

# Homicide and the Night-time Economy

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# Foreword

Homicide and social patterns of alcohol use have become matters of wide concern in the Australian community. In recent years there has been particular interest in understanding and preventing attacks in commercial nightlife settings that typically involve high levels of collective drinking. Although overall rates of Australian homicide are in a long-term pattern of decline the Australian Institute of Criminology National Homicide Monitoring Program has produced a series of reports that draw out the persistent role of alcohol in homicide. This study provides evidence that homicides related to the night-time economy are not highly concentrated in locations of nightlife and heavy drinking that are usually understood as problematic sites of assaults and public disorder. Nevertheless, there is a broad persistence of after dark homicides that involve intoxication and are either directly or indirectly related to commercial night leisure.

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# Executive Summary

Criminologists overwhelmingly acknowledge a strong relation between alcohol, drinking and a range of violent crimes including homicide. Less is known about the actual scenarios and patterns – in particular, whether or not the worst violent effects of drinking occur in private or in public settings such as expanding areas of night leisure.

This study comprises a unique analysis of homicide producing new information about the prevalence, trends and locations of killings that are related to alcohol use and the ‘night-time economy’ (NTE). This was done with a file analysis of case records from two sample years (98/99 and 07/08) stored in the Australian National Homicide Monitoring Program database and a researcher check on the reliability of police classification of incidents as alcohol-related. The study compares the patterns and characteristics of 73 homicides with either a direct or indirect relation to commercial nightlife and gives examples of the typical scenarios of these incidents.

There has been a recent major police, media and public concern about violence from intoxicated strangers occurring within night-time leisure areas across Australia. This study suggests that there is no evidence of a substantial concentration of homicide incidents in specific nightlife entertainment areas. Yet there is an ongoing occurrence of homicides that are both directly and indirectly related to this after dark sphere, with indirectly related incidents outweighing others. This affirms the need to persist with strategies limiting intoxication in night leisure and to explore further means of controlling the purchase and accessibility to alcohol in the general community.

# Introduction

In recent decades there has been a new research and official focus on night leisure and its links with forms and levels of violence and crime (Winlow and Hall, 2006; Hadfield 2009). This has run alongside divided reactions to the expanded provision and consumption of a range of activities around night patterns of public socialising that include collective drinking, eating and other forms of paid entertainment (Roberts, 2006; Talbot 2007). In Australia, planning strategies have been introduced to facilitate the creation of vibrant night centres that are attractive and accessible to all community members (Stevenson, 2003). Yet the positive image of the '24-hour' city often diverged from its empirical reality, as the centrality of licensed venues and alcohol consumption in leisure zones has contrasted sharply with notions of socio-cultural diversity and public safety.

In the United Kingdom, the mix of industrial closure and rapid deregulation of the liquor industry, the rise of a poorly regulated private security sector with much bouncer violence and illegal activity in pubs and clubs, all contributed to the startling rise of problematic commercial night leisure in many towns and cities (Hobbs et al, 2002; Finney, 2004; Roberts, 2006). Disruptive forms of leisure concern local residents, health officials and most police officers whose own place in maintaining public order is partially usurped by the expansion of private security roles (Thomas and Bromley, 2000; Hobbs, Winlow and Hadfield, 2005; Winlow and Hall, 2006). Furthermore, the notion of the 24-hour city has become the focal point of discussions concerning the monoculture of determined late night intoxication (Measham and Brain, 2005) that is appears to be associated with crime, violence and disorder in contemporary post-industrial cities. These concerns have been echoed in recent Australian debates about night-time disorder, late licensing hours, assaults in listed venues, regulation and behaviour of nightclub security and their possible infiltration or targeting by criminal gangs, problems with transport and safety at special events, and the increased resource pressures on police and emergency/medical services at night (Chikritzhs, 2009).

The general relation between much night leisure with crime can be demonstrated by strong evidence that public disorder, vandalism, drunken driving, serious assaults and sexual assaults all peak on weekend nights and follow the rhythms of night socializing (Hadfield, 2009). Research has consistently shown that violence and harm in late-night entertainment areas peaks between midnight and 3 am. It is most frequent on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights (Chikritzhs and Stockwell 2002, 2007; Ireland and Thommeny 1993). If these incidents do not occur within the direct confines of the night economy they may be associated with indirect aspects of it.

There is a key relation between night-time leisure drinking in and around licensed premises and serious confrontational violence that typically (though not exclusively) occurs between young men (Homel and Tomsen, 1993; Polk, 1994; Tomsen, 2005; Donkin and Birks, 2007). The general link between scenarios of heavy night-time intoxication and violent activity, especially within young male groups, has been corroborated in a range of studies (Teece and Williams 2000; Donnelly and Snowball

2006 and Donnelly et al 2007). Evidence from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research confirms that the majority of violence occurs between 12 am and 6 am (BOCSAR 2010). Felson, Baccaglini and Gmelch (1986) note that the dominant demographic using licensed premises (young men) are also generally the most violence-prone group in society. Thus, the risk of violence in a large licensed venue is higher than elsewhere based both on heavy drinking and the demographic of the patron (see also Graham and Homel 2008).

However, it must be remembered that this link between intoxication and violent activity is far from determining and inevitable (Tomsen, 1997). Most obviously, distinctive cultures of personal and collective masculinity that either foster or stifle aggressive and violent deportment arise in different public drinking scenarios. Late 20<sup>th</sup> century ethnographic and sociological studies drew out how much “drunken comportment” takes a range of socially collective and culturally varied forms that may or may not include frequent aggression (Cavan, 1966; MacAndrew and Egerton, 1969). This qualitative research gave an important lead to later studies from criminology and addiction studies that have suggested there is no singular, fixed, social response to collective drinking, in opposition to claims that individual responses are pharmacologically determined (Graham et al 1997; Graham and Homel 2008).

These refinements have been vital in the development of contemporary social science accounts of drinking-related behaviour that seek to inform regulation and prevention with firm knowledge about the environmental/spatial factors in violence. Studies of the licensed environment have found that a shifting range of factors relating to the condition of each venue or site can play a significant role in producing problematic behaviour (Homel et al 1992; Homel and Tomsen 1993; Stockwell et al 1993; Graham et al 2000; Donnelly and Briscoe 2002; Graham and Homel 2008). In this literature a very large number of contributing situational factors are typically identified as affecting the likelihood of violence in the night-time economy. Factors which increase risky drinking and associated harms in licensed premises include: patron demographics and mix; levels of comfort, boredom and intoxication; rapid alcohol consumption; and the behaviour of security staff (Homel and Tomsen 1993; Graham et al 2006; Graham and Homel 2008).

Violence has also been shown to be associated with poor management and inappropriate bureaucratic controls (Graham and Homel 2008; Homel et al 2004). Analyses of licensed venues with high levels of assault and disorder suggest the significance of lax attitudes towards behaviours that include intoxication and the use of and dealing in illicit drugs (Homel et al 2004; Graham and Homel 2008). The irresponsible service of alcohol, with continued service to intoxicated patrons being listed as a critical factor in the probability of associated violence (Stockwell et al 1993; Donnelly and Briscoe 2002). As well as heavy alcohol consumption at licensed premises, other factors that may exacerbate levels of short-term harm associated with drinking include consumption in public areas, and a lack of transport and security in entertainment precincts (Graham and Homel 2008).

Contemporary British researchers have suggested a significant level of homicide risk in relation to night-time leisure (Brookman and Maquire, 2003). They have also begun to suggest some ways to reduce lethality in a range of common situations such



as prevention of fatal glassings and possession of knives and lifting slow late night emergency responses (Brookman and Maquire, 2003). Additionally, it is significant that this research suggests a still mostly unexplored spill effect from aggression and confrontations moving from night entertainment districts on to other public and private areas that include residential premises (Brookman, 2005).

Although much of the negative Australian publicity in relation to the NTE concerns high profile cases of homicide (including bouncer killings and fatal one punch attacks among revellers), there has until recently been limited previous study directly focused on this subject matter. National records signal a notable long-term decline in Australian homicide rates that includes a drop in cases of confrontational killing by assault among male strangers and acquaintances (Dearden and Payne, 2009). Nevertheless, the recent recorded drop in these killings has occurred alongside ongoing concern about long-term rises in levels of serious assault and injuries from violence. The fall in recorded homicide sit unevenly with evidence about high levels of recorded violence between males, often typically engaged in collective drinking and shared night-time leisure practices.

# Study aims and methodology

The major goal of this study was to uncover new information from a close analysis of variation and changes in records of homicides related to alcohol and the night-time economy in order to judge whether prevention measures adopted across Australia appear effective in minimising such fatal incidents.

The broad research aims of this project were:

- To examine historical trends in alcohol related homicide.
- To use material from the national homicide database to further understanding of the nature of the specific links between homicide, alcohol and the night-time economy with case analysis of fatal violence;
- To produce evidence about these homicides that serves as an objective measure of locational, temporal and situational risk.

