



Crime & Imprisonment

Data Report - September 2006

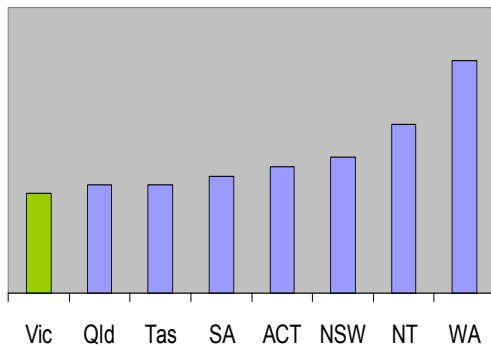
Part 1: CRIME¹

OVERALL CRIME

Victoria remains the state with the lowest recorded rate of overall crime.² At 4198 incidents per 10,000 persons, this is 7.4% lower than Queensland (the state with the next lowest rate of crime) at 4531.2, and 26.3% lower than New South Wales at 5698.9.

All states bar Western Australia have experienced a decline in the overall rate of crime since 1996.

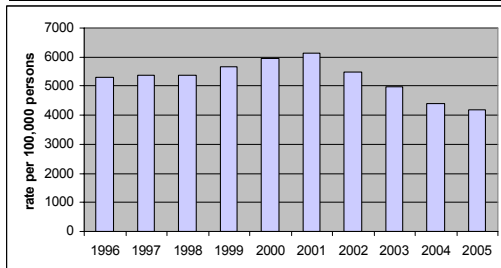
All Crime Categories Combined- State Rank 2005



Overall trend in all Crime Rates 1996-2005



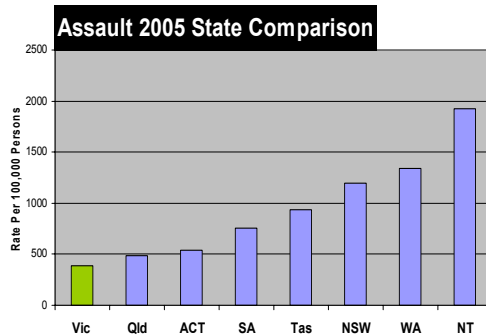
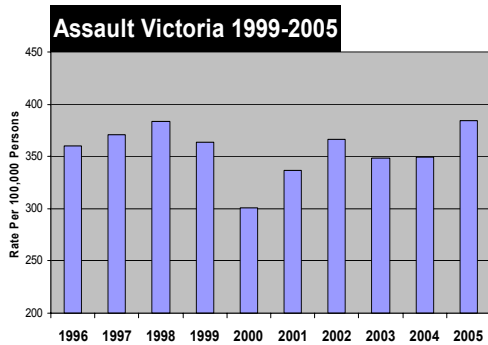
Victoria – total recorded crime 1996-2005



In 2005 Victoria recorded its lowest rate of crime per 100,000 persons for the last ten years. Rate of crime had been increasing gradually from 5309.9 per 100,000 persons in 1996 to 6140.3 in 2001. The rate of crime has been decreasing steadily since 2001 to its current rate of 4198.7.

Assault

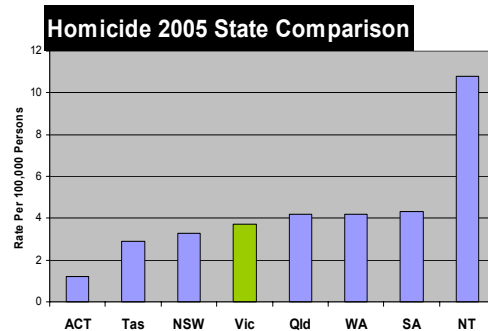
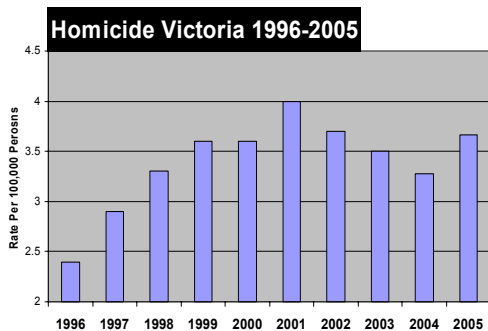
Victoria recorded the lowest rate of assault for any state or territory in 2005 at a rate of 384 assaults per 100,000 persons. This is despite an increase in the rate of assault in Victoria in the last year, from 349 per 100,000 persons in 2004 to 384 in 2005. This rate has fluctuated in the 10 year period from 1996 – 2005 but has not shown substantial or sustained movement in either direction.



