

## 2.12 Community safety

*Three parameters of community safety are considered for this measure:*

- 1. experience of personal injury or death as a result of violence*
- 2. experience of threatened violence or a social setting in which violence is common*
- 3. experience of a social setting where there is a lack of security and a perception of danger, for example, where crimes against property or disorderly behaviour are common.*

### Data sources

Data for this indicator come from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS), the AIHW National Hospital Morbidity Database, the AIHW National Mortality Database and the Australian Institute of Criminology National Homicide Monitoring Program.

#### National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)

The 2002 NATSISS collected information from 9,400 Indigenous Australians across all states and territories of Australia. The sample covered persons aged 15 years or over who were usual residents of private dwellings. It collected information on a wide range of subjects including family and culture, health, education, employment, income, financial stress, housing, as well as law and justice. The 2002 NATSISS is the second national social survey of Indigenous Australians conducted by the ABS. Selected non-Indigenous comparisons are available through the 2002 General Social Survey (GSS). The ABS plans to conduct the NATSISS every 6 years. The next survey is planned for 2008.

#### Hospitalisations

The National Hospital Morbidity Database is a compilation of episode-level records from admitted patient morbidity data collection systems in Australian hospitals in each state and territory. Information on the characteristics, diagnoses and care of admitted patients in public and private hospitals is provided annually to the AIHW by state and territory health departments.

Data are presented for the four jurisdictions that have been assessed as having adequate identification of Indigenous hospitalisations in 2003–04 – Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory (AIHW 2005). These four jurisdictions represent approximately 60% of the Indigenous population of Australia. Data are presented by state/territory of usual residence of the patient.

Hospitalisations for which the Indigenous status of the patient was not reported have been included with hospitalisations data for non-Indigenous people under the 'other' category. This is to enable consistency across jurisdictions as public hospitals in some states and territories do not have a category for the reporting of 'not stated' or inadequately recorded/reported Indigenous status.

Hospitalisation data are presented for the two-year period July 2002 to June 2004. An aggregate of two years of data has been used as the number of hospitalisations for some conditions is likely to be small for a single year.

The principal diagnosis is the diagnosis established to be the problem that was chiefly responsible for the patient's episode of care in hospital. The term 'hospitalisation' has been used to refer to a separation which is the episode of admitted patient care, which can be a total hospital stay (from admission to discharge, transfer or death) or a change in a type of care (for example, from acute to rehabilitation).

## **Mortality**

The National Mortality Database is a national collection of de-identified information for all deaths in Australia and is maintained by the AIHW. Information on the characteristics and causes of death of the deceased is provided by the Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages and coded nationally by the ABS. Information on the cause of death is supplied by the medical practitioner certifying the death, or by a coroner. The data are updated each calendar year.

While the identification of Indigenous deaths is incomplete in all state and territory registration systems, four jurisdictions (Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory) have been assessed by the ABS and the AIHW as having adequate identification. These four jurisdictions represent approximately 60% of the Indigenous population of Australia. Data are presented by state/territory of usual residence rather than state/territory where death occurs.

Deaths for which the Indigenous status of the deceased was not reported have been excluded from the analysis.

Data have been combined for the five-year period 2000–04 due to the small number of deaths from some conditions each year. Data have been analysed using the year of occurrence of death for the period 2000–03 and year of registration of death for 2004. This is because mortality data by year of occurrence of death are a more accurate reflection of mortality during a particular year than year of registration data, however, year of occurrence data for 2004 are still incomplete owing to late registrations.

## **National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP)**

The Australian Institute of Criminology collects data on all homicides recorded in Australia under the National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP). The NHMP was established in 1990 and reports annually by financial year on all homicides recorded in Australia. The Indigenous status of the victim is based on police identification of 'racial appearance' and therefore will underestimate the level of homicide involving Indigenous persons. In addition, data for Victoria, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory are not reported. Nevertheless, the NHMP includes useful information on the circumstances surrounding homicides involving Indigenous persons, such as motive for killing, and victim and perpetrator relationship.

## **Data analyses**

Age-standardised rates and ratios have been used where appropriate as a measure of the Indigenous population relative to other Australians. Ratios of this type illustrate differences between the rates among Indigenous people and those of other Australians, taking into account differences in age distributions.

## **Self-reported data**

The 2002 NATSISS collected information on physical and threatened violence, personal stressors experienced in the last 12 months and neighbourhood community problems, and are presented in the tables and figures below.

### **Victim of physical or threatened violence and personal stressors**

- In 2002, approximately 24% of Indigenous Australians aged 15 years and over and 22% of Indigenous Australians aged 18 years and over reported they were a victim of physical or threatened violence in the last 12 months.
- After adjusting for differences in age structure, Indigenous Australians aged 18 years and over were twice as likely to report being victims of physical or threatened violence in the last 12 months as non-Indigenous Australians.
- In 2002 approximately 83% of Indigenous Australians aged 18 years and over experienced at least one stressor in the last 12 months. This compared to 57% of non-Indigenous Australians (Table 2.12.1). The most common stressors experienced by Indigenous Australians aged 18 years and over were death of a family member or close friend (47%), alcohol or drug-related problems (25%) and overcrowding at home (21%).

### **Victim of physical or threatened violence and personal stressors by age**

- Indigenous Australians aged 18–24, 25–34 and 35–44 years were more likely to be victims of physical or threatened violence than those in the older age groups (Table 2.12.1). Indigenous Australians aged 18–54 years were twice as likely and Indigenous Australians aged 55 years and over were four times as likely to be victims of physical or threatened violence than non-Indigenous Australians of the same age.
- Indigenous Australians aged 55 years and over were slightly less likely to experience stressors than those in the younger age groups. Indigenous Australians were more likely to have experienced at least one stressor in the last 12 months than non-Indigenous Australians across all age groups (Table 2.12.1).

**Table 2.12.1: Issues of community safety, by Indigenous status and age group, persons aged 18 years and older, 2002**

	18–24			25–34			35–44			45–54			55+			Total <sup>(a)</sup>		
	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Rate ratio	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Rate ratio	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Rate ratio	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Rate ratio	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Rate ratio	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Rate ratio
	%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%		%	%	
Victim of physical or threatened violence in last 12 months	33	15	2.2*	26	13	2.0*	23	10	2.3*	16	8	2.0*	11	3	3.7*	20	9	2.2*
<b>Personal stressors experienced in last 12 months</b>																		
Mental illness <sup>(b)</sup>	14	9	1.6*	17	9	1.9*	17	9	1.9*	19	9	2.1*	12	6	2.0*	16	8	2.0*
Death of family member or close friend	45	20	2.3*	46	21	2.2*	46	21	2.2*	47	21	2.2*	50	17	2.9*	47	20	2.4*
Alcohol or drug-related problems	25	12	2.1*	25	10	2.5*	27	7	3.9*	25	8	3.1*	20	4	5.0*	25	7	3.6*
Abuse or violent crime	13	5	2.6*	12	4	3.0*	13	4	3.3*	10	4	2.5*	7	1	7.0*	11	3	3.7*
Witness to violence	17	4	4.3*	16	4	4.0*	16	3	5.3*	13	3	4.3*	12	— <sup>(c)</sup>	31.7*	15	3	5.0*
Trouble with the police	24	6	4.0*	18	4	4.5*	19	3	6.3*	15	3	5.0*	10	1	10.0*	18	3	6.0*
Member of family sent to jail/in jail	21	n.a.	n.a.	22	n.a.	n.a.	19	n.a.	n.a.	18	n.a.	n.a.	14	n.a.	n.a.	20	n.a.	n.a.
Overcrowding at home	27	n.a.	n.a.	21	n.a.	n.a.	20	n.a.	n.a.	18	n.a.	n.a.	16	n.a.	n.a.	21	n.a.	n.a.
Discrimination/racism	16	n.a.	n.a.	19	n.a.	n.a.	22	n.a.	n.a.	18	n.a.	n.a.	13	n.a.	n.a.	18	n.a.	n.a.
<i>Total experienced stressors<sup>(d)(e)</sup></i>	<i>84</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>1.4*</i>	<i>85</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>1.4*</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>1.3*</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>1.3*</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>1.5*</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>1.5*</i>
No stressors reported	16	41	0.4*	15	40	0.4*	18	39	0.5*	18	39	0.5*	23	50	0.5*	17	43	0.4*
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>..</b>

\* Represents statistically significant differences in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous comparisons.

(a) Totals for victim of physical or threatened violence are age standardised as this measure was found to be associated by age.

(b) Data available for non-remote areas only.

(c) Estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution.

(d) Sum of components may be more than total as persons may have reported more than one type of stressor.

(e) Includes divorce or separation, serious illness or disability, serious accident, not able to get job, lost job, gambling problem and pressure to fulfil cultural responsibilities.

Source: ABS and AIHW analysis of 2002 NATSISS and 2002 General Social Survey (GSS).

## Victim of physical or threatened violence and personal stressors by sex

- A slightly higher proportion of Indigenous males aged 15 years and over than Indigenous females aged 15 years and over reported being a victim of physical or threatened violence (26% compared to 23%). Indigenous males and females were twice and three times as likely to be a victim of physical or threatened violence as non-Indigenous males and females respectively (Table 2.12.2).
- A higher proportion of Indigenous females aged 18 years and over reported experiencing at least one stressor in the last 12 months than Indigenous males (85% compared to 80%) (Table 2.12.2).

**Table 2.12.2: Issues of community safety, persons aged 18 years and over, by Indigenous status and sex, 2002**

	Males		Females	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
Victim of physical or threatened violence in last 12 months <sup>(a)</sup>	21*	11*	19*	7*
<b>Personal stressors experienced in last 12 months</b>				
Mental illness <sup>(b)</sup>	12*	7*	20*	9*
Death of family member or close friend	45*	19*	48*	21*
Alcohol- or drug-related problems	22*	7*	27*	8*
Abuse or violent crime	9*	2*	13*	4*
Witness to violence	14*	2*	17*	3*
Trouble with the police	17*	3*	19*	3*
Member of family sent to jail/currently in jail	19	..	20	..
Overcrowding at home	18	..	23	..
Discrimination/racism	17	..	19	..
<i>Total experienced stressors</i> <sup>(c)(d)</sup>	80*	56*	85*	59*
No stressors reported	20*	44*	15*	41*
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

\* Represents statistically significant differences in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous comparisons.

