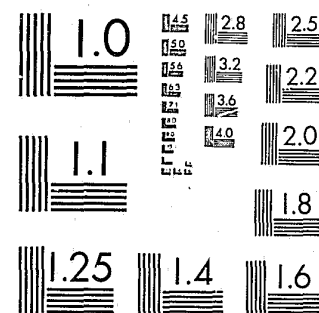


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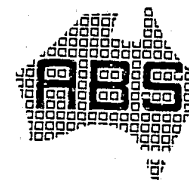
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2/25/88

~~X~~ SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF INMATES OF ADULT CORRECTIVE INSTITUTIONS:
AN ANALYSIS OF DATA DERIVED FROM THE 1976 CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice 83542

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This paper presents details of selected demographic characteristics of inmates of designated adult corrective institutions, as measured in the 1976 Census of Population and Housing.

1.2 There are certain matters to be considered in interpreting census data generally, and in particular, in using census data to describe inmates of corrective institutions. These are outlined below.

General

- the 1976 Census enumerated all persons in Australia at 30 June 1976, including visitors in Australia at that time, and excluding persons usually resident in Australia who were temporarily overseas.
- persons were counted in the State or Territory in which they were located at 30 June 1976, not the State or Territory in which they were usually resident.
- the Census relied on self reporting by respondents. Because of a number of factors (such as misunderstanding of questions or deliberate misreporting) data may not be totally accurate.
- the comparative general population figures used in this paper were obtained from the ABS publications "Population and Dwellings, 30 June 1976 : Cross-Classified Tables" (Catalogue Nos 2418.0-2426.0).
- the ABS publication, "Making Sense of the Census" (Catalogue No 2129.0) explains some basic points which must be appreciated before the information can be interpreted correctly.

Inmates of Corrective Institutions

for general classification purposes all non-private dwellings were classified to dwelling-type categories according to known primary activity. As such, the classification of institutions designated adult corrective institutions does not necessarily correspond to classifications employed in other available statistics. The classification 'adult corrective institution' includes prisons, corrective/detention and training centres, prison farms etc. and police lock-ups.

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it has been found that the classification index used for 1976 Census processing was incomplete in its coverage of adult corrective establishments, such that while most prison 'proper' establishments were included, the coverage of other corrective institutions, particularly police gaols/lock-ups, was only partial.

comparability of these statistics with statistics derived from other sources eg State agency annual reports, is therefore limited, both in terms of the different concepts used in their compilation, and the types and range of establishments to which they relate. The value of these statistics, however, does not lie in their relationship to other available statistics, but in that they were collected and compiled in each State and Territory on a uniform basis, and form a subset of the general Population Census data. This allows for valid intra and inter State comparisons and analysis of prisoner characteristics, and for the direct linking of this data to characteristics of the general population.

1.3 It should also be noted that a post enumeration survey conducted after the 1976 Census revealed an average general underenumeration of 2.7%. It is expected however that this would not significantly effect the ratios and percentages shown in the following tables.

1.4 Similar Census derived information was produced on inmates of juvenile corrective institutions, and is available on request. The quality of this information however, is such that it is not regarded as suitable for presentation in the form of this paper.

2 EXPLANATORY NOTES

2.1 The statistics shown in this paper relate to all inmates of adult corrective establishments. As these statistics are derived from Census data, no information is available as regards inmates' legal status, nor the offences leading to or duration of their detention.

2.2 The following tables show by State, Territory and Australia, inmates variously classified according to sex, age, racial origin, country of birth and age left school.

2.3 For convenience, the terms prison and prisoner are used throughout this paper. These terms are used to apply to all adult corrective establishments, and inmates there-of, and should not be interpreted as relating solely or specifically to establishments described as prisons, or to inmates of establishments so described.

2.4 Where possible, the distribution of prisoners within each of the selected characteristics, has been related to the distribution among the general population. Ideally, the general population figures used should only relate to persons 18 years or older, as this is the age group normally detained in adult corrective establishments (ie offenders and alleged offenders aged 17 years or less, are normally detained in juvenile establishments). From readily available Census information however, this distinction can only be made for the age table (Table 3) itself : general population figures shown for other characteristics are based therefore on total population.

2.5 Adult persons convicted and sentenced in ACT courts are normally held in corrective institutions in NSW, and are therefore included in the NSW figures. Prisoners are normally only held in ACT pending court hearing or determination, or transfer to NSW prisons. For this reason, ACT and NSW figures have been combined in this paper.

