

Statistical Bulletin No. 12  
November, 1980.

SYDNEY CORONERS' COURTS:  
STATISTICS 1975.

Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research  
N.S.W. Department of the Attorney-General and of Justice  
Box 6, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W., 2001

City Coroner: J.B. Goldrick, Stipendiary Magistrate  
Assistant City Coroner: F.J. Mackenzie, Stipendiary Magistrate  
T.M. Weir, Stipendiary Magistrate

Coroners Court  
44-46 Parramatta Road, Glebe, 2037

SYDNEY CORONERS' COURTS  
STATISTICS 1975

City Coroner  
Assistant City Coroner

J.B. Goldrick S.M.  
F.J. Mackenzie (to 13.4.74)  
T.M. Weir S.M. (from 14.4.75)

	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>
Inquest and Magisterial Inquiries	1309	1475	1263	1589
Fire Inquiries	13	18	8	8
	<u>1322</u>	<u>1493</u>	<u>1271</u>	<u>1597</u>
 <u>Findings as to Manner and Cause of Death</u>				
	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>
1. <u>Suicide</u>	357	376	311	336
2. <u>Suicide Whilst Insane</u>	4	10	8	1
3. <u>Open Finding</u>	138	99	141	181
4. <u>Accidental Drug Death</u>			30	54
5. <u>Accidental Drowning</u>			65	70
6. <u>Traffic</u> - Inquest adjourned and followed by committal proceedings when person charged manslaughter or culpable driving.				
Committed for trial	47			
Discharged	14			
Dealt with in Children's Court	<u>2</u>			
				63
7. <u>Traffic</u> - Inquest adjourned when prima facie case of manslaughter or culpabale driving established.				16
8. <u>Other Traffic Accidents</u> - 1972, 1973 and 1974 figures include Categories 6 and 7.	359	479	366	440
9. <u>Other Accidents</u> - 1972 and 1973 figures include Categories 4 and 5.	343	382	248	293
10. <u>Adjourned and Followed by Committal Proceedings when person charged Murder on Non-Traffic Manslaughter</u>	39	49	31	42
11. <u>Killed by Person since Deceased or Unknown</u>	10	7	11	13
12. <u>Excusable and Justifiable Homicide</u>	2	1	1	1
13. <u>Natural Causes</u>	57	72	51	79
	<u>1309</u>	<u>1475</u>	<u>1263</u>	<u>1589</u>

N.B. Figures relate to Inquiries Conducted and Finalised in respective years, not to deaths occurring. In the last quarter of 1975 65% of Inquests were finalised within three (3) months of death, 17% 8% and 5% within 4, 5 and 6 months of death, respectively, and 5% beyond six months.

SYDNEY CORONERS' COURTS 1975

	<u>SUICIDE FINDINGS</u>	<u>TOTAL 336</u>
1. <u>Sex</u>		
Male	207	
Female	129	
	<u>336</u>	
2. <u>Age</u>		
To 12 years	-	
13 -19	7	
20s	74	
30s	58	
40s	64	
50s	69	
60s	37	
70 plus	27	
	<u>336</u>	
3. <u>Marital Status</u>		
Married	135	
Married (Separated)	46	
Single	99	
Divorced	20	
Widow/Widower	34	
Not stated	2	
	<u>336</u>	
4. <u>Living Alone</u>		
Yes	114	
No	219	
Not stated	3	
	<u>336</u>	
5. <u>Method</u>		
OVERDOSE	111	
-Barbiturate	70	
-Barbiturate and Bromide	2	
-Other Sedative	26	
-Anti-convulsant and Alcohol	1	
-Anti-depressant	9	
-Others	3	
	<u>111</u>	

SHOOTING	56
HANGING	55
Gas - Appliance	28
" - Exhaust	22
JUMPING	18
LIE OR JUMP BEFORE TRAIN	11
POISON (Soldering Fluid, Arsenic, Brush Cleaner, Weed Killer)	10
DROWNING	5
CUT THROAT	5
STABBING	5
BURNING	3
ELECTROCUTION	3
SUFFOCATION	2
LIE IN FRONT OF CAR	1
CRASH OVER CLIFF	1
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	336
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6. <u>Alcohol (Blood)</u>	
Nil	222
Below .08%	33
.08% plus	67
Not stated	14
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	336
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7. <u>Suicide Note (Including Tape Recording) Found and Produced</u>	
Yes	124
No	212
	<hr/>
	336
	<hr/>
8. <u>Any Treatment of a Psychiatric Nature</u>	
Yes	145
No	170
Not stated	21
	<hr/>
	336
	<hr/>
9. <u>Previous Indications (Prior attempts or threats)</u>	
Yes	186
No	140
Not stated	10
	<hr/>
	336
	<hr/>
10. <u>Country of Origin</u>	
Australia	228
United Kingdom	27
New Zealand	6
Other Overseas	73
Not stated	2
	<hr/>
	336
	<hr/>

