# 6 Police services

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| Attachment tables |
| Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this Indigenous Compendium by an ‘A’ prefix (for example, in this chapter, table 6A.1). As the data are directly sourced from the 2015 Report, the Compendium also notes where the original table, figure or text in the 2015 Report can be found. For example, where the Compendium refers to ‘2015 Report, p. 6.1’ this is page 1 of chapter 6 of the 2015 Report, and ‘2015 Report, table 6A.1’ is attachment table 1 of attachment 6A of the 2015 Report. A list of attachment tables referred to in the Compendium is provided at the end of this chapter, and the full attachment tables are available from the Review website at www.pc.gov.au/research/recurring/report-on-government-services. |
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The Police services chapter (chapter 6) in the *Report on Government Services 2015*   
(2015 Report) reports on the performance of police services in Australia. Data are reported for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians for a subset of the performance indicators reported in that chapter — those data are compiled and presented here.

Police services are the principal means through which State and Territory governments pursue the achievement of a safe and secure environment for the community. This is through investigation of criminal offences, response to life threatening situations, provision of services to the judicial process and provision of road safety and traffic management. Police services also respond to more general needs in the community — for example, working with emergency management organisations and a wide range of government services and community groups, and advising on general policing and crime issues. Additionally, police are involved in various activities which aim to improve public safety and prevent crime.

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data in the Police services chapter

The Police services chapter in the 2015 Report contains the following data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians:

* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing
* proportion of police staff from Indigenous backgrounds relative to the proportion of the general population who are from Indigenous backgrounds
* deaths in police custody and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths in custody.

### Framework of performance indicators

The Police services performance indicator framework outlined in figure 6.1 identifies the principal police activity areas considered in the 2015 Report. Data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are reported for a subset of the performance indicators and are presented here. It is important to interpret these data in the context of the broader performance indicator framework. The framework shows which data are comparable. For data that are not considered directly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary.

Indicator boxes presented throughout the chapter provide information about the reported indicators. As these are sourced directly from the 2015 Report, they might include references to data not reported for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and therefore not included in this Compendium.

The Report’s statistical context chapter contains data that may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter. These data cover a range of demographic and geographic characteristics, including age profile, geographic distribution of the population, income levels, education levels, tenure of dwellings and cultural heritage (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and ethnic status) (chapter 2).

Indicators relevant to all police services are discussed in section 6.3. These include two ‘equity’ output indicators — ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing’ and ‘police staff by gender’.

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| Figure 6.1 Police services performance indicator framework |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 6.3 Police services performance indicator framework   More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
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*Source*: 2015 Report, figure 6.3, p. 6.9.

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing

‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing’ is an indicator of governments’ objective that provision of services occurs in an equitable manner (box 6.1). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people might feel more comfortable in ‘accessing’ police services when they are able to deal with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander police staff. However, many factors influence the willingness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to access police services, including familiarity with procedures for dealing with police.

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| Box 6.1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing |
| ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing’ is defined as the proportion of police staff (operational plus non-operational) from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds compared with the proportion of people aged 20–64 years who are from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds. These data are used because a significantly larger proportion of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population falls within the younger non-working age groupings compared with the non-Indigenous population. Readily available ABS population projections of people aged 20–64 years provide a proxy for the estimated working population.  A proportion of police staff from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds closer to the proportion of people aged 20–64 years who are from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds represents a more equitable outcome.  The process of identifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members generally relies on self-identification. Where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are asked to identify themselves, the accuracy of the data will partly depend on how they perceive the advantages (or disadvantages) of identification and whether these perceptions change over time.  Data reported for this measure are:   * not comparable across jurisdictions or over time * complete for the current reporting period (subject to caveats). All required 2013-14 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is under development. |
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The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander police staff in 2013-14 was similar to the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the population aged 20–64 years for all jurisdictions except Tasmania and the NT, where the proportion was higher (figure 6.2).

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| Figure 6.2 Proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in 2013-14 and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20–64 years**a, b, c** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 6.5 Proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in 2013-14 and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 20–64 years  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff numbers relate to those staff who self-identify as being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent. b Information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status is collected generally at the time of recruitment. c Data comprise all full time equivalent (FTE) staff except in the NT, where data are based on a headcount at 30 June. |
| *Source*: ABS (2014) *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population aged 20–64 years*, Cat. no. 3238.0 (Series B); State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 6A.17; 2015 Report, figure 6.5, p. 6.13. |
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Time series data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander police staffing are reported in tables 6A.1–8 and 6A.17.

