
8 Corrective services

Corrective services aim to provide a safe, secure and humane custodial environment and an effective community corrections environment in which prisoners and offenders are effectively managed, commensurate with their needs and the risks they pose to the community. Additionally, corrective services aim to reduce the risk of re-offending by providing services and program interventions that address the causes of offending, maximise the chances of successful reintegration into the community and encourage offenders to adopt a law-abiding way of life.

The term ‘prisoners’ is used in this chapter to refer to people held in full time custody under the jurisdiction of an adult corrective services agency. This includes sentenced prisoners serving a term of imprisonment and unsentenced prisoners held on remand. ‘Detainees’ refers to people subject to a periodic detention order, which requires them to be held for two consecutive days within a one-week period in a proclaimed prison or detention centre under the responsibility of corrective services. The term ‘offenders’ is used to refer to people serving community corrections orders.

In this chapter, 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). Both public and privately operated correctional facilities are included; however, the scope of this chapter generally does not extend to:

- juvenile justice¹ (which is reported in the chapter on Protection and support services)
- 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.

¹ As of 2004-05, corrective services in NSW manages one 40-bed facility that houses males aged 16 to 18. These young offenders are included in the daily average number of prisoners and are therefore included in the calculation of indicators. As they represent only a very small proportion of NSW prisoners (less than one-half of one percent), they will have a negligible effect on these indicators and this footnote has therefore not been added to each table and figure.

Indigenous data in the corrective services chapter

The corrective services chapter in the *Report on Government Services 2009* (2009 Report) contains the following data items on Indigenous people:

- imprisonment rates, 2007-08
- community corrections rates, 2007-08
- prisoner death rates from apparent unnatural causes, 2007-08.

The corrective services attachment contains additional data relating to Indigenous people including periodic detention rates, 2007-08.

An improvement to reporting in the Corrective services chapter this year, is the inclusion of aged standardised imprisonment rates for Indigenous and non-Indigenous prisoners, along with the previously reported crude rates.

Attachment tables

Attachment tables for data within the corrective services chapter of this compendium are contained in attachment 8A of the compendium. These tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 8A.3 is table 3 in the corrective services attachment). As the data are directly sourced from the 2009 Report, the compendium also notes where the original table, figure or text in the 2009 Report can be found. For example, where the compendium refers to '2009 Report, p. 8.15' this is page 15 of chapter 8 of the 2009 Report, and '2009 Report, table 8A.2' is attachment table 2 of attachment 8A of the 2009 Report.

Prison custody

On average, 26 455 people per day (excluding periodic detainees) were held in Australian prisons during 2007-08 — an increase of 2.1 per cent over the average daily number reported in the previous year (table 8A.1). In addition, on average, 784 people per day were serving periodic detention orders in NSW and the ACT in 2007-08 — a decrease of 1.6 per cent from the 2006-07 average.

The daily average number of Indigenous prisoners was 6505 — 24.6 per cent of prisoners nationally (table 8A.1).

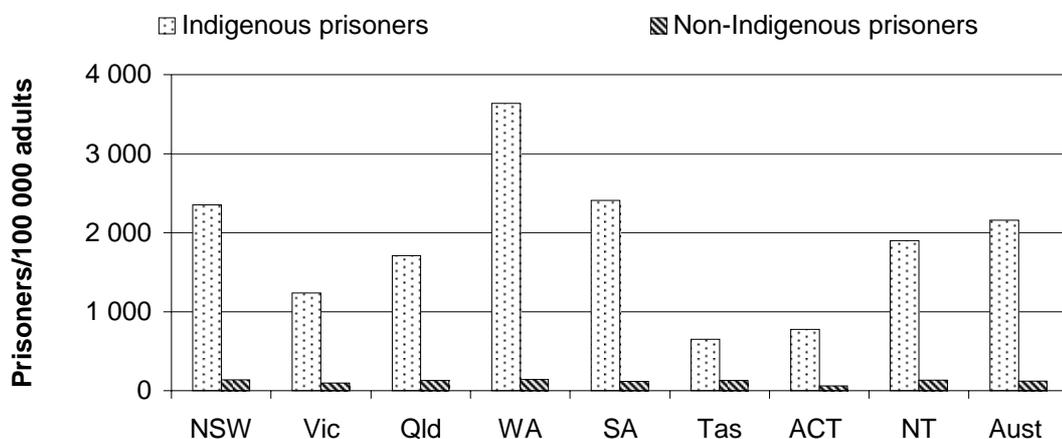
The rate of imprisonment represents the number of prisoners (excluding periodic detainees) per 100 000 people in the corresponding adult population. The adult population refers to people at or over the minimum age at which offenders are

generally sentenced as adults in each jurisdiction (17 years in Queensland and 18 years in all other jurisdictions for the reporting period).