Key research questions include:

- What is the real number of homicides that are related to alcohol and to the night-time economy, and are these increasing, level or decreasing over time?
- What are the particular locations and scenarios of these crimes, the individuals and groups involved as either victims or perpetrators?
- What relationship might indirect aspects of the night-time economy have to fatal incidents?

This study is conceived against the backdrop of divided community views about the value of the contemporary liberalisation of access to alcohol, the expansion of public drinking and other night-time leisure, and the theoretical recognition of the complex links that violence, drinking and drug use have in varied social settings. It reflects on aspects of the long-term general reduction of homicide in specific locations and the contradictory trends in recorded assault rates across Australia (BOCSAR 2009; Victoria Police 2009). Local Australian researchers and police agencies have been at the forefront in implementing and monitoring the local impacts of server intervention strategies, Liquor Accords, outlet density, and the stricter policing and regulation of specific licensed venues and private security providers (Doherty and Roche, 2003; Homel et al 2004; Chikritzhs et al, 2007). However, the actual effects of preventive measures that target night-time leisure activity and which includes further focus on drinking and illicit drug use remain highly contentious.

Australian national homicide monitoring is comprehensive. Nevertheless, key aspects of this crime are not fully understood, including the uneven long-term decline between offences occurring within distinct settings. The study focused on the specific

related patterns of homicide and draw out the full extent and shifts in these with a close examination of archival records. The database has wide coverage - 2963 homicides occurred in Australia in the decade spanning 97/98 to 06/07 (Dearden and Jones, 2008).

The National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP) was established at the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) in 1989. Information about homicide incidents, victims and offenders is provided directly to the AIC from the Homicide Squads of each police agency. This is then supplemented with coronial findings, autopsy and toxicology reports as they become available. This information is sourced from the National Coronial Information System (NCIS), which is a national database containing all cases reported to a coroner throughout Australia, and is managed by the Victorian Department of Justice and the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine.

In 2011/2012 an AIC-based research officer completed archival work that was wide in scope and comprised hands-on quality assurance (QA) examination of all 587 NHMP homicide files from 98/99 (n=327) and 07/08 (n=260). With a close reading of all file documents and the incident narratives, this officer closely selected and recorded the details of 238 cases judged to be 'alcohol-related' and classified these as either or not 'night-time economy related'.

For the purposes of this study, the term 'alcohol-related' is used here to describe any homicide in which alcohol was deemed to have been a contextual or proximal factor. Typically, this was either because the victim or offender had been drinking alcohol in the period shortly preceding the fatal event, or because the homicide occurred on or near premises in which alcohol was being sold or served. Of course, our capacity to identify alcohol was limited to those causes in which 'alcohol' had been flagged by the police or included as text in the incident narratives provided to the NHMP.

The term 'night-time economy' is used to describe homicides that were in some way connected to locations at which alcohol was being sold or served. A 'direct' homicide was classified as one that occurred at or nearby to the place of sale/service, while an 'indirect' homicide occurred at a place of non-sale/service, but for which the incident narrative indicated some earlier connection to such a place. An example of an indirect homicide would include an incident in which a victim was killed in a park or bushland following a physical or verbal altercation at a nearby pub. Importantly, the term 'night-time' was used to limit our analysis only to those cases that occurred between 6pm and 6am. In only a handful of cases was the time of death identified outside of these hours, but where the investigation and incident narrative suggested that the approximate time of death occurred within a range that also included times between 6pm and 6am period. These cases were included.

In all, 73 of these homicides could be reasonably classified in some way as night-time economy related. Consequently, a comparison was drawn between those incidents classified as either directly occurring within or near the physical confines of the night-time economy or those occurring elsewhere but indirectly related to drinking in the night-time economy. The results of this hands-on file analysis process are discussed below.

Data gathering and analysis for this study report proceeded as:

1. From the national database, homicide numbers providing trend lines for recent decades including the two sample years (1998/1999 and 2007/08). This also describes longitudinal changes in alcohol-related and non-related incidents.
2. Analysis and discussion of the features of 73 night-time economy related homicides and further analysis of differences among these incidents – with 27 classified as directly and the other 46 as indirectly NTE-related. This process considered such matters as location and time, the apparent cause of death, characteristics of victims and offenders and the social relation between them.
3. Further use of the case file records in the NTE sample for qualitative accounts. A typology of particular cases as the most typical scenarios of fatal violence with examples of each developed for an ideal type illustrative purpose.

# Homicide in Australia

Homicide is a crime that evokes much public fear and political concern. Nevertheless, Australian rates of homicide are positioned within the mid-to-low range for the industrialised world and there has been a long-term per capita decline. It has been suggested that contemporary factors related to this drop include gun controls, economic buoyancy, and the gentrification of formerly highly violent neighbourhoods (Weatherburn, 2004). However, it is also possible that the further regulation and control of public drinking has been a factor in this shift.

In the last decade annual homicide numbers have consistently fallen below the three hundred mark. On the other hand, it is notable that homicide is far more concentrated in marginal populations and locations in Australia (Dearden and Jones, 2008) and that there are variations in the rates of victimisation that are higher among young men, indigenous people and others from low socio-economic status groups and communities.

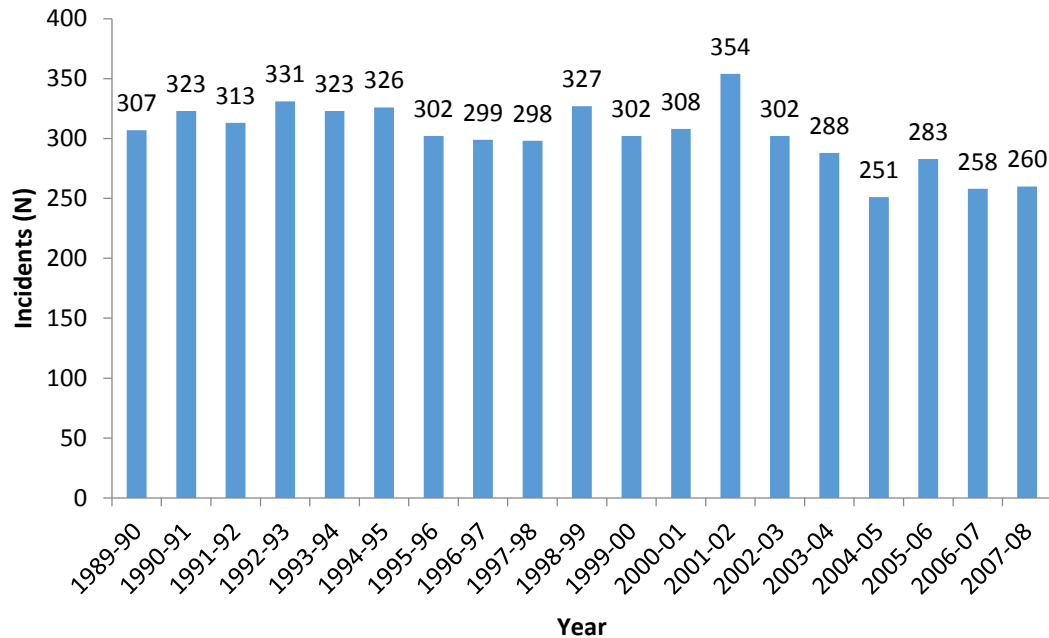
Furthermore, it appears that there are uneven rates of fall in homicide. This recorded drop has been uneven between different scenarios of fatal violence. There has been a decline in fatal male on male stranger violence that has occurred alongside a much slower drop in the rates for domestic/intimate killings (Dearden and Jones, 2008; Dearden and Payne, 2009). These varied and uneven rates of fall in victimisation may be hidden within discussions that are limited to reflecting on the overall drop in homicide.

In relation to the recording of the alcohol-related factor in homicides, there has been considerable historical variation in classification and this makes it difficult to judge if altered rates are due to a shift in recording practices or in the actual level of fatal violent behaviour. The role of recording practices must be considered and weighed here. This increase might in part be due to a shift in police classification practices with a greater focus of attention on the crime-inducing effects of intoxication.

Most importantly, a strong tie between drinking by the victim, offender or both parties in major forms of homicide is suggested in official police and coronial data (Conroy and Carcach, 2001; Dearden and Payne, 2009). This phenomenon is a source of criminological interest that relates to more general debates about long-term decline in forms of violence. Furthermore, in relation to the social context of fatal violence, it has been argued that a wider spread of inhibition (see Parker, 1995) shapes restraint and disengagement in the resolution of social disputes. It is possible that alcohol-related violence (as 'time-out' / disinhibiting scenarios) could be a partial exception to this process.

