

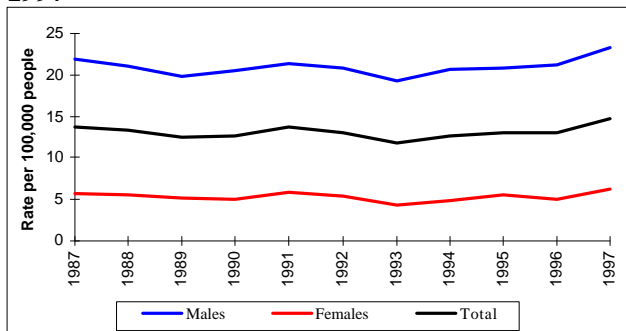
Trends in Suicides, 1987 -1997

Ten year trends in suicide across Australia are examined in this Stats Flash using statistics published in the Report on Government Services, 1999 (Council of Australian Governments).

A total of 2,723 deaths from suicide were recorded in Australia in 1997, comprising 2,146 males and 577 females. This corresponds to a rate of 14.7 suicides per 100,000 persons. The death rate for males has been more than three times the female rate since 1987. The total Australian rate for 1997 was 12.2 per cent higher than the 1996 rate. Overall, the death rate from suicide has increased for both males and females in 1997 compared to 1996 (9.9 per cent for males and 24.0 per cent for females).

Figure 1 shows the trends in male and female death rates from suicide for 1987 to 1997.

Figure 1: Trends in death rate from suicide¹, 1987-1997



Source: Report on Government Services, 1999, Table 5A.17

Table 1: Number of Deaths from Suicide by Sex, 1987-1997

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Males	1,773	1,730	1,658	1,735	1,847	1,820
Females	467	467	438	426	513	474
Total	2,240	2,197	2,096	2,161	2,360	2,294

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Males	1,687	1,830	1,872	1,931	2,146
Females	394	428	495	462	577
Total	2,081	2,258	2,367	2,393	2,723

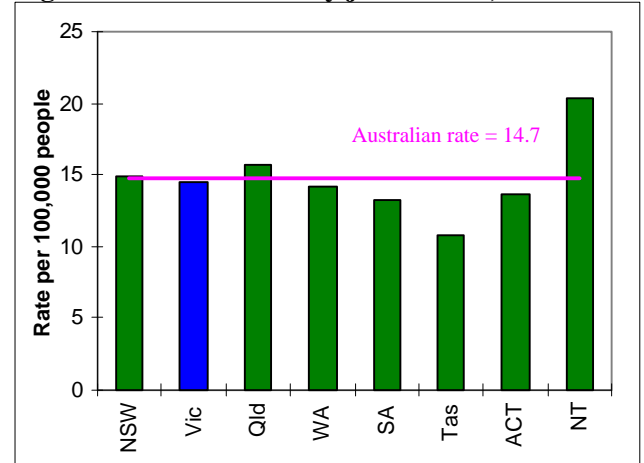
Source: Report on Government Services, 1999, Table 5A.17

Suicide Rates by Jurisdictions

The rate of deaths from suicide in 1997 was highest in the Northern Territory (20.3 deaths per 100,000 people), followed by Queensland (15.7) and New South Wales (14.9). Tasmania had the lowest rate of all the

jurisdictions (10.8 deaths per 100,000 people), while Victoria (14.5 deaths) had a rate just below the national rate of 14.7 deaths per 100,000 people.

Figure 2: Suicide rates² by jurisdiction, 1997

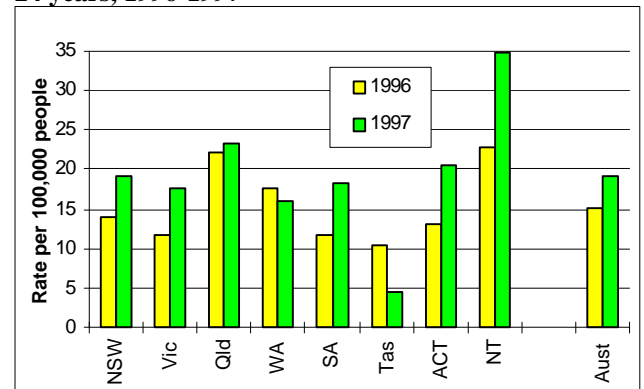


Source: Report on Government Services, 1999, Table 5A.18

Suicide Rate for Persons aged 15-24 years

In 1997, 18.7 per cent of suicides in Australia were committed by people aged 15-24 years. The suicide rate for people in this age group was 19.1 suicides per 100,000 people (up 25.7 per cent from 1996). Figure 3 shows the death rate from suicide for Australians aged 15 to 24 in 1996 and 1997, across the jurisdictions. The largest increases occurred in ACT (up 57.3 per cent), SA (up 55.9 per cent), NT (up 52.6 per cent), and Victoria (up 50 per cent). A large decrease occurred in Tasmania (down 56.2 per cent), with WA also showing a decrease of 9 per cent.

Figure 3: Death rate³ from suicide for people aged 15-24 years, 1996-1997



Source: Report on Government Services, 1999, Table 5A.19

¹ As at 30th June

² Estimated resident population as at 30th June

³ Estimated resident population aged 15-24 years as at 30th June