



# crime

a state by state comparison

# IN AUSTRALIA

## foreword



Many Australians are concerned about crime and its impact on their lives. Our fear of crime, even if it is not realistic, can lead us to modify our behaviour to avoid real and imagined risks.

It is important that we all have access to information that provides a better understanding about crime in Australia. We are fortunate in Australia to have excellent crime statistics.

This brochure draws together in a user-friendly format data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Australian Institute of Criminology and the Productivity Commission.

We have included perpetration rates for homicide, assault, sexual assault, armed robbery, unarmed robbery, burglary and motor vehicle theft.

The brochure also shows changes for these crimes on last year, and changes over four years.

It also compares the 30-day clear up rates and prosecution rates of different jurisdictions. Information on the outcomes of investigations and prosecutions are an indication of the success of the police and prosecution services in dealing with crime.

To show the comparative risk of crime for different age groups the brochure includes information on victimisation rates by age and sex.

It also includes information on imprisonment rates, particularly Indigenous imprisonment, and jurisdictions' expenditure on police services, court and corrective services.

I hope that you will find the brochure informative, and that it encourages informed and sensible discussion about crime and crime prevention.

*Amanda Vanstone*

Senator the Hon. Amanda Vanstone  
Minister for Justice and Customs

## further information

Crime Prevention Branch  
Attorney-General's Department

Robert Garran Offices  
National Circuit  
BARTON, ACT 2600

Telephone 02 6250 6711  
Facsimile 02 6273 0913

[www.ncp.gov.au](http://www.ncp.gov.au)

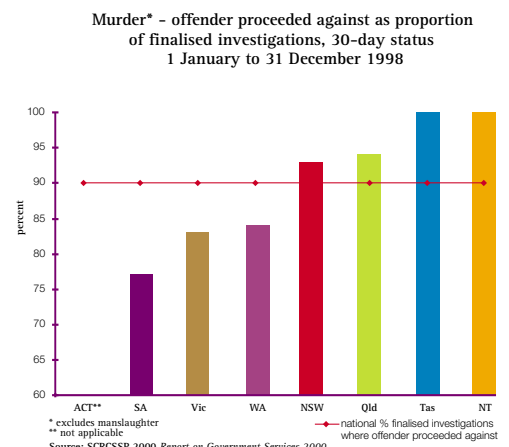
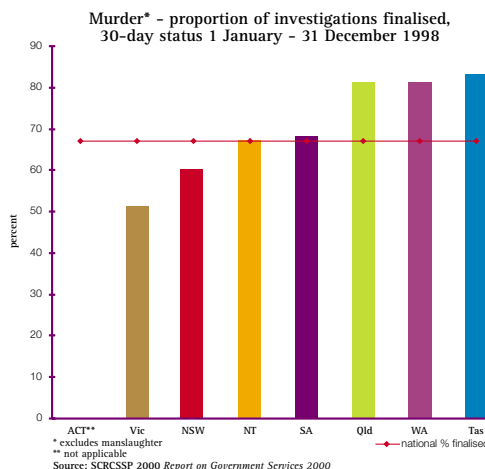
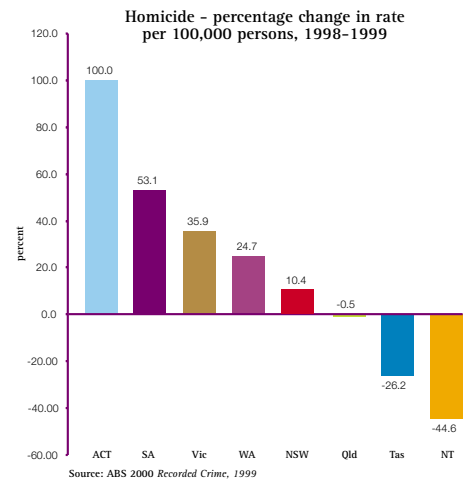
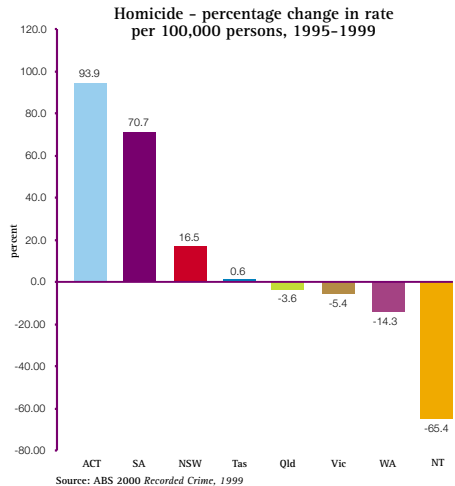
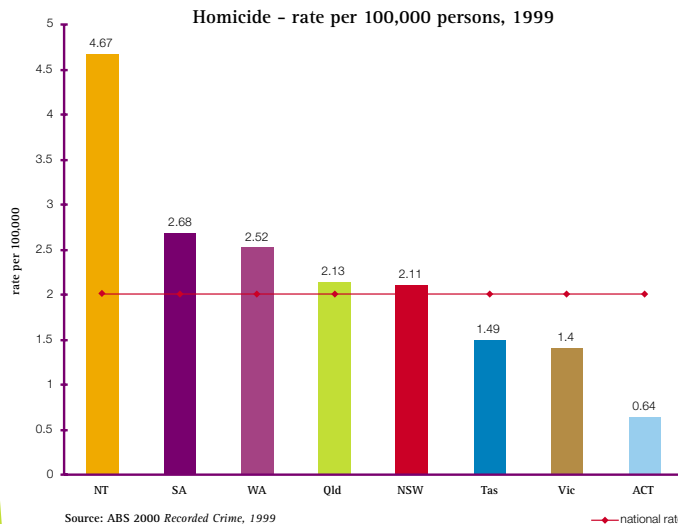
## HOMICIDE

The Australian homicide rate is low by international standards.

According to the Australian Institute of Criminology figures, most homicides in Australia involve male on male violence. Female victims of homicide are more likely than male victims to be killed by an intimate. Over 20% of homicides involve current or former intimates.

Apart from the first year of life, men and women are most at risk of dying from homicide in their 20s.

Homicide includes the offences of murder and manslaughter but not attempted murder and driving causing death.





