



Ministry
of Justice



Safety in Custody Statistics England and Wales Deaths in prison custody to March 2016 Assaults and Self-harm to December 2015

Ministry of Justice
Statistics bulletin

28th April 2016

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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 2015 and annual assaults and self-harm tables, and statistics on deaths in prison custody up to March 2016. Supplementary 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.

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 Statistics¹'. 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

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 2016 including a review on all deaths awaiting further information, and has updated figures for self-harm and assaults to the end of December 2015 (including annual assaults and self-harm tables to 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); 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 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 or received a reprimand or warning.

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 28 April 2016 and includes statistics covering 12-month periods to end of December 2015 for self-harm and assaults and 12-month periods to end of March 2016 for deaths in prison custody.

The next publication of Safety in Custody statistics is scheduled to be published on 28 July 2016, covering 12-month periods to end of March 2016 for assaults and self-harm and June 2016 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, deaths to 12 months ending March 2016, assaults and self-harm to 12 months ending December 2015

	Mar 07	Mar 08	Mar 09	Mar 10	12 months ending					
					Mar 11	Mar 12	Mar 13	Mar 14	Mar 15	Mar 16
Total deaths¹	161	189	163	180	185	211	181	225	239	290
Self-inflicted	72	84	64	59	54	67	52	90	79	100
Natural Causes	85	99	94	116	115	135	119	128	149	167
Homicide	0	1	3	0	2	1	2	3	4	6
Other ²	4	5	2	5	14	8	8	4	7	17
<hr/>										
12 months ending										
	Dec 06	Dec 07	Dec 08	Dec 09	Dec 10	Dec 11	Dec 12	Dec 13	Dec 14	Dec 15
Self-harm incidents¹	23,400	23,000	25,234	24,184	26,979	24,648	23,158	23,230	25,843	32,313
Males	11,899	11,592	12,219	13,706	14,347	15,829	16,567	17,216	19,049	24,979
Females	11,501	11,408	13,015	10,478	12,632	8,819	6,591	6,014	6,794	7,334
Assault incidents¹	15,057	15,272	15,959	15,179	14,335	15,440	14,511	14,664	16,219	20,518
Males	13,895	14,267	15,054	14,474	13,682	14,742	13,961	14,145	15,572	19,760
Females	1,162	1,005	905	705	653	698	550	519	647	758

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 proportion of the most recent two years' figures are expected to be reclassified.

Deaths in prison custody

In the 12 months to March 2016 there were **290 deaths** in prison custody (a rate of **3.4** per 1,000 prisoners), an increase of 51 compared to the 12 months ending March 2015. These deaths comprise of:

- **100 apparent self-inflicted deaths** (a rate of **1.2** per 1,000 prisoners), up from 79 in the previous 12 month period (a 27% increase);
- **167 deaths due to natural causes** (a rate of **1.9** per 1,000 prisoners), up from 149 on the same period in 2015;
- **6 apparent homicides**, up from 4 on the same period in 2015;
- **17 other deaths**, 9 of which are 'awaiting further information' prior to being classified.

Self-harm

In the 12 months to December 2015 there were:

- **32,313 reported incidents of self-harm**, up by 6,470 incidents (25%) on the same period in 2014;
- **377 self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners**, compared with 303 incidents per 1,000 prisoners in the same period of 2014 (up 24%);
- **9,458 prisoners reported to have self-harmed**, up 1,665 (21%) on the same period in 2014;
- **2,261 hospital attendances**, up 504 (29%) on the previous year;
- **110 prisoners per 1,000 self-harmed**, up by 19 per 1,000 prisoners (21%) on the same period in 2014. Of those that self-harmed in the 12 months to December 2015, they self-harmed, on average, 3.4 times.

Assaults

In the 12 months to December 2015 there were:

- **20,518 assault incidents**, up 27% from 16,219 incidents in the same period of 2014;
- **240 assault incidents per 1,000 prisoners**, up from 190 on the same period in 2014;
- **2,813 serious assaults**, up 31% from 2,150 in the previous year;

- **15,511 prisoner on prisoner assaults**, up 24% from 12,552 incidents in the previous 12 months;
- **181 prisoner on prisoner assault incidents per 1,000 prisoners**, up from 147 in the same period of the previous year;
- **2,197 serious prisoner on prisoner assaults**, up 31% from 1,682 in the same period of 2014;
- **4,963 assaults on staff**, up 36% from 3,640 incidents in the same period of 2014;
- **58 assault on staff incidents per 1,000 prisoners**, up from 43 on the same period in 2014;
- **625 serious assaults on staff**, up 31% from 477 in the same period of 2014.

