



SUICIDES

AUSTRALIA

EMBARGO: 11.30AM (CANBERRA TIME) TUE 14 MAR 2006

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INQUIRIES

For further information about these and related statistics, contact the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070.

NOTES

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This publication presents summary statistics on deaths registered in Australia where the underlying cause of death was determined to be suicide. These statistics were compiled from data made available to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) by the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages in each State or Territory. Data are presented for suicide deaths registered in the years 1994 to 2004, by sex and age group, and method of suicide. State and territory death rates from suicide are also presented.

Caution

The quality of cause of death coding is affected by a range of factors including delays in finalising coronial processes. Paragraphs 5 to 10 of the Explanatory Notes provide further explanation. The level of recorded deaths attributed to suicide, and observed changes over time are likely to have been affected by delays in finalising a cause.



ABBREVIATIONS

- ABS Australian Bureau of Statistics
- ICD International Classification of Diseases
- ICD-10 International Classification of Diseases 10th Revision
- ICD-9 International Classification of Diseases, 9th Revision
- WHO World Health Organization

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SUMMARY OF RESULTS

INTRODUCTION

Suicide continues to be a major public health issue. Although death by suicide is a relatively uncommon event (1.6% of all deaths registered in 2004 were attributed to suicide), the human and economic costs are substantial.

Suicide can be defined as the deliberate taking of one's life¹. To be classified as a suicide, a death must be recognised as being due to other than natural causes. It must also be established by coronial enquiry that the death resulted from a deliberate act of the deceased with the intention of ending his or her own life.

This publication contains summary statistics on deaths registered in Australia between 1994 and 2004 (the most recent year for which data are available), where the underlying cause of death was determined as suicide. Data on deaths from suicide are presented disaggregated by sex, age, method of suicide and state or territory of usual residence.

All data are presented by year of registration, rather than the year in which the death occurred. Over the last decade, around 93% of suicide deaths were registered in the same year in which the death occurred, and 7% in the year immediately following.

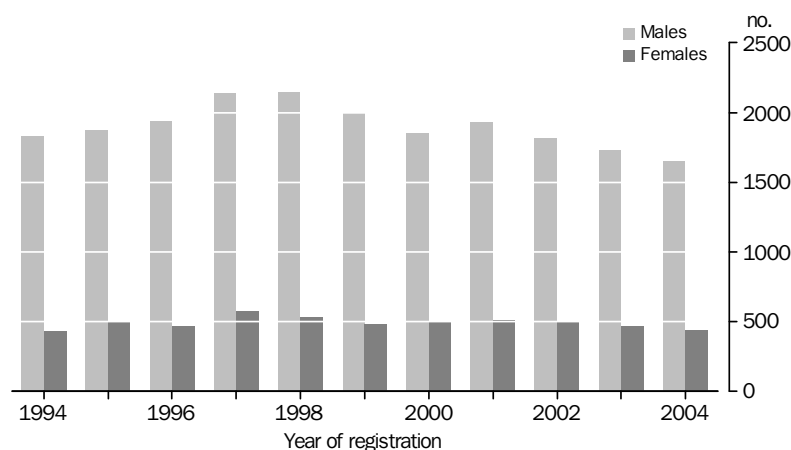
OVERALL TRENDS

Total number of suicide deaths

There were 2,098 deaths from suicide registered in 2004. This number was a decrease from 2,213 registered in the previous year. Males comprised nearly 80% of these deaths.

Numbers of suicides have decreased in recent years following peaks in 1997 and 1998. However, despite these decreases, suicide remains a major external cause of death. For example in each of the years from 1994 to 2004, the total number of deaths from suicide was greater than the number of deaths from transport accidents.

SUICIDE, TOTAL NUMBER OF DEATHS



Ratio of suicide to total deaths

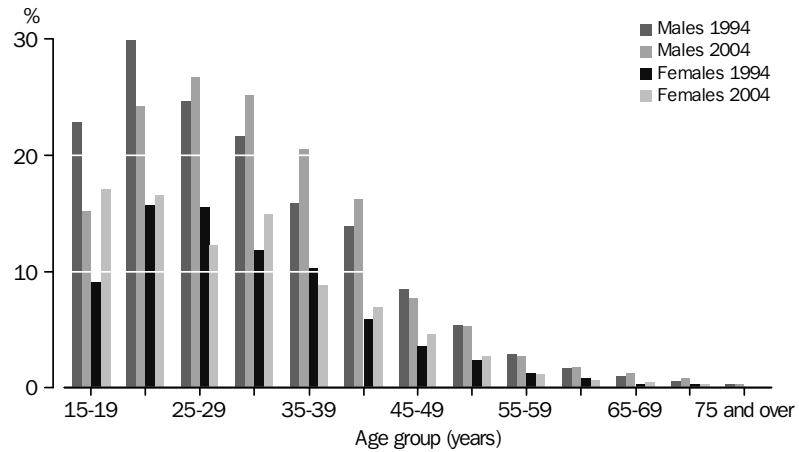
While suicide accounts for only a small proportion (1.6%) of deaths of persons of all ages, it accounts for a greater proportion of deaths from all causes in specific age groups (see graph below). For example, suicide deaths make up more than 20 percent of deaths from all causes, in each five year age group for males between 20 to 39 years. Similarly for females, suicide deaths comprise a much higher proportion of total deaths in younger age groups compared with older age groups (see Table 6).

