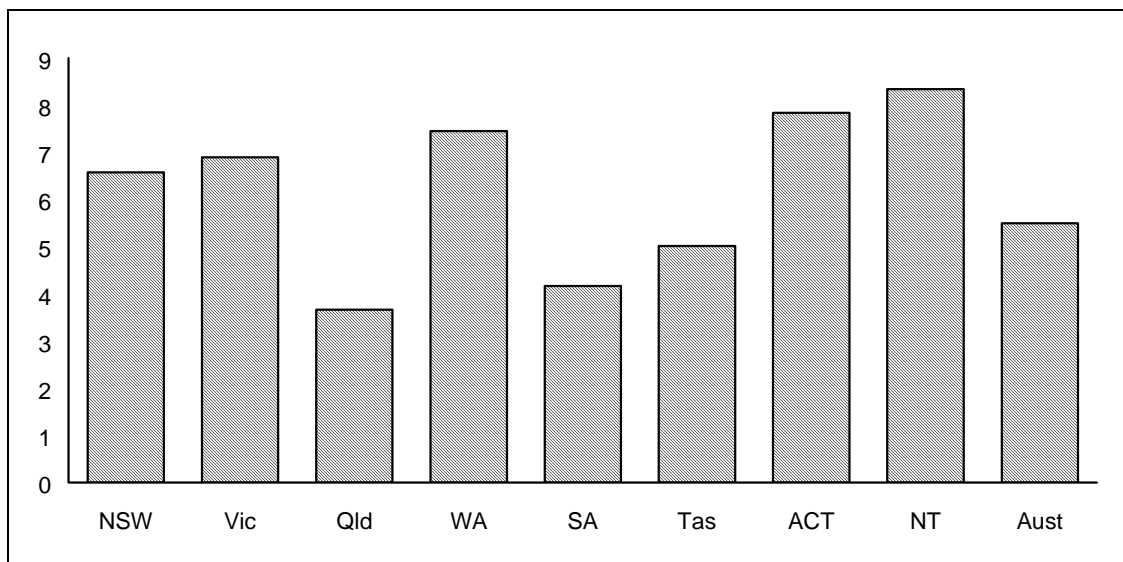
Figure 13.20: Cost of community custody, 1992–93 to 1995–96 (\$ per offender day)



Source: Table 13A.19

Unit costs for community supervision were less varied across jurisdictions than were prisoner unit costs. Queensland reported the lowest unit costs per offender day in 1995–96 (\$3.70) and the NT the highest (\$8.35) (Figure 13.21).¹⁰

Figure 13.21: Cost of community supervision, 1995–96 (\$ per offender day)



Source: Table 13A.20

¹⁰ Unit costs in WA incorporated the effect of fine default legislation which has reduced the number of such offenders who require less intensive supervision.

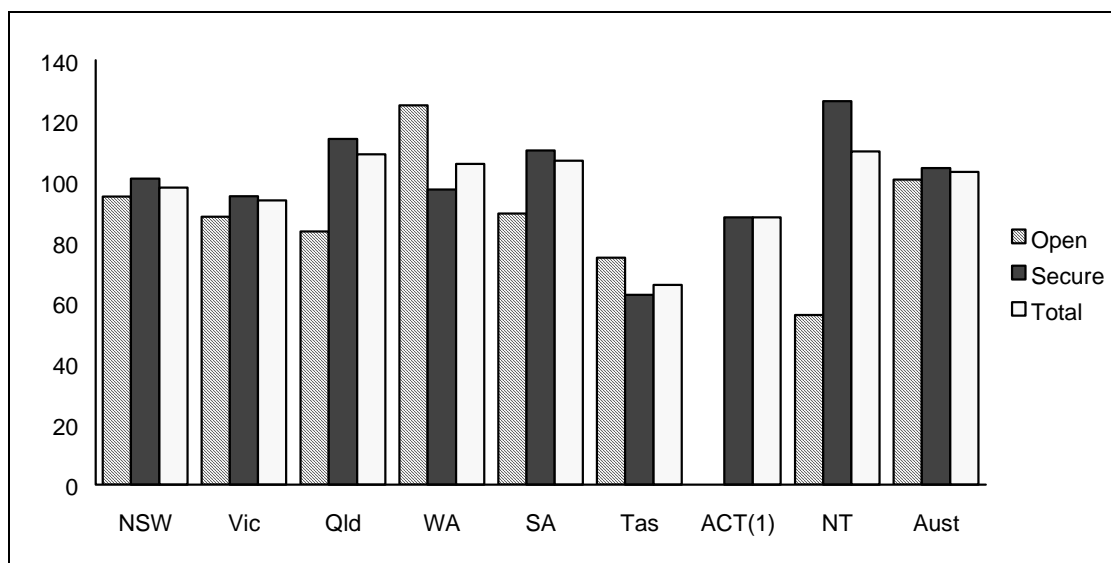
Utilisation

Prison utilisation rates are an efficiency indicator because they indicate how well assets are used. They also reflect performance in system planning in management of investment in facilities. But they also provide an assessment of prison crowding.¹¹ This makes them an indirect measure of prisoner quality of life and, therefore, of offender care.