# ASSAULT

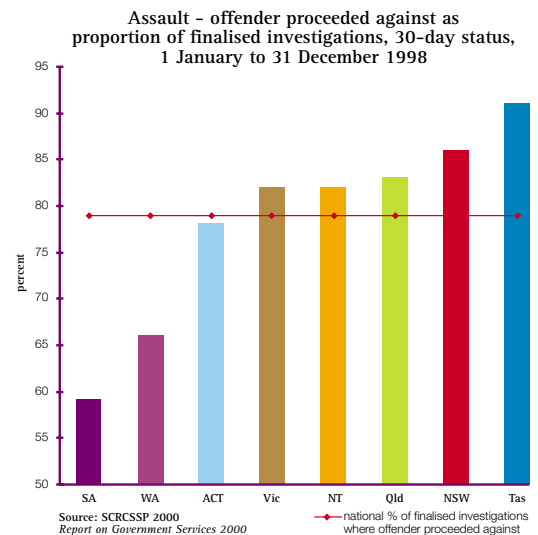
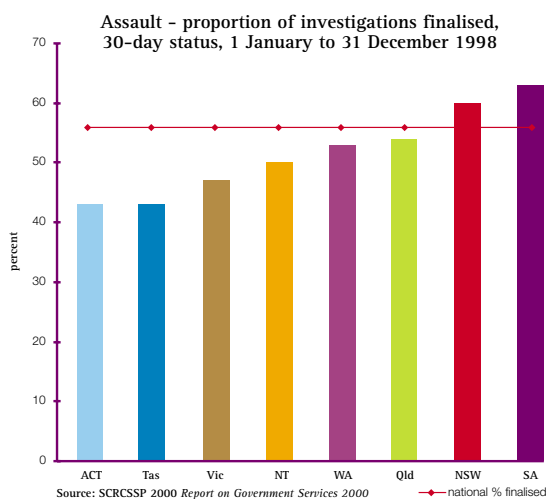
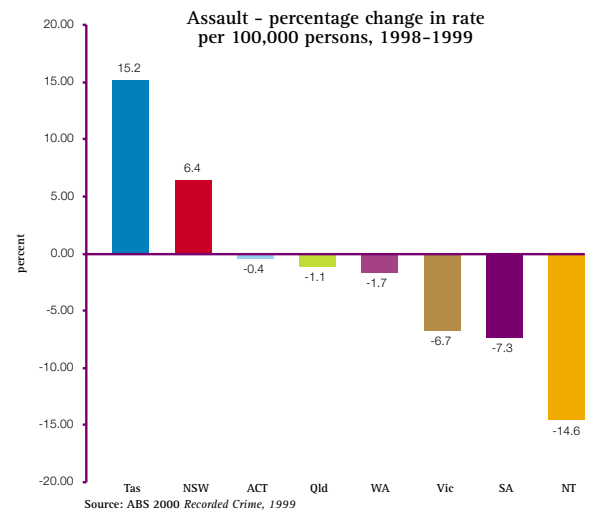
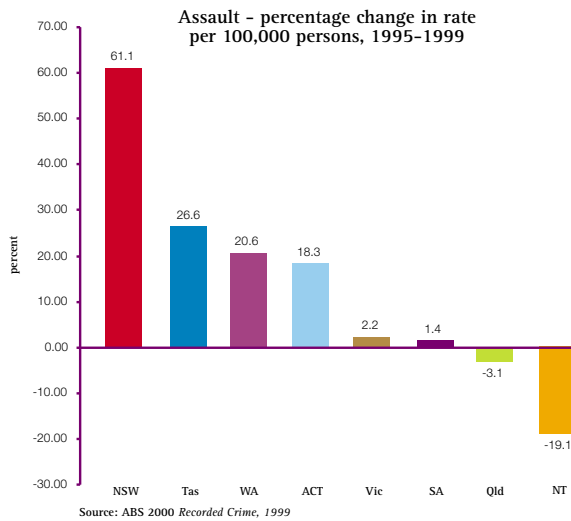
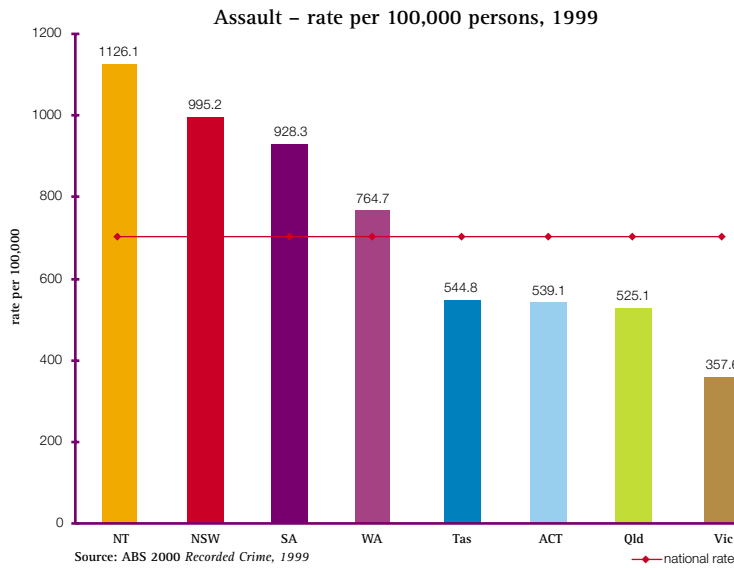
Assault is the most common offence against a person in Australia.

In 1999 the police recorded over 133,000 assaults. That means that recorded assaults averaged about 15 an hour across Australia.

Both men and women are most at risk of being a victim of assault while aged between 15 and 24. Assault rates against men are higher than the rates against women for all age groups.

Females are more likely than males to have been assaulted by someone known to them. Where males were assaulted by someone known to them it was more likely to have been someone other than a family member.

Assault involves inflicting injury or violence against a person, and can include threats where there is reason to believe that the threat can be immediately carried out.

