

# **Safety in Custody Statistics Bulletin**

England and Wales

**Deaths in prison custody to September 2016  
Assaults and Self-harm to June 2016**

Ministry of Justice  
Statistics bulletin

# Contents

Introduction .....	- 3 -
<i>Changes and revisions in this publication</i> .....	- 3 -
<i>Release Schedule</i> .....	- 5 -
Key findings.....	- 6 -
1 Deaths .....	- 7 -
2 Self-harm.....	- 9 -
3 Assaults.....	- 11 -
3.1 All Assaults .....	- 11 -
3.2 Prisoner on prisoner assaults.....	- 12 -
3.3 Assaults on staff .....	- 12 -
3.4 Serious assaults .....	- 13 -
List of tables and figures .....	- 15 -
Data Sources and Data Quality .....	- 16 -
Explanatory notes .....	- 16 -
Contact points.....	- 17 -

## Introduction

Safety in custody statistics cover deaths, self-harm and assaults in prison custody in England and Wales. This publication updates statistics on deaths in prison custody up to September 2016 and self-harm and assaults up to June 2016. Supplementary annual tables, providing more in depth statistics on deaths, self-harm and assaults on a calendar year basis as far as 2015, are also available alongside this bulletin and can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics](http://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'<sup>1</sup>. This guide includes technical and background information on the production of these statistics, and 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. Differences in age, gender, time in custody and random variation, among many other factors, explain to an extent much of the differences between prisons and particular risk groups.
- In prisons, as in the general population, 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, and represent reported incidents.

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

This publication has updated figures on deaths to the end of September 2016 including a review on all deaths awaiting further information. Previously published deaths figures have been revised to reflect categorisations of deaths in earlier periods that had previously been awaiting further information. Figures for self-harm and assaults are updated to the end of June 2016.

---

<sup>1</sup> Guide to Safety in Custody Statistics [www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics)

## 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); and
- 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
Monitoring and Accountability	E.g. Justice Select Committee use Safety in Custody as a primary data source for monitoring and public accountability.
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 date periods than those covered in published statistics. In accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, NOMS is unable to release figures for periods in advance of those published in Official Statistics publications.

## Related publications

This bulletin is published alongside other inter-related bulletins:

*Offender Management Statistics Quarterly Bulletin*<sup>2</sup>: 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.

<sup>2</sup> Offender Management Statistics [www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly)

*Proven Re-offending Statistics Quarterly*<sup>3</sup>: This provides proven re-offending figures for offenders who were released from custody, received a non-custodial conviction at court, received a caution or received a reprimand or warning.

*Death of Offenders in the Community*<sup>4</sup>: This covers deaths of offenders occurring during the period of court order sentences that are served in the community (including community orders, suspended sentence orders) and post-release supervision after completion of a custodial sentence, while under probation supervision.

*Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) annual report*<sup>5</sup>: Presents statistics on the number of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) eligible offenders in England and Wales, and information related to these offenders.

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 27 October 2016, and includes statistics covering 12-month periods to end of September 2016 for deaths in prison custody and 12-month periods to end of June 2016 for self-harm and assaults.

The next publication of Safety in Custody statistics is scheduled to be published on 26 January 2017, covering 12-month periods to end of December 2016 for deaths in prison custody and end of September 2016 for self-harm and assaults.

---

<sup>3</sup> Proven Reoffending Statistics [www.gov.uk/government/collections/proven-reoffending-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/proven-reoffending-statistics)

<sup>4</sup> Death of Offenders in the Community [www.gov.uk/government/collections/death-of-offenders-in-the-community](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/death-of-offenders-in-the-community)

<sup>5</sup> Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) annual reports [www.gov.uk/government/collections/multi-agency-public-protection-arrangements-mappa-annual-reports](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/multi-agency-public-protection-arrangements-mappa-annual-reports)

# Key findings

## Deaths

- **Deaths up 21% overall**
  - In the 12 months to September 2016 there were **324** deaths in prison custody, an increase of 57 (21%) compared to the same period of the previous year.
    - a rate of **3.8** deaths per 1,000 prisoners, compared with 3.1 per 1,000 in the same period of the previous year;
- **Self-inflicted deaths up 13%**
  - **107** apparent self-inflicted deaths, up **13%** from 95 in the previous 12 month period.
    - a rate of **1.3** self-inflicted deaths per 1,000 prisoners, compared to 1.1 per 1,000 in the previous year;
  - **8** self-inflicted deaths in the female estate, in comparison to 4 in the previous 12 month period.
- **Natural cause deaths up 17%**
  - **179** deaths due to natural causes, a **17%** increase from 153 on the previous year. Natural cause deaths are the primary contributor to the increase in deaths overall, and the increase in natural cause deaths is largely explained by the ageing population.
    - a rate of **2.2** per 1,000 prisoners;
- **5** apparent homicides, down from 7 in the same period of the previous year;
- **33** other deaths, **27** of which are 'awaiting further information' prior to being classified.

