



NCIS

National Coronial Information System (NCIS) Annual Report 2015-16



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1 Director's Foreword

The 2015-16 financial year was an exciting one for the NCIS with a range of pleasing outcomes achieved throughout the year.

We ended the year with a small underspend of \$83,500. This is a great result given that we were projecting an overspend at the beginning of the financial year. The 2015-16 budget underspend is partly the result of higher than expected revenue arising from an increase in data requests from external agencies throughout the 2015-16 financial year.

A new and revised Data Quality Review System was fully implemented in November 2015, allowing for greater efficiency in quality assuring case data entered into the NCIS database by court staff in Australia and New Zealand. Key components of this new process involve a focus on external cause death cases which traditionally form the key part of death and injury prevention initiatives. In addition, the new process allows for a more timely error correction and subsequently improved data quality.

As part of the stakeholder engagement business plan objective, there has been a concerted effort to increase the value of the NCIS data report service for coroners, both in terms of quality and timeliness. The positive relationships which have been formed between the NCIS and the eight Australian jurisdictions as well as New Zealand are reflected in a large increase in at-request data reports being prepared for coroners.

Over the last 12 months the NCIS has provided 55 research reports and nine data extracts for coroners and death investigators, a substantial increase in the reports from 41 in 2014-15, and 11 in 2013-14. The opportunity to leverage in-house knowledge of the NCIS to support coroners, and the positive feedback received about this service is very pleasing.

In addition to the data reports prepared by the NCIS unit to both coronial staff and external parties, there has been a focus on providing training in use of the database for existing users of the NCIS. Sixteen face-to-face and four remote training sessions were conducted in 2015-16 with training sessions provided having more than doubled from the previous financial year.

In June 2016, the IT Risk Mitigation Oracle Project to migrate our database operating system to *Oracle* was completed. Full migration was achieved within the projected budget and timeframe for completion, and this migration will ensure the NCIS continues to meet industry security and technical standards.

In 2015-16, the NCIS has been instrumental in supporting Western Australia in amending their local court management system to include a dedicated suicide register. Additional modules have been developed by NCIS staff in order to allow tailored information about suicide deaths collected for dedicated suicide prevention strategies. This demonstrates the NCIS' ability to play an important role in supporting state based projects.

The most recent financial year has demonstrated yet again how the NCIS' has evolved as a key international mortality data repository and highlighted the great potential that there still is to be uncovered over the coming years. I am pleased to share with you the achievements and challenges of the 2015-16 financial year.

Neil Twist
Director National Coronial Information System
Director Strategic Planning
Department of Justice and Regulation Victoria

2 Key issues for NCIS in 2015-16

2.1 Assisting in death investigations

In 2015-16 the NCIS continued to assist the research community in death investigation and prevention.

The NCIS Unit produced 93 data reports for external parties, coronial investigators and the media during 2015-16. This is a substantial increase from the previous year. The majority of reports were focused on intentional self-harm, drugs and alcohol, youth and child deaths and traffic related deaths. Fifty-five of these reports directly informed coronial investigations.

In 2015-16, there has been a focus on engagement with New Zealand. The Research and Engagement Manager travelled to Auckland and Wellington in November 2015 to train coronial staff in the use of the NCIS, present at the Coroners' Continued Education (CCE) Forum and strengthen the NCIS' relationship with New Zealand. Five third parties New Zealand projects and several Australian projects utilise New Zealand data as 30 June 2016.

2.2 Identifying and alerting parties to mortality trends or concerns

In 2015-16, the NCIS Unit produced a number of research reports identifying issues of emerging concern, including:

- ◆ Coronial Report – Intentional Self-Harm Deaths of Military Veterans in Australia, 2000 – 2015
- ◆ Coronial Report – Indigenous Deaths in Custody in Australia, 2000 – 2015
- ◆ Data Report – Intentional Self-Harm of Older Persons (65+) in Australia, 2001 – 2012
- ◆ Coronial Report – Methamphetamine-Related Fatalities in Australia 2011 – 2015

In addition to various research reports, the NCIS has been building on the 'Fatal Facts Search', a public search tool to enable users to search the Fatal Facts publication by category of death. The tool was originally launched in the 2014-15 financial year and has substantially grown since its public release.

Fatal Facts is a publication periodically produced by the NCIS unit which summarises all coronial recommendations contained in findings which have been uploaded to the NCIS during the relevant period of time. Fatal Facts is available to the general public on the NCIS website.

The electronic 'Fatal Facts Search' allows users to search by pre-defined case categories (such as 'Drugs & Alcohol', 'Falls', or 'Older Persons') to identify all coronial recommendations relevant to a selected category. A list of the case categories with corresponding descriptions is available within the tool.

As at 30 June 2016, the Fatal Facts Search Tool covers 1,667 Australian and New Zealand coronial findings with recommendations made by a Coroner between 1st May 2007 and 30th September 2011.

Fatal Facts Search is accessible via the NCIS website <http://www.ncis.org.au/mortality-data-from-the-ncis/fatal-facts/>

2.3 Primary data source for injury and death research

Data sourced from the NCIS was used widely by injury and death researchers.

At 30 June 2016 there were 86 external groups with access to the NCIS for ethically approved research projects. Thirty four of these were new projects which received ethical approval in 2015-16 and 18 were projects that were renewed in this period. Twenty-two projects were concluded.

Traditionally, there has always be a high prevalence of projects focusing on research into several specific aspects of intentional self-harm, injury deaths, the monitoring of drug and alcohol deaths, deaths of the elderly including fall-related fatalities and drowning-related fatalities. Newly initiated projects in the 2015-16 financial year include research into natural disasters, a Canadian study

investigating skeletal age estimation in juveniles and thermal injury deaths in older community dwelling persons. The breadth of research undertaken gives credit to the universal applicability of the NCIS database which is becoming publicly recognised.

Thirty-three academic journal articles were published during 2015-16 which used NCIS data as a primary data source. Articles were published in a wide range of journals including both national and international publications (See Appendix 1 for details about these publications). This is a substantial increase on the number published in 2014-15 (17), it is however acknowledged that this is difficult to predict and is subject to fluctuation.

2.4 Research publication and community engagement

2.4.1 Presentations by NCIS staff

The National Suicide Prevention Conference, Hobart, July 2015

The NCIS Manager presented an overview on the benefits of data visualisation of coronial data. A draft data visualisation tool was presented which is aimed for release in the 2016-17 financial year.

Australian Mortality Data interest Group (AMDIG), Canberra, November 2015

The NCIS Deputy Manager and Quality Manager provided an overview of recent NCIS initiatives, networked with key mortality data collectors and users.

