



Australian Government

Australian Institute of Criminology

AIC reports

Statistical Report

46

Homicide in Australia 2022–23

Hannah Miles
Samantha Bricknell

Celebrating
50 years

© Australian Institute of Criminology 2024

ISSN 2206-7930 (Online)
ISBN 978 1 922877 42 0 (Online)
<https://doi.org/10.52922/sr77420>

Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth), no part of this publication may in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, microcopying, photocopying, recording or otherwise) be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted without prior written permission. Inquiries should be addressed to the publisher.

Published by the Australian Institute of Criminology
GPO Box 1936 Canberra ACT 2601
Tel: (02) 6268 7166
Email: front.desk@aic.gov.au
Website: www.aic.gov.au

Please note: Minor revisions are occasionally made to publications after release. The online versions available on the AIC website will always include any revisions.

Disclaimer: This research report does not necessarily reflect the policy position of the Australian Government.

General editor: Dr Rick Brown, Deputy Director, Australian Institute of Criminology

Edited and typeset by the Australian Institute of Criminology

A full list of publications in the AIC Reports series can be found on the Australian Institute of Criminology website at www.aic.gov.au

Contents

vi Acknowledgements	16 Victims of homicide
vii Abstract	17 Victimization rate
1 Introduction	17 Sex and place of birth
1 Data collection	18 Child and adult victims
1 Definition of homicide	19 Victim relationship with primary offender
2 Homicide classification	22 Indigenous victims
2 Calculation of rates	22 Sex and age
3 Data amendments and revision	24 Relationship with primary offender
3 2022–23 data amendments	25 Non-Indigenous victims
3 Historical data revisions	25 Sex and age
3 Changes from previous report	27 Relationship with primary offender
4 Reference period	29 Missing persons
5 Homicide incidents	29 Cause of death
6 Incident clearance rates	31 Homicide offenders
7 Most serious charge	32 Sex and age
7 Single and multiple victim/offender homicides	33 Type of homicide perpetrated
8 Homicide classification	34 Indigenous offenders
10 Intimate partner and other domestic homicide	34 Offending rates
11 Location of homicide incidents	35 Primary offender relationship with primary victim
13 Circumstances and preceding events	36 Non-Indigenous offenders
15 Weapon use	36 Offending rates
	37 Primary offender relationship with primary victim
	38 Criminal history
	41 References

Figures

- 5 Figure 1: Incidents of homicide, 1989–90 to 2022–23
- 10 Figure 2: Incidents of homicide by classification, 1989–90 to 2022–23
- 11 Figure 3: Incidents of intimate partner homicide by victim sex, 1989–90 to 2022–23
- 17 Figure 4: Victims of homicide by sex, 1989–90 to 2022–23
- 32 Figure 5: Homicide offenders by sex, 1989–90 to 2022–23

Tables

- 6 Table 1: Homicide incidents, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 7 Table 2: Incidents of homicide by clearance status and jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 7 Table 3: Incidents of homicide by most serious charge and jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 8 Table 4: Single- and multiple-victim incidents of homicide by number of offenders and jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 9 Table 5: Incidents of homicide by classification and jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (*n*)
- 9 Table 6: Incidents of homicide by classification and jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (rate)
- 11 Table 7: Incidents of intimate partner homicide by victim sex and jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 12 Table 8: Incidents of homicide by location and jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 14 Table 9: Incidents of homicide by apparent motive, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 14 Table 10: Incidents of homicide committed in the course of another crime by jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 15 Table 11: Incidents of homicide by weapon type and jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 16 Table 12: Homicide victims, 1 July 2022 – 31 June 2023
- 18 Table 13: Victims of homicide by sex of primary offender, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023

- 19 Table 14: Victims of homicide by age group and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 20 Table 15: Victims of homicide by relationship with primary offender and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 21 Table 16: Victims of homicide by relationship with and sex of primary offender, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 22 Table 17: Victims of homicide by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 23 Table 18: Indigenous homicide victims by age and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 23 Table 19: Indigenous victims by sex of primary offender, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 24 Table 20: Indigenous victims of homicide by relationship with primary offender and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 25 Table 21: Indigenous victims of homicide by relationship with and sex of primary offender, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 26 Table 22: Non-Indigenous homicide victims by age and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 26 Table 23: Non-Indigenous victims by sex of primary offender, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 27 Table 24: Non-Indigenous victims of homicide by relationship with primary offender and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 28 Table 25: Non-Indigenous victims of homicide by relationship with and sex of primary offender, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 30 Table 26: Victims of homicide by cause of death and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 31 Table 27: Homicide offenders, 1 July 2022 – 31 June 2023
- 33 Table 28: Homicide offenders by age group and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 34 Table 29: Primary offenders by homicide classification and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 35 Table 30: Homicide offenders by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 35 Table 31: Indigenous primary homicide offenders by Indigenous status and sex of victim, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 36 Table 32: Indigenous homicide offenders by homicide classification and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 37 Table 33: Non-Indigenous primary homicide offenders by Indigenous status and sex of victim, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 38 Table 34: Non-Indigenous primary homicide offenders by homicide classification and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 38 Table 35: Homicide offender criminal history by sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 39 Table 36: Primary homicide offenders by criminal history, sex and homicide classification, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023
- 40 Table 37: Primary homicide offenders by history of domestic and family violence, Indigenous status and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023

Acknowledgements

The Australian Institute of Criminology gratefully acknowledges the ongoing assistance of Australia's police services in supplying the data that form the basis of this report. The Institute further acknowledges the Victorian Department of Justice and Community Safety as the source organisation of the National Coronial Information System data, and the National Coronial Information System as the source of coronial data used in this report.

Abstract

The National Homicide Monitoring Program is Australia's only national data collection on homicide incidents, victims and offenders. This report describes 232 homicide incidents recorded by Australian state and territory police between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023. During this 12-month period there were 247 victims of homicide and 260 identified offenders.

Introduction

The National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP) commenced at the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) in 1990 following a recommendation from the National Committee on Violence for the establishment of a national data collection on homicide. The NHMP is Australia's only national data collection on homicide incidents, victims and offenders.

Data collection

The NHMP holds data on all homicide incidents, victims and offenders recorded by state and territory police since 1989–90. The program draws on two key sources of data:

- offence records obtained from each Australian state and territory police service; and
- state and territory coronial records drawn from the National Coronial Information System (NCIS).

Data from offence records are cross-referenced with coronial records from the NCIS. The AIC has access to open cases (those for which the coronial investigation has not been finalised) and closed cases (those for which the coronial investigation has been completed and a finding has been made available) from all states and territories. NHMP data are supplemented with material from court documents where available.

Definition of homicide

In this report, *homicide* refers to the unlawful killing of a person. The NHMP collects data on:

- all cases resulting in a person or persons being charged with murder or manslaughter;
- all murder–suicides classed as murder by police;
- all driving causing death offences where the offender was charged with murder, manslaughter or equivalent offences; and
- all other deaths classed as homicides by police, including infanticides, whether or not an offender was apprehended.

It excludes attempts to unlawfully kill and conspiracy to kill.

A *homicide victim* refers to persons unlawfully killed by another person as defined above. It excludes persons who are injured but not killed in a homicide event and victims of attempted murder or conspiracy to murder.

A *homicide offender* refers to a person who is charged with a homicide offence as defined above or a person who would have been charged with a homicide offence as defined above but were deceased (by suspected suicide or other cause) prior to arrest or where the homicide incident was cleared otherwise. It excludes persons of interest or suspects who have not been charged.

A *homicide incident* is defined as cleared when one or more offenders have been charged with a homicide offence as defined above, an offender who would have been charged with a homicide offence as defined above died prior to arrest or the incident was cleared by other means (eg legal intervention). Information on homicide offenders is only collected for offenders from cleared homicide incidents. Findings in this report are presented for either all homicide incidents or cleared homicide incidents only.

Homicide classification

Homicide incidents are classified as domestic, acquaintance or stranger homicides. Domestic homicide includes intimate partner and family homicide. Most homicide incidents in Australia involve a single victim and a single offender, in which case classification is simple. Where a homicide incident involves multiple victims and/or offenders, the classification is based on the closest relationship between the victim and the primary offender. For example, if two victims of a single homicide offender are the intimate partner and neighbour of the offender, the incident is classified as a domestic homicide as the closest relationship is between the intimate partner victim and offender. Similarly, if the victim of a multiple-offender homicide is the work colleague of one offender and a stranger to the second offender, the homicide is classified as an acquaintance homicide.

Calculation of rates

Rates are calculated using population data (Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2023) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population estimates and projections (ABS 2019). Unless stated otherwise, rates are calculated using the total population. The denominator used for intimate partner homicide rates is the population aged 18 years and over. Offender rates are calculated using the population aged 10 years and over, to reflect the legal age of criminal responsibility in all jurisdictions in 2022–23.

Data amendments and revision

2022–23 data amendments

Western Australia has revised the data supplied to the NHMP to limit identifying information about homicide incidents, victims and offenders. These revisions limit our ability to cross-reference Western Australian homicide data with NCIS records as undertaken for other state and territory homicide data. Consequently, some of the data presented in this report exclude Western Australia where large amounts of data were unavailable.

Indigenous status data for NSW homicide offenders is based on a new methodology introduced by the New South Wales Police Force in 2021. An offender is recorded as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander if they ever identified as such during an interaction with the police force. The previous methodology recorded an offender as Indigenous if they identified as such in 80 percent of interactions with police or more. This has created an increase in the number and rate of Indigenous homicide offenders compared with previous years. Changes in Indigenous homicide offending rates between 2021–22 or 2022–23 and previous years should be treated with caution.

Historical data revisions

The NHMP undergoes historical data review to update or complete information that may have been unavailable at the time of reporting and to revise the status of previously uncleared homicide incidents. Data published in previous reports may differ to trend data published in this report and online data tables.