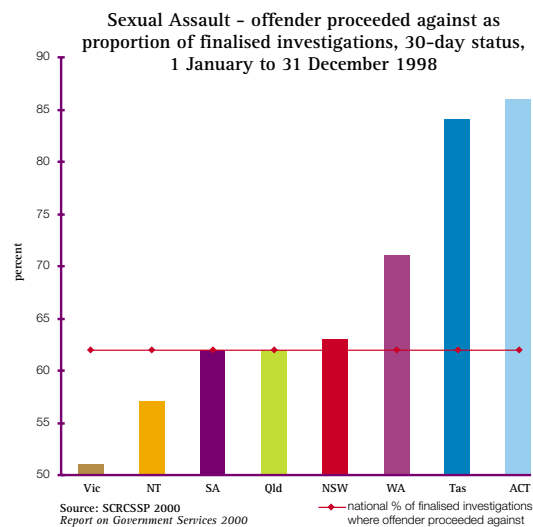
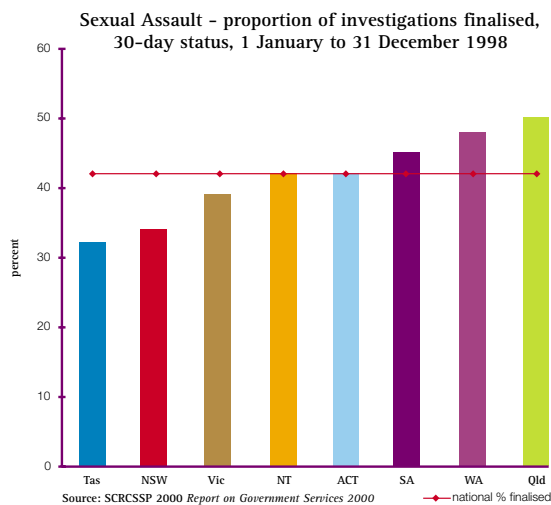
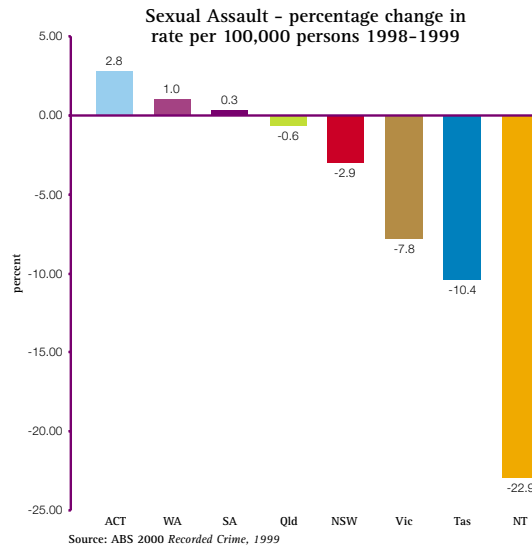
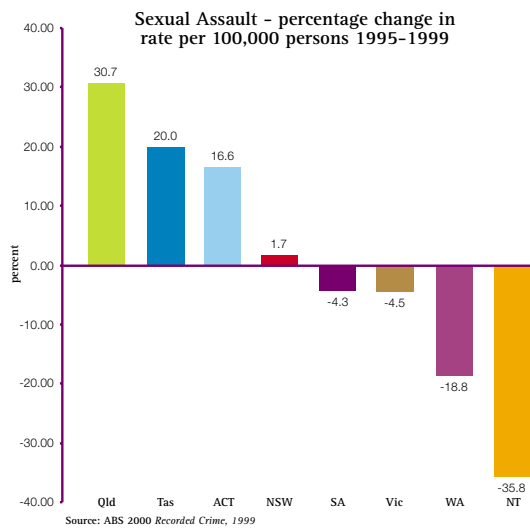
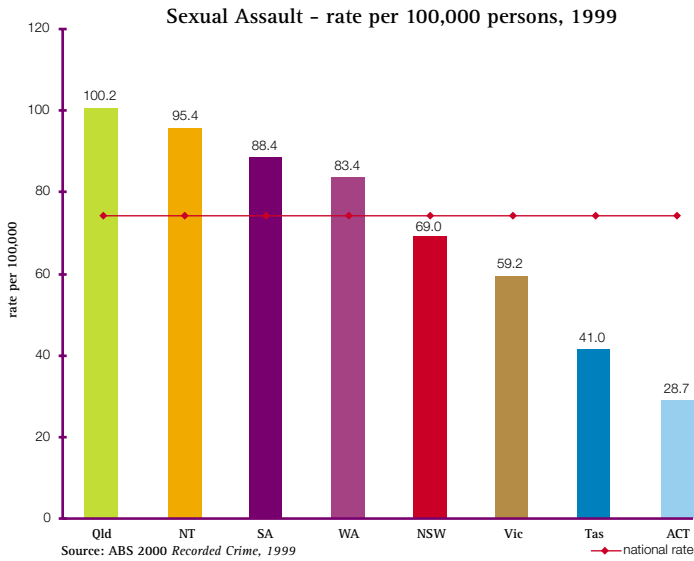


# SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual assaults are committed more often against women than men and are among the most under-reported offences.

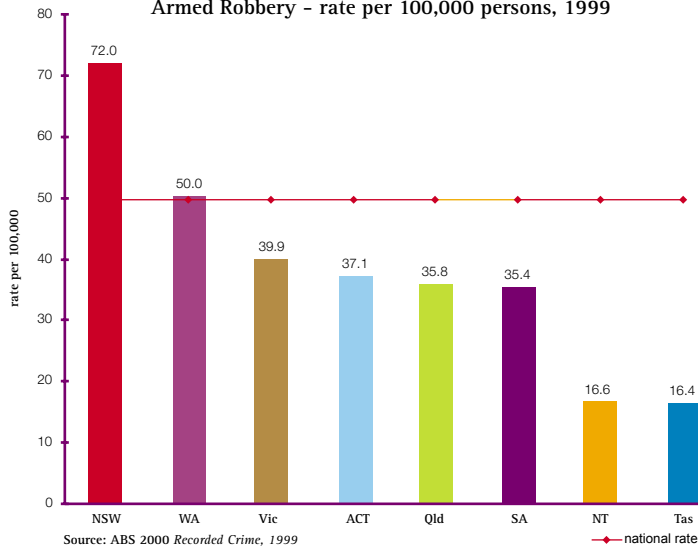
Almost half of all victims were young women under 20 years, whilst just over half of all male victims were aged under 15 years. Sexual offenders are most commonly someone who is known to the victim, but not a family member.

Sexual assaults involve physical assault of a sexual nature, directed toward another person where that person does not give consent.





