



Utilisation of Sobering Up Centres, 1990 - 2007

In Brief

- There was a total of 237,918 admissions to SUCs in WA between 1990 and 2007, of whom 160,784 (67.6%) involved males and 77,090 (32.4%) involved females.
- Whilst half of admissions to the Perth SUC involved non-Indigenous persons, elsewhere the services were used by Indigenous persons, as 2% or fewer admissions in non-metropolitan SUCs involved non-Indigenous persons.
- There were pronounced differences between some of the SUCs in relation to the age and gender structure of the population admitted, such as the Wiluna SUC which had a high frequency of persons in their early twenties whereas the Roebourne SUC had a high frequency of persons in their mid fifties.
- Detentions of intoxicated persons in police lockups have substantially declined in catchment areas where SUCs have opened.

Introduction

Sobering up centres (SUCs) are support services that provide a practical, harm reduction and cost effective approach to the issue of public intoxication. This service provides overnight care to adults who are intoxicated, not in need of hospital care and whose behaviour can be managed effectively and safely by centre staff.

For additional details about the development of SUCs throughout Western Australia (WA) see page A-17 in the Appendices of data tables and figures.

Sobering Up Centres

Overview

Total annual admissions to SUCs steadily increased from 1,533 in 1991 (the first full year of operation) to 21,323 in 2003 and then declined to 18,280 admissions in 2004. Since 2004 admissions have gradually increased, to 21,108 in 2007 (Table 2, page 3).

Gender

From 1990 to 2007 there was a total of 237,918 admissions to SUCs, of which 160,784 (67.6%) were males, 77,090 (32.4%) were females and 44 (<0.1%) where gender was missing (Table 2, page 3).

Quarterly admissions of males steadily increased from 2000 up to mid 2004 and have since stabilised. There was a gradual growth in quarterly admissions of females up to early 2003, then admissions declined up to late 2004 and have since increased (Figure 2, page 4).

Indigenous status

In the period from 1990 to 2007 about one in 10 admissions to SUCs involved non-Indigenous persons. Overall, a total of 216,165 (90.9%) admissions involved Indigenous and 21,697 (9.1%) involved other persons. (There were 22 admissions where indigenous status was unknown.)

Table A-3 (page A-3) shows that with the exception of the Perth SUC, where 49.6% of all admissions involved Indigenous persons, there were very few non-Indigenous admissions at any other SUCs. In the Kimberley, Goldfields and South East, Pilbara and Gascoyne and Midwest and Murchison Health Regions (HRs) it was found that 99.2%, 98.8%, 97.9% and 97.8% of admissions involved Indigenous persons, respectively.

Regional trends

An overview of trends in annual admissions by each SUC up to the end of 2007 is provided in Tables A-1 and A-2 (pages A-1 and A-2).

In the most recent year in 2007, there were three SUCs which accounted for just under half (48.6%) of the total of 21,208 admissions in the year, with 4,589, 3,341 and 2,370 admissions at the Broome, Perth and Kununurra SUCs, respectively.

Cost of SUCs

The breakdown of expenditure in Table 1 of running SUCs in WA indicates they are a cost effective approach

Written by Greg Swensen (April 2008)

for managing intoxicated people. For instance, it cost an average of \$153 per admission in 2007 and for the whole period from 1990 to 2007, cost an average of \$166 per admission (based on a total cost of \$39,481,008 and total of 237,918 admissions).

Age structure

As there are differences in the age and gender structure of the population attending individual SUCs, separate summaries are provided for each SUC within the respective Health Regions (HRs) in WA.

Metropolitan Health Regions

There are three SUCs in the Perth metropolitan area, the Perth SUC which was established in May 1990, the Midland SUC which was established in June 2002 and the Anawim SUC which was established in February 2003.

Over the period from 1990 to 2007 there was a total of 42,647 admissions to the SUCs and from 1992 to 2005 a

Table 1
Annual expenditure on sobering up services, 1990/1991 - 2006/2007

Year	Total	Year	Total
1990/1991	\$318,733	1999/2000	\$2,493,225
1991/1992	\$501,413	2000/2001	\$2,370,100
1992/1993	\$763,165	2001/2002	\$3,476,349
1993/1994	\$1,086,982	2002/2003	\$4,000,813
1994/1995	\$1,863,665	2003/2004	\$3,517,495
1995/1996	\$1,722,200	2004/2005	\$3,547,190
1996/1997	\$1,863,007	2005/2006	\$3,743,154
1997/1998	\$2,016,871	2006/2007	\$3,228,246
1998/1999	\$2,968,400	Total	\$39,481,008

total of 2,080 detentions in police lockups in the catchment area served by these three SUCs (Figure A-1, page A-4).

Perth SUC

Over the period from 1990 to 2007 there was a total of 37,938 admissions, of which 79.5% were males and 20.5% were females. *Note: The Perth SUC was closed for renovations in January 2004 and re-opened on 6 July 2004.*

A breakdown of age related data from 1990 to 2007 is presented in Figure A-2 (page A-4). This shows markedly higher frequencies of male compared to female admissions for all age groups, with the greatest number of male admissions in the 40 to 44 year age group, whereas most female admissions were in the 35 to 39 age group.