Changes from previous report

The NHMP collects data on the use of alcohol and illicit drugs or prescription drugs at non-therapeutic levels by victims and offenders. Victim alcohol and drug use is based on toxicology reports accessed from the NCIS. Offender alcohol and drug use is provided by police. Each year there are incidents where toxicology reports are not available or police reports do not state whether the victim and/or offender used alcohol or drugs. In 2022–23, there were fewer toxicology reports available than in previous years. The alcohol use status of 40 percent ($n=95$) of primary victims and drug use status of 45 percent ($n=105$) of primary victims was unknown. The proportion of missing data for offenders was even higher—75 percent ($n=155$) for offender alcohol use and 86 percent ($n=179$) for offender drug use. Due to these high numbers, victim and offender alcohol and drug use is not contained in this report.

Similarly, the mental health and disability status of offenders is not reported due to large amounts of missing data. Previously, these data were verified using sentencing remarks. However, given the period that elapses before a homicide matter is finalised in court, this information source does not allow for timely publication of these data.

Reference period

This report describes homicide incidents, victims and offenders recorded by Australian state and territory police between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023. Time series data are published in supplementary data tables ([Tables A1–A9](#), [B1–B6](#) and [C1–C4](#)).

Homicide incidents

Between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023, there were 232 incidents of homicide recorded by Australian state and territory police (see Table 1). This is an increase of 14 homicide incidents from the previous year ($n=218$; see Table A1). The homicide incident rate increased to 0.87 per 100,000 in 2022–23 (see Tables 1 and A2) but is the third lowest homicide rate recorded since 1989–90. Overall, the homicide incident rate halved (decreased 52%; see Figure 1) between 1989–90 and 2022–23.

Figure 1: Incidents of homicide, 1989–90 to 2022–23 (rate per 100,000)



Source: AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2022–23 [computer file]; see Table A2

New South Wales recorded the largest number of homicide incidents ($n=63$), followed by Victoria ($n=50$) and Queensland ($n=49$). Five states and territories recorded an increase in the number of homicide incidents between 2021–22 and 2022–23. The largest increase occurred in

Western Australia (+15). Increases were also recorded in Queensland (+7), Northern Territory (+4), South Australia (+3) and Victoria (+1). The number of homicide incidents decreased in New South Wales (-9), the Australian Capital Territory (-4) and Tasmania (-3).

The homicide incident rate for the states and territories in 2022–23 ranged from 0.64 per 100,000 in the Australian Capital Territory to 4.36 per 100,000 in the Northern Territory (see Table 1). The homicide incident rate was higher than the national rate in Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory in 2022–23.

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number	63	50	49	39	12	5	3	11	232
Rate	0.76	0.73	0.90	1.35	0.65	0.87	0.64	4.36	0.87

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]; see Tables A1 and A2

Incident clearance rates

In 2022–23, 90 percent ($n=208$) of homicide incidents were cleared at the time of reporting (see Table 2). Ninety-five percent of these incidents ($n=198$), or 85 percent of all homicide incidents recorded in 2022–23, had been cleared by charge. The offender died prior to arrest (excluding legal intervention) in four percent ($n=8$) of cleared incidents and the homicide incident was cleared by other means (including legal intervention) in one percent ($n=2$). Ninety-one percent ($n=8,460$) of homicide incidents between 1989–90 and 2022–23 have been cleared (see Table A3).

Ten percent ($n=24$) of homicide incidents in 2022–23 were not cleared (see Table 2). Homicides that are not cleared include incidents where an offender is yet to be identified, where a suspect has been identified but not charged with a homicide offence, and long-term missing person cases where police determine the victim has met with foul play.

The clearance rate was 89 percent ($n=144$) for homicide incidents where the primary victim was male and 93 percent ($n=64$) where the primary victim was female. Ninety-one percent ($n=42$) of incidents in 2022–23 where the primary victim was Indigenous were cleared, as were 91 percent ($n=162$) of incidents where the primary victim was non-Indigenous.

Table 2: Incidents of homicide by clearance status and jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Cleared by charge	54	42	44	33	8	5	2	10	198
Offender died prior to arrest ^a	1	1	1	2	1	0	1	1	8
Cleared otherwise ^b	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Cleared	55	43	46	35	10	5	3	11	208
Not cleared	8	7	3	4	2	0	0	0	24
Total	63	50	49	39	12	5	3	11	232

a: Includes suspected deaths by suicide. Excludes deaths by legal intervention

b: Includes legal intervention

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Most serious charge

The most serious charge for 82 percent ($n=190$) of homicide incidents in 2022–23 was murder (see Table 3). Manslaughter was the most serious charge in 15 percent ($n=35$) of incidents. The charge in three percent ($n=7$) of incidents was not stated or unknown. The most serious charge was murder in 88 percent ($n=8,191$) of homicide incidents between 1989–90 and 2022–23 (see Table A4).

Table 3: Incidents of homicide by most serious charge and jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Murder	52	40	48	23	10	5	3	9	190
Manslaughter	11	3	1	16	2	0	0	2	35
Infanticide	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not stated/unknown	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Total	63	50	49	39	12	5	3	11	232

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Single and multiple victim/offender homicides

The majority of homicide incidents in Australia involve a single victim and offender. In 2022–23, 95 percent ($n=220$) of homicides were single-victim incidents and almost three-quarters (73%, $n=169$) were single victim/single offender incidents (see Table 4). Thirteen percent ($n=29$) involved a single victim and multiple offenders, where the number of offenders ranged from two to five. Single victim/single offender incidents were more common where the primary victim was female (84%, $n=58$) than where the primary victim was male (69%, $n=111$).

Five percent ($n=12$) of homicides in 2022–23 were multiple-victim incidents (see Table 4). Nine of these incidents involved a single offender (4% of all homicide incidents). Seventeen percent ($n=27$) of incidents in 2022–23 where the primary victim was male were multiple victim/single offender incidents, compared with four percent ($n=3$) of incidents where the primary victim was female.

Table 4: Single- and multiple-victim incidents of homicide by number of offenders and jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Single victim									
Single victim, single offender	49	31	37	31	8	3	2	8	169
Single victim, multiple offenders	5	11	5	2	2	2	0	2	29
Single victim, no offender identified ^a	7	6	3	4	2	0	0	0	22
<i>Total single-victim incidents</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>220</i>
Multiple victims									
Multiple victims, single offender	1	1	3	2	0	0	1	1	9
Multiple victims, multiple offenders	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Multiple victims, no offender identified ^a	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
<i>Total multiple-victim incidents</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>12</i>
Total	63	50	49	39	12	5	3	11	232

a: Includes incidents not cleared at time of reporting
Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Homicide classification

Homicide classification is based on the relationship between the primary victim and the primary offender. A homicide incident is classed as:

- a domestic homicide, where the victim was the intimate partner or relative (including kinship groups) of the primary offender;
- an acquaintance homicide, where the victim was the friend or acquaintance of the primary offender or was otherwise known to the primary offender (eg housemate, neighbour, work colleague, relationship rival, fellow gang member); or
- a stranger homicide, where the victim had no known relationship with the primary offender.

In 2022–23, there were 79 incidents of domestic homicide (34% of all homicide incidents), 64 incidents of acquaintance homicide (28%) and 34 incidents of stranger homicide (15%; see Table 5).

Between 1989–90 and 2022–23, 39 percent ($n=3,658$) of homicide incidents were domestic homicides and 36 percent ($n=3,325$) were acquaintance homicides (see Table A5). The proportion of domestic homicide incidents increased from 28 percent ($n=61$) in 2021–22, whereas the proportion of acquaintance homicide incidents decreased from 36 percent ($n=79$).

The distribution of domestic versus acquaintance homicide incidents has varied over the 34 years since 1989–90 and in some years this is affected by the number of incidents where the relationship between the victim and primary offender was not stated. In 2022–23, the victim–offender relationship was not stated for 31 homicide incidents—13 percent of all homicide incidents and 15 percent of cleared incidents.

The prevalence of stranger homicides has been more consistent. Overall, 12 percent ($n=1,138$) of homicide incidents between 1989–90 and 2022–23 were stranger homicides. Similarly, there was little change in the proportion of stranger homicide incidents between 2021–22 (14%, $n=31$) and 2022–23 (15%, $n=34$).

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
<i>Intimate partner</i>	11	4	10	5	3	1	1	3	38
<i>Filicide</i>	4	2	2	1	1	0	1	0	11
<i>Parricide</i>	2	5	6	0	3	0	0	0	16
<i>Siblicide</i>	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	4
<i>Other family</i>	6	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	10
Domestic	24	12	19	8	7	2	2	5	79
Acquaintance	21	19	13	3	1	2	1	4	64
Stranger	6	4	14	6	1	1	0	2	34
Relationship not stated	4	8	0	18	1	0	0	0	31
Incident not cleared	8	7	3	4	2	0	0	0	24
Total	63	50	49	39	12	5	3	11	232