The national rate of imprisonment for all prisoners was 162.6 per 100 000 Australian adults in 2007-08, compared to 162.0 in 2006-07 (2009 Report, figure 8.2, p. 8.6). The national (crude) imprisonment rate per 100 000 Indigenous adults in 2007-08 was 2156.6 compared with a corresponding rate of 123.2 for non-Indigenous prisoners (figure 8.1).

Imprisonment rate comparisons need to be interpreted with care, especially for states and territories with relatively small Indigenous populations. This is because 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.

Figure 8.1 **Indigenous and non-Indigenous crude imprisonment rates, 2007-08^{a, b, c}**



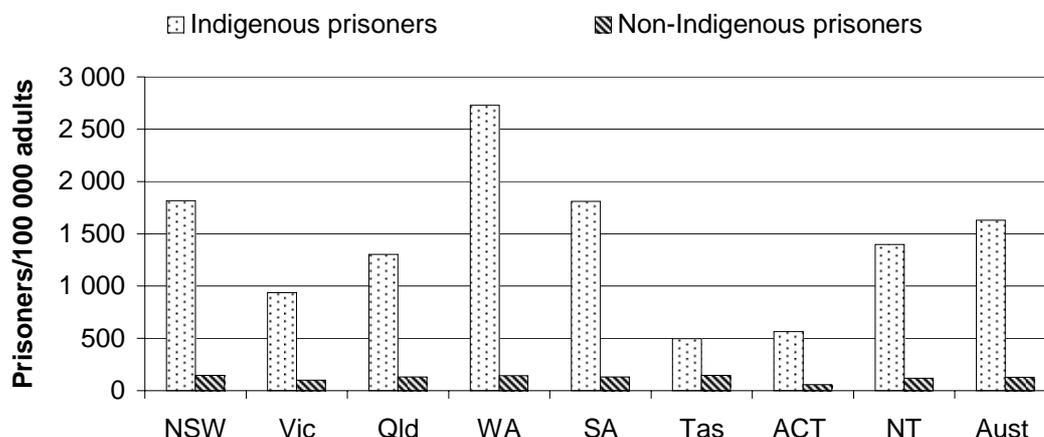
^a Non-age standardised rates based on the daily average prisoner population numbers supplied by State and Territory governments, calculated against adult Indigenous and non-Indigenous population estimates (population data supplied by the ABS National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics). ^b The 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 whose Indigenous status was reported as unknown.

Source: ABS (unpublished) derived from *Australian Demographic Statistics*, December quarter, 2007 (preliminary), Cat. no. 3101.0; ABS (unpublished) derived from *Experimental Projections Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population*, Cat. no. 3231.0; State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 8A.3; 2009 Report, figure 8.3, p. 8.7

The Indigenous population has a younger age profile compared to the non-Indigenous population, and that factor will contribute to higher rates when the overall (crude) imprisonment rate is compared between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations. Age standardisation is a statistical method that accounts for differences in the age structures of populations, allowing a more valid comparison to be made between populations.

The national age standardised imprisonment rate per 100 000 Indigenous adults in 2007-08 was 1630.4 compared with a corresponding rate of 128.2 for non-Indigenous prisoners (figure 8.2). This represents a ratio of 12.7, compared to a ratio of 17.5 for the crude imprisonment rate.

Figure 8.2 **Indigenous and non-Indigenous age standardised imprisonment rates, 2007-08^a**



^a Rates are based on the indirect standardisation method, applying age-group imprisonment rates derived from Prison Census data.

Source: ABS (unpublished) derived from *Australian Demographic Statistics*, December quarter, 2007 (preliminary), Cat. no. 3101.0; ABS (unpublished) derived from *Experimental Projections Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population*, Cat. no. 3231.0.; ABS (unpublished) derived from *Prisoners in Australia*, Cat. no 4517.0; State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 8A.3; 2009 Report, figure 8.4, p. 8.8.

