

# NCIS Coding Tips

## February 2007

### Happy New Year

It is a little late in the year to be wishing you all a Happy New Year but as this is the first newsletter for 2007 there is actually no better time.

So let's have a look at what we all did during 2006.

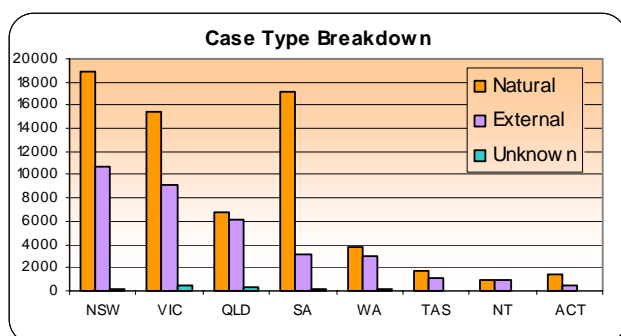
State	Cases Opened	Cases Closed
NSW	5617	5040
VIC	4813	5281
QLD	3200	2814
SA	1930	1814
WA	1527	1848
TAS	465	459
NT	305	282
ACT	341	444

Note: The above table refers solely to cases where:

- Notification occurred between 1 Jan 06 and 31 Dec 06;
- Date Closed occurred between 1 Jan 06 and 31 Dec 06.

### Case Statistics

The following table illustrates the breakdown of Case Type upon Completion for each jurisdiction.

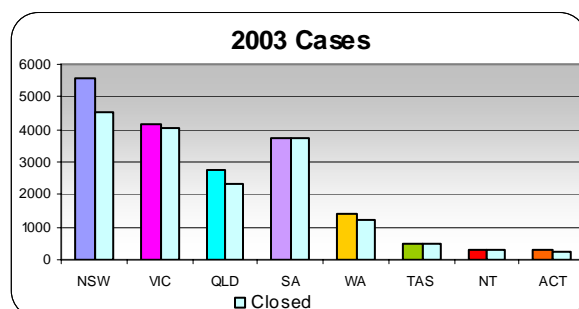
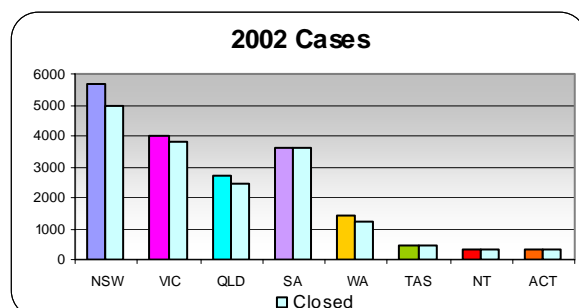
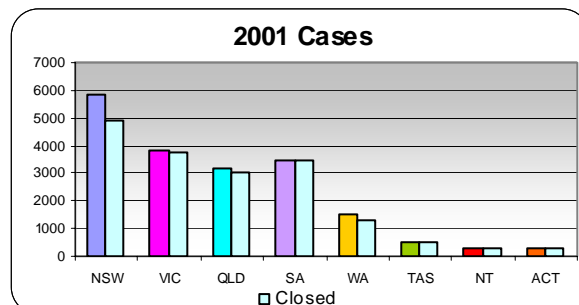
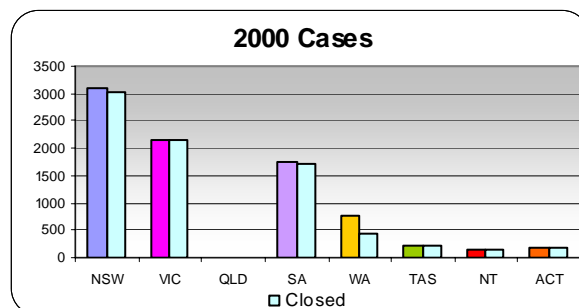
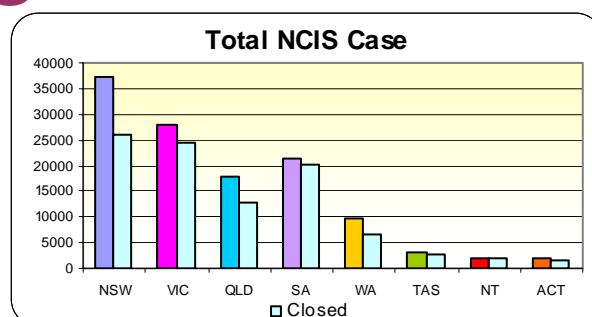