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

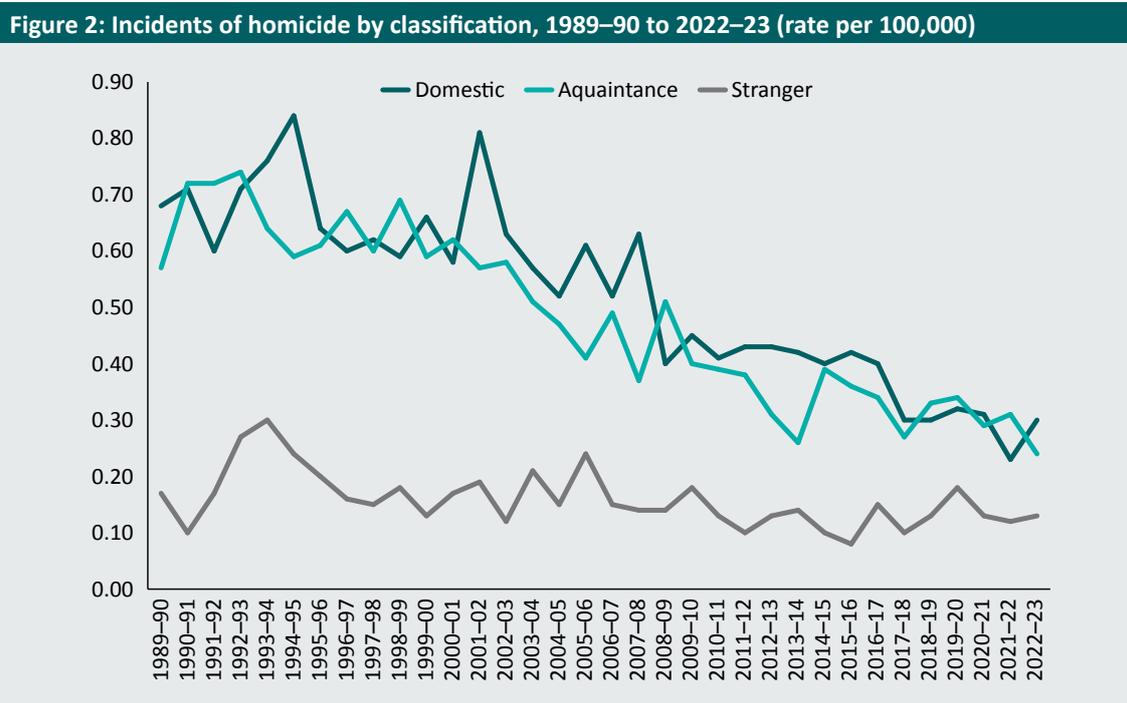
The rate of domestic homicide in 2022–23 was 0.30 per 100,000 (see Table 6 and Figure 2). This is an increase from 2021–22 (0.23 per 100,000) but consistent with the domestic homicide rate recorded for the previous four years (between 0.30 and 0.32 per 100,000; see Table A6). The acquaintance homicide rate, however, decreased to 0.24 per 100,000, the lowest acquaintance homicide rate recorded since 1989–90. The acquaintance homicide rate has varied over the previous 10 years, ranging from 0.26 per 100,000 in 2013–14 to 0.39 per 100,000 in 2014–15.

The stranger homicide rate was 0.13 per 100,000 in 2022–23 (see Table 6), similar to the rate of 0.12 per 100,000 recorded in 2021–22. The stranger homicide rate has shown greater consistency across the 1989–90 to 2022–23 period (see Table A6).

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA ^a	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Domestic	0.29	0.18	0.35	na	0.38	0.35	0.43	1.98	0.30
Acquaintance	0.25	0.28	0.24	na	0.05	0.35	0.21	1.58	0.24
Stranger	0.07	0.06	0.26	na	0.05	0.17	0.00	0.79	0.13

a: Rates are not calculated for Western Australia due to large amounts of missing data on victim–offender relationship. Western Australia is included in the total rate calculation

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]



Source: AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2022–23 [computer file]; see Table A6

Intimate partner and other domestic homicide

In 2022–23 there were 38 incidents of intimate partner homicide (see Table 5). Intimate partner homicide comprised almost half (48%) of domestic homicide incidents and 16 percent of all homicide incidents in 2022–23.

Eighty-nine percent ($n=34$) of intimate partner homicide incidents in 2022–23 were perpetrated against a female victim (see Table 7). The number of incidents of intimate partner homicide perpetrated against a female increased by eight from the previous year (26 in 2021–22 vs 34 in 2022–23). However, the number of incidents in 2022–23 is lower than the average number of incidents recorded in the previous 10 years ($n=36$) and the equal third lowest number of intimate partner homicide incidents perpetrated against females recorded since 1989–90 (see Table A7).

The female intimate partner homicide rate in 2022–23 was 0.32 per 100,000 female population aged 18 years and over. This is an increase from the rate of 0.25 per 100,000 recorded in the previous year but the second lowest rate recorded since 1989–90. The female intimate partner homicide rate decreased overall by two-thirds (66%) in the 34-year period between 1989–90 and 2022–23 (see Figure 3 and Table A7).

Eleven percent ($n=4$) of intimate partner homicide incidents in 2022–23 involved a male victim (see Table 7). The rate was 0.04 per 100,000 male population aged 18 years and over. The male intimate partner homicide rate decreased to its lowest rate since 1989–90 (see Figure 3 and Table A7).

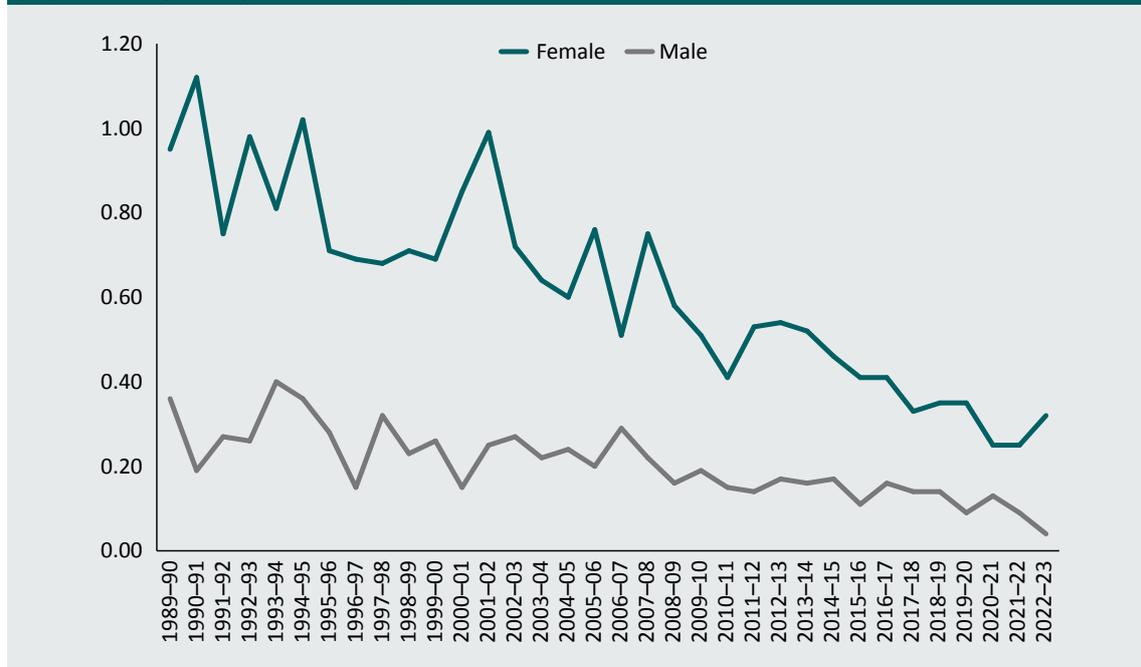
Of the remaining 41 incidents of domestic homicide (see Table 5), 16 (or 7% of all homicide incidents) were parricides (the killing of a parent) and 11 (5%) were filicides (a parent killing a child). Four incidents (2%) were siblicide (the killing of a sibling) and 10 incidents (4%) were the homicide of another family member (including kin).

Table 7: Incidents of intimate partner homicide by victim sex and jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Female	11	3	9	5	2	1	1	2	34
Male	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	4

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Figure 3: Incidents of intimate partner homicide by victim sex, 1989–90 to 2022–23 (rate per 100,000 population aged 18 years and over)



Source: AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2022–23 [computer file]; see Table A7

Location of homicide incidents

Homicides predominantly take place in residential settings. In 2022–23, 56 percent (n=129) of homicide incidents occurred at someone’s home or property (see Table 8). One in three homicide incidents (29%, n=67) took place in a community location and one in 10 (11%, n=25) in another location. The location was not stated or unknown for four percent (n=10) of homicide incidents.

Further detail on the location of homicide incidents was available for all states and territories except Western Australia ($n=193$ homicide incidents). The victim's home was the most common location for homicide incidents in 2022–23, as it has been each year since 1989–90. Forty percent ($n=78$) of homicide incidents in 2022–23 (excluding Western Australia) were located in the victim's home (see Table 8). A street, footpath or similar was the second most common location, with a fifth (19%, $n=37$) of homicide incidents taking place in this setting.

Other types of locations were less common. Most of these homicides took place in a residential setting other than the victim's home—seven percent ($n=13$) in the offender's home and 11 percent ($n=22$) in another person's home. Four percent ($n=8$) of homicide incidents took place in an open area (such as bushland or a waterway) and two percent ($n=4$) while the victims were sitting in a vehicle. Another two percent ($n=3$) were located in an aged care facility.

Table 8: Incidents of homicide by location and jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA ^a	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Victim's home	26	19	25	na	5	0	1	2	78
Offender's home	3	0	4	na	3	1	0	2	13
Other home	10	8	2	na	0	1	0	1	22
<i>Residential</i>	39	27	31	16	8	2	1	5	129
Street/footpath	11	8	11	na	1	2	0	4	37
Open area/waterway	4	2	1	na	0	0	1	0	8
Sporting oval/facility	0	0	1	na	0	0	0	0	1
Public transport/facility	1	1	1	na	0	0	0	0	3
Public carpark	1	1	0	na	0	0	0	1	3
<i>Community</i>	17	12	14	15	1	2	1	5	67
Short stay accommodation	1	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	1
Correctional facility	0	0	1	na	0	0	0	0	1
Health care facility	0	0	0	na	0	0	0	0	0
Aged care facility	0	1	0	na	2	0	0	0	3
Mental health/psychiatric facility	0	0	0	na	0	0	1	0	1
Workplace/school	0	1	0	na	0	0	0	0	1
Retail	0	0	1	na	0	0	0	1	2
Recreation/food venue	1	1	0	na	0	0	0	0	2
Private motor vehicle	3	1	0	na	0	0	0	0	4
Other not specified	0	2	1	na	0	0	0	0	3
<i>Other</i>	5	6	3	7	2	0	1	1	25
Multiple locations	0	1	0	na	0	0	0	0	1
Not stated/unknown	2	4	1	1	1	1	0	0	10
Total	63	50	49	39	12	5	3	11	232

a: Further detail on incident location was not available for Western Australia

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Circumstances and preceding events

The NHMP collects information on motive or the apparent precursors to homicide events. Motive reported by the NHMP is based on police records. The circumstances preceding a homicide may be more nuanced than the originally recorded motive indicates and are generally confirmed where the matter proceeds through the criminal justice system or following a coronial inquest. Information regarding the circumstances of homicide incidents in Western Australia is excluded due to limited data.