(a) Proportions for victim of physical or threatened violence are age standardised as this measure was found to be associated by age.

(b) Data collected for non-remote areas only.

(c) Sum of components may be more than total as persons may have reported more than one type of stressor.

(d) Includes divorce or separation, serious illness or disability, serious accident, not able to get job, lost job, gambling problem and pressure to fulfil cultural responsibilities.

Source: ABS and AIHW analysis of 2002 NATSISS and 2002 GSS.

### **Victim of physical or threatened violence and personal stressors by state/territory**

- The proportion of Indigenous Australians aged 18 years and over who were a victim of physical or threatened violence in the last 12 months ranged from 14% in the Northern Territory to 27% in the Australian Capital Territory (Table 2.12.3).
- Indigenous Australians were two to four times as likely to be a victim of physical or threatened violence as non-Indigenous Australians in all states and territories with the exception of the Northern Territory where the rates were similar (14% and 15%) (Table 2.12.3).
- The proportion of Indigenous Australians aged 18 years and over who experienced stressors in the last 12 months ranged from 75% in Tasmania to 88% in the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory (Table 2.12.3).

**Table 2.12.3: Issues of community safety, persons aged 18 years and over, by Indigenous status and state/territory, 2002**

	NSW		Vic		Qld		WA		SA		Tas		ACT		NT	
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.
	(per cent)															
Victim of physical or threatened violence in last 12 months <sup>(a)</sup>	18*	8*	26*	8*	22*	11*	22*	10*	26*	8*	17*	8*	27*	7*	14*	15*
<b>Selected types of personal stressors experienced in last 12 months</b>																
Mental illness <sup>(b)</sup>	14*	8*	20*	8*	17*	8*	18*	8*	19*	9*	15*	8*	24*	11*	10 <sup>(c)</sup>	7
Death of family member or close friend	44*	20*	42*	20*	49*	19*	47*	18*	47*	22*	35*	20*	51*	21*	53*	21*
Alcohol- or drug-related problems	21*	7*	24*	7*	27*	8*	25*	8*	25*	7*	13*	7*	31*	10*	34*	8*
Abuse or violent crime	9*	3*	13*	3*	13*	3*	12*	4*	11*	3*	6*	3*	22*	5*	12*	5*
Witness to violence	9	3*	13*	2*	17*	3*	14*	3*	16*	2*	6*	2*	16*	3*	29*	5*
Trouble with the police	18*	3*	18*	2*	20*	4*	18*	4*	19*	4*	7*	3*	28*	4*	15*	4*
Member of family sent to jail/currently in jail	17	n.a.	16	n.a.	20	n.a.	26	n.a.	19	n.a.	7	n.a.	21	n.a.	23	n.a.
Overcrowding at home	11	n.a.	14	n.a.	25	n.a.	19	n.a.	20	n.a.	7	n.a.	18	n.a.	45	n.a.
Discrimination/racism	20	n.a.	19	n.a.	18	n.a.	20	n.a.	24	n.a.	7	n.a.	41	n.a.	10	n.a.
<i>Total experienced stressors<sup>(d)</sup></i>	79*	56*	83*	56*	86*	59*	81*	59*	81*	58*	75*	59*	88*	62*	88*	59*
<i>No stressors reported</i>	21*	44*	17*	44*	14*	41*	19*	41*	19*	42*	25*	41*	12*	38*	12*	41*
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total number</b>	74,650	4,849,277	15,629	3,655,501	67,531	2,654,470	35,182	1,406,411	14,070	1,124,503	9,518	337,113	2,255	229,260	32,564	97,255

\* Represents statistically significant differences in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous comparisons.

(a) Proportions for victim of physical or threatened violence are age standardised as this measure was found to be associated by age.

(b) Data collected for non-remote areas only.

(c) Estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution.

(d) Sum of components may be more than total as persons may have reported more than one type of stressor.

Source: ABS and AIHW analysis of 2002 NATSISS and 2002 GSS.

### Victim of physical or threatened violence and personal stressors by remoteness

- The proportion of Indigenous Australians aged 15 years and over who were a victim of physical or threatened violence was similar in remote and non-remote areas (23% and 25% respectively) (Table 2.12.4; Figure 2.12.1).
- Indigenous persons in remote areas were more likely to report having experienced at least one stressor than Indigenous persons in non-remote areas (86% compared to 81%) (Table 2.12.4). Indigenous Australians were more likely to have experienced stressors than non-Indigenous Australians across all remoteness areas (Table 2.12.5).

**Table 2.12.4: Issues of community safety, Indigenous persons aged 15 years and over, by sex, 2002**

	Remote	Non-remote	Total
	%	%	%
Victim of physical or threatened violence in last 12 months	22.7	25.0	24.3
<b>Personal stressors experienced in last 12 months<sup>(a)</sup></b>			
Mental illness <sup>(b)</sup>	n.a.	15.6	n.a.
Death of family member or close friend	55.3	42.1	45.7
Alcohol- or drug-related problems	36.5	20.5	24.9
Abuse or violent crime	17.2	8.9	11.2
Witness to violence	30.0	10.3	15.7
Trouble with the police	21.7	17.1	18.4
Member of family sent to jail/currently in jail	25.0	17.4	19.5
Overcrowding at home	41.6	12.6	20.5
Discrimination/racism	16.3	18.2	17.7
<i>Total experienced stressors<sup>(a)/(c)</sup></i>	<i>85.5</i>	<i>81.0</i>	<i>82.3</i>
No stressors reported	14.5	19.0	17.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Sum of components may be more than total as persons may have reported more than one type of stressor.

(b) Data collected for non-remote areas only.

(c) Includes divorce or separation, serious illness or disability, serious accident, not able to get job, lost job, gambling problem and pressure to fulfil cultural responsibilities.

Source: ABS 2004a.

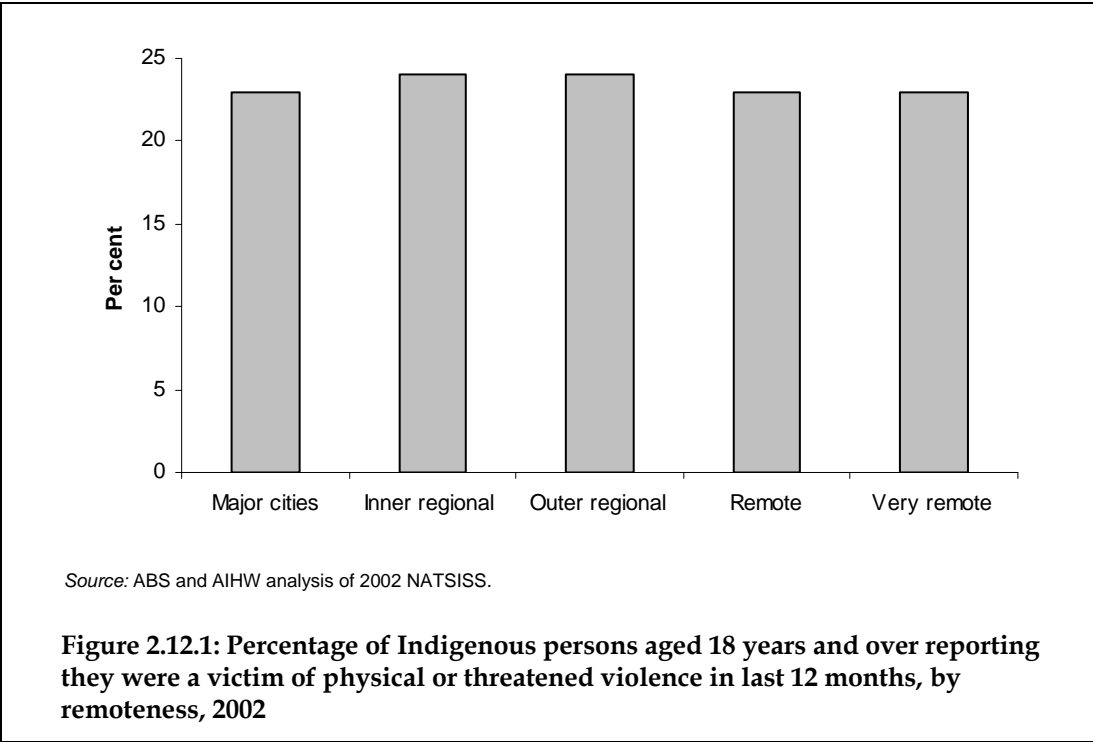
**Table 2.12.5: Issues of community safety, persons aged 18 years and over, by Indigenous status and remoteness, 2002**

	Major cities		Inner regional		Outer regional		Subtotal non-remote		Remote		Very remote <sup>(a)</sup>		Subtotal remote	
	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.	Indig.	Non-Indig.
	(per cent)													
Victim of physical or threatened violence in last 12 months <sup>(b)</sup>	19*	9*	21*	10*	20*	8*	20*	9*	20*	8*	20	n.p.	20	n.p.
<b>Personal stressors experienced in last 12 months</b>														
Mental illness <sup>(c)</sup>	19*	8*	18*	8*	11*	7*	16*	8*	n.a.	6 <sup>(d)</sup>	n.a.	n.p.	..	n.p.
Death of family member or close friend	42*	20*	43*	20*	44*	21*	43*	20*	51*	15 <sup>(d)</sup>	58	n.p.	56	n.p.
Alcohol or drug related problems	22*	8*	20*	7*	19*	6*	21*	7*	26*	8 <sup>(d)</sup>	41	n.p.	37	n.p.
Abuse or violent crime	11*	3*	7*	3*	8*	3*	9*	3*	13*	6 <sup>(d)</sup>	19	n.p.	17	n.p.
Witness to violence	11*	3*	7*	3*	10*	2*	10*	3*	19*	3 <sup>(d)</sup>	34	n.p.	30	n.p.
Trouble with the police	18*	3*	15*	3*	16*	4*	16*	3*	18*	4 <sup>(d)</sup>	23	n.p.	22	n.p.
Member of family sent to jail/currently in jail	20	n.a.	14	n.a.	17	n.a.	17	n.a.	19	n.a.	28	n.p.	25	n.p.
Overcrowding at home	16	n.a.	9	n.a.	11	n.a.	13	n.a.	25	n.a.	50	n.p.	42	n.p.
Discrimination/racism	22	n.a.	15	n.a.	17	n.a.	19	n.a.	17	n.a.	17	n.p.	17	n.p.
<b>Total experienced stressors<sup>(e)(f)</sup></b>	<b>83*</b>	<b>58*</b>	<b>81*</b>	<b>58*</b>	<b>79*</b>	<b>56*</b>	<b>81*</b>	<b>57*</b>	<b>80*</b>	<b>51*</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>n.p.</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>n.p.</b>
No stressors reported	17*	42*	19*	42*	21*	44*	19*	43*	20*	49*	12	n.p.	14	n.p.
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>n.p.</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>n.p.</b>

\* Represents statistically significant differences in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous comparisons.

