
7 Corrective services

Corrective services aim to meet the overall objectives of the criminal justice system, outlined in the 'Justice preface', by providing a safe, secure and humane adult correctional system that incorporates the elements of rehabilitation, community protection and reparation. In this Report, corrective services include prison custody (including periodic detention) and a range of community corrections orders and programs for adult offenders (for example, parole and community work orders). The term 'prisoners' is used in this chapter to refer to people held in full time custody under the jurisdiction of an adult corrective service agency; the term 'offenders' is used to refer to people serving community corrections orders. Both public and privately operated correctional facilities are included; however, the scope of this chapter does not extend to:

- juvenile justice (which is covered in the community services preface)
- prisoners or alleged offenders held in forensic mental health facilities to receive psychiatric care (who are generally the responsibility of health departments)
- prisoners held in police custody (who are covered in the police services chapter)
- people held in facilities such as immigration or military detention centres.

Indigenous data in the corrective services chapter

The corrective services chapter in the *Report on Government Services 2005* (2005 Report) contains the following data items on Indigenous people:

- Indigenous and non-Indigenous imprisonment rates, 2003-04
- Indigenous and non-Indigenous community corrections rates, 2003-04
- Prisoner death rates from apparent unnatural causes, 2003-04.

Supporting tables

Supporting tables for data within the corrective services chapter of the compendium are contained in the attachment to the compendium. These tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 7A.3 is table 3 in the corrective services attachment to the compendium). As the data are directly sourced from the 2005 Report, the compendium also notes where the original table, figure or text in the 2005

Report can be found. For example, where the compendium refers to 2005 Report, p. 7.15' this is page 15 of chapter 7 of the 2005 Report, and '2005 Report, 7A.2' is attachment table 2 of attachment 7 of the 2005 Report.

Prison custody

On average, 23 015 people per day (excluding periodic detainees) were held in Australian prisons during 2003-04 — 21 465 males and 1549 females (93.3 per cent and 6.7 per cent of the prison population respectively). This daily average was an increase of 3.5 per cent over the average daily number reported in the previous year in the previous year (table 7A.1). Nationally, the daily average number of Indigenous prisoners was 4960 (compared with 4600 in 2002-03) — 21.6 per cent of prisoners nationally (table 7A.1).

The rate of imprisonment represents the number of prisoners (excluding periodic detainees) per 100 000 people in the corresponding adult population. The adult population includes people at or over the minimum age at which sentencing to adult custody can occur in each jurisdiction (17 years old in Victoria and Queensland and 18 years old in all other jurisdictions for the reporting period).

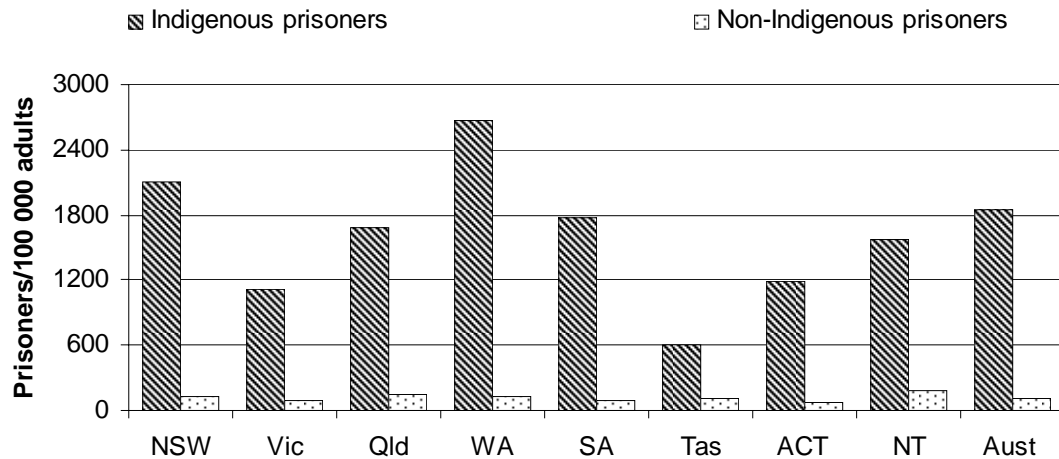
Imprisonment rates for Indigenous and non-Indigenous prisoners are not yet available for 2003-04. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has suspended publication of these rates until new population projections can be appropriately integrated into the corrective services data series.

The national imprisonment rate per 100 000 Indigenous adults in 2002-03 was 1850.5 compared with a rate of 115.4 for non-Indigenous prisoners per 100 000 non-Indigenous adults (figure 7.1). WA reported the highest rate of Indigenous imprisonment per 100 000 adults (2678.4) and Tasmania reported the lowest (600.8). The NT reported the highest non-Indigenous imprisonment rate per 100 000 adults (177.7) and the ACT reported the lowest (70.2) (figure 7.1).

These comparisons need to be interpreted with care, especially for states and territories with low Indigenous populations, where small changes in prisoner numbers can cause variations in rates that do not accurately represent either real trends over time or consistent differences from other jurisdictions.