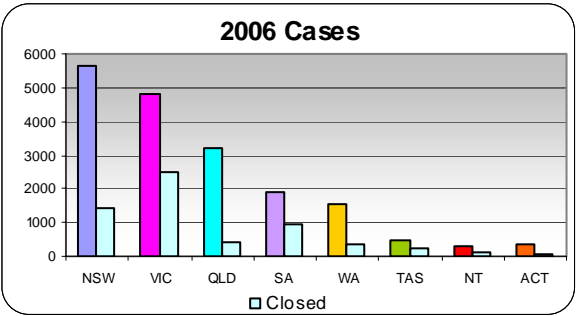
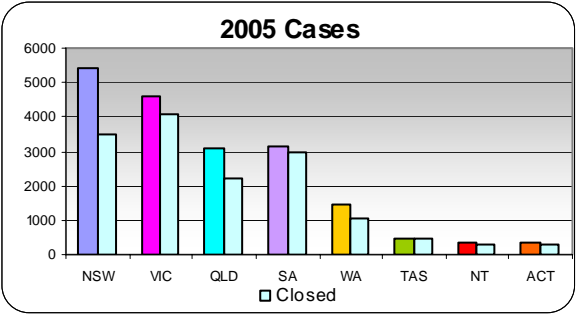
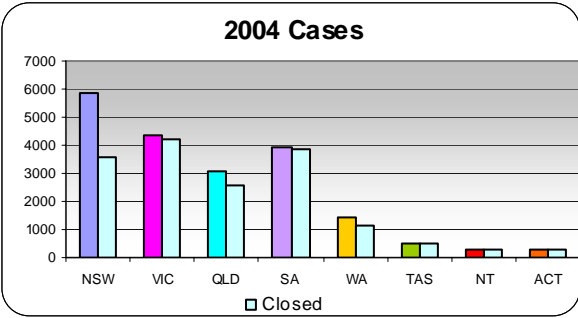
The following tables illustrate the case closure status for each jurisdiction for 2000-2006, as well as a yearly breakdown of closure status.

The first column for a jurisdiction reflects total cases while the second reflects closed cases.

Note:

- NCIS was implemented as of 1 July 2000 and therefore the data for 2000 is for the July – December;
- Queensland commenced NCIS participation as of 1 January 2001 and therefore has no data recorded to 2000.



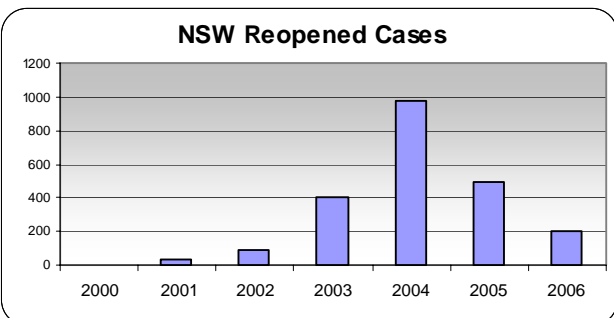


### NSW Re-Opened Cases

Closure statistics for NSW do not include cases that have been re-opened for Quality Assurance Purpose.

As NSW cases are signed-off directly into the NCIS interface and due to the number of coders involved in the NSW data entry it is simpler to re-open all cases rejected through the QA process to allow coders to be able to make the necessary amendments.

The table below illustrates the number of NSW cases that had been closed, processed through the QA program and re-opened for amendment by the jurisdictions as of 31 December 2006.



## Completion of 2005 Data

Towards the end of 2006, coders in several jurisdictions were encouraged to code and close as many of the outstanding 2005 cases as possible before mid January 2007. This was in response to a request from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) who are currently completing the coding of 2005 death data.

Initiatives to assist the coders in several jurisdictions included:

- Identification of outstanding cases;
- Training of additional coders to assist with 2005 backlog;

Adjusted for this last concentrated effort of coding, the percentage of closed cases for 2005 (as at 19 Jan 2007) is as follows:

Jurisdiction	% 2006 Cases Closed as at 19/01/07*
NSW	83.69
VIC	89.25
QLD	74.22
SA	95.56
WA	74.34
TAS	91.75
NT	89.57
ACT	83.62

\*Adjusted to include cases that have been re-opened for amendment by the jurisdiction, as a result of errors being identified in the QA Process

## Managing QA Reports



All jurisdictions are reminded that the QA Reports distributed by the NCIS team are not solely for information.

