



Ministry
of Justice



**Safety in Custody Statistics
England and Wales
Deaths in prison custody to
March 2015
Assaults and Self-harm to
December 2014**

Ministry of Justice
Statistics bulletin

30 April 2015

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Introduction

Safety in custody statistics cover deaths, self-harm and assaults in prison custody in England and Wales. This publication updates statistics on assaults and self-harm up to December 2014 and statistics on deaths in prison custody up to March 2015. Supplementary tables, providing more in depth statistics on deaths, self-harm and assaults on a calendar year basis, are also available alongside this bulletin and can be found at www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics.

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

In interpreting the statistics contained within this bulletin, users are recommended to read with it the accompanying 'Guide to Safety in Custody Statistics'¹ that includes technical and background information on the production of these statistics, and more information on data quality.

When considering particular statistics, readers should note the following:

- Risk of death, self-harm or assaults is distributed unevenly around the prison estate. Age, gender, time in custody and random variation, explain many of the differences between prisons and particular risk groups.
- In prisons, as in the community, self-harm is often covert and assaults may go unreported. In prison custody, however, such incidents are more likely to be detected and counted. Recording of self-harm and assault incidents in prison custody has improved over the years but it remains the case that they cannot be counted with absolute accuracy.

Although this publication concerns statistics, the incidents described in this report are, by their nature, tragic and distressing to the prisoners, their families and staff.

From time to time, events in prison custody and developments within and outside NOMS have changed the way safety in prisons is viewed and managed. Some have resulted in changes to the way offenders are managed. Others have affected the way statistics are collected and reported. The accompanying guide includes a timeline summarising some of the key events and developments that have affected safety in prison custody and supporting statistics. These help with interpretation of longer term trends.

Changes and revisions in this publication

¹ Guide to Safety in Custody Statistics www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics

This publication has updated figures on deaths to the end of March 2015.

Users and uses of these Statistics

The cost of deaths, self-harm and assaults in prison custody, in both human and financial terms is high. This report adds to the body of learning in this area and supports work to prevent such tragedies in future. The contents support a wide range of operational and strategic decisions including:

- Management of risk;
- Deployment of staff (identification of high risk periods and locations etc.);
- Design of prison cells (identification and reduction of ligature points);
- Assessment of changes in sentencing and other policies affecting prisoners.

The statistics included in this publication are used extensively and meet a broad spectrum of user needs as shown below.

User	Summary of main statistical needs
MOJ Ministers	Use the statistics to monitor the safety and wellbeing of the prison population; assess policy impacts (e.g. changes to managing vulnerable prisoners)
MPs and House of Lords	Statistics are frequently used to answer parliamentary questions
Policy teams	Statistics are used to inform policy development, to monitor impact of changes over time and to model future changes and their impact on the system
Agencies responsible for offender management	Current and historical robust administrative data are used to support performance management information at national and local levels to complement their understanding of the current picture and trends over time
Academia, students and businesses	Used as a source of statistics for research purposes and to support lectures, presentations and conferences
Journalists	Used as a compendium of robust data on safety in custody so that an accurate and coherent story can be told on the safety of the prison environment.
Voluntary sector	Data are used to monitor trends of the safety and wellbeing of prisoners, to reuse the data in their own briefing and research papers and to inform policy work and responses to consultations.
General public	Data are used to respond to ad-hoc requests and requests made under the Freedom of Information Act. Recent requests include number of deaths, self-harm and assaults in prisons.

NOMS regularly receives requests for statistics for more recent, or different, date periods than those covered in published statistics. In accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, NOMS is generally unable to release statistics for periods beyond those published in Official Statistics publications.

Related publications

This bulletin is published alongside two inter-related bulletins:

Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin²: This provides key statistics relating to offenders who are in prison or under Probation Service supervision. It covers flows into these services (receptions into prison or probation starts) and flows out (discharges from prison or probation terminations) as well as the caseload of both services at specific points in time.

Proven Re-offending Statistics Quarterly³: This provides proven re-offending figures for offenders who were released from custody, received a non-custodial conviction at court, received a caution, reprimand, warning or tested positive for opiates or cocaine.

Taken together, these publications present users with a more coherent overview of offender management, re-offending among both adults and young people and the safety of offenders whilst in prison custody.

Release Schedule

This bulletin was published on 30 April 2015 and includes statistics covering 12-month periods to end of December 2014 for self-harm and assaults and 12 month periods to end of March 2015 for deaths.

The next publication of Safety in Custody statistics is scheduled to be published on 30 July 2015, covering 12-month periods to end of March 2015 for assaults and self-harm and June 2015 for deaths in prison custody.

² Offender Management Statistics www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly

³ Proven Reoffending Statistics www.gov.uk/government/collections/proven-reoffending-statistics

Key findings

Table 1: Safety in Custody Summary Statistics, England and Wales

	12 months ending									
	Mar 06	Mar 07	Mar 08	Mar 09	Mar 10	Mar 11	Mar 12	Mar 13	Mar 14	Mar 15
Total deaths¹	168	161	189	163	180	185	211	181	225	239
Self-inflicted	74	72	84	64	59	54	67	52	88	76
Natural Causes	88	85	99	94	116	115	135	118	130	144
Homicide	3	0	1	3	0	2	1	2	3	4
Other ²	3	4	5	2	5	14	8	9	4	15

	12 months ending									
	Dec 05	Dec 06	Dec 07	Dec 08	Dec 09	Dec 10	Dec 11	Dec 12	Dec 13	Dec 14
Self-harm incidents¹	23,781	23,400	23,000	25,234	24,184	26,979	24,648	23,158	23,230	25,775
Males	10,420	11,899	11,592	12,219	13,706	14,347	15,829	16,567	17,216	18,995
Females	13,361	11,501	11,408	13,015	10,478	12,632	8,819	6,591	6,014	6,780
Assault incidents¹	14,413	15,057	15,272	15,959	15,180	14,335	15,440	14,511	14,664	16,196
Males	13,324	13,895	14,267	15,054	14,475	13,682	14,742	13,961	14,145	15,549
Females	1,089	1,162	1,005	905	705	653	698	550	519	647

1. Figures include incidents at NOMS operated Immigration Removal Centres

2. 'Other' deaths include accidental and other difficult to classify deaths including those for which further information is awaited. A small proportion of the most recent two years figures are expected to be reclassified as natural causes.

Deaths in prison Custody

- In the 12 months to March 2015 there were 239 deaths in prison custody – an increase of 14 compared to the 12 months ending March 2014. These deaths comprise of:
 - 76 apparent self-inflicted deaths, down from 88 on the same period in 2014
 - 144 deaths due to natural causes, up from 130 on the same period in 2014
 - 4 apparent homicides, up from 3 on the same period in 2014;
 - 15 other deaths, 11 of which are yet to be classified - awaiting further information.

Self-harm

In 2014 there were:

- 25,775 reported incidents of self-harm, up by 2,545 incidents (11%) from 2013
- 302 self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners, compared with 276 incidents per 1,000 prisoners in 2013 (up 9%)
- 7,722 prisoners reported to have self-harmed, up 780 (11%) from 2013
- 91 individuals self-harming per 1,000 prisoners, up by 9 per 1,000 prisoners (11%) from 2013.

Assaults

- Changes to quality assurance processes in 2013 led to improved reporting of assaults.

In 2014 there were:

- 16,196 assault incidents, up 10% from 14,664 incidents in 2013
- 190 assault incidents per 1,000 prisoners, up from 174 in 2013.
- 3,637 assaults on staff, up 11% from 3,266 incidents in 2013
- 43 assault on staff incidents per 1,000 prisoners, up from 39 in 2013
- 2,145 serious assaults up 35% from 1,588 in 2013.
- 477 serious assaults on staff up 33% from 359 in 2013.