While imprisonment rates for Indigenous people are far higher than those for non-Indigenous people, the majority of prisoners are non-Indigenous. Nationally, 76.3 per cent of prisoners were non-Indigenous in 2003-04 (table 7A.1).

Figure 7.1 **Indigenous and non-Indigenous imprisonment rates, 2002-03^{a, b, c}**



^a Based on the daily average prisoner population numbers supplied by states and territories, calculated against adult Indigenous and non-Indigenous population estimates (ABS figures supplied by the National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics). ^b ACT rates include ACT prisoners held in the ACT and in NSW prisons. NSW rates exclude ACT prisoners held in NSW prisons. ^c Excludes prisoners reported as being of unknown Indigenous status.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 7A.3; 2005 Report, p. 7.6, figure 7.3.

Community corrections

All jurisdictions operate community corrections programs. Community corrections comprise a variety of non-custodial programs. These programs vary in the extent and nature of supervision, the conditions of the order (such as a community work component or personal development program attendance) and the level of restrictions placed on the person's freedom of movement in the community (for example, home detention). No single objective or set of characteristics is common to all community corrections programs, other than that they generally provide either a non-custodial sentencing alternative or a post-custodial mechanism for reintegrating prisoners into the community under continued supervision.

Community corrections include court imposed non-custodial sentences that are administered by corrective services. These sentences may include suspended sentences, court imposed home detention, community service orders, probation, intensive supervision orders and recognisance. In most states and territories, fine default orders are administered by community corrections, as is bail supervision in some jurisdictions. All jurisdictions have reparation and supervision orders. Restricted movement orders were available in all jurisdictions except Tasmania in 2003-04. Community corrections also include post-custodial programs (for example, parole, release on licence, pre-release orders and some

forms of home detention), under which prisoners released into the community continue to be subject to corrective services supervision.

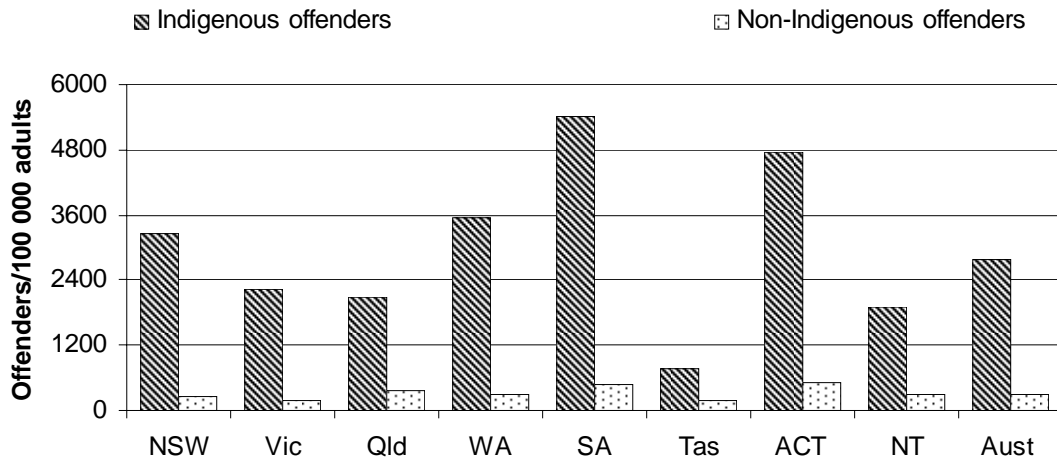
A daily average of 50 821 offenders were serving community corrections orders across Australia in 2003-04 — a decrease of 2.1 per cent from the previous year's average (table 7A.2). This daily average comprised 41 369 males (81.4 per cent), 9011 females (17.7 per cent) and 441 offenders whose gender was not recorded. The daily average comprised 7676 Indigenous offenders (15.1 per cent of the total community correction population), 38 853 non-Indigenous offenders (76.5 per cent) and 4292 persons whose Indigenous status was unknown (table 7A.2).

The community corrections rate represents the number of offenders serving community corrections orders per 100 000 people in the corresponding adult population. The adult population includes people at or over the age of entry to the adult correctional system in each jurisdiction (17 years in Victoria and Queensland, and 18 years in all other jurisdictions for the reporting period).

Community corrections rates for Indigenous and non-Indigenous prisoners were not available for 2003-04. The ABS has discontinued publication of these rates until new population projections can be appropriately integrated into the corrective services data series. The national rate for Indigenous offenders in 2002-03 was 2764.1 per 100 000 Indigenous adults compared with 275.3 for non-Indigenous offenders (figure 7.2). South Australia reported the highest rate of Indigenous offenders per 100 000 Indigenous adults in 2002-03 (5398.1) and Tasmania reported the lowest (766.5). The ACT reported the highest rate of non-Indigenous offenders per 100 000 non-Indigenous adults (497.5) and Victoria reported the lowest rate (173.7) in 2002-03 (figure 7.2).

As in the case of imprisonment rates, these comparisons need to be interpreted with care, especially for those jurisdictions with low Indigenous populations, where small changes in offender numbers can cause variations in rates that do not accurately represent either real trends over time or consistent differences from other jurisdictions.