2.6 It is emphasised that these statistics relate to the characteristics of prisoners at a point in time, and are not necessarily representative of the majority of persons received into prisons. Similarly, the prisoner : population ratios shown should not be interpreted as imprisonment rates in the sense of imprisonment usage.

3 SEX

Table 1

PRISONERS : NUMBER AND RATIOS PER 10,000 POPULATION,
BY STATE/TERRITORY AND SEX

| | | NSW+ ACT | VIC | QLD | SA | WA | TAS | NT | AUST |
|----------|-------|-------------|-------|-------|------|-------|------|------|-------|
| Males: | No. | 3,561 | 1,683 | 1,540 | 701 | 960 | 285 | 189 | 8,919 |
| | Ratio | 14.4 | 9.3 | 15.0 | 11.3 | 16.5 | 14.1 | 36.0 | 13.2 |
| Females: | No. | 115 | 50 | 46 | 19 | 54 | 3 | - | 287 |
| | Ratio | 0.5 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 1.0 | 0.1 | - | 0.4 |
| Persons: | No. | 3,676 | 1,733 | 1,586 | 720 | 1,014 | 288 | 189 | 9,206 |
| | Ratio | 7.4 | 4.8 | 7.8 | 5.8 | 8.9 | 7.1 | 19.5 | 6.8 |

. The number of prisoners per 10,000 population, was 33 times higher for males than females.

. In total, 96.9% of prisoners in Australia were male.

. The Northern Territory had the highest imprisonment ratio, (particularly when males are considered separately) followed by W.A.

. Victoria, while second highest in terms of the actual number of prisoners, had the lowest overall prisoner-population ratio.

4 AGE

Table 2

NUMBER OF PRISONERS : BY AGE AND STATE

| Age (years) | State/Territory | | | | | | | | RATIO (a) |
|----------------|-----------------|-------|-------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-------|--------------|
| | NSW& ACT | VIC | QLD | SA | WA | TAS | NT | AUST | |
| Under 17 | 9 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 14 | 5 | 10 | 44 | - |
| 18-19 | 176 | 143 | 139 | 40 | 85 | 32 | 26 | 641 | 13.7 |
| 20-24 | 1,123 | 488 | 467 | 287 | 351 | 111 | 59 | 2,886 | 26.0 |
| 25-29 | 813 | 292 | 333 | 132 | 222 | 48 | 32 | 1,872 | 16.6 |
| 30-34 | 520 | 195 | 216 | 80 | 117 | 28 | 28 | 1,184 | 12.6 |
| 35-39 | 310 | 137 | 123 | 54 | 68 | 13 | 10 | 715 | 8.8 |
| 40-44 | 222 | 108 | 101 | 40 | 55 | 14 | 9 | 549 | 7.6 |
| 45-49 | 186 | 108 | 75 | 25 | 33 | 15 | 6 | 448 | 5.9 |
| 50-54 | 148 | 91 | 54 | 29 | 35 | 8 | 4 | 369 | 5.0 |
| 55-59 | 91 | 61 | 38 | 13 | 16 | 6 | 2 | 227 | 3.7 |
| 60-64 | 47 | 45 | 18 | 14 | 9 | 2 | 2 | 137 | 2.4 |
| 65+ | 31 | 64 | 19 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 1 | 134 | 1.1 |
| Total | 3,676 | 1,733 | 1,586 | 720 | 1,014 | 288 | 189 | 9,206 | 10.2 |

(a) Ratio of prisoners per 10,000 population over 18 years old

Table 3

NUMBER OF PRISONERS, BY AGE AND STATE : EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE OF INMATES WITHIN THAT STATE

| Age (years) | State/Territory | | | | | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | NSW&ACT | VIC | QLD | SA | WA | TAS | NT | AUST |
| Under 17 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 1.4 | 1.7 | 5.3 | 0.5 |
| 18-19 | 4.8 | 8.3 | 8.8 | 5.6 | 8.4 | 11.1 | 13.8 | 7.0 |
| 20-24 | 30.5 | 28.2 | 29.4 | 39.9 | 34.6 | 38.5 | 31.2 | 31.3 |
| 25-29 | 22.1 | 16.8 | 21.0 | 18.3 | 21.9 | 16.7 | 16.9 | 20.3 |
| 30-34 | 14.1 | 11.3 | 13.6 | 11.1 | 11.5 | 9.7 | 14.8 | 12.9 |
| 35-39 | 8.4 | 7.9 | 7.8 | 7.5 | 6.7 | 4.5 | 5.3 | 7.8 |
| 40-44 | 6.0 | 6.2 | 6.4 | 5.6 | 5.4 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 6.0 |
| 45-49 | 5.1 | 6.2 | 4.7 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 5.2 | 3.2 | 4.9 |
| 50-54 | 4.0 | 5.3 | 3.4 | 4.0 | 3.5 | 2.8 | 2.1 | 4.0 |
| 55-59 | 2.5 | 3.5 | 2.4 | 1.8 | 1.6 | 2.1 | 1.1 | 2.5 |
| 60-64 | 1.3 | 2.6 | 1.1 | 1.9 | 0.9 | 0.7 | 1.1 | 1.5 |
| 65+ | 0.8 | 3.7 | 1.2 | 0.6 | 0.9 | 2.1 | 0.5 | 1.5 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Table 4

