



Suicide & self-harm monitoring

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Data from suicide registers

Suspected deaths by suicide in Victoria

The number of suspected deaths by suicide in Victoria each year has been relatively steady over the past five years, with the number in 2020 (713) similar to 2019 (720), 2018 (702) and 2017 (689) (Coroners Court 2021). The number of suspected deaths by suicide reported in Victoria from 1 January to 31 July 2021 (384) is similar to the numbers reported for the same periods in 2018 (396) and 2017 (401) and slightly lower than 2020 (436) and 2019 (418) (Coroners Court 2021).

The monthly data show considerable variation (see Figure 1 below), however, ‘these monthly fluctuations tend to even out over the course of a year. This demonstrates the importance of not attributing too much significance to the suicide frequency in any one month’ (Coroners Court 2020a). The variation between months ‘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’ (Coroners Court 2021).

Figure 1: Number of suspected deaths by suicide in Victoria, by month, 2016 to 2021

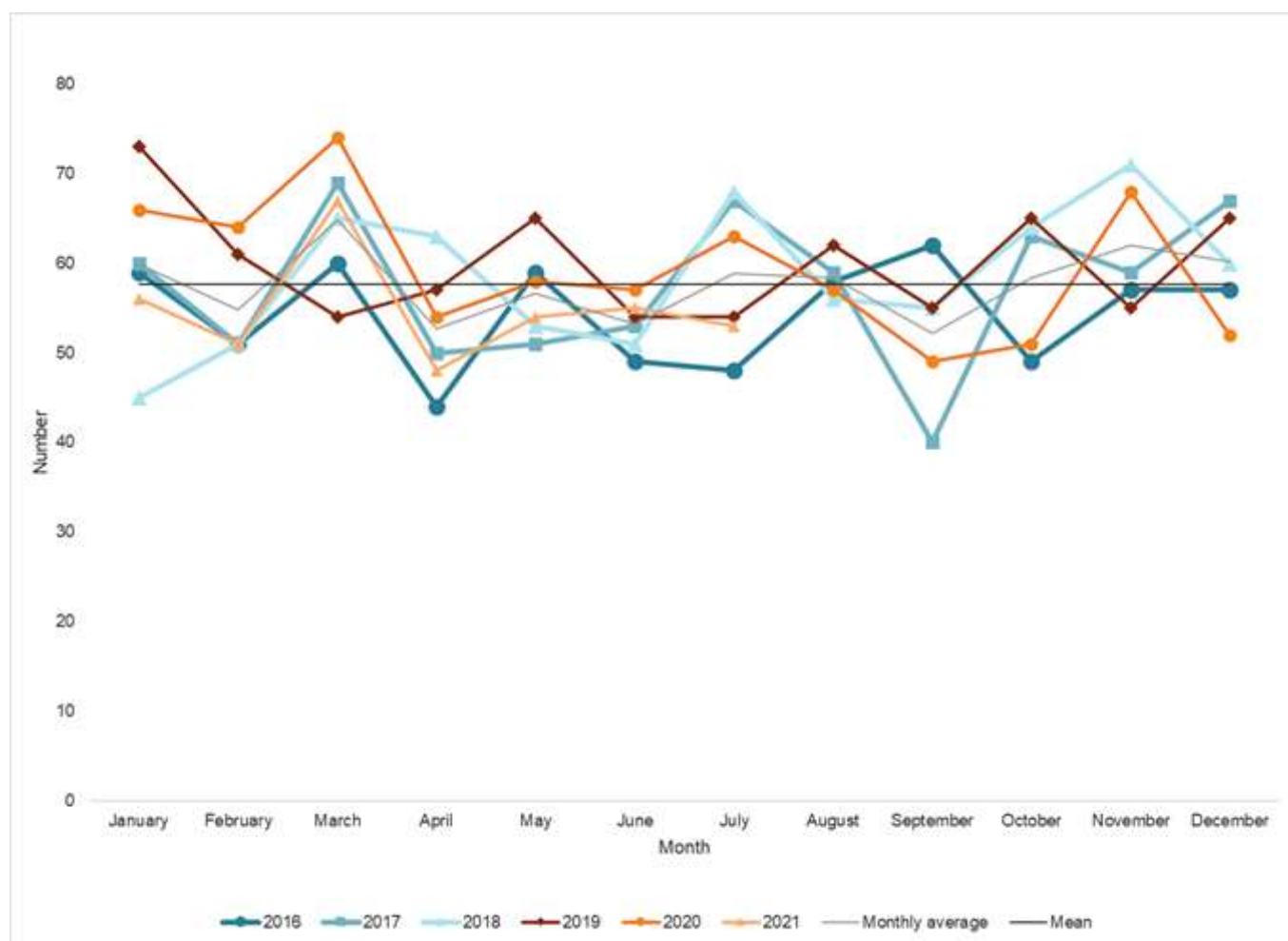
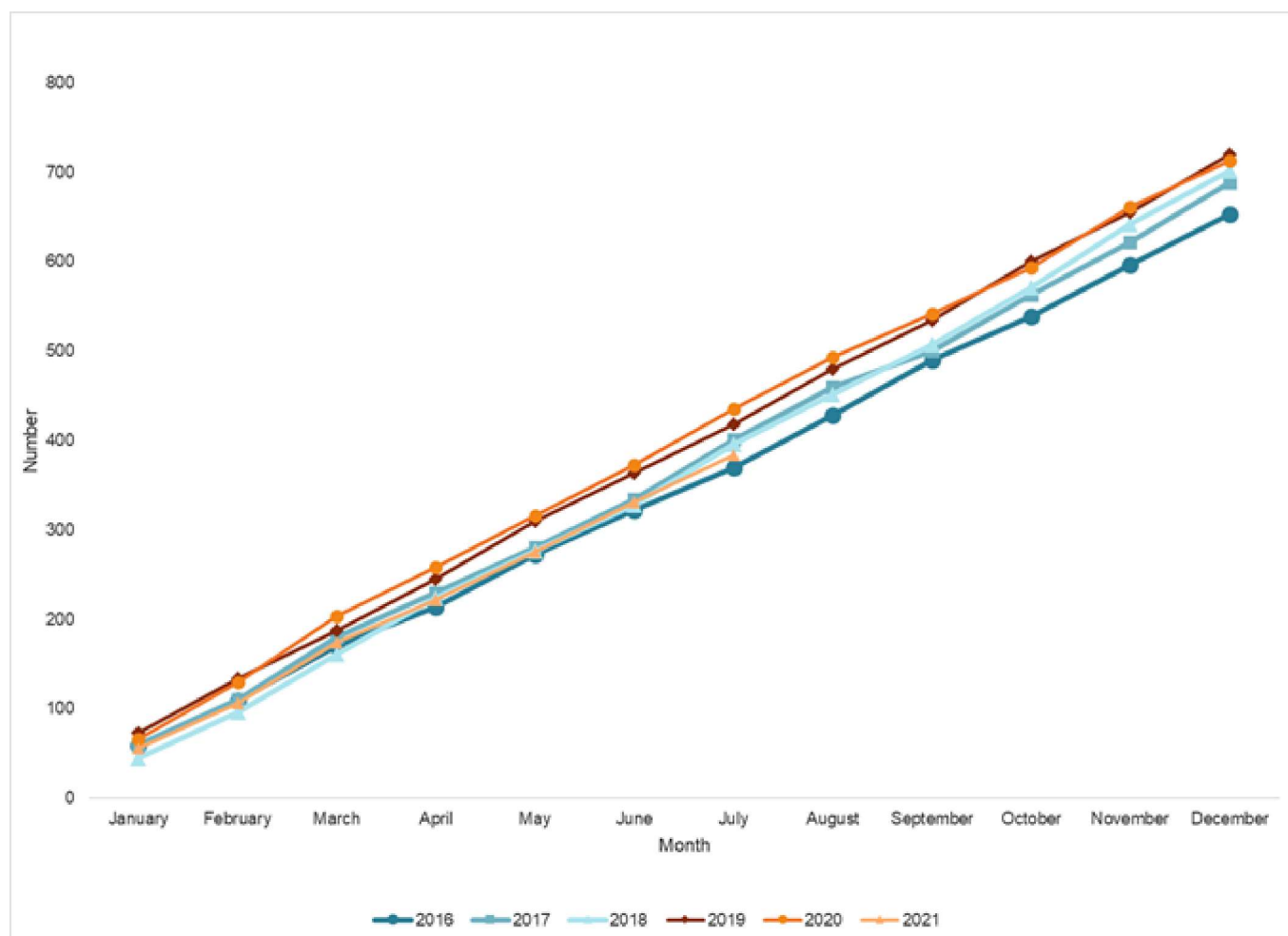


