Main Features

Prisoners per 100,000 Population annual change:
Queensland
- All ↓ 6.6%
- Indigenous ↓ 8.1%
Australia
- All ↑ 1.7%
- Indigenous ↓ 7.3%

Proportion of Unsentenced Prisoners annual change:
Queensland ↑ 1.8% points
Australia ↑ 2.5% points

Proportion of Sentenced Prisoners—Fine Default
Only annual change:
Queensland ↓ 6.2% points
Australia ↓ 2.0% points

Commentary

- On the night of the Prison Census, 30 June 2000, Queensland prisons held 4,482 prisoners. This number was 20.6 % of the number in prison throughout Australia.
- There were 165.5 prisoners in Queensland per 100,000 adult population in 2000. This rate was down 6.6 % from 177.2 prisoners per 100,000 on 30 June 1999.
- In 2000, the 21,714 prisoners in all Australian prisons made up 147.7 per 100,000 adult Australian population, up slightly from 145.2 in 1999.
- The rate of imprisonment of Indigenous people was over 12 times the rate for non-Indigenous people. In 2000 Queensland prisons held 1,622.0 Indigenous prisoners per 100,000 Indigenous adult population and 129.9 non-Indigenous prisoners per 100,000 non-Indigenous adult population (figure 1).

Figure 1: Prisoners, Queensland, 1990 to 2000

- Only 1 in 17 prisoners in Queensland were female (5.8% of the total). The proportion of female prisoners in Australia as a whole was slightly higher (6.4%). The proportion of female prisoners was unchanged from 1999 (5.8% for Queensland and 6.3% for Australia).
- One sixth of prisoners in Queensland (15.6%) were unsentenced, that is on remand, awaiting sentence or awaiting deportation. The Australian figure was 17.4 %. Both figures had increased from 1999 (13.8% for Queensland and 14.9% for Australia).
- The proportion of sentenced prisoners imprisoned in Queensland for fine default as their most serious offence fell substantially from 6.3 % in 1999 to 0.1% in 2000. The Australian figure fell from 2.5% in 1999 to 0.5% in 2000.
- The proportion of sentenced prisoners serving an indeterminate sentence, such as life imprisonment, was greater in Queensland (8.5%) than in Australia as a whole (4.7%). In both cases it had risen from 1999 (from 6.8% and 4.6% respectively).
- Of the remaining sentenced prisoners, that is those sentenced to a specified number of years, the median aggregate sentence for prisoners in Queensland was 4.0 years, up from 3.8 years in 1999. The median aggregate sentence in Australia as a whole was 3.9 years, up from 3.8 years. (If the indeterminate sentences were included in calculating the median, the median would be higher, particularly in Queensland, where the proportion of indeterminate sentences was higher.)
- In 2000, 65.2 % of prisoners in Queensland had had an episode of prior known adult imprisonment. This proportion was up from 61.8 % in 1999 and had risen overall from 1990. The proportion for Australia was 56.4 % in 2000 and had been at a similar level since 1990 (figure 2).

Figure 2: Prior imprisonment, 1990 to 2000