Homicide

The rate of homicide in Victoria increased slightly between 2004 and 2005 from a rate of 3.3 per 100,000 persons to a rate of 3.7. This is the first increase since a steady decline began in 2001.

Victoria retains a relatively low rate of homicide in comparison with other states.

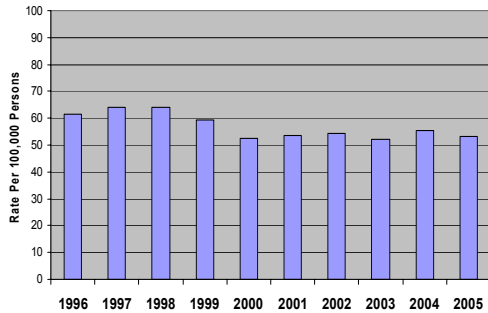


Sexual Assault

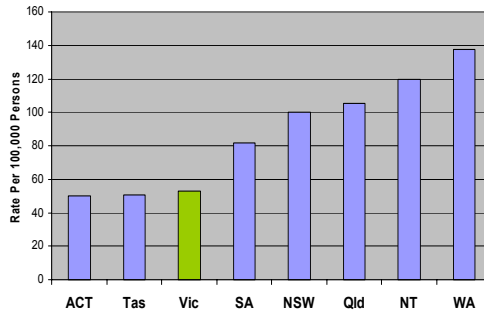
Sexual assault in Victoria has remained relatively stable since 2000.³

Victoria has a marginally higher rate of sexual assault than the ACT and Tasmania, all of which have considerably lower rates than the other states. Victoria has a rate of sexual assault nearly half (47%) that of New South Wales.

Sexual Assault Victoria 1996-2005



Sexual Assault 05 State Comparison

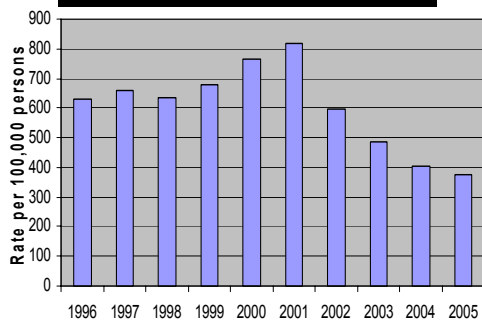


Motor Vehicle Theft

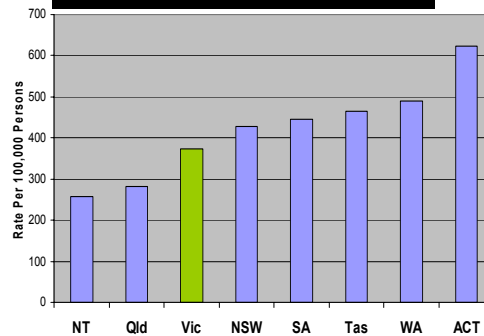
The rate of motor vehicle theft in Victoria continued to decline, and the rate of 373.5 per 100,000 persons in 2005 was the lowest rate recorded in the last 10 years. This is a decrease of 40.8% from a rate of 630.8 per 100,000 persons in 1996, and a decrease of 54.4% from a peak rate of 819.1 per 100,000 in 2001.

This is reflected in Victoria's position as having the third lowest rate of motor vehicle theft of all the States and Territories.

Motor Vehicle Theft Victoria 1996-2005



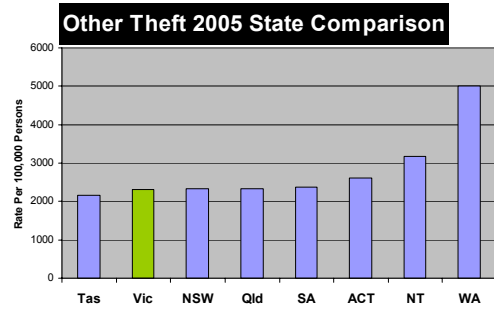
Vehicle Theft 05 State Comparison



Other Theft

The rate of other theft in Victoria also continued to decline, and the rate of 2307.4 per 100,000 persons in 2005 was again the lowest rate recorded in the last 10 years.