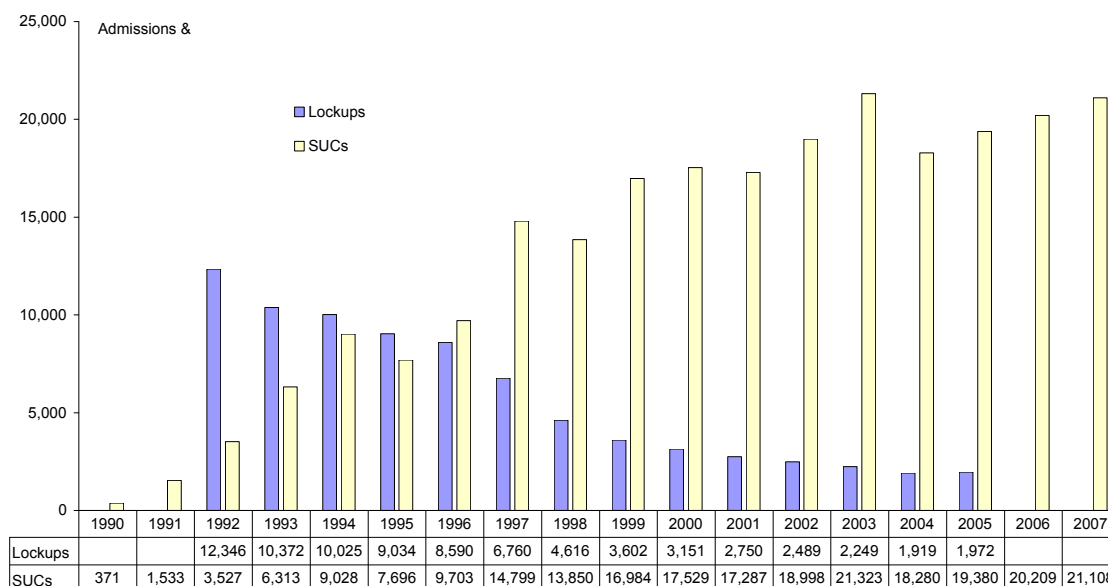
A separate breakdown for non-Indigenous and Indigenous persons by age group and gender is presented in Figures A-3 and A-4 (page A-5) respectively. With respect to non-Indigenous persons male admissions were distributed over a wide age range, with the highest frequency of admissions in the 35 to 39 age group. Across all age groups there were fewer female than male admissions, particularly in relation to admissions of females involving non-Indigenous persons.

With respect to Indigenous persons, both male and female admissions peaked in the 40 to 44 age group and compared to non-Indigenous admissions, there were few younger persons.

Midland SUC

From 2002 to 2007 there was a total of 2,063 admissions, of which 74.1% were males and 25.9% were females. *Note: The Midland SUC closed in May 2006.*

Figure 1
Annual admissions to sobering up centres & detentions for drunkenness in police lockups, 1990 - 2007



A breakdown of age related data from 2002 to 2007 is presented in Figure A-5 (page A-6). This shows the greatest number of male admissions involved the 45 to 49 year age group, whereas for females most admissions involved the 35 to 39 age group. At the Midland SUC the most frequent age group was the 45 to 49 age group, with very few female admissions after their mid 30s.

Anawim SUC

From 2003 to 2007 there was a total of 2,612 admissions, all of which were females as this SUC provides services to females only.

A breakdown of age related data from 2003 to 2004 is presented in Figure A-6 (page A-6) and shows there were two clusters of admissions, of those in the 30 to 34 and 40 to 44 year age groups respectively.

Other

A limited sobering up service was conducted in the metropolitan beachside suburb of Scarborough as part of New Year's Eve celebrations to assist management of intoxicated persons. This service operated from 2001 to 2005 and resulted in a total of 34 admissions.

Goldfields & South East Coastal HR

In the Goldfields and South East Coastal HR there is one SUC, the Kalgoorlie SUC which was established in June 1994.

Kalgoorlie SUC

From 1994 to 2007 there was a total of 17,297 admissions to the Kalgoorlie SUC and from 1994 to 2005 a total of 9,334 detentions in police lockups in the Kalgoorlie SUC catchment area (Figure A-7, page A-7).

Of the total of 17,297 admissions, of which 57.4% were males and 42.5% were females. A breakdown of age related data from 1998 to 2007 is presented in Figure A-8 (page A-7).

This shows that male admissions mostly involved the 35 to 44 age group, whereas female admissions mostly involved the 30 to 44 age group. Overall, most admissions involved those aged from 25 to 49, with similar numbers of admissions of both males and females in younger age groups

Midwest & Murchison HR

In the Midwest and Murchison HR there are two SUCs, the Wiluna SUC (established in April 1996) and the Geraldton SUC (established in December 2003).