There were 160 cleared homicide incidents in 2022–23 (excluding Western Australia) where motive was applicable. Most homicide incidents are immediately preceded by an argument between the victim(s) and offender(s). In 2022–23, the alleged motive for 44 percent of cleared homicide incidents ($n=70$) was an argument or other conflict. Around a fifth of homicide incidents each were preceded by a domestic argument (21%, $n=33$) or a dispute about another matter (18%, $n=28$; see Table 9). Six percent ($n=9$) of incidents took place during an alcohol-related altercation. Disputes over money ($n=3$) and drugs ($n=7$) allegedly motivated six percent of homicide incidents in 2022–23.

In five percent ($n=8$) of incidents the offender was apparently delusional (ie experiencing psychosis or other mental health event) while in 10 percent ($n=16$) there was no perceptible motive for the homicide (see Table 9). The motive for another 19 percent of homicide incidents ($n=30$) was not stated or unknown at the time of reporting.

A quarter (25%, $n=48$) of homicide incidents in 2022–23 (excluding Western Australia) were committed in the course of another crime (see Table 10). An assault preceded these homicides in 38 percent ($n=18$) of incidents, armed robbery in 13 percent ($n=6$) of incidents and kidnapping in six percent ($n=3$). Ten percent ($n=5$) of these homicide incidents occurred in the context of drug offences. Excluding Western Australia, a quarter (26%, $n=37$) of homicide incidents where the primary victim was male and a fifth (21%, $n=11$) of incidents where the primary victim was female were committed in the course of another crime.

Table 9: Incidents of homicide by apparent motive, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	<i>n</i>
Revenge	4
Jealousy	2
Desertion/termination	2
Argument of a domestic nature	33
Alcohol-related argument	9
Other argument	28
Dispute over money	3
Dispute over drugs	7
Racial vilification	0
Sexual vilification	0
Sexual gratification	0
Gang-related	4
Mercy killing/suicide	2
Other	11
Mistaken identity	0
Victim intervened	1
Apparently delusional	8
No apparent motive	16
Not stated/unknown	30
Total	160

Note: Excludes Western Australia (n=39 incidents). Excludes non-WA incidents that were not cleared at time of reporting (n=20) or where motive is not applicable eg most driving causing death offences (n=13)

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Table 10: Incidents of homicide committed in the course of another crime by jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Preceding crime	12	9	22	1	1	0	3	48
No preceding crime	36	23	25	10	4	2	8	109
Not stated/unknown	15	18	2	1	0	0	0	36
Total	63	50	49	12	5	3	11	193

Note: Excludes Western Australia (n=39 incidents)

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Weapon use

A weapon was used in 86 percent ($n=199$) of homicide incidents in 2022–23 (see Table 11). Thirty-seven percent ($n=85$) of all homicide incidents were perpetrated with a knife or other sharp instrument. Knives and other sharp instruments are the weapons most commonly used in homicide in Australia. Since 1989–90, 35 percent ($n=3,230$) of homicide incidents involved this weapon type.

Hands and/or feet were used in a fifth (18%, $n=42$) of homicide incidents (see Table 11), similar to the proportion (21%, $n=1,964$) of incidents committed with hands and feet between 1989–90 and 2022–23. Firearms were the third most common weapon used in homicide incidents. Eleven percent ($n=26$) of homicide incidents in 2022–23 involved a firearm, lower than the overall 17 percent of incidents ($n=1,556$) using a firearm between 1989–90 and 2022–23.

In 2022–23, a knife or other sharp instrument was used in 40 percent ($n=64$) of homicide incidents where the primary victim was male compared with 30 percent ($n=21$) of incidents where the primary victim was female. Firearms were also used in a higher proportion of male homicide incidents (13%, $n=21$) than female homicide incidents (7%, $n=5$) in 2022–23. Conversely, hands and feet were more commonly used in the homicide of a female primary victim (22%, $n=15$) than a male victim (17%, $n=27$).

Table 11: Incidents of homicide by weapon type and jurisdiction, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Firearm	10	7	4	2	1	1	0	1	26
Knife/other sharp instrument	22	18	22	13	2	1	0	7	85
Blunt instrument	3	5	2	6	0	1	1	1	19
Hands and feet	16	10	8	2	3	1	1	1	42
Fire	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3
Drugs	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Poison	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Vehicle	1	2	5	1	0	1	0	0	10
Other	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Multiple weapons	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Weapon not stated	3	2	3	2	0	0	0	0	10
<i>Weapon used</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>199</i>
Weapon not used	7	4	0	12	2	0	1	0	26
Not stated/unknown	1	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	7
Total	63	50	49	39	12	5	3	11	232

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Victims of homicide

In 2022–23 there were 247 victims of homicide (see Table 12), an increase of 13 victims from 2021–22 (see Table B1). Of these, most were victims of murder (82%, $n=203$), while 15 percent ($n=37$) were victims of manslaughter. There were seven victims (3%) for which the most serious offence was not stated or unknown.

Table 12: Homicide victims, 1 July 2022 – 31 June 2023									
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Male									
Number	48	42	37	22	8	3	3	8	171
Rate	1.16	1.25	1.37	1.52	0.87	1.06	1.30	6.26	1.29
Female									
Number	17	10	18	19	4	2	1	4	75
Rate	0.41	0.29	0.65	1.32	0.43	0.69	0.42	3.21	0.56
Total									
Number	65	52	55	42 ^a	12	5	4	12	247
Rate	0.78	0.76	1.01	1.46	0.65	0.87	0.86	4.75	0.93

a: Includes one victim whose sex was not stated or unknown

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]; see Tables B1 and B2

New South Wales recorded the largest number of homicide victims ($n=65$) in 2022–23, while the Australian Capital Territory recorded the fewest ($n=4$). The overall increase in the number of homicide victims from 2021–22 to 2022–23 was driven by increases in Western Australia (+15) and Queensland (+12). There was also an increase in the number of victims recorded in the Northern Territory (+5) and South Australia (+3). The number of homicide victims decreased in New South Wales (–12), Victoria (–4), Tasmania (–3) and the Australian Capital Territory (–3).

Victimisation rate

The homicide victimisation rate in 2022–23 was 0.93 per 100,000. While this was a slight increase from the rate recorded in 2021–22 (0.90 per 100,000), it is the third lowest victimisation rate recorded between 1989–90 and 2022–23. The homicide victimisation rate has declined overall by 52 percent since 1989–90 (see Figure 4).

The Northern Territory recorded the highest homicide victimisation rate (4.75 per 100,000 people; see Table 12 and Table B2), followed by Western Australia (1.46 per 100,000). The lowest rate of victimisation was recorded in South Australia (0.65 per 100,000). Queensland continued to record the largest reduction in rates of homicide victimisation, with an overall 59 percent decrease between 1989–90 and 2022–23 (2.45 per 100,000 in 1989–90 vs 1.01 per 100,000 in 2022–23; see Table B2).

Figure 4: Victims of homicide by sex, 1989–90 to 2022–23 (rate per 100,000)



Source: AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2022–23 [computer file]; see Tables B2 and B3

Sex and place of birth

Most victims of homicide in Australia are male (65%, $n=6,404$ since 1989–90; see Table B3). In 2022–23 males comprised 69 percent ($n=171$) of homicide victims, and females comprised 30 percent ($n=75$; see Table 12). The sex of one homicide victim was not stated or unknown. The male victimisation rate was 1.29 per 100,000, a decrease from the rate recorded in 2021–22 (1.36 per 100,000). The female victimisation rate increased from 0.45 per 100,000 in 2021–22 to 0.56 per 100,000 in 2022–23 (see Table B3). Male and female homicide victimisation rates vary from year to year but largely declined between 1989–90 and 2022–23. The rate of male homicide victimisation halved (49%) during this period and the rate of female homicide victimisation decreased by 58 percent (see Figure 4 and Table B3).

Male victims of cleared homicide incidents were mostly killed by a male primary offender (86%, $n=131$; see Table 13). A similar proportion of female victims were killed by a male primary offender (87%, $n=60$). Fourteen percent ($n=21$) of male victims and 13 percent ($n=9$) of female victims were killed by a female primary offender.

	Male victim	Female victim	Total
Male offender	131	60	191
Female offender	21	9	30
Total^a	152	69	221
Offender not identified ^b	19	6	26 ^c
Total	171	75	247^c

a: Includes victims of cleared homicide incidents only

b: Includes victims of homicide incidents not cleared at time of reporting

c: Includes one victim whose sex was not stated or unknown

Note: Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Just over half of homicide victims in 2022–23 were born in Australia (53%, $n=131$), while 14 percent ($n=34$) were born overseas. The place of birth was not stated or unknown for one-third of homicide victims (33%, $n=82$). Female homicide victims were slightly more likely to have been born overseas (16%, $n=12$) than male homicide victims (13%, $n=22$).