## Self-Harm

- **Self-harm incidents up 26%**
  - In the 12 months to June 2016 there were **36,440** reported incidents of self-harm, up by 7,509 incidents (26%) on the previous year;
    - a rate of **426** self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners, compared with 338 incidents per 1,000 prisoners in the previous year;
- **Individuals self-harming up 23%**
  - **10,544** prisoners self-harmed, up 1,943 (23%) from the previous year;
    - a rate of **123** prisoners per 1,000, up from 101 per 1,000 prisoners in the previous year;
  - Those that self-harmed in the 12 month period self-harmed, on average, 3.5 times.
- **2,583** hospital attendances, up 35% from the previous year. However, the proportion of self-harm incidents requiring hospital attendance has remained generally consistent in recent years.

## Assaults

- **Assault incidents up 34%**
  - In the 12 months to June 2016 there were **23,775** assault incidents, an increase of 6,078 incidents (34%) from the same period of the previous year;
    - a rate of **278** assault incidents per 1,000 prisoners, up from 207 in the previous year;
  - **3,134** serious assaults, up 26% from the previous year;
- **Prisoner on Prisoner assault incidents up 32%**
  - **17,782** prisoner on prisoner assaults, up 32% from 13,472 incidents in the previous year;
    - a rate of **208** prisoner on prisoner assault incidents per 1,000 prisoners, up from 158 in the same period of the previous year;
  - **2,462** serious prisoner on prisoner assaults, up 28% from 1,926 in the previous year;
- **Assaults on staff up 43%**
  - **5,954** assaults on staff, up 43% from 4,177 in the previous year;
    - a rate of **70** assault on staff incidents per 1,000 prisoners, up from 49 in the previous year;
  - **697** serious assaults on staff, up 20% from the previous year.

# 1 Deaths

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’<sup>6</sup> on the death. Until this time, for administrative and statistical purposes, NOMS classify deaths by *apparent* cause of death.

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

*Natural cause deaths include any death of a person as a result of a naturally occurring disease process.* The majority of deaths in prison custody were from natural causes (around 60% of all deaths). Natural cause deaths have been on a general upward trend over the last decade. This is contributed to by an ageing prison population (see Offender Management Statistics Quarterly<sup>7</sup>).

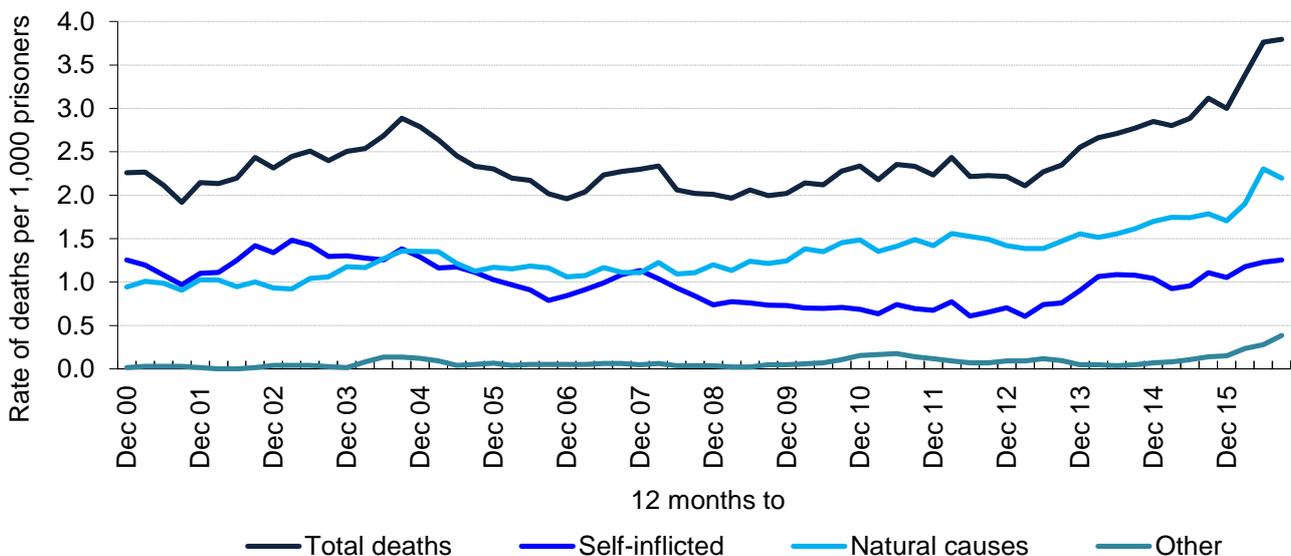
*Self-inflicted deaths are any death of a person who has apparently taken his or her own life irrespective of intent.* This not only includes suicides but also accidental deaths as a result of the person’s own actions. This classification is used because it is not always known whether a person intended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

*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 with regards to homicide.

