






Safety in Custody Statistics, England and Wales: Deaths in Prison Custody to September 2019 Assaults and Self-harm to June 2019

Main Points

<p>Number of deaths decreased from the previous 12-month period</p>		<p>In the 12 months to September 2019, there were 308 deaths in prison custody, a decrease of 5% from 325 deaths the previous 12 months. Of these, 90 deaths were self-inflicted, there were 89 self-inflicted deaths in the previous 12 months.</p>
<p>Self-harm incidents continue to rise The number of individuals self-harming increased</p>		<p>Self-harm incidents reached a record high of 60,594 incidents in the 12 months to June 2019, up 22% from the previous 12 months. In the most recent quarter, self-harm incidents increased by 13% to a record high of 16,342 incidents.</p> <p>The number of individuals self-harming increased by 5% in the 12 months to June 2019, to 12,740, and the number of self-harm incidents per individual increased by 17% from 4.1 to 4.8.</p>
<p>Assaults remain at a high level</p>		<p>There were 34,112 assault incidents in the 12 months to June 2019, up 5% from the 12 months to June 2018. In the most recent quarter, assaults decreased by 1% to 8,360 incidents.</p>
<p>Assaults on staff continue to rise</p>		<p>There were 10,424 assaults on staff in the 12 months to June 2019, up 10% from the previous 12 months. In the latest quarter the number of assaults on staff increased by 3% to 2,617 incidents.</p>
<p>12% of all assault incidents were serious</p>		<p>In the 12 months to June 2019, there were 3,928 serious assault incidents, the same level as the previous 12 months. Serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults decreased by 2% to 2,984 in the 12 months to June 2019, whereas serious assaults on staff increased by 7% to 1,006.</p>

Safety in custody statistics cover deaths, self-harm and assaults in prison custody and HMPPS Immigration Removal Centres in England and Wales, with figures in the summary tables in the quarterly publications presented on a 12-month rolling basis over an 11-year time series. Supplementary annual tables, providing more in-depth statistics on a calendar year basis, underlying data files with pivot tables providing lower level granularity, and a guidance technical document are also available alongside this bulletin, at www.gov.uk/government/collections/safety-in-custody-statistics¹

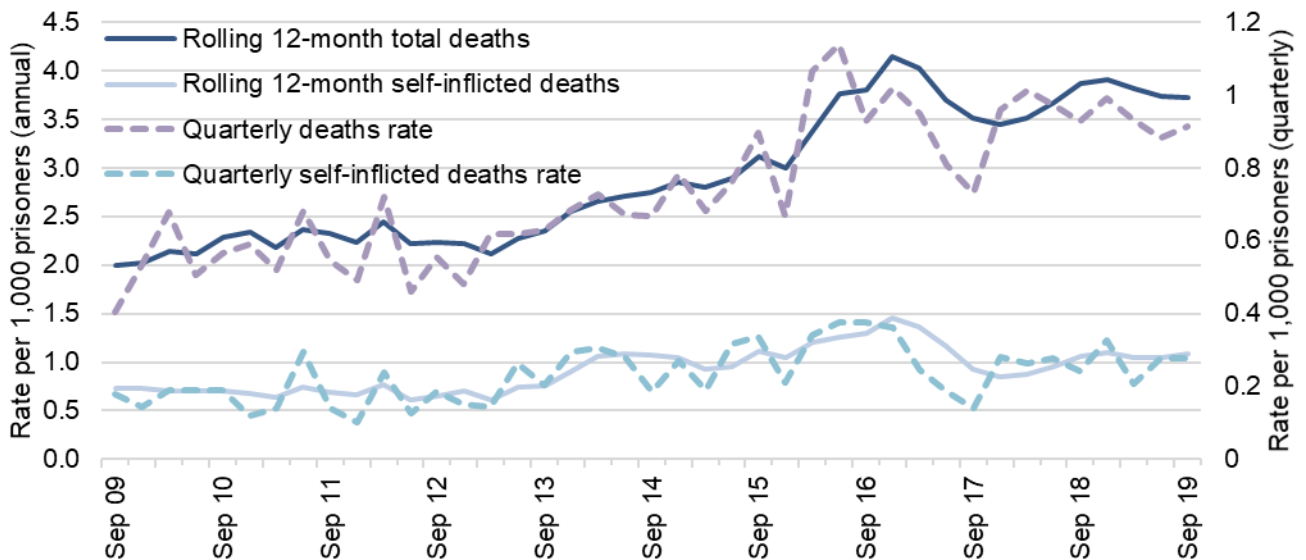
¹ Data on deaths is published three months ahead of self-harm and assaults. Therefore, the deaths annual publication and tables are published alongside the year ending September Safety in Custody publication.