Figure 2: Cumulative number of suspected deaths by suicide in Victoria, by month, 2016 to 2021



Data for each year from 2016-2020 and from 1 January to 31 July 2021 show that (Coroners Court. 2020b, 2021):

- around three-quarters of suspected deaths by suicide are among males
- the majority of suspected deaths by suicide for both males and females occur among those aged between 25 and 55
- approximately two-thirds of suspected deaths by suicide occur in metropolitan locations.

Suspected deaths by suicide in Queensland

Data from the interim Queensland Suicide Register (iQSR) show that the number of suspected deaths from suicide from 1 January to 31 July 2020 (454) was similar to that of the same period in 2019 (445) and 2017 (456) (Leske et al. 2020).

Leske et al. have estimated monthly age-standardised suspected suicide rates in Queensland in 2020 for both males and females, taking into account population growth for more meaningful comparisons between years. Estimated rates for 2020 are similar to the previous 5 years; see Figures 2 and 3, replicated with permission from Leske et al. (2020) and including updated data for August 2020.

Figure 3: Age-standardised suspected deaths by suicide rate per 100,000, Queensland males, by month, 1 January 2015 to 31 August 2020

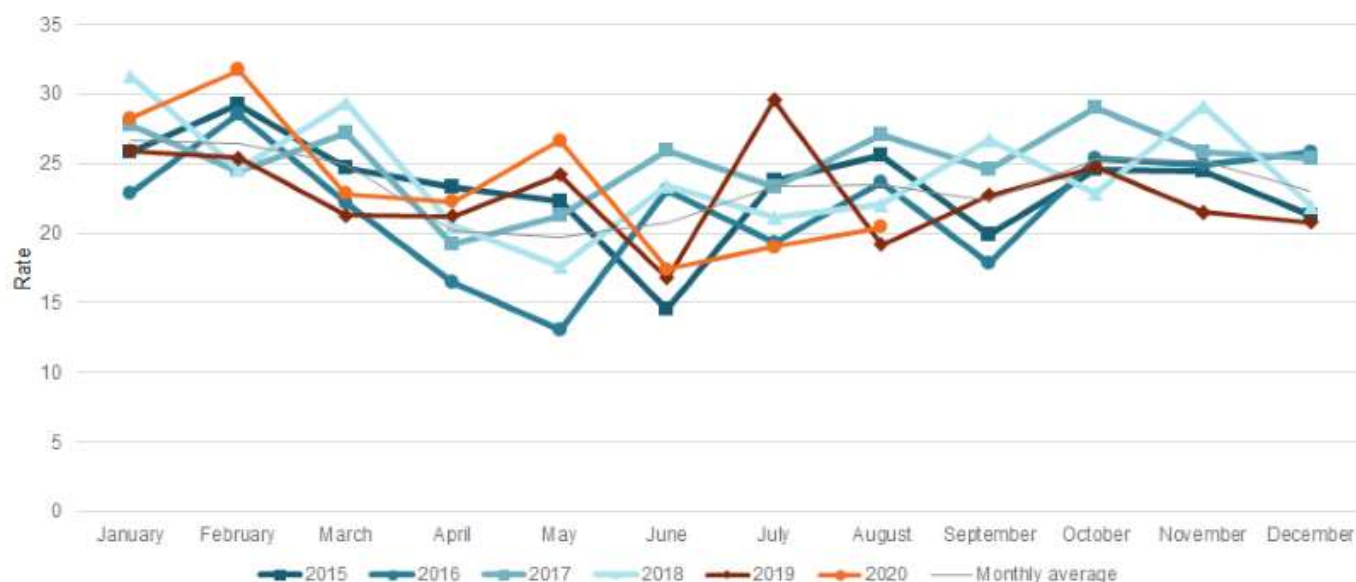
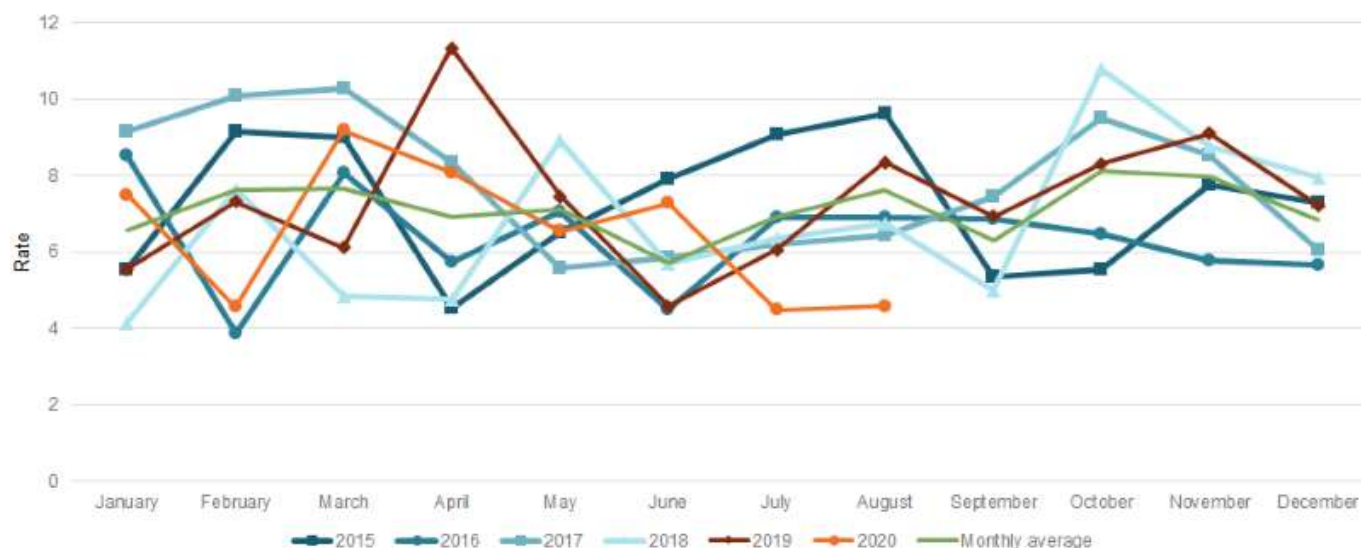