*‘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.*

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, see Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1: Deaths per 1,000 prisoners by apparent cause, 12 months ending December 2000 to 12 months ending September 2016, England and Wales**



<sup>6</sup> Prisons and Probation Ombudsman: Fatal Incident Reports [www.ppo.gov.uk/document/fii-report/](http://www.ppo.gov.uk/document/fii-report/)

<sup>7</sup> Offender Management Statistics [www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly)

In the 12 months to September 2016 there were **324** deaths in prison custody, an increase of 57 (**21%**) compared to the previous year. This is a rate of **3.8** deaths per 1,000 prisoners, up from 3.1 per 1,000 in the previous year. This is both the highest number of deaths in the time series and the highest rate, see figure 1 above. Longer term trends and greater detail are presented in the annual deaths tables<sup>8</sup>.

In the 12 months ending September 2016 there were **107** apparent self-inflicted deaths, up from 95 in the previous 12 months (**13%**). On a rate basis this is **1.3 per 1,000 prisoners**, up from **1.1 per 1,000 in the previous year**. There were **8** self-inflicted deaths in the female estate in the 12 months to September 2016, compared to 4 in the previous year.

There were **5** apparent homicides in the 12 months to September 2016, down from 7 in the previous year. Homicides in prison custody remain relatively rare, accounting for less than 2% of all deaths in the most recent period and 1% of deaths over the last ten years.

There were **179** deaths due to natural causes in the 12 months to September 2016, up from 153 in the previous year (**17%**). This is the highest in the time series. Natural cause deaths were at a rate of **2.2** per 1,000 prisoners, up from 1.8 per 1,000 in the previous year. This increase in natural cause deaths is largely explained by the ageing prison population alone, and this rise is responsible for 46% of the year-on-year rise in deaths overall.

In the 12 months to September 2016, **33** 'other' deaths occurred, **27** of which are 'awaiting further information' prior to being classified. These deaths were either inconclusive after toxicology and post-mortem, meaning classification cannot be arrived at until inquest (which can be a considerable time after the death), while others remain awaiting results at the time of publication. There were a particularly high number of deaths awaiting further classification in this period, and as such, the number of 'other' deaths is not directly comparable with earlier years, and it is likely the number of deaths of the remaining classifications will be revised upwards.

---

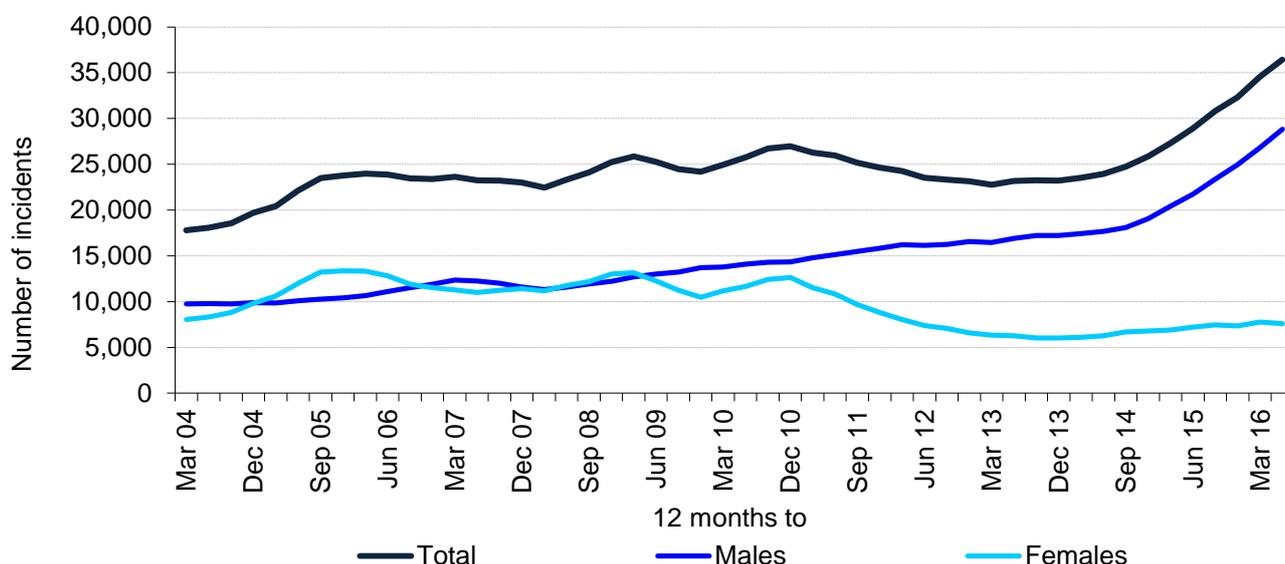
<sup>8</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/519428/safety-in-custody-deaths-to-2015.xls](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/519428/safety-in-custody-deaths-to-2015.xls)

## 2 Self-harm

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.” Neither this measure, nor the outcome of self-harm incidents give an indication of attempted suicide. Although incidents of self-harm may include attempts at suicide, it is difficult to determine intent with sufficient accuracy to be recorded as such. While some incidents may result in serious outcomes, such as hospitalisation, the purpose or intent of an act may be unclear. While hospitalisation may give an indication of the seriousness of the outcome of self-harm, the threshold at which hospitalisation is required may vary according to the medical facilities available at an establishment.