¹ Butterworth Concise Australian Legal Dictionary, 1997

SUMMARY OF RESULTS *continued*

Ratio of suicide to total deaths continued

RATIO OF SUICIDE TO TOTAL DEATHS, 1994 AND 2004



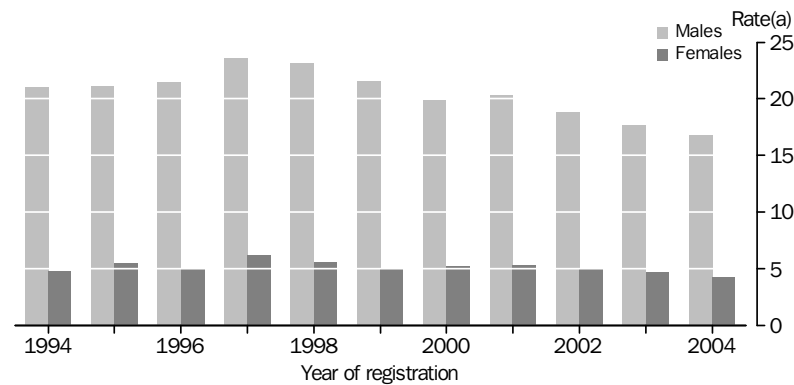
Age-standardised rates

Age standardisation allows comparison of rates between populations with different age structures. The age-standardised suicide rate (for persons) in 2004 was 6% lower than the corresponding rate for the previous year and 29% lower than in 1997.

The age-standardised suicide rate in 2004 for males was 16.8 per 100,000 while the corresponding rate for females was 4.3 per 100,000 (see final columns of Tables 2 and 3).

Throughout the period 1994 to 2004 the male age-standardised suicide death rate was approximately four times higher than the corresponding female rate, as can be seen in the following graph.

AGE-STANDARDISED DEATH RATES FOR SUICIDE



(a) Age-standardised rate per 100,000. Standardised using direct method and the Australian estimated resident population (persons) at 30 June 2001 as standard population

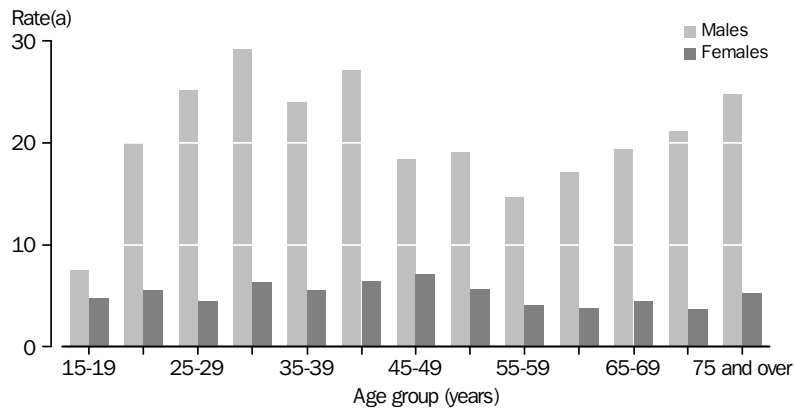
Age-specific rates

The pattern of age-specific rates in 2004 for suicide in males and females is shown in the graph below.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS *continued*

Age-specific rates *continued*

AGE-SPECIFIC SUICIDE RATES 2004



(a) Rate per 100,000 estimated resident population

The highest age-specific suicide death rate for males in 2004 was observed in the 30-34 years age group (29.2 per 100,000) and the lowest was in the 15-19 years age group (7.5 per 100,000). For females the highest age-specific suicide death rate in 2004 was observed in the 45-49 years age group (7.1 per 100,000) and the lowest in the 70-74 years age group (3.7 per 100,000)(see Table 2).

METHOD OF SUICIDE

In 2004 the most frequent method of suicide was hanging, which was used in almost half (48%) of all suicide deaths. The next most used methods were poisoning by 'other' (including motor vehicle exhaust) (19%), poisoning by drugs (11%), and methods using firearms (8%). The remaining group (Other) comprised 14% of suicide deaths and included deaths from drowning, jumping from a high place, and other methods. Over the decade a clear pattern was apparent in methods using firearms. Suicide deaths using firearms have more than halved over this period, from 420 deaths in 1994, to 169 deaths in 2004. See Table 4 for data on broad groupings of method of suicide.