Child and adult victims

Nine in 10 homicide victims were adults (aged 18 years or over; 90%, $n=222$), and 10 percent ($n=25$) were children aged 0–17 years (see Table 14). Homicide victims in 2022–23 were most likely to be aged 35–44 years (19%, $n=46$), followed by 25–34 years (18%, $n=44$). Of the child victims, six were less than one year of age (2% of all victims), nine were aged 1–9 years (4%), and 10 were 10–17 years (4%; see Table 14).

Adult males comprised nearly two-thirds of homicide victims in 2022–23 (62%, $n=152$), the same proportion recorded in 2021–22 ($n=146$). Adult female victims comprised 28 percent ($n=69$) of homicide victims. Similar proportions of male homicide victims were aged 18–24 (18%, $n=30$), 25–34 (18% $n=30$), 35–44 (17%, $n=29$) and 45–54 (16%, $n=27$). The largest proportion of female victims in 2022–23 were aged 35–44 (23%, $n=17$), followed by those aged 65 years and over (21%, $n=16$).

Eight percent ($n=19$) of homicide victims were boys, while two percent ($n=6$) were girls. Eight of the boy victims were aged 1–9, six were 10–17 years and five were less than one year of age. Four of the six girls were aged 10–17 years, one was aged 1–9 and one victim was aged less than one year.

	Male	Female	Total
Less than 1	5	1	6
1–9	8	1	9
10–17	6	4	10
<i>Children</i>	19	6	25
18–24	30	3	33
25–34	30	14	44
35–44	29	17	46
45–54	27	13	40
55–64	20	6	26
65 and over	16	16	33 ^a
<i>Adults</i>	152	69	222 ^a
Total	171	75	247^a

a: Includes one victim whose sex was not stated or unknown

Note: Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Victim relationship with primary offender

There were 221 victims from 208 cleared homicide incidents in 2022–23. The remaining 26 victims (11%) were killed in incidents that had not been cleared at the time of reporting (see Table 15).

Sixty-nine percent ($n=152$) of victims from cleared incidents knew the primary offender, while 17 percent ($n=37$) were killed by a stranger (see Table 15). There were 32 victims from cleared homicide incidents for whom the relationship between the victim and the primary offender was not stated or unknown (14%). Over three-quarters (78%, $n=54$) of female homicide victims knew the primary offender, compared with 64 percent ($n=98$) of male victims.

Male homicide victims were most likely to be killed by a friend, an acquaintance or some other known person who was not a family member (39%, $n=60$). Most of these were acquaintance relationships ($n=31$, 20% of all male victims from cleared homicide incidents). Six percent of male victims were killed by a friend ($n=9$), and another six percent by a neighbour, housemate or work colleague ($n=9$).

Twenty-two percent ($n=34$) of male homicide victims were killed by a family member other than an intimate partner (see Table 15). Almost half of these victims were the child of the primary offender ($n=13$, 9% of all male victims from cleared homicide incidents), while nine victims (6%) were the parent of the primary offender. Three percent of all male victims ($n=4$) were killed by a current or former intimate partner, half the proportion of male victims of intimate partner homicide recorded in 2021–22 (6%, $n=9$). Just under a fifth (18%, $n=28$) of male victims did not know the primary offender, similar to the proportion recorded in 2021–22 (19%, $n=29$).

Half of female homicide victims were killed by a current or former intimate partner (49%, $n=34$). Seventeen percent ($n=12$) were killed by another family member, lower than the 22 percent ($n=34$) recorded for male victims. One in 10 female victims were the parent of the offender (10%, $n=7$), while four percent ($n=3$) were the child of the offender. Female victims were much less likely than male victims to be killed by an acquaintance (12%, $n=8$), or by a stranger (13%, $n=9$).

Table 15: Victims of homicide by relationship with primary offender and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male victim	Female victim	Total
Intimate partner	4	34	38
Child	13	3	16
Parent	9	7	16
Sibling	4	0	4
Other relative	8	2	10
Friend	9	0	9
Acquaintance	31	2	33
Neighbour/housemate/work colleague	9	5	14
Relationship rival	2	0	2
Gang member	4	0	4
Other	2	1	3
Acquaintance less than 24 hours	3	0	3
<i>Knew primary offender</i>	98	54	152
Stranger	28	9	37
Relationship not stated	26	6	32
Total	152	69	221

Note: Includes victims from cleared homicide incidents only. Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

A quarter of male victims of male offenders were killed by an acquaintance in 2022–23 (24%, $n=31$; see Table 16). Just under a fifth were killed by a family member (18%, $n=24$), while just over a fifth were killed by a stranger (21%, $n=27$). Male victims of female offenders were most frequently the child of the primary offender (38%, $n=8$), followed by the intimate partner (19%, $n=4$).

Over half of female victims of male offenders were killed by a current or former intimate partner (57%, $n=34$; see Table 16), while 12 percent ($n=7$) were killed by their teenage or adult child. The same number of female victims of male offenders were killed by a friend or acquaintance or by a stranger (12%, $n=7$ each). Female-on-female homicide victims were most frequently the child of the primary offender (33%, $n=3$), followed by a stranger (22%, $n=2$).

Table 16: Victims of homicide by relationship with and sex of primary offender, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male victim, male offender	Female victim, male offender	Male victim, female offender	Female victim, female offender	Total
Intimate partner	0	34	4	0	38
Child	5	0	8	3	16
Parent	7	7	2	0	16
Sibling	4	0	0	0	4
Other relative	8	1	0	1	10
Friend	9	0	0	0	9
Acquaintance	31	2	0	0	33
Neighbour/housemate/work colleague	9	4	0	1	14
Relationship rival	2	0	0	0	2
Gang member	4	0	0	0	4
Other	2	1	0	0	3
Acquaintance less than 24 hours	2	0	1	0	3
Stranger	27	7	1	2	37
Relationship not stated	21	4	5	2	32
Total	131	60	21	9	221

Note: Includes victims from cleared homicide incidents only. Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Indigenous victims

There were 49 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims of homicide, making up 20 percent of homicide victims in 2022–23 (see Table 17). This is slightly higher than the proportion of Indigenous homicide victims recorded in 2021–22 (18%, $n=41$) and higher than the average proportion of Indigenous victims since 1989–90 (14%, $n=1,364$).

In 2022–23, the homicide victimisation rate for Indigenous Australians was 5.36 per 100,000 relevant population (see Table 17), an increase from the rate of 4.57 per 100,000 recorded in 2021–22.

Table 17: Victims of homicide by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023

	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous		Total
	<i>n</i>	Rate per 100,000	<i>n</i>	Rate per 100,000	
Male	35	7.65	133	1.04	168
Female	14	3.07	58	0.45	72
Total	49	5.36	191	0.74	240

Note: Excludes three male and three female victims whose Indigenous status was not stated or unknown and one victim whose sex and Indigenous status was not stated or unknown. Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Sex and age

The majority of Indigenous homicide victims in 2022–23 were male (71%, $n=35$) while 29 percent ($n=14$) were female (see Table 17). The victimisation rate for Indigenous males was 7.65 per 100,000 relevant population, an increase from the rate of 6.25 per 100,000 recorded in 2021–22. The victimisation rate for Indigenous females also slightly increased from 2.90 per 100,000 in 2021–22 to 3.07 per 100,000 in 2022–23.

Almost a fifth of Indigenous homicide victims in 2022–23 were children under the age of 18 years (18%, $n=9$; see Table 18), an increase in the proportion of Indigenous child victims of homicide recorded in 2021–22 (12%, $n=5$). Between 1989–90 and 2022–23, 12 percent ($n=158$) of Indigenous homicide victims were children (see Table B5).

Eighty-two percent ($n=40$) of Indigenous victims were adults. Similar proportions of Indigenous male victims were aged 25–34 years (23%, $n=8$) and 35–44 years (20%, $n=7$). Most Indigenous female victims were aged either 25–34 years (43%, $n=6$) or 45–54 (29%, $n=4$).

Table 18: Indigenous homicide victims by age and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male	Female
Less than 1	2	0
1–9	3	1
10–17	1	2
<i>Children</i>	6	3
18–24	4	0
25–34	8	6
35–44	7	1
45–54	6	4
55–64	3	0
65 and over	1	0
<i>Adults</i>	29	11
Total	35	14

Note: Data presented refer to an individual’s sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie ‘social and cultural identity, expression and experience’; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

An offender was identified or charged in the homicide of 45 of the 49 Indigenous victims (92%). Of the 32 Indigenous male victims of cleared homicides, 84 percent (n=27) were killed by a male primary offender and 16 percent (n=5) by a female primary offender (see Table 19). Sixty-two percent (n=8) of Indigenous female victims were killed by a male primary offender and 38 percent (n=5) by a female primary offender. Indigenous females were twice as likely to be killed by a female primary offender as Indigenous male victims (38%, n=5 vs 16%, n=5 respectively).

Table 19: Indigenous victims by sex of primary offender, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male victim	Female victim	Total
Male offender	27	8	35
Female offender	5	5	10
Total	32	13	45

Note: Includes victims of cleared homicide incidents only. Data presented refer to an individual’s sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie ‘social and cultural identity, expression and experience’; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Relationship with primary offender

Three-quarters of Indigenous victims of cleared homicides knew the offender (76%, $n=34$; see Table 20), while 11 percent ($n=5$) were killed by a stranger. Indigenous male victims were most commonly killed by a friend, acquaintance or other known person (41%, $n=13$), or by a family member other than an intimate partner (34%, $n=11$). One Indigenous male victim was killed by an intimate partner (3%). Indigenous females were most likely to have been killed by an intimate partner (38%, $n=5$) or other family member (31%, $n=4$).