Those who self-harm often do so covertly. In the general population, 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.

**Figure 2: Number of self-harm incidents in prison custody by gender, 12 months ending March 2004 to 12 months ending June 2016, England and Wales**



In the 12 months to June 2016 there were **36,440** reported incidents of self-harm, up by 7,509 incidents (**26%**) on the previous year. This is a rate of **426** self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners, up from 338 per 1,000 in the previous year. This is the highest number of self-harm incidents in the time series, see figure 2 above. Greater detail on self-harm is presented in the annual self-harm tables<sup>9</sup>.

**10,544** prisoners self-harmed in the 12 months to June 2016, up 1,943 (**23%**) from the previous year. This is a rate of **123** prisoners per 1,000, up from 101 per 1,000 in the previous year. Those that self-harmed in the 12 months to June 2016 self-harmed, on average, 3.5 times.

Self-harm trends differ considerably by gender. In the 12 months to June 2016 there were **28,844** incidents of self-harm by male prisoners, up **33%** on the previous year. This is a rate of **353** incidents per 1,000 male prisoners, compared with 266 per 1,000 in the previous year. **9,392** male prisoners self-harmed in the most recent 12 month period, up 1,966 (**26%**) on the previous year. This is a rate of **115** male prisoners per 1,000, up from 91 per 1,000 in the previous year.

In the 12 months to June 2016, there were **7,596** incidents of self-harm by female prisoners, up **6%** on the previous year. This is a rate of **1,961** self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners, compared with 1,854

<sup>9</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/519429/safety-in-custody-self-harm-to-2015.xls](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/519429/safety-in-custody-self-harm-to-2015.xls)

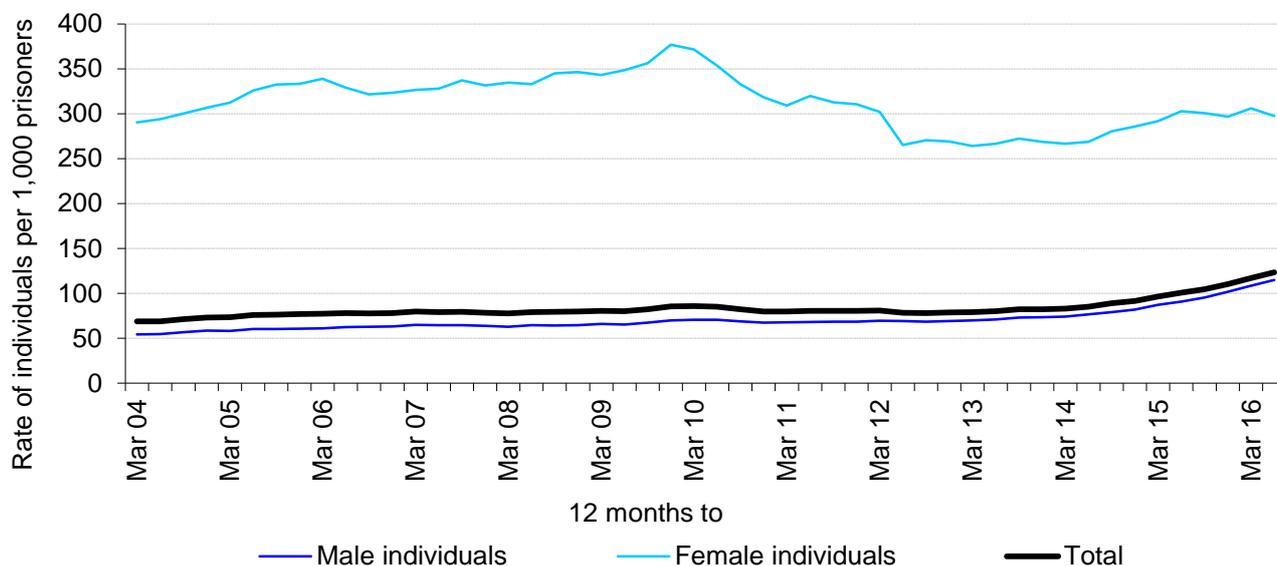
incidents per 1,000 prisoners in the previous year. **1,152** female prisoners self-harmed in the most recent 12 month period, a small reduction of 23 (**2% reduction**), broadly consistent with the previous year. This is a rate of **297** female prisoners per 1,000, falling from 303 per 1,000 prisoners on the previous year. It should be noted that, while this is a year on year increase, self-harm among females was higher in the 12 months ending March 2016 (when the number of incidents was 7,781, a rate of 2,034 per 1,000).