2 Deaths: 12 months ending September 2019

Number of deaths continues to fall

In the 12 months to September 2019, there were 308 deaths in prison custody, a decrease of 5% from 325 deaths the previous 12 months. Of these, 90 deaths were self-inflicted, up from 89 the previous 12 months.

Figure 1: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of deaths per 1,000 prisoners, 12 months ending September 2009 to 12 months ending September 2019, with quarterly rates



In the 12 months to September 2019, there were 308 deaths in prison custody (a rate of 3.7 per 1,000 prisoners), a decrease from 325 deaths in the previous 12 months (a rate of 3.9 per 1,000 prisoners). The most recent quarter saw the number of deaths increase to 76, up from 73 in the three months to June 2019. Quarterly death figures should be considered with caution due to greater volatility and the potential for seasonal effects. Long-term trends and more detail are presented in annual tables².

There were 90 apparent self-inflicted deaths in the 12 months to September 2019 (a rate of 1.1 per 1,000 prisoners), there were 89 in the previous 12 months, and 158 deaths due to natural causes (a rate of 1.9 per 1,000 prisoners), a 9% decrease from 173 deaths the previous 12 months.

There were 58 deaths recorded as 'other' in the 12 months to September 2019, 56 of which are 'awaiting further information' prior to being classified. In some cases, the results of the toxicology and post-mortem tests are inconclusive, meaning classification cannot be arrived at until inquest (which can be a considerable time after the death). As a result, the number of deaths in the individual categories is not directly comparable with earlier years: it is likely that numbers in some categories will be revised upwards once classifications have been finalised.

² Data on deaths are published three months ahead of Assaults and self-harm, therefore, the Deaths in prison custody 2018 annual publication is published in the Safety in Custody year ending September 2018 assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/787136/safety-in-custody-Deaths-dec-18.ods

3 Self-harm: 12 months to June 2019

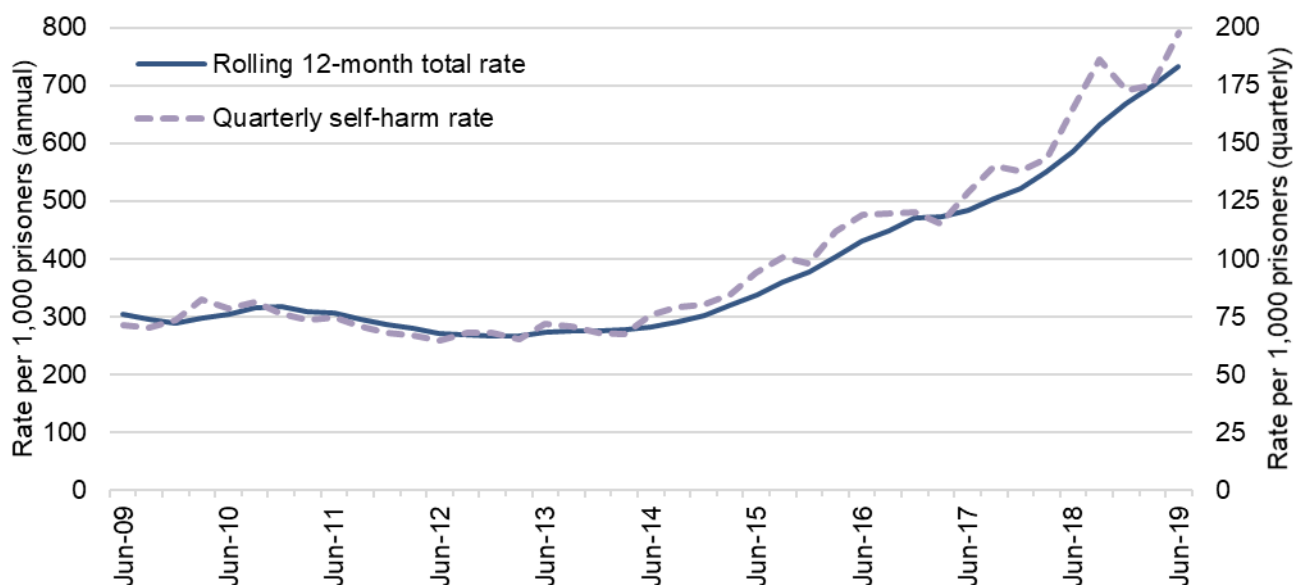
Self-harm incidents continue to rise, reaching new record high.