GENERAL POPULATION : AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE GENERAL POPULATION AGED EIGHTEEN YEARS OR OLDER BY STATE, EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE *

| Age | State / Territory | | | | | | | |
|-------|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | NSW&ACT | VIC | QLD | SA | WA | TAS | NT | AUST |
| 18/19 | 5.0 | 5.2 | 5.2 | 5.3 | 5.4 | 5.4 | 5.2 | 5.1 |
| 20-24 | 11.8 | 12.2 | 12.2 | 12.3 | 13.4 | 12.4 | 17.2 | 12.2 |
| 25-29 | 12.4 | 12.4 | 12.2 | 12.3 | 13.6 | 12.3 | 19.3 | 12.5 |
| 30-34 | 10.5 | 10.3 | 10.2 | 9.9 | 10.8 | 10.0 | 15.0 | 10.4 |
| 35-39 | 9.0 | 9.0 | 8.7 | 8.5 | 9.5 | 8.9 | 11.0 | 9.0 |
| 40-44 | 8.0 | 8.1 | 7.6 | 7.7 | 8.2 | 7.8 | 8.0 | 8.0 |
| 45-49 | 8.5 | 8.6 | 8.0 | 8.6 | 8.2 | 8.2 | 6.9 | 8.4 |
| 50-54 | 8.3 | 8.2 | 7.9 | 8.4 | 7.4 | 8.2 | 5.8 | 8.1 |
| 55-59 | 7.0 | 6.7 | 7.1 | 7.1 | 5.9 | 7.1 | 4.1 | 6.8 |
| 60-64 | 6.3 | 6.1 | 6.5 | 6.4 | 5.6 | 6.4 | 3.2 | 6.2 |
| 65+ | 13.2 | 13.3 | 14.2 | 13.5 | 12.1 | 13.3 | 4.3 | 13.3 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

While persons in the age group 18-29 comprised 29.8% of the Australian population 18 years or older, they comprised 58.6% of the prison population. The proportion of prisoners and general population (18 years and above) in the 30-44 age group were similar (26.7% and 27.4% respectively), while the proportion of prisoners aged 45 and over, 14.4%, was significantly less than the proportion

5 RACIAL ORIGIN

In the 1976 Census, persons were asked to indicate the racial origin group to which they considered they belonged. The responses of prisoners, classified to Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander, and Other, are shown in Tables 5 and 6 below.

Although some care should be taken in interpreting Tables 5 and 6 due to the high proportion of Not Stated (particularly among prisoners), it is clear that persons of Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander racial origin comprised a significantly larger proportion of prisoners than of the general population : for Australia, 12.7% and 1.2% respectively.

Table 5

NUMBER OF PRISONERS BY RACIAL ORIGIN AND STATE

| State | Racial Origin | | | | Total |
|-------|---|-------|------------|--|-------|
| | Aboriginal/ Torres Strait Islanders | Other | Not Stated | | |
| NSW | 266 | 2,111 | 1,294 | | 3,671 |
| VIC | 64 | 968 | 701 | | 1,733 |
| QLD | 252 | 882 | 452 | | 1,586 |
| SA | 117 | 490 | 113 | | 720 |
| WA | 351 | 495 | 168 | | 1,014 |
| TAS | 11 | 258 | 19 | | 288 |
| NT | 106 | 71 | 12 | | 189 |
| ACT | .. | 4 | 1 | | 5 |
| AUST | 1,167 | 5,279 | 2,760 | | 9,206 |

These figures are presented in percentage and ratio terms, and related to the racial origin distribution, recorded for the general population, in Table 6.