Although there was a small increase in how prolific male self-harmers were, with **3.1** incidents per self-harming male on average, up from 2.9, the increase for females was more substantial, reaching an average of **6.6** incidents per self-harming female, compared to 6.1 in the previous year. To note, in the previous quarterly publication it was reported that in the 12 months to March 2016, there was an average of 6.7 incidents per self-harming females, so while this is a year on year increase, there has been a fall in how prolific female self-harmers are since the last quarter.

In the 12 months to June 2016 there were **2,583** hospital attendances as a result of self-harm incidents in total, up **35%** from the previous year. There was a far more substantial increase in hospital attendances due to self-harm for males than females. Males had a **37%** increase in self-harm requiring hospital attendance (**2,425** hospital attendances), while females increased by **9%** to **158** hospital attendances. However, these increases for both male and female hospital attendances are largely explained by the relative increases in self-harm incidents, as the proportion of self-harm incidents requiring hospital attendances for both males and females have remained largely consistent across the time series.

While female self-harmers are more prolific than males, male self-harmers have more than four times the proportion of self-harm incidents that require hospitalisation (8.4% for males, 2.1% for females in the most recent period).

**Figure 3: Rate of self-harming individuals per 1,000 prisoners by gender, 12 months ending March 2004 to 12 months ending June 2016, England and Wales**



The rate of self-harm among male prisoners has steadily increased across the time series, reaching a peak of 115 self-harming males per 1,000 prisoners in the most recent 12 months period ending June 2016. The rate of self-harm among female prisoners fell after a peak of 377 per 1,000 female prisoners in the 12 months ending December 2009, reaching the lowest rate of 264 per 1,000 in the 12 months ending March 2013. Since this time there has been a gradual increase in the rate among females, reaching 306 per 1,000 in the 12 months ending March 2016, but falling slightly in the most recent quarter to 297 per 1,000. Female self-harm rates remain considerably higher than self-harm rates of males.

### 3 Assaults

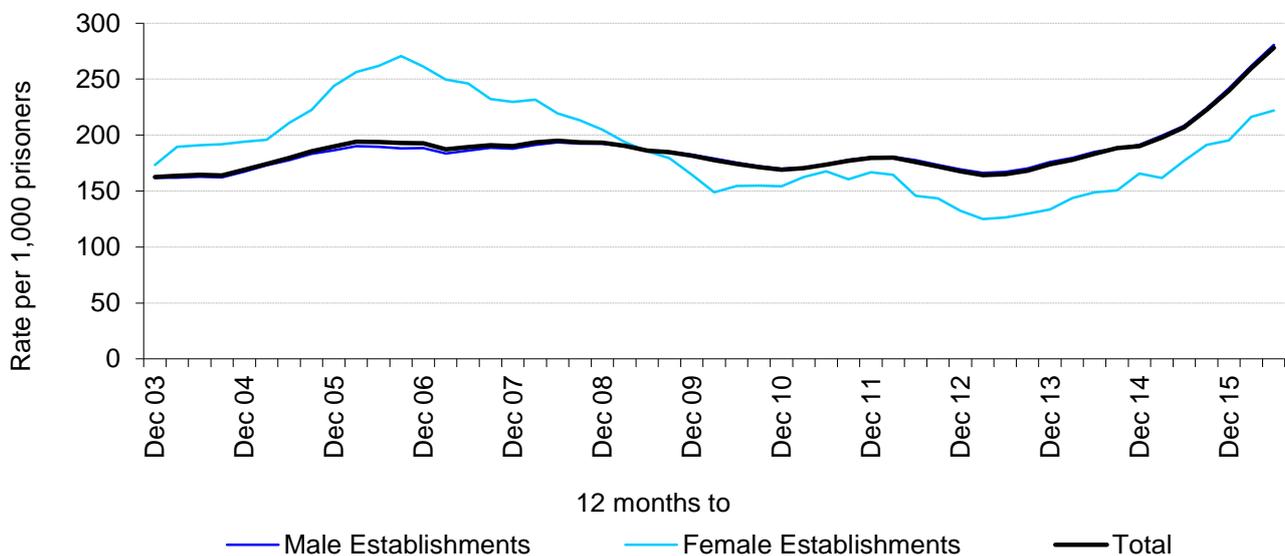
Assaults in prison custody cover a wide range of violent incidents including fights between prisoners. NOMS does not use the Home Office counting rule definitions of Actual Bodily Harm (ABH), Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH), affray etc. and figures cannot be compared directly.

#### 3.1 All Assaults

*Comparisons between the male and female estate*

Because of the predominance of male prisoners, assaults are dominated by incidents in the male prison estate. As males account for over 95%<sup>10</sup> of the prison population, the total rates of assaults of all types and the corresponding rates among males are very closely aligned across the time series.