STATE AND TERRITORY

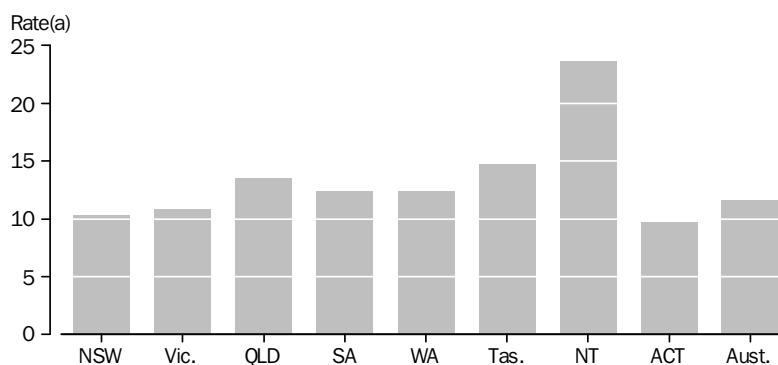
Suicide rates in states and territories may fluctuate over time particularly in the smaller jurisdictions, because of the small number of suicides that may be registered annually. Therefore caution should be exercised when comparing annual state and territory suicide data (see Table 5). Other factors such as the higher rate of suicide in rural areas may contribute to differences across states and territories. In the Northern Territory, the high rate of suicide in the Indigenous population contributes to the high rate of suicide in that jurisdiction. See *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, 2005* (cat. no. 4704.0, page 159) for more information on suicide deaths in the Indigenous population.

Combining data for five years allows more reliable comparison of suicide rates across the states and territories. The graph below shows age-standardised suicide rates for the states and territories using the most recent five years of data (registration years 2000-2004) combined (Table 5).

SUMMARY OF RESULTS *continued*

STATE AND TERRITORY *continued*

SUICIDE BY STATE AND TERRITORY 2000-2004, age-standardised rates



(a) Age-standardised rate per 100,000. Standardised using direct method and estimated resident population for Australia (persons) at 30 June 2001 as standard.

For this period, high rates were evident in the Northern Territory (more than double the national rate), followed by Tasmania (26% above the national rate) and Queensland (16% above the national rate). New South Wales, Victoria and the ACT all had rates lower than the national rate.

OTHER ABS PUBLICATIONS

Other ABS publications or articles that contain information on deaths from suicide are as follows:

Publications:

Causes of Death, Australia (cat. no. 3303.0) - annual

Deaths, Australia (cat. no. 3302.0) - annual

The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, 2005 (cat. no. 4704.0)

Suicides, Australia 1921-1998 (cat. no. 3309.0)

A Mortality Atlas of Australia (cat. no. 3318.0)

Trends in Mortality by Causes of Death in Australia, the States and Territories During 1971-92, and in Statistical Divisions and Sub-divisions During 1991-92 (cat. no. 3313.0)

Articles:

Suicide (*Australian Social Trends 2000*, cat. no. 4102.0)

Youth suicide (*Australian Social Trends 1994*, cat. no. 4102.0)

SUICIDE, NUMBER OF DEATHS—5 year age groups

AGE GROUP (YEARS)

Year(a)	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75 and over	All ages(b)
MALES														
1994	122	252	205	209	174	180	150	120	91	82	76	65	100	1 830
1995	98	252	236	239	220	162	154	116	108	69	63	54	96	1 873
1996	114	237	236	229	234	179	151	115	93	88	68	68	112	1 931
1997	121	295	294	246	215	216	153	141	97	80	77	69	131	2 143
1998	116	248	314	277	273	206	167	147	88	75	87	49	97	2 150
1999	97	212	272	235	224	203	165	147	102	74	63	77	121	2 002
2000	89	174	235	240	234	210	152	139	80	66	56	64	113	1 860
2001	95	181	226	260	240	207	171	140	101	74	63	64	107	1 935
2002	97	164	214	229	222	209	159	143	84	74	64	51	103	1 817
2003	89	162	180	227	185	196	187	112	88	66	63	65	109	1 736
2004	53	143	172	221	174	208	131	126	89	78	71	64	123	1 661
FEMALES														
1994	17	40	43	42	55	44	38	30	23	24	14	18	37	428
1995	29	55	49	50	50	54	48	41	31	19	23	14	32	495
1996	26	30	49	47	65	45	50	38	21	19	15	23	27	462
1997	33	60	59	56	64	58	45	51	32	24	25	22	41	577
1998	35	47	56	53	77	58	33	39	30	23	20	21	39	533
1999	27	44	55	61	48	56	57	40	20	22	17	12	23	490
2000	41	34	57	49	67	65	34	33	29	22	20	21	30	503
2001	25	38	55	53	65	53	49	57	28	20	13	20	38	519
2002	27	29	47	56	48	74	51	43	35	21	15	15	38	503
2003	24	25	41	70	57	45	57	36	37	22	20	13	23	477
2004	32	37	30	48	41	50	51	38	24	17	17	12	39	437
PERSONS														
1994	139	292	248	251	229	224	188	150	114	106	90	83	137	2 258
1995	127	307	285	289	270	216	202	157	139	88	86	68	128	2 368
1996	140	267	285	276	299	224	201	153	114	107	83	91	139	2 393
1997	154	355	353	302	279	274	198	192	129	104	102	91	172	2 720
1998	151	295	370	330	350	264	200	186	118	98	107	70	136	2 683
1999	124	256	327	296	272	259	222	187	122	96	80	89	144	2 492
2000	130	208	292	289	301	275	186	172	109	88	76	85	143	2 363
2001	120	219	281	313	305	260	220	197	129	94	76	84	145	2 454
2002	124	193	261	285	270	283	210	186	119	95	79	66	141	2 320
2003	113	187	221	297	242	241	244	148	125	88	83	78	132	2 213
2004	85	180	202	269	215	258	182	164	113	95	88	76	162	2 098

(a) Year of registration

(b) Includes deaths of persons aged under 15 years and age not stated.