Table 20: Indigenous victims of homicide by relationship with primary offender and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male victim	Female victim	Total
Intimate partner	1	5	6
Child	5	2	7
Parent	0	1	1
Sibling	3	0	3
Other relative	3	1	4
Acquaintance	13	0	13
<i>Knew the offender</i>	25	9	34
Stranger	3	2	5
Relationship not stated	4	2	6
Total	32	13	45

Note: Includes victims of cleared homicide incidents only. Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

The majority of homicides involving Indigenous victims were male-on-male incidents (60%, $n=27$; see Table 21). Almost half of Indigenous male victims of a male offender were acquainted with the offender (48%, $n=13$). Thirty percent ($n=8$) were killed by a male family member. Sixty percent ($n=3$) of Indigenous male victims of female offenders were killed by a family member other than an intimate partner.

Indigenous female victims of a male primary offender were most commonly killed by a current or former intimate partner (63%, $n=5$; see Table 21). Sixty percent ($n=3$) of Indigenous female victims of female offenders were related to the offender.

Table 21: Indigenous victims of homicide by relationship with and sex of primary offender, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male victim, male offender	Female victim, male offender	Male victim, female offender	Female victim, female offender	Total
Intimate partner	0	5	1	0	6
Other family	8	1	3	3	15
Acquaintance	13	0	0	0	13
Stranger	3	2	0	0	5
Relationship not stated	3	0	1	2	6
Total	27	8	5	5	45

Note: Includes victims of cleared homicide incidents only. Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Non-Indigenous victims

There were 191 non-Indigenous victims of homicide (77%) in 2022–23 (see Table 17). The homicide victimisation rate for non-Indigenous Australians was 0.74 per 100,000, similar to the rate of 0.76 per 100,000 recorded in 2021–22.

Sex and age

Most non-Indigenous homicide victims in 2022–23 were male (70%, $n=133$) while 30 percent ($n=58$) were female (see Table 17). The victimisation rate for non-Indigenous males decreased from 1.16 per 100,000 relevant population in 2021–22 to 1.04 per 100,000 in 2022–23. The rate of non-Indigenous female victimisation increased from 0.36 per 100,000 in 2021–22 to 0.45 per 100,000 in 2022–23.

In 2022–23 eight percent ($n=15$) of non-Indigenous homicide victims were children (see Table 22). Thirteen of the child victims were boys (7% of all non-Indigenous victims) and two (1%) were girls. Between 1989–90 and 2022–23, 12 percent ($n=1,026$) of non-Indigenous homicide victims were children (see Table B6).

Sixty-three percent of non-Indigenous victims of homicide in 2022–23 were men ($n=120$). Twenty-nine percent were women ($n=56$), an increase from 19 percent ($n=37$) in 2021–22 (see Table B6).

Table 22: Non-Indigenous homicide victims by age and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male	Female
Less than 1	3	0
1–9	5	0
10–17	5	2
<i>Children</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>2</i>
18–24	24	3
25–34	22	8
35–44	22	16
45–54	20	8
55–64	17	6
65 and over	15	15
<i>Adults</i>	<i>120</i>	<i>56</i>
Total	133	58

Note: Data presented refer to an individual’s sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie ‘social and cultural identity, expression and experience’; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

One or more offenders were identified or charged in the homicide of 172 of the 191 non-Indigenous homicide victims. Eighty-six percent ($n=102$) of non-Indigenous male and 94 percent ($n=51$) of non-Indigenous female victims were killed by a male primary offender (see Table 23). Fourteen percent ($n=16$) of non-Indigenous males were killed by a female offender.

Table 23: Non-Indigenous victims by sex of primary offender, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male victim	Female victim	Total
Male offender	102	51	153
Female offender	16	3	19
Total	118	54	172

Note: Includes victims of cleared homicide incidents only. Data presented refer to an individual’s sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie ‘social and cultural identity, expression and experience’; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Relationship with primary offender

Two-thirds of non-Indigenous victims were killed by someone they knew (67%, $n=116$), while a fifth were killed by a stranger (18%, $n=31$; see Table 24). The relationship between the victim and the primary offender was not stated or unknown for 15 percent ($n=25$) of non-Indigenous homicide victims.

Half of non-Indigenous female homicide victims were killed by their current or former intimate partner (52%, $n=28$; see Table 24). Thirteen percent ($n=7$) of non-Indigenous female victims were the victim of a family member other than an intimate partner, and in all but one of these instances the victim was the parent of the primary offender. Seven non-Indigenous female victims were killed by a stranger (13%).

Non-Indigenous male victims were less likely to know the primary offender than non-Indigenous female victims (62%, $n=73$ vs 80%, $n=43$ respectively; see Table 24). Forty percent ($n=47$) of non-Indigenous male victims were killed by a known person who was not an intimate partner or family member, while a fifth (20%, $n=24$) were killed by a stranger. Non-Indigenous male victims of family members were equally likely to have been the child (7%, $n=8$) or the parent of the offender (8%, $n=9$).

Table 24: Non-Indigenous victims of homicide by relationship with primary offender and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male victim	Female victim	Total
Intimate partner	3	28	31
Child	8	0	8
Parent	9	6	15
Sibling	1	0	1
Other relative	5	1	6
Acquaintance	47	8	55
<i>Knew the offender</i>	73	43	116
Stranger	24	7	31
Relationship not stated	21	4	25
Total	118	54	172

Note: Includes victims of cleared homicide incidents only. Data presented refer to an individual’s sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie ‘social and cultural identity, expression and experience’; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

While most non-Indigenous female victims of male perpetrated homicides were the offender's intimate partner (55%, $n=28$), the largest proportion of non-Indigenous male victims of a female perpetrated homicide were the child of the offender (31%, $n=5$; see Table 25). Fourteen percent ($n=7$) of female victims of male perpetrated homicide were killed by a family member other than an intimate partner. Among non-Indigenous female victims of female homicide offenders, two (67%) were killed by a stranger and one (33%) was killed by an acquaintance.

Forty-five percent ($n=46$) of non-Indigenous male victims of male perpetrated homicide were killed by a known person other than a family member (see Table 25). Sixteen percent ($n=16$) were the victim of a family member, and 23 percent ($n=23$) were killed by a stranger.

Table 25: Non-Indigenous victims of homicide by relationship with and sex of primary offender, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male victim, male offender	Female victim, male offender	Male victim, female offender	Female victim, female offender	Total
Intimate partner	0	28	3	0	31
Child	3	0	5	0	8
Parent	7	6	2	0	15
Sibling	1	0	0	0	1
Other relative	5	1	0	0	6
Friend	8	0	0	0	8
Acquaintance	21	2	0	0	23
Neighbour/housemate/work colleague	8	4	0	1	13
Relationship rival	2	0	0	0	2
Gang member	4	0	0	0	4
Other	1	1	0	0	2
Acquaintance less than 24 hours	2	0	1	0	3
Stranger	23	5	1	2	31
Relationship not stated	17	4	4	0	25
Total	102	51	16	3	172

Note: Includes victims of cleared homicide incidents only. Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Missing persons

In 2022–23 there were 13 homicide victims (5% of all victims) who had been reported missing at the time of the incident—one child and 12 adults. Eight of these victims were male and five were female. All but one of these victims were non-Indigenous.

Cause of death

A stab wound from a knife or other sharp instrument was the most common cause of death for homicide victims in 2022–23 (34%, $n=85$; see Table 26) and was the leading cause of death for both male (37%, $n=64$) and female (28%, $n=21$) victims. Beating or blunt force trauma was the cause of death for 18 percent of homicide victims ($n=44$), followed by gunshot wounds (13%, $n=33$) and injuries sustained in a collision involving a vehicle (8%, $n=20$). There were nine victims (4%) for whom the cause of death was not able to be determined at autopsy.

Female homicide victims were more likely than male homicide victims to have died as a result of strangulation or suffocation (11%, $n=8$ vs 3%, $n=5$ respectively). Male victims were more likely than female victims to have died as a result of a beating or blunt force trauma (19%, $n=33$ vs 15%, $n=11$ respectively) or gunshot wounds (15%, $n=25$ vs 11%, $n=8$ respectively).

The most common cause of death for Indigenous homicide victims in 2022–23 was a stab wound (45%, $n=22$), followed by beating or blunt force trauma (18%, $n=9$) and gunshot wounds (8%, $n=4$). Similarly, the leading cause of death of non-Indigenous victims was a stab wound (33%, $n=63$), again followed by beating or blunt force trauma (17%, $n=32$) and gunshot wounds (15%, $n=29$). Indigenous victims were more likely than non-Indigenous victims to have died from a stab wound (45% vs 33% respectively), whereas non-Indigenous victims were twice as likely as Indigenous victims to have died from a gunshot wound (15% vs 8% respectively).

Table 26: Victims of homicide by cause of death and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male	Female	Total
Gunshot wound	25	8	33
Stab wound	64	21	85
Blunt force trauma/beating	33	11	44
Drug overdose	1	0	1
Drowning/submersion	4	0	4
Criminal neglect	2	1	3
Pushed from a high place	0	0	0
Strangulation/suffocation	5	8	13
Smoke inhalation/burns	2	2	4
Shaking	0	0	0
Other	2	2	4
Hit by car/car accident	13	7	20
Multiple	10	7	17
Cause of death not ascertained	6	3	9
Cause of death not available	4	5	10 ^a
Total	171	75	247^a

a: Includes one victim whose sex was not stated or unknown

Note: Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Homicide offenders

There were 260 homicide offenders from 208 cleared incidents in 2022–23 (see Table 27), a decrease of 19 from the previous year (see Table C1). The offending rate was 1.11 per 100,000 population aged 10 years and over, a decrease in the offending rate reported in 2021–22 (1.22 per 100,000; see Table C2).