**Figure 4: Rate of assaults overall per 1,000 prisoners by gender, 12 months ending December 2003 to 12 months ending June 2016, England and Wales**



In the 12 months to June 2016 there were **23,775** assault incidents, an increase of **34%** from 17,697 in the previous year, and is the highest in the time series. This is a rate of **278** assault incidents per 1,000 prisoners, up from 207 in the previous year see figure 4 above. Greater detail on assaults is presented in the annual assaults tables<sup>11</sup>. Of these, **3,134** were serious assaults, up **26%** from 2,495 in the previous year. Since 2012, serious assaults have more than doubled.

Between 2006 and 2014 the rate of assaults in the male estate had ranged within 166 to 194 assault incidents per 1,000 male prisoners. Since then there has been a substantial increase in the rates of assaults, reaching 281 assault incidents per 1,000 male prisoners in the 12 months ending June 2016.

In the female estate, after the period from 2006 to 2012 in which assault rates generally decreased, the rate of assaults in the female estate has since been increasing to 222 assault incidents per 1,000 female prisoners in the 12 months ending June 2016.

The rise in assaults since 2012 has coincided with major changes to the regime, operating arrangements and culture in public sector prisons. For example, restructuring of the prison estate including staff reductions, which have reduced overall running costs, and an increasing awareness of gang culture and

<sup>10</sup> Offender Management Statistics [www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly)

<sup>11</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/519430/safety-in-custody-assaults-to-2015.xls](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/519430/safety-in-custody-assaults-to-2015.xls)

illicit psychoactive drugs in prisons. As well as the dangers to both physical and mental health, trading in these illicit drugs can lead to debt, violence and intimidation.

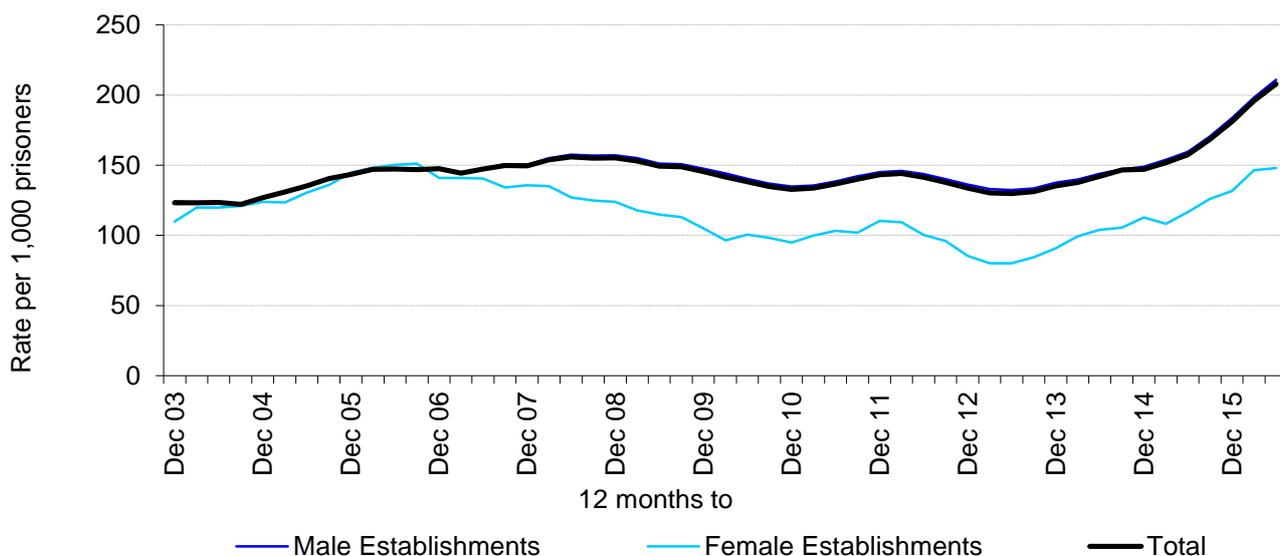
An incident of assault can involve both prisoner on prisoner assaults and assaults on staff, and other types of assault (for example involving visitors). Accordingly, the total number of assaults is not the sum of the subsets of prisoner on prisoner assaults and assaults on staff. The same is true of serious assaults.

### 3.2 Prisoner on prisoner assaults

There were **17,782** prisoner on prisoner assaults in the 12 months to June 2016, up **32%** from 13,472 incidents in the previous year. This is a rate of **208** prisoner on prisoner assault incidents per 1,000 prisoners, up from 158 in the previous year. Of these, **2,462** were serious prisoner on prisoner assaults, up **28%** from 1,926 in the previous year.

While the rate of prisoner on prisoner assaults in the female estate had in general reduced from 2006 to June 2013, no clear trend was seen in the same period in the male estate. However since June 2013, the rate of prisoner on prisoner assaults in both the male and female estate has been rising, with the highest rate in the time series for males (211 per 1,000), females (148 per 1,000) and overall (208 per 1,000 prisoners) in the most recent 12 months.

