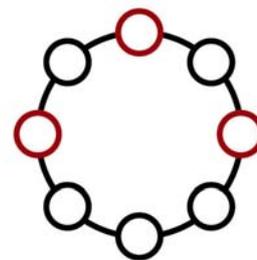


NCIS News

Edition 16 - January 2017



NCIS

NATIONAL CORONIAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

WELCOME

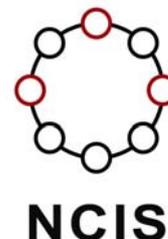
In this edition of NCIS News, we have highlights from the 2015-16 Annual Report, an overview of a research project involving anaphylaxis related fatalities using NCIS data, and the availability of Primary Health Network (PHN) information from the NCIS. We now also have direct links to academic publications that reference the NCIS available on our website. There has been high demand for Research Reports, with the NCIS recording the most productive quarter to date in this area.

As always, we love hearing from our users and welcome any feedback. If you would like to comment on any of the items in this newsletter, or would like further information, please contact us at ncis@ncis.org.au.

IN THIS ISSUE

Annual Report 2015-16	page 2
Document Attachment and Case Closure	page 2
Staff Movements	page 3
Academic Publications on Website	page 3
Primary Health Network Information	page 3
Increasing Anaphylaxis Fatalities	page 4
Research Data Reports	page 5
Third Party Access Applications	page 5
NCIS Statistics	page 6
Fatal Facts	page 7
Recent Events	page 8
NCIS Data References	page 10
NCIS in the News	page 11
Staff Contact Details & Feedback	page 12

The NCIS is governed by a Board of Management. Administrative support is provided by the Victorian Department of Justice & Regulation (DJR). The NCIS is funded by each State/Territory Justice Department in Australia and New Zealand, and the Australian Departments of Health, SafeWork Australia, the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission, the Australian Department of Infrastructure & Regional Development and the Australian Institute of Criminology.



NCIS ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

The NCIS Annual Report for 2015-16 is now available on the NCIS website (www.ncis.org.au).

Here are some highlights from the report:

Key Performance Measures

Searches of the NCIS:

- 29,000 searches by death investigators (↑20%)
- 106,000 searches by third party researchers (↑10%)

Research Reports:

- 93 data reports produced for coroners and external parties
- 34% increase in the number of data reports requested by coronial death investigators

Data Extracts:

- 32 data extracts produced for authorised NCIS users

User Training:

- Double the number of training sessions provided by the NCIS to users

Operations Update

- A focus to reduce the backlog of cases awaiting quality review in 2016-17.
- The development of the West Australian Coronial Suicide Information System (WACSIS).
- An ongoing commitment to working with Victoria to improve case closure statistics.

DOCUMENT ATTACHMENT AND CASE CLOSURE NEWS

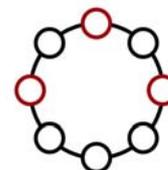
The NCIS Unit is continuing to work with jurisdictions to maximise the proportion of finalised coronial cases being closed on the NCIS, and documentation attached to case records.

Over the past few months, liaison with jurisdictions about these topics has resulted in:

- The attachment of approximately 4,000 police narratives for 2016 cases reported in Victoria (87% of 2016 cases now have police narratives attached).
- The attachment of approximately 1,800 autopsy reports for cases reported across 2014-2016 in New South Wales (more than 80% of NSW cases reported across 2014-2016* now have autopsy reports attached to the NCIS).
- The bulk closure of approximately 4,000 cases (mainly natural causes) reported across 2013-2016 in Victoria (95% of all 2013 cases in Victoria are now closed; with 71% cases closed for 2014).

* Where it was indicated an autopsy was performed.

Our thanks to the coronial courts/forensic institutions which have been working with us to achieve these outcomes for NCIS!



STAFF MOVEMENTS

The NCIS Administration Officer Nikki McLean has been successful in securing a position at Corrections Victoria in the Department of Justice & Regulations. Nikki has been an integral part of the NCIS team for the previous 18 months and we wish her all the best for her future endeavours.