From 1996 to 2007 there was a total of 16,507 admissions to SUCs and from 1996 to 2005 a total of 8,810 detentions in police lockups in the catchment areas for these SUCs in this region (Figure A-9, page A-8).

Table 2

Annual admissions to sobering up centres & detentions in police lockups by gender, 1990 - 2007

	Sobering up centres				Police lockups			
	Males	Females	Unknown	Total	Males	Females	Unknown	Total
1990	315	56	-	371	-	-	-	-
1991	1,286	247	-	1,533	-	-	-	-
1992	2,621	906	-	3,527	9,000	3,346	-	12,346
1993	4,724	1,589	-	6,313	7,789	2,583	-	10,372
1994	6,500	2,527	1	9,028	7,266	2,759	-	10,025
1995	5,616	2,071	9	7,696	6,470	2,458	106	9,034
1996	6,641	3,057	5	9,703	6,356	2,006	228	8,590
1997	10,022	4,764	13	14,799	5,035	1,578	147	6,760
1998	9,512	4,338	-	13,850	3,538	966	112	4,616
1999	11,223	5,760	1	16,984	2,764	771	67	3,602
2000	11,432	6,096	1	17,529	2,443	667	41	3,151
2001	11,326	5,960	1	17,287	2,060	652	38	2,750
2002	11,972	7,023	3	18,998	1,821	641	27	2,489
2003	13,792	7,531	-	21,323	1,654	581	14	2,249
2004	14,631	3,648	1	18,280	1,389	515	15	1,919
2005	12,700	6,676	4	19,380	1,441	510	21	1,972
2006	12,737	7,469	3	20,209				
2007	13,734	7,372	2	21,108				
Total	160,784	77,090	44	237,918				

Wiluna SUC

From 1996 to 2007 there was a total of 12,883 admissions to the Wiluna SUC, of which 59.4% were males and 40.6% were females. A breakdown of age related data from 1998 to 2007 is presented in Figure A-10 (page A-8).

This shows that a relatively young population have attended this SUC, with the most frequent admissions in the 20 to 24 age group. It was also found that there were similar numbers of male and female admissions of those aged between the 25 and 44 years as compared to other age groups.

Geraldton SUC

From 2003 to 2007 there was a total of 3,624 admissions to the Geraldton SUC, of which 70.6% were males and 29.4% were females. A breakdown of age related data from 2003 to 2007 is presented in Figure A-11 (page A-9).

This shows although there were similar number of male and female admissions in younger age groups, there were markedly greater numbers of admissions of males in the 35 to 49 age group as compared to females. There were two clusters of female admissions involving those in their thirties and their late fifties.

Pilbara & Gascoyne HR

There are two SUCs in the Pilbara and Gascoyne HR, the Hedland SUC (established in April 1991) and the Roebourne SUC (established in February 1993).

From 1991 to 2007 there was a total of 43,884 admissions to SUCs and from 1991 to 2005 a total of 11,968 detentions

in police lockups in the catchment areas served by these SUCs (Figure A-12, page A-9).

Hedland SUC

From 1991 to 2007 there was a total of 23,997 admissions, of which 62.0% were males and 38.0% were females. A breakdown of age related data from 1998 to 2004 is presented in Figure A-13 (page A-10).

This shows high frequencies of admissions involving younger age groups compared to older age groups. However, while the most frequent admissions involved the 30 to 34 age group, there was also substantial numbers of admissions involving males up to their late sixties.

Roebourne SUC

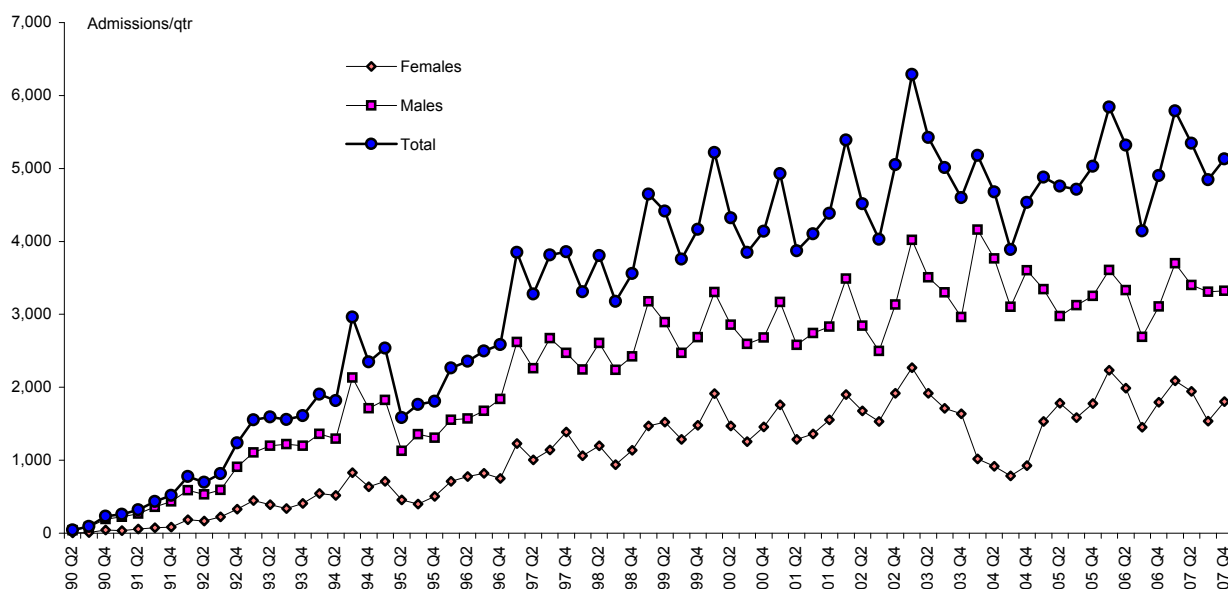
From 1993 to 2007 there was a total of 19,887 admissions, of which 60.5% were males and 39.5% were females. A breakdown of age related data from 1993 to 2007 is presented in Figure A-14 (page A-10).