It is expected that all errors detailed in reports will be amended by coders in a timely manner.

If amendments are not made, the entire QA process ceases to be of any practical use in improving the quality and consistency of coding on the NCIS.

The NCIS is a valuable source of information regarding deaths within Australia, not only for coronial offices but various research and injury surveillance organisations. The effect of errors remaining in the NCIS data often results in inaccurate statistics being extracted from the NCIS or reported to NCIS users.

If coronial data is to be more widely used as a resource for injury and death surveillance and prevention; it is essential that the data in the NCIS be accurate and maintains a reportable level of consistency for quality.

Amendments can be made in two ways, depending on data entry processes:

### Amendments into LCMS

For jurisdictions who enter data via a Local Case Management System (LCMS) the amendments should be made directly into the LCMS.

This will involve re-opening the case and making the modifications to the existing data.

Amended cases will be included in the next upload of data from the LCMS to the NCIS.

### Amendments directly into NCIS

Jurisdictions entering data directly into and/or closing cases via the NCIS interface must make the amendments directly into the NCIS.

For Vic and NSW, each of the cases identified for amendment in distributed QA Reports will automatically be re-opened in the NCIS to allow coders to modify the data, (coders are unable to amend closed cases).

Coders are required to access the appropriate case and make the necessary amendments and then "Signoff" or close the case once again. Modifications to the NCIS interface are instantaneous upon saving; therefore there is no need to upload data.

## Amending Coroner Closed Dates

The "Coroner Closed" date for re-opened cases should remain unchanged to reflect the date detailed on the Coronial Finding or Statement of Dispensing, which is the date the case was finalised by the Coroner.



## Checking QA Reports

The above information regarding the management of QA Reports is provided not only as a reminder to the importance of the task but also reflects the future activities of the NCIS Quality Assurance program.

The NCIS has commenced the third phase of the QA Process:

Phase 1: Process closed cases for a month through the edits and QA process identifying accepted and rejected cases;

Phase 2: Verify identified errors and distribute Quality Assurance Reports to relevant coders in the jurisdictions;

Phase 3: Re-process errors detailed in QA Reports to verify that appropriate action has been taken by the jurisdictions.

Upon the first reassessment of data (phase 3), a new QA Report will be distributed to jurisdictions and an accompanying letter will be provided to the registrars/managers of each court indicating their current rate of error amendment. Information will be included regarding the next step, which includes a designated time period for amendments to be made before the data is reviewed again.

Upon the second reassessment of data, a state which is still not processing the required QA amendments will be brought to the attention of the NCIS Board of Management which includes CEOs of Coronial Offices from each jurisdiction as well as the Commonwealth.

Understandably we would like to avoid raising this issue with the Board as we don't wish to increase stress and workload on coders. However as previously discussed it is vital that amendment to data is made so that we can ensure all users, coronial and external, that the NCIS data meets the quality standards.

# NCIS Case Inclusion Criteria



The NCIS is designed to capture information about all cases reported to an Australian coroner since July 2000 (1 January 2001 for cases reported in Queensland).

However, it is noted that often there are cases added to local coronial office systems which, although important to the efforts of the office, are deemed to be outside the scope of the NCIS.

While it is accepted that all cases reported to and processed by each coronial office should be entered into the court's local case management system (LCMS), it is also important to note that not all cases need to be loaded into the NCIS.

Outlined below is a list of instances where cases reported to your office and processed through your LCMS will not be loaded into the NCIS (or if initially loaded, will either have access restricted or will be removed from the system by the NCIS staff):

In all scenarios detailed below, the deletion of a case from the NCIS does not result in the deletion from the LCMS. The LCMS data will remain untouched, unless NCIS is instructed to delete a case by the relevant court.

When any issues detailed below arise, clerks should contact the NCIS team to ensure that any or all appropriate action is taken.

## Restricted Cases

**Definition:** Cases deemed as inappropriate for general access.

These cases should be flagged as restricted on your local system or via the NCIS interface. The flag ensures that even though the cases will be loaded into and remain in the backend of the NCIS, the case details are not visible to users accessing the system via the web interface.

The cases are still accessible by NCIS staff, and are included within aggregate statistics sourced from the backend of the system, although they are not included in statistics compiled from using the web interface.