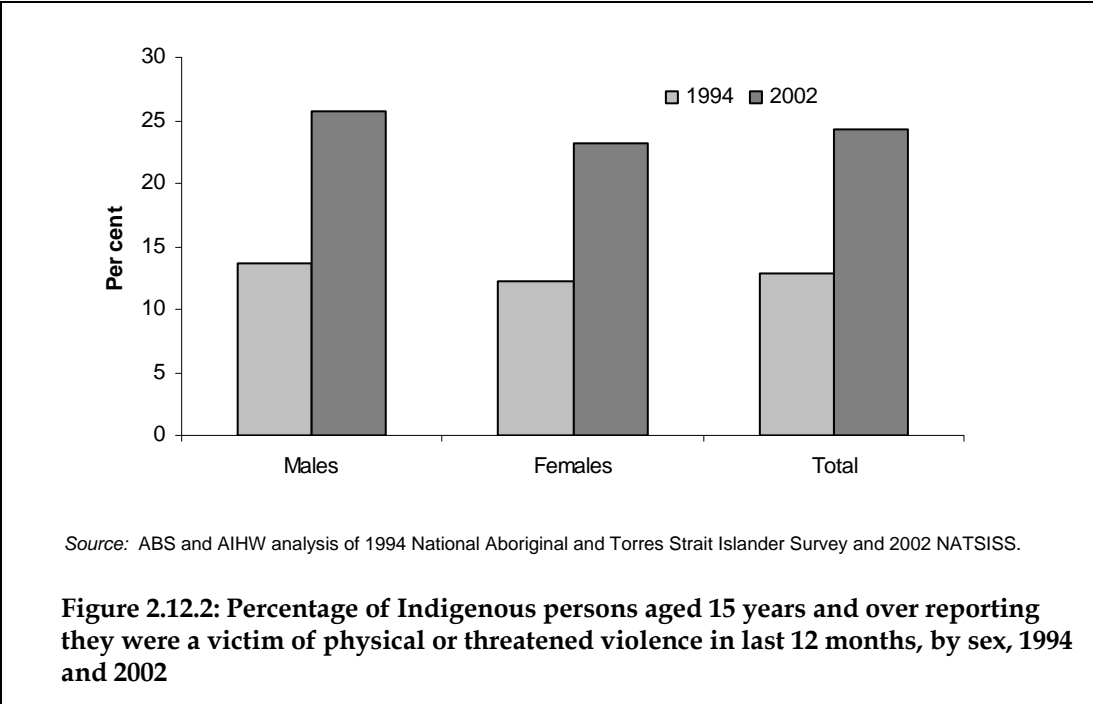
- (a) Non-Indigenous estimates not available for very remote Australia.
- (b) Proportions for victim of physical or threatened violence are age standardised as this measure was found to be associated by age.
- (c) Data collected for non-remote areas only in the NATSISS.
- (d) Estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution.
- (e) Sum of components may be more than total as persons may have reported more than one type of stressor.
- (f) Includes divorce or separation, serious illness or disability, serious accident, not able to get job, lost job, gambling problem and pressure to fulfil cultural responsibilities.

Source: ABS and AIHW analysis of 2002 NATSISS and 2002 GSS.



**Time series analysis**

- A higher proportion of Indigenous persons aged 15 years and over reported being a victim of physical or threatened violence in the last 12 months in 2002 than in 1994 (13% compared to 24%) (Figure 2.12.2).



### **Victim of physical or threatened violence and witness to violence by selected health and population characteristics**

- Indigenous Australians with fair/poor health, a disability or long-term health condition and in the lowest quintile of household income were more likely to have been a victim of physical or threatened violence as those with excellent health, with no disability and in the highest quintile of household income (Table 2.12.6).
- Approximately 15% of Indigenous Australians aged 18 years and over had been a witness to violence in the last 12 months. Indigenous Australians were five times as likely to have been a witness to violence as non-Indigenous Australians. Indigenous Australians in remote areas were nine times as likely to have been a witness to violence as non-Indigenous Australians in remote areas.

**Table 2.12.6: Victim of and witness to violence, by selected health and population characteristics and Indigenous status, persons aged 18 years and older, 2002**

	Victim of physical or threatened violence				Witness to violence			
	Indigenous	Indigenous age standardised	Non-Indigenous	Rate ratio	Indigenous	Indigenous age standardised	Non-Indigenous	Rate ratio
	Proportion of those who were victim of physical or threatened violence				Proportion of those who were a witness to violence			
<b>Self-assessed health status</b>								
Excellent/good	20	15	9	1.7*	14	13	3	4.3*
Good	24	20	13	1.5*	17	16	4	4.0*
Fair/poor	27	29	16	1.8*	15	16	3	5.3*
<b>Disability or long-term health condition<sup>(a)</sup></b>								
Has disability or long-term health condition	27	26	12	2.2*	12	11	4	2.8*
No disability or long-term condition	20	14	8	1.8*	7	8	2	4.0*
<b>Household income</b>								
1st quintile	27	24	13	1.8*	13	13	4	3.3*
5 <sup>th</sup> quintile	18 <sup>(e)</sup>	14 <sup>(e)</sup>	9	1.6	9 <sup>(e)</sup>	14 <sup>(e)</sup>	2	7.0*
<b>Index of disparity</b>								
1st quintile	24	21	10	2.1*	18	17	4	4.3*
5th quintile	26 <sup>(e)</sup>	18 <sup>(e)</sup>	7	2.6*	8 <sup>(e)</sup>	11 <sup>(e)</sup>	2	5.5*
<b>Financial stress— unable to raise \$2,000 within a week for something important</b>								
	27	23	13	1.8*	20	19	4	4.8*
<b>Location</b>								
Remote	23	20	7	2.9*	30	28	3	9.3*
Non-remote	23	20	9	2.2*	10	9	3	3.0*
<b>Law and justice<sup>(b)</sup></b>								
Used legal services in last 12 months	69	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	22	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Arrested by police in last 5 years	45	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	21	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

(continued)

**Table 2.12.6 (continued): Victim of and witness to violence, by selected health and population characteristics and Indigenous status, persons aged 18 years and older, 2002**

	Victim of physical or threatened violence				Witness to violence			
	Indigenous	Indigenous age standardised	Non-Indigenous	Rate ratio	Indigenous	Indigenous age standardised	Non-Indigenous	Rate ratio
	Proportion who were victim of physical or threatened violence				Proportion who were a witness to violence			
Incarcerated in last 5 years	43	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	21	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
<b>Housing</b>								
Owner	15	14	8	1.8*	7	15	2	7.5*
Renter	27	23	13	1.8*	19	9	4	2.3*
Dwelling has structural problems	27	24	n.a.	n.a.	23	10	n.a.	n.a.
Dwelling requires additional bedrooms <sup>(c)</sup>	25	21	n.a.	n.a.	26	12	n.a.	n.a.
<b>Family and culture<sup>(b)</sup></b>								
Involved in social activities in last 3 mths	24	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	16	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Had undertaken voluntary work in last 12 months	26	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	17	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Able to get support in time of crisis from someone outside the household	3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	15	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Person removed from natural family	37	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	16	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Relative removed from natural family	9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	16	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Currently lives in homelands	23	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	21	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Attended cultural event(s) in last 12 mths	26	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	20	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2.2*</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4.7*</b>
<b>Total number</b>	<b>58,621</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>1,288,673</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>38,236</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>373,693</b>	<b>n.a.</b>

\*Represents results with statistically significant differences in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous comparisons.

(a) Data collected in non-remote areas only.

(b) Data collected for Indigenous Australians only.

(c) Based on Canadian National Occupancy Standard for housing appropriateness.

(d) Estimate has a relative standard error of between 25% and 50% and should be used with caution.

Source: ABS and AIHW analysis of 2002 NATSISS and 2002 GSS.

## Neighbourhood/community problems

- In 2002, approximately 74% of Indigenous Australians aged 15 years and over reported that neighbourhood or community problems were present (Table 2.12.7).
- Dangerous or noisy driving was the most common neighbourhood/community problem reported (45%), followed by theft (43%). Problems involving youth, vandalism/graffiti/damage to property, alcohol and illegal drugs were also common problems reported.

## Neighbourhood/community problems by age and sex

- The proportion of Indigenous Australians reporting neighbourhood/community problems was lowest among those aged 55 years and over (69%) (Table 2.12.7) and similar for males and females (73% and 74% respectively) (Table 2.12.8).