1. Deaths in Prison Custody

In the 12 months to March 2016 there were:

- **290 deaths in prison custody**, an increase of 51 compared to the same period of 2015. This is a rate of 3.4 deaths per 1,000 prisoners, up from 2.8 in the previous 12 month period;
- **100 apparent self-inflicted deaths** (a rate of 1.2 per 1,000 prisoners), up from 79 in the previous 12 month period (a 27% increase);
- **167 deaths due to natural causes** (a rate of 1.9 per 1,000 prisoners), up from 149 on the same period in 2015;
- **6 apparent homicides**, up from 4 on the same period in 2015;
- **17 other deaths**, 9 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*.

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.

1.1 Deaths in Prison Custody

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 (58% of all deaths). Natural cause deaths have been on a general upward trend over the last decade. This is contributed to by an aging prison population (see Offender Management Statistics Quarterly⁵).

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.

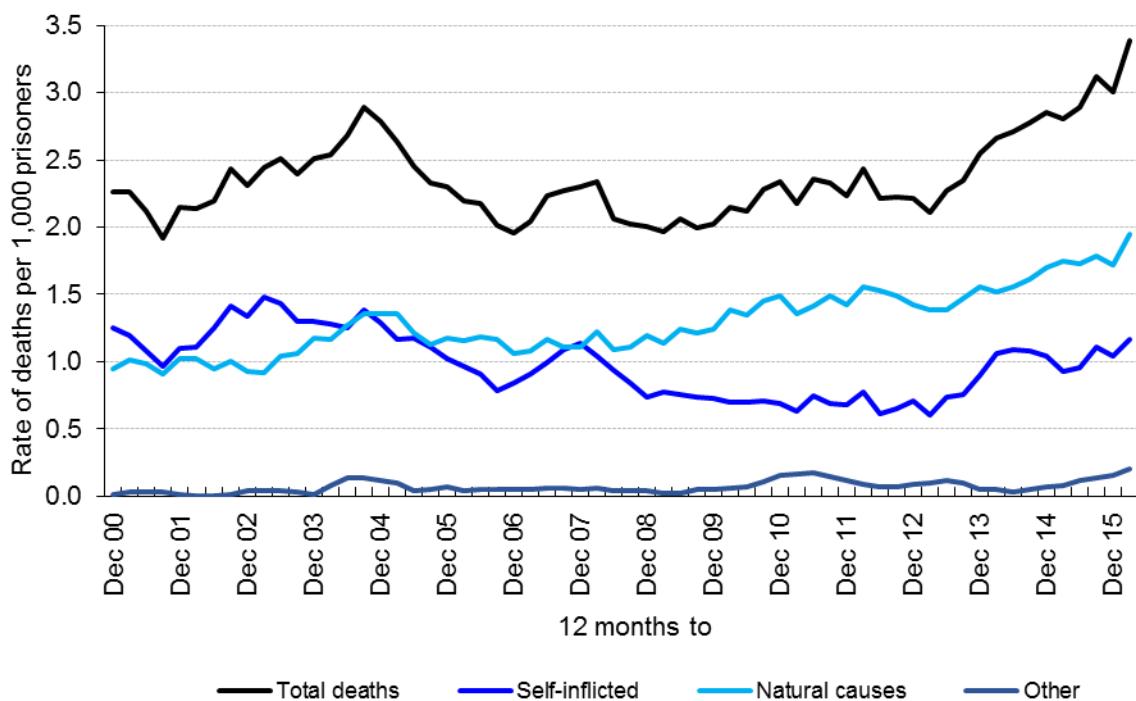
'Other' deaths include any death of a person whose death cannot easily be classified as natural causes, self-inflicted or homicide. The category includes accidents and cases where the cause of death is unknown even after all of the investigations have been concluded.

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.

⁴ Prisons and Probation Ombudsman: Fatal Incident Reports www.ppo.gov.uk/document/fii-report/

⁵ Offender Management Statistics www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly

Figure 1: Deaths per 1,000 prisoners by apparent cause, 12 months ending December 2000 to 12 months ending March 2016, England and Wales (rolling 12 month totals by quarter)



The rate of deaths fell during 2005 and 2006 from a prior peak of 2.9 per 1,000 prisoners in the 12 months to September 2004. Since March 2013, the rate of deaths has increased again, reaching a peak across the time series in the most recent 12 month period ending March 2016 of 3.4 per 1,000 prisoners.

Although prior to June 2004, self-inflicted deaths had predominated within the rate of deaths, since this time onward, natural cause deaths have been the predominant driver of the rate of deaths. There has in general been a largely steady increase in the rate of natural cause deaths, reaching a peak across the time series in the most recent 12 months ending March 2016 of 1.9 per 1,000 prisoners. Although this is partially explained by the aging prison population, there are many other factors involved.