## Medical Certificate Cases

**Definition:** Cases which, although initially reported to the coroner, are ultimately issued a medical certificate by a treating doctor.

Once the certificate is produced these cases should be flagged as such on the local system or via the NCIS interface. These cases are then removed from the NCIS.

## Transferred Cases

**Definition:** Cases transferred from one coronial office to another (either inter or intra state), often a second case record is opened by the receiving court.

Both the LCMS and NCIS have data fields for the identification of cases that are transferred into or out of a court.

Relevant data fields are:

- Transfer Details;
- Transferred To;
- Transferred From;
- Original Case No.

It is important that the applicable data fields are completed for each transferred case as the information assists with the process of tracking original and duplicate cases in the NCIS.

After consultation with the relevant coroner's court, one of these records will be removed from the NCIS to avoid duplicate records of the same fatality being recorded on the NCIS.

Note: Usually the original case is deleted from the NCIS as this is the case that will not be completed and closed.

## Multiple Body Parts / Multiple Cases

**Definition:** Multiple cases exist, usually with various reports, where the numerous body parts are identified as belonging to one person.

Cases are created over a period of time as additional parts of the person are located and identified.

Upon notification NCIS will append all relevant reports into the one document (e.g. all police narratives, autopsy reports, findings etc) and attach them to one case. All other NCIS cases will be deleted from the NCIS (reference to the other local case numbers should be made in the Address Text box located on the Incident Time/Location screen).

## Re-opened Cases (pre-NCIS)

**Definition:** Cases where each of the following stipulations is true:

- Notification date is before 1 July 2000 (1 Jan 2001 for QLD);
- Case has been investigated and closed by a coroner;
- Additional information or requests result in case being re-opened for further investigation.

These cases would have been initially reported to a coroner prior to the commencement date of the NCIS.

Therefore the initial investigation and all subsequent investigations concerning that case (in the event of being re-opened) are not to be included on the NCIS, regardless of the case details or potential research value.

## Reviewable Cases

**Definition:** Recent legislation in Victoria indicates that a death should be reviewed by the Coroner where it involves the death of a second or subsequent child of a parent.

Cases reviewed by the Coroner in Victoria under the "reviewable case" legislation, which would otherwise not constitute a reportable death

These specific instances are identified within the Victorian Case Management system under a code of REV, and are subsequently removed from the NCIS, unless the death would have otherwise fallen under the standard criteria for reporting a death to the coroner.

## Outside Coronial Jurisdiction

**Definition:** Cases where a death has been reported to the coroner and uploaded to the system **and** subsequent information from the coroner's office identifies the cases as outside coronial jurisdiction.

The NCIS team must be notified of these cases to ensure that they are removed from the system.

**Instances where a case should and will be included on the NCIS include:**

## Sensitive Cases

**Definition:** Cases deemed 'sensitive' by the applicable court.

These cases should be flagged as sensitive on your local system and will be labelled as sensitive only for the information of the coronial clerks in that jurisdiction.

The sensitive flag does not impact the release of, or access to, the case on the NCIS. If you do not want the case to be viewed by NCIS users, flag the case as "restricted" as opposed to "sensitive".

## Missing Person Cases

**Definition:** Cases reported to as the individual is suspected to be deceased.

This is usually based on the several factors including the circumstance in which they were last seen or known to be alive, the length of time they have been missing and when the date of notification to the coroner's office is made, must be after 1 July 2000 (1 January 2001 in Queensland).

## Additional Information for handling NCIS Cases

### Re-opened Cases (post NCIS)

**Definition:** Cases where each of the following stipulations is true:

- Notification date is after 1 July 2000 (1 Jan 2001 for QLD);
- Case has been investigated and closed by a coroner;
- Additional information or requests result in case being re-opened for further investigation.

Completion of the "Coroner Closed" date is to reflect the most recent date upon which the case was closed.

Any subsequent autopsy or coronial findings will be attached as an additional document, and will be accessible as a link from the Case Detail screen (e.g. Finding 1, Finding 2).

## Things To Do While Your Workmates Are Away.....



Leave some messages



Finally something to do with that foam packaging



Show them how much you love them - leave a few presents



Protect them from those little aliens...



Share your green thumb

## Feedback

Any feedback, queries or issues regarding the new NCIS interface can be directed to me via email on [leanned@vifm.org](mailto:leanned@vifm.org) or telephone on (03) 9684 4458.

Thank You

*Leanne*