1 Deaths in custody

In the 12 months to March 2015 there were 239 deaths in prison custody – an increase of 14 compared to the same period of 2013. These deaths comprise of:

- **76 apparent self-inflicted deaths**, down from 88 on the same period in 2014 (14% decrease);
- **144 deaths due to natural causes**, up from 130 on the same period in 2014 (11% increase);
- **4 apparent homicides**, up from 3 on the same period in 2014;
- **15 other deaths**, 11 of which are yet to be classified

A death in prison custody is defined as ‘any death of a person in prison custody arising from an incident in or, on rare occasions, immediately prior to prison custody’.

All deaths in prison custody are subject to a police investigation and a coroner’s inquest. Once the inquest has been concluded, the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman’s office publish a detailed ‘Fatal Incident Report’⁴ on the death. Until this time, for administrative and statistical purposes NOMS classify deaths by *apparent* cause of death.

Annual supplementary tables published alongside this bulletin⁵ show that the key population factors in determining risk of death in custody are:

- Age: Older prisoners are more likely to die of natural causes. Self-inflicted death risk varies with age. In absolute terms, the peak of self-inflicted deaths is amongst prisoners in their 30s, although when considering rates, the peak is amongst prisoners in their 40s and 50s;
- Time in custody: Self-inflicted deaths are more likely in the early stages of custody;
- Gender: Female prisoners are less likely to die in custody.

Table 2: Deaths in Custody Summary Statistics, England and Wales

	12 months ending										
	Mar 05	Mar 06	Mar 07	Mar 08	Mar 09	Mar 10	Mar 11	Mar 12	Mar 13	Mar 14	Mar 15
DEATHS											
Deaths in prison custody^{1,2}	197	168	161	189	163	180	185	211	181	225	239
Self-inflicted	87	74	72	84	64	59	54	67	52	88	76
Natural Causes	101	88	85	99	94	116	115	135	118	130	144
Homicide	2	3	0	1	3	0	2	1	2	3	4
Other ³	7	3	4	5	2	5	14	8	9	4	15
<i>of which</i>											
Other/Non-natural	7	3	4	5	2	5	14	8	9	2	4
Awaiting further information	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	2	11
Deaths per 1,000 prisoners	2.6	2.2	2.0	2.3	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.4	2.1	2.7	2.8
Self-inflicted	1.2	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.6	1.0	0.9
Natural Causes	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.4	1.5	1.7
Deaths by Gender											
Male	179	161	155	181	158	174	176	207	175	219	228
Female	18	7	6	8	5	6	9	4	6	6	11

1. All classifications of deaths remain provisional until confirmed at inquest.

2. Data includes incidents at NOMS run Immigration Removal Centres

3. A minority of the most recent two years figures for 'other' deaths are expected to be re-classified as natural causes

⁴ Prisons and Probation Ombudsman: Fatal Incident Reports www.ppo.gov.uk/prison-investigations.html

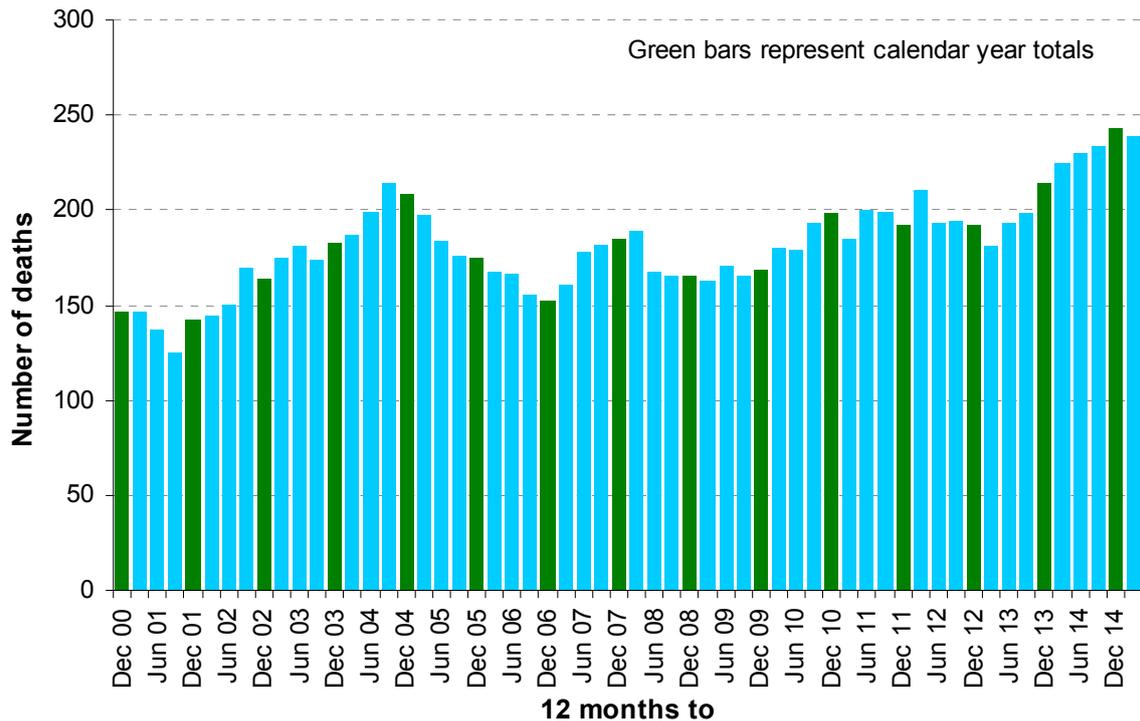
⁵ Deaths in Custody: Deaths tables at www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics

As there are a number of deaths yet to be classified it is likely that some will be reclassified as natural cause deaths when sufficient information becomes available, and some may be reclassified as self-inflicted. For this reason all figures for the last two years are provisional.

1.1 Overall mortality

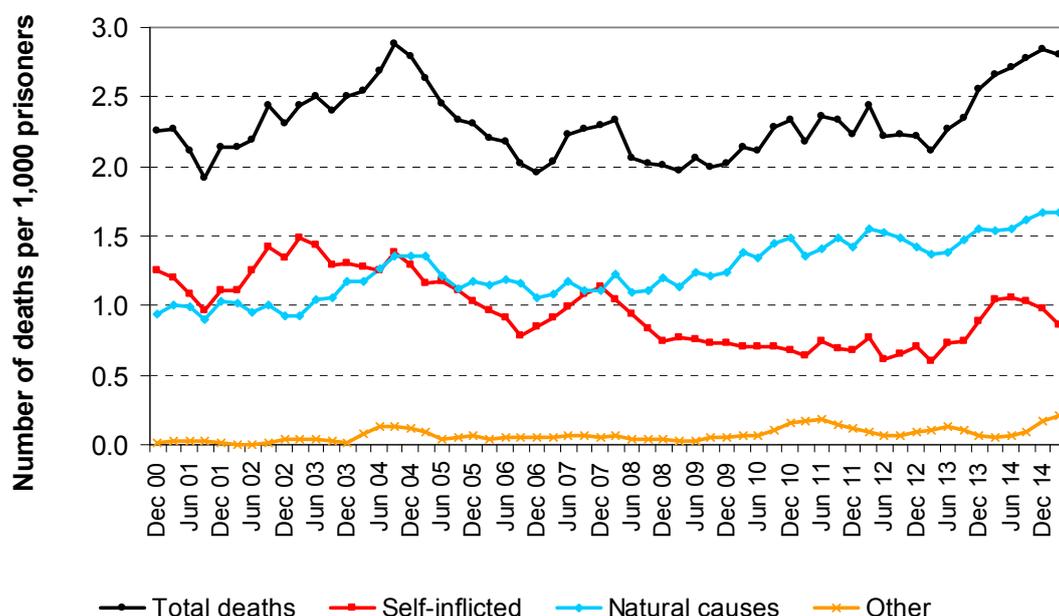
There were 239 deaths in prison custody in the 12 months to the end of March 2015. The majority of deaths in prison custody were from natural causes (144 deaths (60%)), with self-inflicted deaths making up just under one-third of deaths.