While imprisonment rates for Indigenous people, whether calculated on a crude or age standardised basis, are far higher than those for non-Indigenous people, the majority of prisoners are non-Indigenous. Nationally, 74.4 per cent of all prisoners were non-Indigenous in 2007-08 (table 8A.1).

Community corrections

All jurisdictions provide community corrections services. Community corrections are responsible for a range of non-custodial sanctions (listed for each jurisdiction in 2009 Report, table 8A.24) and deliver post-custodial interventions under which prisoners released into the community continue to be subject to corrective services supervision.

These services 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 restriction placed on the offender's freedom of movement in the community (for example, home detention). No single objective or set of characteristics is common to all jurisdictions' community corrections services, other than that they generally provide a non-custodial sentencing

alternative or a post-custodial mechanism for reintegrating prisoners into the community under continued supervision.

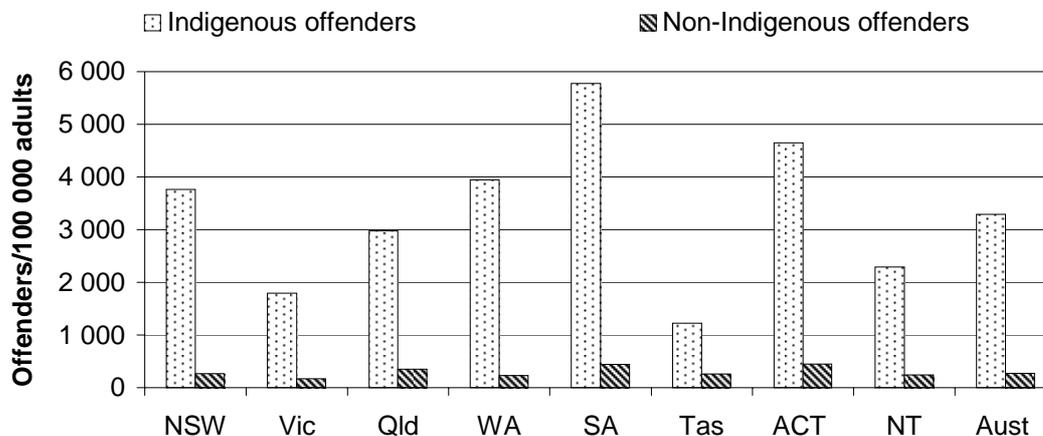
All jurisdictions have reparation and supervision orders. Restricted movement orders were available in all jurisdictions except Queensland, Tasmania and the ACT in 2007-08. In most states and territories, fine default orders are administered by community corrections and bail supervision by corrective services operates in a number of jurisdictions (2009 Report, table 8A.24).

A daily average of 54 914 offenders were serving community corrections orders across Australia in 2007-08 — an increase of 4.3 per cent from the previous year's average (table 8A.2). This daily average comprised 44 815 males (81.6 per cent), 9920 females (18.1 per cent) and 178 offenders whose gender was not reported. The daily average comprised 9918 Indigenous offenders (18.1 per cent of the total community correction population), 43 289 non-Indigenous offenders (78.8 per cent) and 1706 people whose Indigenous status was unknown (table 8A.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 refers to people at or over the minimum age at which offenders are generally sentenced as adults in each jurisdiction (17 years in Queensland and 18 years in all other jurisdictions for the reporting period). The national rate for Indigenous offenders in 2007-08 was 3288.2 per 100 000 Indigenous adults compared with 271.1 for non-Indigenous offenders (figure 8.3).

Comparisons need to be interpreted with care, especially for those jurisdictions with relatively small Indigenous populations, because 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. Further, community corrections rates presented in figure 8.3 are not age standardised (that is, they are not adjusted to account for the different age structures of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations).

Figure 8.3 **Indigenous and non-Indigenous community corrections rates, 2007-08^{a, b}**