**Table 2.12.7: Neighbourhood/community problems, by age group: Indigenous persons aged 15 years and older, 2002**

	15–24 years	25–34 years	35–44 years	45–54 years	55 years and over	Total
	(per cent)					
<b>Neighbourhood/community problem present</b>						
Theft	42.5	41.9	46.0	46.5	37.4	43.0
Problems involving youth	32.3	32.3	32.3	32.3	32.3	32.3
Prowlers/loiterers <sup>(a)</sup>	15.0	15.3	16.2	14.4	11.5	14.8
Vandalism/graffiti/damage to property	33.9	30.5	37.3	32.4	28.5	32.9
Dangerous or noisy driving <sup>(a)</sup>	40.4	48.6	50.5	47.0	40.2	45.4
Alcohol	35.1	33.9	36.0	31.9	26.3	33.5
Illegal drugs	35.9	31.1	34.0	31.1	23.7	32.3
Family violence	20.7	22.4	23.6	21.0	15.4	21.2
Assault	21.5	19.4	21.7	19.1	14.2	19.9
Sexual assault	9.3	7.5	8.8	7.9	5.2	8.1
Problems with your neighbours <sup>(a)</sup>	15.8	13.7	15.0	12.5	9.1	13.9
Levels of neighbourhood conflict	16.3	14.8	16.2	14.1	9.8	14.9
Level of personal safety day or night <sup>(a)</sup>	11.8	12.6	10.0	8.4	8.5	10.8
<b>Total with neighbourhood/community problems</b>	<b>73.6</b>	<b>74.3</b>	<b>75.4</b>	<b>73.4</b>	<b>68.7</b>	<b>73.6</b>
No neighbourhood/community problems reported	24.9	24.9	24.0	25.8	29.4	25.3
<b>Total<sup>(b)</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Total number</b>	<b>82,749</b>	<b>71,139</b>	<b>57,741</b>	<b>38,375</b>	<b>32,201</b>	<b>282,205</b>

(a) Data collected in non-remote areas only.

(b) Includes people who did not know or state their neighbourhood/community problems.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2002 NATSISS.

**Table 2.12.8: Neighbourhood/community problems, by sex: Indigenous persons aged 15 years and older, 2002**

	Male	Female
	%	%
<b>Neighbourhood/community problem present</b>		
Theft	43.0	43.0
Problems involving youth	33.0	31.8
Prowlers/loiterers <sup>(a)</sup>	15.6	14.2
Vandalism/graffiti/damage to property	33.1	32.7
Dangerous or noisy driving <sup>(a)</sup>	43.8	46.9
Alcohol	33.1	33.9
Illegal drugs	32.2	32.3
Family violence	19.6	22.6
Assault	20.7	19.1
Sexual assault	7.6	8.6
Problems with your neighbours <sup>(a)</sup>	14.6	13.3
Levels of neighbourhood conflict	15.2	14.5
Level of personal safety day or night <sup>(a)</sup>	10.3	11.2
<b>Total with neighbourhood/community problems</b>	<b>72.9</b>	<b>74.1</b>
No neighbourhood/community problems reported	26.0	24.8
<b>Total<sup>(b)</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Total number</b>	<b>135,199</b>	<b>147,006</b>

(a) Data collected in non-remote areas only.

(b) Includes people who did not know or state their neighbourhood/community problems.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2002 NATSISS.

### Neighbourhood/community problems by state/territory

- Of the four states and territories for which data on neighbourhood/community problems are presented (New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia), Western Australia had the lowest proportion of Indigenous persons reporting neighbourhood/community problems overall (72%). Queensland had the highest proportion of Indigenous persons reporting illegal drugs, family violence, assault and sexual assault as a problem (Table 2.12.9).

**Table 2.12.9: Neighbourhood/community problems, Indigenous persons aged 15 years and older, NSW, Vic, Qld and WA, 2002**

	<b>NSW</b>	<b>Vic</b>	<b>Qld</b>	<b>WA</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Neighbourhood/community problem present</b>				
Theft	45.5	43.9	43.4	39.2
Problems involving youth	28.0	29.3	33.6	33.0
Prowlers/loiterers <sup>(a)</sup>	15.0	14.7	13.5	17.6
Vandalism/graffiti/damage to property	32.6	31.2	31.5	32.8
Dangerous or noisy driving <sup>(a)</sup>	43.1	44.6	45.6	50.6
Alcohol	30.4	23.1	36.0	35.9
Illegal drugs	31.6	28.6	35.6	30.7
Family violence	15.0	13.1	25.7	21.9
Assault	14.6	12.9	20.9	19.9
Sexual assault	6.3	5.3	12.6	7.2
Problems with your neighbours <sup>(a)</sup>	16.9	12.2	12.2	10.6
Levels of neighbourhood conflict	10.8	8.5	17.1	14.2
Level of personal safety day or night <sup>(a)</sup>	11.6	9.7	8.7	14.7
<b>Total with neighbourhood/community problems</b>	<b>75.0</b>	<b>73.2</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>72.3</b>
No neighbourhood/community problems reported	24.7	23.2	24.1	26.5
<b>Total<sup>(b)</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Total number</b>	<b>83,585</b>	<b>36,189</b>	<b>75,975</b>	<b>15,813</b>

(a) Data collected in non-remote areas only.

(b) Includes people who did not know or state their neighbourhood/community problems.

Note: Data for SA, NT, Tas and ACT not available for publication due to survey output restrictions.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2002 NATSISS.

### Neighbourhood/community problems by remoteness

- A higher proportion of Indigenous people aged 15 years and over reported most types of neighbourhood/community problems in remote areas than in non-remote areas (Table 2.12.10).

**Table 2.12.10: Neighbourhood/community problems, by remoteness: Indigenous persons aged 15 years and older, 2002**

	Remote	Non-remote
	%	%
<b>Neighbourhood/community problem present</b>		
Theft	41.5	43.6
Problems involving youth	47.9	26.5
Prowlers/loiterers <sup>(a)</sup>	n.a.	14.8
Vandalism/graffiti/damage to property	43.5	28.9
Dangerous or noisy driving <sup>(a)</sup>	n.a.	45.4
Alcohol	54.1	25.8
Illegal drugs	46.1	27.1
Family violence	40.9	13.8
Assault	41.1	11.9
Sexual assault	16.7	4.8
Problems with your neighbours <sup>(a)</sup>	n.a.	13.9
Levels of neighbourhood conflict	30.8	8.9
Level of personal safety day or night <sup>(a)</sup>	n.a.	10.8
<b>Total with neighbourhood/community problems</b>	<b>74.2</b>	<b>73.3</b>
No neighbourhood/community problems reported	24.9	25.5
<b>Total<sup>(b)</sup></b>		
<b>Total number</b>	<b>77,100</b>	<b>205,100</b>

(a) Data collected in non-remote areas only.

(b) Includes people who did not know or state their neighbourhood/community problems.

Source: ABS 2004a.

### Neighbourhood/community problems by selected health and population characteristics

- Indigenous Australians with a disability or long-term health condition and in the lowest quintile of household income were more likely to report family violence, assault, sexual assault or personal safety as neighbourhood/community problems than those with no disability/long-term condition and those in the highest quintile of household income (Table 2.12.11).

**Table 2.12.11: Neighbourhood/community problems, by selected health and population characteristics: Indigenous persons aged 15 years and over, 2002**

	Neighbourhood/community problem reported			
	Family violence	Assault	Sexual assault	Personal safety day or night <sup>(a)</sup>
	%	%	%	%
<b>Self-assessed health status</b>				
Excellent/good	40.1	44.8	43.9	40.6
Good	33.8	30.3	32.7	30.0
Fair/poor	25.7	24.4	23.3	29.5
<b>Disability or long-term health condition<sup>(b)</sup></b>				
Yes	57.8	55.8	56.1	56.5
No	42.2	44.2	43.9	43.5
<b>Household income</b>				
1st quintile	34.5	35.3	36.3	42.6
5th quintile	2.9	2.5	2.7	3.0
<b>Financial stress—unable to raise \$2,000 within a week for something important</b>	71.4	71.4	52.8	55.6
<b>Location</b>				
Remote	52.8	56.6	56.5	n.a.
Non-remote	47.2	43.4	43.5	n.a.
<b>Law and justice</b>				
Used legal services in last 12 months	27.1	24.7	19.0	29.6
Arrested by police in last 5 years	21.6	22.5	20.9	21.5
Incarcerated in last 5 years	9.5	9.9	7.1	7.6
<b>Housing</b>				
Owner	12.6	11.5	10.4	23.7
Renter	85.1	86.1	86.6	73.6
Dwelling has structural problems	58.4	59.4	61.0	49.5
Dwelling requires additional bedrooms <sup>(c)</sup>	88.7	88.7	81.5	84.2
<b>Family and culture</b>				
Involved in social activities in last 3 months	93.6	94.8	94.3	93.3
Had undertaken voluntary work in last 12 months	29.1	25.7	27.6	41.6
Able to get support in time of crisis from someone outside family	67.6	69.8	68.4	78.2
Has been removed from natural family	8.7	8.4	7.8	14.4
Relative removed from natural family	36.6	35.1	39.7	48.9
Currently lives in homelands	29.5	31.7	27.3	18.5
Attended cultural event(s) in last 12 months <sup>(a)</sup>	82.5	80.3	81.2	64.5
<b>Total<sup>(d)</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Total number</b>	<b>59,731</b>	<b>56,046</b>	<b>22,849</b>	<b>22,121</b>

(a) Data collected or calculated in non-remote areas only.

(b) Excludes people who chose 'not applicable' regarding their disability status

(c) Based on Canadian National Occupancy Standard for housing appropriateness.

(d) Includes 'not known' or 'not stated' cases.

Source: AIHW analysis of 2002 NATSISS.

## **Hospitalisations**

- For the period July 2002 to June 2004, there were 7,856 hospitalisations of Indigenous Australians in Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory combined in which assault was recorded as the principal diagnosis. This represented approximately 2.5% of total hospitalisations of Indigenous Australians in these states and territories.
- Overall, in the four states and territories combined, Indigenous Australians were hospitalised for assault at around 17 times the rate of other Australians.

## **Hospitalisations by age and sex**

- Hospitalisation rates for assault were highest among those aged 25–34 and 35–44 years in the Indigenous population and among those aged 15–24 and 25–34 years in the other Australian population. Indigenous males aged 55–64 and 65 years and over were hospitalised for assault at around 20 times the rate of other males, and Indigenous females aged 25–34, 35–44 and 45–54 years were hospitalised for assault at around 60 times the rate of other females (Table 2.12.12).