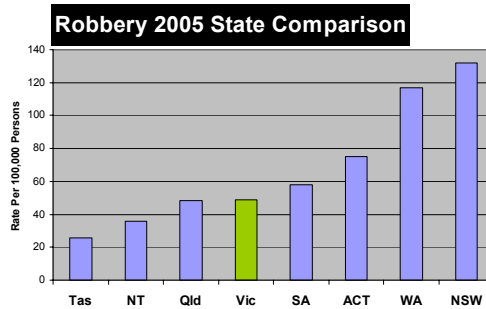
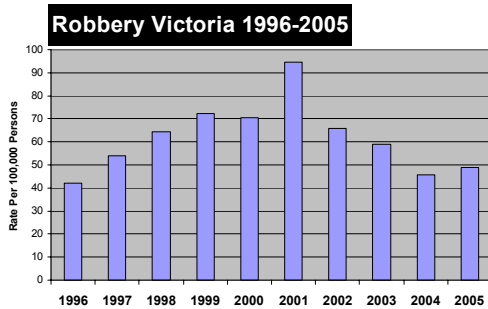
Tasmania is the only State or territory with a lower rate of other theft than Victoria.



Robbery

After rising steadily between 1996 and 2001, the rate of robbery in Victoria has almost returned to its 1996 level. The rate of 48.8 per 10,000 persons in 2005 increased marginally from the 2004 rate of 45.8.

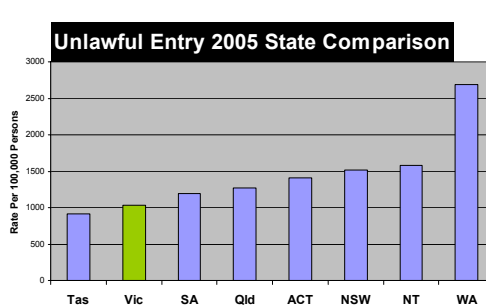
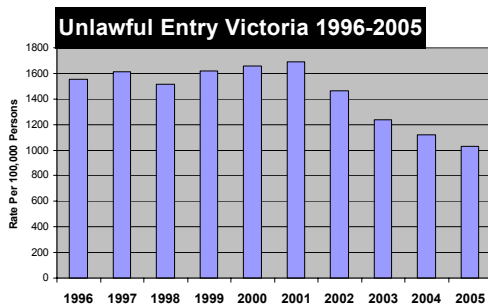
The rate of robbery in Victoria is relatively low in comparison with other States and Territories.



Unlawful Entry

Unlawful entry has continued to decline in Victoria and is now at 1028.1 per 100,000 persons. This is the lowest rate in 10 years and displays a significant decrease from the peak of 1688.3 in 2001, a difference of 39.1%.

Tasmania remains the only state with a lower rate of unlawful entry than Victoria in 2005.

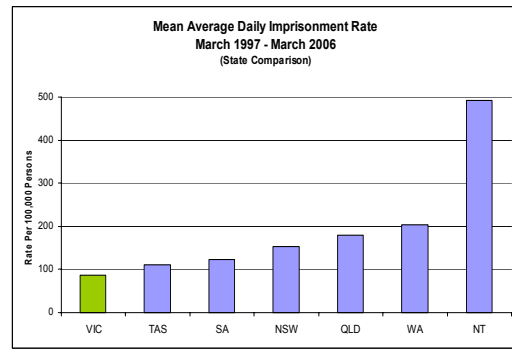
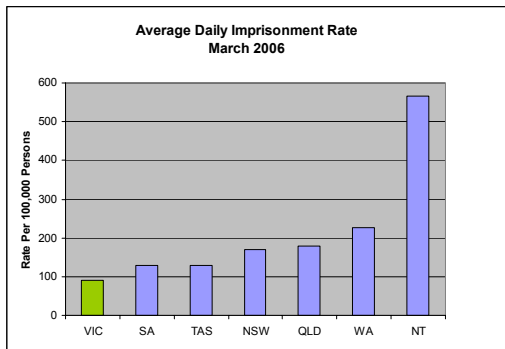


PART 2: IMPRISONMENT⁴

Imprisonment: State Comparison

Victoria recorded the lowest average daily imprisonment rate for all States and Territories for the March Quarter of 2006.