The rate of self-inflicted deaths had reached its peak in the time series in the 12 months to March 2003 of 1.5 per 1,000 prisoners. After a period of fluctuations from 2004 to 2008, the self-inflicted death rate had stabilised until 2013. Subsequently the rate began to rise again to the highest point, since the prior peak, in the most recent 12 months ending March 2016 of 1.2 per 1,000 prisoners.

There were 6 apparent homicides in the 12 months ending March 2016. Homicides in prison custody remain relatively rare, accounting for 2% of all deaths in the most recent period and 1% of all deaths in the last ten years. 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.

There were 17 other deaths in the 12 months ending March 2016 (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 following inquest. In prior periods all deaths have now been classified, while 9 of the deaths in the most recent 12 months await further information prior

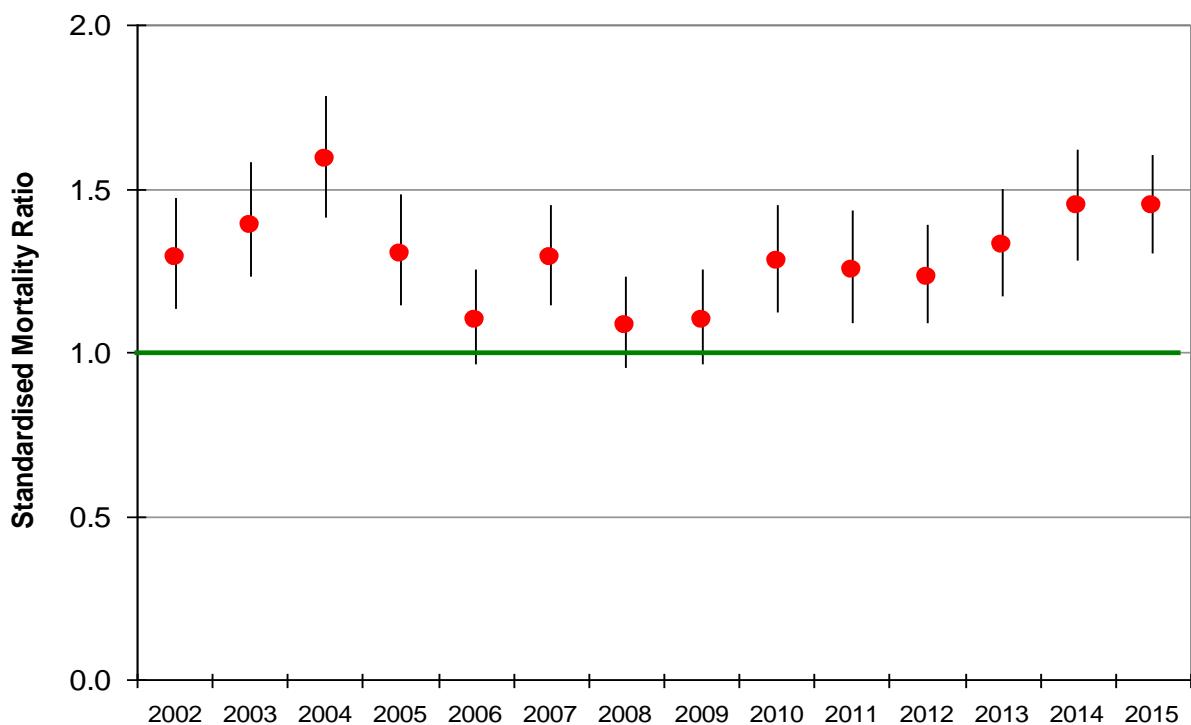
to being classified. As such all figures for the most recent period are subject to change upon classification of these deaths.

1.2 Comparison of deaths in prison custody with those in the general 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 in comparison with the general population. 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).

The SMR provides a means of making like for like comparisons of the death rate in prison custody to that of the general population of England and Wales, by adjusting for age distribution and gender. Figure 2 below presents the SMR of the prison population, compared to the expected level from the general population. Where the likelihood of death is the same as would be expected based on the general population, the SMR would have a value of 1 (depicted by the green line - a ratio of 1:1). Due to the adjustments, there is a margin of error around the SMR estimates, depicted on the graph as the range of values covered by lines around the point estimates.

Figure 2: Annual Standardised Mortality Ratio (SMR) for prison population, 2002 to 2015, England and Wales



In 2015, the likelihood of prison mortality was 45%⁶ greater than in the general population (with 90% confidence within a range of 30% to 60% greater likelihood). In seven out of the last ten years, the likelihood of prison mortality has been significantly higher than in the

⁶ In 2015, the SMR for the prison population was 1.45 with a lower bound 90% confidence interval of 1.30 and the upper bound of 1.60.

general population, however none of the apparent year on year changes to the SMR are significant across the period. Figure 2 is updated annually on a calendar year basis when the underlying general population data⁷ become available from the Office of National Statistics.