This shows relatively few admissions involved younger age groups and that most admissions involved those aged between 40 and 59 years. It was also found the most frequent male admissions were in the 50 to 54 age group, whereas the greatest number of female admissions were in the 55 to 59 age group.

Kimberley HR

In the Kimberley HR there are six SUCs, the Halls Creek SUC (established in September 1992), the Fitzroy Crossing SUC (established in March 1994), the Kununurra SUC (established in September 1996), the Derby SUC

Figure 2
Quarterly admissions to sobering up centres by sex, 1990 - 2007



(established in May 1998), the Broome SUC (established in February 1999) and the Wyndham SUC (established in December 2002).

From 1992 to 2007 there was a total of 117,582 admissions to SUCs and from 1992 to 2005 a total of 44,759 detentions in police lockups in the catchment areas served by these SUCs (Figure A-15, page A-11).

Halls Creek SUC

From 1992 to 2007 there was a total of 27,335 admissions, of which 69.0% were males, 29.1% were females and 1.9% where gender was missing. A breakdown of age related data from 1992 to 2007 is presented in Figure A-16 (page A-11).

This shows greater number of male than female admissions across all age groups. It was found that the greatest number of admissions involved the 25 to 29 age group, which most admissions involving males from the 20 to 39 age group.

Fitzroy Crossing SUC

From 1994 to 2006 there was a total of 8,651 admissions, of which 64.6% were males and 35.3% were females. *Note: The Fitzroy Crossing SUC closed in December 2006.*

A breakdown of age related data from 1994 to 2006 is presented in Figure A-17 (page A-12). This shows high frequencies of both female and male admissions of those up to their late thirties and that overall there were greater number of male admissions in all age groups.

Kununurra SUC

From 1996 to 2007 there was a total of 22,716 admissions, of which 76.7% were males and 23.2% were females.

A breakdown of age related data from 1996 to 2007 is presented in Figure A-18 (page A-12). This shows that there were markedly higher frequencies of male compared to female admissions across all age groups.

Derby SUC

From 1998 to 2007 there was a total of 18,226 admissions, of which 70.5% were males and 29.5% were females.

A breakdown of age related data from 1998 to 2007 is presented in Figure A-19 (page A-13). This shows that most admissions were clustered in the 25 to 49 age group

and that there were higher frequencies of male than female admissions in all age groups.

Broome SUC

From 1999 to 2007 there was a total of 35,092 admissions, of which 65.3% were males and 34.7% were females.

A breakdown of age related data from 1998 to 2007 is presented in Figure A-20 (page A-13). This shows overall there were higher frequencies of male compared to female admissions. It can also be seen that female admissions peaked in the 30 to 34 age group, whereas male admissions peaked in the 35 to 39 age group.

Wyndham SUC

From 2002 to 2007 there was a total of 5,562 admissions, of which 70.3% were males and 29.7% were females.

A breakdown of age related data from 2002 to 2004 is presented in Figure A-21 (page A-14). This shows two clusters in male admissions, involving the 35 to 54 age group and smaller frequency of admissions in the 25 to 29 age group.

The most frequent female admissions were in the 35 to 39 age group, with a similar peak in admissions as occurred for males in the 25 to 29 age group.

Police Lock Ups

From 1990 to 2005 there was a total of 79,875 detentions of intoxicated persons in police lock ups in the various catchment areas served by SUCs in WA.

Out of the 79,875 admissions, 59,026 (73.9%) were males, 20,033 (25.1%) were females and there were 816 (1.0%) detentions where gender was missing (Table 2, page 3).

The positive impact of SUCs on reducing detention of intoxicated persons in police lockups in the catchment areas where SUCs were established is demonstrated in Figure 1 (page 2).