Figure 7.2 **Indigenous and non-Indigenous community corrections rates, 2002-03^a**



^a Rates are based on the daily average offender population numbers supplied by State and Territory governments, calculated against adult Indigenous and non-Indigenous population estimates (ABS data supplied by the National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics). Excludes offenders whose Indigenous status was reported as unknown.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 7A.3; 2005 Report, p. 7.8, figure 7.5.

Custody — apparent unnatural deaths

Prison custody indicator results are affected by small numbers, especially when expressed as a rate of total prisoner populations in jurisdictions with relatively small average daily prisoner populations. Given the small absolute numbers in many cases, care needs to be taken when comparing effectiveness indicators across jurisdictions and over time within jurisdictions. A single incident in the smallest jurisdiction can double the rate of some indicators, but have little apparent effect in the larger jurisdictions.

The ‘apparent unnatural deaths’ rate is provided as an output indicator of effectiveness (box 7.1). The data for this indicator is provided on a comparable basis.

Box 7.1 Custody — apparent unnatural deaths

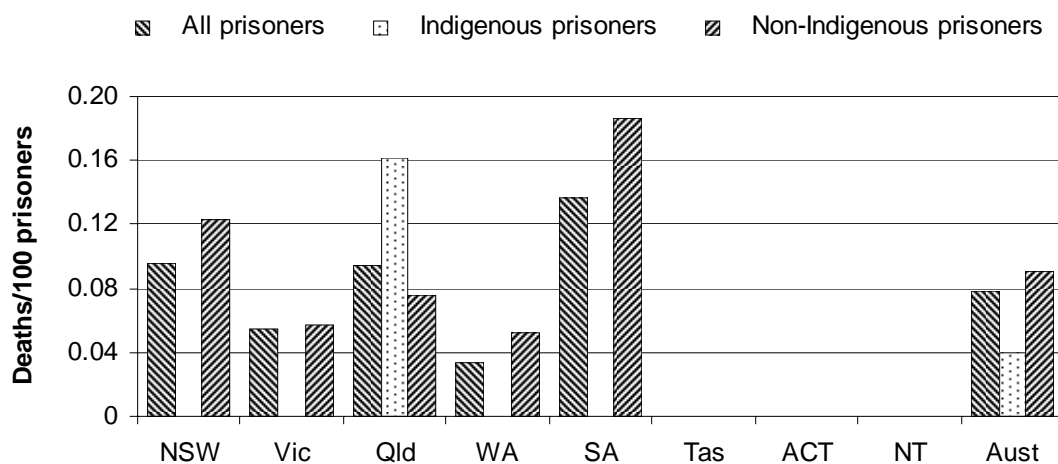
Effective custodial management involves a duty of care for the safety and well-being of people detained in prisons, particularly for those prisoners at risk of self-harm or harm from others. This includes providing an environment where there is a low risk of death from unnatural causes.

The 'apparent unnatural deaths' rate is defined as the number of deaths, divided by the annual average prisoner population, multiplied by 100, where the likely cause of death is suicide, drug overdose, accidental injury and homicide, and is reported separately for Indigenous and non-Indigenous prisoners.

A zero or low deaths rate indicates better performance towards achieving the effectiveness objective of custody as defined in Box 7.1 (2005 Report, p. 7.13, Box 7.4).

The rate of deaths from apparent unnatural causes for all prisoners in 2003-04 ranged from 0.14 per 100 prisoners in SA to zero in Tasmania, the ACT and the NT (figure 7.3). For Indigenous prisoners, Queensland reported two deaths (table 7A.15) from apparent unnatural causes (a rate of 0.16 per 100 prisoners) and all other jurisdictions reported a zero rate (figure 7.3). Neither of the two jurisdictions operating periodic detention reported deaths of periodic detainees in 2003-04 (table 7A.4).

Figure 7.3 Prisoner deaths rates from apparent unnatural causes, 2003-04^{a, b, c}



^a The 'apparent unnatural deaths' rate is calculated as the number of deaths, divided by the annual average prisoner population, multiplied by 100. ^b Indigenous deaths rates from apparent unnatural causes represent two deaths in Queensland in 2003-04. ^c NSW, Victoria, WA, SA, Tasmania the ACT and the NT reported zero deaths from unnatural causes for Indigenous prisoners.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 7A.4; 2005 Report, p. 7.14, figure 7.7.

The national rate of deaths from apparent unnatural causes for all prisoners declined from 0.20 in 1999-2000 to 0.08 in 2003-04 (2005 Report, p. 7.14, figure 7.8). Rates fell for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous prisoners (table 7A.5).

Jurisdictional data

Selected descriptive and effectiveness prisoner data across jurisdictions are reported in the corrective services attachment tables of this compendium.

References

NCAG (National Corrections Advisory Group) 2004, *Data Collection Manual 2003-04*, Canberra, unpublished.

SCRCSSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision) 2005, *Report on Government Services 2005* (2005 Report), Canberra.