Asia Pacific Coroners Society Conference 2015, Hobart, November 2015

The NCIS Manager gave an overview on the capacity of the NCIS to be a national data repository for family and domestic violence related data.

Australasian Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion Conference, Sydney, November 2015

The NCIS Research and Engagement Manager presented on the challenges associated with obtaining accurate figures on the number of 'ice-related deaths' deaths and the importance of a strong evidence base for policy development.

Coroners Continuing Education Forum, Wellington (NZ), November 2015

The NCIS Research and Engagement Manager gave an overview about the NCIS and its benefits to Coroners as well as hosting a 'hands-on' training session about the use of the NCIS database for the New Zealand Chief Coroner and twenty NZ Coroners in attendance.

2.4.2 Increased engagement with stakeholders

The NCIS has been working closely with Suicide Prevention Australia (SPA) to engage with stakeholders and develop a national minimum dataset for the reporting of suicide. This work is ongoing, however it was confirmed during 2015-16 that the NCIS would be the best repository in which to store this national data.

Following the increased engagement with New Zealand coronial staff, a government report about suicide data and prevention suggested that the National Coronial Information System will allow New Zealand Coroners to identify opportunities for suicide prevention¹.

As directed by the Law, Crime and Community Safety Council of the Council of Australian Governments, the NCIS began consultation with coroners, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and a range of other stakeholders in relation to the standardisation of coronial reporting of suicide as recommended by Coronial Council of Victoria 2014 report, "Suicide Reporting in the Coronial Jurisdiction".

¹ Controller and Auditor-General of New Zealand. (2016). *Collecting and Using Information About Suicide*. <http://www.oag.govt.nz/2016/suicide-information/docs/suicide-information.pdf>

The NCIS has conducted a comparative study using data from the Australian Co-ordinating Registry for all Births, Deaths and Marriage Registries (ACR) to assess the comparability of registry data concerning country of birth and indigenous status with data contained on the NCIS. Results from this analysis will be reported back to the registries to inform a decision as to whether adding this registry data to the NCIS would improve the completeness of information about these variables.

The NCIS produced 55 research reports and nine data extracts for coroners/death investigators in the 2015-16 financial year. The total output for coroners and death investigators has increased 56 per cent since 2014-2015, and 481 per cent since 2013-2014. This was another significant increase from the previous year, and reflects the consultation and engagement with coroners and death investigators to produce quality reports.

NCIS has introduced a new service in which data extracts are provided to authorised users of the NCIS. These data extracts include geographic data, ICD-10 codes and key identifiers for approved data linkage projects. The service has been well received, with 32 data extracts produced throughout the 2015-16 financial year.

2.4.3 Student placements

The NCIS has hosted two internship students from the Criminology program of the University of Melbourne during the 2015-16 financial year. Projects completed by students involved:

- ◆ Intentional self-harm fatalities in New Zealand in 2012. The resulting report was presented to the New Zealand Chief Coroner.
- ◆ Differences in coronial legislation across Australia and New Zealand. The findings from this project have been published online to enable users of coronial data to identify possible reasons for varying frequencies in coronial reporting within cross-jurisdictional comparison.

The NCIS has hosted one placement student from the Health Information Management course of La Trobe University. The student completed the following project:

- ◆ Investigation into the Perpetrator Relationship to the Deceased Relationship for Fatal Assault Cases in Australia and New Zealand. The findings from the project have been utilised in presentations and work performed by the NCIS unit during 2015-16 and will inform future work surrounding revisions to the variables within the Perpetrator Relationship field.

2.4.4 Delivery of all reporting requirements under the NCIS Commonwealth Funding Agreement

NCIS delivered three mortality reports to the Commonwealth Department of Health as required under the Commonwealth funding agreement with NCIS:

- ◆ NCIS Drug Mortality Data Report 2013
- ◆ NCIS Injury Mortality Data Report 2013
- ◆ NCIS Intentional Self-Harm Mortality Report 2013.

2.4.5 Increased training focus, with addition of remote training options

Sixteen face-to face and four remote training sessions were conducted in 2015-16 with new and existing users of the NCIS database. The training sessions provided have more than doubled from the previous financial year.

This increased focus on training of users is aimed to optimise the use of the NCIS database and has been well received by users.

2.4.6 The NCIS continues to be considered an “Essential Statistical Asset for Australia”

The Essential Statistical Assets for Australia initiative is run by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and identifies and examines statistical collections that are critical to decision making in Australia.

The NCIS was identified as an Essential Statistical Asset in the first ABS publication in 2013 (one of 74 essential statistical collections), and has continued to be included in the subsequent analysis in each subsequent release (in 2014 the ABS examined the quality of each asset; in 2015 the ABS examined key opportunities and barriers surrounding the use of these statistics).

2.4.7 Data quality improvement

Data Quality improvement strategies progressed

In November 2015, the NCIS implemented its new Data Quality Review System, commencing with data that had been closed in August 2013. The new process focuses on cases involving external cause deaths, correcting coding issues at the time of review, and automatic generation of QA reports. These changes have significantly decreased the time required to review cases, as well as the number of cases to be reviewed. As cases are being corrected on the NCIS at the time of review, accurate data is now available to users earlier than before. Feedback from jurisdictions on the new process has been overwhelmingly positive.

While the changes to the quality assurance process have led to significant improvements, the backlog of cases to be reviewed continues to be a concern. As at 30 June 2016 there were over 41,000 cases awaiting review. The Quality team reviewed over 20,000 cases in 2015-16 (2,776 more cases than the previous year) and will continue to focus on the reduction of the backlog during 2016-17.

The NCIS Quality Team undertook reviews of two specific subject areas during 2015-16, being how drug involvement in deaths is coded on the NCIS, and the Perpetrator Relationship to Deceased data field.

- ◆ **Alcohol and/or drug involvement in deaths on the NCIS.** Part of a larger project, this review focused on the existing methods for the coding and searching for these cases, with particular focus of the organisation of drugs in the 'Pharmaceutical Substances for Human Use' sub-category in the Object code set. Through internal review and consultation with coders and users, the NCIS Unit has been able to identify issues with the current framework, and develop recommendations for improvement and enhancement of coding drug involvement in death. These recommendations will be further developed during 2016-17, with a view for implementation in 2017-18.
- ◆ **Perpetrator Relationship to Deceased.** This is a mandatory data field for all assault cases and was the first comprehensive look at the data since the field was implemented on 1 July 2014. The review was two-fold, firstly to verify the accuracy of the coding and secondly to assess the inclusiveness of the code set. The result of the review was positive and recommendations for new categories within the code set have been accepted by the NCIS for future implementation.