# Homicide in Australia: NHMP data

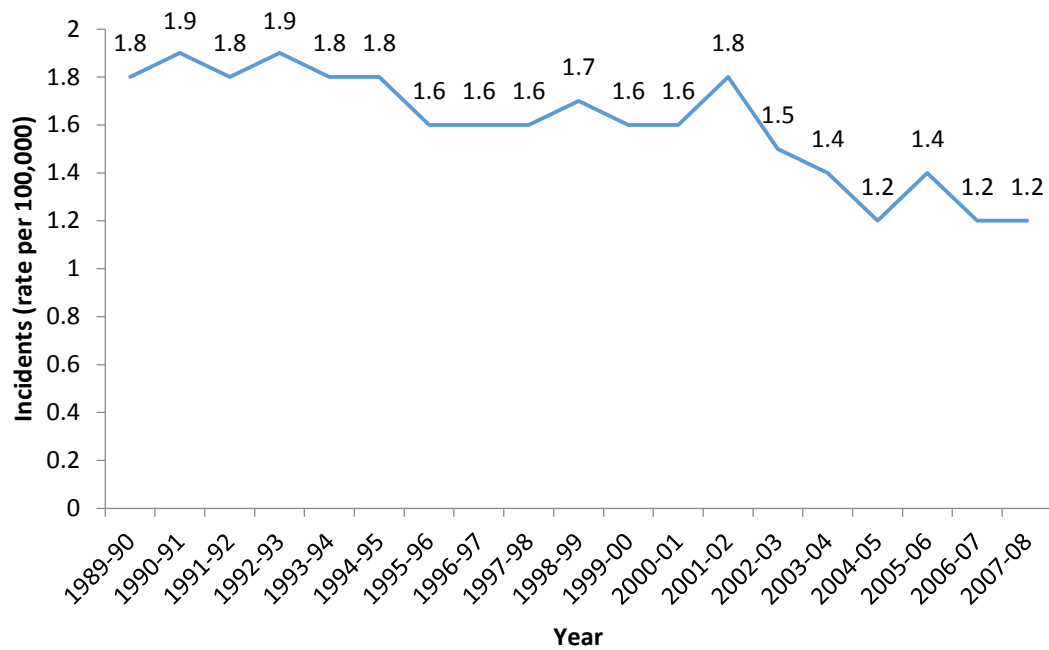
**Figure 1: Homicide incidents in Australia, 1989–90 to 2007–08 (n)**



Source: AIC NHMP 1989/90-2007/08 [Computer File]

Figure 1 illustrates that a drop in homicide numbers that has occurred across recent decades. Australia has reached an annual homicide level below 300 incidents and this is more remarkable when considered in the context of Australia's population. This change took place in a period of substantial population growth.

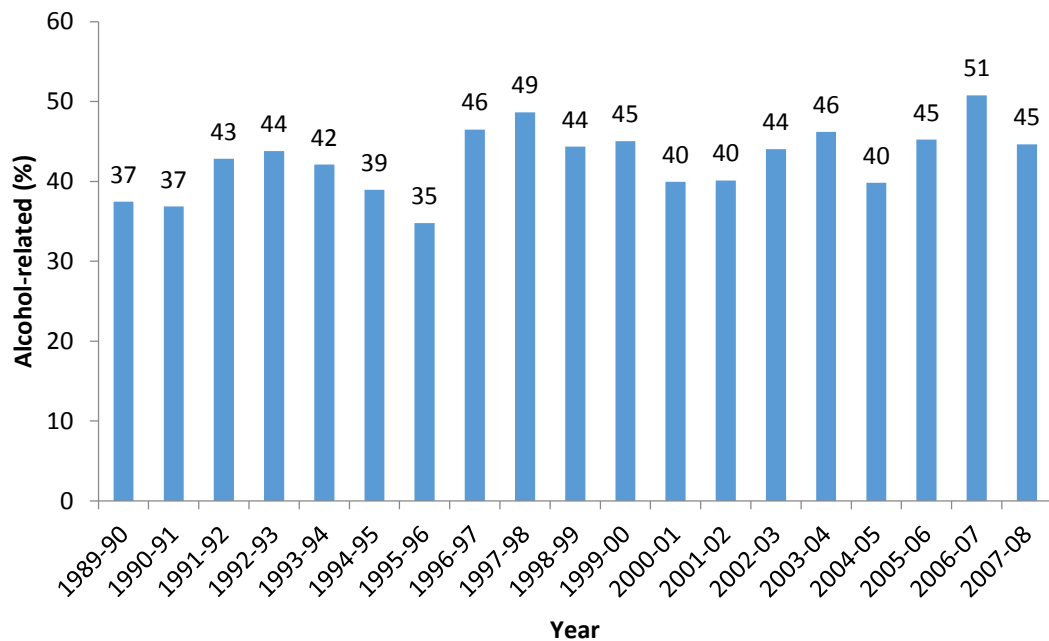
**Figure 2: Homicide incidents, 1989–90 to 2007–08 (rate per 100,000)**



Source: AIC NHMP 1989/90-2007/08 [Computer File]

Figure 2 illustrates this fall in homicide by per capita rate. Recorded homicide rates underwent a steady decline throughout the 20th century and this became quite notable in the last two decades. During the 1990's the homicide rate in Australia was just under two incidents per 100,000 people. Since 2001-02, the rate has dropped and in recent years was regularly at 1.2 incidents per 100,000 people and even more recent reporting suggests that this has fallen to 1.1/100,000 (Bryant and Cussen, 2015).

**Figure 3: Alcohol-related homicide incidents, 1989–90 to 2007–08 (%)**

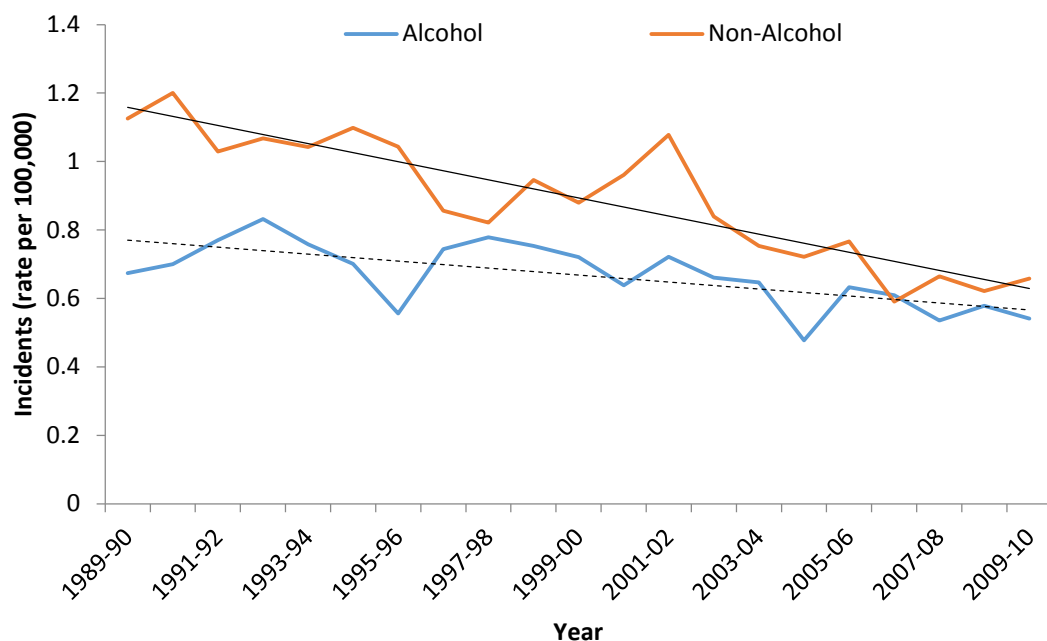


Source: AIC NHMP 1989/90-2007/08 [Computer File]

Note: Alcohol-related is defined as any incident in which a victim or offender was indicated by police as having been drinking. 'No' includes unknown and not recorded.

Regardless that homicide rates show a long-term decline there is a known prominence of alcohol as a factor in Australian homicide. In some years this has been found to be the case in more than half of all incidents. Figure 3 illustrates this marked relation with alcohol that is usually recorded as within the 40-50% range.

**Figure 4: Alcohol and non-alcohol related homicide incidents, 1989–90 to 2007–08 (rate per 100,000)**



Source: AIC NHMP 1989/90-2007/08 [Computer File]

Note: Alcohol-related is defined as any incident in which a victim or offender was indicated by police as having been drinking. No includes unknown and not recorded.

There is evidence that alcohol-related homicide exhibits a slower rate of recorded decline than is the case for homicide in general. Figure 4 illustrates the different level of drop in Australian homicide between alcohol-related and non alcohol-related offences. In these trend lines non alcohol-related homicide fell from a rate of 1.2/100,000 to well below 1/100,000. Alcohol-related incidents have had a notably slower downward trend.

The information in both figure 3 and figure 4 sits within an understanding of the slower decline of alcohol-related homicides within a quicker overall decline of Australian homicide in general. It seems probable that a recorded rise in alcohol-related homicide does in part reflect a real trend that has occurred at the same time as the overall homicide drop, ie., alcohol-related incidents are a larger fraction of a smaller total of Australian homicides per annum.