Other Overseas

Yugoslavia	15
Germany	8
Italy	7
Poland	6
Hungary	4
Chile	3
Holland	3
Switzerland	3
Austria	2
China	2
Czechoslovakia	2
France	2
Greece	2
India	2
Russia	2
U.S.A.	2
Canada	1
Ecuador	1
Egypt	1
Ireland	1
Jordan	1
Lebanon	1
Malta	1
Portugal	1
	<hr/>
	73
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11. Occupation

Males

Professional	11
Commercial	22
Clerical	2
Skilled	29
Semi-skilled	27
Unskilled	36
Pensioner	49
Unemployed	17
Retired	5
Student	6
Policeman	1
Thief	1
Not stated	1
	<hr/>
	207
	<hr/>

Females

Home Duties	58
Pensioner	33
Employed	31
Unemployed	5
University Student	1
Not stated	1
	<hr/>
	129
	<hr/>

Females Employed

Office	14
Nurse	4
Barmaid	3
Factory	1
Domestic	1
Teacher	1
Shop Assistant	1
Tea Lady	1
Cosmetician	1
Medical Practitioner	1
Prostitute	1
Psycho-Therapist	1
Librarian	1
	<u>31</u>

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OPEN FINDINGS

No Evidence Manner and Cause of Death, or Either	41
Left "Open" as Between Suicide or Accident	140
TOTAL	<u>181</u>

OPEN-SUICIDE OR ACCIDENT

1. <u>Sex</u>	
Male	78
Female	62
	<u>140</u>
2. <u>Age</u>	
To 12 years	-
13 -19	2
20s	24
30s	30
40s	29
50s	29
60s	14
70 plus	12
	<u>140</u>
3. <u>Manner of Death</u>	
Drug Overdose	92
Fall from Height	14
Drowning	12
Train - struck by or fall from	7
Head injuries	5
Shooting	4
Hanging	3
Gassing	1
Electrocution	1
Burns	1
	<u>140</u>
4. <u>Drug Overdoses</u>	
Barbiturates	44
"            & Alcohol	6
"            & Other	
Sedatives	1
Other Sedatives	26
"            "            & Alcohol	3
Anti-depressants	2
Arsenic	1
Morphine	1
Alcohol	1
Others	7
	<u>92</u>

5. More Likely Manner of Death

Suicide	68
Accident	46
Unknown	24
Natural Cause	2
	<u>140</u>

6. Reason for Opening Finding

Lack Evidence Intention	61
Insufficient Evidence	24
Mental Illness Factor	21
Addicted on Habituated	
Drugs	16
Alcohol Factor	16
Evidence Ambiguous	2
	<u>140</u>

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ACCIDENTAL (NON-INTENDED) DRUG DEATHS

TOTAL 54

1.	<u>HARD DRUGS</u> (Non-Sedative)		<u>9</u>
	Morphine	5	
	Morphine + Methadone	1	
	Heroin	1	
	Methadone	1	
	Heroin (followed by palfium)	1	
2.	<u>ALCOHOL</u> (Alone)		<u>9</u>
	Blood/Alcohol % .470-.240		
3.	<u>SEDATIVES. DEPRESSANTS</u> (Alone)		<u>17</u>
	Chloral Hydrate (Dormel/Elixnocte)	9	
	Barbiturates	6	
	Methaqualone	1	
	Methaqualone + Chloral Hydrate	1	
4.	<u>SEDATIVES + ALCOHOL</u>		<u>11</u>
	Barbiturates	4	
	Barbiturates + Valium	2	
	Valium	2	
	Dormel	3	
5.	<u>OTHERS</u>		<u>8</u>
	Propranolol + Alcohol	1	
	Methaqualone + Alcohol	1	
	Inhalation Pressurised Can	1	
	Quindine	1	
	Accidental Pre-Operative Overdose Digoxin (17 day- old infant)	1	
	Paraquat Weed-killer in Coca-Cola bottle (13 year- old boy)	1	
	Lead Arsenate Build-up -Sprayed on home grown vegetables	2	
			<u>TOTAL</u> <u>54</u>
6.	<u>SEX</u>		
	Male	29	
	Female	25	
		<u>54</u>	