**Figure 5: Rate of prisoner on prisoner assaults per 1,000 prisoners by gender, 12 months ending December 2003 to 12 months ending June 2016, England and Wales**



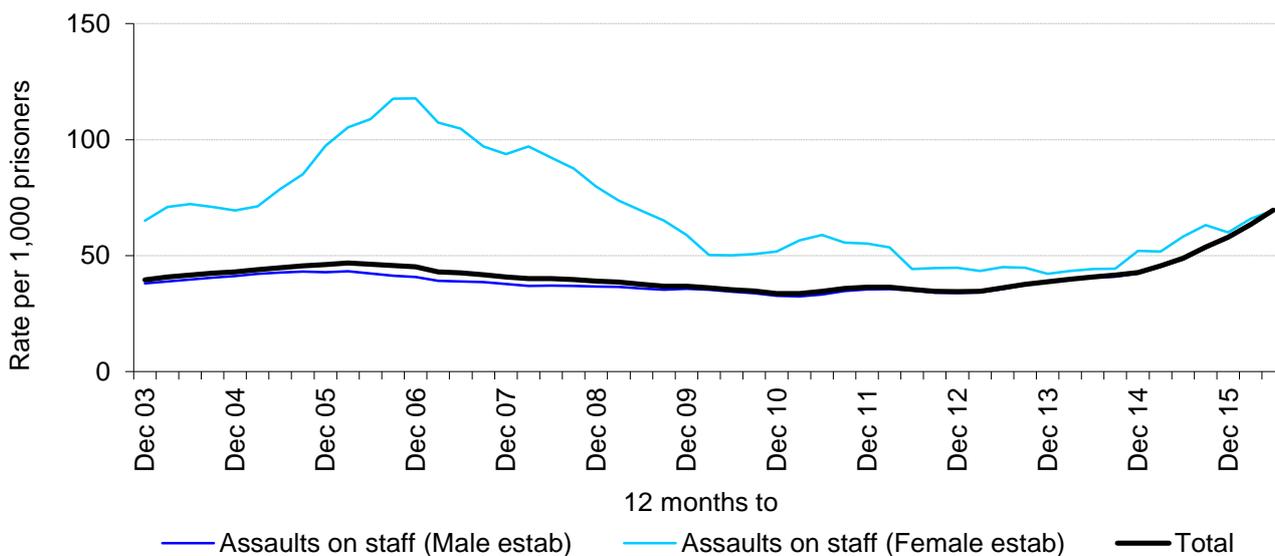
### 3.3 Assaults on staff

There were **5,954** assaults on staff in the 12 months to June 2016, up **43%** from 4,177 in the previous year. This is a rate of **70** assault on staff incidents per 1,000 prisoners, up from 49 in the previous year. Of these, **697** were serious assaults on staff, up **20%** from 579 in the previous year.

In the male estate, after a prolonged period remaining fairly static, since 2013 the rate of assaults on staff has continued to rise. Although in the female estate a substantial reduction in the rate of assaults on staff had been seen from 2007 to 2009, followed by a relatively static period, since 2014 the rate of assaults on staff in the female estate has begun to show an overall trend of rising again.

Gender splits are based on the gender of establishment, and do not give any indication of the gender of the staff involved. It is not possible to break down assaults on staff by the gender of the staff assaulted.

**Figure 6: Rate of assaults on staff per 1,000 prisoners by gender, 12 months ending December 2003 to 12 months ending June 2016, England and Wales**