**Table 1: Victims/Offender under influence of alcohol, 1989-90 to 2009-10 (n and %)**

	<b>All homicides</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Victim under influence of alcohol</b>		
<b>Yes</b>	2,181	32.5
<b>No</b>	430	6.4
<b>Unknown</b>	4,095	61.1
<b>Total</b>	6,706	100
<b>Offender under influence of alcohol</b>		
<b>Yes</b>	2,683	38.0
<b>No</b>	274	3.9
<b>Unknown</b>	4,110	58.2
<b>Total</b>	7,067	100

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

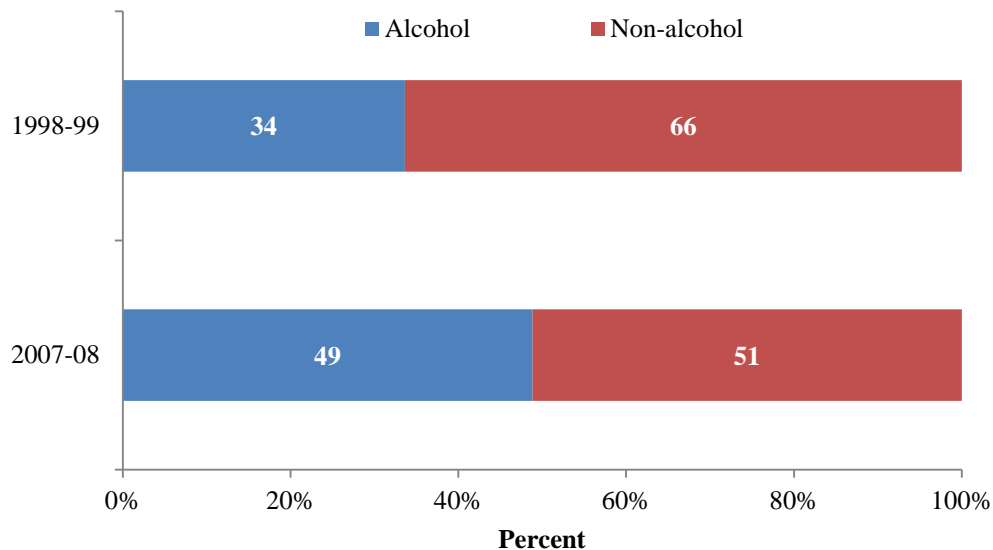
Source: AIC NHMP 1989/90-2007/08 [Computer File]

Note: Alcohol-related is defined as any incident in which a victim or offender was indicated by police as having been drinking. No includes unknown and not recorded.

There is uncertainty about the classification of homicides in different periods as alcohol-related. Yet as table 1 illustrates, national database records reflect the overall role of alcohol in thousands of homicides occurring over two decades. Alcohol is clearly a factor in both offending and victimisation with 38 percent of offenders and just over 32 percent of victims classified as under the influence of alcohol at the time of the crime. From this data, it appears likely that there is a notable strong relation with homicide risk factors that are compounded in scenarios of shared drinking, aggressive interaction and physical vulnerability.

# Trends in Homicide and the Night-time Economy 1998/99 – 2007/08

**Figure 5: Alcohol and non-alcohol related homicide incidents by percentage, 1998–99 and 2007–08 (%)**



Source: AIC NHMP 1989/90-2007/08 [Computer File]

Note: Alcohol-related is defined subsequent to the project QA checks. The proportions differ from the original NHMP estimates.

A total of 238 project cases were classified by QA checking as alcohol-related, suggesting that alcohol was an important contextual factor in around 41 percent of all 587 incidents occurring within the two annual periods. By year, these were 110 cases for 1998/99 and 128 cases from 2007/08. Similarly, as figure 5 illustrates, NHMP general data for the two specific sample years 98/99 and 07/08 with adjustments from this study's QA checking reflect a notable rise in the proportions of alcohol-related homicides from 34% to 49%.

On project evidence, in 98/99 alcohol-related homicides were 30% (110/327) and then in 07/08 49% (128/260) of all incidents. It seems likely that this rise in the raw number of incidents in the same period as a significant fall in homicide reflects more effective police recording of the role of alcohol as well as some real increase in these cases. Quite possibly, the true proportion of alcohol-related homicide grew in this sample decade.

**Table 2: Night-time economy (NTE) related homicides, 1998-99 to 2007-08**

	1998/99	2007/08	Total
<b>Direct</b>	14	13	27
<b>Indirect</b>	25	21	46
<b>Total</b>	39	34	73

Source: Homicide and the Night-time Economy study

A key concern of this study was to uncover any shift in the relation between the night-time economy and homicide in 1998/99 and 2007/08. Table 2 reflects the results of a project file analysis that located a total of 73 NTE related cases. The overall night-time economy related cases fell from 39 to 34 cases in these years. However, this drop of 12% is notably lower than the overall 30% fall in total Australian homicide numbers between 98/99 and 07/08. In fact despite this fall in numbers, NTE related homicide rate rose slightly from being 12% (39/327) to 13.5% (35/260) of all homicides in these years.

Of the total 73 NTE related cases, 27 were direct and 46 indirect. The 27 direct moved from 14 to 13 cases (an insignificant or small change), but the indirect cases fell from 25 to 21 (a drop that may be significant). This table illustrates the virtually unchanged proportion of direct and the reduced proportion of indirect cases in relation to all alcohol-related homicides in the sample years.

**Table 3: Victim Characteristics**

	1998/99		2007/08		Total		All
	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect	
	N						
Male	14	14	13	12	27	26	53
Female	1	12	0	9	1	21	22
0/10	0	0	0	2	0	2	2
11/17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
18/29	6	9	6	6	12	15	27
30/49	8	13	5	11	13	24	37
50/69	1	3	2	2	3	5	8
70+	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
Total	15	26	13	21	28	47	75
	%						
Male	93	50	87	57	90	53	71
Female	7	43	0	43	3	43	29
0/10	0	0	0	10	0	4	3
11/17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
18/29	40	32	40	29	40	31	36
30/49	53	46	33	52	43	49	49
50/69	7	11	13	10	10	10	11
70+	0	4	0	0	0	2	1
Total	100	93	87	100	93	96	100
	Summary statistics						
Mean age	32.6		36.9	32.6	34.7		
Median age	31		36.5	30	37		

Source: Homicide and the Night-Time Economy study

Table 3 illustrates the sex/gender and age of victims. By age, the largest groups of victims were in their 30s and 40s. A clear majority of victims were male (71%). Males were killed in almost even numbers between the direct and indirect settings. However, there is a remarkable concentration of cases with female victims in the indirect category.

**Table 4: Victim/ Offender relationship**

	1998/99		2007/08		Total		
	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect	All
	N						
Intimate partner	0	6	0	7	0	13	13
Filicide (Other)	0	0	0	2	0	2	2
Parricide	0	1	0	1	0	2	2
Siblicide	0	0	0	2	0	2	2
Other family	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
Close friend	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
Acquaintance	7	10	1	4	8	14	22
Acquaintance – neighbour	0	1	0	1	0	2	2
Other (eg employer/employee)	0	1	0	1	0	2	2
Gang member	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Acquaintance - less than 24	0	1	4	0	4	1	5
Stranger	4	1	6	3	10	4	14
Unknown	2	2	2	0	4	2	6
Total	14	25	13	21	27	46	73
	%						
Intimate partner	0	24	0	33	0	28	18
Filicide (Other)	0	0	0	10	0	4	3
Parricide	0	4	0	5	0	4	3
Siblicide	0	0	0	10	0	4	3
Other family	0	4	0	0	0	2	1
Close friend	0	4	0	0	0	2	1
Acquaintance	50	40	8	19	30	30	30
Acquaintance – neighbour	0	4	0	5	0	4	3
Other (eg employer/employee)	0	4	0	5	0	4	3
Gang member	7	0	0	0	4	0	1
Acquaintance - less than 24	0	4	31	0	15	2	7
Stranger	29	4	46	14	37	9	19
Unknown	14	8	15	0	15	4	8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Homicide and the Night-time Economy study

Table 4 suggests a spread of relationship types between victims and offenders. Just 19 percent of relations were classified as stranger and these were mostly NTE direct matters. Acquaintances, neighbours and recent acquaintances comprised 40 percent. Intimate partners cases were 18 percent. However, intimate partner and some other form of family relation together equaled 28 percent of matters and occurred overwhelmingly in indirect NTE settings.