A trial concept to geocode all existing residential and incident addresses on the NCIS database to the current ABS geographical framework, the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) was successful in 2015-16. ASGS geocodes will be available on the NCIS in 2016-17 for all closed cases, as soon as technical adjustments to the database have been made to allow for the new code set.

Completion of IT Risk Mitigation Project

A project to enable the migration of the NCIS backend operating system from Informix to Oracle was conducted throughout 2015-16 (with the technical rollout occurring in July 2016).

This migration to Oracle aligns the database software underpinning the NCIS to a commonly used product throughout government and the private sector, including the Victorian Department of Justice and Regulation and the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine (VIFM)². An Oracle based infrastructure therefore allows for broader technical support options for the NCIS.

Incorporation of New Zealand ICD-10AM Codes

During 2015-16, the New Zealand Ministry of Health (MoH) agreed to provide the NCIS with the ICD-10AM codes assigned by the MoH for deaths reported in New Zealand. The NCIS has since received

² VIFM provides technology support for the NCIS.

ICD-10AM codes for New Zealand deaths reported from July 2007 (the commencement of the NZ collection on NCIS).

This data will be uploaded and available on the NCIS during 2016-17 once technical adjustments are made to the NCIS to incorporate these new codes.

Increased NCIS internal IT resources

The ongoing technical development and upskilling of a member of the NCIS quality team resulted in a promotion for this staff member to NCIS IT Testing and Quality Officer in 2015-16.

This position has taken responsibility for re-developing and monitoring the data upload scripts for the NCIS, provision of data extracts, and conducting backend database development tasks. This additional technical resource within the NCIS provides the Unit with an immediate first point of contact for some technical tasks, and provides important coverage for other technical functions in the absence of VIFM ICT resources³.

Development of a suicide register for the WA Coronial Local Case Management System (LCMS)

The NCIS Unit were commissioned in 2015-16 by the Telethon Kids Institute to develop a number of additional screens in the existing WA Coroners Court LCMS to collect extra information about suspected suicides reported to the Coroner. This extra information will form the West Australian Coronial Suicide Information System (WACSIS).

During 2015-16 a beta version of WACSIS was provided to the Telethon Kids for review and testing, and any adjustments will be made before rollout during 2016-17.

This development indicated the potential for the NCIS Unit to make enhancements to the existing databases used within coroners' courts in order to collect additional information, avoiding the creation of multiple separate data collections which share a proportion of the same information.

2.5 Case closure on NCIS

Timely case closure is the subject of ongoing discussion between NCIS and the jurisdictions. The NCIS has established a working group with the Victorian Coroners Court which will focus on improving case closure statistics for Victoria in 2016-17. One of the projects of this group is the bulk closure of natural death cases, utilising data available in both the NCIS and local court system to complete coding in mandatory data fields.

2.6 Sourcing Autopsy Reports from South Australia

Ongoing discussions are continuing in relation to whether autopsy reports should be sent directly to NCIS from the Forensic Sciences Centre (FSC) or from the South Australia Coroners Court. Investigations have commenced as to whether FSC can send autopsy reports electronically to the Coroners Court - a system that is not currently in place.

³ The VIFM ICT still provides the majority of technical support for the NCIS.

3 Financial Report

3.1 Revenue

The major item to note is that the NCIS revenue from research fees increased significantly from \$50,825 in 2014-15 to \$168,428 in 2015-16. The NCIS team has managed a significantly increased demand for data and research. This has not only meant a significant increase in productivity but also an increase in revenue, which helped NCIS end the year in surplus.

The team is to be congratulated for making more data available so that more research into causes of death can be conducted.

3.2 Expenses

Contractor expenditure of \$4,281 in 2015-16 came down from a high of \$44,141 in 2014-15. The high expenditure in 2014-15 was due to a lengthy absence of a staff member, which necessitated greater expenditure on contractors to backfill the position. This situation resolved in 2015. The staff member's employment in NCIS ceased and the position has now been filled, so contractor expenditure has decreased to a more typical level.

Employee related expenses have increased as the result of maternity leave payments and long service leave provisions.

Staff training and development has decreased from 2014-15 expenditure. During 2014-15, NCIS migrated from a proprietary IT system to Oracle. Staff were trained in the use and management of the Oracle database and this expenditure had been approved by the Board as part of the IT migration project. The project is now complete and the investment means that NCIS' major IT risk (reliance on a proprietary system that not commonly used within government) has now been eliminated.

The trust account balance of \$496,496 at the end of 2015-16 is considerably lower than the balance of \$774,116 at the end of 2014-15. This relates to the 2015-16 Commonwealth funding component of \$400,000 not having been received by the end of the financial year. We have been in lengthy discussions with the Commonwealth regarding this situation and the 2015-16 funding will be transferred to NCIS in February 2017. The situation will be significantly improved from 2016-17 with next year's funding to be transferred in May 2017. As a result, the 2016-17 trust fund balance will appear considerably higher as it will account for two years of funding from the Commonwealth.

Table 1: NCIS 2015 and 2016 Financial Statement

	2016 \$	2015 \$
Opening balance (Cash in bank)	774,116	888,287
Add Receipts		
Income		
Government Grants - AU	1,143,426	1,018,318
Government Grants - NZ	91,609	91,609
User Pays (1)	168,428	50,825
TOTAL	1,403,463	1,160,752
Less Expenses		
Professional Services	0	3438
Contractors, consultants and professional service expenses (2)	4281	44141
Depreciation	15012	12166
Employee related expenses	802193	666183
Information technology expenses	340701	297462
Other operating expenses	0	2500
Postage and communication expenses	482	715
Printing, stationery and other office expenses	1103	960
Staff training and development expenses (3)	19712	42981
Travel, entertainment and personal expenses	11217	12743
Utilities and services	125220	123612
TOTAL	1,319,921	1,206,901
Balance for the year	83,542	(46,149)
Capital expenditure	0	-56,386
Accrued expenses	-8,296	10,046
Depreciation	15,012	12,166
Grants paid in advance	27,000	-25,000
Accrued Revenue (4)	-400,000	0
Accounts receivable (5)	7,534	-14,758
Movement in employee provisions (6)	12,656	-23,606
Closing balance (Cash in bank)	496,496	774,116