Figure 4: Age-standardised suspected suicide rate per 100,000, Queensland females, by month, 1 January 2015 to 31 August 2020



While data for Queensland do not show rises in suspected suicide rates compared with previous years, the 2020 iQSR reported that up until 31 July 2020, police officers mentioned COVID-19 in 32 of 454 suspected suicides (7%) (Leske et al. 2020). For more information see [COVID-19](#).

Suspected deaths by suicide in New South Wales

The New South Wales Suicide Monitoring System, established in October 2020, reported 899 suspected deaths by suicide in NSW 2020. This is 43 lower than the number of deaths reported in 2019 (942) (NSW Ministry of Health 2021). The number of suspected deaths by suicide reported in New South Wales from 1 January to 30 June 2021 (444) is similar to the numbers reported for the same period in 2020 (424) and 2019 (428) (NSW Ministry of Health 2021).

Figure 5: Number of suspected deaths by suicide in New South Wales, by month, 2019 to 2021

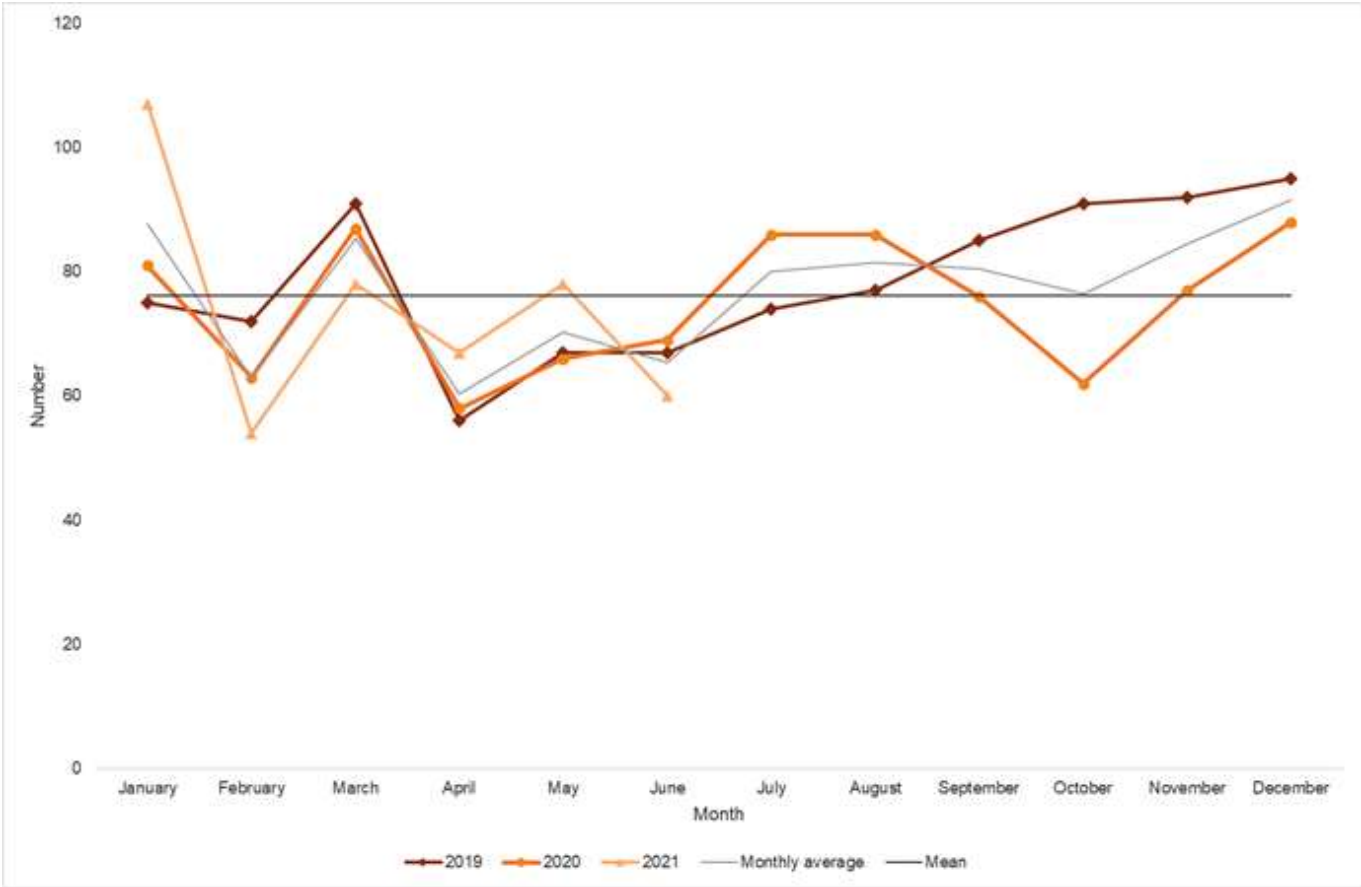
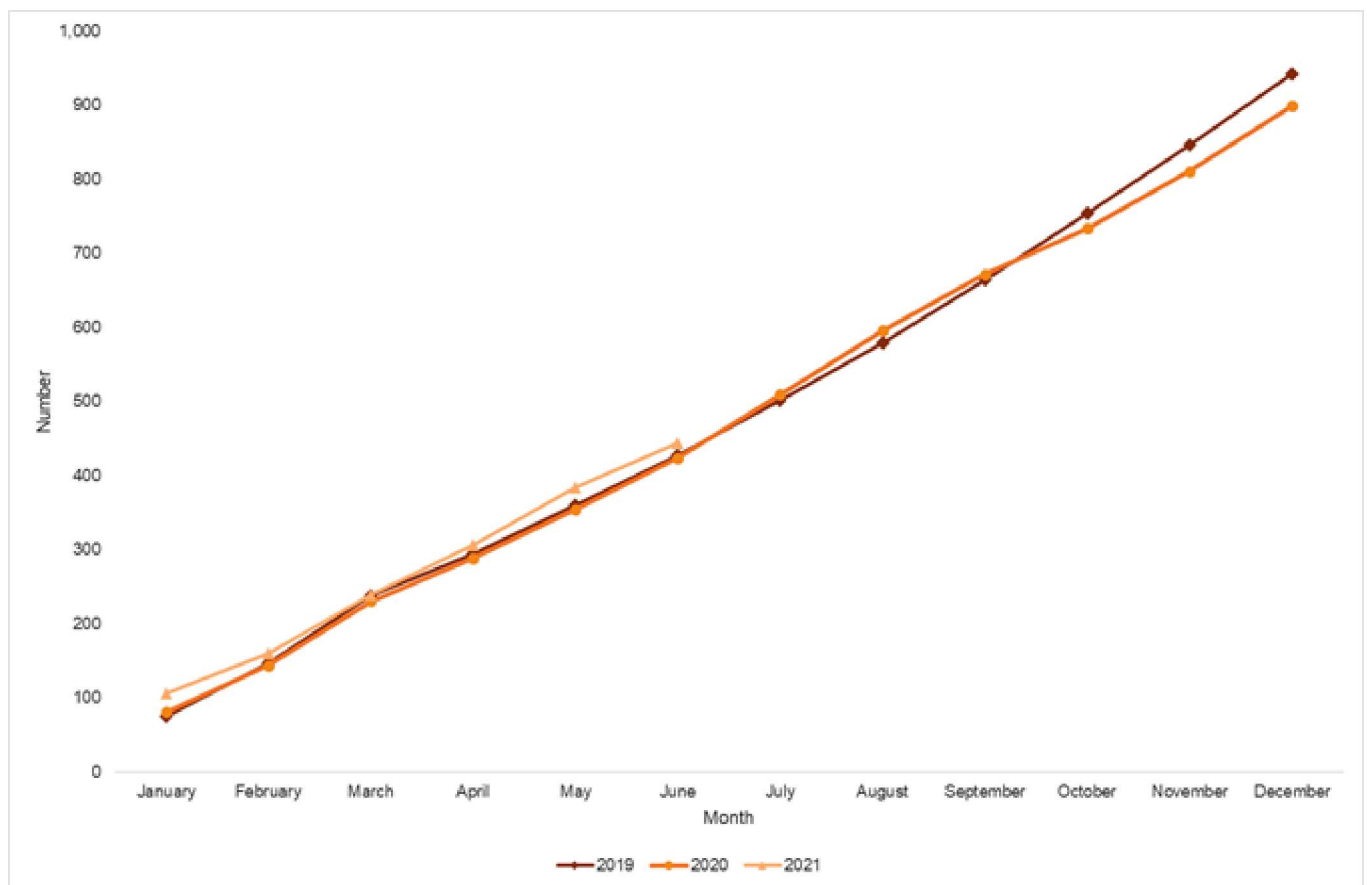