This data shows there has been a sustained and marked decline in detentions since 1992 as the number of SUCs were progressively expanded throughout the State.

Appendices: Data Tables & Figures

Table A-1
Annual admissions to all sobering up centres, WA, 1990 - 1998

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Metro									
Perth	371	1,108	1,442	1,516	1,784	1,649	1,712	2,776	2,881
Midland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Anawim	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	371	1,108	1,442	1,516	1,784	1,649	1,712	2,776	2,881
Midwest & Murchison									
Wiluna	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,451	2,493	1,198
Geraldton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,451	2,493	1,198
Goldfields & SE Coastal									
Kalgoorlie	-	-	-	-	931	1,258	1,094	1,151	1,642
Sub total	-	-	-	-	931	1,258	1,094	1,151	1,642
Kimberley									
Halls Creek	-	-	754	2,105	2,248	1,971	1,873	2,432	1,927
Fitzroy Crossing	-	-	-	-	1,225	556	412	856	736
Kununurra	-	-	-	-	-	-	517	2,356	1,421
Broome	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Derby	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,006
Wyndham	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	754	2,105	3,473	2,527	2,802	5,644	5,090
Pilbara & Gascoyne									
Hedland	-	425	1,331	2,237	2,053	1,402	1,251	1,180	1,566
Roebourne	-	-	-	455	787	860	1,393	1,555	1,473
Sub total	-	425	1,331	2,692	2,840	2,262	2,644	2,735	3,039
Total State	371	1,533	3,527	6,313	9,028	7,696	9,703	14,799	13,850

Table A-2
Annual admissions to all sobering up centres, WA, 1999 - 2007

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Metro									
Perth	2,775	2,548	2,455	2,910	2,587	892	2,331	2,860	3,341
Midland	-	-	-	168	557	894	361	83	-
Anawim	-	-	-	-	523	588	526	457	518
Other	-	-	12	16	3	2	1	-	-
Sub total	2,775	2,548	2,467	3,094	3,670	2,376	3,219	3,400	3,859
Midwest & Murchison									
Wiluna	692	904	1,072	1,400	928	298	395	972	1,080
Geraldton	-	-	-	-	23	767	933	665	1,236
Sub total	692	904	1,072	1,400	951	1,065	1,328	1,637	2,316
Goldfields & SE Coastal									
Kalgoorlie	1,567	1,409	1,960	1,183	1,127	1,019	970	1,084	902
Sub total	1,567	1,409	1,960	1,183	1,127	1,019	970	1,084	902
Kimberley									
Halls Creek	1,614	1,536	1,801	1,459	1,913	1,560	1,217	1,357	1,568
Fitzroy Crossing	973	645	752	810	640	695	237	114	-
Kununurra	1,564	1,669	1,121	1,366	2,088	2,096	3,085	3,063	2,370
Broome	2,477	3,086	2,965	4,511	4,951	4,030	3,853	4,630	4,589
Derby	2,141	1,785	2,047	2,229	2,348	1,748	1,759	1,619	1,544
Wyndham	-	-	-	138	1,531	1,263	871	821	938
Sub total	8,769	8,721	8,686	10,513	13,471	11,392	11,022	11,604	11,009
Pilbara & Gascoyne									
Hedland	1,466	1,902	1,447	1,209	899	1,184	1,541	1,430	1,474
Roebourne	1,715	2,045	1,655	1,599	1,205	1,244	1,300	1,053	1,548
Sub total	3,181	3,947	3,102	2,808	2,104	2,428	2,841	2,483	3,022
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Total State	16,984	17,529	17,287	18,998	21,319	18,280	19,380	20,209	21,208

Table A-3
Total admissions to all sobering up centres by indigenous status, WA, 1990 - 2007

	Period	Indigenous		Non-Indigenous	Total
		n	%		
Metro					
Perth	1990-2007	18,812	49.6	19,128	37,940
Midland	2002-2006	1,923	93.2	140	2,063
Anawim	2003-2007	2,601	99.6	11	2,612
Other	2001-2005	-		-	34
Sub total	1990-2007	23,336	54.7	19,279	42,649
Midwest & Murchison					
Wiluna	1996-2007	12,744	98.9	139	12,883
Geraldton	2003-2007	3,403	93.9	221	3,624
Sub total	1996-2007	16,147	97.8	360	16,507
Goldfields & SE Coastal					
Kalgoorlie	1994-2007	17,098	98.8	199	17,297
Sub total	1994-2007	17,098	98.8	199	17,297
Kimberley					
Halls Creek	1992-2007	27,205	99.5	130	27,335
Fitzroy Crossing	1994-2006	8,609	99.5	42	8,651
Kununurra	1996-2007	22,359	98.4	357	22,716
Broome	1999-2007	34,808	99.2	284	35,092
Derby	1998-2007	18,150	99.6	76	18,226
Wyndham	2002-2007	5,488	99.1	51	5,539
Sub total	1992-2007	116,619	99.2	940	117,559
Pilbara & Gascoyne					
Hedland	1991-2007	23,298	97.1	699	23,997
Roebourne	1993-2007	19,667	98.9	220	19,887
Sub total	1991-2007	42,965	97.9	919	43,884
Total State	1990-2007	216,165	90.9	21,697	237,896

Note: Excludes 22 cases where indigenous status unknown.