⁷ Death figures for the general population, as used in SMR calculations, are derived from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) Mortality Statistics at the following link www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/vsob1/death-reg-sum-tables/2014/sb-deaths-first-release--2014.html and national population figures come from the Population Projections Statistics at the following link: www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/hpp/national-population-projections/2014-based-projections/index.html

2 Self-harm

In the 12 months to December 2015 there were:

- **32,313 reported incidents of self-harm**, up by 6,470 incidents (25%) on the same period in 2014;
- **377 self-harm incidents per 1,000 prisoners**, compared with 303 incidents per 1,000 prisoners in the same period of 2014 (up 24%);
- **9,458 prisoners reported to have self-harmed**, up 1,665 (21%) on the same period in 2014;
- **2,261 hospital attendances**, up 504 (29%) on the previous year;
- **110 prisoners per 1,000 self-harmed**, up by 19 per 1,000 prisoners (21%) on the same period in 2014. Of those that self-harmed in the 12 months to December 2015, they self-harmed, on average, 3.4 times.

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.

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.

As self-harm trends differ considerably by gender, these are presented separately below for males and females.

2.1 Male self-harm

In the 12 months to December 2015 there were:

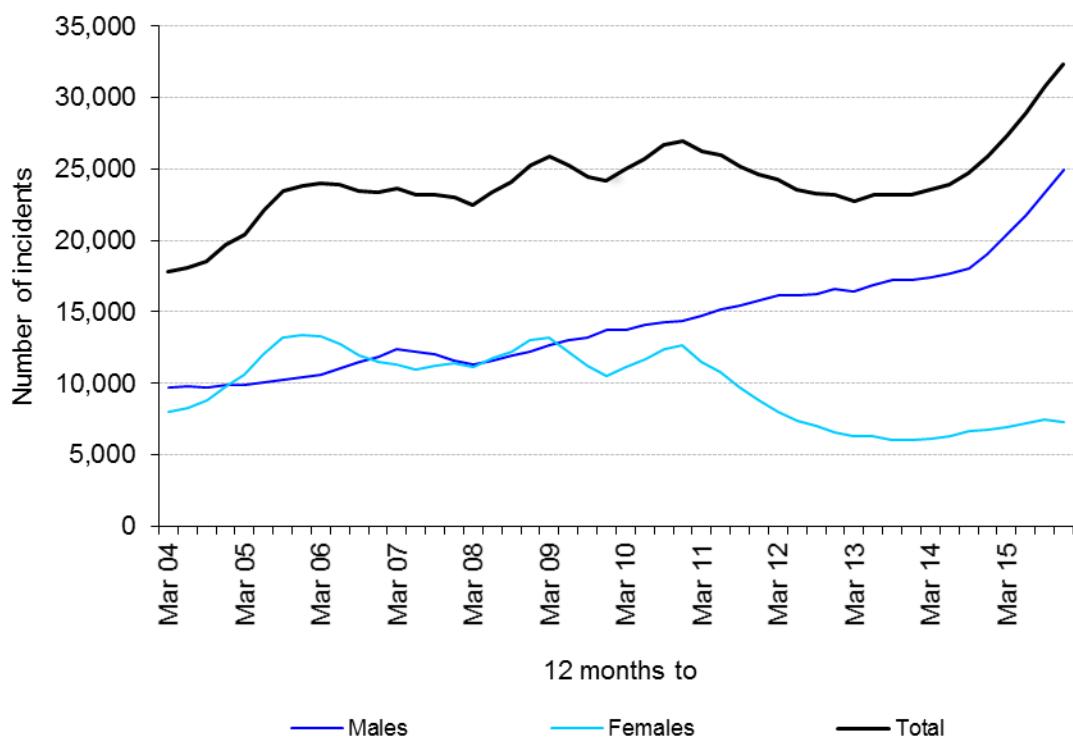
- **24,979 reported incidents of self-harm by male prisoners**, up 5,930 incidents (31%) in the previous year;
- **306 incidents per 1,000 male prisoners**, up 72 (31%) compared with the previous 12 months;
- **8,306 male prisoners self-harmed**, up 1,629 (24%) on the same period of 2014;
- **2,103 hospital attendances** due to self-harm by males, up from 1,625 in the same period of 2014;
- **102 male prisoners per 1,000 self-harmed**, up from 82 per 1,000 in the same period of 2014. Of those male prisoners who self-harmed, they carried out, on average, **3.0** self-harm incidents in the 12 months to December 2015, slightly up from 2.9 incidents in the previous year.