After a competitive recruitment process, the NCIS Administration Officer role has been filled by Caitlin Ring. Caitlin is a recent Bachelor of Criminal Justice Graduate with extensive experience in administrative work. We are excited to have Caitlin join the NCIS team!

Katherine Dartnell has completed her internship with the NCIS as part of her Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree at the University of Melbourne. Her project involved researching and producing a report on the death prevention role of the Coroner, specifically in relation to the implementation of coronial recommendations in health-oriented cases in Western Australia. Katherine will continue working with us in a research and quality assurance capacity.

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS ON NCIS WEBSITE

Over 160 academic publications relating to research conducted using the NCIS, from 2011 to 2016, are now available on the NCIS website at <http://www.ncis.org.au/mortality-data-from-the-ncis/external-reports-using-ncis-data/>. The full-text version of the articles (where possible) or abstract (where copyright restrictions apply) have been linked for all papers.

PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORK INFORMATION

Due to strong demand from government, researchers and community organisations requesting geographical data, the NCIS now has Primary Health Network (PHN) information available. PHNs are an initiative of the Australian Department of Health which established 31 PHNs on 1 July 2015.

PHNs were established to reduce fragmentation of care by integrating and coordinating health services, supporting the role of general practice, and leveraging and administering health program funding.

Forecasting demand for services and rigorous evaluation of in-place injury prevention programs are critical for the efficient allocation of funding, and with approximately 300,000 NCIS cases allocated to a PHN area of usual residence of the deceased, the NCIS is now able to fill this data gap.

PHNs can be provided for approved users through our data extract service.



INCREASING ANAPHYLAXIS FATALITIES

Ever wondered what sort of research that other users of the NCIS do? Dr Raymond Mullins, from the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) has been kind enough to summarise the work he has completed using data from the NCIS.

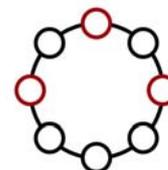
Increasing Number of Anaphylaxis-Related Fatalities

In research published in the “Clinical Experimental Allergy” in August 2016 (doi: 10.1111/cea), Australian researchers examined fatal anaphylaxis (serious allergic reactions) time trends in Australia from 1997 to 2013 using death certificate-derived Australian Bureau of Statistics data with additional information obtained from the subset referred to in the NCIS.

Contrary to recent USA and UK research, Australian anaphylaxis fatality rates increased by 6.2% per year, similar to increases in hospital anaphylaxis admission rates over the same period. 324 deaths were recorded; the leading cause was medication with most deaths unpredictable. Of deaths following insect sting and tick bites, most were males aged greater than 50 years, knew they were allergic yet few had adrenaline available for treatment and almost none had undergone immunotherapy to reduce the risk of further reactions. Food allergy accounted for 23 known deaths, most commonly in young adult males with asthma eating away from home. Peanuts/tree nuts were the most common cause in those aged 20 years or less, with seafood the main trigger in older individuals. Many food-related deaths were treated for asthma first and adrenaline was delayed.

The authors commented on a potential for underreporting of many unwitnessed food-related deaths occurring in the community compared to those occurring after medical misadventure, particularly as coronial review of food-related deaths is not mandated in Australia.

While not all allergy-related deaths may be preventable, this study (in conjunction with previously published literature) has informed current Australasian recommendations (<http://www.allergy.org.au/health-professionals/ascia-plans-action-and-treatment>), the importance of the recumbent posture when anaphylaxis is suspected, to treat for anaphylaxis first and asthma second if there is uncertainty of the diagnosis in the appropriate setting, and ensuring the availability of specific venom immunotherapy (where relevant).



RESEARCH DATA REPORTS

The NCIS Research Report service has experienced the most productive quarter so far, producing 49 reports. Specifically, 20 reports for Coroners were produced, covering areas such as Aboriginal deaths in custody over the last fifteen years and police pursuit/intercept-related fatalities across Australia.

Notably, a number of coronial reports were provided in relation to potential suicide clusters that may have emerged within the last 12 months, demonstrating the utility of the NCIS for early-warning trend analysis.