Armed Robbery - rate per 100,000 persons, 1999

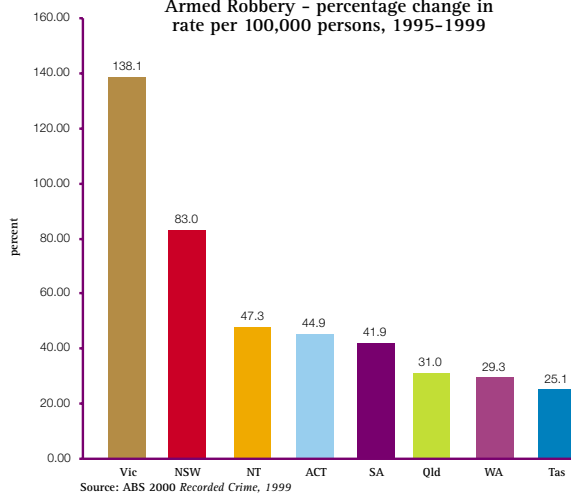


# ARMED ROBBERY

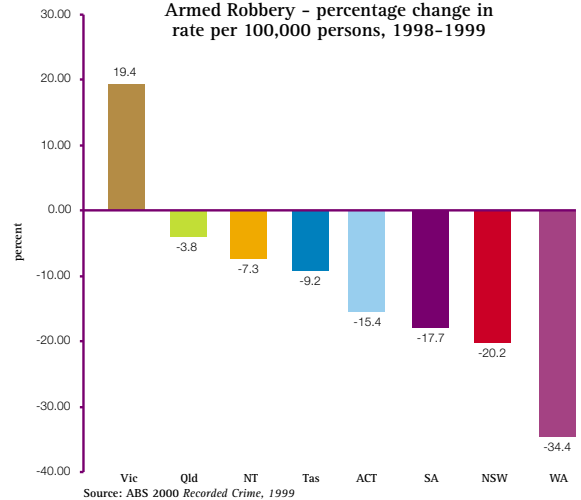
Armed and unarmed robbery are among the fastest growing crimes, and along with burglary are the crimes most closely associated with drug addiction. The most common location in 1999 for robbery offences was the street or footpath.

Armed robberies accounted for 42% of all robberies in 1999. For armed robberies, 46% occurred at retail locations. Firearms were used in 15% of armed robbery offences in 1999.

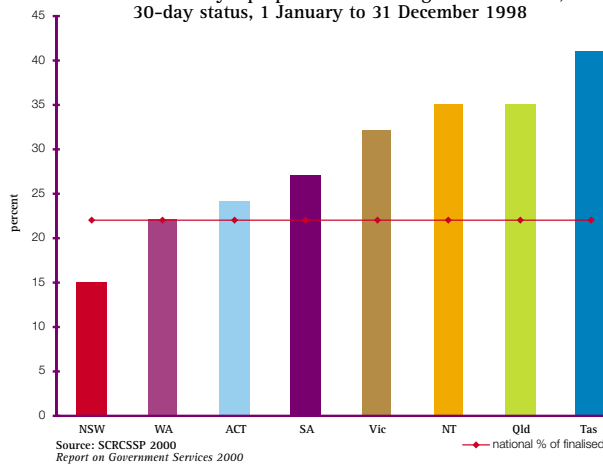
Armed Robbery - percentage change in rate per 100,000 persons, 1995-1999



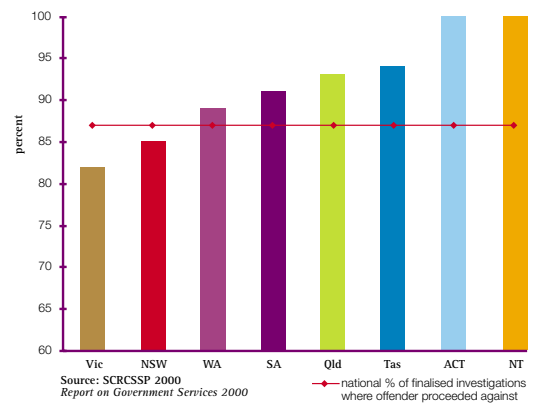
Armed Robbery - percentage change in rate per 100,000 persons, 1998-1999



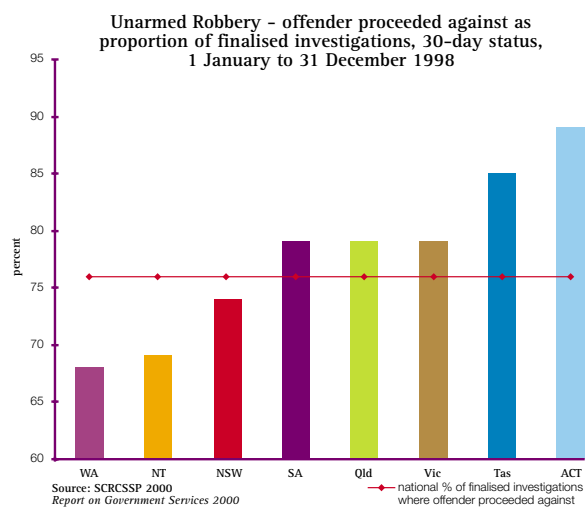
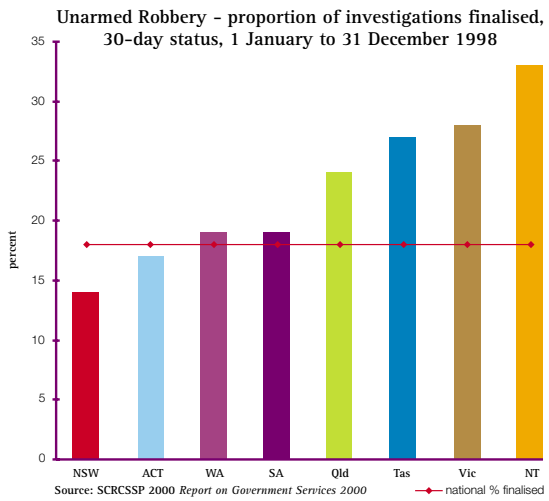
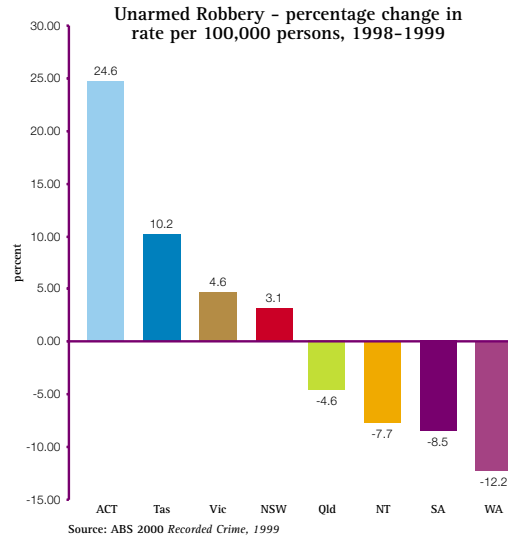
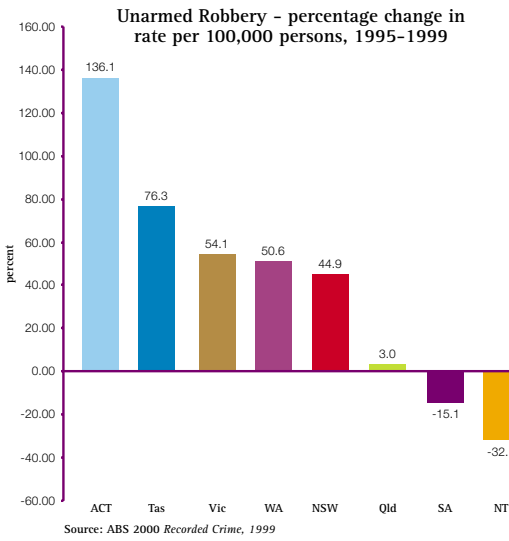
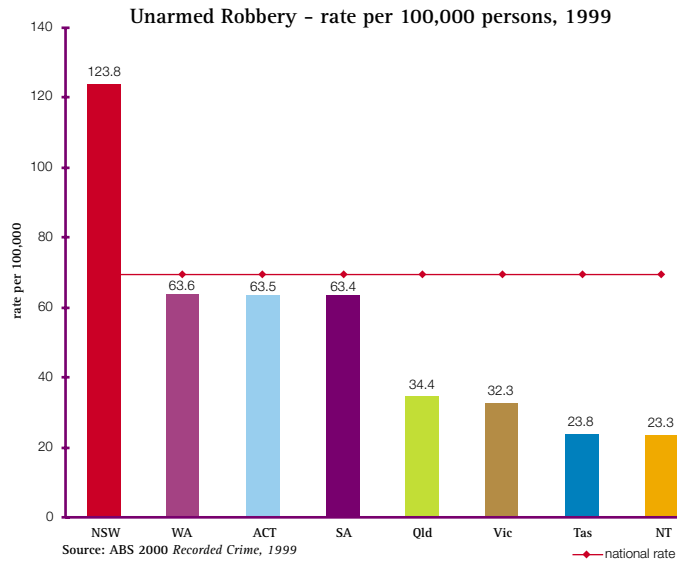
Armed Robbery - proportion of investigations finalised, 30-day status, 1 January to 31 December 1998