In the 12 months to June 2019, there were 60,594 incidents, up 22% from the previous 12 months, and a new record high. On a quarterly basis, the number of incidents increased by 13% to 16,342, a record quarterly high.

The number of individuals self-harming increased.

The number of individuals self-harming increased by 5% in the 12 months to June 2019, to 12,740, and the number of self-harm incidents per individual increased by 17% from 4.1 to 4.8.

Figure 2: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners, 12 months ending June 2009 to 12 months ending June 2019, with quarterly rates

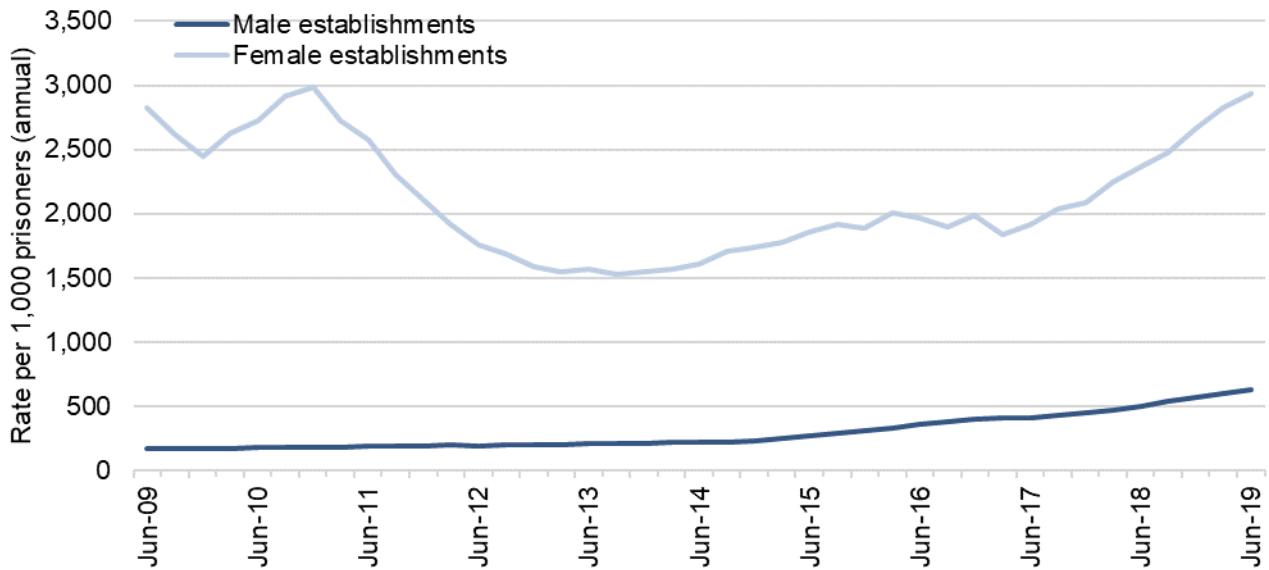


In the 12 months to June 2019, there were 60,594 reported incidents of self-harm (a rate of 732 per 1,000 prisoners), up 22% from the previous 12 months. On a quarterly basis, the number of incidents in the three months to June 2019 increased to 16,342 (up 13% on the previous quarter), a record high number of quarterly incidents.

The number of individuals self-harming increased by 5% in the latest 12 months, to the highest recorded figure of 12,740 individuals (a rate of 154 individuals per 1,000 prisoners). The number of incidents per self-harming individual increased by 17%, from 4.1 in the previous 12 months to 4.8 in the latest 12 months, although a small number of prolific self-harmers have a disproportionate impact on this figure. The majority of those who self-harm in prison do so only once. Additional detail on this can be found in the annual self-harm tables.

The number of self-harm incidents requiring hospital attendance increased by 7% to 3,388 in the 12 months to June 2019, and increased by 24% in the latest quarter (964 incidents). The proportion of incidents that required hospital attendance decreased in the previous 12 months, from 6.4% to 5.6%.