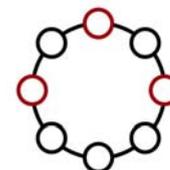
The NCIS also assisted the Queensland State Coroner inform a parliamentary inquiry into possible regulation of combat sports. The two reports on contact-sport and combat sport fatalities are publically available on the Queensland parliamentary website, and case summaries including coronial recommendations were included in the parliamentary report.

THIRD PARTY ACCESS APPLICATIONS

Since September 2016, there have been eight new third party applications to the NCIS. These applications have been received from three different types of research organisations including Academic Institutions, Health and Transport Agencies and Non-Profit Organisations.

The applications span a range of subject areas including Water Related, Intentional Self-Harm, Child & Infant Death, Geographic, Transport & Traffic Related, Homicide & Assault and Work-Related.

The next NCIS closing date for new and renewing applications is Wednesday 1st February 2017. All applications received by this date will be considered at the JHREC meeting on Thursday 16th March 2017.



NCIS STATISTICS

Case closure and Document Attachment Rates for all Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand cases 2000-2016

1. NCIS case closure rates by jurisdiction as at 1st December 2016

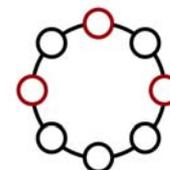
Jurisdiction	% cases closed
ACT	96%
NSW	90%
NT	96%
QLD	93%
SA	95%
TAS	92%
VIC	79%
WA	92%
NZ	89%

* The NCIS only contains closed cases from New Zealand, however this figure for NZ indicates the proportion of closed cases on the NCIS as a function of all NZ Coronial cases (open and closed), as indicated by the NZ Coronial Services Centre.

2. NCIS case document attachment by jurisdiction as at 1st December 2016

Jurisdiction	Autopsy	Finding	Toxicology	Police
ACT	92%	97%	73%	98%
NSW	72%	61%	67%	54%
NT	93%	97%	72%	97%
QLD	65%	62%	36%	97%
SA	0%	99%	23%	100%
TAS	82%	89%	85%	98%
VIC	94%	91%	98%	86%
WA	75%	97%	90%	100%
NZ	97%	98%	78%	97%

Further detail related to the above statistics are available at:
<http://www.ncis.org.au/data-collection-2/operational-statistics/>



FATAL FACTS

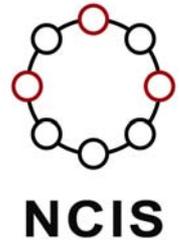
Fatal Facts is a publication produced by the NCIS which summarises coronial cases where a coroner has made recommendations with a view to prevent similar fatalities occurring in the future.

The NCIS *Fatal Facts Search* tool allows users to search on recommendations made by a Coroner across cases closed between 1st May 2007 and 30th June 2012.

You can access *Fatal Facts Search* at www.ncis.org.au

Information about the latest edition of Fatal Facts which has been published since the last NCIS News is provided below.

Fatal Facts Edition	33
Coverage period (cases closed between)	1st April 2012 - 30th June 2012
Release Date	January 2017
No. of Recommendations	93
- Australian	61
- New Zealand	32
Topics covered	Adverse Medical Effects, Aged Care, Child & Infant Deaths, Drugs & Alcohol, Electrocution, Falls, Fire Related, Homicide & Assault, Indigenous, Intentional Self-Harm, Law Enforcement, Leisure Activity, Mental Illness & Health, Natural Causes, Older Persons, Transport & Traffic Related, Water Related, Work Related, Youth.



RECENT EVENTS

Asia Pacific Coroners' Society Conference 2016

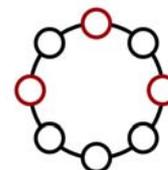
The NCIS Manager Eva Saar attended the annual Asia Pacific Coroners' Society Conference (APCSC) in Perth, Western Australia, in November 2016 as an invited speaker.

The conference theme was 'Pathways to Prevention', with a range of national and international speakers sharing knowledge about the opportunities and challenges associated with the Coroner's death prevention role with the ~ 150 delegates.