Table 6

PRISONERS AND GENERAL POPULATION, 'BY RACIAL ORIGIN AND STATE' - PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTIONS AND RATIOS PER 10,000 PERSONS

| State | Aboriginal/Torres Strait | | | Other | | | Not Stated | | | Total |
|---------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | %Prison Populat- ion(a) | %Total Populat- ion(b) | Rate per 10,000(c) | % Prison Populat- ion (a) | % Total Populat- ion (b) | Rate per 10,000(c) | % Prison Populat- ion (a) | % Total Populat- ion (b) | Rate per 10,000 (c) | Rate per 10,000 (c) |
| NSW&ACT | 7.2 | 0.8 | 64 | 57.5 | 90.6 | 5 | 35.2 | 8.5 | 31 | 7 |
| VIC | 3.7 | 0.4 | 43 | 55.9 | 89.6 | 3 | 40.5 | 10.0 | 19 | 5 |
| QLD | 15.9 | 2.0 | 61 | 55.6 | 90.0 | 5 | 28.5 | 8.0 | 28 | 8 |
| SA | 16.3 | 0.9 | 109 | 68.1 | 92.8 | 4 | 15.7 | 6.3 | 14 | 6 |
| WA | 34.6 | 2.3 | 134 | 48.8 | 91.6 | 5 | 16.6 | 6.1 | 24 | 9 |
| TAS | 3.8 | 0.7 | 37 | 89.6 | 90.6 | 7 | 6.6 | 8.7 | 5 | 7 |
| NT | 56.1 | 24.4 | 45 | 37.6 | 66.4 | 11 | 6.3 | 9.2 | 13 | 19 |
| AUST | 12.7 | 1.2 | 73 | 57.3 | 90.4 | 4 | 30.0 | 8.4 | 24 | 7 |

- (a) The number of prisoners of a particular racial origin expressed as a percentage of the total number of prisoners in that State.
- (b) The number of persons of a particular racial origin expressed as a percentage of the total number of persons in that State.
- (c) The number of prisoners per 10,000 persons of the same racial origin group in that State.

On a prisoner to population ratio basis, prisoners of aboriginal racial origin were represented to the greatest degree in SA and WA (109 and 134 per 10,000 population respectively). Although 56.1% of prisoners in the Northern Territory were of Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander origin, this converts to a ratio of only 45 per ten thousand population, a rate higher only than in Tasmania and Victoria.

In all States however, persons of Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander origin were represented to a considerably higher degree in the prison population, than persons of other racial origins.

6 COUNTRY OF BIRTH

Table 7

NUMBER OF PRISONERS, BY COUNTRY OF BIRTH AND STATE

| Country of Birth | State | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| | NSW | VIC | QLD | SA | WA | TAS | NT | ACT | AUST |
| Australia | 3,108 | 1,454 | 1,378 | 563 | 863 | 274 | 164 | 2 | 7,806 |
| New Zealand | 72 | 17 | 37 | 10 | 10 | .. | 6 | .. | 152 |
| U.K. and Eire | 171 | 90 | 86 | 75 | 77 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 515 |
| Germany | 36 | 17 | 18 | 15 | 6 | .. | 2 | .. | 94 |
| Greece | 16 | 16 | .. | 5 | 2 | 2 | .. | .. | 41 |
| Italy | 26 | 37 | 3 | 5 | 11 | .. | 1 | .. | 83 |
| Netherlands | 10 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 1 | .. | .. | 28 |
| Eastern Europe (a) | 106 | 55 | 27 | 18 | 16 | 6 | 1 | .. | 229 |
| Other Europe (b) | 43 | 18 | 11 | 10 | 8 | .. | 2 | .. | 92 |
| Middle East (c) | 19 | 6 | .. | 4 | 1 | .. | .. | .. | 30 |
| S.E. Asia (d) | 14 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | .. | 1 | .. | 27 |
| Other Asia (e) | 18 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | .. | .. | .. | 28 |
| Africa | 8 | 4 | 7 | .. | 4 | .. | 1 | .. | 24 |
| U.S.A. | 9 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | .. | .. | .. | 22 |
| Other America (f) | 8 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | .. | 2 | 1 | 24 |
| Other | 7 | .. | 2 | 1 | 1 | .. | .. | .. | 11 |
| Total | 3,671 | 1,733 | 1,586 | 720 | 1,014 | 288 | 189 | 5 | 9,206 |

- (a) Comprised of Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Ukraine, USSR (nei), Yugoslavia.
- (b) Comprised of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Malta, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Other Europe (nei).
- (c) Comprised of Cyprus, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Muscat, Oman, Yemen, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey.
- (d) Comprised of Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam.
- (e) Comprised of Bangladesh, China (Republic of), Christmas Is., Cocos Isl., Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Timor (east), Other Asia (nei).
- (f) Includes West Indies/Caribbean, Canada, and central/southern America.

These figures are expressed in % terms, and related to the general population in the Table below.