Figure A-1

**Admissions to sobering up centres & detentions for drunkenness in police lockups
Perth Metropolitan Health Regions, 1990 - 2007**

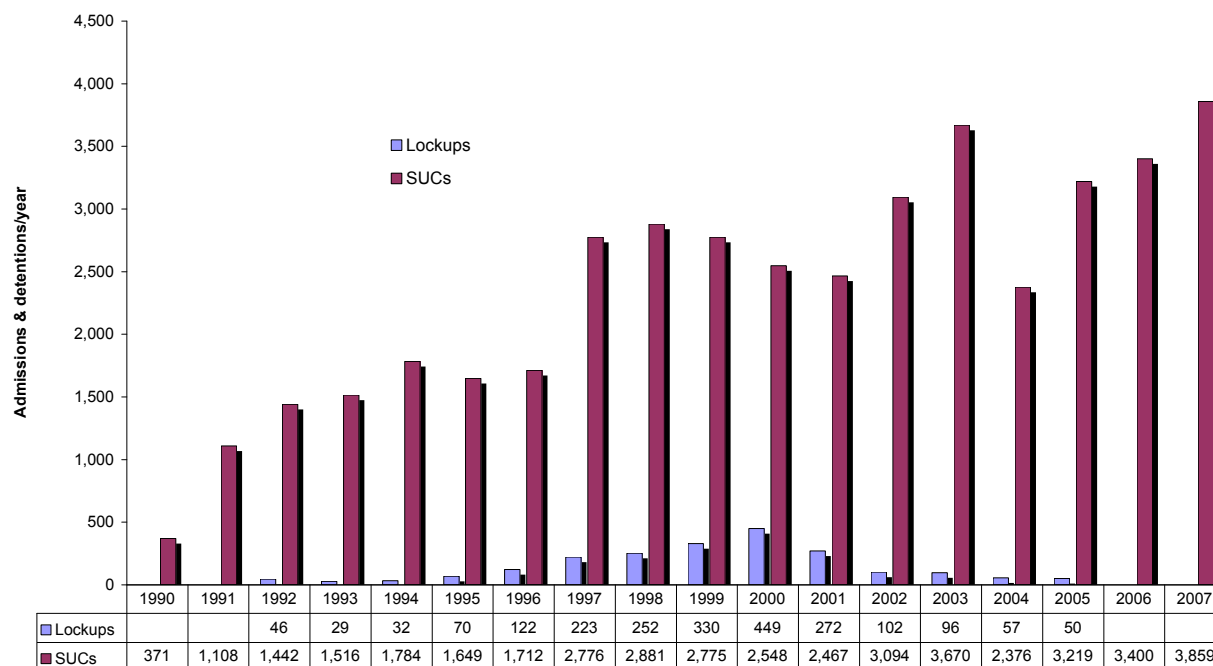


Figure A-2

Admissions to Perth sobering up centre by age group & sex, 1990 - 2007

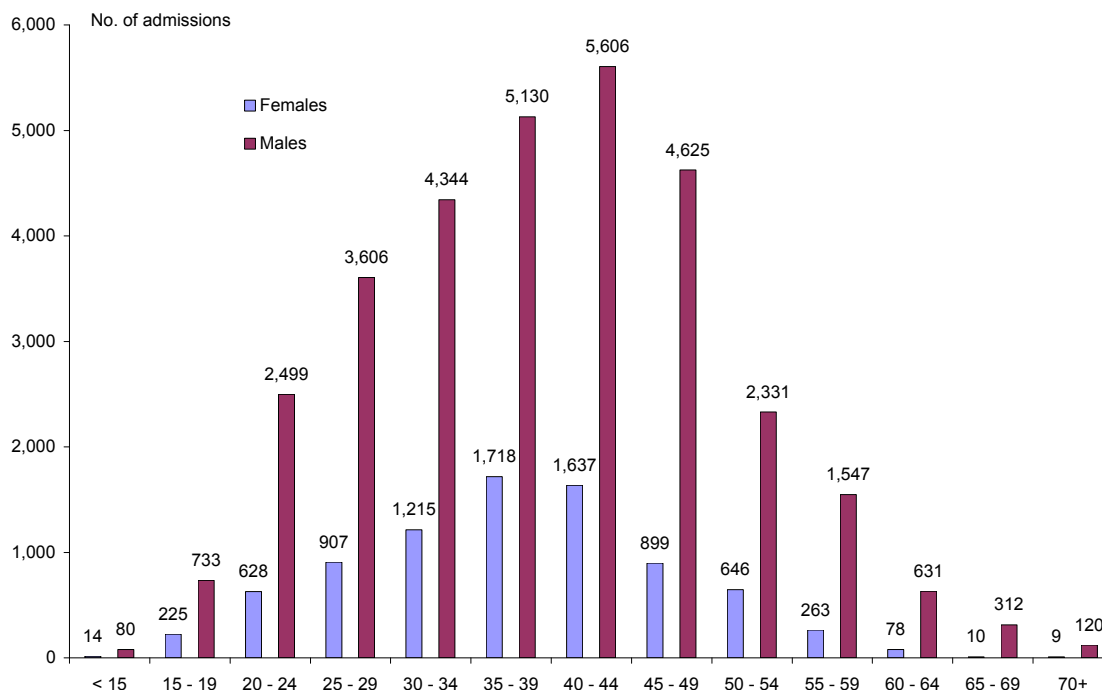


Figure A-3
Admissions to Perth sobering up centre by age group & sex
non-Indigenous persons, 1990 - 2007

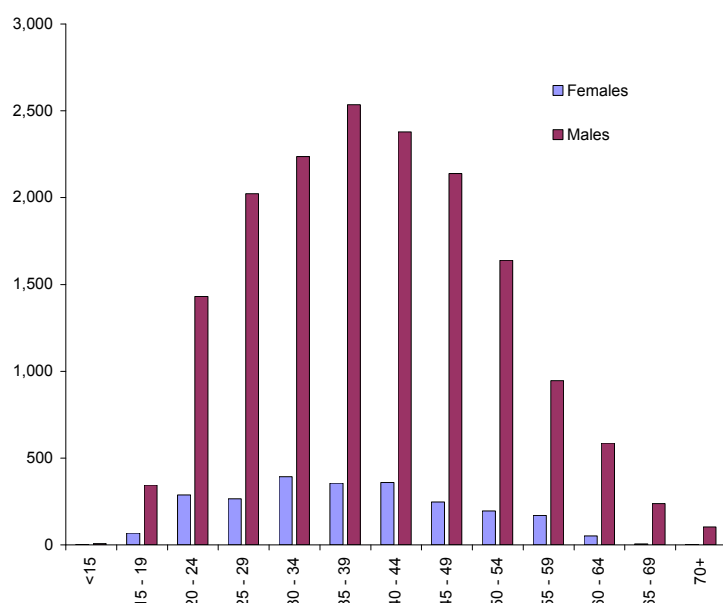


Figure A-4
Admissions to Perth sobering up centre by age group & sex
Indigenous persons, 1990 - 2007