7. AGE

To 12 years	1
13 - 19	9
20s	12
30s	8
40s	8
50s	9
60s	4
70 plus	2
Not stated	1
	<hr/>
	54
	<hr/>

8. ADDICTED OR HABITUATED TO DRUGS  
(Including Alcohol)

Yes	35
No	14
Not Known	5
	<hr/>
	54
	<hr/>

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ACCIDENTAL DROWNINGS                      TOTAL 70

1. SEX

Male	50
Female	20
	<u>70</u>

2. AGE

To 5 years	29
6 - 12	3
13 - 19	5
20s	14
30s	5
40s	5
50s	3
60s	3
70 plus	3
	<u>70</u>

3. CIRCUMSTANCES

Home Pool - Child 5 years and under	21
- Others	2
Public Swimming Pool	
- Child 5 years & under	4
- Others	1
- Collapsed - Drug Abuse History	1
Accidental Falls	
- Drunken	6
- Into Harbour, Intoxicated Pentobarb & Valium	1
- Following Injuries after Accidental Fall from Cliff	1
- Others	4
In Bath - Child 5 years & under	4
- After Epileptic Convulsion	1
- Others	3
Boating & Canoeing	3
Yacht Sank at Sea	2
Rock Fisherman	2
Washed into Sea, Collecting Specimens Bottom North Head	1
Open Sea - Off Rocks	1
- Bondi Bay	1
Swimming - Still Water	1
Surf	4
- Skin Diving	1
River	2
Senile or Mental Wanderer	2
Playing Canal	1
	<u>70</u>

4. SWIMMING ABILITY

Good	6
Fair	9
Slight	10
Nil (including Young (Children)	28
Not Known	14
Not Applicable	3
	<u>70</u>

5. COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Australia	56
United Kingdom	4
New Zealand	2
France	1
Ireland	1
Italy	1
Japan	1
Latvia	1
New Guinea	1
Portugal	1
Yugoslavia	1
	<u>70</u>

6. ALCOHOL (Blood)

Nil (Including Young Children)	55
Below .08%	4
.08% plus	9
Not Known	2
	<u>70</u>

7. HOME POOL DROWNINGS - Children  
    5 Years and Under

	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>
Total such Drownings	7	14	19	21
Total Accidental Drownings	46	57	65	70
Proportion	15%	25%	29%	30%

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TRAFFIC ACCIDENT DEATHS

CATEGORIES 6, 7 & 8

TOTAL 519

The table indicated the status (Driver, Passenger, etc.) of Traffic Accident Victims together with sex, age and alcohol factor. THE FIGURES CERTAINLY UNDERSTATE THE ALCOHOL FACTOR. Many victims survive for considerable periods after injury. Where death occurs more than 24 hours after injury, blood alcohol analysis is not ordered. This accounts for the 92 (18%) "Not Known" cases. Survival even for a few hours will result in a lower reading and may result in a "Nil" reading. In addition, the figures do not include drivers involved in fatal crashes but who survive them and frequently have consumed a considerable quantity of alcohol.

As for previous years, the figures show that those most at risk on the roads are pedestrians (216 out of 519 or 42% - for 1974, 167 out of 366 or 46%). Again, the very young and the very old are the primary victims. 23% of all victims (118 out of 519) were pedestrians aged 60 years or over (for 1974, 17% - 64 out of 366).

On the other hand 34% of all victims (179 out of 519) were drivers, riders or occupants of motor vehicles who were in their teens or their twenties (for 1974, 33% - 120 out of 366).

As for 1974, the proportion of victims with a blood alcohol level of .08% or more was 21%. The number of victims with a reading of .255% or more doubled from 13 in 1974 to 26 in 1975.

Status	Driver	Passenger	M/Cycle Rider	Pillion	Pedal Cycle etc.	Pedestrian	Total	
Totals	115	91	71	13	13	216	519	
SEX	M	101	34	68	8	11	141	363
	F	14	57	3	5	2	75	156
AGE	To 12 yrs		8			11	22	41
	13-19	14	24	20	8	1	7	74
	20s	42	22	44	5	1	10	124
	30s	13	8	4			12	37
	40s	16	8	1			14	39
	50s	15	2	2			33	52
	60s	10	6				41	57
	70 plus	5	13				77	95
	Not Known	18	16	11	1		46	92
	ALCOHOL	Nil (Incl. Children)	48	55	39	6	13	117
Below .08%		8	8	10	3		9	38
.08-.150		13	3	6	2		11	35
.155-.250		20	6	5			19	50
.255 plus		8	3		1		14	26