Armed Robbery - offender proceeded against as proportion of finalised investigations, 30-day status, 1 January to 31 December 1998



# UNARMED ROBBERY





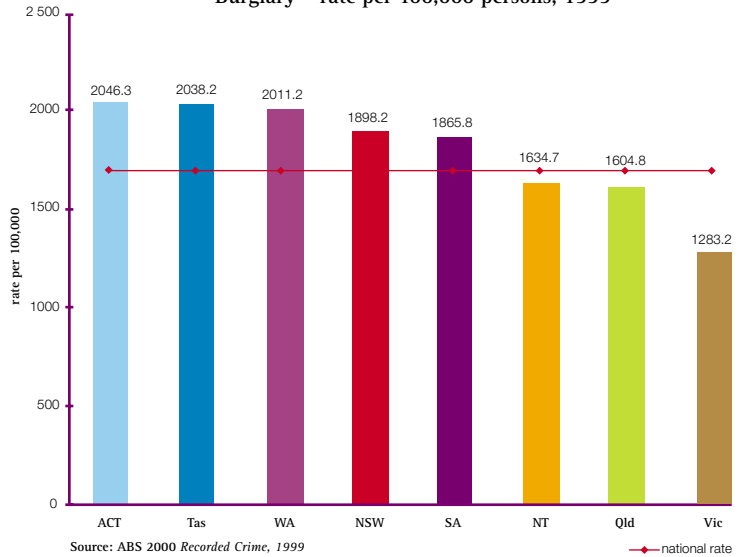
# BURGLARY

Burglary is one of the most common crimes recorded by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

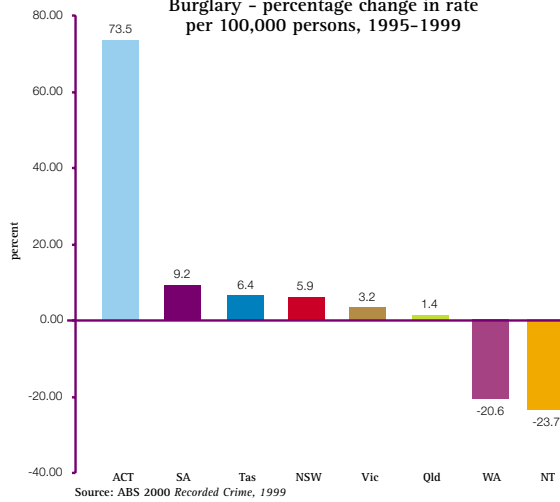
In 1999 there were 323,000 premises recorded by police as having been burgled. A total of 221,000 of these burglaries occurred in residential locations.

Though they have very high reporting rates, burglary and other forms of unlawful entry have the lowest proportion of investigations finalised after 30 days.

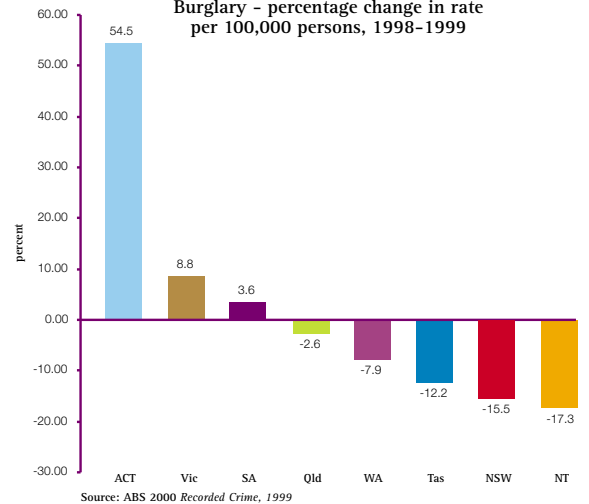
Burglary - rate per 100,000 persons, 1999



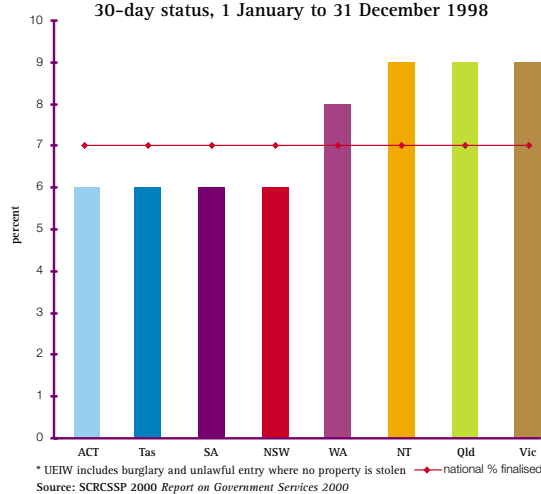
Burglary - percentage change in rate per 100,000 persons, 1995-1999