Figure 1: Number of deaths in prison custody, 2000 to March 2015 (rolling 12 month totals by quarter)



The prison population has increased over the last 10 years and, therefore everything else being equal, a corresponding increase in the number of deaths would be expected. The death rate better shows the trend in deaths taking into account changes in the size of the prison population. Figure 2, shows the 12 month rolling death rate fell to 2.8 deaths per 1,000 prisoners following increases in the previous eight reporting periods.

Figure 2: Deaths per 1,000 prisoners by apparent cause, 2000 to March 2015 (rolling 12 month totals by quarter)



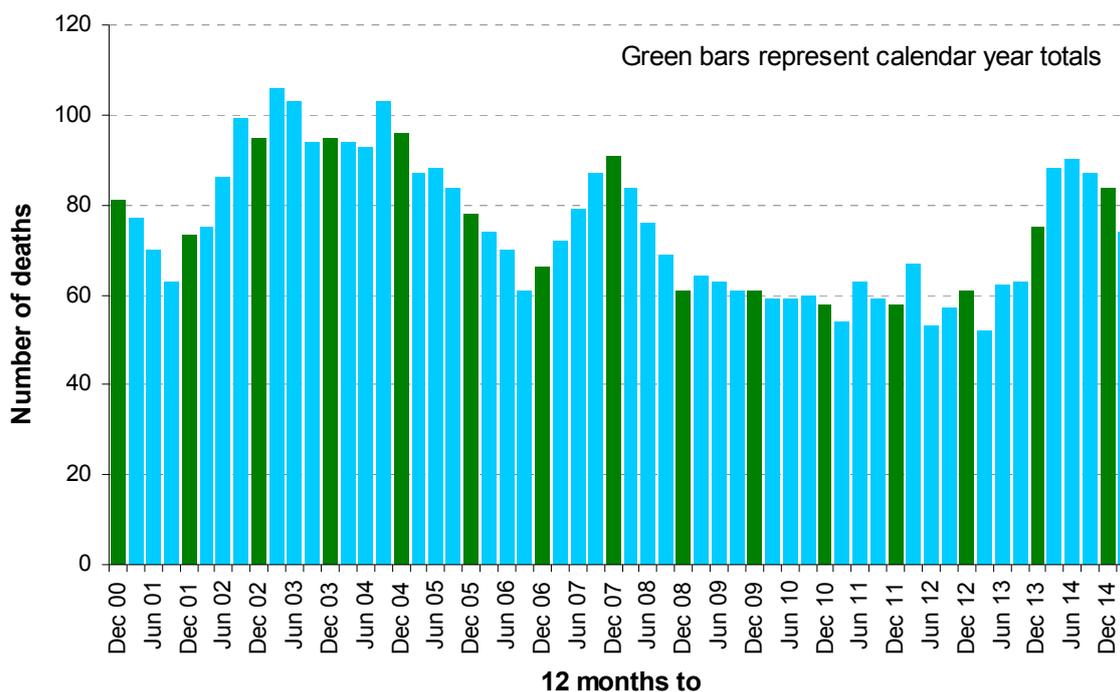
1.2 Self-inflicted deaths

- **76 self-inflicted deaths** in the 12 months to March 2015, 12 (14%) less than in the 12 months ending March 2014.
- The **rate of self-inflicted deaths decreased to 0.9 per 1,000 prisoners**, from 1.0 in the previous year.

Self-inflicted deaths are any death of a person who has apparently taken his or her own life irrespective of intent. This not only includes suicides but also accidental deaths as a result of the person's own actions. This classification is used because it is not always known whether a person intended to commit suicide.

Self-inflicted deaths decreased to 76 in the 12 months ending March 2015 compared to 88 in the same period of 2014. Quarterly figures remain volatile. The 12 month rolling numbers of self-inflicted deaths (see figure 3) and corresponding rate (figure 2) have both fallen.

Figure 3: Number of apparent self-inflicted deaths in prison custody, between 2000 to March 2015 (rolling 12 month totals by quarter)



1.3 Natural cause deaths

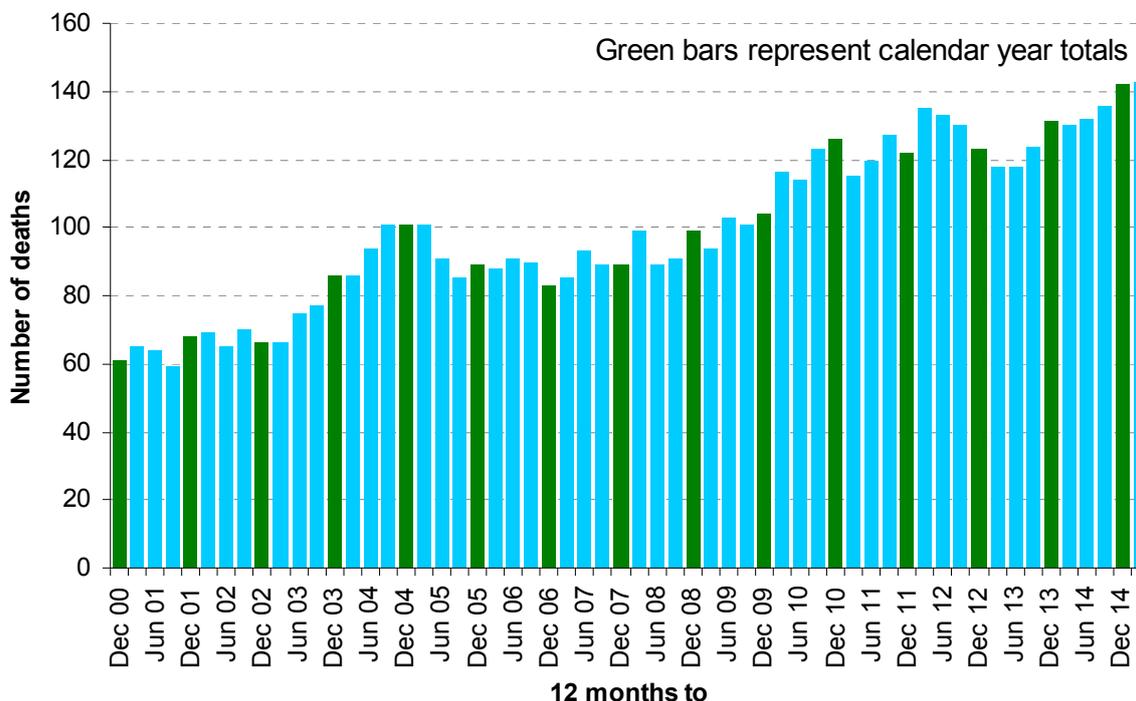
- **144 natural cause deaths** in the 12 months ending March 2015, 14 (11%) more than in the 12 months ending March 2014;
- The **rate of natural cause deaths increased to 1.7 deaths per 1,000 prisoners** from 1.5 in the previous year.

Natural cause deaths include any death of a person as a result of a naturally occurring disease process.

There were 144 deaths from natural causes in the 12 months ending March 2015. This figure is likely to increase as it is typical for some of the deaths awaiting further information to be reclassified as natural causes. The uncertainty on the figures will not be entirely removed until after inquest. The current figure is 14 (11%) higher than the number of natural cause deaths in the 12 months ending March 2014.