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OTHER ACCIDENTS (Category 9) TOTAL 293

(i.e. Excluding Accidental Drug, Drowning and Road Traffic Deaths)

<u>CIRCUMSTANCES</u>		<u>TOTALS</u>
1. <u>FALLS</u>		<u>133</u>
Drunken	32	
At Work	7	
" " Down Airconditioning		
Shaft	1	
" " Stage Platform off 6th		
floor Monorail	1	
From Train	10	
" the Bus	5	
" Height	2	
" Cliff	2	
15 yr.-old Boy Sitting 3rd Floor		
Window	1	
From Ladder	3	
" Window	3	
Over Balustrade	1	
Stairs	3	
From Roof	1	
Broken Flying Fox	1	
From Horse	3	
Result of Epileptic Fit	1	
Infant (6 weeks) From Chair	1	
Child - Rail Trolley	1	
- Monkey Bar	1	
In Boat	1	
Others (Mostly Aged Persons)	52	
2. <u>BURNS</u>		<u>51</u>
Smoking in Bed or Chair	17	
Electric Radiator	4	
Electric Bed-Lamp	1	
Gas Fire	1	
" Stove	1	
Shower	1	
Bath	5	
Washbasin	1	
House on Fire	5	
Exploding Kerosene Heater	1	
Clothes Lit by Cigarette	2	
Smoking in Car - Tin of Petrol	1	
Child (2 years) - Fuel Ignited		
by Gas Pilot Light	1	
Young Child (to 5 years)		
Playing Matches		
- Flanelette Clothes	1	
- Set Fire Interior Car	3	

Explosion - Ignition Toluene Solvent	2	
Petrol Tanker Being Filled -Static Electric Spark	1	
Struck by lightening	1	
At sea - Escaping Steam in in Engine Room	1	
Industrial	1	
3. <u>SUFFOCATION</u>		<u>21</u>
Smoke from House on Fire	9	
Smoking in Bed	2	
Buried Digging Trench	2	
Infant in Cot	4	
Child - Collapsed Stroller	1	
- Dirt from Flower Bag	1	
Infant - Climbed out of Cot Caught Between Cupboards	1	
Vomit Inhaled While Drunk	1	
4. <u>GASSED</u>		<u>19</u>
Stove Left On	10	
Faulty Appliance	6	
Bath Heater	2	
Car Motor Left in Garage	1	
5. <u>INJURIES</u>		<u>21</u>
Hit or Run Over by Train	9	
Run Over by Tractor	2	
Crushed by Truck Tip Tray	1	
Falling Bricks - At Work	1	
Baby's Skull Fractured - Collapsible Cot	1	
Drunken Man (.310% Repairing Car - Run Over	1	
Mechanic Falling Under Semi-Trailer	1	
Crushed by Car Falling off Jack	1	
Brick Cutting Wheel Disintegrated	1	
Jammed at Top of Lift	1	
Ran into Aeroplane Prop.	1	
Crushed by Drink Machine	1	
6. <u>FOOD</u>		<u>18</u>
Choking	17	
Swallowed Bone	1	
7. <u>ELECTROCUTION</u>		<u>11</u>
Faulty Appliances	9	
Home Renovations	1	
At Work	1	

8. <u>FACTORY &amp; SHIP</u>		<u>10</u>
Drawn into Machinery	2	
Struck by Beer Keg. - Unloading Truck	1	
Struck by Timber	1	
Struck by Falling Sheet Fibro	1	
Loading Ship	1	
At sea - Whaling	1	
Overcome Fumes in Tank	1	
Fall into Blue Metal Bin	1	
Petrol Fumes (Oil Tanker)	1	
9. <u>STRANGULATION</u>		<u>1</u>
Infant's Cardigan Caught on Cot	1	
10. <u>OTHERS</u>		<u>8</u>
Cerebral Damage - Hypersensi- tivity Reacation to Radio Opaque Dye Injected During Cardiac Operation	1	
Depression Heart Muscle - Combination Anaesthetic Drugs	1	
Infant (4 mos.) - Small Plastic Disc Impacted in Larynx	1	
Boy Playing "Unloaded" Rifle - Shot Girl	1	
Shock - Child Falling into Creek	1	
Poison - Arsenic	1	
Brain Damage - Immersion in Water	1	
Man Shot Self in Head While Drunk.	1	