SUICIDE , AGE-SPECIFIC DEATH RATES(a)—5 year age groups

AGE GROUP (YEARS)														
Year(b)	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75 and over	All ages(c)
MALES														
1994	18.6	34.5	30.0	28.4	25.0	27.3	24.3	25.3	23.1	23.1	22.9	24.6	31.7	21.0
1995	15.1	34.8	34.1	32.7	30.9	24.3	24.2	23.4	26.6	19.5	18.8	20.0	29.2	21.1
1996	17.4	33.4	33.2	31.8	32.2	26.5	23.1	22.2	22.2	24.9	20.2	24.6	32.4	21.5
1997	18.5	42.8	40.5	34.6	29.2	31.5	23.5	25.3	22.3	22.1	22.8	24.5	36.1	23.6
1998	17.6	36.9	42.9	39.4	36.6	29.7	25.5	24.8	19.6	20.2	25.9	17.0	25.5	23.2
1999	14.6	32.1	37.3	33.5	29.8	28.8	24.9	23.9	21.7	19.2	18.9	26.1	30.4	21.6
2000	13.1	26.6	32.5	33.9	31.3	29.2	22.8	21.9	16.3	16.5	16.9	21.4	27.2	19.8
2001	13.8	27.4	32.2	35.8	32.4	28.2	25.3	21.5	19.7	17.9	18.8	21.1	24.5	20.3
2002	13.9	24.2	31.1	30.8	30.3	27.8	23.2	22.0	15.3	17.3	18.6	16.8	22.5	18.8
2003	12.7	23.3	26.3	30.1	25.5	25.7	26.9	17.1	15.1	15.0	17.7	21.5	22.9	17.7
2004	7.5	20.0	25.2	29.2	24.0	27.1	18.4	19.1	14.7	17.1	19.3	21.2	24.8	16.8
FEMALES														
1994	2.7	5.6	6.3	5.7	7.9	6.7	6.4	6.6	6.0	6.7	3.9	5.7	7.1	4.8
1995	4.7	7.8	7.1	6.8	7.0	8.1	7.8	8.6	7.8	5.3	6.5	4.3	5.9	5.5
1996	4.2	4.4	6.9	6.5	8.9	6.6	7.8	7.6	5.2	5.3	4.2	7.0	4.8	5.1
1997	5.3	9.0	8.1	7.8	8.6	8.4	7.0	9.5	7.6	6.6	7.1	6.7	7.0	6.2
1998	5.6	7.2	7.6	7.5	10.2	8.3	5.0	6.8	6.9	6.2	5.7	6.3	6.4	5.6
1999	4.2	6.9	7.5	8.6	6.3	7.8	8.6	6.7	4.4	5.7	4.9	3.6	3.7	5.1
2000	6.3	5.3	7.8	6.8	8.9	8.9	5.0	5.3	6.1	5.5	5.8	6.3	4.6	5.2
2001	3.8	5.9	7.8	7.2	8.7	7.1	7.2	8.8	5.6	4.9	3.7	6.0	5.6	5.3
2002	4.1	4.4	6.8	7.4	6.5	9.7	7.4	6.6	6.5	5.0	4.2	4.5	5.5	5.0
2003	3.6	3.7	6.0	9.1	7.8	5.8	8.1	5.5	6.5	5.1	5.5	3.9	3.2	4.7
2004	4.8	5.5	4.5	6.3	5.6	6.5	7.1	5.7	4.0	3.8	4.5	3.7	5.3	4.3
PERSONS														
1994	10.9	20.3	18.2	17.1	16.4	17.0	15.5	16.2	14.6	14.9	13.1	14.3	16.4	12.8
1995	10.0	21.5	20.7	19.8	19.0	16.2	16.1	16.1	17.3	12.4	12.5	11.5	14.7	13.1
1996	10.9	19.1	20.1	19.1	20.5	16.5	15.5	15.1	13.8	15.1	12.0	15.1	15.3	13.1
1997	12.0	26.1	24.3	21.2	18.8	19.9	15.3	17.5	15.1	14.3	14.8	14.9	18.1	14.7
1998	11.7	22.3	25.3	23.4	23.4	18.9	15.3	16.0	13.4	13.2	15.6	11.3	13.8	14.3
1999	9.5	19.7	22.4	21.0	18.0	18.2	16.7	15.4	13.2	12.5	11.8	14.2	14.0	13.2
2000	9.8	16.1	20.1	20.3	20.0	19.0	13.9	13.7	11.3	11.0	11.2	13.4	13.4	12.3
2001	8.9	16.8	20.0	21.3	20.4	17.6	16.2	15.1	12.8	11.4	11.1	13.2	13.0	12.6
2002	9.1	14.5	19.0	19.0	18.3	18.7	15.2	14.3	11.0	11.2	11.3	10.4	12.2	11.8
2003	8.3	13.7	16.2	19.5	16.6	15.7	17.4	11.3	10.8	10.1	11.5	12.3	11.1	11.1
2004	6.2	12.9	14.9	17.7	14.7	16.7	12.7	12.4	9.4	10.5	11.8	12.1	13.2	10.4

(a) Deaths per 100,000 estimated resident population in each age and sex group.