3.3 Explanatory notes to Table 1

- 1) User Pays total includes annual fees from third party researchers and fees from data requests. There has been a significant increase in workload in this area providing increased revenue in the 2015-16 year compared to 2014-15 year with the accrued User Pays having more than tripled.
- 2) The majority of contractor expenditure related to the approved engagement of administration support for NCIS when required. In the 2014-15 financial year, there was a vacancy in the NCIS Administration Officer position for six months, resulting in greater spending on a contractor to backfill this position.
- 3) Staff Training and development has the following significant items of expenditure – Violence against women research conference, Oracle training for system development, Professional development via democracy and society symposium and also the strategic coaching program. This is a substantial reduction from the 2014-15 financial year, when the Oracle database training was paid for from the Contractors budget. The NCIS Board of Management had approved the use of funds within the NCIS Trust for the Oracle project and accordingly this training expense had not been included as part of the NCIS operating budget.
- 4) Accrued Revenue balance relates to revenue not received from Commonwealth Department of Health for the 2015/16 year for \$400K. The delays in the partnership agreement not being finalised and hence revenue not yet received are in part due to the Commonwealth election process and the caretaker period. The NCIS has been working closely with the Commonwealth Department of Health to expedite the transfer of the outstanding funds for the 2015-16 financial year.
- 5) Accounts Receivable balance has increased slightly from last year. The majority of the debtors relate to current debt that is not yet due. There is continued monitoring of debtor balances ensuring debts are paid and cleared as promptly as possible.
- 6) Provisions for employee benefits consist of amounts for annual leave and long service leave accrued by employees. Provisions are recognised when NCIS has a present obligation, the future sacrifice of economic benefits is probable, and the amount of the provision can be measured reliably. The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the consideration required to settle the present obligation at reporting period, taking into account the risks and uncertainties surrounding the obligation.

3.4 Government funding contributions made in 2015 – 16

Table 2: List of 2015-16 Government funding contributions

Government	Amount contributed \$AUD
Commonwealth	622,672 ⁴
New South Wales	165,008
Victoria	132,808
Queensland	106,991
New Zealand	91,609
Western Australia	51,028
South Australia	38,649
Tasmania	12,540
ACT	8,348
NT	5,382
TOTAL	1,235,035

⁴ Note that this amount includes 2015-16 funding of \$400,000 still owed by the Department of Health and Ageing. This funding has been the subject of lengthy discussions between NCIS and the Commonwealth and will now be paid in February 2017.

4 Use of the NCIS database

4.1 Searches of the database conducted by death investigators⁵

There were over 29,000 searches of the NCIS conducted by death investigators during 2015-16 (Table 3).

This is a 20 per cent increase from the previous year, following an increase of more than 90 per cent from the 2013-14 financial year. This is reflective of the NCIS database being relied upon more heavily than ever by death investigator users.

Table 3: Searches conducted by death investigators

Type of search ⁶	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14
Query Design	1,227	1,365	528
Coroners Screen	959	1,234	1,039
Find Case screen	27,154	21,154	10,653
TOTAL	29,449	23,753	12,202

4.2 Searches of the database by approved third party users

There were over 106,000 searches of the NCIS conducted by third party researchers during 2015-16 (Table 4). This is a 10 per cent increase in usage from the previous year.

At 30 June 2015, there were 86 active research projects with approved access to the NCIS. This is six more than at 30 June 2015. Twenty-one projects came to completion throughout the year while the total number of active projects is still increasing.

Thirty-four new third party applications were received in 2015-16 (Table 5) in addition to 18 renewal applications. This is not only a significant increase from the previous year but shows that new and renewal applications have more than doubled from the 2013-14 financial year.

Table 4: Searches conducted by third parties with existing approved access to NCIS

Type of search	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
Query Design	5530	3,983	2,601	2,695
Coroners Screen	482	816	893	550
Find Case Screen	100,049	90,954	57,745	56,783
TOTAL	106,061	95,753	61,239	60,028

⁵ Death investigators are those individuals who directly assist with the investigation of deaths reported to a coroner. They include coroners, coronial clerks, forensic scientists, pathologists and police assisting the coroner. Also included are police members who have access to the NCIS as death investigators such as the Victoria Police Arson Squad and Missing Person Units around Australia.

⁶ The three types of searches, Query Design, Coroners Screen and Find Case Screen can be used interchangeably by all users. The Query Design is based on coded data and allows the user to create a specific query on any of the data collected. The Coroners Screen is a broad text based search utilising attached documentation. The Find Case search is a used to identify a specific known case.

Table 5: New third party applications for access to NCIS

External Research Projects	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14
New projects	34	28	15
Renewed projects	18	8	8
TOTAL	52	36	23

4.3 Requests for data⁷

A variety of government, private and media organisations requested and were provided with aggregate data from the NCIS via data reports compiled by NCIS staff. In addition, the NCIS staff assisted coronial death investigators in searching the NCIS as requested.

Throughout 2015-16, the NCIS team produced 93 data reports for coroners and external parties including the media. The breakdown is detailed in Table 6.

Of particular note is the substantial increase in reports produced for coronial death investigators. In the 2014-15 and 2015-16 financial years, the NCIS has placed a focus on stakeholder engagement, in particular on coronial death investigators. This effort is reflected in the substantial increase of data reports provided to this party.

Thirty-two data extracts for existing users were produced throughout the 2015-16 financial year (Table 7).

Table 6: Requests for data by parties other than researchers

Organisation Type	NCIS Data Reports Produced 2015-16	NCIS Data Reports Produced 2014-15	NCIS Data Reports Produced 2013-14
External interest groups	32	44	42
Media organisations	6	5	8
Coronial death investigators	55	41	11
TOTAL	93	90	61

Table 7: Provision of data extracts by NCIS

Organisation Type	NCIS Data Extracts Produced 2015-16	NCIS Data Extracts Produced 2014-15	NCIS Data Extracts Produced 2013-14
Coronial death investigators	9	N/A	N/A
Non-coronial users	23	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	32	N/A	N/A

⁷ 'Other groups' include the media, external interest groups and service providers. The NCIS prepares reports containing aggregate data on request. The NCIS also conducts searches to assist death investigators as required.

4.4 Document attachment

In addition to demographic information about the deceased and coded data surrounding the circumstances of their death, the NCIS holds up to four different medico-legal documents for each recorded case. These documents (the Coronial Finding, the Autopsy Report, the Toxicology Report and the Police Narrative) are invaluable for researchers and death investigators to obtain a holistic picture of each case. The NCIS strives to make all four reports available for every case which can pose a challenge. Different administrative processes in different coronial jurisdictions result in varying levels of document attachment which are detailed below.

The NCIS provides detailed information about document attachment rates for each case bimonthly on our website to make researchers aware of potential gaps in information.

Table 8 displays the percentage of document attachment for the four document types by jurisdiction for cases closed over the last three financial years.

Noteworthy changes in document attachment rates are detailed below:

Findings

Finding documents have overall satisfying attachment rates in all jurisdictions. New South Wales and Victoria which were notably below the national average in the 2013-14 and 2014-15 financial years have substantially improved rates in the 2015-16 year, resulting from increased engagement with these jurisdictions.