Figure 4 shows that natural cause deaths have been on a general upward trend over the last decade, albeit with fluctuations between reporting periods. The prison population has been aging (see page 6 of the NOMS Offender Equalities report) <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/noms-annual-offender-equalities-report-2013-to-2014>

Figure 4: Number of apparent natural cause deaths in prison custody, 2000 to March 2015 (rolling 12 month totals by quarter)



1.4 Homicides

Homicides include any death of a person at the hands of another. This includes murder and manslaughter cases. As with self-inflicted deaths, the classification system does not make any judgement about intent.

- **4 apparent homicides** in the 12 months ending March 2015 compared with 3 in the 12 months ending March 2014;
- Homicides are relatively rare accounting for about 1% of all deaths in prison custody.

Homicides in prison custody are relatively rare, ranging between 0 and 4 in any year since 1979.

Cell-sharing risk assessments were introduced in 2002 with the aim of reducing the risk of placing prisoners in cells where they may cause harm to their cell companion.

1.5 Other deaths

‘Other’ deaths include any death of a person whose death cannot easily be classified as natural causes, self-inflicted or homicide. The category includes accidents and cases where the cause of death is unknown even after all of the investigations have been concluded.

There were **15 other deaths in the 12 months ending March 2015** (6% of all deaths). This number is not directly comparable with earlier years as some of the deaths in this category are likely to be reclassified (typically as either natural cause or other/non-natural deaths) following inquest.

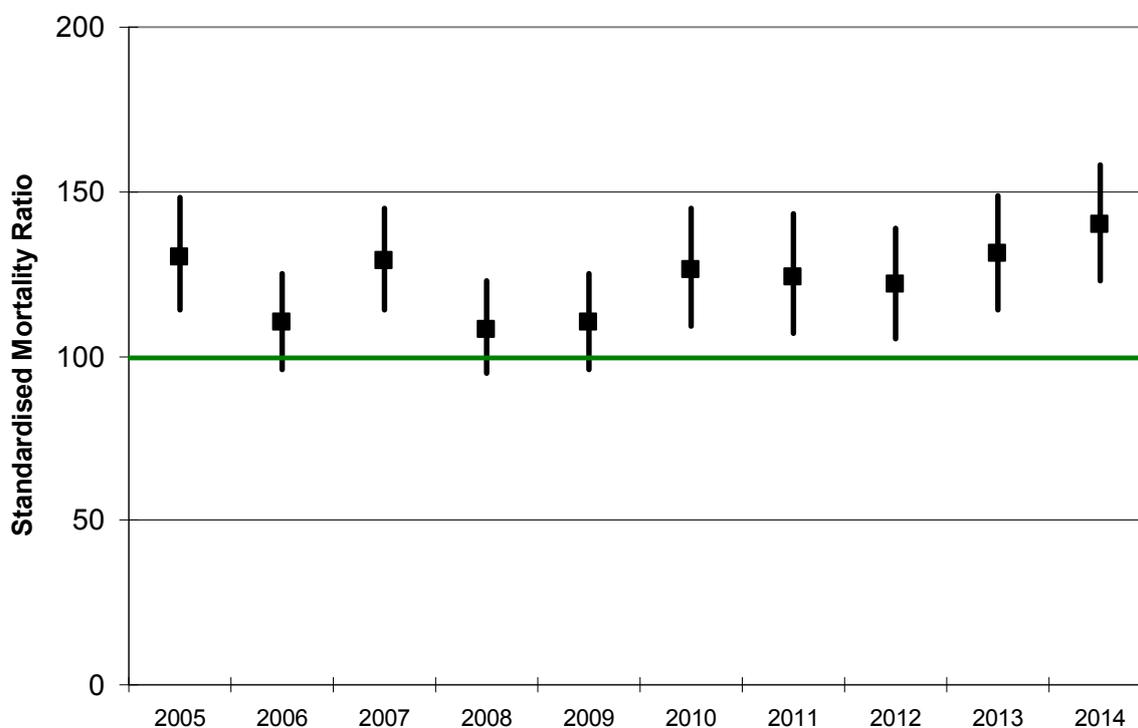
The numbers in this category have increased in recent years due to a number of cases that have proved difficult to classify.

The majority of deaths for which information is awaited beyond three months are expected to be classified as either 'other/other non-natural' or natural causes.

Some of the cases in the aggregated 'other' category appear to be drug related but there is insufficient information to classify any to be self-inflicted. The uncertainty will not be entirely removed until after inquest.

1.6 Comparison of deaths in prison with those in the general population

Figure 5: Annual Standardised Mortality Ratio (SMR) for prison population



The prison population is very different from the general population: 95% of the prison population are male, there are no prisoners aged under 15 and relatively few are over 60. As a result, rates of deaths in prison custody cannot be compared directly with those for the general population. One technique used for comparing mortality rates for different populations is known as the Standardised Mortality Ratio (SMR).

Figure 5 is based on annual data and shows the Standardised Mortality Ratio (SMR) for the prison population and its 95% confidence interval. It compares overall deaths with those of the general population of England and Wales taking into account differences in age and gender. If the minimum of the SMR confidence level of the SMR is above 1, then this indicates that the mortality rate of the prison population is significantly higher than that of the general population. In 2014, the SMR for the prison population was significantly higher than

the general population with a ratio of 1.40 with a lower bound 95% confidence interval of 1.23 and an upper bound of 1.50. In seven out of the last ten years, prison mortality has been significantly higher than that of the general population. The increase in the ratio in 2014 compared with 2013 is not significant.

The chart is updated annually on a calendar year basis when the underlying data become available.

2 Self-harm

- In 2014 there were
- **25,775 reported incidents of self-harm**, up by 2,545 incidents (11%) from 2013
- **302 self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners**, compared with 276 incidents per 1,000 prisoners in 2013 (up 9%)
- **7,722 prisoners reported to have self-harmed**, up 780 (11%) from 2013
- **91 individuals self-harming per 1,000 prisoners**, up by 9 per 1,000 prisoners (11%) from 2013.

Self-harm in prison custody is defined as, “*any act where a prisoner deliberately harms themselves irrespective of the method, intent or severity of any injury.*” Those who self-harm often do so covertly. In the community, such self-harm will often go undetected. In prisons, such incidents are more likely to be detected and counted although there will still be incidents that are not detected.

Annual statistics suggest the key factors determining the risk of self-harm in custody are:

- Age: Younger prisoners are more likely to self-harm than older prisoners⁶;
- Time in custody: A disproportionate amount of self-harm occurs in the early stages of custody⁷.
- Gender: Females are more likely to self-harm than males.

Table 3: Self-harm in Custody Summary Statistics, England and Wales

	12 months ending									
	Dec 05	Dec 06	Dec 07	Dec 08	Dec 09	Dec 10	Dec 11	Dec 12	Dec 13	Dec 14
SELF-HARM										
Self-harm incidents¹	23,781	23,400	23,000	25,234	24,184	26,979	24,648	23,158	23,230	25,775
Males	10,420	11,899	11,592	12,219	13,706	14,347	15,829	16,567	17,216	18,995
Females	13,361	11,501	11,408	13,015	10,478	12,632	8,819	6,591	6,014	6,780
Self-harm individuals²	5,837	6,090	6,296	6,586	7,149	6,767	6,907	6,821	6,942	7,722
Males	4,348	4,652	4,847	5,058	5,535	5,418	5,606	5,703	5,897	6,618
Females	1,489	1,438	1,449	1,528	1,614	1,349	1,301	1,118	1,045	1,104
Self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners	313	299	286	305	289	318	287	267	276	302
Males	146	161	153	156	173	178	194	201	214	233
Females	2,991	2,586	2,608	2,949	2,447	2,982	2,106	1,587	1,546	1,736
Self-harm individuals per 1,000 prisoners²	77	78	78	80	86	80	80	79	82	91
Males	61	63	64	65	70	67	69	69	73	81
Females	333	323	331	346	377	318	311	269	269	283
Self-harm incidents per individual	4.1	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.4	4.0	3.6	3.4	3.3	3.3
Males	2.4	2.6	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9
Females	9.0	8.0	7.9	8.5	6.5	9.4	6.8	5.9	5.8	6.1
Hospital Attendances	1,219	1,214	1,290	1,290	1,304	1,386	1,540	1,547	1,603	1,749
Males	985	1,001	1,104	1,083	1,131	1,208	1,381	1,391	1,484	1,617
Females	234	213	186	207	173	178	159	156	119	132

1. Figures include incidents at NOMS operated Immigration Removal Centres

2. Numbers of individuals should be treated as approximate as the details of prisoners are not always recorded against each self-harm incident.