(b) Year of registration

(c) Age-standardised death rate per 100,000 using estimated resident population for Australia (persons) at 30 June 2001 as the standard population. Direct method used. Includes deaths of persons aged under 15 years.

SUICIDE, AGE-SPECIFIC DEATH RATES(a)—10 year age groups

Year(b)	AGE GROUP (YEARS)							All ages(c)
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75 and over	
MALES								
1994	27.0	29.2	26.1	24.7	23.1	23.6	31.7	21.0
1995	25.4	33.4	27.8	23.9	23.3	19.3	29.2	21.1
1996	25.7	32.5	29.4	22.7	23.4	22.2	32.4	21.5
1997	31.0	37.6	30.3	24.3	22.2	23.6	36.1	23.6
1998	27.4	41.2	33.2	25.2	19.9	21.8	25.5	23.2
1999	23.3	35.4	29.3	24.4	20.6	22.3	30.4	21.6
2000	19.7	33.2	30.2	22.4	16.4	19.0	27.2	19.8
2001	20.4	34.0	30.3	23.4	18.9	19.9	24.5	20.3
2002	19.0	30.9	29.0	22.6	16.2	17.7	22.5	18.8
2003	18.0	28.3	25.6	22.1	15.0	19.4	22.9	17.7
2004	13.8	27.3	25.6	18.8	15.7	20.2	24.8	16.8
FEMALES								
1994	4.3	6.0	7.3	6.5	6.3	4.8	7.1	4.8
1995	6.4	7.0	7.5	8.1	6.6	5.5	5.9	5.5
1996	4.3	6.7	7.8	7.7	5.2	5.6	4.8	5.1
1997	7.2	8.0	8.5	8.1	7.1	6.9	7.0	6.2
1998	6.4	7.6	9.3	5.9	6.6	6.0	6.4	5.6
1999	5.6	8.0	7.1	7.7	5.0	4.3	3.7	5.1
2000	5.8	7.3	8.9	5.2	5.9	6.0	4.6	5.2
2001	4.8	7.5	7.9	8.0	5.3	4.8	5.6	5.3
2002	4.3	7.1	8.1	7.0	5.9	4.4	5.5	5.0
2003	3.7	7.7	6.8	6.8	5.9	4.7	3.2	4.7
2004	5.1	5.4	6.0	6.4	3.9	4.1	5.3	4.3
PERSONS								
1994	15.9	17.6	16.7	15.8	14.7	13.6	16.4	12.8
1995	16.1	20.2	17.6	16.1	15.0	12.0	14.7	13.1
1996	15.2	19.6	18.6	15.3	14.4	13.4	15.3	13.1
1997	19.3	22.8	19.3	16.3	14.7	14.8	18.1	14.7
1998	17.1	24.3	21.2	15.6	13.3	13.6	13.8	14.3
1999	14.6	21.7	18.1	16.1	12.9	12.9	14.0	13.2
2000	12.9	20.2	19.5	13.8	11.2	12.3	13.4	12.3
2001	12.8	20.7	19.0	15.7	12.2	12.1	13.0	12.6
2002	11.8	19.0	18.5	14.8	11.1	10.8	12.2	11.8
2003	11.0	18.0	16.1	14.4	10.5	11.9	11.1	11.1
2004	9.6	16.4	15.7	12.6	9.9	11.9	13.2	10.4

(a) Deaths per 100,000 estimated resident population in each age and sex group.

(b) Year of registration

(c) Age-standardised death rate per 100,000 using estimated resident population for Australia (persons) at 30 June 2001 as the standard population. Direct method used. Includes deaths of persons aged under 15 years.

SUICIDE, BY METHOD(a)—number of deaths

Year (b)	Poisoning by drugs	Poisoning by other(c)	Hanging(d)	Firearms(e)	Other(f)	Total
MALES						
1994	188	425	532	400	285	1 830
1995	194	455	585	366	273	1 873
1996	163	486	672	369	241	1 931
1997	160	555	812	309	307	2 143
1998	157	499	1 035	218	241	2 150
1999	158	492	868	257	227	2 002
2000	144	472	807	213	224	1 860
2001	151	427	855	242	260	1 935
2002	156	362	846	207	246	1 817
2003	148	340	820	185	243	1 736
2004	127	331	822	164	217	1 661
FEMALES						
1994	142	72	107	20	87	428
1995	154	101	114	23	103	495
1996	165	94	120	15	68	462
1997	149	116	175	21	116	577
1998	153	87	182	17	94	533
1999	120	103	160	13	94	490
2000	129	102	182	10	80	503
2001	134	86	195	20	84	519
2002	131	77	199	11	85	503
2003	130	75	176	9	87	477
2004	102	71	176	5	83	437
PERSONS						
1994	330	497	639	420	372	2 258
1995	348	556	699	389	376	2 368
1996	328	580	792	384	309	2 393
1997	309	671	987	330	423	2 720
1998	310	586	1 217	235	335	2 683
1999	278	595	1 028	270	321	2 492
2000	273	574	989	223	304	2 363
2001	285	513	1 050	262	344	2 454
2002	287	439	1 045	218	331	2 320
2003	278	415	996	194	330	2 213
2004	229	402	998	169	300	2 098

(a) See glossary for ICD-9 and ICD-10 codes used for categories of method of suicide.