**Table 2.12.12: Hospitalisations for principal diagnosis of assault, by Indigenous status, sex and age, Qld, WA, SA and NT, July 2002 to June 2004<sup>(a)(b)(c)(d)</sup>**

	Indigenous				Other <sup>(e)</sup>				Ratio <sup>(i)</sup>
	Number	Rate per 1,000 <sup>(f)</sup>	LCL 95% <sup>(g)</sup>	UCL 95% <sup>(h)</sup>	Number	Rate per 1,000 <sup>(f)</sup>	LCL 95% <sup>(g)</sup>	UCL 95% <sup>(h)</sup>	
<b>Males</b>									
0-4	80	2.2	1.7	2.7	100	0.2	0.2	0.3	10.0*
5-14	89	1.2	1.0	1.4	227	0.2	0.2	0.3	5.3*
15-24	895	16.3	15.2	20.5	3,590	3.5	3.4	3.6	4.6*
25-34	1,162	26.7	25.1	36.2	2,728	2.7	2.6	2.8	10.1*
35-44	930	27.5	25.8	30.1	1,841	1.7	1.6	1.8	16.3*
45-54	319	14.9	13.3	14.8	914	0.9	0.8	1.0	16.5*
55-64	97	9.2	7.3	5.5	341	0.4	0.4	0.5	20.6*
65+	24	3.5	2.1	2.4	145	0.2	0.1	0.2	19.6*
<b>Females</b>									
0-4	68	1.9	1.5	2.4	91	0.2	0.2	0.3	9.2*
5-14	82	1.2	0.9	1.4	88	0.1	0.1	0.1	12.7*
15-24	1,054	19.3	18.1	20.5	529	0.5	0.5	0.6	35.1*
25-34	1,621	34.5	32.8	36.2	584	0.6	0.5	0.6	59.8*
35-44	1,054	28.4	26.7	30.1	517	0.5	0.4	0.5	60.2*
45-54	313	13.4	11.9	14.8	225	0.2	0.2	0.3	60.2*
55-64	53	4.4	3.2	5.5	88	0.1	0.1	0.1	36.5*
65+	14	1.5	0.7	2.4	97	0.1	0.1	0.1	15.8*
<b>Persons</b>									
0-4	148	2.1	1.7	2.4	191	0.2	0.2	0.2	9.6*
5-14	171	1.2	1.0	1.4	315	0.2	0.1	0.2	7.4*
15-24	1,949	17.8	17.0	18.6	4,120	2.1	2.0	2.1	8.5*
25-34	2,783	30.7	29.6	31.9	3,312	1.6	1.6	1.7	18.9*
35-44	1,984	28.0	26.8	29.2	2,358	1.1	1.0	1.1	25.9*
45-54	632	14.1	13.0	15.2	1,139	0.6	0.5	0.6	25.1*
55-64	150	6.6	5.5	7.6	429	0.3	0.3	0.3	23.1*
65+	38	2.4	1.6	3.1	242	0.1	0.1	0.2	17.8*

\* Represents results with statistically significant differences in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous comparisons at the p<.05 level.

- (a) Data are from public and most private hospitals. Excludes private hospitals in the Northern Territory.
- (b) Categories are based on the ICD-10-AM (National Centre for Classification in Health 2004). Causes of injury are based on the first reported external cause as 'assault' ICD-10-AM codes X85-Y09, where the principal diagnosis was 'injury and poisoning' (S00-T98).
- (c) Financial year reporting.
- (d) Data are reported by state/territory of usual residence of the patient hospitalised and are for Western Australia, South Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland only. These four jurisdictions are considered to have adequate levels of Indigenous identification, although the level of accuracy varies by jurisdiction and hospital. Data for these four jurisdictions over-represent Indigenous populations in less urbanised and more remote locations. Hospitalisation data for four jurisdictions should not be assumed to represent the hospitalisation experience in the other jurisdictions.
- (e) Other includes hospitalisations of non-Indigenous people and those for whom Indigenous status was not stated.
- (f) Age-specific rate per 1,000 population.
- (g) LCL = lower confidence limit.
- (h) UCL = upper confidence limit.
- (i) Rate ratio: Indigenous rate divided by rate for other Australians.

Source: AIHW analysis of AIHW National Hospital Morbidity Database

## Hospitalisations by state/territory

- In Queensland, Indigenous Australians were hospitalised for assault at nine times the rate of other Australians. In the Northern Territory and South Australia, Indigenous Australians were hospitalised for assault at 13 and 17 times the rate of other Australians, and in Western Australia, Indigenous Australians were hospitalised for assault at 30 times the rate of other Australians (Table 2.12.13).

**Table 2.12.13: Hospitalisations for principal diagnosis of assault, by Indigenous status, Qld, WA, SA and NT, July 2002 to June 2004<sup>(a)(b)(c)(d)</sup>**

	Indigenous				Other <sup>(e)</sup>				Ratio <sup>(i)</sup>
	Number	Rate per 1,000 <sup>(f)</sup>	LCL 95% <sup>(g)</sup>	UCL 95% <sup>(h)</sup>	Number	Rate per 1,000 <sup>(f)</sup>	LCL 95% <sup>(g)</sup>	UCL 95% <sup>(h)</sup>	
Qld	2,075	8.4	8.0	8.8	6,518	0.9	0.9	0.9	9.4*
WA	3,004	23.0	22.1	23.9	2,857	0.8	0.7	0.8	30.4*
SA	693	13.5	12.4	14.5	2,308	0.8	0.8	0.8	16.7*
NT	2,084	17.8	17.0	18.7	423	1.4	1.3	1.5	12.8*
<b>Qld, WA, SA, NT</b>	<b>7,856</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>12,106</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>17.0*</b>

\* Represents results with statistically significant differences in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous comparisons at the p<.05 level.

(k) Data are from public and most private hospitals. Excludes private hospitals in the Northern Territory.

(l) Categories are based on the ICD-10-AM (National Centre for Classification in Health 2004). Causes of injury are based on the first reported external cause as 'assault' ICD-10-AM codes X85–Y09, where the principal diagnosis was 'injury and poisoning' (S00–T98).

(m) Financial year reporting.

(n) Data are reported by state/territory of usual residence of the patient hospitalised and are for Western Australia, South Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland only. These four jurisdictions are considered to have adequate levels of Indigenous identification, although the level of accuracy varies by jurisdiction and hospital. Data for these four jurisdictions over-represent Indigenous populations in less urbanised and more remote locations. Hospitalisation data for four jurisdictions should not be assumed to represent the hospitalisation experience in the other jurisdictions.

(o) Other includes hospitalisations of non-Indigenous patients and those for whom Indigenous status was not stated.

(p) Directly age standardised using the Australian 2001 Standard population.

(q) LCL = lower confidence limit.

(r) UCL = upper confidence limit.

(s) Rate ratio Indigenous:Other.

Note: it should be noted that a person can have more than one hospital episode associated with a single assault.

Source: AIHW analysis of AIHW National Hospital Morbidity Database.

## Time series analysis

Hospitalisation rates, rate ratios and rate differences between Indigenous and other Australian hospitalisation for assault over the five-year period 1998–99 to 2003–04 are presented in Table 2.12.14 and Figure 2.12.3 below.

- Over the period 1998–99 to 2003–04, there were significant declines in the hospitalisation rate for assault among Indigenous males and females. The fitted trend implies an average yearly decline in the rate of around 0.4 per 1,000.
- Over the same period there were no significant changes in the hospitalisation rate for assault for other Australians.
- There were significant declines in both the hospitalisation rate ratios and rate differences between Indigenous and other Australians for assault over the period 1998–99 to 2003–04, which reflects both a relative and absolute decline in the gap between hospitalisation rates for Indigenous and other Australian hospitalisations from assault.

It should be noted that changes in the level of accuracy of Indigenous identification in hospital records will result in changes in the level of reported hospital separations for Indigenous Australians. Also, changes in access, hospital policies and practices all impact on the level of hospitalisation over time. Caution should be used in interpreting changes over time as it is not possible to ascertain whether a change in reported hospitalisation is due to changes in the accuracy of Indigenous identification or real changes in the rate at which Indigenous people are hospitalised. An increase in hospitalisations may reflect better access rather than a worsening of health.

**Table 2.12.14: Age-standardised hospitalisation rates, rate ratios and rate differences from assault, Qld, WA, SA and NT, 1998–99 to 2003–04**

	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	Annual change <sup>(a)</sup>
<b>Indigenous rate per 1,000</b>							
Males	16.2	15.3	15.2	15.8	14.6	13.6	-0.4*
Females	16.6	16.1	15.1	15.5	15.0	14.5	-0.4*
Persons	16.4	15.7	15.1	15.6	14.8	14.1	-0.4*
<b>Other Australian<sup>(b)</sup> rate per 1,000</b>							
Males	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.3	0.0
Females	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.0
Persons	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.0
<b>Rate ratio<sup>(c)</sup></b>							
Males	11.5	11.1	10.2	10.8	10.4	10.1	-0.2*
Females	19.0	18.8	16.3	17.1	17.4	17.4	-0.3
Persons	18.7	18.3	16.4	17.3	17.2	16.8	-0.3*
<b>Rate difference<sup>(d)</sup></b>							
Males	14.8	13.9	13.7	14.4	13.2	12.3	-0.4*
Females	15.7	15.2	14.1	14.6	14.1	13.7	-0.4*
Persons	15.5	14.8	14.2	14.7	13.9	13.2	-0.4*

\* Represents results with statistically significant increases or declines at the p<.05 level over the period 1998–99 to 2003–04.

(a) Average annual change in rates, rate ratios and rate differences determined using linear regression analysis.