**Table 5: Cause of death**

	1998/99		2007/08		Total		All
	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect	
	N						
Gunshot wound	5	2	2	0	7	2	9
Stab wound	3	8	2	10	5	18	23
Beating	6	9	6	8	12	17	29
Pushed from a high place	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
Strangulation / Suffocation	0	4	0	2	0	6	6
Other – hit by car, car accident etc	0	0	2	1	2	1	3
Unknown	0	2	0	0	0	2	2
Total	14	25	13	21	27	46	73
	%						
Gunshot wound	36	8	15	0	26	4	12
Stab wound	21	32	15	48	19	39	32
Beating	43	36	46	38	44	37	40
Pushed from a high place	0	0	8	0	4	0	1
Strangulation / Suffocation	0	16	0	10	0	13	8
Other – hit by car, car accident etc	0	0	15	5	7	2	4
Unknown	0	8	0	0	0	4	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Homicide and the Night-time Economy study

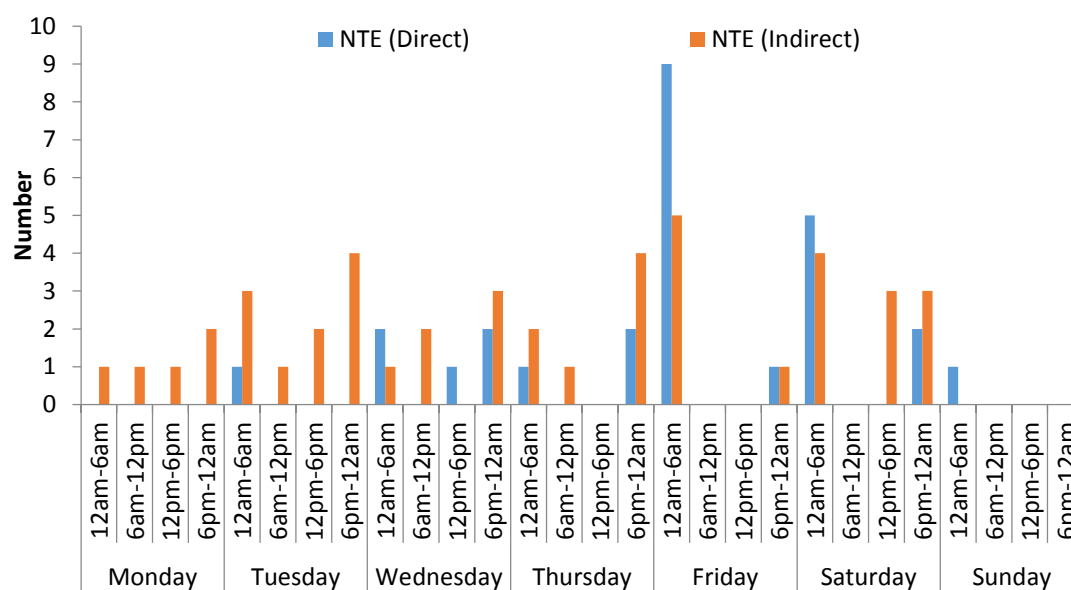
Table 5 illustrates the significance of unarmed attacks, with ‘beatings’ as the largest category of mode of killing and highest in direct NTE cases. This was closely followed in significance by stabbing and then strangulation. The former was higher and the latter exclusive to indirect NTE incidents. Gunshot killings were more concentrated within the direct NTE matters.

**Table 6: Time of day**

	1998/99		2007/08		Total		
	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect	All
	N						
Midnight to before 6am	6	9	11	7	17	16	33
6am to before noon	1	4	0	1	1	5	6
Noon to before 6pm	0	3	1	1	1	4	5
6pm to before midnight	6	6	1	11	7	17	24
Not stated	1	3	0	1	1	4	5
Total	14	25	13	21	27	46	73
	%						
Midnight to before 6am	43	36	85	33	63	35	45
6am to before noon	7	16	0	5	4	11	8
Noon to before 6pm	0	12	8	5	4	9	7
6pm to before midnight	43	24	8	52	26	37	33
Not stated	7	12	0	5	4	9	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Homicide and the Night-time Economy study

Table 6 illustrates that the most frequent time of day for incidents was midnight to early morning (6 am), followed by early evening to midnight and these together accounted for 78 percent of all homicides. These are known as times of peak intoxication for Australian revellers engaged in night leisure (see Miller et al 2013). The close reading of file summaries and case narratives (see below) suggest that fatal episodes of extended night drinking can carry over well into the hours of following day but are still NTE related matters.

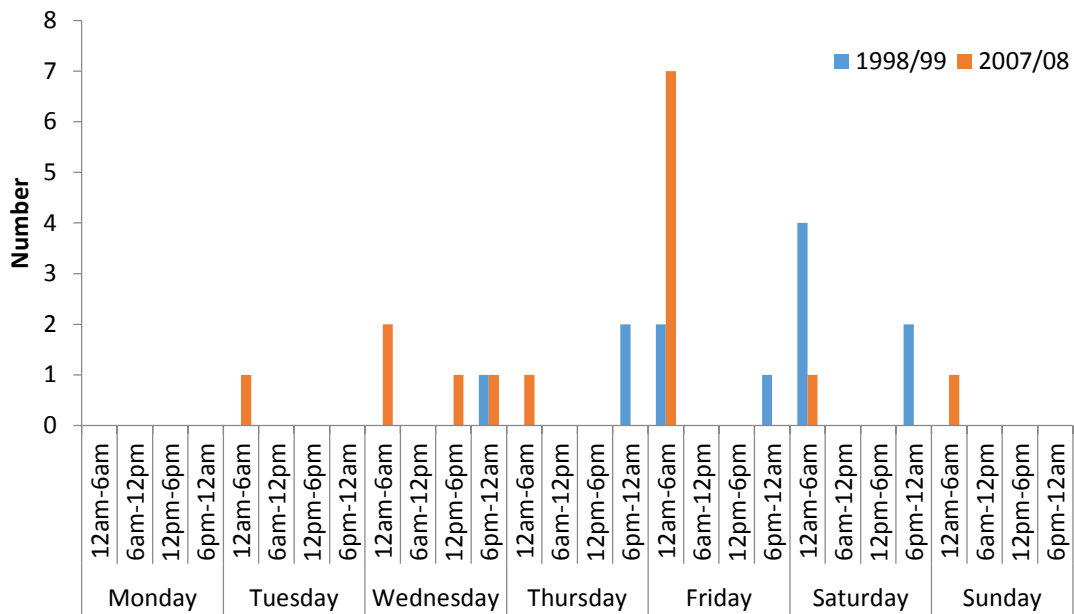
**Figure 6: NTE-related homicide incidents, 1998–99 and 2007–08 (% of alcohol-related incidents)**

Source: AIC NHMP 1989/90-2007/08 [Computer File]

Note: Alcohol-related is defined subsequent to the QA project checks. The proportions differ from the original NHMP estimates in Figure 3.

Figure 6 gives a visual illustration of the very late night element in these homicides. These incidents peak towards the end of the week with Thursday nights having an unexpected prominence. Late Thursday and late Friday nights are most important for direct NTE cases. Indirect NTE cases are more spread across the course of the week including Mondays and Tuesdays.

**Figure 7: Direct NTE-related homicide incidents, 1998–99 and 2007–08**

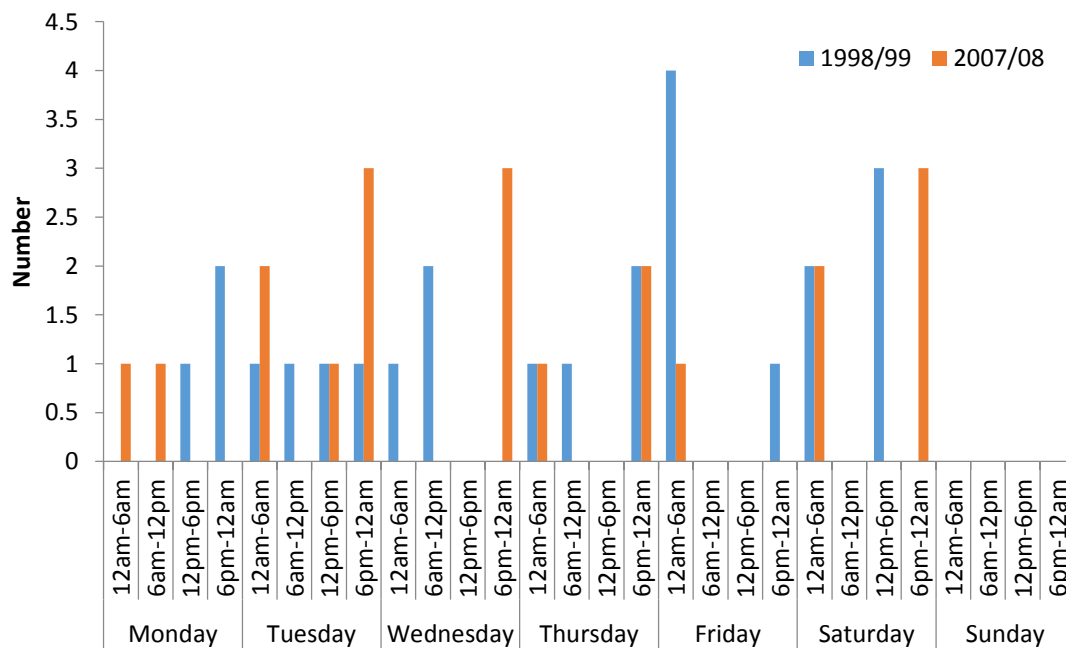


Source: AIC NHMP 1989/90-2007/08 [Computer File]

Note: Alcohol-related is defined subsequent to the project QA checks. The proportions differ from the original NHMP estimates in Figure 3.