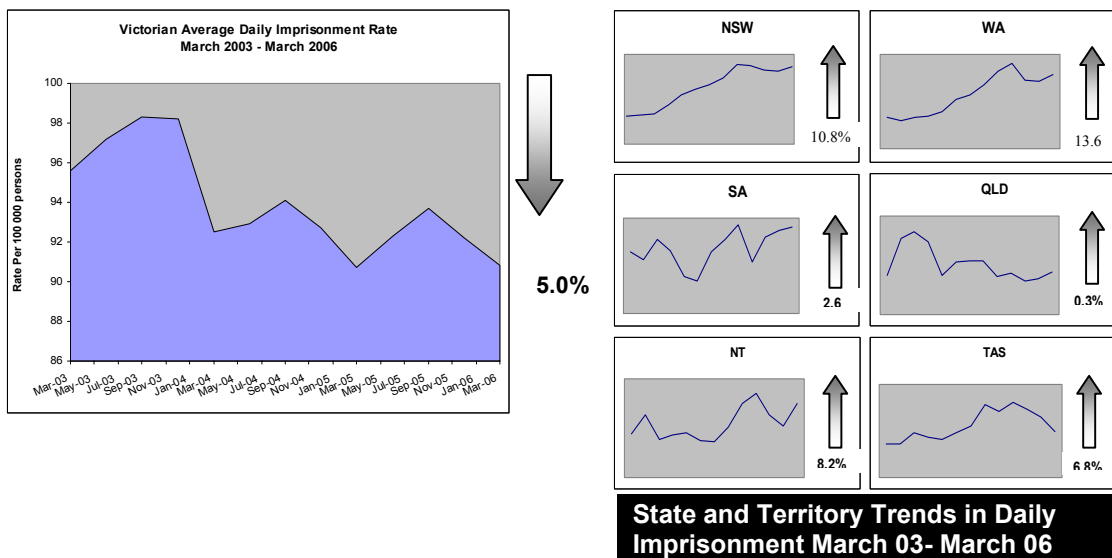
This is consistent with having the lowest mean average daily imprisonment rate of all states and Territories in the 10 year period from 1996 to 2005 at a rate of 87.4 persons per 100,000.



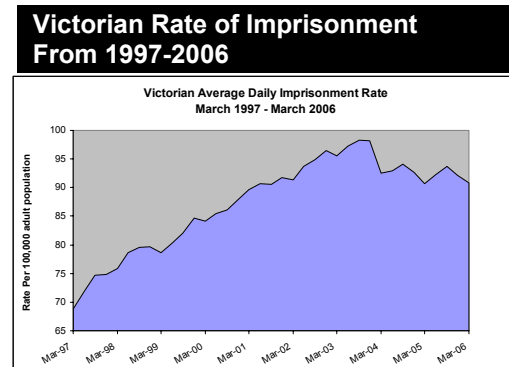
Imprisonment Rates in Victoria

Victoria recorded a fall of 5% in imprisonment rates between March 2003 and March 2006.

Victoria is the only state or Territory to record a decrease in the rate of imprisonment between March 2003 and March 2006.



This, however, follows a substantial rise in the rate of imprisonment since 1997, which peaked in the September Quarter of 2003 at a rate of 98.3. Despite the recent decline, the rate of 90.8 at March 2006 still represents a 31.7% increase on the rate of imprisonment in March 1997.



WOMEN'S IMPRISONMENT

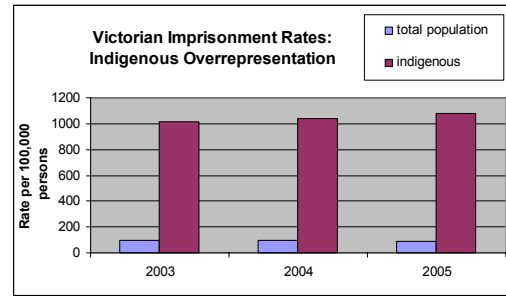
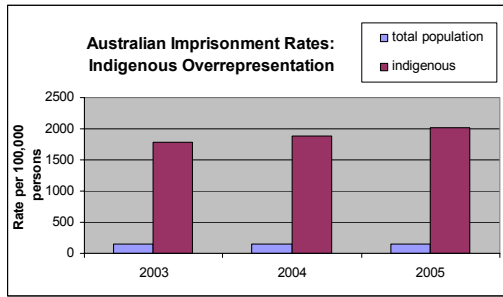


The rate of imprisonment of women increased overall from 10.5 per 100,000 in 2000 to 12.6 in 2005. This rate decreased slightly between 2003 and 2004, and remained stable between 2004 and 2005.