Autopsy reports

The attachment levels of autopsy reports in New South Wales has seen an increase from 44 per cent in the 2013-14 financial year to 74 per cent in 2015-16. Victoria's attachment rate has returned to a 99 per cent average after a temporary drop to 82 per cent in the 2014-15 financial year. There has been a slight drop in attachment levels of Northern Territory autopsy reports which may be due to administrative delays in NT coroners' court receiving finalised autopsy reports, as referenced in a recent NT Coronial Finding⁸. Despite best efforts, South Australian autopsy reports are not automatically transferred to the NCIS from the local case management system and there is no alternative process for securing these reports. The resulting large gap in the level of document attachment for South Australian cases has a limiting effect on research projects involving South Australian data.

Toxicology reports

The attachment level of New South Wales toxicology reports for cases closed in 2015-16 has almost doubled since the 2013-14 financial year however is still below the national average. South Australia showed a slight decrease in the attachment of toxicology reports with 70 per cent of cases closed in 2015-16 having an attached report. A temporary upload issue which had resulted in low attachment rates of New Zealand toxicology reports in 2014-15 has been rectified, resulting in 94 per cent of toxicology reports attached to cases closed in the 2015-16 financial year.

Police reports

New South Wales has seen a substantial increase in attachment rates of police narratives but is still below the national average, while Victoria saw a further reduction in the proportion of cases with a police narrative attached. This is likely due to police/coronial administrative processes in Victoria where the police narratives cannot be electronically received from police by the Court, and a manual process must be used for NCIS to source the information. It is hoped this may change with implementation of an electronic police form in Victoria within the next few years.

While the NCIS has made substantial progress in improving document attachment rates across most jurisdictions, there are still notable gaps in some areas, such as the lack of autopsy reports from South

⁸ Coronial Finding by Greg Cavanagh on 17 October 2016 into death of Krista Lloyd, in which the coroner stated the autopsy reports for this case took more than 1 year to be finalised, there was a substantial backlog of autopsy reports to be finalised in the NT. The Coroner recommended further resourcing of the forensic pathology unit in NT <https://justice.nt.gov.au/courts/coroners-decisions>

Australia. The targeted engagement with South Australia which occurred in 2015-16 to identify a way in which autopsy reports can be obtained for the NCIS will continue into the 2016-17 financial year.

Table 8: Document attachment levels for cases closed during 2015-16 compared with those closed during the two previous financial years.

Jurisdiction	Finding attachment (per cent)			Autopsy attachment (per cent)			Toxicology attachment (per cent)			Police narrative attachment (per cent)		
	15-16	14-15	13-14	15-16	14-15	13-14	15-16	14-15	13-14	15-16	14-15	13-14
ACT	99	100	99	98	96	96	98	97	96	93	95	94
NSW	73	66	46	74	55	44	65	39	34	50	28	29
NT	100	100	100	75	97	96	100	100	99	99	99	99
QLD	100	100	100	100	99	100	98	98	96	98	95	93
SA	99	100	100	0	0	0	70	92	88	100	99	100
TAS	99	99	100	100	100	99	100	100	100	91	95	99
VIC	89	82	61	99	82	97	99	99	98	74	87	93
WA	100	100	100	100	99	100	100	98	97	100	97	97
NZ	97	97	98	95	96	98	94	57	92	94	94	97

5 Timeliness of Case Closure

Timeliness of case closure is measured by the percentage of cases closed on the NCIS within 60 days of the coronial finding being finalised (Table 9). The Australian Capital Territory, South Australia and Western Australia maintained their consistently high timeliness rate. The Australian Capital Territory saw a slight drop but overall the timeliness rate is still high.

Queensland and New South Wales have both seen progressive increases in the timeliness of their case closure over the past five financial years. Conversely, Victoria has seen substantial decreases with only 13 per cent of cases closed on the NCIS within 60 days after the completion of a finding. The progressive reduction of timely case closure over the past five financial years in Victoria has had a negative impact on research capabilities both for the NCIS unit as well as external researchers directly accessing the database. The NCIS has been regularly liaising with the Coroners Court of Victoria to address the case closure issues, and both CCoV and NCIS have allocated resources in an effort to improve this issue. It is accordingly expected that this number will have substantially increased in the 2016-17 financial year.

Tasmania has seen an increase in the percentages of closed cases after a drop in timeliness in case closure in 2014-15.

The Northern Territory has again had a reduction in timeliness of case closure in the 2015-16 financial year after a drop in the 2014-15 financial year. The NCIS unit will liaise with the Northern Territory Coroners Court to enquire about the reasons behind this trend.

Table 9: Percentage of cases closed on the NCIS within 60 days of completion of finding

Jurisdiction	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12
ACT	98	93	97	99	98
NSW	67	55	47	27	20
NT	58	78	91	98	98
QLD	98	68	23	77	63
SA	100	100	100	99	99
TAS	77	56	75	82	90
VIC	13	12	22	38	59
WA	100	98	99	99	99
NZ⁹	93	94	87	53	38

Table 10 displays a breakdown of the total number of cases closed on the NCIS by jurisdiction and financial year. Case volume is generally commensurate to jurisdiction population.

Most jurisdictions have been fairly stable in their number of closed cases compared with the previous financial year. New South Wales however has seen an almost 25 per cent decrease in the number of cases closed on NCIS. The NCIS will liaise with the NSW Coroners Court to enquire about the possible reasons behind this development and discuss possible solutions.

⁹ The New Zealand closure within 60 days statistics for the 2012-13 and 2011-12 financial years were affected by the back-coding of cases closed since 1st of July 2007. The current year is a reflection of the current court processes.

Table 10: Total number of cases closed on the NCIS by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12
ACT	211	326	325	374	299
NSW	4,805	6,262	6,057	8,158	6,074
NT	376	258	327	288	267
QLD	2,589	2,829	3,197	2,296	3,977
SA	2,173	2,470	2,038	1,769	2,339
TAS	478	501	445	303	446
VIC	4,016	3,907	1,607	4,279	4,411
WA	2,047	2,055	2,062	2,224	2,183
NZ	3,190	3,112	3,149	3,278	3,104

6 Quality Assurance

As noted in section 2.4.7, a revised NCIS quality assurance (QA) Process was implemented during 2015-16, which will improve the timeliness of quality reviews conducted. Focused reviews were also conducted on the coding of drug involvement in deaths, and the Perpetrator Relationship to Deceased field (see section 2.4.7).

The quality assurance activities for the year also included an effort to review and finalise cases which had previously been reviewed and rejected, and were awaiting correction by the jurisdictions. Cases were assessed to verify that recommended corrections had been made and were then flagged as accepted within the NCIS. Any corrections that had not been made were subsequently processed on the NCIS and marked as accepted.

