Main Features

**Imprisonment rate annual change:**
- Queensland: ↓ 0.2%
- Australia: ↑ 3.4%

**Proportion of unsentenced prisoners annual change:**
- Queensland: ↓ 1.3 percentage points
- Australia: ↓ 0.2 percentage points

**Proportion of female prisoners annual change:**
- Queensland: ↓ 0.2 percentage points
- Australia: ↓ 0.1 percentage point

Commentary

- On the night of the Prison Census, 30 June 2005, Queensland prisons held 5,354 prisoners. This number represents 21.1% of the total number in Australian prisons.

- There were 176.7 prisoners in Queensland per 100,000 adult population in 2005. This rate was down 0.2% from 177.0 prisoners per 100,000 adult population in 2004. In 2005, the 25,353 prisoners in all Australian prisons represented 162.5 prisoners per 100,000 adult population, up 3.4% from 157.1 in 2004 (Figure 1).

- Approximately one fifth of all prisoners in Queensland (20.9%) and Australia (20.2%) were unsentenced (on remand, awaiting sentence or awaiting deportation). This represents a slight decrease from 22.2% and 20.4% respectively in 2004.

- Of the remaining sentenced prisoners (those sentenced to a specified term) the median aggregate sentence length for prisoners in Queensland was 3.0 years, a decrease from 3.5 years in 2004. The median aggregate sentence in Australia as a whole was 3.0 years, a decrease from 3.3 years in 2004 (note: if indeterminate sentences were included in calculating the median, it would be higher, particularly in Queensland where the proportion of indeterminate sentences was higher).

- In 2005, 66.5% of prisoners in Queensland had an episode of prior known adult imprisonment. This proportion has increased from 64.1% in 2004 and has risen overall since 1995. Similarly, the proportion for Australia has increased from 57.5% in 2004 to 60.4% in 2005, which also represents an increase since 1995.

- Only 1 in 15 prisoners in Queensland in 2005 were female (6.7% of the total, compared with 6.9% in 2004). The proportion of female prisoners in Australia as a whole has decreased from 6.9% in 2004 to 6.8% in 2005.

- When comparing rates of imprisonment for Indigenous and non-Indigenous prisoners, it is recommended that age standardised rates be used. The age standardised rate of imprisonment for Queensland Indigenous prisoners was 1,303.8 per 100,000 adult Indigenous population, making Indigenous persons 9.5 times more likely than non-Indigenous persons to be in prison at 30 June 2005 (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Indigenous and non-Indigenous age standardised imprisonment rates, Qld, 2000 to 2005

Figure 1: Imprisonment rate, 1995 to 2005