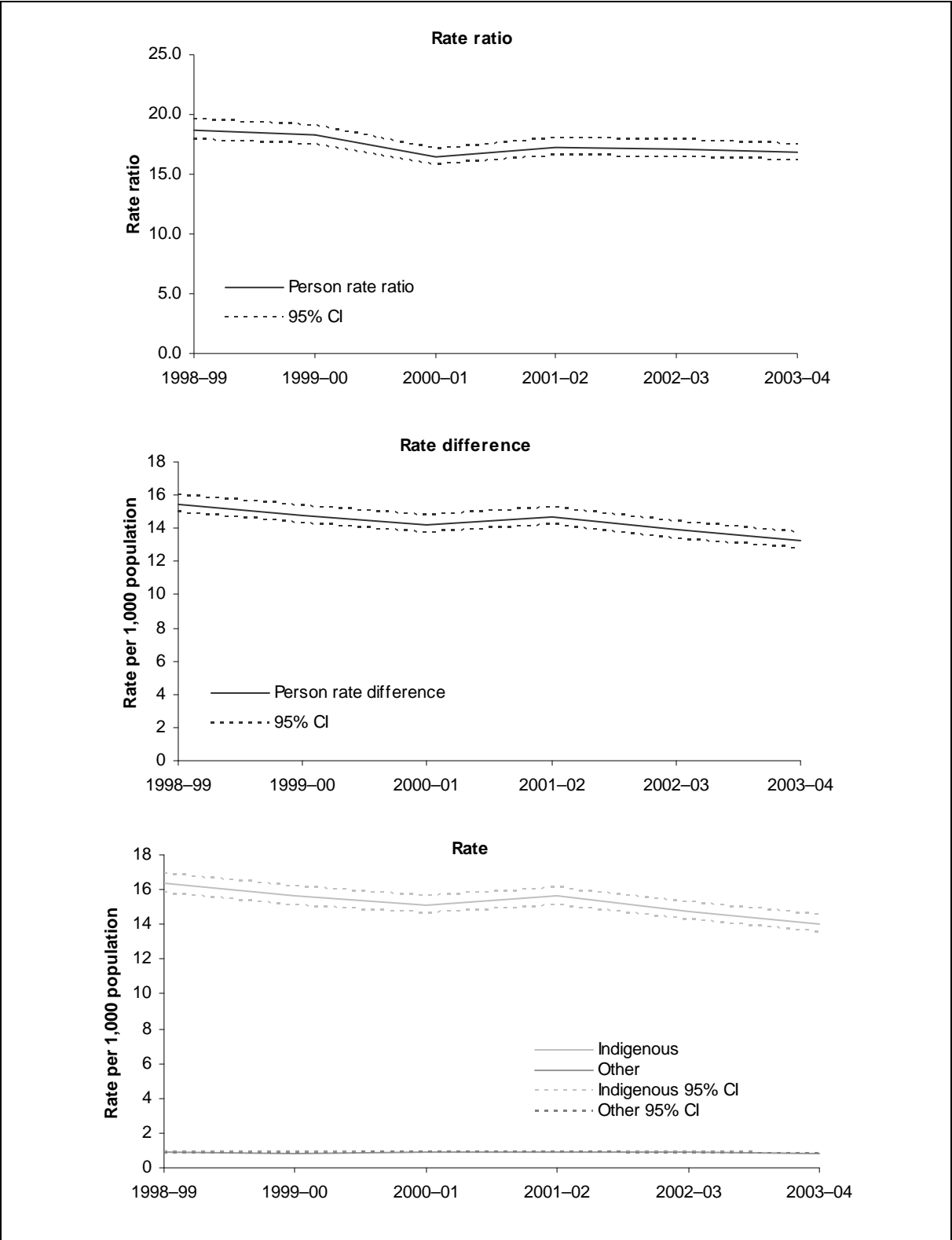
(b) Includes hospitalisations of non-Indigenous Australians and those for whom Indigenous status was not stated.

(c) Hospitalisation rate of Indigenous Australians divided by the hospitalisation rate for other Australians.

(d) Hospitalisation rate for Indigenous Australians minus the hospitalisation rate for other Australians.

Note: Rates have been directly age standardised using the Australian 2001 Standard population.

Source: AIHW analysis of AIHW National Hospital Morbidity Database.



Source: AIHW analysis of AIHW National Hospital Morbidity Database.

**Figure 2.12.3: Hospitalisation rates, rate ratios and rate differences between Indigenous and other Australians from assault, Qld, WA, SA and NT, 1998-99 to 2003-04**

## **Mortality**

Tables 2.12.15 and 2.12.16 present deaths from assault in Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory over the five-year period 2000–2004.

- Over the period 2000–2004, there were 147 deaths of Indigenous people from assault (homicide) in Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory combined. This represented approximately 2% of total deaths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in these states and territories.
- Indigenous Australians in the four states and territories combined died from assault at 10 times the rate of non-Indigenous Australians.

### **Mortality by age and sex**

- Mortality rates for assault were highest among those aged 25–34 and 35–44 years in both the Indigenous population and non-Indigenous population (Figure 2.12.4). Indigenous males in these age groups died from assault at between 12 and 17 times the rate of non-Indigenous Australians of the same age, and Indigenous females in these age groups died from assault at between 13 and 19 times the rate of non-Indigenous females of the same age (Table 2.12.15).

**Table 2.12.15: Deaths from assault (homicide), by Indigenous status, sex and age, Qld, WA, SA and NT, 2000–2004<sup>(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)</sup>**

	Indigenous				Non-Indigenous				Ratio <sup>(i)</sup>
	Number	Rate per 100,000 <sup>(f)</sup>	LCL 95% <sup>(g)</sup>	UCL 95% <sup>(h)</sup>	Number	Rate per 100,000 <sup>(f)</sup>	LCL 95% <sup>(g)</sup>	UCL 95% <sup>(h)</sup>	
<b>Males</b>									
0–4	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	14	1.2	0.6	1.9	n.p.
5–14	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	11	0.4	0.2	0.7	n.p.
15–24	13	9.8	4.5	15.1	38	1.5	1.0	2.0	6.4*
25–34	27	25.0	15.6	34.5	53	2.1	1.5	2.6	12.1*
35–44	27	32.8	20.4	45.1	52	1.9	1.4	2.4	17.0*
45–54	10	19.3	7.3	31.3	36	1.4	1.0	1.9	13.4*
55–64	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	35	1.9	1.3	2.6	n.p.
65+	0	0.0	—	—	15	0.8	0.4	1.1	—
<b>Females</b>									
0–4	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	13	1.2	0.5	1.8	n.p.
5–14	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	11	0.5	0.2	0.7	n.p.
15–24	21	15.8	9.1	22.6	30	1.3	0.8	1.7	12.5*
25–34	23	19.7	11.6	27.7	27	1.1	0.7	1.5	18.5*
35–44	11.0	12.2	5.0	19.5	33	1.2	0.8	1.6	10.1*
45–54	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	17	0.7	0.4	1.0	n.p.
55–64	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	6	0.3	0.1	0.6	n.p.
65+	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	12	0.5	0.2	0.8	n.p.
<b>Persons</b>									
0–4	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	27	1.2	0.8	1.7	n.p.
5–14	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	22	0.5	0.3	0.6	n.p.
15–24	34	12.8	8.5	17.1	68	1.4	1.1	1.7	9.2*
25–34	50	22.3	16.1	28.4	80	1.6	1.2	1.9	14.2*
35–44	38	22.0	15.0	29.1	85	1.6	1.2	1.9	14.1*
45–54	13	12.0	5.5	18.6	53	1.1	0.8	1.3	11.3*
55–64	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	41	1.1	0.8	1.5	n.p.
65+	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	n.p.	27	0.6	0.4	0.8	n.p.

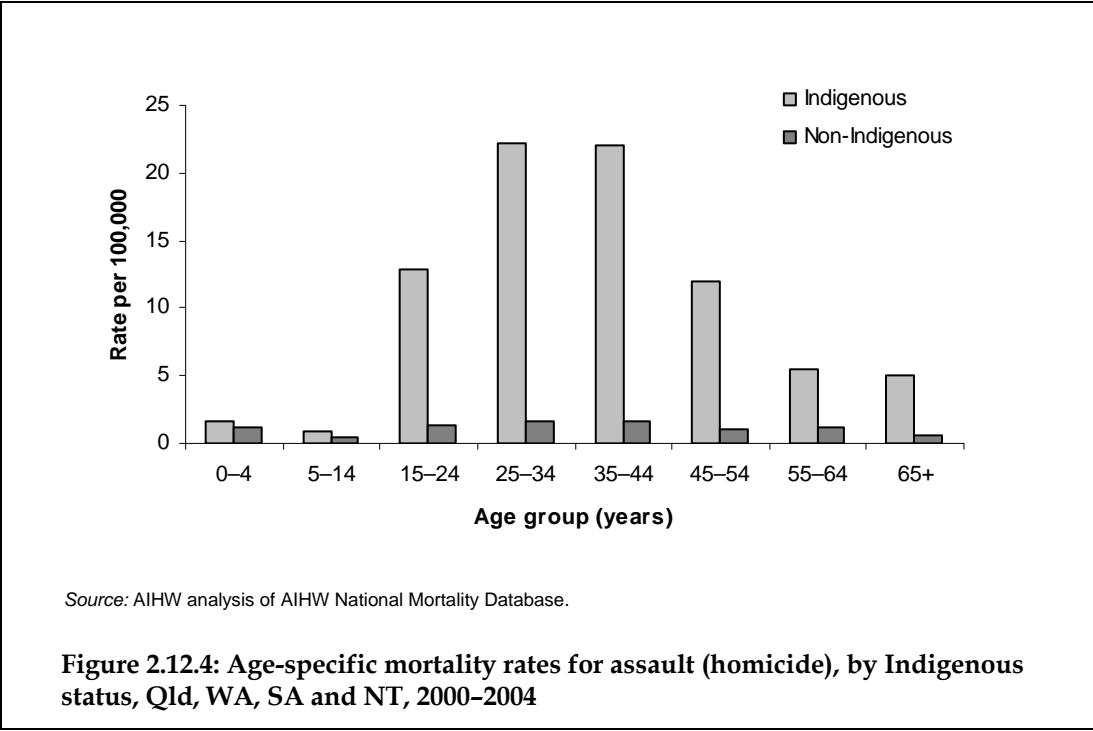
\* Represents results with statistically significant differences in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous comparisons at the p<.05 level.

n.p. Not published where numbers are less than 5.

- (a) Data are reported for Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory only. These four jurisdictions are considered to have adequate levels of Indigenous identification in mortality data. They do not represent a quasi-Australian figure.
- (b) Data are presented in five-year groupings due to small numbers each year.
- (c) These data excludes a total of 18 deaths where Indigenous status was not stated.
- (d) While most deaths of Indigenous Australians are registered, it is likely that some are not accurately identified as Indigenous. Therefore, these statistics are likely to underestimate the Indigenous all causes mortality rate.
- (e) Deaths are by year of occurrence except the latest year which is based on year of registration.
- (f) Age-specific rate per 100,000 population.
- (g) LCL = lower confidence limit.
- (h) UCL = upper confidence limit.
- (i) Rate ratio Indigenous:non-Indigenous.