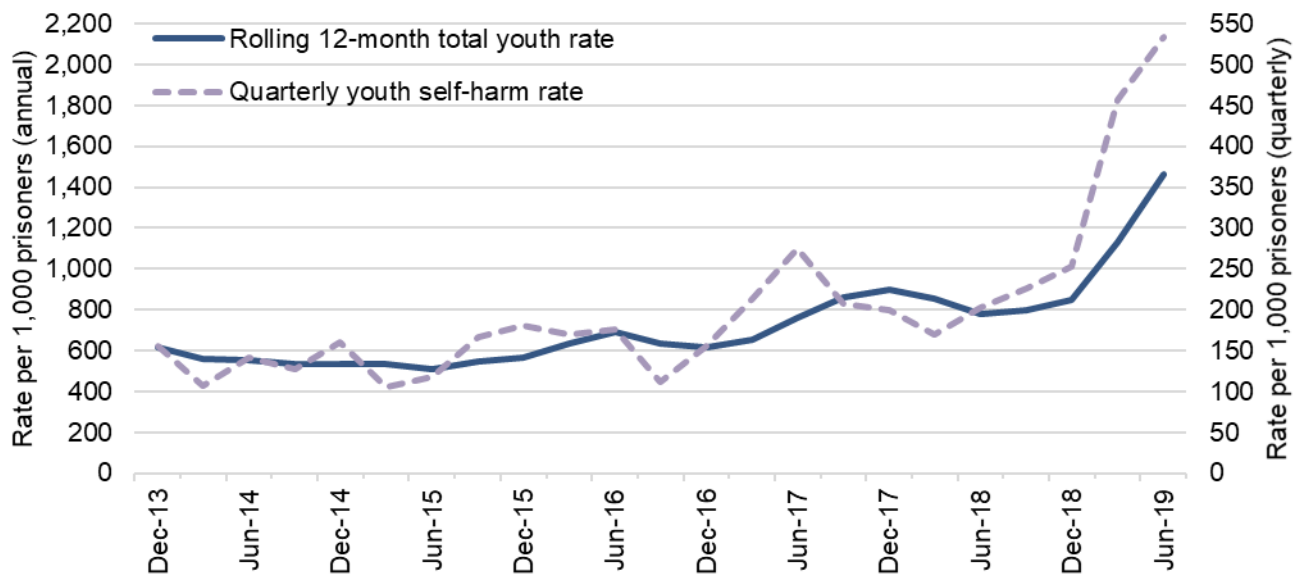
Figure 3: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners by gender of establishment, 12 months ending June 2009 to 12 months ending June 2019



Self-harm trends differ considerably by gender, with a rate of 626 incidents per 1,000 prisoners in male establishments in the 12 months to June 2019 (with incidents up 22% from the previous 12 months) compared to a rate of 2,940 per 1,000 prisoners in female establishments (an increase of 20% in the number of incidents from the previous 12 months). In the 12 months to June 2019, the number of self-harm incidents per self-harming male increased from 3.7 in the previous 12 months to 4.3, while self-harm prolificacy among females increased from 7.7 in the previous 12 months to 9.1 incidents per self-harming individual.

Self-harm incidents requiring hospital attendance have increased in male establishments by 6%, from 2,965 in the 12 months to June 2018 to 3,135 in the 12 months to June 2019, and increased by 32% to 253 in female establishments in the latest 12 months. Self-harmers in female establishments were twice as prolific as those in male establishments in the latest 12 months (9.1 incidents per self-harming individual, compared to 4.3 in male establishments), although the proportion of incidents that required hospitalisation was almost three times higher in male establishments (6.3% compared to 2.3% in female establishments).

Figure 4: 12 month rolling rate of self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners by youth offenders, 12 months ending December 2013 to 12 months ending June 2019, with quarterly rates



In youth estate³, there was an 83% increase in self-harm incidents in the 12 months to June 2019 compared to the previous 12 months (from 539 in the previous 12 months to 985 in the most recent 12 months) and an 88% increase in the self-harm rate per 1,000 prisoners in the 12 months to June 2019 compared to the previous 12 months (from 779 in the previous 12 months to 1,463 in the most recent 12 months).