Table 11 displays the total number of cases on the NCIS that were quality assured in 2015-16. In total, 20,375 cases were reviewed. This represents an increase of 14 per cent on 2014-15 levels. Table 12 summarises the total number of errors detected, which remained consistent with the previous year. Forty two per cent of cases reviewed in 2015-16 contained one or more errors, compared with 43 per cent in 2014-15.

Table 11: Total number of cases quality assured in 2015-16 by jurisdiction.

Jurisdiction	Number of cases quality assured	Percentage of cases quality assured
ACT	398	2
NSW	2757	14
NT	378	2
QLD	7815	38
SA	3954	19
TAS	557	3
VIC	689	3
WA	1075	5
NZ	2752	14
Total	20,375	100

Table 12: Results of quality assurance assessment

Quality Assurance Results	2015-16	2014-15
Cases reviewed with no error detected	11,874 (58 per cent)	10,013 (57 per cent)
Cases reviewed with one or more error detected. ¹⁰	8,501 (42 per cent)	7,586 (43 per cent)
Total	20,375 (100 per cent)	17,599 (100 per cent)

¹⁰ A substantial proportion of the errors detected were determined to be procedural errors and do not impact the ability to search for or locate a relevant case on the NCIS. New error categories to be applied in the revised QA process will allow for more detailed analysis of the type of errors based on their impact on case identification

Appendix 1 Research and Publications

Publication Citation	Publication Date
FERGUSON, C., DOLEY, R., WATT, B., LYNEHAM, M. & PAYNE, J. (2015) Arson-Associated homicide in Australia: A five year follow-up. <i>Australian Institute of Criminology- Trends & Issues in crime and criminal justice No. 484</i>	July 2015
KOLVES, K., & DE LEO, D. (2015) Child, Adolescent and Young Adult Suicides: A Comparison Based on the Queensland Suicide Registry. <i>Journal of Child and Adolescent Behaviour</i>	July 2015
PIPER, D., COCKBURN, T., MADDEN, B., VINES, P., & MCILLWRAITH, J. (2015) The role of the law in communicating patient safety. <i>Communicating Quality and Safety in Health Care 2015, Cambridge University Press.</i>	July 2015
THOMPSON K., & MATTHEWS, C. (2015) Inroads into Equestrian Safety: Rider-Reported Factors Contributing to Horse-Related Accidents and Near Misses on Australian Roads. <i>Animals, Vol. 5, Issue 3</i>	July 2015
MILNER, AJ., NIVEN, H., PAGE, K., & LAMONTAGNE, AD. (2015) Suicide in veterinarians and veterinary nurses in Australia: 2001-2012	August 2015
WALLIS, B., WATT, K., FRANKLIN, R., & KIMBLE, R. (2015) Drowning in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and adolescents in Queensland (Australia) <i>BMC Public Health Volume 15</i>	August 2015
ARNAUTOVSKA, U., MCPHEDRAN, S. & DE LEO, D. (2015) Differences in characteristics between suicide cases of farm managers compared to those of farm labourers in Queensland, Australia. <i>The International Electronic Journal of Rural and Remote Health Research, Education, Practice and Policy</i>	September 2015
KOLVES, K., POTTS, B., & DE LEO, D. (2015) Ten Years of suicide mortality in Australia: Socio-economic and psychiatric factors in Queensland. <i>Forensic and Legal Medicine</i>	September 2015
HENDERSON, J. (2015) Standing your ground: the importance of Health Information Managers sharing what they do. <i>Health Information Management Journal Vol. 44, Issue 3 Pages 04-06</i>	Oct 2015
MCINTOSH, A., PATTON, D., RECHNITZER, G., GRZEBIETA, R. (2015) Injury mechanisms in fatal Australian quad bike incidents. <i>Traffic Injury Prevention, Accepted manuscript</i>	Oct 2015
READ, G., SALMON, P., LENNE, M., STANTON, N. (2015) Walking the line: Understanding pedestrian behaviour and risk at rail level crossings with cognitive work analysis. <i>Applied Ergonomics, Online Only</i>	Oct 2015
ROXBURGH, A., HALL, WD., BURNS, L., PILGRIM, J., SAAR, E., NIELSEN, S., DEGENHARDT, L. (2015) Trends and characteristics of accidental and intentional codeine overdose deaths in Australia. <i>Medical Journal of Australia. 203(7) Pages 299.e1-299.e7</i>	Oct 2015

Publication Citation	Publication Date
WALLIS, B., WATT, K., FRANKLIN, R, NIXON, J., & KIMBLE R. (2015) Where children and adolescents drown in Queensland: a population-based study. <i>BMJ Open Vol 5, Iss 11 Pgs 1-11</i>	Nov 2015
DORAN, C., LING, R., GULLESTRUP, J., WANNELL, S., & MILNER, A. (2015) The Impact of a Suicide Prevention Strategy on Reducing the Economic Cost of Suicide in the New South Wales Construction Industry. <i>The Journal of Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention. Advance article</i>	Dec 2015
LAIDLAW, M., ROWE, D., BALL, A., & MIELKE, H. (2015) A Temporal Association between Accumulated Petrol (Gasoline) Lead Emissions and Motor Neuron Disease in Australia. <i>International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. 12(12) Pgs 16124-16135.</i>	Dec 2015
LILLEY, R., DAVIES, G., & WILSON, S. (2015) An evaluation of case completeness for New Zealand Coronial case files held on the Australasian National Coronial Information System (NCIS). <i>Injury Prevention Online First.</i>	Dec 2015
MILNER, A., PAGE, A., MORELL, S., HOBBS, C., CARTER, G., DUDLEY, M., DUFLOU, J., & TAYLOR, R. (2015) Social connections and suicidal behaviour in young Australian adults: Evidence from a case-control study of persons aged 18-34 years in NSW, Australia. <i>SSM Population Health. Vol 1 Pgs 1-7.</i>	Dec 2015
DRUMMER, O., & YAP, S. (2016) The Involvement of Prescribed Drugs in Road Trauma. <i>Forensic Science International. Accepted Manuscript.</i>	Jan 2016
DEUTER, K., PROCTER, N., EVANS, D., & JAWORSKI, K. (2016) Suicide in older people: Revisioning new approaches. <i>International Journal of Mental Health Nursing. Online</i>	Jan 2016
HAYMAN, J., & OXENHAM, M. (2016) Estimation of the time since death in decomposed bodies found in Australian conditions. <i>Australian Journal of Forensic Services. Online</i>	Feb 2016
PEDEN, A., FRANKLIN, R., & LEGGAT, P. (2016) International travellers and unintentional fatal drowning in Australia- a 10 year review 2002-2012. <i>Journal of Travel Medicine, 23(2).</i>	Feb 2016
ARNAUTOVSKA, U., MCPHEDRAN, S., KELLY, B., REDDY, P., & DE LEO, D. (2016) Geographic variation in suicide rates in Australian farmers: Why is the problem more frequent in Queensland than in New South Wales? <i>Death Studies. Accepted manuscript</i>	Feb 2016
MCPHEDRAN, S. (2016) A systematic review of quantitative evidence about the impacts of Australian legislative reform on firearm homicide. <i>Aggression and Violent Behaviour. Accepted manuscript</i>	Mar 2016
TOO, L., SPITTAL, M., BUGEJA, L., MCCLURE, R., & MILNER, A. (2016) Individual and community factors for railway suicide: a matched case-control study in Victoria, Australia. <i>Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology, Pgs. 1-8.</i>	Mar 2016