Figure 7 illustrates that across the sample years there was a shift of direct NTE cases from the Thursday-Sunday late week peak to a pattern of occurrence that was more spread across the entire week. It is likely that this reflects changes in the broader social patterns of night-life participants towards early and mid-week consumption.

**Figure 8: Indirect NTE-related homicide incidents, 1998–99 and 2007–08**



Source: AIC NHMP 1989/90-2007/08 [Computer File]



Note: Alcohol-related is defined subsequent to the QA project checks. The proportions differ from the original NHMP estimates in Figure 3.

Figure 8 also illustrates the broader pattern of nightlife consumption over the study decade with a shift away from the late week prominence of NTE related incidents and towards a spread of cases across the course of the week.

# Project case summary details and scenarios

The following analysis is the result of a further focus on the data from examination of records of 73 NTE related homicides as case summaries and incident narratives. This classifies incidents by a typology of scenarios as defined by project lead investigator. The discussion is intended to draw out key features and shifts across the decade in both direct and indirect NTE cases.

## 1998/99 – Direct case general features and examples

Characteristics, scenarios and key examples of the 14 homicides in this category were as follows. The incidents these were spread between states and territories with a notably higher number occurring in New South Wales:

- New South Wales - 8
- South Australia - 2
- Northern Territory - 2
- Victoria - 1
- Western Australia - 1.

The locations were also geographically spread surprisingly without the high inner city and developed entertainment district focus that could be expected. Only 2 cases were located in an inner city (1 in Sydney CBD and the other Darwin city), 6 were located in suburban locations (4 in Sydney suburbs), and the other 6 in a mix of rural and regional locations.

The specific types of location were:

- in a licensed hotel/premises - 4 (2 hotels, 1 restaurant and 1 nightclub)
- near to licensed hotel/premises - 6 (5 just outside and one in a car-park)
- commercial night business - 2 (a games arcade, a pool hall), and
- on street near to commercial night area - 2 (an ATM, on a street).

In line with the data in figure 7 above, the peak times for these homicides were during and towards weekend and with a concentration around drinking from late to very late (on Thursday overnight, Friday overnight and Saturday overnight) as the key problem times.

Only one person (a victim) was female. Of 15 victims and 20 perpetrators, higher number of involved parties were in their 20s (12) or their 30s (7). Victims ranged in age from 20s to 50s – with 11 in their 20s and 30s. There was a younger profile for perpetrators. These ranged in age from teens to 40s – with 2 teenagers and 6 in their 20s.

One case had 2 victims, there were 2 perpetrators in 3 cases and 3 perpetrators in another. Thus, there was a collective mix of parties involved directly in the violence.

Police recording and the incident narrative provided evidence of the presence of drinking in 13 of the 14 cases. These were victim and perpetrator drinking in 7, victim only drinking 3 times and perpetrator only 3 times. Victims were drinking in 7 incidents (4 unknown) and the perpetrators drinking in 9 cases (3 unknown). Files records suggested that both parties had been drinking in 5 incidents with a further 6 unknown.

Table 5 above refers to the prominent of ‘beating’ in direct cases and in line with this, the weapons/mode of killing were:

- fists and feet - 5
- gun/rifle - 5
- knife - 3
- axe - 1.

As scenarios of killing 98/99 cases appeared as occurring within a highly male social domain of violence and conflict and they assumed 2 general forms. **These were 1. male-male confrontational violence, and 2. killings occurring in the course of another crime or as part of a criminal conflict.** In that year, male-male confrontation comprised 8 cases, 1 involved a male attempted rape and killing of a female victim, and 5 occurring in the course of a crime/criminal conflict.

**Key examples of these types were:**

**Male-male confrontation (3 of 8 cases):**

No 3

The victims and another friend (who was also shot) were drinking at a pub on the Great North Road. Two of the friends began arguing, and went out onto the street. A car containing the perpetrator and several others pulled up near the victims, the men inside yelled at the victims, allegedly ‘egging them on.’ A physical altercation then occurred between the men. During this altercation the perpetrator shot all three men, killing victims 1 & 2 and wounding the other man.

No 39

A fight erupted between the perpetrator and victim. Both parties were separated, however the perpetrator followed the victim into the kitchen. It was there that the perpetrator attacked the victim with a knife, stabbing him in the neck several times

No 94

The victim and perpetrator were involved in an altercation in the car park of the Crossing Hotel on the evening of the incident. The perpetrator punched the victim in the face and body, causing him to fall to the ground. The perpetrator then kicked the victim twice in the jaw and then fled the scene. The victim was admitted to hospital in an unconscious state. He was transferred to Perth the following day, and died July 5 as a result of the head injuries sustained in the attack

**Related to another crime /criminal conflict (2 of 5 cases):**

No 103

The perpetrators were drinking at the pool hall the evening of the shooting. They went there with the intention to rob the premises of money and alcohol. At approximately 0425 the victim was attacked on the premises of the pool hall whilst taking out the rubbish. He was confronted by the three men and forced together with his wife and son to lay on the floor whilst the men demanded money and keys. Whilst perpetrator 1 was standing over the victim, armed with the firearm, the shotgun discharged and fatally wounded the victim (shot in the stomach at close range). The offenders fled the scene with two bottles of bourbon and keys. Perpetrator 2 dropped one bottle of bourbon whilst running from the scene, the other bottle was drunk at Perpetrator 2's house.

No 116

The victim and perpetrator were drinking at different pubs throughout the evening of the incident. The perpetrator wanted to 'roll' someone (i.e rob them). The perpetrator approached the victim on the street, attacking him with a half axe and stealing his wallet.

**1998/99 – Indirect case general features and examples**

There was a spread of these 25 homicides across Australia. There were:

- New South Wales -11
- Queensland -5
- Victoria - 5
- Western Australia - 2
- South Australia -1
- Australian Capital Territory -1.

Only 2 cases occurred in an inner city (both Sydney), 9 cases were in suburbs and another 14 in the rural and regional locations that featured as a prominent category.

The specific types of location were:

- in a home - 14
- in a street/outdoors - 6
- caravan park - 2
- motel - 1
- community hall - 1
- unknown - 1.

The peak time for these homicides peaked on weekends but was more spread across the week than with direct cases. These were 4 on early Saturday, 3 on early Sunday, 3 on late Sunday, and 2 cases each for late Tuesday, early Wednesday, late Wednesday,

early Thursday, early Friday and late Friday, and 1 on late Saturday. The time of 1 incident was unknown.

In reversal to direct cases, the parties were rarely strangers to each other. Furthermore, 12 of the 26 victims and 3 of the 32 perpetrators were female. Victims were typically older than perpetrators – with the peak years as 20s-30s and then 20s for these groups. Of the 26 victims and 32 known perpetrators, most were in their 20s (23), 30s (17) or 40s (9) with smaller numbers in their teens (1), 50s (4), 60s (1) and 70s (1) and 2 unknown.

Alcohol consumption was present in 24 of 25 cases with victims drinking in 18 of these (3 unknown) and perpetrators drinking in 23 of them (2 unknown). In 15 cases both parties had been drinking (with 5 unknown). The weapons/mode of killing were hands and feet in 13, a knife in 7, gun in 2, and knife and motor vehicle in 1. Another 2 cases were unknown.

The weapons/mode of killing were:

- fists and feet – 13
- gun/rifle 2
- knife 7
- motor vehicle 2
- unknown 2

As scenarios of killing these were more diverse than direct cases and also reflected a greater proportion of intimate partner violence (4 female and 2 male victims). The real motive for killing (and classification) was unknown in 2 cases. In general, they assumed 4 broad forms. **These were 1. male-male confrontational violence, 2. intimate partner killings, and 3. male-female victimisation, and 4. cases occurring in the course of a crime/criminal conflict.**

**Key examples of these types were:**

<b>Male-male confrontation (2 of 9 cases):</b>
No 37 The victim and perpetrator were drinking together at a pub the afternoon leading up to the incident. At the first pub they consumed approximately 8 full strength schooners of beer, and then moved on to another pub. They each drank an unknown quantity of beer at this location. The victim was ejected after falling asleep inside the pub, and later urinating on the front step. The victim, perpetrator and friends together moved onto another pub where they consumed 2/3 more full strength schooners. In a taxi on the way home the victim believed the taxi driver was travelling in the wrong direction and demanded to be let out, believing his friends would follow. They did not. The victim then hailed another taxi, and upon arriving home engaged in an argument with the perpetrator. During the course of the argument the victim was punched and pushed against the wall, falling into a wall unit. The victim then went to bed. The following

day the victim complained of pain to his chest and rib area. He was later conveyed to hospital where he was found to have internal bleeding and a ruptured spleen. The victim died a short time later. Cause of death was blunt force trauma to the trunk and torso.