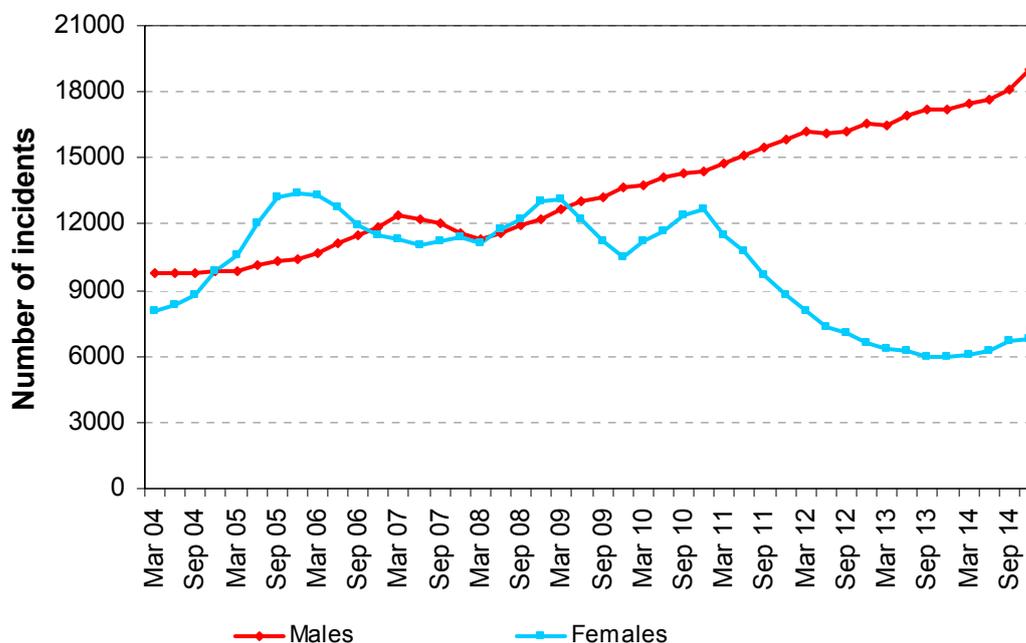
The number of reported self-harm incidents increased by 11% in the 12 months to December 2014 to 25,775 compared with 23,230 incidents in the same period a year earlier.

As self-harm rates differ between males and females it is best to consider the trends separately.

⁶ Safety in Custody: Self-harm Table 2.4

⁷ Safety in Custody: Self-harm Table 2.5 www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics

Figure 6: Number of self-harm incidents in prison custody by gender 2004-2014 (rolling 12 month totals by quarter)



2.1 Male self-harm

In 2014 there were:

- **18,995 reported incidents of self-harm by male prisoners**, up 1,779 incidents (10%) in the previous year.
- **233 incidents per 1,000 male prisoners**, up 19 (9%) compared with 2013.
- **6,618 male prisoners self-harmed**, up 721 (12%) from 2013.
- Of those male prisoners who self-harm, they carried out, on average, 2.9 self-harm incidents in 2014, the same as the previous year.

The number of reported male self-harm incidents increased by 10% in 2014 to 18,995 incidents compared with 17,216 incidents in 2013. This continues the long term trend of the number of self-harm incidents amongst male prisoners increasing.

The number of incidents is affected by changes in the size of the prison population. The rate per 1,000 prisoners accounts for changes in the prison population. This also increased over the period to 233 incidents per 1,000 prisoners in 2014 compared with 214 incidents per 1,000 prisoners a year earlier.

The number of male prisoners reported to have self-harmed has increased to 6,618 in 2014 from 5,897 in 2013 (an increase of 12%). However, approximately 5% of male self-harm incidents do not have the prisoner's details recorded and so the actual number of males self-harming is likely to be higher.

2.2 Female self-harm

In 2014 there were:

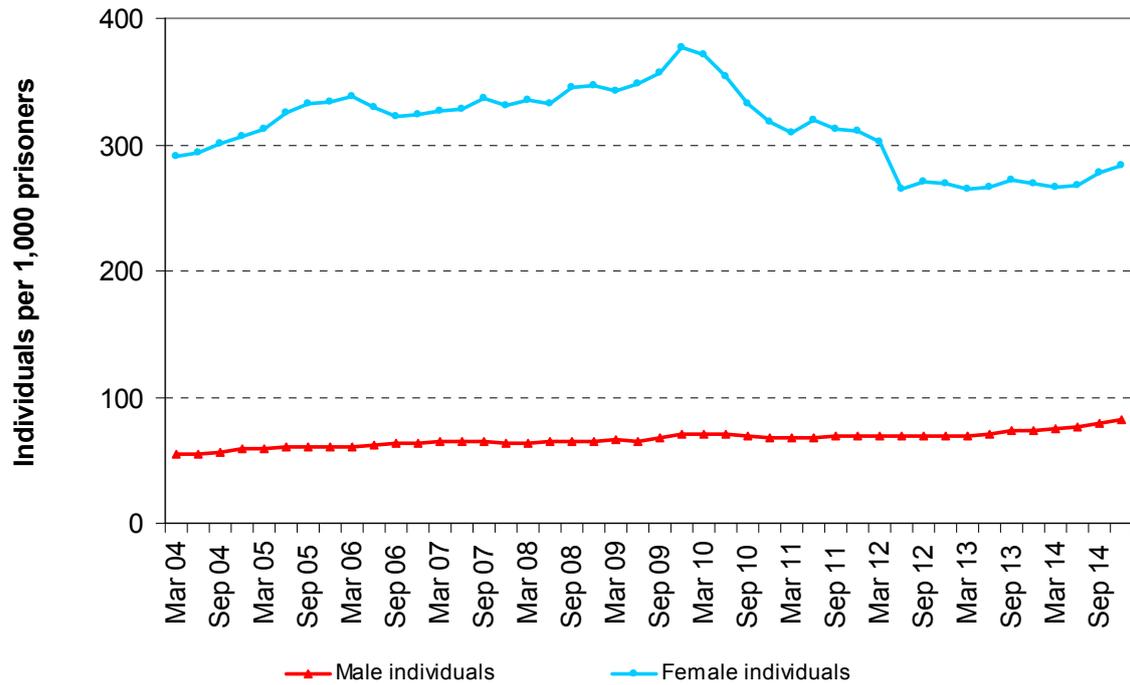
- **6,780 incidents of self-harm by female prisoners**, up 766 incidents (13%) from 2013;
- **1,104 female prisoners self-harmed**, up 59 (6%) on the previous year
- **283 females per 1,000 female prisoners**, up 14 per 1,000 female prisoners (5%) on the previous 12 months;
- Female prisoners who self-harm, were responsible for 6.1 self-harm incidents on average, up 0.3 incidents (5%) in 2013.