In the latest quarter there were 350 self-harm incidents, a 13% increase from 311 incidents in the previous quarter, and a 143% increase from the same quarter the previous year (April to June 2018).

Self-harm incidents requiring hospital attendance have increased in youth estates from 3.3% in the previous 12 months to 5.6% in the 12 months to June 2019.

³ Youth estates include all 15 to 18-year olds in Young Offender Institutes, and all 15 to 17-year olds in Youth Prisons.

4 Assaults: 12 months to June 2019

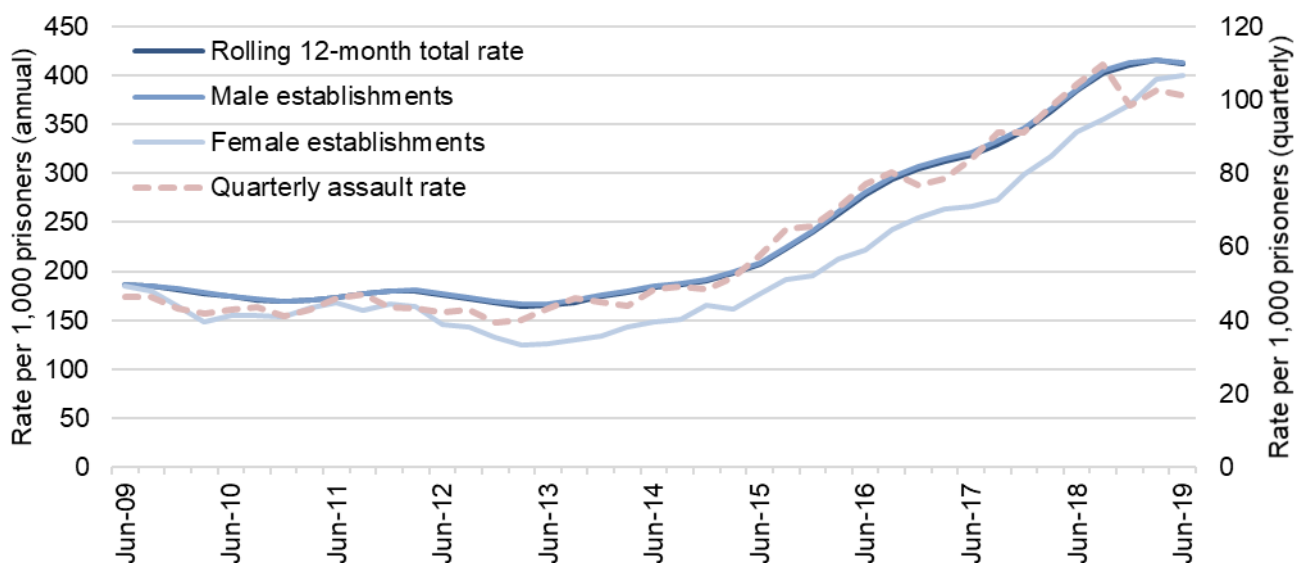
Assaults and serious assaults continue to rise, reaching record highs.

In the 12 months to June 2019, there were 34,112 assault incidents, a 5% increase from the previous 12 months. Assaults decreased by 1% in the latest quarter to 8,360 incidents, remaining lower than the peak in the July to September 2018 quarter.

The proportion of assaults on staff continue to rise.

There were 10,424 assaults on staff in the 12 months to June 2019, up 10% from the previous 12 months, and a record high figure. In the latest quarter the number of assaults on staff increased by 3% to 2,617 incidents.

Figure 5: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of total assaults by gender of establishment, 12 months ending June 2009 to 12 months ending June 2019, with quarterly rates