No 75

The victim allegedly made threats to his ex-girlfriend (perp2) and her husband (perp 1) decided to 'settle' the matter. The two, accompanied by two other men, went to the victim's house on the night of the incident and perp 1 stabbed the victim 35 times, slit his throat and shot him in the head (post-mortem). They then drove back to Sydney where they were later arrested.

#### **Intimate partner killings (2 of 6 cases):**

No 28

Both victim and perpetrator were found in the crashed vehicle. The victim had stab wounds.

No 95

The perpetrator and victim had been drinking together with friends throughout the afternoon and into the evening at the Kununurra Hotel. They all caught a cab to the home of the victim. They continued drinking there and an altercation arose between the victim and perpetrator (regarding the relationship between the perpetrator and another man) resulting in the perpetrator stabbing the victim in the neck. The perpetrator and her friend reported the stabbing at the police station and when they returned to the house the victim was deceased.

#### **Male-female victimisation (1 of 6 cases):**

No 78

The perpetrator lived with his mother, the victim. The perpetrator returned home after a late gambling session at the Grand Hotel. It is understood that he had a difficult relationship with his mother whom he owed over \$40,000 (a result of his gambling). She also disapproved of his drinking. At some point in the afternoon the perpetrator strangled the victim, and phoned an ambulance. When police arrived at the scene the perpetrator told them he believed there was a break in.

No 80

The perpetrator was released from prison the afternoon of the incident. He caught a bus to Wangaratta and attended a local hotel where he drank and won a sum of money on the poker machines. He then phoned an escort agency, and two hours after his call the victim arrived at his room. It is unknown what took place in the room, however motel staff found the body later that evening when the perpetrator failed to check out.

#### **Related to another crime /criminal conflict (1 of 4 cases):**

No 12

The perpetrators went to the house of the victim with the intention to extort the \$20,000 the victim owed his uncle (a friend/gang member of the perpetrators). They threatened the victim and his housemates armed with two guns and a baseball bat.

They beat several of the housemates, including the victim who they later shot in the neck, execution style. The perpetrators then fled the scene and were caught by police with the help of a local who was in contact with one of the perpetrators

### **2007/08 – Direct case general features and examples**

As in the early sample year, within these 13 homicides there was an unexpected prominence of cases occurring in New South Wales but they only occurred in two states. By state these were:

- New South Wales – 10
- Queensland – 3.

The location was also spread rather than focused on inner city and entertainment districts. Incidents were 2 in inner cities (both regional), 6 in the suburbs of cities and large towns (4 in Sydney), and 5 in a mix of rural and regional locations.

By specific location, these homicides were:

- licensed hotel or premises - 3,
- near licensed hotel or premises - 4 (included a confrontation between an evicted drinker and security, fight at a taxi rank, alleged queue jumping outside licensed premises),
- in a street near a commercial night area - 3
- in a street/outdoors - 2 (both in public parks)
- in a commercial night business - 1 (a late take-away food shop).

The peak time for these homicides was again during and towards weekends. A key problem time was the very late Thursday-Friday overnights. In line with Figure 7, incidents shifted further to Thursday-Friday overnight across the study decade – probably as part of a general move to the spread of night-life activity across the week.

In the majority of cases the parties were strangers to each other. Quite surprisingly, the crimes involved two females in the unexpected guise of perpetrator with one incident involving a motor vehicle as weapon and another an attack with a screwdriver following a conflict over a vehicle driving through a crowd of drinkers.

Of 13 victims and 14 perpetrators most involved parties (as in 98/99) were in their 20s (11) or their 30s (6). Again, victims ranged in age from 20s to 50s – with 6 in their 20s and another 4 in their 30s. There was a younger profile for perpetrators. Once again, these ranged in age from teens to 40s – with 1 teenagers and 5 in their 20s. The age of 4 perpetrators from 2 unsolved killings was unknown.

In all 13 incidents cases one of the parties involved had been engaged in drinking and in 9 of these both the victim and perpetrator had been drinking. In all, 12 victims and 11 perpetrators were drinking prior to the crime.

In these crimes there were 2 perpetrators in one case and all other victims and perpetrators were classified as solo actors. Thus, direct violence appeared to be less collective than previously. Other people were socially engaged or on-looking in 13 cases but perhaps with a lower inclination to become directly involved.

The weapons/mode of killing were:

- fists and feet - 5
- gun/rifle - 2
- motor vehicle - 2
- knife - 1
- screwdriver - 1
- branch - 1
- bat - 1.

As scenarios of killing these 07/08 cases assumed 3 general forms that differed from 98/99 due to the absence of women as victims and their new involvement as perpetrators. **These were 1. male-male confrontational violence, 2. female-male victimisation, and 3. killings occurring in the course of another crime or as part of a criminal conflict.** In that year, male-male confrontation comprised 8 cases, another 2 were female on male confrontational attacks, and 3 occurred in the course of a crime/criminal conflict.

**Key examples of these types were:**

<b>Male-male confrontation (2 of 8 cases):</b>
<p>No 85</p> <p>The perpetrator left the nightclub he had been at with friends and for unknown reasons attacked the victim and his friends who were already in a taxi. The victim and his friends got out of the taxi and started fighting with the perpetrator. The victim was punched once in the face knocking him unconscious. Bouncers of nearby clubs phoned police – perpetrators had also assaulted them. The victim was taken to hospital, however died soon after.</p> <p>No 40</p> <p>The victim had been at a work function the evening of the incident. When he left the party he walked to the Standard Hotel (according to colleagues he was only mildly intoxicated). He was escorted out of the hotel around 1am for being too drunk. The victim was allegedly aggressive and abusive towards the security, and spat in the face of the perpetrator (one of the bouncers). The perpetrator alleges that the victim was about to head butt him, so he punched the victim in the head, causing the victim to fall to the ground and hit his head on the concrete footpath. The perpetrator and other security personnel then moved the victim down the road and rest him against a fence. The perpetrator went to check on the victim several times up until 3am. At one point the perpetrator threw a bucket of water on the victim. The perpetrator left once his shift was finished. The victim was found by two girls – he has lying face down in a</p>



garden bed near the fence, and had been vomiting. He was mumbling and unsteady on his feet. The girls called a taxi for him and he went home. When he arrived home he was incoherent, extremely unsteady, smelt of vomit and was saturated. He defecated himself, urinated and was vomiting. His partner took him to the bathroom and left him there with a bucket, believing him to be incredibly intoxicated. At 0630 he was still on the toilet 'snoring.' When his partner returned to the house later in the morning the victim's lips and cheeks were blue and he was unresponsive. She phoned 000. The victim died of multiple brain haemorrhages 7/12/07, 2315.

**Female-male confrontation (1 of 2 cases):**

No 33

The victim and friends were drinking at the Bateau Bay Hotel. They were served last drinks at midnight, and they together with approximately 100 other patrons were ushered out of the hotel. In the car park an argument erupted between the victim and the driver of a car attempting to drive through the crowds. A woman stepped out of the car, and struck the victim with both hands, using presumably a screwdriver. Another man stepped out of the passenger side, and struck another person in the crowd. The car then fled the scene.

**Related to another crime /criminal conflict (2 of 3 cases):**

No 79

The victim left the hotel he had been drinking at in the early hours of the morning. Whilst walking home he was accosted by a group of people (4 men, one female). The perpetrator punched the victim in the head, causing him to fall to the ground. The victim was then kicked and punched several times, and robbed of \$10, a packet of tobacco and a cigarette lighter. Police found the victim on the street and attempted to revive him.

No 51

The previous day was ANZAC Day. Both the victim and perpetrator had been drinking heavily (separately) throughout the day. The day of the incident the perpetrator went to Churchill's Sports bar to confront a friend of the victim over a sum of money owed to him. The perpetrator armed himself with a gun borrowed from a friend to warn the man who owed him money how serious he was. Whilst the two men were arguing, the victim intervened in the conversation. The victim and others instigated physical argument with the offender, which soon turned into a brawl involving the entire bar. The perpetrator left concerned that the police would be called and he would be found to be in possession of a loaded gun. However upon seeing that his friends were still fighting with the victim, he re-entered the bar and shot the victim three times, twice in the chest. The perpetrator then fled the scene. (The victim was a known gang member/affiliate and had been threatening the perpetrator).

In contrast to direct killings there was a spread of these 21 cases across Australia. By jurisdiction these were:

- Queensland - 5
- New South Wales - 4
- Western Australia - 4
- South Australia - 3
- Victoria - 3
- Northern Territory - 2.