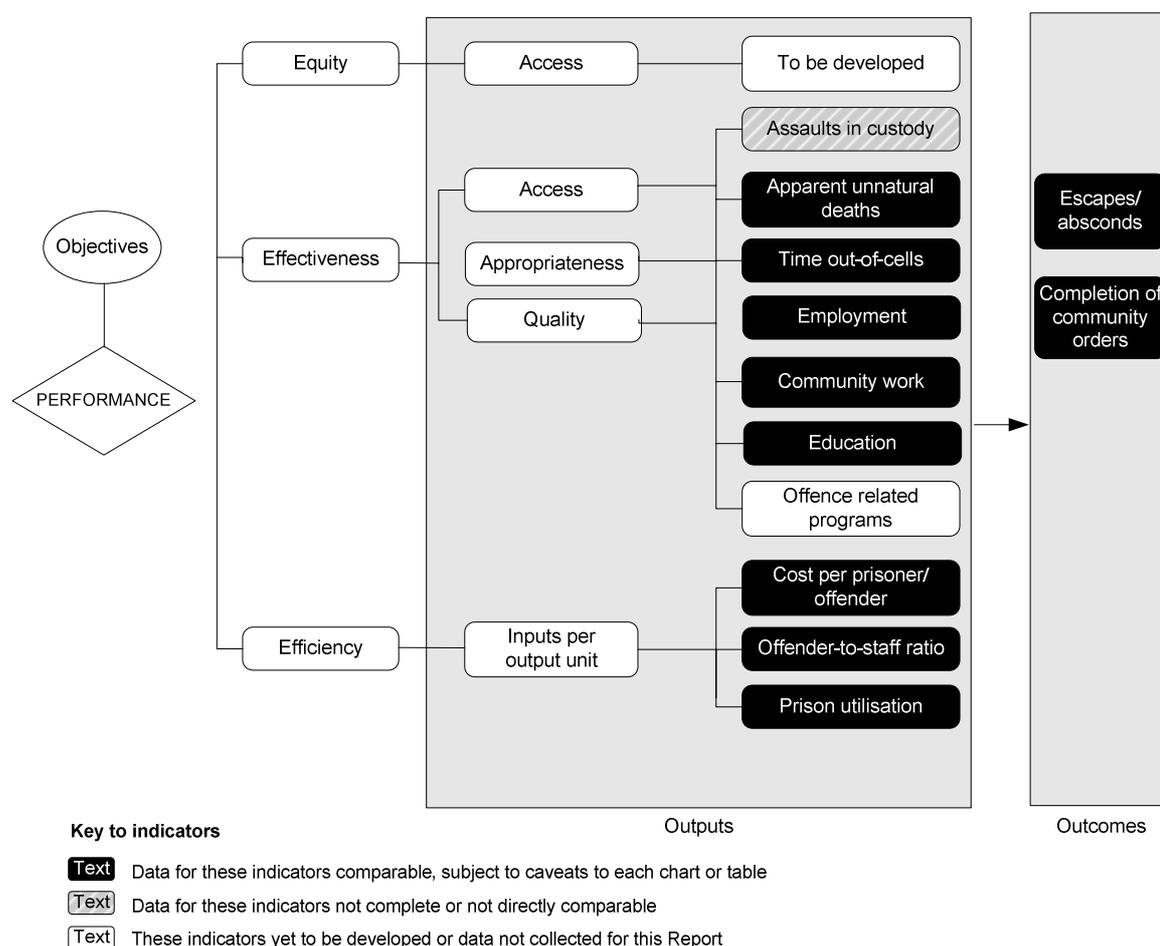
^a Non-age standardised rates based on the daily average offender population numbers supplied by State and Territory governments, calculated against adult Indigenous and non-Indigenous population estimates (population data supplied by the ABS National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics). ^b Excludes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

Source: ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics*, December quarter, 2007 (preliminary), Cat. no. 3101.0; ABS (unpublished) derived from *Experimental Projections Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population*, Cat. no. 3231.0; State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 8A.3; 2009 Report, figure 8.6, p. 8.10.

Framework of performance indicators

Data for Indigenous people are reported for one of the performance indicators for corrective services in the 2009 Report. It is important to interpret these data in the context of the broader performance indicator framework outlined in figure 8.4. The performance indicator framework shows which data are comparable in the 2009 Report. For data that are not considered directly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary.

Figure 8.4 Performance indicators for corrective services



Source: 2009 Report, figure 8.7, p. 8.13.

As of 2007-08, imprisonment rates for Indigenous and non-Indigenous prisoners are reported as both crude and age standardised rates. However, data are not available for calculating age standardised periodic detention or community correction offender rates.

Apparent unnatural deaths (prisoners)

‘Apparent unnatural deaths’ is an indicator of governments’ objective of providing a safe, secure and humane custodial environment including providing a custodial environment in which there is a low risk of death from unnatural causes (box 8.1).