2.2 Female self-harm

In the 12 months to end of December 2015 there were:

- **7,334 incidents of self-harm by female prisoners**, up 540 incidents (8%) on the same period in 2014;
- **1,888 incidents per 1,000 female prisoners**, up 148 (9%) compared with the previous 12 months;
- **1,152 female prisoners self-harmed**, up 36 (3%) on the previous 12 months;
- **158 hospital attendances** due to self-harm by females, up from 132 (20% increase) in the same period of 2014;
- **297 female prisoners per 1,000** self-harmed, up from 286 in the same period of 2014. Female prisoners who self-harm, were responsible for **6.4** self-harm incidents on average, up 0.3 incidents on the same period in 2014.

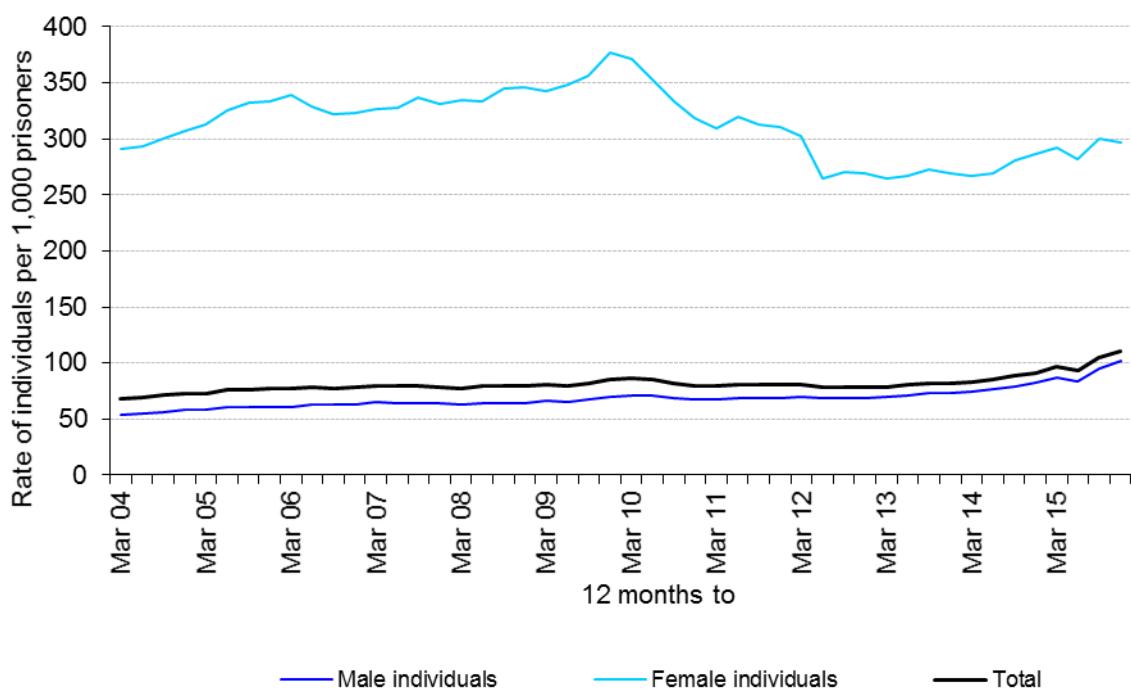
Figure 3: Number of self-harm incidents in prison custody by gender, 12 months ending March 2004 to 12 months ending December 2015, England and Wales



Across the time series, there had been a steady increase in the number of incidents of self-harm among males. Since the 12 months ending September 2014, there has been a notable acceleration in the rate of this increase. This reached a peak of 24,979 incidents of self-harm among males in the 12 months ending December 2015.

For females, although from 2011 onward there were substantial reductions in the number of self-harm incidents from a peak of 13,361 incidents in the 12 months ending December 2005. Since 2014 there has been a trend for increasing incidents of self-harm among females, albeit still considerably below past levels. This reached 7,458 incidents in the 12 months ending September 2015, and fell slightly in the most recent 12 month period to 7,334 incidents.

Figure 4: Self-harming individuals per 1,000 prisoners by gender, 12 months ending March 2004 to 12 months ending December 2015, England and Wales (rolling 12 months by quarter)



When considering rates of individuals self-harming, due to the fact more than 95% of the prison population is male, rates in total are closely aligned to the rates among males across the time series. When considering females, despite the falls seen between 2009 and 2012, rates of individuals self-harming among females remain disproportionately high in comparison to the overall rates of individuals self-harming.

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 265 per 1,000 in the 12 months ending June 2012. Since this time there has been a gradual increase in the rate among females, reaching 301 per 1,000 in the 12 months ending September 2015, and remaining largely consistent at 297 per 1,000 in the most recent 12 months.

The rate of self-harm among male prisoners has steadily increased across the time series, reaching a peak of 102 self-harming males per 1,000 prisoners in the most recent 12 months period ending December 2015.

Females accounted for nearly a quarter of self-harm incidents in this reporting period, but only make up less than 5% of the prison population (see Offender Management Statistics)⁸.

