

Coroners Court

Monthly Suicide Data Report

October 2023 update

22 Nov 2023

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WARNING: This following report includes information on suicides.

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Purpose

This report presents the October 2023 update to Victorian suicide statistics. This report was produced under the Coroners Court of Victoria's initiative to release timely and accessible data on suicide across the state.

Victorian Suicide Register

In Victoria all deaths from suspected non-natural causes including suspected suicides are required to be reported to the Coroners Court of Victoria. The Coroners Court reviews newly reported deaths on a daily basis to identify those that occur in circumstances consistent with suicide and adds these deaths to the Victorian Suicide Register (VSR).

The VSR has been in operation since 2012 and is the most accurate and timely data source for suicide in Victoria. VSR data is regularly shared with the Victorian Department of Health, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Victoria Police, health services, and other bodies engaged in suicide prevention to inform their work.

Considerations when interpreting the data

Victoria's suicide frequency varies quite substantially from month to month. Additionally, there can be substantial variation in the monthly and annual frequency of suicides by sex and age group. This variation, which is not unique to Victoria but is a feature of suicide data around Australia and internationally, usually results from random factors rather than underlying systemic issues or emerging clusters. The data therefore should be interpreted cautiously, with great care taken in drawing conclusions about any apparent increase or decrease that is observed.

Changes in reported frequencies over time

The deaths included in the VSR are regularly reviewed as coroners' investigations progress and more is learned about the circumstances in which they occurred. Deaths may be removed from the VSR if investigation establishes they are likely not to be suicides; likewise, deaths initially missed may be added to the VSR as new evidence consistent with suicide is gathered. This is why some data reported here may be different to what was reported in previous months.

However, data changes are usually minor: VSR analyses have shown that over time, there is consistently less than 5% difference between the number of suicides initially identified as suicides, and the number of deaths ultimately confirmed as suicides.

Monthly data update

1. Year to date frequency by sex

Table 1 shows the frequency of Victorian suicides by deceased sex as at the end of October each year, for the years 2019-2023.

Table 1: Year to date (month end October) suicide frequency by sex, Victoria 2019-2023.

Sex	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Male	439	413	427	465	475
Female	145	146	142	165	183
Total	584	559	569	630	658

2. Monthly frequency

Table 2 shows the monthly frequency and aggregate monthly¹ frequency of Victorian suicides for January 2019 through to October 2023.

Table 2: Monthly frequency and aggregate monthly frequency of Victorian suicides, January 2019 to October 2023.

Monthly frequency						Aggregate monthly frequency				
Month	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
January	70	61	61	56	71	70	61	61	56	71
February	61	60	51	54	62	131	121	112	110	133
March	50	67	68	64	56	181	188	180	174	189
April	51	53	49	57	70	232	241	229	231	259
May	68	51	54	55	66	300	292	283	286	325
June	51	52	57	66	46	351	344	340	352	371
July	56	56	54	56	66	407	400	394	408	437
August	57	59	52	73	62	464	459	446	481	499
September	56	49	50	72	73	520	508	496	553	572
October	64	51	73	77	86	584	559	569	630	658
November	48	68	60	65		632	627	629	695	
December	65	53	54	70		697	680	683	765	

1 The aggregate monthly frequency is the sum of frequencies for all months so far in each year. For example, the aggregate monthly frequency in March of a year is the sum of the monthly frequencies in January, February and March for that year.

3. Year to date frequency by age group and sex

Table 3 shows the Victorian suicide frequency by deceased sex and age group as at the end of October each year, for the years 2019-2023.

Table 3: Year to date (month end October) suicide frequency by sex and age group, Victoria 2019-2023.

Age group by sex	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Male					
Under 18	12	12	9	9	14
18 to 24	53	49	39	41	45
25 to 34	98	72	79	88	91
35 to 44	89	72	76	77	98
45 to 54	68	67	83	101	93
55 to 64	67	69	61	57	67
65 and over	52	72	80	92	67
Total	439	413	427	465	475
Female					
Under 18	5	2	10	3	10
18 to 24	16	11	17	13	17
25 to 34	19	39	35	27	35
35 to 44	23	29	22	27	43
45 to 54	32	20	21	36	34
55 to 64	22	20	20	24	18
65 and over	28	25	17	35	26
Total	145	146	142	165	183
All people					
Under 18	17	14	19	12	24
18 to 24	69	60	56	54	62
25 to 34	117	111	114	115	126
35 to 44	112	101	98	104	141
45 to 54	100	87	104	137	127
55 to 64	89	89	81	81	85
65 and over	80	97	97	127	93
Total	584	559	569	630	658

4. Year to date frequency by location of fatal incident

Table 4a shows the suicide frequency as at the end of October in Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria, for the years 2019 to 2023. Table 4b shows the same data but represented as proportions of all suicides rather than as frequencies.

Table 4a: Year to date (month end October) suicide frequency by location of fatal incident, Victoria 2019-2023.

Location of fatal incident	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Metropolitan	370	377	362	416	440
Regional	214	182	207	214	218
Total	584	559	569	630	658

Table 4b: Year to date (month end October) suicide proportion by location of fatal incident, Victoria 2019-2023.

Location of fatal incident	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Metropolitan	63%	67%	64%	66%	67%
Regional	37%	33%	36%	34%	33%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%