Eva gave a joint presentation with Ms Amy Peden, National Manager Research and Policy of the Royal Life Saving Society Australia (RLSSA), titled "Using coronial data to assist in death prevention: The prevention of unintentional drowning". For many years, national coronial data on the NCIS has formed a crucial part of the annual national drowning report, a powerful advocacy tool published by the RLSSA.

Ms Amy Peden also used the opportunity to thank Coroners in the room for their work and support of a national data system which allows RLSSA to base their aim to reduce the prevalence of unintentional drowning in Australia on a solid evidence base.

The presentation was well received by the audience and generated further interest and positive discussions about the NCIS and its operations.



RECENT EVENTS

AVSIG Conference

On 21st and 22nd November, Jessica Jackson (Deputy Manager) and Leanne Daking (Quality Manager) attended the Australasian Vital Statistics Interest Group (AVSIG) Workshop held in Canberra.

The AVSIG (formerly known as AMDIG - Australasian Mortality Data Interest Group) Workshop is a forum for providers and users of “vital statistics” (birth and death) within Australia and New Zealand to discuss the statistics and the many projects and studies which utilise them.

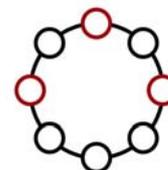
The 2016 Workshop was attended by about seventy people with a rich program over two days covering a range of diverse topics. As some of the attendees liaise regularly with the NCIS, the workshop was a great opportunity to put faces to names.

Jessica Jackson gave an overview of the operations of the NCIS and its involvement in data linkage activities. As the NCIS is in the process of developing robust processes regarding data linkage involving coronial data, it is crucial for us to liaise with other data custodians and data users to assure we are putting the best possible systems into place. Three presentations detailed outcomes that involved the use of NCIS data; this included reviews of surgical deaths, identifying links between suicide and co-morbidities, and usefulness of the NCIS for identifying and reviewing New Zealand coronial fatalities.

The Registrars of several Birth, Deaths and Marriage Registries (BDM) were in attendance which allowed for an increased understanding of their current work and priorities. The NCIS welcomed the opportunity to further build on the already positive working relationship with the Registries.

Information regarding the progress of the new World Health Organisation (WHO) code set (ICD-11), expected to be rolled out by 2018, was detailed by key members of the WHO Revision Task Force. As the code set will have implications for the ABS and New Zealand Statistics, as well as hospitals and data users, the NCIS Unit will continue to monitor all the developments associated with ICD-11.

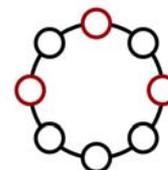
As in previous years, the AVSIG Workshop was a great opportunity for information sharing, cementing bonds with users and other data providers.



NCIS DATA REFERENCES

Recent publications that have referenced data from the NCIS include:

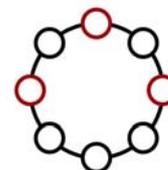
- Welton, R., Williams, D.J., & Liew, D. (2016) Injury trends from envenoming in Australia 2000-2013. *Internal Medicine Journal*. doi: 10.1111/imj.13297
- Peden, A., Franklin, R.C., & Leggat, P. (2016) Alcohol and its contributory role in fatal drowning in Australian rivers 2002-2012. *Accident Analysis and Prevention*, 98, 259-265. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.aap.2016.10.009>
- San Too, L., Pirkis, J., Milner, A., Bugeja, L., & Spittal, M. J. (2016). Railway suicide clusters: How common are they and what predicts them? *Injury Prevention*. doi:10.1136/injuryprev-2016-042029
- Pilgrim, J. L., Dorward, R., & Drummer, O. H. (2016) Drug-caused deaths in Australian medical practitioners and health-care professionals. *Addiction*. doi: 10.1111/add.13619
- Johnson, K. (2016). Substance use mortality in HCPs: how often is it a mistake? *Addiction*. <https://www.univadis.com/viewarticle/substance-use-mortality-in-hcps-how-often-is-it-a-mistake-464563>
- Walsh, R. A., & Ryan, L. (2016). Hospital admissions in the Hunter Region from trees and other falling objects, 2008-2012. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*. doi: 10.1111/1753-6405.12614
- Rogers, J. G. (2016). Dental hospitalisation of Victorian children and young adults - prevalence, determinants, impacts and policy implications. <http://hdl.handle.net/11343/120191>
- Lyneham, M., Chan, A., Willis, M., & McDonald, H. (2016). Prisoner-on-prisoner homicides in Australia: 1980 to 2011. *Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice*, 517. http://aic.gov.au/media_library/publications/tandi_pdf/tandi517.pdf
- Fuller, G. W., Hernandez, M., Pallot, D., Lecky, F., Stevenson, M., & Gabbe, B. (2016). Health State Preference Weights for the Glasgow Outcome Scale Following Traumatic Brain Injury: A Systematic Review and Mapping Study. *Value In Health*. doi: 10.1016/j.jval.2016.09.2398