Tasmania reported the lowest utilisation rate (66 per cent). It and the ACT (74 per cent) had rates well below those of the other jurisdictions. Prison utilisation in Queensland, WA, SA, and the NT exceeded design capacity.

The differences in utilisation rates were more pronounced when secure and open prisons were considered separately. For secure prisons, utilisation ranged from 63 per cent in Tasmania to 126 per cent in the NT, while open prison utilisation ranged from 56 per cent in the NT to 125 per cent in WA (Figure 13.22).

Figure 13.22: Prison capacity utilisation rates by type of prisoner, 1995–96 (per cent)



1 ACT rate relates to remand prisoners only.

Source: Table 13A.6

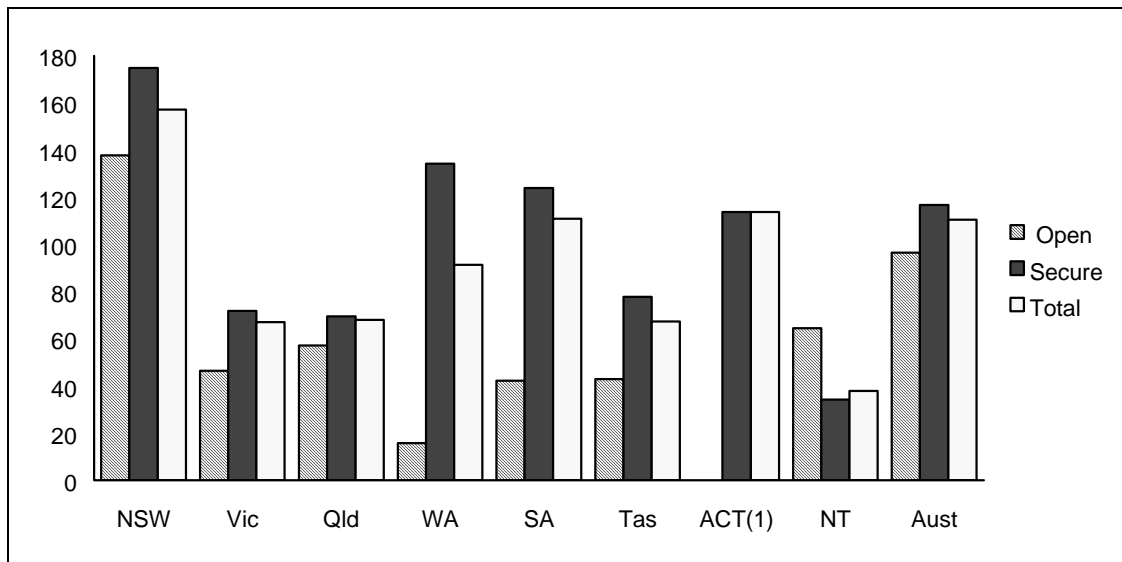
¹¹ Utilisation is a measure of actual prison occupancy relative to the design capacity of the prison. It is defined in Attachment 13A.4.

Prison assets

Assets per prisoner provide an indicator of the capital inputs to corrective services. Reported values of prison assets per prisoner varied markedly across jurisdictions, from \$38 000 in the NT to \$157 000 in NSW (Figure 13.23).

Asset values also showed significant jurisdictional variation when secure and open prisons were considered separately. Open prison asset values showed greater variation, ranging from \$16 000 per prisoner in WA to \$138 000 in NSW (Figure 13.23). However, this measure is particularly sensitive to the methods of valuation used, for example, in valuing historical buildings and hence results should be treated with caution.

Figure 13.23: Value of assets, 1995–96 (\$'000 per prisoner)



1 ACT rate relates to remand prisoners only.

Source: Table 13A.21

Offender-to-staff ratios

Offender-to-staff ratios are an indicator of the efficiency with which labour inputs are used in corrective services. Tasmania and the ACT reported the lowest ratios of prisoners to staff (1.1 and 0.7 respectively) (Table 13.1). Ratios were reasonably similar for the remaining six jurisdictions, ranging from 1.4 to 1.6. These relativities also held for the ratio of prisoners to operational staff.

The ratio of community supervision offenders to staff generally ranged from 23 in NSW to 32 in Tasmania. Queensland had a substantially higher ratio of 45 (Table 13.1).

The ratio of offenders serving community custody orders to staff showed great variability between jurisdictions. However, the ratios should be compared with

caution, given the small numbers on which they are based in three of the four jurisdictions (Table 13.1).

Table 13.1: Offenders-to-staff ratios, 1995–96 (prisoners per staff)

	<i>Prisons¹</i>	<i>Community supervision</i>	<i>Community custody</i>
NSW	1.4	23.0	3.8
Vic	1.6	25.6	na
Qld	1.4	44.7	3.1
WA	1.5	24.7	na
SA	1.5	35.1	6.0
Tas	1.1	32.0	na
ACT ²	0.7	17.7	na
NT	1.6	23.5	8.4
Aust	1.5	31.9	4.1

na not available.

1 Government operated.

2 ACT prison data relate to remand prisoners only.

Source: State and Territory unpublished