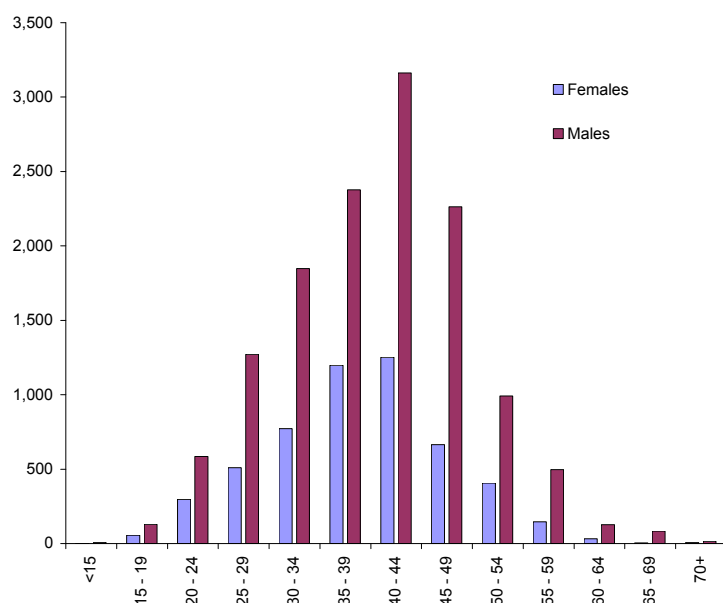


Figure A-5
Admissions to Midland sobering up centre by age group, 2002 - 2006

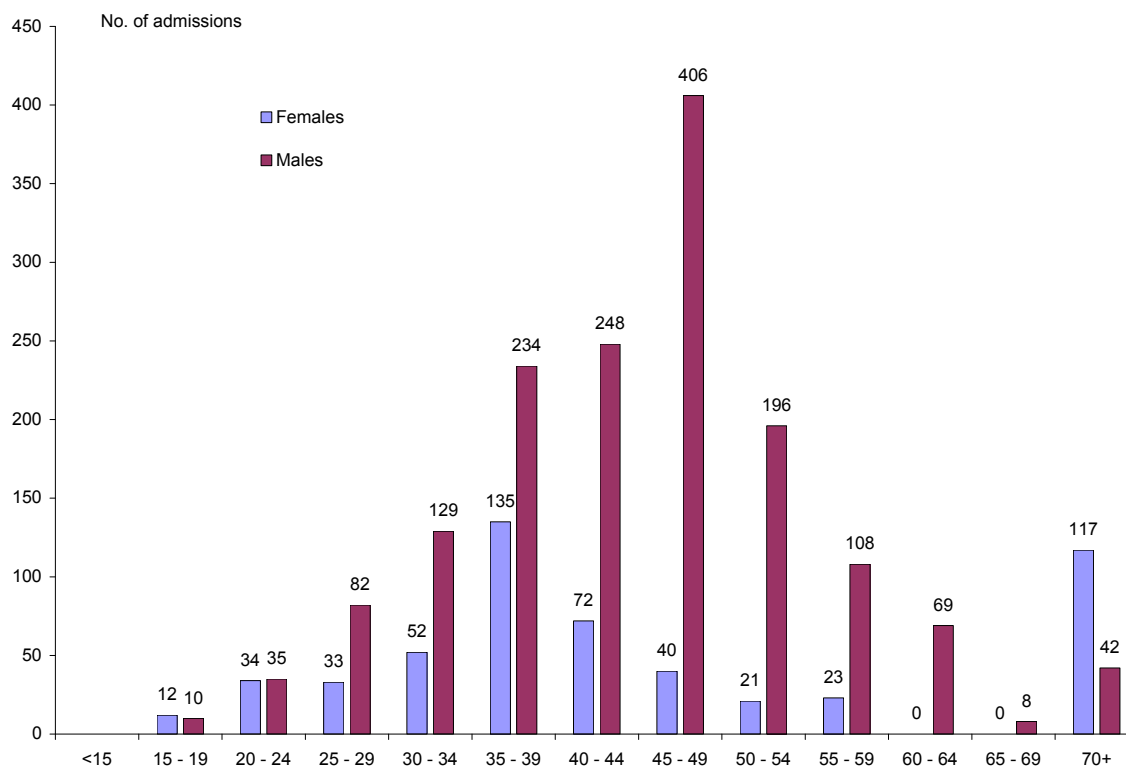


Figure A-6
Admissions to Anawim sobering up centre by age group, 2003 - 2007