The incidents were widespread but only 2 occurred in inner cities (Adelaide and Darwin), 4 took place in suburbs and another 15 in rural and regional locations that featured as a prominent category. By specific location these were:

- in a home - 13,
- in a boarding house - 1
- in a street/outdoors - 7.

The peak time for these homicides was more notably spread across the week than with direct cases. Thus, cases were clustered around Wednesday and Sunday.

In reversal to direct cases, the parties were strangers to each in only 3 of 21 instances. Similarly, a much higher proportion of females featured among them – 9 women were victims and 4 were perpetrators (2 with female victims).

All of these crimes were solved, and of the 21 victims and 23 perpetrators most were in their 20s (11), 30s (11) or 40s (12) and a smaller number in their teens (5 perpetrators) and 50s (3). Most disturbingly, 2 victims were infant babies under 2 years. In other cases, the victims were typically older than perpetrators.

In 7 cases both parties had been drinking (3 unknown), and 14 of 20 victims (4 unknown) and 17 of 23 perpetrators had been engaged in drinking prior to the incident.

The weapons/mode of killing were:

- knife -10
- fists and feet -7
- motor vehicle -1
- bodily shaking -1
- glass bottle - 1
- iron bar – 1.

As scenarios of killing these were more diverse than direct cases and also reflected a greater proportion of intimate partner violence (6 female and 2 male victims). They assumed 5 general forms. **These were 1. male-male confrontational violence, 2.**

**intimate partner killings, and 3. male-female victimisation, 4. female-female confrontation, and 5. infanticide.** No incidents were classified as occurring in the course of a crime/criminal conflict.

**Key examples of these types were:**

<p><b>Male-male confrontation (2 of 7 cases):</b></p>
<p>No 69 The victim and his father were driving home from the Seacliff Hotel, when the victim cut off another car at the intersection of Seacliff and Davenport roads. The victim was followed several blocks by a small, dark car. The victim got out of the car on Aaron Avenue. He was attacked by two men from the small dark car. The victim was bashed and kicked unconscious. The two men fled the scene. The victim's father called paramedics. Due to the father's vision impairment, description of the perpetrators was limited. A DNA match was found which linked the perpetrator to the incident.</p>
<p>No 120 On the evening of the incident the victim came home drunk and attacked his girlfriend, the friend and roommate of the perpetrator. The victim was allegedly choking the girlfriend and threatening the perpetrator. The perpetrator armed himself with a knife and when the two men clashed the victim was stabbed. The perpetrator and the girlfriend had both called police three times for assistance that night. The victim died at the scene.</p>
<p><b>Intimate partner killings (2 of 8 cases):</b></p>
<p>No 82 The perpetrator had been drinking throughout the evening before the incident. The victim locked herself in her room (allegedly after an argument over the victim not having made the perpetrator dinner) - the perpetrator kicked the door down and stabbed the victim several times.</p>
<p>No 91 The victim and perpetrator had a history of alcohol fuelled domestic violence. The evening of the incident the pair had been drinking together at various locations. They became involved in an argument and the female perpetrator hit the victim in the face with large glass bottle. He was left on the street outside their house, and later died in hospital from a combination of hyperthermia, blood loss and a heart attack.</p>
<p><b>Male-female victimisation (1 of 2 cases):</b></p>
<p>No 122 The victim and perpetrator had been drinking with friends at a local hotel the evening of the incident. They all returned to the home of the victim; the victim and perpetrator went upstairs and came back down some time later, out to the front garden. The perpetrator made a comment about a 14 year old female present. The other male friends present accused the perpetrator of being a paedophile, and a physical</p>

altercation ensued. The perpetrator thereafter got into a Mitsubishi Pajero parked outside the house, reversed back, and then swung the car to the right and sped across the lawn towards the victim and friends. The car struck the victim, and then drove across her. The male friends present attacked the car with a hammer and baseball bat damaging the windscreen. The perpetrator drove away from the scene, continuing to be attacked. He crashed the car into the gates of the Rockingham Train Station – the perpetrator fled the scene. He was located at his home the following morning by police.

**Female-female confrontation (1 of 2 cases):**

No 19

The perpetrator and victim had been drinking together throughout the day. They started at 11am on 23 June at the pub, then bought a 30 pack of VB and returned home to drink with friends. Later that evening they both returned to Coles where they bought a cask of Moselle. They consumed this in the scrub next to Mad Harry's. The victim returned home, and the perpetrator went into town in search of more alcohol. When the perpetrator returned home, herself and the victim engaged in a heated argument over a TV set and a heater in the lounge room. The perpetrator moved both of these items into her bedroom. The victim began banging on the bedroom door of the perpetrator with an iron bar – when the perpetrator came out the victim hit her in the leg with the bar. The perpetrator responded by grabbing the bar and hitting her with downward force in the head, causing the victim to fall to the ground. Relatives of the victim witnesses the incident, took the bar from the perpetrator who then ran away. She later returned and handed herself into police. The victim died at the scene.

**Infanticide (1 of 2 cases):**

No 55

The victim was left at home with a friend whilst the mother was at a hotel with friends. The perpetrator was also out drinking, however at a separate location. The perpetrator was noted by friends to be a 'bit tipsy. 'The perpetrator attended the victim's house later in the evening, put the victim in the shower and prepared food. Whilst in the shower/getting out the victim's head was bumped. The victim appeared normal up until he was put to bed. The victim was checked on several times throughout the evening. The following morning the victim's mother found the child to be not breathing.

# Conclusion

This study confirms that alcohol has a major part to play in Australian homicide. The per capita rate of homicide is dropping steadily. Nevertheless, it appears that the fall in crimes that can be classified as alcohol-related is slower than the fall in non-alcohol related matters. In recent years there has been much controversy about violence in commercial night-life and the need for stricter regulation of after dark entertainment zones where people engaged in collective drinking around the nation – with the greatest concern expressed about stranger attacks occurring directly within the night-time economy.

This research confirms that fatal direct night-time economy cases are neither high in number nor concentrated in areas well known for being drinking and leisure districts. The crimes appear to be spread out via type of location with occurrence across suburban, small town and rural and regional areas. It is possible that this unexpected finding reflects that police and official crime prevention efforts have been substantially effective in combating the possibility of fatal assaults in concentrated areas of night-life and that the risk of such crimes is now spread across spaces that are less subject to surveillance, prevention and regulatory measures.

The incidence of homicides directly related to the night-time economy was virtually stable during the 98/99-07/08 period (with 14 falling to 13 incidents) but it is noteworthy that this happened against a backdrop of significant expansion of night-life activity across the nation and in specific tourist and entertainment areas. The shifting categories across this decade suggest an identical level of male on male confrontation but an unexpected occurrence of female on male (non-intimate partner) stranger attacks that might be a small reflection of further female participation in Australian night-life. There was also a small drop in incidents related to another crime.

Despite the focus of public anxiety on stranger attacks in developed nightlife zones it is also the case that more homicides have an indirect “flow on” relation to this sphere and the heavy intoxication that it can foster. Furthermore, this study confirms that there is a concentration of male risk and victimisation within the direct night-time economy, and that risk and victimisation is much higher for women in the indirect sphere. Homicides indirectly related to nightlife fell as a slightly more significant rate (from 25 to 21 incidents) between 98/99 and 07/08. The most interesting aspects of this were the real drop in both the non-intimate partner male on female victimisation incidents and also incidents related to another crime. By contrast, there was a persistence of homicides arising from a personal confrontation (appearing to drop from 8 to 7 but actually rising to 9 if 2 female on female arguments are included) between acquaintances and friends, a small rise in intimate partner cases (6 to 8), and new appearance of infanticides occurring in domestic space (2).

Across the study decade the great majority of indirect NTE cases involve some form of non-stranger relation between parties, but a close scrutiny of 07/08 records for indirect NTE cases suggest matters with a more pronounced quality of personal intensity. Male on male confrontational disputes were more related to such close links with brother/brother and stepfather/stepson cases and only one male on male incident

conformed to the more classic stranger conflict. Furthermore, the wholly new scenarios also reflected this personal intensity with two cases of women killing a close female friend and two infants killed by stepfathers with a heated emotional response to an issue or personal dispute. If confrontational cases are counted to include all male on male, female on male and female on female matters it appears the total annual number actually rose from 17 to 19 incidents in 98/99 to 07/08 with some shifting towards such confrontations occurring in a more domestic sphere.

It is still the case that personal disputes where one or both parties have been engaged in drinking appear most risky of all in these more private circumstances including family and intimate partner conflicts where there is less possibility of third party initiated restraint or intervention. An important aspect of strategies to limit and reduce fatal alcohol-related conflicts is to limit the frequency and scale of irrational social conflicts among intoxicated people where there is no obvious inhibiting force of surveillance and intervention from third parties. General restrictions on community access to and purchase of alcohol seem to be the most obvious first response to this problem.

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