The number of reported female self-harm incidents increased by 13% in 2014 to 6,780 incidents compared with 6,014 incidents in 2013. The rate of self-harm incidents increased to 1,736 incidents per 1,000 female prisoners compared with 1,546 incidents per 1,000 female prisoners. This increase reverses the downward trend seen since 2010.

The number of female prisoners recorded to have self-harmed in 2014 increased to 1,104 prisoners from 1,045 prisoners in 2013. The rate of female prisoners self-harming increased to 283 females per 1,000 female prisoners in 2014 compared with 269 per 1,000 female prisoners a year earlier (figure 7). As with males there is a small percentage of female self-harm incidents, typically less than 5%, where the individual involved is not recorded.

This has reversed the recent falling trend of self-harm by female prisoners which fell by 50% between 2010 (12,632 incidents) and 2013 (6,014 incidents). Over the same period the rate of females who self-harmed fell by 15% (318 females per 1,000 female prisoners and 269 females per 1,000 female prisoners respectively).

Figure 7: Self-harming individuals per 1,000 prisoners by gender, England and Wales (rolling 12 months by quarter)



Despite the falls seen in recent years, self-harm by females continue to account for a disproportionate amount of self-harm in prison custody – females accounted for 27% of self-harm incidents in this reporting period but only make up around 5% of the prison population.

3 Assaults (including fights)

- Changes to quality assurance processes in 2013 led to improved reporting of assaults.

In 2014 there were:

- **16,196 assault incidents**, up 10% from 14,664 incidents in 2013
- **190 assault incidents per 1,000 prisoners**, up from 174 in 2013.
- **3,637 assaults on staff**, up 11% from 3,266 incidents in 2013
- **43 assault on staff incidents per 1,000 prisoners**, up from 39 in 2013
- **2,145 serious assault** up 35% from 1,588 in 2013.
- **477 serious assaults on staff** up 33% from 359 in 2013.

Assaults in prison custody cover a wide range of violent incidents including fights between prisoners. NOMS does not use the Home Office counting rule definitions of Actual Bodily Harm (ABH), Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH), affray etc. because of the difficulty of determining this at the time an incident is reported. As a result, assault incident figures cannot be compared directly with offences.

Table 4: Assault incidents Summary Statistics, England and Wales

	12 months ending									
	Dec 05	Dec 06	Dec 07	Dec 08	Dec 09	Dec 10	Dec 11	Dec 12	Dec 13	Dec 14
ASSAULTS										
Assault incidents^{1 2}	14,413	15,057	15,272	15,959	15,180	14,335	15,440	14,511	14,664	16,196
Male establishments	13,324	13,895	14,267	15,054	14,475	13,682	14,742	13,961	14,145	15,549
Female establishments	1,089	1,162	1,005	905	705	653	698	550	519	647
Assault incidents per 1,000 prisoners	190	193	190	193	182	169	180	168	174	190
Male establishments	186	189	188	192	183	170	180	169	176	191
Female establishments	244	261	230	205	165	154	167	133	133	166
Serious assaults	1,372	1,404	1,485	1,491	1,317	1,385	1,374	1,255	1,588	2,145
Male establishments	1,306	1,344	1,435	1,448	1,281	1,341	1,327	1,227	1,554	2,103
Female establishments	66	60	50	43	36	44	47	28	34	42
Assaults on Staff	3,502	3,530	3,279	3,219	3,080	2,848	3,132	2,987	3,266	3,637
Male establishments	3,067	3,006	2,869	2,867	2,828	2,629	2,901	2,801	3,102	3,434
Female establishments	435	524	410	352	252	219	231	186	164	203
Assault on staff per 1,000 prisoners	46	45	41	39	37	34	36	34	39	43
Male establishments	43	41	38	37	36	33	35	34	39	42
Female establishments	97	118	94	80	59	52	55	45	42	52
Serious assaults on staff	299	279	285	284	269	302	273	260	359	477
Male establishments	277	254	266	265	257	283	254	252	351	461
Female establishments	22	25	19	19	12	19	19	8	8	16

1. Figures include incidents at NOMS operated Immigration Removal Centres

2. Gender refers to the type of establishment. Although predominantly the gender of the people involved in the assault will be the same as the type of establishment, in a small number of cases - typically assaults on staff - the gender may be different to the establishment type.

Assaults are dominated by what happens in the male prison estate, which accounts for 95% of the prison population.

The key population factors determining the risk of involvement in assaults are:

- Age: Younger prisoners are more likely to assault and be victims than older prisoners,⁸
- Time in custody: After the initial induction period, a disproportionate amount of assaults occurs in the early stages of custody.⁹

⁸ Safety in Custody: Assaults table 3.3

3.1 All Assaults

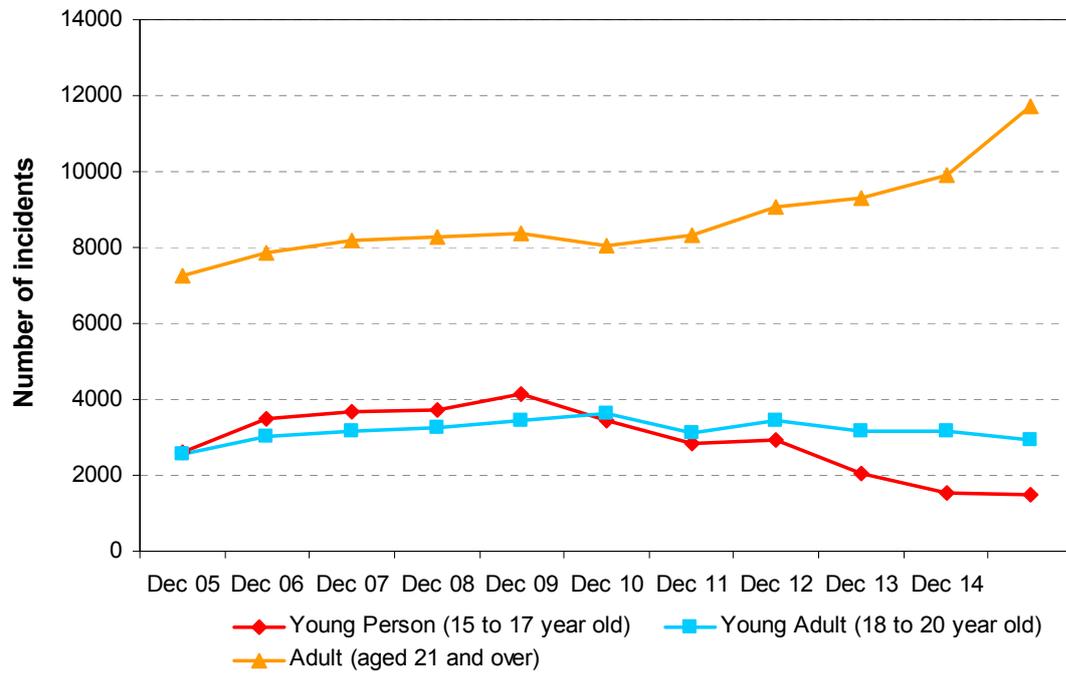
There were 16,196 recorded assault incidents in 2014 equivalent to a rate of 190 assaults per 1,000 prisoners, up from 14,664 and 174 per 1000 prisoners in 2013.

There are differing trends between different age groups (figure 8). The increase in assaults primarily occurs amongst adult (those aged 21 and over) prisoners which has consistently increased since 2010. In 2014, there were 11,712 assaults involving only adults, an increase of 3,664 incidents since 2010. In addition to an element of improved reporting, there has also been an increase in the numbers within this cohort of the prison population.