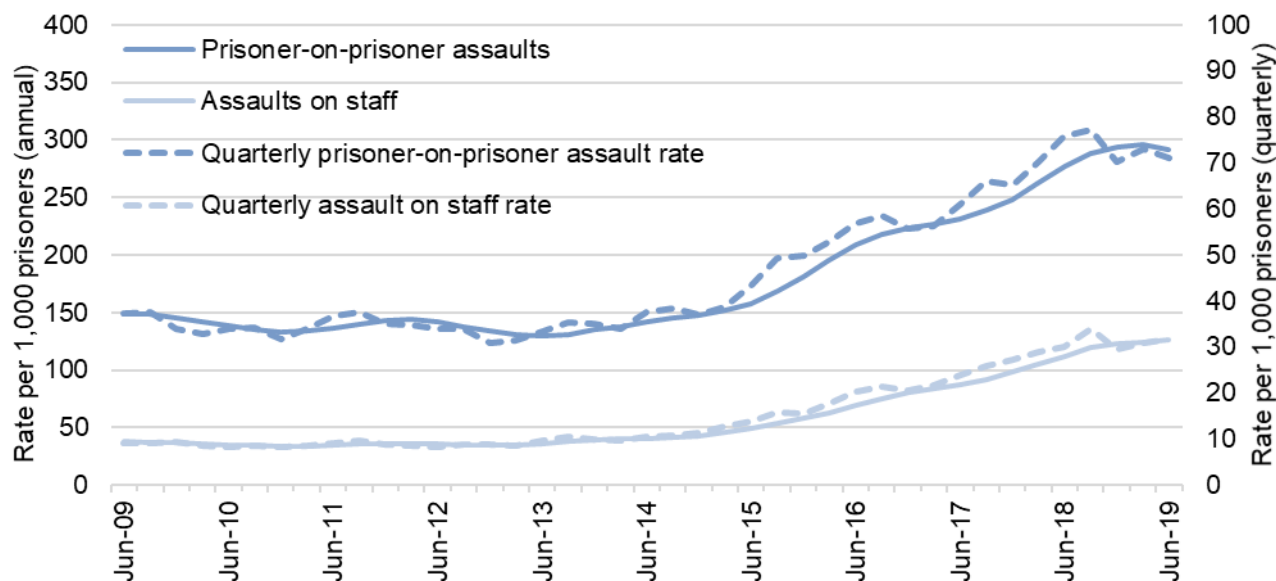


In the 12 months to June 2019, assault incidents increased by 5% to 34,112, a rate of 412 incidents per 1,000 prisoners. In the latest quarter, there were 8,360 assaults, a decrease of 1% from the previous quarter. The quarterly figure reached a peak of 9,126 in the July to September 2018 quarter.

The number of incidents in male establishments increased by 4% from 31,210 to 32,586 in the 12 months to June 2019. The number of incidents in female establishments increased by 13% from 1,346 to 1,526 incidents in the same period.

In the latest quarter, the number of assaults in male establishments decreased by 1% to 8,005, and the number of assaults in female establishments decreased by 14% to 355. Assault rates were higher in male establishments (413 incidents per 1,000 prisoners) than female establishments (401 incidents per 1,000 prisoners) in the latest 12 months.

Figure 6: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of prisoner-on-prisoner assaults and assaults on staff, 12 months ending June 2009 to 12 months ending June 2019, with quarterly rates



There were 24,139 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults⁴ in the 12 months to June 2019 (a rate of 292 per 1,000 prisoners), an increase of 3%. The latest quarter saw a 3% decrease in prisoner-on-prisoner assaults (to 5,862 incidents).

There were 10,424 assaults on staff⁵ in the 12 months to June 2019 (a rate of 126 per 1,000 prisoners), up 10% from the previous 12 months. This is the highest level in the time series. In the latest quarter there was a 3% increase in assaults on staff (to 2,617 incidents), although this was lower than the peak in the July to September 2018 quarter (2,827 incidents).

The proportion of assaults on staff increased to 31% of all incidents in the 12 months to June 2019, an increase from 29% in the previous 12 months, and a steady increase from 20% in 2012.

In male establishments, prisoner-on-prisoner assaults increased by 3% to 23,229 incidents (294 incidents per 1,000 male prisoners), and assaults on staff increased by 9% to 9,799 incidents (124 incidents per 1,000 male prisoners) in the 12 months to June 2019 compared to the previous 12 months.