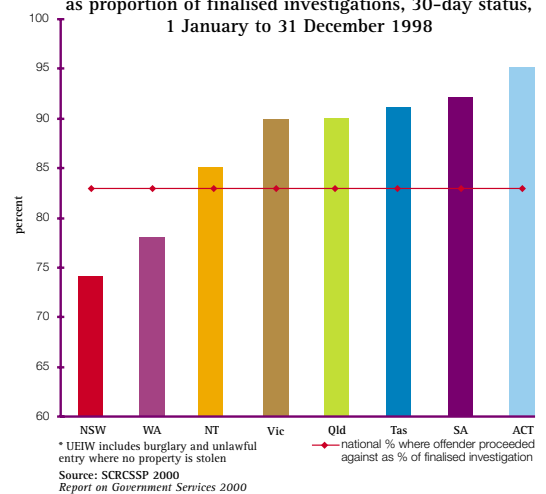
Burglary - percentage change in rate per 100,000 persons, 1998-1999

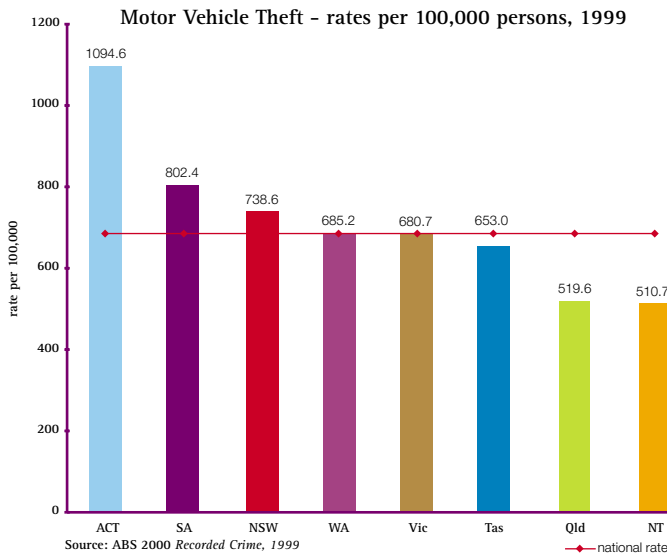


Unlawful Entry With Intent\* - proportion of investigations finalised, 30-day status, 1 January to 31 December 1998



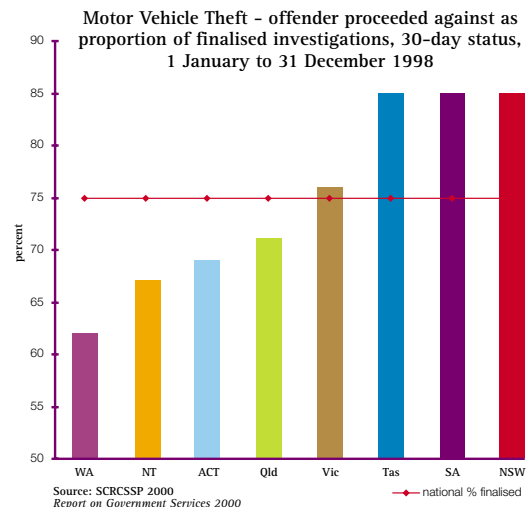
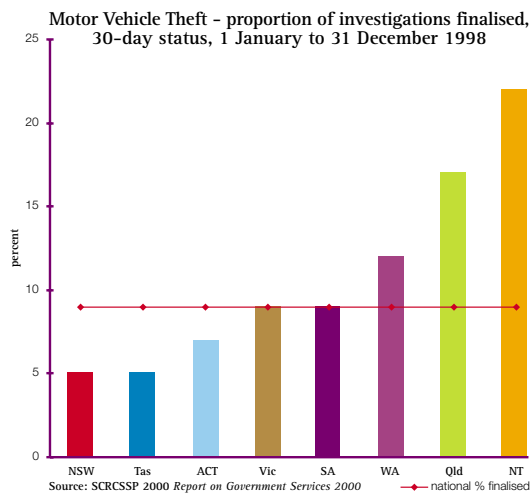
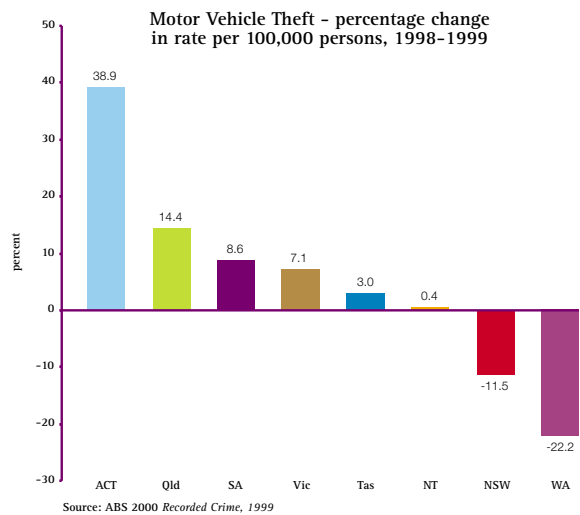
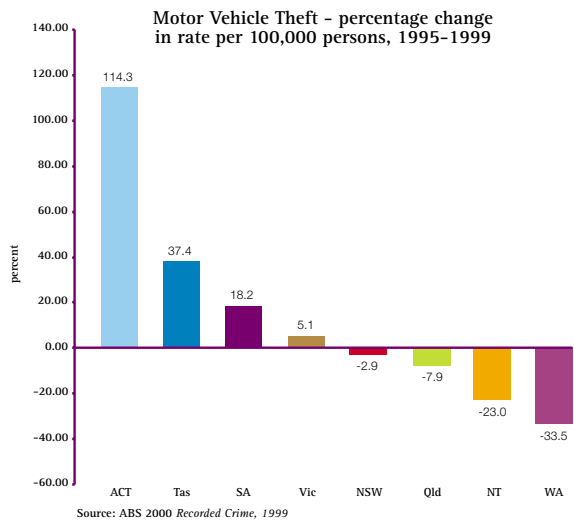
Unlawful Entry With Intent\* - offender proceeded against as proportion of finalised investigations, 30-day status, 1 January to 31 December 1998