Note: The completeness of identification of Indigenous deaths can vary by age.

Source: AIHW analysis of AIHW National Mortality Database.



**Mortality by state/territory**

- In Queensland and South Australia, Indigenous Australians died from assault at five and seven times the rate of non-Indigenous Australians. In the Northern Territory and Western Australia, Indigenous Australians died from assault at 11 and 12 times the rate of non-Indigenous Australians in these states and territories respectively (Table 2.12.16).

**Table 2.12.16: Deaths from assault (homicide), by Indigenous status, Qld, WA, SA and NT, 2000–2004<sup>(a)(b)(c)(d)</sup>**

	Indigenous				Non-Indigenous				Ratio <sup>(h)</sup>
	Number	Rate per 100,000 <sup>(e)</sup>	LCL 95% <sup>(f)</sup>	UCL 95% <sup>(g)</sup>	Number	Rate per 100,000 <sup>(e)</sup>	LCL 95% <sup>(f)</sup>	UCL 95% <sup>(g)</sup>	
Qld	40	6.4	4.3	8.5	229	1.3	1.3	1.3	5.1*
WA	28	10.5	5.8	15.2	87	0.9	0.9	0.9	12.2*
SA	9	7.4	2.4	12.3	85	1.0	1.0	1.0	7.3*
NT	70	23.9	17.7	30.1	20	2.2	2.2	2.2	11.0*
<b>Qld, WA, SA, NT<sup>(i)</sup></b>	<b>147</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>10.0*</b>

\* Represents results with statistically significant differences in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous comparisons at the p<.05 level.

(l) Data are presented in five-year groupings due to small numbers each year.

(m) These data exclude a total of 18 deaths where Indigenous status was not stated.

(n) While most deaths of Indigenous Australians are registered, it is likely that some are not accurately identified as Indigenous. Therefore, these statistics are likely to underestimate the Indigenous all causes mortality rate.

(o) Deaths are by year of occurrence except the latest year which is based on year of registration.

(p) Directly age standardised using the Australian 2001 Standard population.

(q) LCL = lower confidence limit.

(r) UCL = upper confidence limit.

(s) Rate ratio Indigenous:Non-Indigenous.

(t) Data are reported for Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory only. These four jurisdictions are considered to have adequate levels of Indigenous identification in mortality data. They do not represent a quasi-Australian figure. The ABS calculated the completeness of identification of Indigenous deaths for the period 1999–2003 using population estimates as 54% for Queensland, 72% for Western Australia, 66% for South Australia and 95% for the Northern Territory. The completeness of Indigenous identification for avoidable deaths may differ from the estimates for 'all causes'.

Source: AIHW analysis of AIHW National Mortality Database.

## Time series analysis

Longer term mortality trend data are limited to three jurisdictions – Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory, which have over 10 years of reasonable coverage of Indigenous deaths in their recording systems.

There is a consistent time series of population estimates from 1991. Due to changes in the classification and coding of causes of death from ICD-9 (used up until 1996) to ICD-10 (used from 1997 onwards), which affects the comparability of the data, the analysis reported for this indicator has been done for two time periods – 1991–1996 and 1997–2003. Data for 2004 was not used because of late registration of some deaths. Data are presented in three–four year groupings due to low numbers of deaths from assault each year.

Due to the late inclusion of a 'not stated' category of Indigenous status in 1998 (before which not stated responses were included with non-Indigenous deaths), Indigenous mortality rates have been compared with the mortality rates of 'other' Australians (which include deaths of both non-Indigenous people and deaths for which Indigenous status was not stated).

Mortality rates, rate ratios and rate differences between Indigenous and other Australians for assault over the period 1991–1993 to 1994–1996 and 1997–1999 to 2000–2003 are presented in Table 2.12.17 and Figure 2.12.5.

- Over the period 1991–1993 to 1994–1996, there were non-significant declines in recorded mortality for assault for Indigenous Australians in Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory combined. Over the same period there were non-significant increases in mortality rates for assault for other Australians.

- Over the period 1997–1999 to 2000–2003, there were significant increases in the mortality rates from assault for Indigenous Australians and significant declines in mortality rates from assault for other Australians over this period.

Fluctuations in the level of Indigenous mortality over time partly reflect changing levels of coverage of Indigenous deaths and population estimates. Given the volatility in the measures of Indigenous mortality, caution should be exercised in assessing trends in Indigenous mortality over time and comparisons between jurisdictions and comparisons with the non-Indigenous population.

**Table 2.12.17: Age-standardised mortality rates, rate ratios and rate differences for deaths from assault (homicide), WA, SA and NT, 1991–1993 to 1994–1996 and 1997–1999 to 2000–2003**

	1991-1993	1994-1996	Difference in rates	1997-1999	2000-2003	Difference in rates
Indigenous deaths	76	64	..	43	97	..
Other deaths <sup>(b)</sup>	146	169	..	152	166	..
Indigenous rate per 100,000	23.3	17.3	-6.0	10.9	17.4	6.5*
Other rate <sup>(b)</sup> per 100,000	1.5	1.7	0.2	1.5	1.2	-0.3*
Rate ratio <sup>(e)</sup>	15.1	10.2	..	7.3	14.6	..
Rate difference <sup>(d)</sup>	21.7	15.6	..	9.4	16.2	..

\* Represents statistically significant differences at the  $p < .05$  level over the period 1991–1993 to 1994–1996 and 1997–1999 to 2000–2003.

(f) Average annual change in rates, rate ratios and rate differences determined using linear regression analysis.

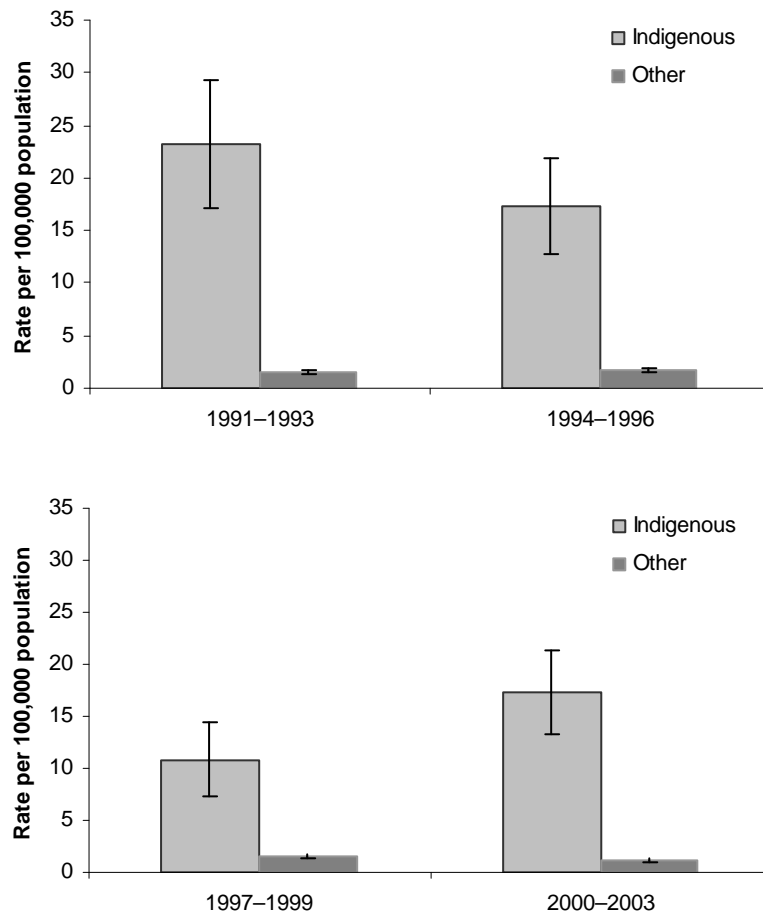
(g) Includes deaths of non-Indigenous people and those for whom Indigenous status was not stated.

(h) Mortality rate for Indigenous Australians divided by the mortality rate for other Australians.

(i) Mortality rate for Indigenous Australians minus the mortality rate for other Australians.

Note: Rates have been directly age standardised using the Australian 2001 Standard population.

Source: AIHW analysis of AIHW National Mortality Database.



*Note:* Due to coding changes from 1CD-9 to ICD-10 between 1996 and 1997, data from 1991-1996 cannot be strictly compared with data from 1997 onwards.

*Source:* AIHW analysis of AIHW National Mortality Database.

**Figure 2.12.5: Age-standardised mortality rates from assault (homicide), by Indigenous status, 1991-1993 to 1994-1996 and 1997-1999 to 2000-2003**

## Victims of homicide

The National Homicide Monitoring Program collects data on all homicides recorded in Australia. Data for the five-year periods 1994–95 to 1998–99 and 1999–2000 to 2003–04 are presented in Table 2.12.18 below.

- Over the five year period 1999–2000 to 2003–04, there were 225 Indigenous victims of homicide recorded in the National Homicide Monitoring Program which was higher than the number recorded for the period 1994–95 to 1998–99 (196).
- Indigenous victims represented 14% of total victims of homicide over the period 1999–2000 to 2003–04.
- For approximately 41% of homicides in the period 1999–2000 to 2003–04 in which the victim was Indigenous, the homicide involved a male offender and a male victim and for 36%, the homicide involved a male offender and a female victim.
- For approximately 82% of homicides in the period 1999–2000 to 2003–04 where the victim was Indigenous, both the offender and the victim were not working. This compared to 41% of homicides where the victim was non-Indigenous.
- Domestic altercation was the most common circumstance surrounding homicides in the period 1999–2000 to 2003–04 in which the victim was Indigenous (41%), followed by alcohol-related arguments (24%). The most common circumstance surrounding homicides in which the victim was non-Indigenous was other arguments (other than domestic or alcohol related) (45%).
- For approximately 62% of homicides in the period 1999–2000 to 2003–04 in which the victim was Indigenous, the homicide involved intimate partners or other family members and for 31% the homicide involved friends and acquaintances. The corresponding proportions for homicides involving non-Indigenous victims were 43% and 36% respectively.