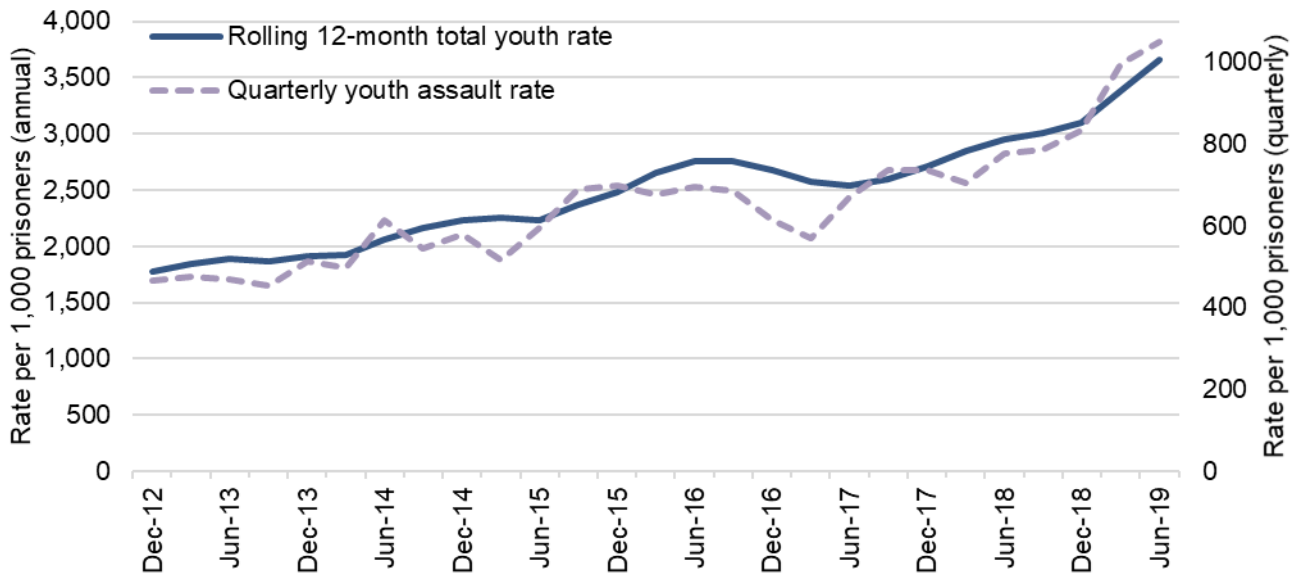
In female establishments, prisoner-on-prisoner assaults were unchanged at 910 incidents (239 incidents per 1,000 female prisoners), and assaults on staff increased by 40% to 625 incidents (164 incidents per 1,000 female prisoners) in the 12 months to June 2019 compared to the previous 12 months.

The proportion of assaults on staff in female establishments (41%) was higher than the proportion in male establishments (30%) in the 12 months to June 2019. Assault rates on staff have historically been higher in female establishments, and saw a larger increase in female establishments than male establishments in the 12 months to June 2019 compared to the previous 12 months.

⁴ This figure includes any prisoner-on-prisoner assaults where there may also have been an assault on staff.

⁵ There was a change in how staff assaults have been recorded from April 2017, this has simplified how incidents involving staff are identified, however it is possible this has increased the recording of incidents. Please see the Guide to Safety in Custody statistics for further information

Figure 7: 12 month rolling rate of assault incidents per 1,000 prisoners by youth offenders, 12 months ending December 2013 to 12 months ending June 2019, with quarterly rates



In youth estates, there was a 21% increase in assaults in the 12 months to June 2019 compared to the previous 12 months (from 2,044 in the previous 12 months to 2,466 in the most recent 12 months) and a 24% increase in the assault rate per 1,000 prisoners in the 12 months to June 2019 compared to the previous 12 months (from 2,954 in the previous 12 months to 3,663 in the most recent 12 months).

In the latest quarter there were 688 assault incidents, a 1% increase from 680 incidents in the previous quarter, and a 24% increase from the same quarter the previous year (April to June 2018).

Prisoner-on-prisoner assaults increased by 9% in the youth estate, from 1,640 in the previous 12 months to 1,780 in the 12 months to June 2019. Prisoner on staff assaults increased by 60%, from 485 in the previous 12 months to 774 in the 12 months to June 2019.