⁸ Offender Management Statistics www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly

3 Assaults (including fights)

In the 12 months to December 2015 there were:

- **20,518 assault incidents**, up 27% from 16,219 incidents in the same period of 2014;
- **240 assault incidents per 1,000 prisoners**, up from 190 on the same period in 2014;
- **2,813 serious assaults**, up 31% from 2,150 in the previous year;
- **15,511 prisoner on prisoner assaults**, up 24% from 12,552 incidents in the previous 12 months;
- **181 prisoner on prisoner assault incidents per 1,000 prisoners**, up from 147 in the same period of the previous year;
- **2,197 serious prisoner on prisoner assaults**, up 31% from 1,682 in the same period of 2014;
- **4,963 assaults on staff**, up 36% from 3,640 incidents in the same period of 2014;
- **58 assault on staff incidents per 1,000 prisoners**, up from 43 on the same period in 2014;
- **625 serious assaults on staff**, up 31% from 477 in the same period of 2014.

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

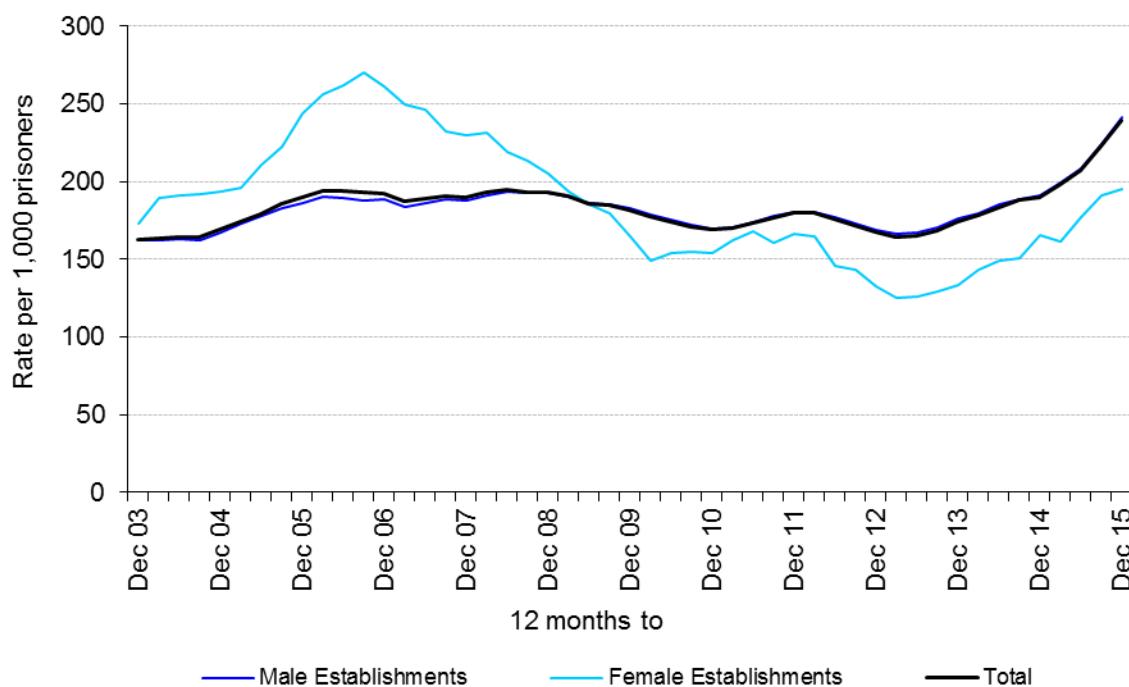
Because of the predominance of male prisoners, assaults are dominated by incidents in the male prison estate. As males account for over 95%⁹ of the prison population, the total rates of assaults of all types and the corresponding rates among males are very closely aligned across the time series.

In calendar years since 2006, the rate of assaults in the male estate had ranged within 170 to 192 assault incidents per 1,000 male prisoners, however in 2015, this level has been exceeded. The rate of assaults for male prisoners increased to 242 assaults per 1,000 male prisoners in the 12 months to December 2015, compared with 191 assaults per 1,000 male prisoners in the same period of 2014 (a 27% year on year increase in the rate of assaults in the male estate).

In the female estate, after a period in which assault rates generally decreased from 2006 to 2012, the rate of assaults in the female estate has since been increasing. There were 195 assaults per 1,000 female prisoners in the 12 months to December 2015, up from 166 assaults per 1,000 female prisoners in the same period of 2014. The rate of assaults in the female estate had halved between 2006 and 2013, from a peak of 271 assaults per 1,000 female prisoners in the 12 months to September 2006 to 125 assaults per 1,000 female prisoners in March 2013.