(b) Year of registration.

(c) Includes poisoning by other gases and vapours (including motor vehicle exhaust).

(d) Includes strangulation and suffocation.

(e) Includes explosives.

(f) Includes drowning, smoke/fire/flames, sharp object, jumping from high place, jumping or lying before moving object, other and unspecified means.

SUICIDE BY STATE OR TERRITORY(a), number of deaths, age-standardised rate

Year(b) NSW Vic. Qld SA WA Tas. NT ACT Aust.

MALES

1994	629	401	365	140	188	63	np	np	1 830
1995	593	439	396	161	179	51	np	np	1 873
1996	660	388	451	153	171	54	28	26	1 931
1997	712	528	434	161	206	40	33	29	2 143
1998	705	446	454	199	234	49	np	np	2 150
1999	689	440	396	155	192	68	27	35	2 002
2000	588	382	421	161	206	40	37	25	1 860
2001	613	412	406	168	212	51	39	34	1 935
2002	552	386	431	140	188	54	44	22	1 817
2003	510	409	371	154	167	54	np	np	1 736
2004	464	396	371	141	156	70	44	19	1 661

FEMALES

1994	152	110	90	29	29	7	np	np	428
1995	172	127	99	39	39	15	np	np	495
1996	155	112	88	32	47	10	7	11	462
1997	222	141	101	35	49	11	5	13	577
1998	157	133	125	45	53	10	np	np	533
1999	180	112	84	45	44	10	5	10	490
2000	142	129	120	38	55	10	5	4	503
2001	172	129	93	39	57	13	4	12	519
2002	140	142	106	30	54	16	11	4	503
2003	130	131	95	39	59	15	np	np	477
2004	123	125	82	37	38	18	7	7	437

PERSONS

1994	781	511	455	169	217	70	19	36	2 258
1995	765	566	495	200	218	66	23	34	2 368
1996	815	500	539	185	218	64	35	37	2 393
1997	934	669	535	196	255	51	38	42	2 720
1998	862	579	579	244	287	59	42	31	2 683
1999	869	552	480	200	236	78	32	45	2 492
2000	730	511	541	199	261	50	42	29	2 363
2001	785	541	499	207	269	64	43	46	2 454
2002	692	528	537	170	242	70	55	26	2 320
2003	640	540	466	193	226	69	44	35	2 213
2004	587	521	453	178	194	88	51	26	2 098

AGE-STANDARDISED RATE 2000-2004 (c)

Males	16.7	16.7	22.1	20.4	19.5	24.1	38.8	15.9	18.7
Females	4.2	5.3	5.3	4.7	5.4	6.0	6.3	3.9	4.9
Persons	10.3	10.8	13.5	12.4	12.4	14.7	23.6	9.7	11.6

RATE RATIO 2000-2004 (d)

Males	0.90	0.89	1.18	1.09	1.04	1.29	2.08	0.85	1.00
Females	0.86	1.08	1.09	0.96	1.11	1.22	1.28	0.80	1.00
Persons	0.89	0.93	1.16	1.07	1.06	1.26	2.03	0.84	1.00

np not available for publication but included in totals where applicable, unless otherwise indicated

(a) State or Territory of usual residence.

(b) Year of registration

(c) Age-standardised death rate per 100,000 for the five-year period 2000 to 2004, using estimated resident population for Australia (persons) at 30 June 2001 as the standard population. Direct method of standardisation. Includes deaths of persons aged under 15 years.

(d) Ratio of age-standardised rate for state/territory to corresponding rate for Australia

RATIO OF SUICIDE TO TOTAL DEATHS, percentage

AGE GROUP (YEARS)