Figure 6: Cumulative number of suspected deaths by suicide in New South Wales, by month, 2019 to 2021



In 2019, 2020 and from 1 January to 30 June 2021 (NSW Ministry of Health 2021):

- around three-quarters of suspected deaths by suicide were among males
- more than half of all suspected deaths by suicide occurred among those aged between 25 and 55
- around half of suspected deaths by suicide occurred among residents of Greater Sydney.

References

Coroners Court of Victoria 2020a.  [Monthly Suicide Data Report](https://www.coronerscourt.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/Coroners%20Court%20Monthly%20Suicide%20Data%20Report%20-%20Report%201%20-%202027082020.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2eMUUvfflSLsTM8q0ID60M7DP6xfKplqW6VHxf2L1Bui8zBno6ZPTdMxQ)

(<https://www.coronerscourt.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/Coroners%20Court%20Monthly%20Suicide%20Data%20Report%20-%20Report%201%20-%202027082020.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2eMUUvfflSLsTM8q0ID60M7DP6xfKplqW6VHxf2L1Bui8zBno6ZPTdMxQ>), 1 – 27 August 2020.

Coroners Court of Victoria 2020b.  [Monthly Suicide Data Report](https://www.coronerscourt.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-01/Coroners%20Court%20Monthly%20Suicide%20Data%20Report%20-%20December%202020.pdf)

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([https://www.coronerscourt.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-07/Public suicide report - June 2021.pdf](https://www.coronerscourt.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-07/Public%20suicide%20report%20-%20June%202021.pdf)), July 2021 update – 13 August 2021.

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Last updated 1/09/2021 v23.0

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