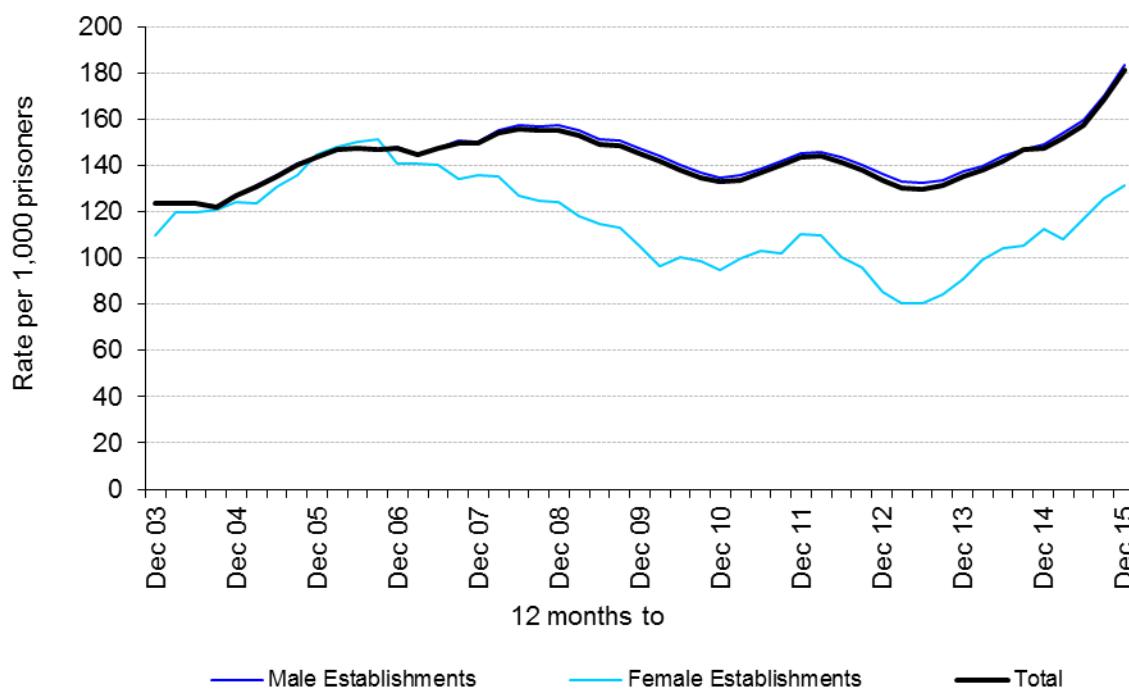
⁹ Offender Management Statistics www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly

Figure 5: Rate of assaults overall per 1,000 prisoners by gender, 12 months ending December 2003 to 12 months ending December 2015, England and Wales (rolling 12 months by quarter)



3.2 Prisoner on prisoner assaults

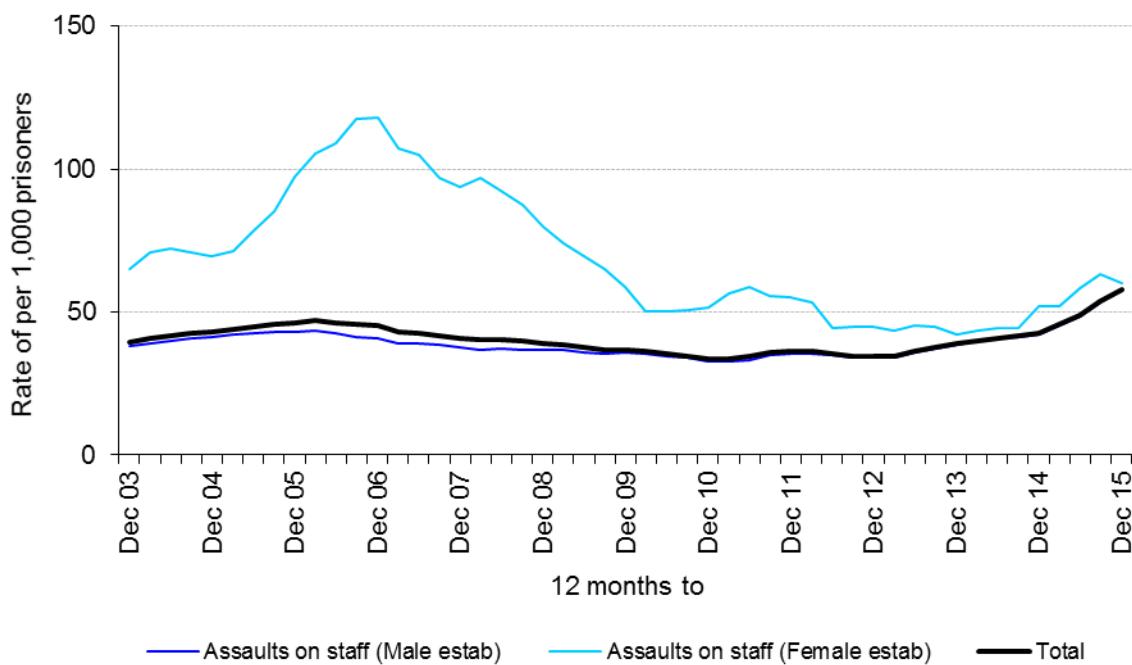
Figure 6: Rate of prisoner on prisoner assaults per 1,000 prisoners by gender, 12 months ending December 2003 to 12 months ending December 2015, England and Wales (rolling 12 months by quarter)