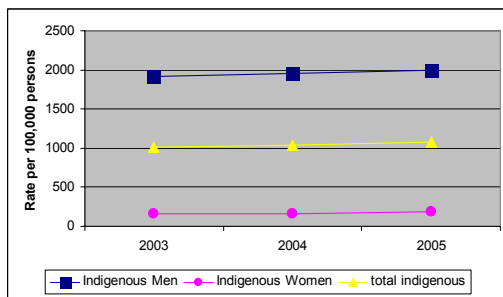
INDIGENOUS OVERREPRESENTATION⁶

In 2005, Indigenous Australians were nearly 13 times more likely to be imprisoned than non-indigenous Australians, and Indigenous Victorians were nearly 12 times more likely to be imprisoned.

Indigenous Victorians are slightly less likely than Indigenous Australians to be imprisoned proportionate to the non-Indigenous population. However, in Australia overall imprisonment rates are increasing, while in Victoria the increased rate of imprisonment of Indigenous people is occurring while rates of imprisonment for non-Indigenous people are decreasing.



Victorian Rate of Incarceration of Indigenous People 2003- March 2006



Between 2003 and 2006, imprisonment of Indigenous people in Victoria increased by 6.1% from 1016.5 to 1078.6 people per 100,000.

Of this, the rate of imprisonment of Indigenous men increased by 4.3% (from 1911.8 to 1994.6) while imprisonment of Indigenous women increased by 23.5% (from 153.9 to 190).

SPENDING ON IMPRISONMENT⁷

Expenditure on Australian prisons increased by 22.24% over the 5 year period from 2000-01 to 2004-05.

During the same period of time, expenditure on Victorian prisons increased by 46.01%. This represents an increase from \$173 million in 2000-01 to \$253 million in 2004-05, or an increase of \$80 million per year.



COST OF ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES

According to a 'snapshot' at 17 January 2006, approximately half of all people in prison had two or more characteristics of serious disadvantage. These characteristics include being unemployed, being homeless, having an intellectual disability, having drug or alcohol issues, having previously been admitted to a psychiatric institution, or being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.⁸

The total cost of imprisoning people in Victoria in 2004-05 was \$227.80 per prisoner per day.⁹

By contrast, an offender in community corrections cost \$12.60 per day¹⁰, community based residential services for people with a mental illness cost \$134.59 per day¹¹, and government expenditure on public housing costs \$50 per dwelling per day¹².

ENDNOTES

¹ Data from Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Recorded Crime – Victims, Australia 4510.0* (2005) and (2003). As the 2005 report used an indexed measure for the first time and did not include rate per 100,000 persons, the rate reported in the ABS *Recorded Crime – Victims, Australia 4510.0* (2003) was used for the data from 1996 – 2003, and the rate per 100,000 persons for 2004 and 2005 was calculated from the raw data in the ABS *Recorded Crime – Victims* (2005) in combination with the *Population data 2005: ABS Report on Australian Demographic Statistics 3101.0* (December Quarter 2005), and *Population data 2004: ABS Report on Australian Demographic Statistics 3101.0* (December Quarter 2004). As such, some caution must be used in interpreting these statistics.

² This is based on total crime per 100,000 persons. Crimes include homicide and related offences, assault, sexual assault, robbery, unlawful entry with intent, motor vehicle theft and other theft, as detailed above.

³ It is conceivable that this may represent a significant decrease, given the higher incidence of reporting of sexual offences.

⁴ Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics Report - *Corrective Services, Australia 4512.0* (March Quarter 2006)

⁵ Source: ABS Report - *Corrective Services, Australia 4512.0* (figures from 1997-2002, and 2006).

⁶ Source: ABS Report on Corrective Services Australia 4512.0 (2006).

⁷ *Report on Government Services 2006* Table 7A.7 - Source :State and Territory governments (unpublished).

⁸ *Growing Victoria Together Progress Report, 2005-06, Appendix B – Service Delivery*, p358. Department of Premier and Cabinet, State of Victoria.

⁹ *Report on Government Services 2006*, Table 7A.6. Source: State and Territory Governments (unpublished): Total cost per prisoner is the combined recurrent cost per prisoner per day plus capital cost per prisoner per day.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, Table 7A.9: Total cost per offender is the combined recurrent cost per offender per day plus capital cost per offender per day.

¹¹ *Ibid*, Table 11A.40: Average cost to government (recurrent) per patient day for community-based residential services (2003-04 dollars). Cost is for units not staffed 24 hours per day.

¹² *Ibid*, Table 16.1 Government housing assistance, 2004-05. Total includes recurrent and capital costs.