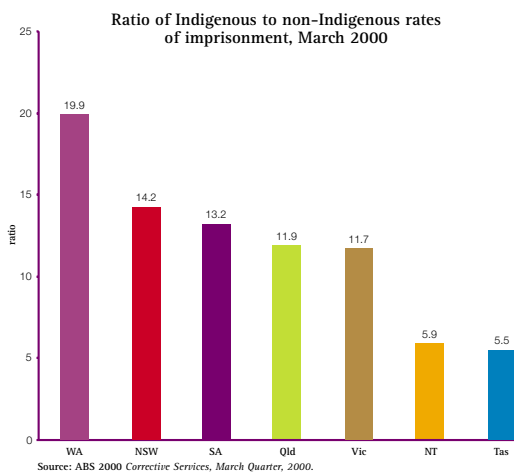
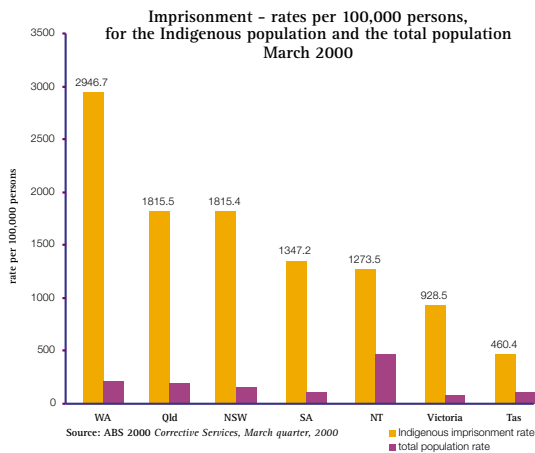




# MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT

The most frequent places in 1999 where motor vehicle theft occurred were streets/footpaths (39%), garages and driveways of residences (19%) and retail locations (13%). Car parks accounted for 11% of all motor vehicle theft locations.





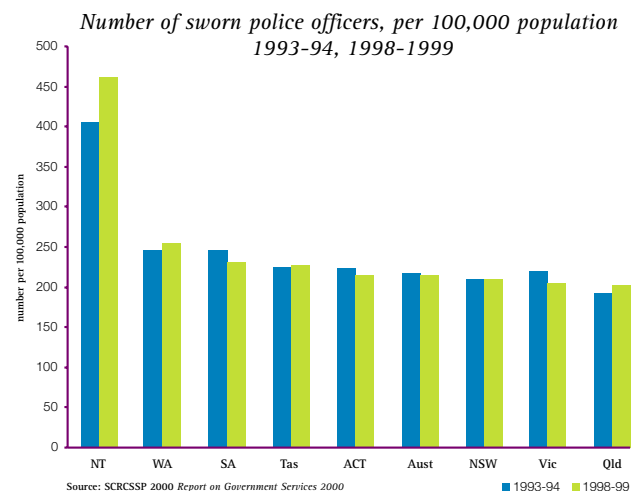
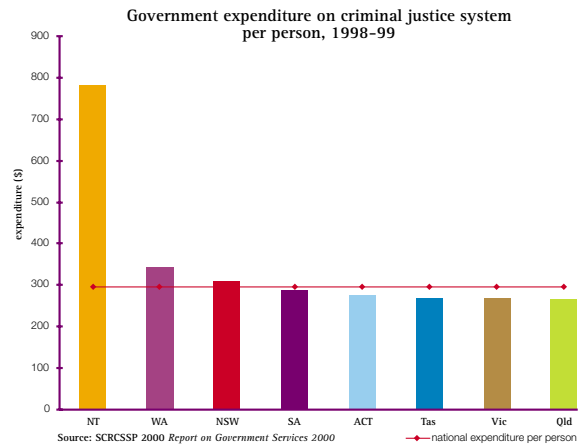
# INDIGENOUS IMPRISONMENT

Indigenous imprisonment rates are too high. Indigenous people are over-represented in Australian jails. Nationally the rate of Indigenous imprisonment is nearly 15 times that of the non-Indigenous imprisonment rate.

One measure of the fairness of society is the ratio of its Indigenous incarceration rate to its non-Indigenous incarceration rate, which other things being equal should be 1.

The ratio of Indigenous to non-Indigenous incarceration rates is lowest in Tasmania, the Northern Territory has the second lowest ratio, followed by Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, New South Wales and Western Australia.

# LAW ENFORCEMENT RESOURCES



The resources that are devoted to policing, the courts and corrective services are an indicator of jurisdictions' commitment to law enforcement. These figures include expenditure on police services, court and corrective services.