Box 8.1 Apparent unnatural deaths (prisoners)

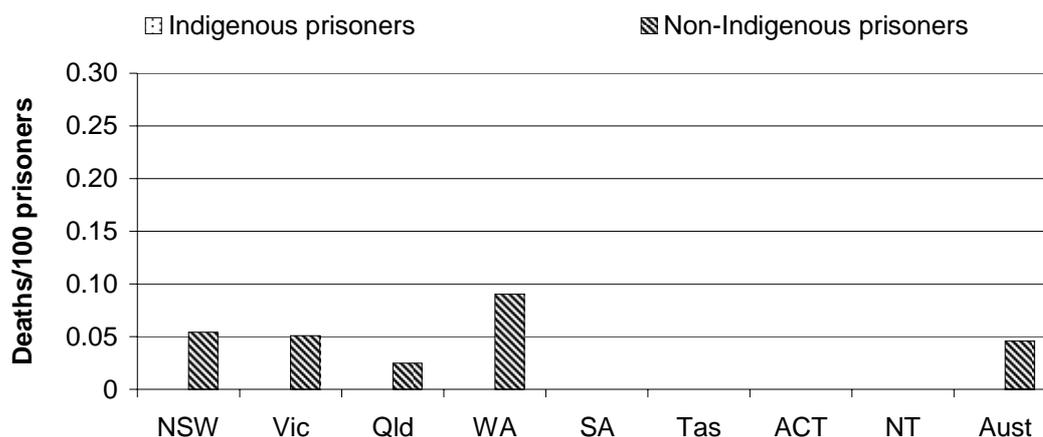
'Apparent unnatural deaths' is defined as the number of deaths, divided by the annual average prisoner or detainee population, multiplied by 100 (to give the rate per 100 prisoners or 100 detainees), where the likely cause of death is suicide, drug overdose, accidental injury or homicide, and is reported separately for Indigenous and non-Indigenous prisoners or detainees.

A zero or low rate indicates better performance, however rates for this indicator need to be interpreted with caution. A single incident in a jurisdiction with a relatively small prisoner or detainee population can significantly increase the rate in that jurisdiction, but would have only a minor impact in jurisdictions with larger populations. A relatively high rate in a jurisdiction with a small prisoner or detainee population may represent only a very small number of actual incidents.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Figure 8.5 presents information on rates of death from apparent unnatural causes in 2007-08, for Indigenous and non-Indigenous prisoners. Nationally, the rate of deaths from apparent unnatural causes was 0.03 in 2007-08. The rate for non-Indigenous prisoners was 0.05 and there were no deaths of Indigenous prisoners from apparent unnatural causes in the counting period, giving a zero rate for 2007-08.

Figure 8.5 Rate of prisoner deaths from apparent unnatural causes, 2006-07^a



^a All jurisdictions report on this indicator. Where no column appears, this indicates zero deaths during the counting period.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 8A.4; 2009 Report, figure 8.8, p. 8.16.

The national rate of deaths from apparent unnatural causes for all prisoners has declined over the last five years, from 0.08 in 2003-04 to 0.03 in 2007-08 (2009 Report, figure 8.9, p. 8.17). Rates decreased for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous prisoners (table 8A.5). This is the second year over the five-year period where there were no deaths of Indigenous prisoners from apparent unnatural causes during the counting period.

Future directions in performance reporting

Consistent with the 2008 Strategic Plan for Corrective Services, the disaggregation of various indicators by Indigenous and non-Indigenous status is being further developed and trialed for possible incorporation in future reports as the basis for equity-access indicator rates.

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 8A.3 is table 3 in the corrective services attachment). The tables included in the attachment are listed below.

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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| Table 8A.2 | Average daily community corrections offender population |
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| Table 8A.9 | Effectiveness, periodic detention - NSW |
| Table 8A.10 | Descriptors, community corrections - NSW |
| Table 8A.11 | Descriptors, prisons - Vic |
| Table 8A.12 | Effectiveness, prisons - Vic |
| Table 8A.13 | Descriptors, community corrections - Vic |
| Table 8A.14 | Descriptors, prisons - Qld |
| Table 8A.15 | Effectiveness, prisons - Qld |
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| Table 8A.19 | Descriptors, community corrections - WA |
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| Table 8A.21 | Effectiveness, prisons - SA |
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| Table 8A.26 | Descriptors, prisons - ACT |
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| Table 8A.28 | Descriptors, periodic detention - ACT |

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- Table 8A.29** Effectiveness, periodic detention - ACT
Table 8A.30 Descriptors, community corrections - ACT
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