Publication Citation	Publication Date
WUNDERSITZ, LN., DOECKE, SD., RAFTERY, SJ., & HARRISON, J. (2016) <i>Quad Bikes in South Australia- an investigation of their use, crash characteristics and associated injury risks (CASR134)</i> , Safework SA, Adelaide. On Centre for Automotive Safety Research website & The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine website	April 2016
DWYER, R., FRASER, S., & DIETZE, P. (2016) Benefits and Barriers to expanding the availability of take-home naloxone in Australia: A qualitative interview study with service providers. <i>Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy</i> . Online only.	April 2016
DARTNELL, S. & GOODMAN-DELAHUNTY, J. (2016) The coronial investigations of suspected deaths: Prevalence and outcomes in New South Wales. <i>Journal of Law and Medicine</i> , 609.	April 2016
SAAR, E. (2016) Response to 'An evaluation of case completeness to New Zealand Coronial case files held on the Australasian National Coronial Information System' by Lilley et al. <i>Injury Prevention</i> . Online First	April 2016
LOWER, T., MONAGHAN, N., & ROLFE, M. (2016) Quads, Farmers 50+ Years of Age, and Safety in Australia. <i>Safety online</i> , 2(2).	May 2016
MULLINS, R., WAINSTEIN, B., BARNES, E., LIEW, W., & CAMPBELL, D. (2016) Increases in anaphylaxis fatalities in Australia 1997 to 2013. <i>Clin Exp Allergy</i> , 46(8); 1099-1100.	May 2016
CHAPMAN, M., & THOMPSON, K. (2016) Preventing and Investigating Horse-Related Human Injury and Fatality in Work and Non-Work Equestrian Environments: A consideration of the Workplace Health and Safety Framework. <i>Animals</i> , 6 (5), Pgs 2-14.	May 2016
NZ MOUNTAIN SAFETY COUNCIL (2016) There and Back: An exploration of outdoor recreation incidents in New Zealand, NZ, Version 1.0 2016.	June 2016

Media Reports	Publication Date
BUTT, C. (2015) Deaths among young an unintended consequence of euthanasia movement: mother. <i>SMH/The Age</i> . July 13, 2015. http://www.smh.com.au/national/health/deaths-among-young-an-unintended-consequence-of-euthenasia-movement-mother-20150713-gia7e5	July 2015
LAWSON, M. (2015) Forget Sharks, the real death risk is horses. <i>Financial Review Online</i> . 22 July 2015. http://www.afr.com/opinion/forget-sharks-the-real-death-risk-is-horses-20150722-gihu26	July 2015
SCHADENBERG, A. (2015) Assisted suicide promotion has led to more youth suicide in Australia. http://www.nationalrighttolifenews.org/news/2015/07/assisted-suicide-promotion-has-led-to-more-youth-suicide-in-australia/#.VcFW0LXUdLs	July 2015

Media Reports	Publication Date
ABC NEWS (2015) Fact Check: Do many more people die by suicide than in road accidents. <i>ABC News</i> . 8 October 2015. http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-10-08/suicide-rates-road-toll-john-brogden-fact-check/6822324	Oct 2015
BROOK, B. (2015) World first: Guideline to manage post-traumatic stress disorder among emergency workers launched in Sydney. <i>News.com.au</i> , 29 October 2015. http://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/health/health-problems/world-first-guideline-to-manage-post-traumatic-stress-disorder-among-emergency-workers-launched-in-sydney/news-story/89655b9bd40cbeb8a1b8e7f3e735fef9	Oct 2015
HORE, M., ARGOON, A., and THOMPSON, A. (2015) Victoria Police mental health crisis: tragic death sparks calls for action. <i>Herald Sun</i> , 13 October 2015. http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/law-order/victoria-police-mental-health-crisis-tragic-death-sparks-calls-for-action/news-story/a0cd938b16b2849d03fed49b16bb2249	Oct 2015
MCCOLL, G. (2015) Policewoman's death shines spotlight on the problem of work-related suicides. <i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i> , 16 October 2015. http://www.smh.com.au/national/policewomans-death-shines-spotlight-on-the-problem-of-workrelated-suicides-20151016-gkb0s9.html	Oct 2015
SBS NEWS (2015) Codeine- related deaths rise in Australia, <i>SBS News</i> , 5 October 2015. http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2015/10/05/codeine-related-deaths-rise-australia	Oct 2015
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DONNELLY, B. (2015) Brighton couple end lives in 'suicide pact'. <i>The Age</i> , 13 November 2015. http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/elderly-couple-found-dead-in-brighton-home-20151113-qkyon3.html	Nov 2015
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LEE J. (2015) Common painkillers to remain over the counter until 2017 after ruling delay. <i>The Sydney Morning Herald</i> , 19 November 2015. http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/common-painkillers-to-remain-over-the-counter-until-2017-after-ruling-delay-20151119-ql2yld.html	Nov 2015
DAVEY, M. (2016) Selling opioid overdose antidote Naloxone over counter 'will save lives'. <i>The Guardian Online</i> , 29 January 2016. https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/jan/29/selling-opioid-overdose-antidote-naloxone-over-counter-will-save-lives	Jan 2016
MARCARD, S. (2016) Life Saving medication available over the counter from 1 February. <i>Pennington Institute Online</i> , http://www.pennington.org.au/life-saving-medication-available-over-the-counter-from-1-february/	Jan 2016
DAVEY, M. (2016) Second Victoria police suicide in a week puts spotlight on officers' mental health. <i>The Guardian Online</i> , 11 February 2016. https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2016/feb/11/second-victoria-police-suicide-in-a-week-puts-spotlight-on-officers-mental-health	Feb 2016
BUCCI, N. & HOUSTON, C. (2016) Two Victoria Police officers take their own lives in a week. <i>The Age</i> , 10 February 2016. http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/two-victoria-police-officers-take-their-own-lives-in-a-week-20160210-gmr0yu.html	Feb 2016