### Deaths in police custody and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths in custody

‘Deaths in police custody’, and ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths in police custody’ are indicators of governments’ objective to provide safe custody for alleged offenders, and ensure fair and equitable treatment for both victims and alleged offenders (box 6.2).

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| Box 6.2 Deaths in police custody, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths in police custody |
| ‘Deaths in police custody’ and ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths in police custody’ are defined as the number of non-Indigenous and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths in police custody and custody related operations.  A low or decreasing number of deaths in custody and custody-related operations is desirable.  Data reported for this measure are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time * complete for the current reporting period (subject to caveats). All required 2012-13 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/research/recurring/report-on-government-services. |
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Nationally, there were 18 deaths in police custody and custody-related operations in 2012‑13. Of these 18 deaths, 5 were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (table 6.1). Time series data are available in table 6A.38.

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| Table 6.1 Deaths in police custody and custody-related operations**a, b** |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | NSW | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | ACT | NT | Aust | | **Non-Indigenous deaths** | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | 2007-08 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 1 | – | 3 | 29 | | 2008-09 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 7 | 4 | – | 1 | 1 | 29 | | 2009-10 | 3 | 6 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 21 | | 2010-11 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | – | 18 | | 2011-12 | 10 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 3 | – | – | – | 32 | | 2012-13 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 3 | – | – | – | – | 13 | | **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths** | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | 2007-08 | – | – | 1 | – | 2 | – | – | 2 | 5 | | 2008-09 | – | – | 1 | 1 | 2 | – | – | 4 | 8 | | 2009-10 | 2 | – | – | 2 | – | – | – | 2 | 6 | | 2010-11 | 1 | – | 1 | 5 | – | – | – | – | 7 | | 2011-12 | – | – | 1 | – | – | – | – | 2 | 3 | | 2012-13 | – | – | 1 | 3 | 1 | – | – | – | 5 | | Total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths 2007-08 to 2012-13 | 3 | – | 5 | 11 | 5 | – | – | 10 | 34 | | **Total deaths** | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | 2007-08 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 1 | – | 5 | 34 | | 2008-09 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 8 | 6 | – | 1 | 5 | 37 | | 2009-10 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 27 | | 2010-11 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 1 | – | 25 | | 2011-12 | 10 | 6 | 9 | 5 | 3 | – | – | 2 | 35 | | 2012-13 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 1 | – | – | – | 18 | | Total deaths  2007-08 to 2012-13 | 39 | 26 | 39 | 32 | 17 | 4 | 3 | 16 | 176 | |
| a Deaths in police custody include: deaths in institutional settings (for example, police stations/lockups and police vehicles, or during transfer to or from such an institution, or in hospitals following transfer from an institution); and other deaths in police operations where officers were in close contact with the deceased (for example, most raids and shootings by police). Deaths in custody-related operations cover situations where officers did not have such close contact with the person as to be able to significantly influence or control the person’s behaviour (for example, most sieges and most cases where officers were attempting to detain a person, such as pursuits). b The AIC data are subject to revision and data in other publications might differ. Data for historic years were revised during 2010 and are now presented on a financial year basis so they differ from those in earlier reports.  **–** Nil or rounded to zero. |
| *Source:* AIC (various years, unpublished) *Deaths in Custody, Australia;* table 6A.38; 2015 Report,  table 6.3, p. 6.55. |
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### Definitions of key terms

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| **Full time equivalent (FTE)** | The equivalent number of full time staff required to provide the same hours of work as performed by staff actually employed. A full time staff member is equivalent to a full time equivalent of one, while a part time staff member is greater than zero but less than one. |
| **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff** | Number of staff who are self-identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. |
| **Offender** | In the Police Services chapter, the term ‘offender’ refers to a person who is alleged to have committed an offence. This definition is not the same as the definition used in chapter 8 (Corrective services). |

### List of attachment tables

Attachment tables for data within this chapter are contained in the attachment to the Compendium. These tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by a ‘6A’ prefix (for example, table 6A.1 is table 1 in the Police services education attachment). Attachment tables are on the Review website (www.pc.gov.au/research/recurring/report-on-government-services).

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| **Table 6A.1** | Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, NSW |
| **Table 6A.2** | Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, Victoria |
| **Table 6A.3** | Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, Queensland |
| **Table 6A.4** | Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, WA |
| **Table 6A.5** | Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, SA |
| **Table 6A.6** | Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, Tasmania |
| **Table 6A.7** | Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, ACT |
| **Table 6A.8** | Police service expenditure, staff and asset descriptors, NT |
| **Table 6A.17** | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, sworn and unsworn police staff |
| **Table 6A.38** | Number of deaths in police custody and custody-related operations |