Assault incidents where the youngest person involved was aged between 18 and 20 years old has remained broadly unchanged at around 3,000 incidents a year over the last 10 years. The number of assaults involving 15 to 17 year olds has fallen by over 50% from its peak in 2009 to 1,479 assault incidents in 2014. This fall in the 15 to 17 year old age group has been driven by the fall in the number of 15 to 17 year olds held in prison custody, and does not present any evidence in itself of this age group becoming less violent.

⁹ Safety in Custody: Assaults table 3.4 www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics

Figure 8: Number of assault incidents by age group of youngest prisoner involved in incident

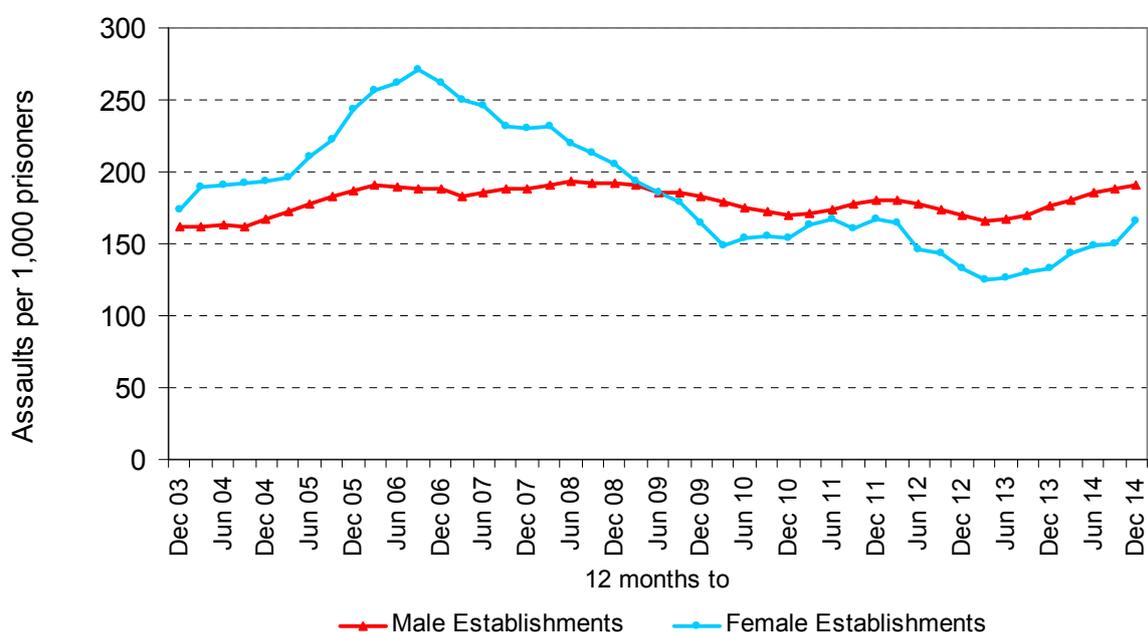


Comparisons between the male and female estate

The rate of assaults for male prisoners increased in 2014 to 191 assaults per 1,000 prisoners, compared with 176 assaults per 1,000 male prisoners in 2013. The increase has come after a period of falling trend which saw the rate of assaults falling from 192 assaults per 1,000 male prisoners in 2008 to 176 assaults per 1,000 male prisoners in 2013.

In the female estate, there were 166 assaults per 1,000 female prisoners in 2014, up from 133 assaults per 1,000 female prisoners in 2013. This increase has come after a period of falling trend. The rate of assaults in the female estate fell from a peak of 261 assaults per 1,000 female prisoners in 2006 to 133 assaults per 1,000 female prisoners in the 2013 – almost halving the rate of assaults in female establishments over the period.

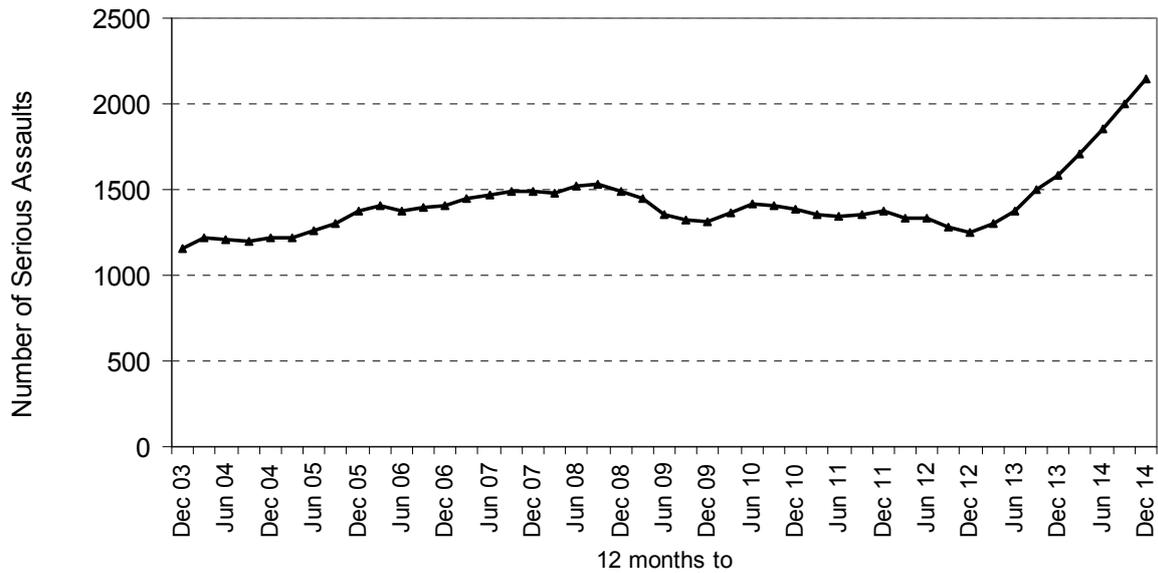
Figure 9: Total assaults per 1,000 prisoners by gender, England and Wales (rolling 12 months by quarter)



Serious assaults¹⁰ increased in 2014 to 2,145 incidents from 1,588 incidents in the previous year – an increase of 35%. As with all incidents, there is volatility in the time series of serious assault incidents, although there has been a general quarter on quarter upward trend for the last 8 reporting periods (figure 10).

¹⁰ For the definition of serious assaults see the Guide to Safety in Custody Statistics. www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics

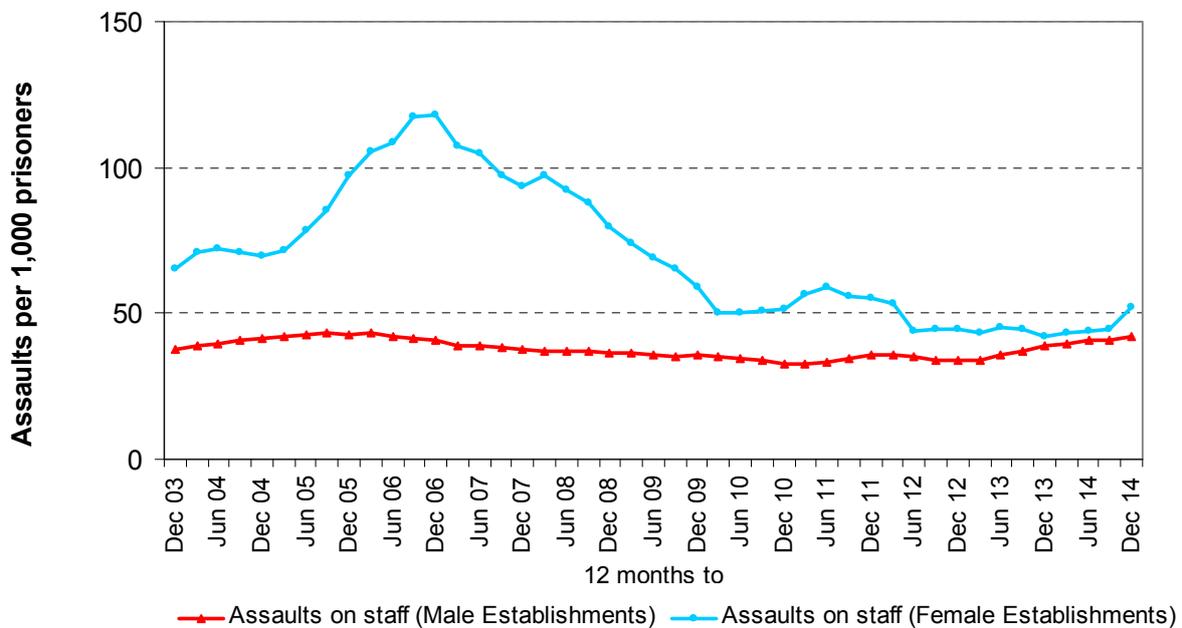
Figure 10: Serious assaults by quarter (rolling 12 month totals), England and Wales