Table 8

NUMBER OF PRISONERS, BY COUNTRY OF BIRTH, EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE OF PRISONERS AND A RATIO TO THE POPULATION

| Country of Birth | No. of prisoners | % of prisoners | % of population | Ratio to population (a) |
|------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Australia | 7,806 | 84.8 | 79.9 | 7.2 |
| New Zealand | 152 | 1.7 | 0.7 | 16.9 |
| U.K. and Eire | 515 | 5.6 | 8.2 | 4.6 |
| All Other | 733 | 8.0 | 11.2 | 4.8 |
| Total | 9,206 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 6.8 |

(a) Prisoners per 10,000 general population classified to that Country of Birth.

As could be expected, Australian born persons comprised the majority of prisoners, 84.8%, slightly in excess of the 79.9% of Australian born persons in the general population. An interesting feature is that while persons born in New Zealand comprised only 1.7% and 0.7% of the prison and general populations respectively, when expressed as a prisoners to population rate, the New Zealand figure is almost 2½ times the rate for 'Total' countries of birth combined.

7. AGE LEFT SCHOOL

Note: Care should be taken in interpreting this data due to the relatively high proportion for which 'Age Left School' was not stated.

Table 9

NUMBER OF PRISONERS: BY AGE LEFT SCHOOL AND STATE

| State | Age left school (years) | | | | | | | | 19 & over | Never attended | Still attending | Not stated | Total |
|--|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|-----|-----------|----------------|-----------------|------------|-------|
| | 12 & under | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | | | | | | |
| NSW | 71 | 109 | 560 | 912 | 434 | 143 | 74 | 27 | 33 | 1 | 1307 | 3671 | |
| VIC | 30 | 79 | 324 | 347 | 178 | 67 | 36 | 25 | 11 | 1 | 635 | 1733 | |
| QLD | 61 | 95 | 333 | 384 | 165 | 71 | 22 | 13 | 23 | .. | 419 | 1586 | |
| SA | 14 | 22 | 129 | 251 | 98 | 40 | 16 | 9 | 12 | 2 | 127 | 720 | |
| WA | 27 | 58 | 257 | 262 | 134 | 46 | 22 | 14 | 38 | 1 | 155 | 1014 | |
| TAS | 16 | 31 | 75 | 94 | 50 | 8 | 1 | .. | 1 | 1 | 11 | 288 | |
| NT | 10 | 8 | 31 | 43 | 35 | 18 | 7 | 1 | 17 | 4 | 15 | 189 | |
| ACT | .. | .. | .. | 2 | .. | 1 | .. | 1 | 1 | .. | .. | 5 | |
| AUST - | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Number | 229 | 402 | 1709 | 2295 | 1094 | 394 | 178 | 90 | 136 | 10 | 2669 | 9206 | |
| % of prisoners | 2.5 | 4.4 | 18.6 | 24.9 | 11.9 | 4.3 | 1.9 | 1.0 | 1.5 | 0.1 | 28.9 | 100.0 | |
| % of general population (a) | 2.9 | 3.2 | 20.4 | 23.9 | 16.9 | 10.0 | 5.3 | 2.1 | 1.0 | 4.7 | 9.5 | 100.0 | |
| Ratio of prisoners per 10,000 population (a) | 8.0 | 12.6 | 8.5 | 9.7 | 6.6 | 4.0 | 3.4 | 4.4 | 13.8 | 0.2 | 28.5 | 9.3 | |

By restricting the coverage to persons who responded as having left school or never attended, the following % distribution and ratios are derived.

Table 10

PRISONERS WHO HAVE LEFT SCHOOL OR NEVER ATTENDED. NUMBER BY AGE LEFT SCHOOL EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE OF PRISONERS AND THE GENERAL POPULATION

| | Age Left School (years) | | | | | | | | 19 & over | Never attended | Total |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|-----|-----------|----------------|-------|
| | 12 & under | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | | | | |
| % of prisoners | | 3.5 | 6.2 | 26.2 | 35.1 | 16.8 | 6.0 | 2.7 | 1.4 | 2.1 | 100.0 |
| % of general population(a) | | 3.4 | 3.8 | 23.8 | 27.9 | 19.7 | 11.7 | 6.2 | 2.4 | 1.2 | 100.0 |

(a) General population aged 15 years and over at Census date.

Of those prisoners who responded to this item as having left school (6531), 71.0% reported leaving school at age 15 years or prior. This compares with 58.9% for the general population. The percentage of persons reporting 'never attended school' was slightly higher for prisoners than for the general population.

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

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DECEMBER 1981

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