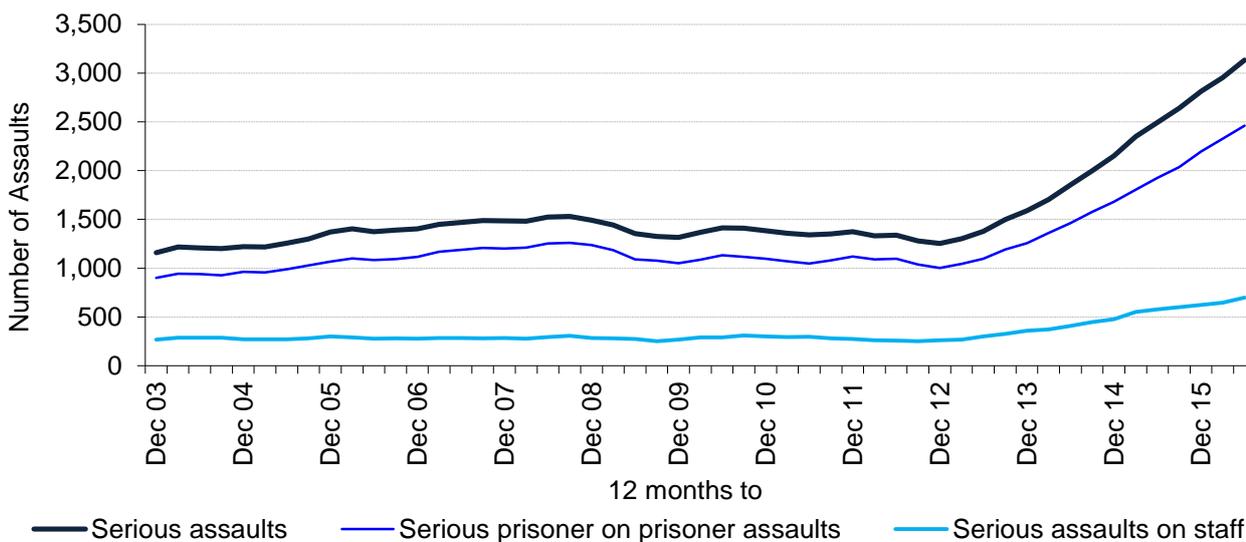


### 3.4 Serious assaults

Serious assaults are those which involve one or more of the following:

- a sexual assault;
- results in detention in outside hospital as an in-patient;
- requires medical treatment for concussion or internal injuries;
- incurs any of the following injuries: a fracture, scald or burn, stabbing, crushing, extensive or multiple bruising, black eye, broken nose, lost or broken tooth, cuts requiring suturing, bites temporary or permanent blindness.

**Figure 7: Number of serious assaults total, serious prisoner on prisoner assaults, and serious assaults on staff, 12 months ending December 2003 to 12 months ending June 2016, England and Wales**



After a prolonged period of stability in the time series of serious assault incidents of all types, there has been a clear quarter on quarter upward trend since December 2012 in serious assaults, serious prisoner on prisoner assaults and serious assaults on staff (see figure 7). Since 2012, the number of serious assaults of all types has more than doubled.

## References

HM Inspectorate of Prisons

- Prison and YOI inspections ([www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/inspections/](http://www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/inspections/))

Independent Advisory Panel (IAP) on Deaths in Custody

- Deaths in state custody ([www.iapdeathsincustody.independent.gov.uk/](http://www.iapdeathsincustody.independent.gov.uk/))

Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC)

- Deaths in Custody Study ([www.ipcc.gov.uk/en/Pages/deathscustodystudy.aspx](http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/en/Pages/deathscustodystudy.aspx))
- Deaths following police contact ([www.ipcc.gov.uk/en/Pages/reports\\_polcustody.aspx](http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/en/Pages/reports_polcustody.aspx))

Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO)

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

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

- ICD 10 ([www.apps.who.int/classifications/icd10/browse/2010/en](http://www.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](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/about/statistics))
- Prison Service Orders ([www.justice.gov.uk/offenders/psos](http://www.justice.gov.uk/offenders/psos))
- Prison Service Instructions ([www.justice.gov.uk/offenders/psis](http://www.justice.gov.uk/offenders/psis))

## List of tables and figures

This is a list of quarterly Safety in Custody Statistics tables and figures. Figures 1 to 7 are included in this document. The summary tables, and previously published annual tables, are available from the website<sup>12</sup>. All tables refer to incidents in prison custody in England and Wales.

---

<b>Table description</b>	
<b>Safety in Custody – Summary tables</b>	
Table 1	Safety in custody summary statistics
Table 2	Deaths in custody summary statistics
Table 3	Self-harm summary statistics
Table 4	Assaults summary statistics
Table 5	Deaths in prison custody by apparent cause by quarter
Table 6	Self-harm incidents by quarter
Table 7	Assault incidents by quarter
<b>Safety in Custody – Figures</b>	
Figure 1	Deaths per 1,000 prisoners by apparent cause
Figure 2	Number of self-harm incidents by gender
Figure 3	Self-harm individuals per 1,000 prisoners by gender
Figure 4	Assaults per 1,000 prisoners – assaults by gender
Figure 5	Assaults per 1,000 prisoners – prisoner on prisoner by gender
Figure 6	Assaults per 1,000 prisoners – on staff by gender of establishment
Figure 7	Number of serious assaults: total, prisoner on prisoner, on staff

---

<sup>12</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics)

## 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 quality is considered to be fit for purpose. 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 general population. 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'<sup>13</sup>

## 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

---

<sup>13</sup> Guide to Safety in Custody Statistics which can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics)

## Contact points

Press enquiries should be directed to the Ministry of Justice press office:

Tel: 020 3334 3536

Other enquiries about these statistics should be directed to:

**Kate Shaw**

Performance and Analysis Group

NOMS Agency

Clive House

70 Petty France

London

SW1H 9EX

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

General information about the official statistics system of the UK is available from  
[statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system](http://statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system)

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](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice)

[www.sps.gov.uk/FreedomofInformation/PrisonerDeaths.aspx](http://www.sps.gov.uk/FreedomofInformation/PrisonerDeaths.aspx)

<http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/statistics-research/stats-research-publications.htm>

Alternative formats are available on request from [statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:statistics.enquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright. Produced by the Ministry of Justice.