3.2 Assaults on staff

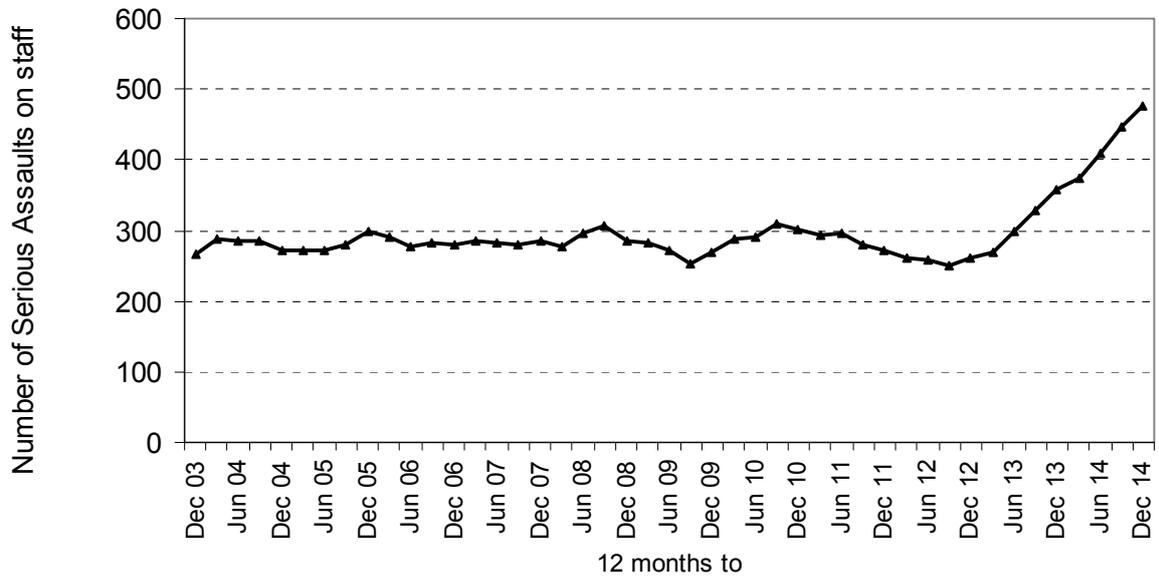
There were 3,637 assaults on staff in 2014 at a rate of 43 assaults per 1,000 prisoners. This is an increase of 371 (11%) assaults on 2013,

Figure 11: Total assaults on staff per 1,000 prisoners by gender, England and Wales (rolling 12 months by quarter)



There were 477 serious assaults on staff in 2014 – an increase of 118 incidents (33%) on the previous year.

Figure 12: Number of serious assaults on staff, England and Wales (rolling 12 months by quarter),



References

HM Inspectorate of Prisons

- Prison and YOI inspections (www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprisons/inspections/)

Independent Advisory Panel (IAP) on Deaths in Custody

- Deaths in state custody (<http://iapdeathsincustody.independent.gov.uk/>)

Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC)

- Deaths in Custody Study (www.ipcc.gov.uk/en/Pages/deathscustodystudy.aspx)
- Deaths following police contact (www.ipcc.gov.uk/en/Pages/reports_polcustody.aspx)

Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO)

- Fatal Incident reports (www.ppo.gov.uk/document/fii-report/)
- Annual reports (www.ppo.gov.uk/document/annual-reports/)

World Health Organisation (WHO) International Classification of Diseases (ICD)

- ICD 10 (<http://apps.who.int/classifications/icd10/browse/2010/en>)

Ministry of Justice/NOMS

- Prison and Probation Statistics (www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/about/statistics)
- Prison Service Orders (www.justice.gov.uk/offenders/psos)
- Prison Service Instructions (www.justice.gov.uk/offenders/psis)

List of tables and figures

This is a list of quarterly and annual Safety in Custody Statistics tables and figures. Tables 1 to 4 and figures 1 to 4 are included in this publication. The remaining tables are available from the website¹¹. All tables refer to incidents in prison custody in England and Wales.

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Table 2	Deaths in custody summary statistics	Apr 05 – Mar 15
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Table 4	Assaults summary statistics	Jan 05 – Sep 14
Table 5	Deaths in prison custody by apparent cause by quarter	Jan 00 – Mar 15
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Figure 4	Number of apparent natural cause deaths in prison custody	Dec 00 – Dec 14
Figure 5	Standardised Mortality Ratio	Dec 04 – Dec 14
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Figure 9	Assaults per 1,000 prisoners – total	Jan 03 – Sep 14
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Table 1.13	Annual self-inflicted deaths in prison custody: Ligatures used in hanging/self-strangulation	1999 - 2014
Table 1.14	Annual self-inflicted deaths in prison custody: Ligature points used in	1999 - 2014

¹¹ Safety in Custody: Assaults table 3.2 www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics

	fatal hangings	
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Table 3.17	Dates of prisons opening/closing and major re-roles of prisons	2001 – 2014

Data Sources and Data Quality

The data presented in this publication are drawn from the NOMS Deaths in Custody Database and NOMS Incident Reporting System.

Information relating to deaths in prison custody is closely scrutinised and the data is considered to be of high quality. Classifications of deaths however, are not finalised until after inquest. As inquests may not be concluded until some years after a death, tables dependent on classifications should be treated as provisional. Changes do not generally affect reported trends.

Although care is taken when processing and analysing the returns, the information collected is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale recording system. While the figures shown have been checked as far as practicable, they should be regarded as approximate and not necessarily accurate to the last whole number shown in the tables. Where figures in the tables have been rounded to the nearest whole number, the rounded components do not always add to the totals, which are calculated and rounded independently.

Self-harm and assault incidents in custody are more likely to be detected and counted than those occurring in the community. However, some incidents in custody will remain undetected and therefore go unreported.

For a more detailed discussion about data sources and data quality see the 'Guide to Safety in Custody Statistics'¹²

Explanatory notes

The statistics in this bulletin relate to deaths, self-harm and assaults in prison custody in England and Wales.

Symbols and conventions

The following symbols have been used throughout the tables in this bulletin:

..	not available
0	nil or less than half the final digit shown
-	not applicable
(p)	Provisional data
(r)	Revised data

¹² Guide to Safety in Custody Statistics which can be found at www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics

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General enquiries about the statistical work of the Ministry of Justice can be e-mailed to: statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk

General information about the official statistics system of the UK is available from www.statistics.gov.uk

Ministry of Justice publishes data relating to offender management in England and Wales. Equivalent statistics for Scotland and Northern Ireland can be found at:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice

www.sps.gov.uk/FreedomofInformation/PrisonerDeaths.aspx

www.dojni.gov.uk/index/statistics-research/stats-research-publications.htm

Alternative formats are available on request from statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk

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