## SOURCES OF DATA

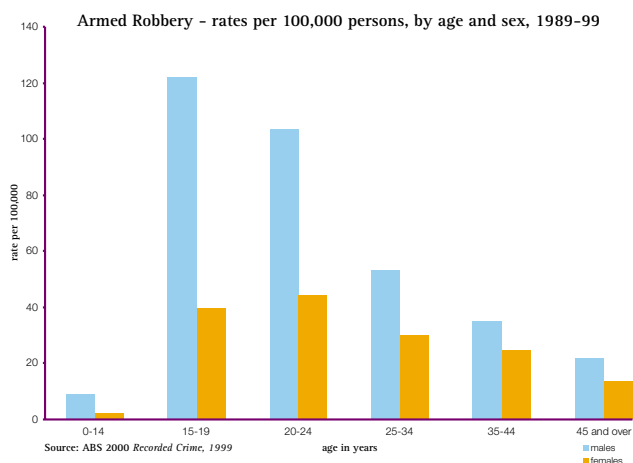
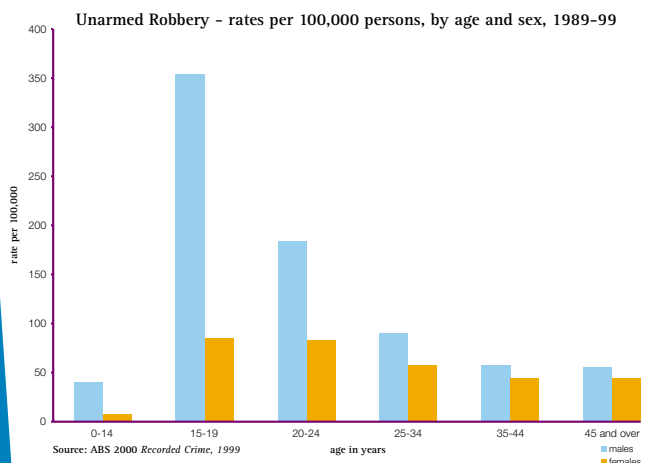
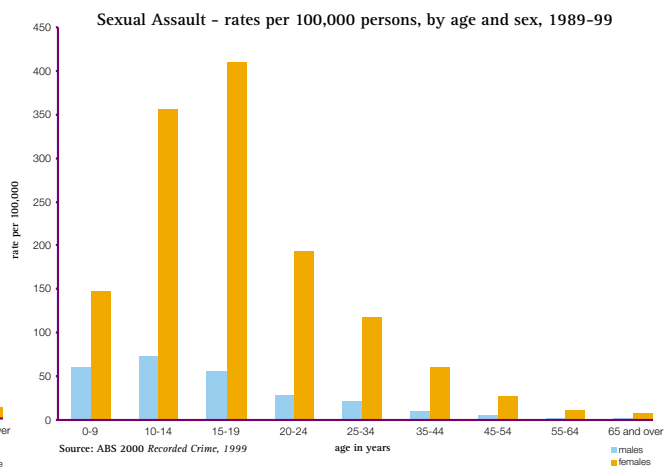
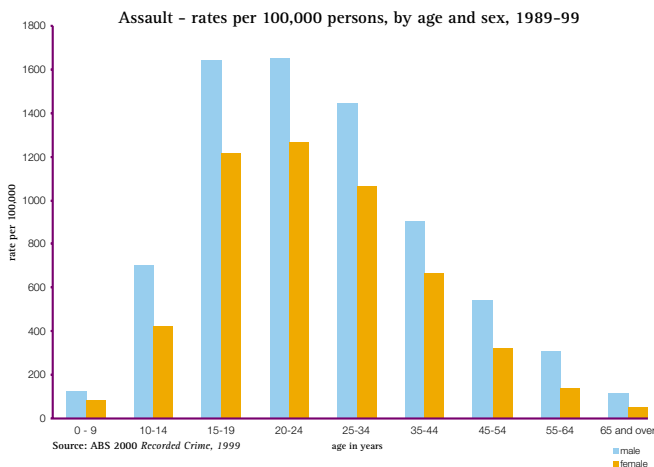
Most data in this bulletin are extracted from national recorded crime statistics compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) according to national standards and classifications. These data understate the true level of crime in Australia because not all offences are reported to, or become known by, police. When considering the nature and extent of crime, recorded crime data can be supplemented with information from other sources including the national and state crime victims surveys conducted by the ABS.

Other data are taken from Productivity Commission and Australian Institute of Criminology publications. For further information on specific details, including where the data needs to be interpreted with caution, source documents should be consulted.

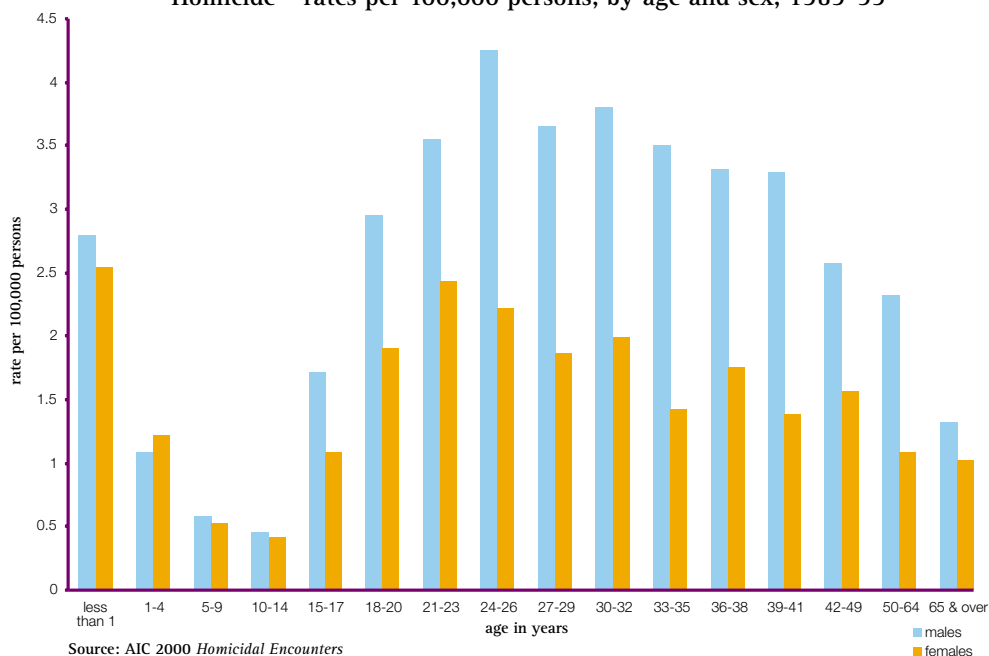
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 1999 *Crime and Safety, Australia, April 1998* Cat. No. 4509.0
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2000 *Recorded Crime, Australia, 1999* Cat. No. 4510.0
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2000 *Corrective Services, Australia, March Quarter 2000* Cat. No. 4512.0
- Australian Institute of Criminology 2000 *Homicidal Encounters: A study of homicide in Australia 1989-1999* Research and Public Policy Series No.28.
- Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision 2000 *Report on Government Services, 2000*, Vol.2. AusInfo, Canberra.



# AGE RATE VICTIMS OF CRIME



## Homicide - rates per 100,000 persons, by age and sex, 1989-99



The media create fear about young people's participation in crime. The reality is that young people are more likely to be the victims of personal crime than other age groups.

Young people have the highest rate of victimisation for personal crime recorded by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, which show that for:

- assault the highest rates are for males and females between the ages of 20 and 24;
- sexual assault the highest rates are for females between the ages of 15 and 19 and for males between the ages of 10 and 14;

- unarmed robbery the highest rates are for males and females between the ages of 15 and 19;

- armed robbery the highest rates are for males between the ages of 15 to 19 and for females between the ages of 20 to 24.

The Australian Institute of Criminology's homicide monitoring data show that for:

- homicide the highest rates are for males between the ages of 24 and 26;
- homicide the highest rate is for females in the first year of life.

Figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics survey of the victims of crime aged over 15 years show that young people – 15 to 24 year olds – are the victim of 38% of all assault incidents, but are only 18% of the population surveyed. They also show that 15-24 year olds are more likely to have been robbed more than once in the last 12 months than those aged over 25 years.

When young people offend their crimes are less serious than other age groups. There is no evidence that the proportion of crime committed by young people as a whole is increasing.

