

Coroners Court

Monthly Suicide Data Report

March 2024 update

11 Apr 2024

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WARNING: This following report includes information on suicides.

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Purpose

This report presents the March 2024 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 March each year, for the years 2020-2024.

Table 1: Year to date (month end March) suicide frequency by sex, Victoria 2020-2024.

Sex	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Male	153	137	116	137	166
Female	33	40	56	52	56
Total	186	177	172	189	222

2. Monthly frequency

Table 2 shows the monthly frequency and aggregate monthly¹ frequency of Victorian suicides for January 2020 through to March 2024.

Table 2: Monthly frequency and aggregate monthly frequency of Victorian suicides, January 2020 to March 2024.

Month	Monthly frequency					Aggregate monthly frequency				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
January	61	59	54	72	78	61	59	54	72	78
February	61	51	55	61	81	122	110	109	133	159
March	64	67	63	56	63	186	177	172	189	222
April	53	49	58	69		239	226	230	258	
May	50	54	56	66		289	280	286	324	
June	52	58	66	46		341	338	352	370	
July	56	54	56	66		397	392	408	436	
August	59	51	73	63		456	443	481	499	
September	47	50	72	73		503	493	553	572	
October	50	74	77	87		553	567	630	659	
November	68	60	66	74		621	627	696	733	
December	53	54	70	68		674	681	766	801	

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 March each year, for the years 2020-2024.

Table 3: Year to date (month end March) suicide frequency by sex and age group, Victoria 2020-2024.

Age group by sex	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Male					
Under 18	5	2	0	9	2
18 to 24	19	9	10	14	17
25 to 34	22	25	16	23	29
35 to 44	27	24	21	25	37
45 to 54	31	26	32	23	25
55 to 64	32	29	12	19	25
65 and over	17	22	25	24	31
Total	153	137	116	137	166
Female					
Under 18	1	4	2	3	0
18 to 24	2	5	6	3	7
25 to 34	8	11	11	9	13
35 to 44	5	7	8	15	10
45 to 54	5	6	9	9	10
55 to 64	4	6	8	6	8
65 and over	8	1	12	7	8
Total	33	40	56	52	56
All people					
Under 18	6	6	2	12	2
18 to 24	21	14	16	17	24
25 to 34	30	36	27	32	42
35 to 44	32	31	29	40	47
45 to 54	36	32	41	32	35
55 to 64	36	35	20	25	33
65 and over	25	23	37	31	39
Total	186	177	172	189	222

4. Year to date frequency by location of fatal incident

Table 4a shows the suicide frequency as at the end of March in Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria, for the years 2020 to 2024. Table 4b shows the same data but represented as proportions of all suicides rather than as frequencies.

Table 4a: Year to date (month end March) suicide frequency by location of fatal incident, Victoria 2020-2024.

Location of fatal incident	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Metropolitan	128	109	108	117	147
Regional	58	68	64	72	75
Total	186	177	172	189	222

Table 4b: Year to date (month end March) suicide proportion by location of fatal incident, Victoria 2020-2024.

Location of fatal incident	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Metropolitan	69%	62%	63%	62%	66%
Regional	31%	38%	37%	38%	34%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%