As seen in figure 6 above, 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 both males (184 per 1,000 prisoners) and overall (181 per 1,000 prisoners) in the most recent 12 months.

3.3 Assaults on staff

Figure 7: Rate of assaults on staff per 1,000 prisoners by gender, 12 months ending December 2003 to 12 months ending December 2015, England and Wales (rolling 12 months by quarter)



There are notable differences in the time series of the rates of assaults on staff within male and female establishments. This is based on the gender of the prisoners held within establishments, and does not give any indication of the gender of the staff involved.

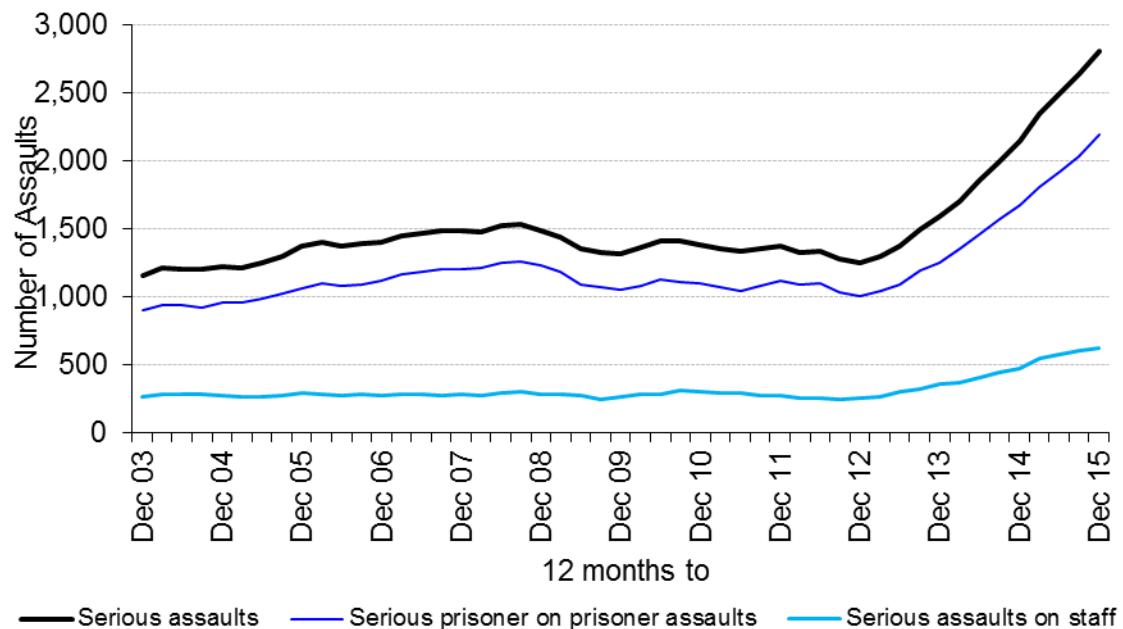
In the male estate, after a prolonged period remaining fairly static, since 2013 the rate of assaults on staff has continued to rise.

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 (although the most recent 12 month period is slightly lower than the 12 months ending the prior quarter). Due to lower numbers involved in the female estate, fluctuations are more evident than in the male estate or in total.

3.4 Serious assaults

After a prolonged period of stability in the time series of serious¹⁰ 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 8). Since 2012, the number of serious assaults of all types have more than doubled.

Figure 8: Number of serious assaults total, serious prisoner on prisoner assaults, and serious assaults on staff, 12 months ending December 2003 to 12 months ending December 2015, England and Wales (rolling 12 months by quarter)



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

References

HM Inspectorate of Prisons

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

Independent Advisory Panel (IAP) on Deaths in Custody

- Deaths in state custody (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 (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 Safety in Custody Statistics tables and figures. Table 1 and figures 1 to 8 are included in this document. The remaining tables, and previously published annual tables, are available from the website¹¹. All tables refer to incidents in prison custody in England and Wales.

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Figure 8	Number of serious assaults: total, prisoner on prisoner, on staff

¹¹ Safety in Custody: Assaults table 3.2 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'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

Contact points

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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
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
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
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