**Table 2.12.18: Victims of homicide for all jurisdictions where data are available, by Indigenous status, with selected data on circumstances surrounding the homicide, 1994–95 to 1998–99 and 1999–2000 to 2003–04**

	1994–95 to 1998–99 <sup>(a)</sup>						1999–2000 to 2003–04 <sup>(a)</sup>					
	Indigenous victims		Non-Indigenous victims		Total victims <sup>(b)</sup>		Indigenous victims		Non-Indigenous victims		Total victims <sup>(b)</sup>	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Gender<sup>(c)</sup></b>												
Male offender/male victim	79	41	733	55	812	53	88	41	681	53	769	52
Male offender/female victim	73	38	408	31	481	32	77	36	415	32	492	33
Female offender/male victim	34	18	139	10	173	11	39	18	124	10	163	11
Female offender/female victim	6	3	48	4	54	4	10	5	57	4	67	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,328</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,520</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,277</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,491</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Employment status<sup>(c)</sup></b>												
Offender & victim both working	3	2	133	13	136	12	5	3	192	18	197	16
Neither working	135	85	516	51	651	55	147	82	435	41	582	47
Offender working only	11	7	139	14	150	13	12	7	188	18	200	16
victim working only	9	6	228	22	237	20	15	8	238	23	253	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,016</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,174</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,053</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,232</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Circumstance</b>												
Domestic altercation	76	39	354	24	430	26	92	41	388	27	480	29
Alcohol-related argument	53	27	111	8	164	10	55	24	121	8	176	11
Other argument	40	20	709	48	749	45	45	20	651	45	696	42
No apparent motive/unknown	27	14	296	20	323	19	33	15	278	19	311	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,470</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,666</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,438</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,663</b>	<b>100</b>

(continued)

**Table 2.12.18 (continued): Victims of homicide for all jurisdictions where data are available by Indigenous status, with selected data on circumstances surrounding the homicide, 1994–95 to 1998–99 and 1999–2000 to 2003–04**

	1994–95 to 1998–99 <sup>(a)</sup>						1999–2000 to 2003–04 <sup>(a)</sup>					
	Indigenous victims		Non-Indigenous victims		Total victims <sup>(b)</sup>		Indigenous victims		Non-Indigenous victims		Total victims <sup>(c)</sup>	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Victim–Offender relationship<sup>(d)</sup></b>												
Intimate partners and other family	111	59	509	40	620	42	128	62	527	43	655	46
Friends & acquaintances	60	32	427	34	487	33	63	31	437	36	500	35
Strangers	6	3	249	20	255	17	13	6	193	16	206	14
Other relationship	10	5	79	6	89	6	1	0	56	5	57	4
Unknown	1	1	7	1	8	1	1	0	14	1	15	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,271</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,459</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,227</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,433</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total<sup>(b)</sup></b>	<b>196</b>		<b>1,470</b>		<b>1,666</b>		<b>225</b>		<b>1,438</b>		<b>1,663</b>	

(a) Where an offender has been identified.

(b) Excludes victims where racial appearance, gender, employment status, circumstances or victim–offender relationship data were unknown.

(c) Where more than one offender, victim counted twice across categories if multiple offenders were of different genders or different employment status.

(d) Refers only to relationship between victim and first offender, where identified.

Source: AIHW analysis of Australian Institute of Criminology, National Homicide Monitoring Program, 1994–2004.

## **Data quality issues**

### **National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)**

*The NATSISS uses the standard Indigenous status question. The NATSISS sample was specifically designed to select a representative sample of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and thus overcomes the problems inherent in most national surveys with small and unrepresentative Indigenous samples. As with other surveys, the NATSISS is subject to sampling and non-sampling errors. Calculations of standard errors and significance testing help to identify the accuracy of the estimates and differences.*

*Information recorded in this survey is essentially 'as reported' by respondents. The ABS makes every effort to collect accurate information from respondents, particularly through careful questionnaire design, pre-testing of questionnaires, use of trained interviewers and assistance from Indigenous facilitators. Nevertheless, some responses may be affected by imperfect recall or individual interpretation of survey questions (ABS 2004).*

*Non-Indigenous comparisons are available through the General Social Survey. Time series comparisons are available through the 1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey.*

*In remote communities there were some modifications to the NATSISS content in order to address language and cultural appropriateness in traditional communities, as well as to assist respondents in understanding the concepts. Some questions were excluded and some reworded. Also, paper forms were used in communities in remote areas and computer-assisted interview (CAI) instruments were used in non-remote areas. The CAI process included built in edit checks and sequencing.*

*Further information on NATSISS data quality issues can be found in the national publications (ABS 2004a).*

### **Community safety and family violence data**

*The sensitive nature of many of the issues surrounding community safety could also influence responses to these questions. Any data that are self-reported are likely to underestimate circumstances which the respondent may feel frightened or ashamed of or be unwilling to admit to the data collector, such as experience of family violence involvement with the police. Any such self-reported figures are likely to underestimate the occurrence of the circumstance in question.*

*In addition, the NATSISS question on 'family violence' does not directly measure experience of family violence as it asks about whether certain issues are a problem in the neighbourhood/community. However, these data do provide useful information about the social setting for family violence.*

### **Hospital separation data**

#### **Separations**

*The number and pattern of hospitalisations can be affected by differing admission practices among the jurisdictions and from year to year, and differing levels and patterns of service delivery. In terms of mental health service delivery, there are a number of different service delivery models ranging from ambulatory care in community mental health services and hospitals and non-ambulatory care in hospitals and residential services.*

#### **Indigenous status question**

*Some jurisdictions have slightly different approaches to the collection and storage of the standard Indigenous status question and categories in their hospital collections. The not stated category is missing from several collections. It is recommended that the standard wording and categories be used in all jurisdictions (AIHW 2005).*

*(continued)*

## **Data quality issues (continued)**

### ***Under-identification***

*The incompleteness of Indigenous identification means the number of hospital separations recorded as Indigenous is an underestimate of hospitalisations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. While the identification of Indigenous people in hospitalisations is incomplete in all states and territories, four jurisdictions (Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory) have been assessed as having adequate identification in 2003–04 (AIHW 2005).*

*It has therefore been recommended that reporting of Indigenous hospital separations be limited to aggregated information from Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory. The proportion of the Indigenous population covered by these four jurisdictions is 60%. The following caveats have also been recommended:*

- *Interpretation of results should take into account the relative quality of the data from the jurisdictions included (currently a degree of Indigenous under-identification in Western Australia and relatively marked Indigenous under-identification in Queensland data).*
- *Data for these four jurisdictions over-represent Indigenous populations in less urbanised and more remote locations.*
- *Hospitalisation data for four jurisdictions should not be assumed to represent the hospitalisation experience in other jurisdictions (ABS & AIHW 2005).*

### ***Numerator and denominator***

*Rate and ratio calculations rely on good numerator and denominator data. The changes in the completeness of identification of Indigenous people in hospital records may take place at different rates than changes in the identification of Indigenous people in other administrative collections and population censuses. Denominators used here are sourced from the ABS's Experimental estimates and projections: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991 to 2009 (ABS 2004b).*

## **Mortality data**

### ***Deaths***

*The mortality rate for Indigenous Australians can be influenced by identification of Indigenous deaths, late registration of deaths, and changes to death forms and/or processing systems. Due to the small size of the Indigenous population, these factors can significantly impact on trends over time and between jurisdictions.*

### ***Indigenous status question***

*All jurisdictions comply with the standard wording for the Indigenous status question and categories for their death registration forms. However, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory all have slightly different wording to the national standard for the instruction on those with both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin (ABS & AIHW 2005). While the wording is only slightly different, it would be ideal to have all jurisdictions asking the question in exactly the same way.*

### ***Under-identification***

*Almost all deaths in Australia are registered. However, the Indigenous status of the deceased is not always recorded/recorded correctly. The incompleteness of Indigenous identification means the number of deaths registered as Indigenous is an underestimate of deaths occurring in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population (ABS 1997). As a result, the observed differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous mortality are under-estimates of the true differences.*

*(continued)*

### **Data quality issues (continued)**

*While the identification of Indigenous deaths is incomplete in all states and territory registration systems, four jurisdictions (Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory) have been assessed by the ABS and AIHW as having adequate identification. Longer term mortality trend data are limited to three jurisdictions (South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory) with 10 years of adequate identification of Indigenous deaths in their recording systems. The quality of the time series data is also influenced by the late inclusion of a not stated category for Indigenous status in 1998. Prior to this time, the not stated responses were probably included with the non-Indigenous. The ABS calculated the implied coverage (identification) of Indigenous deaths for the period 2000–2004 using population estimates: New South Wales – 46%, Victoria – 35%, Queensland – 53%, South Australia – 66%, Western Australia – 72%, the Northern Territory – 94%, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory were not calculated due to small numbers, Australia – 57% (ABS 2005).*

*It should be noted that different causes may have different levels of under-identification that differ from the 'all cause' coverage estimates. It should also be noted that the quality of the cause of death data depends on every step of the process of recording and registering deaths (including the documentation available at each step of the process) from certification to coding of cause of death. There are also current concerns about data quality for causes of death especially relating to external causes of death to all Australians (not just Indigenous) (ABS 2006).*

#### **Numerator and denominator**

*Rate and ratio calculations rely on good numerator and denominator data. The changes in the completeness of identification of Indigenous people in death records may take place at different rates than changes in the identification of Indigenous people in other administrative collections and population censuses. Denominators used here are sourced from the ABS experimental estimates and projections: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians (ABS 2004b).*

#### **Cause of death coding**

*Causes of death based on the tenth revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10). Mortality coding using ICD-10 was introduced into Australia from 1 January 1997.*

#### **National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP)**

*The NHMP was established in 1990 and reports annually by financial year on all homicides recorded in Australia. The Indigenous status of the victim is based on police identification of 'racial appearance', and therefore will underestimate the level of homicide involving Indigenous persons. In addition, data for Victoria, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory are not reported. Nevertheless, the NHMP includes useful information on the circumstances surrounding homicides involving Indigenous persons.*

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