NCIS IN THE NEWS

Recent media articles in print, radio and online that have referenced the NCIS include:

- Panelli, R. (2016). *SUDEP Awareness Day highlights the need for global action on epilepsy-related deaths*. Retrieved October 17, 2016, from <http://www.newsmaker.com.au/news/132760/sudep-awareness-day-highlights-the-need-for-global-action-on-epilepsyrelated-deaths>
- National Asthma Council Australia. (2016). *Women most likely to die from asthma - older women urged to take care*. Retrieved November 16, 2016, from <https://www.nationalasthma.org.au/news/2016/women-most-likely-to-die-from-asthma-older-women-urged-to-take-extra-care>
- Gillespie, T. (2016). *Coroner backs calls to ban boxing in regional areas*. Retrieved November 22, 2016, from <http://www.thechronicle.com.au/news/coroner-backs-calls-ban-boxing-regional-areas/3114301/>
- Kelly, F. (Presenter). (2016, November 24). Euthanasia and Physician Assisted Suicide [Radio broadcast transcript] In *ABC Breakfast*. Retrieved from <https://ama.com.au/sites/default/files/documents/241116%20-%20Transcript%20-%20Dr%20Michael%20Gannon,%20RN%20Breakfast,%20Euthanasia.pdf>
- Tehan, D., & Ley, S. (2016). *Preliminary results from study into veterans' suicide*. Retrieved November 30, 2016, from http://minister.dva.gov.au/media_releases/2016/nov/va113.htm
- Senior Au. (2016). *Results from study into veterans' suicide*. Retrieved December 1, 2016, from <http://seniorau.com.au/6576-results-from-study-into-veterans-suicide>
- Korff, J. (2016). *Aboriginal suicide rates*. Retrieved from December 1, 2016, from <https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/people/aboriginal-suicide-rates>
- Georgatos, G. (2016). *Australia's shame: Some communities have 600 times the national suicide rate*. Retrieved December 2, 2016, from <https://independentaustralia.net/politics/politics-display/australias-shame-some-communities-have-600-times-the-national-suicide-rate,9794>



NCIS CONTACT DETAILS

Neil Twist

Director

(03) 8684 1530

neil.twist@justice.vic.gov.au

Eva Saar

Manager

(03) 9684 4372

eva.saar@ncis.org.au

Jessica Jackson

Deputy Manager

(03) 9684 4137

jessica.jackson@ncis.org.au

Dannielle Murphy

Quality Assistant

(03) 9684 4373

dannielle.murphy@ncis.org.au

Leanne Daking

Quality Manager

(03) 9684 4458

leanne.daking@ncis.org.au

Tony Chan

IT & Quality Testing

Officer

(03) 9684 4321

tony.chan@ncis.org.au

Caitlin Ring

Administration Officer

(03) 9684 4442

caitlin.ring@ncis.org.au

Jessica Bryan

Access Liaison Officer

(03) 9684 4323

jessica.bryan@ncis.org.au

Thomas Burgess

Research & Engagement

Manager

(03) 9684 4139

thomas.burgess@ncis.org.au

Katherine Dartnell

Research Assistant & Junior

Quality Assistant

(03) 9684 4485

katherine.dartnell@ncis.org.au

NCIS FEEDBACK

The NCIS welcomes any comments, suggestions or queries about the content of this newsletter or the NCIS generally.

Email: ncis@ncis.org.au

www.ncis.org.au