Media Reports	Publication Date
QUINN, K. (2016) Andrew Denton is back with Better off Dead, a podcast about the right to die. <i>Sydney Morning Herald/ The Age</i> , 18 February 2016. http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/tv-and-radio/andrew-denton-is-back-with-better-off-dead-a-podcast-about-the-right-to-die-20160218-gmxr1j.html	Feb 2016
CHILTON, G. (2016) Here are the animals REALLY most likely to kill you in Australia. <i>Australian Geographic Online</i> , 22 March 2016. http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/wildlife/2016/03/here-are-the-animals-really-most-likely-to-kill-you-in-australia/	Mar 2016
HORNSEY, C. (2016) New Mental Health Framework for First Responders. <i>ProBono Australia</i> , 24 March 2016. https://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2016/03/new-mental-health-framework-for-first-responders/	Mar 2016
BURKE, L. (2016) Elderly suicide: Statistic reveals Australia's shocking secret. <i>www.news.com.au</i> , 4 April 2016. http://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/health/health-problems/elderly-suicide-statistic-reveals-australias-shocking-secret/news-story/c048e5abb4e4fe4f8ea9e92b70a4ac2d	April 2016
ABC RADIO (2016) Alarming rates of elderly suicide prompt calls for legal voluntary euthanasia, http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/breakfast/aged-care/7303080	April 2016
WILSON, L. (2016) Emergency Egress Handbook Needed for People with Disability, <i>Sourceable</i> , 20 April 2016. https://sourceable.net/emergency-egress-handbook-needed-for-people-with-disability/	April 2016
LEMAY, R. (2016) Budget 2016: Major Police IT projects win funding. Delimiter online. https://delimiter.com.au/2016/05/03/budget-2016-major-police-projects-win-funding/	May 2016
CORMACK, L. (2016) Fentanyl, the drug that killed Prince, is stronger than heroin and morphine. <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> , 3 June 2016. http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/music/fentanyl-the-drug-that-killed-prince-stronger-than-heroin-and-morphine-20160602-qpahkm.html	June 2016
CROUCH, B. (2016) Errors turning methotrexate — a drug used for rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis and inflammatory bowel disease — into a killer. <i>The Advertiser</i> , 5 June 2016. http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/errors-turning-methotrexate--a-drug-used-for-rheumatoid-arthritis-psoriasis-and-inflammatory-bowel-disease--into-a-killer/news-story/2cd945c36e9dd148261a3966f387034d	June 2016

Government/ Annual Reports	Publication Date
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ROYAL LIFE SAVING SOCIETY AUSTRALIA (2016) Research and Policy Summary	March 2016
ACT GOVERNMENT (2016) Health and Wellbeing of Older Persons in the Australian Capital Territory. Health Series No. 63	May 2016
Safety Campaigns	Publication

	Date
WORKSAFE (2015) Work Health and Safety in the Accommodation and Food Services Industry 2015	August 2015
SUICIDE PREVENTION AUSTRALIA (2015) Transforming Suicide Prevention Research: A National Action Plan 2015.	September 2015

Appendix 2 Feedback

Selected words of appreciation received throughout the 2015-16 financial year are provided below:

Lucinda Coates and Kat Hayes, Senior Researcher and Project Manager, Risk Frontiers, Macquarie University

I sincerely thank the National Coronial Information Service (NCIS) for being such an important part of our recent and ongoing research work for the Bushfire & Natural Hazards CRC. Our research involved the investigation of trends in the socio-demographic and environmental circumstances surrounding fatalities from floods, earthquakes, severe storms and other natural hazards across Australia. A very important focus was the collection of data pertaining to each fatality, which were analysed in relation to informing the understanding of the circumstances surrounding the deaths and how this information could best be utilized for emergency management policy and practice.

NCIS was able to supply us with data from all across Australia from 2000-01 onwards in great detail and this was made available to us online such that, with the use of a password, we were able to access and analyse the data from our usual workplaces. After the necessary application form was approved, and in fact throughout the entire process, NCIS staff were very helpful and engaged in making it work for us. They supplied a tutorial to get us started as well as help and extra searches en route, whenever we needed it. In no small part due to the data and assistance received from NCIS, we have been able to present a report (via the BNHCRC website) on flood fatalities across Australia and will soon present a report on fatalities from cyclones, earthquakes and severe storms (gust, hail, lightning, rain and tornado).

The NCIS play an extremely important role as a vital "one-stop" point of access for all Coronial data from near the turn of this century for genuine researchers. We certainly could not have completed our work to the standard we were able to reach without their services and will be eternally grateful for both the detail of the data and the ease with which (after appropriate approvals were sought and granted) it was made available.

Bob Clifford, Field Officer 'Mates in Construction' for and on behalf of Michelle Caston, Chief Executive Officer

Thank you for the Data Report: DR15-38 Intentional Self-Harm Fatalities of Construction and Manufacturing Workers in South Australia 2001 – 2013.

MATES in Construction is a charity, working specifically in suicide prevention within the construction industry. The industry has high rates of suicide, in fact nearly 2.5 times more likely to suicide than the national average. Most of the studies commissioned to date have come out of Queensland where the program started. Here in SA we have for many years had a lack of statistics relating to suicide for our state, when I requested the information from the NCIS I was unsure of exactly what you would deliver.

I have to say I was very impressed with what you delivered, it certainly exceeded our expectations.

The report was presented in a clear and professional way and in a timely fashion; it certainly contained everything that I had requested.

This report will be used by MATES in Construction to further our knowledge of our industry and help us to develop suicide prevention programs that more accurately reflect our understanding of the issues involved. I have been unable up to this point to extract information from any source for South Australia statistics that is anywhere near as good as what you have presented to us.

I have already recommended your service to other similar organisations and will continue to do so. What you do is unique and fairly priced for what you produce.

I wish to thank you and your team for all your assistance and help.

Kerry Haby, Research and Policy Development Officer, Macedon Ranges Shire Council

Macedon Ranges Suicide Prevention Action Group (MRSPAG) aims to reduce suicide in the Macedon Ranges Shire, Victoria. One of our objectives is to strengthen our evidence base, to help guide future prevention strategies. Since MRSPAG formed in late 2014, we have made a number of requests for

data from the National Coronial Information System, not just for Macedon Ranges Shire but also for the 28 other local government areas in the Victoria Police Western Region for the twelve year period from 2001 to 2012. We are in the process of sharing this with stakeholders across these areas.

NCIS data has been invaluable in helping us identify some of the potential drivers for suicide in our community; but more importantly to us as a non-academic community-based group, NCIS staff are incredibly patient, responsive and thorough. We can't recommend NCIS highly enough. Thank you.