Year(a)	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75 and over	All ages(b)
MALES														
1994	22.9	29.9	24.7	21.6	15.9	13.9	8.5	5.4	2.9	1.7	1.0	0.6	0.3	2.7
1995	19.9	27.5	27.8	22.8	19.0	12.8	8.9	5.2	3.5	1.5	0.8	0.5	0.3	2.8
1996	21.1	27.4	26.9	22.5	20.8	13.5	8.6	5.0	3.0	1.9	0.9	0.7	0.3	2.8
1997	21.2	34.4	31.3	25.9	19.9	16.4	8.9	5.8	3.2	1.7	1.1	0.7	0.4	3.2
1998	22.9	28.5	31.7	26.0	24.0	15.7	10.3	6.2	2.9	1.7	1.3	0.5	0.3	3.2
1999	17.7	25.2	26.5	24.1	21.0	15.6	9.9	6.2	3.3	1.8	1.0	0.8	0.4	3.0
2000	17.8	24.9	25.5	25.8	20.9	15.6	9.4	5.8	2.6	1.6	0.9	0.7	0.3	2.8
2001	20.8	27.2	29.8	29.5	23.7	16.4	10.1	5.9	3.1	1.7	1.1	0.7	0.3	2.9
2002	22.1	26.5	29.7	27.1	23.5	16.5	8.9	6.1	2.6	1.7	1.1	0.6	0.3	2.6
2003	19.9	26.1	25.9	28.4	19.1	14.6	10.4	5.0	2.6	1.6	1.1	0.8	0.3	2.5
2004	15.2	24.2	26.7	25.2	20.5	16.2	7.7	5.3	2.7	1.8	1.3	0.8	0.3	2.4
FEMALES														
1994	9.1	15.7	15.6	11.9	10.3	5.9	3.6	2.4	1.3	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.7
1995	13.6	18.8	17.0	12.1	10.1	7.4	4.7	3.1	1.8	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.8
1996	14.1	13.2	16.6	12.9	11.7	6.3	4.7	2.8	1.2	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.8
1997	14.9	21.1	18.4	13.0	11.6	7.8	4.2	3.5	1.8	1.0	0.6	0.3	0.1	0.9
1998	14.8	18.2	18.2	14.2	13.4	7.6	3.1	2.6	1.7	1.0	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.9
1999	12.6	16.4	17.5	15.0	9.0	7.1	5.3	2.9	1.2	0.9	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.8
2000	19.0	13.8	17.6	13.1	11.8	8.8	3.2	2.2	1.5	1.0	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.8
2001	15.8	16.5	21.6	15.1	12.4	6.7	4.8	3.7	1.5	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.8
2002	14.5	14.8	18.1	15.3	9.7	9.7	4.8	2.7	1.7	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.8
2003	13.1	11.6	16.4	18.4	11.1	5.9	5.2	2.6	1.9	0.9	0.6	0.3	0.1	0.7
2004	17.1	16.6	12.3	14.9	8.8	6.9	4.6	2.7	1.2	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.1	0.7
PERSONS														
1994	19.3	26.6	22.4	19.0	14.0	11.0	6.7	4.3	2.3	1.4	0.7	0.5	0.2	1.8
1995	18.0	25.4	25.0	19.8	16.4	10.8	7.3	4.4	2.9	1.2	0.7	0.4	0.2	1.9
1996	19.3	24.4	24.3	20.0	17.8	11.0	7.1	4.2	2.3	1.5	0.7	0.6	0.2	1.9
1997	19.4	31.1	28.1	21.9	17.1	13.3	7.1	5.0	2.7	1.5	0.9	0.6	0.2	2.1
1998	20.3	26.2	28.5	22.9	20.5	12.7	7.4	4.8	2.5	1.4	1.0	0.4	0.2	2.1
1999	16.3	23.1	24.4	21.4	17.0	12.4	8.1	5.0	2.5	1.5	0.8	0.6	0.2	1.9
2000	18.1	22.0	23.5	22.1	17.8	13.2	6.9	4.4	2.2	1.4	0.8	0.6	0.2	1.8
2001	19.5	24.5	27.7	25.4	19.8	12.7	8.1	5.1	2.5	1.4	0.8	0.6	0.2	1.9
2002	19.8	23.7	26.6	23.5	18.8	14.0	7.3	4.7	2.3	1.4	0.9	0.5	0.2	1.7
2003	17.9	22.3	23.4	25.2	16.4	11.4	8.5	4.1	2.3	1.3	0.9	0.6	0.2	1.7
2004	15.9	22.1	22.7	22.5	16.3	12.8	6.4	4.3	2.1	1.4	1.0	0.6	0.2	1.6

(a) Year of registration

(b) Includes deaths of persons aged under 15 years and age not stated

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication contains summary statistics on deaths where the underlying cause of death was determined to be suicide. The registration of deaths is the responsibility of the individual state and territory Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages. As part of the registration process, information about the cause of death is supplied by the medical practitioner certifying the death or by a coroner. Other information about the deceased is supplied by a relative or other person acquainted with the deceased, or by an official of the institution where the death occurred. This information is provided to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) by individual Registrars for coding and compilation into aggregate statistics shown in this publication. In addition, the ABS supplements this data with information from the National Coroners Information Service (NCIS).

SCOPE AND COVERAGE

2 The statistics in this publication relate to the number of deaths registered, not those which actually occurred, in the years shown. Over the last decade about 7% of suicide deaths occurring in one year were not registered until the following year or later. The ABS deaths collection includes all deaths that occurred and were registered in Australia including deaths of persons whose usual residence is overseas. Deaths of Australian residents that occurred outside Australia may be registered by individual Registrars, but are not included in ABS statistics.

EXTERNAL CAUSES OF DEATH

3 Deaths that are classified as External Causes are generally of the kind that are reported to Coroners for investigation. Although what constitutes a reportable death varies across jurisdictions, they are generally reported in circumstances such as:

- Where the person died unexpectedly and the cause of death is unknown;
- Where the person died in a violent or unnatural manner;
- Where the person died during or as a result of an anaesthetic;
- Where the person was 'held in care' or in custody immediately before they died; and
- Where the identity of the person who has died is unknown.

4 Where an accidental or violent death occurs, the underlying cause is classified according to the circumstances of the fatal injury, rather than the nature of the injury which is coded separately.

DATA QUALITY

5 In compiling causes of death statistics the ABS employs a variety of quality control measures, which include:

- providing certifiers with certification booklets for guidance in reporting cause of death on medical certificates;
- seeking additional information, where necessary, from medical practitioners, from coroners and from the National Coroners Information Service (NCIS);
- check-coding of cause of death; and
- editing checks at the individual record and aggregate levels.