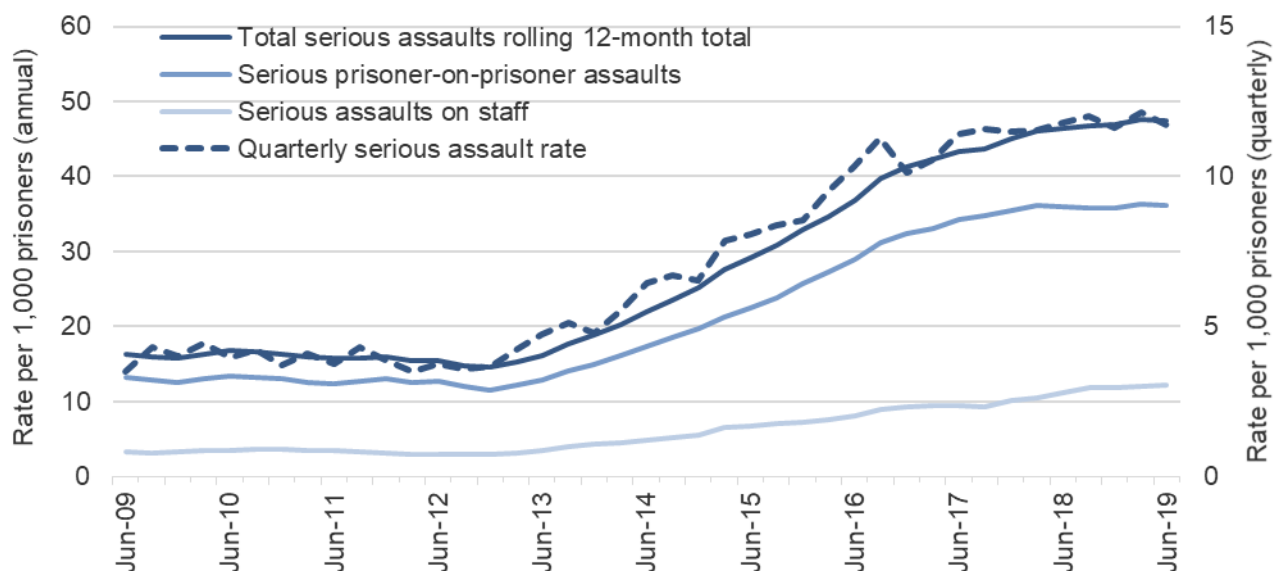
Serious assaults

Of the 34,112 assault incidents, 3,928 (12%) were serious

In the 12 months to June 2019, there were 3,928 serious assault incidents, a similar figure to the previous 12 months. Serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults decreased by 2% to 2,984 in the 12 months to June 2019, whereas serious assaults on staff increased by 7% to 1,006.

Serious assaults are those which fall into one or more of the following categories: a sexual assault; requires detention in outside hospital as an in-patient; requires medical treatment for concussion or internal injuries; or 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 8: Quarterly 12-month rolling rate of total serious assaults, serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, and serious assaults on staff, 12 months ending June 2009 to 12 months ending June 2019



In the 12 months to June 2019, there were 3,928 serious assaults (a rate of 47 per 1,000 prisoners), a similar figure to the previous 12 months. In the latest quarter, there were 966 serious assaults, down 4% from the previous quarter. In the latest 12 months, 12% of assaults were serious assaults, the same percentage as the previous 12 months.

There were 2,984 serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults (a rate of 36 per 1,000 prisoners) in the 12 months to June 2019, a decrease of 2% from the previous 12 months. In the latest quarter, the number of serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults decreased by 9% (to 717 incidents).

There were 1,006 serious assaults on staff (a rate of 12 per 1,000 prisoners) in the 12 months to June 2019, an increase of 7% from the previous 12 months, and the highest in the time series. In the latest quarter, the number of serious prisoner-on-staff assaults increased by 14% (to 260 incidents).

In youth estates, there was a 35% increase in serious assaults, from 86 in the previous 12 months to 116 in the 12 months to June 2019. There was also a 54% increase in serious assaults on staff, from 39 in the previous 12 months to 60 (the highest in the timeseries) in the 12 months to June 2019.

Further Information

Accompanying files

As well as this bulletin, the following products are published as part of this release:

- A technical guide providing further information on how the data are collected and processed, as well as information on the revisions policy and legislation relevant to sentencing trends and background on the functioning of the criminal justice system.
- A set of summary tables for the latest quarter, and annual tables up to the latest calendar year.
- Underlying data files with pivot tables, giving lower level granularity.

National Statistics status

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.



All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's (UKSA) regulatory arm. The UKSA considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is the Ministry of Justice's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected for National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the UKSA promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Our statisticians regularly review the content of publications. Development of new and improved statistical outputs is usually dependent on reallocating existing resources. As part of our continual review and prioritisation, we welcome user feedback on existing outputs including content, breadth, frequency and methodology. Please send any comments you have on this publication including suggestions for further developments or reductions in content.

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