NCIS FACT SHEET
Animal-related deaths in Australia

There were 541 animal-related deaths reported to an Australian coroner between 2001 and 2017, with an average of 32 animal-related deaths reported per calendar year. Land mammals comprised the majority (71.0%) of deaths, followed by reptiles and amphibians (10.7%) and insects and invertebrates (8.7%).

Public roads (30.3%), homes (20.7%) and farming areas (19.2%) were the most frequent locations at which fatal animal-related incidents occurred.

Half of all animal-related deaths occurred in New South Wales and Queensland (25.0% each)
One quarter of deaths involved a vehicle incident
There were no deaths confirmed to have involved a spider bite

Animal-related deaths

There were no deaths confirmed to have involved a spider bite
### Horses

- **172** deaths
- Nearly one third (31.8%) of animal-related deaths involved horses.
- The majority of horse-related deaths occurred among persons aged 25 to 64 years (57.0%). A fall from a horse was a primary contributing factor to death in 108 cases.
- Over two fifths (42.4%) of horse-related deaths involved trail or general horseback riding.

### Bovine

- **82** deaths
- **52.4%** direct contact with bovine animal
- **34.1%** persons aged 65+ years
- Cows, bulls and other bovine animals contributed to 15.2% of animal-related deaths.
- There were 23 fatal bovine-related incidents where the person was working as farmer or farm worker.
- Deaths associated with bovine animals most frequently involved circumstances in which the person was struck, kicked, trampled, knocked over or crushed (52.4%) by the animal. Nearly half (47.6%) of bovine-related deaths involved a vehicle incident.

### Dogs

- **53** deaths
- **49.1%** biting incidents
- **49.1%** persons aged 65+ years
- Dog-related deaths were most common among those aged 65 years and over (49.1%), followed by those aged under 15 years (20.8%).
- Dog-related deaths resulted from biting (49.1%), falls (41.5%) and vehicle incidents (9.4%).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharks</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>The majority of deaths involving sharks were of persons aged between 15 and 44 years (74.1%). Eleven fatal incidents involving sharks occurred in Western Australia, while six occurred in Queensland and New South Wales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kangaroos</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>There were 37 deaths involving kangaroos, all of which were as a result of a vehicle incident. In 20 of these incidents, the person was a motorcyclist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snakes</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>There were 37 snake-related deaths, of which 35 were known to involve a venomous snake. Twelve fatal incidents involving snakes occurred in Queensland, while nine occurred in New South Wales and six occurred in Victoria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bees</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>All bee-related deaths involved the person suffering anaphylaxis. Twelve fatal incidents involving bees occurred in Western Australia, while nine occurred in South Australia and six occurred in New South Wales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crocodiles</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>In six crocodile-related deaths, the person was fishing at the time of the incident. Fifteen fatal incidents involving crocodiles occurred in the Northern Territory, while five occurred in Queensland.</td>
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The data presented in this fact sheet was obtained from the NCIS in January 2020. The dataset extracted contained fatalities reported to an Australian coroner between 1 January 2001 and 31 December 2017 that were coded as being contributed to by an animal, and where the coronial investigation had concluded and the case was closed on the NCIS. Visit the NCIS website for information on data sources and limitations. To request a comprehensive data report, contact the NCIS or visit www.ncis.org.au.

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