6 The quality of cause of death coding can be affected by changes in the way information is reported by certifiers, by lags in completion of coroner cases and the processing of the findings. While changes in reporting and lags in coronial processes can affect coding of all causes of death, those coded to causes within *Chapter XX: External causes of morbidity and mortality* are more likely to be affected because the code assigned within the chapter may vary depending on the coroner's findings.

7 In regard to the impacts on quality resulting from lags in finalising coronial processes, ABS is investigating options for revising deaths data to capture more complete cause of death information.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

DATA QUALITY *continued*

8 Care should be taken in interpreting results in recent years for several groups of causes within Chapter XX: External causes of morbidity and mortality. These include Intentional self-harm (suicide) (X60-X84), Falls(W00-W19) and Assault (X85-Y09). See *Causes of Death, Australia 2004* (cat. no. 3303.0) Explanatory notes for further information.

9 In relation to suicide, there has been an increase in recent years in the number of open coroners' cases. Where cases are not finalised and the findings are not available to the ABS in time for publication of causes of death statistics, deaths are coded to other accidental, ill-defined or unspecified causes rather than suicide. The causes of death statistics are not revised once a coronial enquiry is finalised.

10 The number of deaths coded to Intentional self-harm (suicide) has declined in recent years which may in part reflect the increase in open coroners' cases when the statistics were finalised.

GLOSSARY

Age-specific death rate	Age-specific death rates are the number of deaths registered (or occurred) during the calendar year at a specified age per 100,000 of the estimated resident population of the same age at mid-point of the year (30 June).
Causes of death	Causes of death recorded on death certificates are those diseases, morbid conditions, or injuries which either resulted in or contributed to death. From the information provided on the death certificates an underlying cause of death is coded according to the rules and guidelines of that particular revision of the International Classification of Diseases.
Crude death rate	The crude death rate is the number of deaths registered during the calendar year per 1,000 estimated resident population at 30 June.
Death	Death refers to any death which occurs in, or en route to Australia and is registered with a State or Territory Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages.
Estimated resident population	Estimated resident population (ERP) data are estimates of the Australian population obtained by adding to the estimated resident population at the beginning of each period the components of natural increase (on a usual residence basis) and net overseas migration.
Method of suicide	In this publication, suicide deaths data for registration years 1994-1996 have been coded to ICD-9 while data for registration years 1997-2004 have been coded to ICD-10. For suicide deaths, ICD-9 and ICD-10 classifications are comparable. Codes for groupings of methods used in this publication are shown below.

METHOD OF SUICIDE

	<i>ICD-9 codes</i>	<i>ICD-10 codes</i>
Poisoning by drugs	E950.0 - E950.5	X60 - X64
Poisoning by 'other'(a)	E950.6 - E952.9	X65 - X69
Hanging, strangulation, and suffocation	E953	X70
Firearms and explosives	E955	X72 - X75
Other(b)	E954, E956 - E959	X71, X76 - X84
All suicides	E950 - E959	X60 - X84

(a) includes motor vehicle exhaust

(b) includes drowning, smoke/fire/flames, sharp object, jumping from high place, jumping or lying before moving object, other and unspecified means

Suicide	Suicide refers to the deliberate taking of one's life. To be classified as a suicide a death must be recognised as due to other than natural causes and established by a coronial inquiry that death results from a deliberate act of the deceased with the intention of taking his or her own life.
Standardised death rate	<p>Standardised death rates enable the comparison of death rates between populations with different age structures by relating them to a standard population. The ABS standard populations relate to the years ending in 1 (e.g. 2001). The current standard population is all persons in the 2001 Australian population. They are expressed per 100,000 persons.</p> <p>There are two methods of calculating standardised death rates:</p> <p>The direct method - this is used when the populations under study are large and the age-specific death rates are reliable. It is the overall death rate that would have prevailed in the standard population if it had experienced at each age the death rates of the population under study; and</p> <p>The indirect method - this is used when the populations under study are small and the age-specific death rates are unreliable or not known. It is an adjustment to the crude death rate of the standard population to account for the variation between the actual number of deaths in the population under study and the number of deaths which would</p>

GLOSSARY *continued*

Standardised death rate <i>continued</i>	have occurred if the population under study had experienced the age-specific death rates of the standard population. Standardised rates in this publication: In this publication, five year age groups (0-4, 5-9, ... 85 & over) were used in the calculation of standardised rates, and a small number of records where age at death was not stated were excluded. The direct method of standardisation was used and the standard population used was the Estimated Resident Population (ERP) for Australia (persons) at June 2001.
Undetermined intent	Possible suicides where the coroner concludes an 'open' finding and not explicitly suicide are excluded from analysis in this publication. See explanatory notes in Suicides 1921-1998 (ABS cat. no. 3309.0) for further explanation of deaths of undetermined intent.
Underlying Cause of Death	The underlying cause of death is the disease or injury which initiated the train of events leading directly to death. Accidental and violent deaths are classified according to the external cause, that is, to the circumstances of the accident or violence which produced the fatal injury rather than to the nature of the injury.
Year of Occurrence	Data presented on year of occurrence basis relate to the date the death occurred.
Year of Registration	Data presented on year of registration basis relate to the date the death was registered.

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