Table 27: Homicide offenders, 1 July 2022 – 31 June 2023

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Male									
Number	60	54	51	30	8	9	2	11	225
Rate	1.65	1.82	2.15	2.38	0.99	3.56	0.99	9.99	1.94
Female									
Number	3	8	5	10	4	0	1	4	35
Rate	0.08	0.26	0.20	0.79	0.48	0.00	0.48	3.71	0.29
Total									
Number	63	62	56	40	12	9	3	15	260
Rate	0.86	1.03	1.16	1.58	0.73	1.76	0.73	6.88	1.11

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]; see Tables C1 and C2

Most homicide offenders were charged (95%, $n=248$), 11 offenders (4%) died prior to arrest (by alleged suicide ($n=8$) or legal intervention ($n=3$)) and one was cleared otherwise (1%). New South Wales ($n=63$) and Victoria ($n=62$) recorded the largest numbers of offenders (see Table 27). This was followed by Queensland ($n=56$) and Western Australia ($n=40$). There were 15 offenders identified in the Northern Territory, 12 in South Australia, nine in Tasmania and three in the Australian Capital Territory.

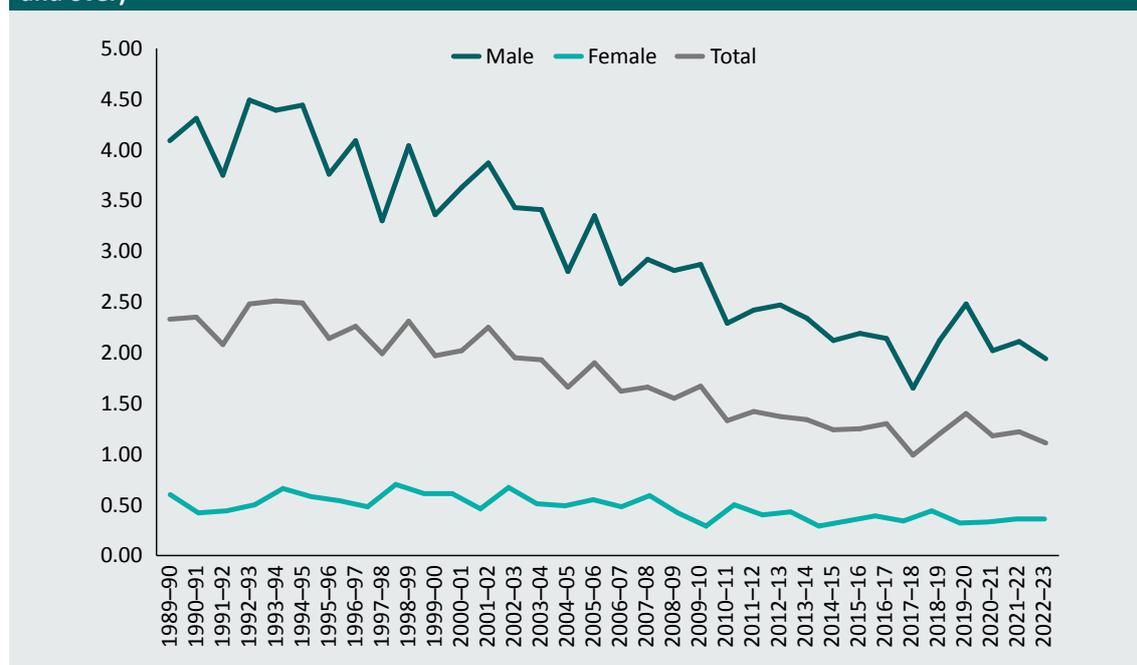
In 2022–23, around two-thirds of offenders perpetrated the homicide alone (68%, $n=178$), an increase in the proportion of sole offenders from the previous year (58%, $n=161$). Thirty-two percent ($n=82$) of offenders in 2022–23 committed the homicide with at least one other co-offender. The number of co-offenders ranged from two to five.

Sex and age

Males comprised the majority of offenders in 2022–23 (87%, $n=225$; see Table 27). This is the same proportion of all male homicide offenders in Australia since 1989–90 (87%, $n=9,192$; see Table C3). The rate of male homicide offending was 1.94 per 100,000 population aged 10 years and over, a decrease from 2.11 per 100,000 population aged 10 years and over in 2021–22 (see Table C3). Females comprised 13 percent ($n=35$) of all homicide offenders in 2022–23. The female homicide offending rate also decreased from the previous year. In 2022–23 it was 0.29 per 100,000 population, down from the 0.35 per 100,000 population recorded in 2021–22 (see Table C3).

Between 1989–90 and 2022–23, the overall rate of homicide offending decreased by 52 percent, from 2.33 per 100,000 aged 10 years and over to 1.11 per 100,000 (see Figure 5). This is the second lowest rate of homicide offending since 1989–90.

Figure 5: Homicide offenders by sex, 1989–90 to 2022–23 (rate per 100,000 population aged 10 years and over)



Source: AIC NHMP 1989–90 to 2022–23 [computer file]; see Tables C2 and C3

Just over one-quarter of homicide offenders were aged 25–34 years (27%, $n=71$; see Table 28). Male offenders were most commonly aged 25–34 years (27%, $n=61$), followed by those aged 18–24 (23%, $n=52$) and those aged 35–44 (16%, $n=36$). One in three female offenders were aged 25–34 years (29%, $n=10$).

Eleven percent of offenders in 2022–23 were aged 10–17 years ($n=28$; see Table 28), the same proportion of child offenders reported in 2021–22 (11%, $n=30$). All but two of the offenders aged 10–17 were male (93%, $n=26$).

Table 28: Homicide offenders by age group and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male	Female	Total
10–17	26	2	28
18–24	52	4	56
25–34	61	10	71
35–44	36	9	45
45–54	28	8	36
55–64	12	1	13
65 and over	10	1	11
Total	225	35	260

Note: Data presented refer to an individual’s sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie ‘social and cultural identity, expression and experience’; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Type of homicide perpetrated

In 2022–23 most primary homicide offenders of cleared incidents were male (88%, *n*=182; see Table 29). Thirty-five percent (*n*=64) of these male offenders committed a domestic homicide, most often against a current or former intimate partner (19% of male primary offenders, *n*=34). Thirty-four percent (*n*=62) committed an acquaintance homicide, lower than the proportion of male-perpetrated acquaintance homicides reported in 2021–22 (45%, *n*=77). Eighteen percent (*n*=32) of male primary offenders killed a stranger.

Most female primary offenders in 2022–23 also committed a domestic homicide (58%, *n*=15; see Table 29). Thirty-one percent of female primary offenders committed a filicide (*n*=8), 15 percent (*n*=4) committed an intimate partner homicide and eight percent (*n*=2) committed a parricide. An equal number of female primary offenders committed acquaintance and stranger homicides in 2022–23 (8%, *n*=2 each).

Table 29: Primary offenders by homicide classification and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male	Female	Total
<i>Intimate partner</i>	34	4	38
<i>Filicide</i>	3	8	11
<i>Parricide</i>	14	2	16
<i>Siblicide</i>	4	0	4
<i>Other family</i>	9	1	10
Domestic	64	15	79
Acquaintance	62	2	64
Stranger	32	2	34
Relationship not stated	24	7	31
Total	182	26	208

Note: Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Indigenous offenders

Of the 260 homicide offenders in 2022–23, 28 percent ($n=73$) identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (see Table 30), slightly exceeding the proportion of Indigenous offenders reported in 2021–22 (24%, $n=66$). Most Indigenous homicide offenders in 2022–23 were male (84%, $n=61$), while 16 percent ($n=12$) were female. Indigenous offenders comprised 17 percent ($n=1,754$) of all homicide offenders since 1989–90 (see Table C4). Fourteen percent ($n=1,411$) of homicide offenders since 1989–90 were Indigenous males and three percent ($n=343$) were Indigenous females.

Offending rates

The rate of homicide offending among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in 2022–23 was 10.18 per 100,000 relevant population aged 10 years and over (see Table 30). The rate of Indigenous male offending was 17.13 per 100,000, while the Indigenous female offending rate was 3.33 per 100,000. Both of these rates are an increase from the respective rates of 16.36 per 100,000 and 2.55 per 100,000 Indigenous male and female homicide offenders reported in 2021–22.

The proportion and rate of Indigenous homicide offending has increased since 2020–21. This is attributable in part to a change in data supplied by the New South Wales Police Force such that the Indigenous status of the offender is now based on whether the individual has 'ever' identified as Indigenous (see *Introduction*). Comparisons of Indigenous offending rates described in reports referencing the period prior to 2021–22 should be interpreted with caution.

Table 30: Homicide offenders by sex and Indigenous status, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023

	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous		Total
	<i>n</i>	Rate per 100,000 ^a	<i>n</i>	Rate per 100,000 ^a	
Male	61	17.13	157	1.39	218
Female	12	3.33	22	0.19	34
Total	73	10.18	179	0.79	252

a: Rate per 100,000 population aged 10 years and over

Note: Excludes eight offenders whose Indigenous status was not stated or unknown. Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Primary offender relationship with primary victim

Indigenous status was known for 203 of the 208 primary offenders, 30 percent ($n=60$) of whom identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (see Table 31). One-quarter (25%, $n=51$) of all primary homicide offenders in 2022–23 were Indigenous males, while four percent ($n=9$) were Indigenous females.

Indigenous male primary offenders were equally likely to have killed an Indigenous or non-Indigenous male (39%, $n=20$; see Table 31). The primary victim was an Indigenous female in 12 percent ($n=6$) of homicides when the primary offender was an Indigenous male. All but one victim of an Indigenous female primary offender were Indigenous (89%, $n=8$)—four male and four female victims. The remaining victim of an Indigenous female primary offender was a non-Indigenous male (11%).

Table 31: Indigenous primary homicide offenders by Indigenous status and sex of victim, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (*n*)

	Male offender	Female offender	Total
Indigenous male victim	20	4	24
Indigenous female victim	6	4	10
<i>Total Indigenous</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>34</i>
Non-Indigenous male victim	20	1	21
Non-Indigenous female victim	5	0	5
<i>Total non-Indigenous</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>26</i>
Total	51	9	60

Note: Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Around a third of Indigenous male primary offenders each killed an intimate partner or family member (31%, $n=16$) or an acquaintance (33%, $n=17$; see Table 32). A quarter killed a stranger (24%, $n=12$; see Table 32). A fifth of female Indigenous offenders killed an intimate partner (22%, $n=2$) and a third killed their children (33%, $n=3$).

Table 32: Indigenous homicide offenders by homicide classification and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male offender	Female offender	Total
<i>Intimate partner</i>	5	2	7
<i>Filicide</i>	1	3	4
<i>Parricide</i>	2	0	2
<i>Siblicide</i>	3	0	3
<i>Other family</i>	5	1	6
Domestic	16	6	22
Acquaintance	17	0	17
Stranger	12	0	12
Relationship not stated	6	3	9
Total	51	9	60

Note: Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Non-Indigenous offenders

Sixty-nine percent ($n=179$) of homicide offenders in 2022–23 were non-Indigenous (see Table 30). The majority of these offenders were male (88%, $n=157$) and 12 percent ($n=22$) were female. Since 1989–90, non-Indigenous male offenders comprised 71 percent ($n=7,569$) of all homicide offenders, compared with 60 percent ($n=157$) recorded in 2022–23 (see Table C4). Non-Indigenous females comprised 10 percent ($n=1,061$) of homicide offenders between 1989–90 and 2022–23.

Offending rates

The homicide offending rate for non-Indigenous Australians in 2022–23 was 0.79 per 100,000 population aged 10 years and over (see Table 30). The offending rate for non-Indigenous males was 1.39 per 100,000 population aged 10 years and over, while the offending rate for non-Indigenous females was 0.19 per 100,000 population aged 10 years and over. The rates of homicide offending for non-Indigenous males and females both decreased from the previous year.

Primary offender relationship with primary victim

In 2022–23, 143 of the 208 primary homicide offenders were non-Indigenous (69%)—127 males (89%) and 16 females (11%; see Table 33). The majority of non-Indigenous offenders killed a non-Indigenous person (92%, $n=131$), while six percent ($n=8$) of non-Indigenous primary offenders killed an Indigenous person.

Fifty-nine percent of non-Indigenous male primary offenders killed a non-Indigenous male ($n=75$) and one-third killed a non-Indigenous female (32%, $n=41$; see Table 33). Five percent ($n=6$) of non-Indigenous males killed an Indigenous male, and two percent ($n=2$) killed an Indigenous female.

Non-Indigenous female primary offenders mostly killed a non-Indigenous male (81%, $n=13$) while 13 percent ($n=2$) killed a non-Indigenous female (see Table 33). There were no Indigenous victims of non-Indigenous female primary offenders.

	Male offender	Female offender	Total
Indigenous male victim	6	0	6
Indigenous female victim	2	0	2
<i>Total Indigenous</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>8</i>
Non-Indigenous male victim	75	13	88
Non-Indigenous female victim	41	2	43
<i>Total non-Indigenous</i>	<i>116</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>131</i>
Indigenous status not stated or unknown	3	1	4
Total	127	16	143

Note: Data presented refer to an individual’s sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie ‘social and cultural identity, expression and experience’; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Friends and acquaintances have historically been the main victims of non-Indigenous male primary homicide offenders, but in 2022–23 the largest proportion of non-Indigenous male offenders killed an intimate partner or family member (38%, $n=48$; see Table 34). Just under one-quarter of non-Indigenous male primary offenders killed a current or former intimate partner (23%, $n=29$), an increase from 15 percent of offenders ($n=19$) recorded in 2021–22. A friend or acquaintance was the primary victim in 34 percent ($n=43$) of homicide incidents perpetrated by a non-Indigenous male offender, down from 46 percent ($n=59$) in the previous year. Fourteen percent ($n=18$) of non-Indigenous male offenders killed a stranger.

Intimate partners or family members (56%, $n=9$; see Table 34) were also the main victims of non-Indigenous female offenders. Most of these victims were a child of the offender (31% of non-Indigenous female offenders, $n=5$). Two non-Indigenous female primary offenders killed their current or former intimate partner and two killed their parent (13% each). Non-Indigenous female homicide offenders were less likely than non-Indigenous male offenders to kill an acquaintance (13%, $n=2$ vs 34%, $n=18$ respectively). Two non-Indigenous female primary homicide offenders killed a stranger (13%).

Table 34: Non-Indigenous primary homicide offenders by homicide classification and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male offender	Female offender	Total
<i>Intimate partner</i>	29	2	31
<i>Filicide</i>	2	5	7
<i>Parricide</i>	12	2	14
<i>Siblicide</i>	1	0	1
<i>Other family</i>	4	0	4
Domestic	48	9	57
Acquaintance	43	2	45
Stranger	18	2	20
Relationship not stated	18	3	21
Total	127	16	143

Note: Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Criminal history

In 2022–23 most homicide offenders had a criminal history (60%, $n=155$)—59 percent ($n=133$) of male offenders and 63 percent ($n=22$) of female offenders (see Table 35). In addition, five percent ($n=14$) of offenders were on a protection order and three percent ($n=9$) were on bail at the time of the homicide.

Table 35: Homicide offender criminal history by sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male offender	Female offender	Total offender
Criminal history	133	22	155
No criminal history	32	10	42
Not stated/unknown	60	3	63
Total	225	35	260

Note: Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS.

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Excluding Western Australia due to data availability, male primary offenders of stranger homicides were much more likely to have a recorded criminal history (70%, $n=19$) than offenders of a domestic homicide (46%, $n=26$) or an acquaintance homicide (47%, $n=28$; see Table 36). However, the criminal history of a third (35%, $n=54$) of male primary offenders in 2022–23 was not stated or unknown. Fifty-seven percent ($n=8$) of female primary offenders of domestic homicide had a criminal history.

Table 36: Primary homicide offenders by criminal history, sex and homicide classification, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Male primary offender			Female primary offender		
	Domestic	Acquaintance	Stranger	Domestic	Acquaintance	Stranger
Criminal history	26	28	19	8	1	1
No criminal history	11	9	1	4	1	0
Not stated/unknown	20	22	7	2	0	0
Total	57	59	27	14	2	1

Note: Excludes Western Australia ($n=35$ primary offenders). Data presented refer to an individual’s sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie ‘social and cultural identity, expression and experience’; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS.

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

Information was also available on whether homicide offenders had a known history of domestic and family violence as an offender, victim or both. A history of domestic or family violence refers to the offender being known to police in relation to a domestic and family violence incident, rather than whether or not they were charged with an associated offence. Excluding Western Australia, 45 percent ($n=78$) of primary homicide offenders had a history of domestic and family violence—28 percent ($n=48$) as a perpetrator, four percent ($n=7$) as a victim and 13 percent ($n=23$) as both a victim and perpetrator (see Table 37).

Thirty-eight percent ($n=16$) of Indigenous male primary offenders had a history of domestic and family violence (see Table 37), most frequently as the perpetrator of the violence (19% of all Indigenous primary male offenders, $n=8$). The domestic and family violence history of almost half of Indigenous male primary offenders, however, was not stated or unknown (45%, $n=19$). All five Indigenous female primary offenders had a history of domestic and family violence—four (80%) as both the perpetrator and the victim of the violence, and one (20%) as the victim.

In 2022–23, 44 percent ($n=49$) of non-Indigenous males had a history of domestic and family violence—one-third (34%, $n=38$) as the perpetrator of the violence, two percent ($n=2$) as the victim and eight percent ($n=9$) as the perpetrator and victim of the violence (see Table 37). The majority of non-Indigenous female primary offenders also had a history of domestic and family violence (62%, $n=8$), most often as both the victim and perpetrator of the violence (31% of all primary non-Indigenous female offenders, $n=4$).

Fifty-eight percent ($n=17$) of male intimate partner homicide offenders (excluding Western Australia) had a known history of domestic and family violence, of whom 76 percent ($n=13$) had a history of perpetrating domestic and family violence and 18 percent ($n=3$) had a history as a perpetrator and victim of the violence.

Table 37: Primary homicide offenders by history of domestic and family violence, Indigenous status and sex, 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 (n)

	Indigenous			Non-Indigenous		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Perpetrator	8	0	8	38	2	40
Victim	2	1	3	2	2	4
Perpetrator and victim	6	4	10	9	4	13
<i>History of domestic and family violence</i>	16	5	21	49	8	57
No known history	7	0	7	28	3	31
Not stated/unknown	19	0	19	34	2	36
Total	42	5	47	111	13	124

Note: Excludes Western Australia (n=35 primary offenders). Excludes two male primary offenders whose Indigenous status was not stated or unknown. Data presented refer to an individual's sex (ie sex characteristics) rather than gender (ie 'social and cultural identity, expression and experience'; ABS 2021). This reflects the definitions in the data provided by the source organisations and from the NCIS

Source: AIC NHMP 2022–23 [computer file]

References

URLs correct as at March 2024

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2023. National, state and territory population. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/national-state-and-territory-population/jun-2023>

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021. Standard for sex, gender, variations of sex characteristics and sexual orientation variables. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/standards/standard-sex-gender-variations-sex-characteristics-and-sexual-orientation-variables/2020>

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2019. Estimates and projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples/estimates-and-projections-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-australians/latest-release>

AIC reports

Statistical Report

Hannah Miles is a Research Analyst in the Australian Institute of Criminology's Statistical Collections and Indigenous Justice Research Program.

Dr Samantha Bricknell is the Research Manager of the Australian Institute of Criminology's Statistical Collections and Indigenous Justice Research Program.

Australia's national research and
knowledge centre on crime and justice

www.aic.gov.au