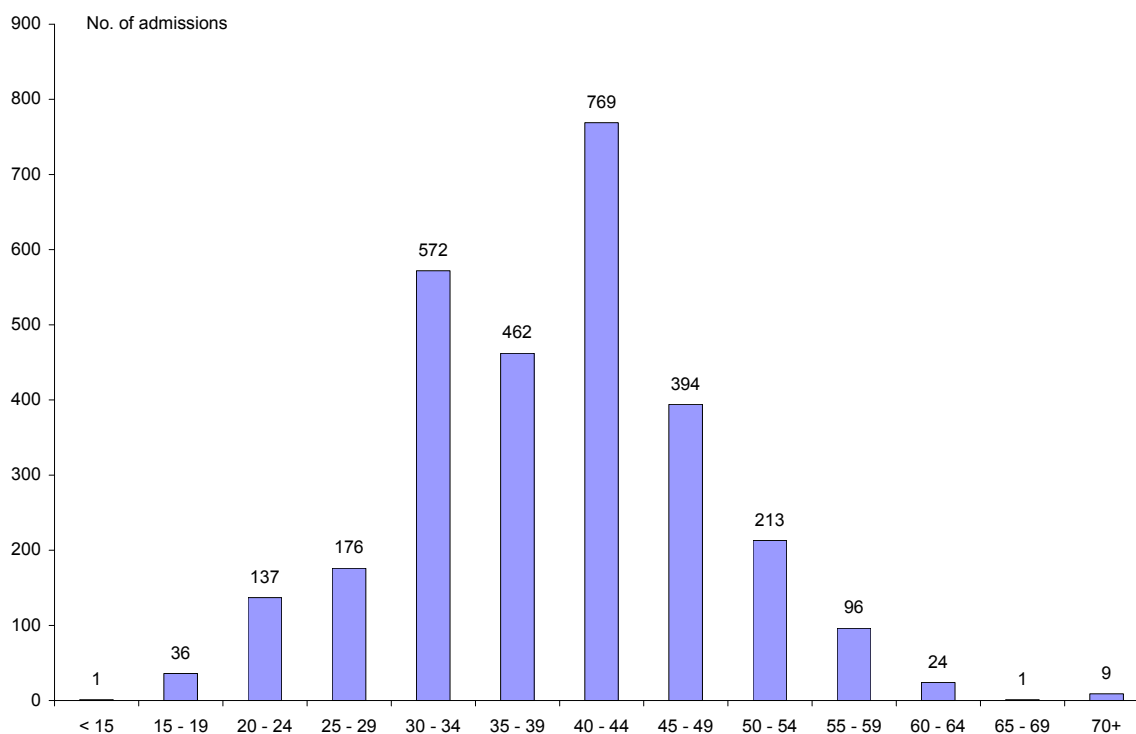


Figure A-7
Admissions to sobering up centres & detentions for drunkenness in police lockups
Goldfields & South East Coastal Health Region, 1992 - 2007

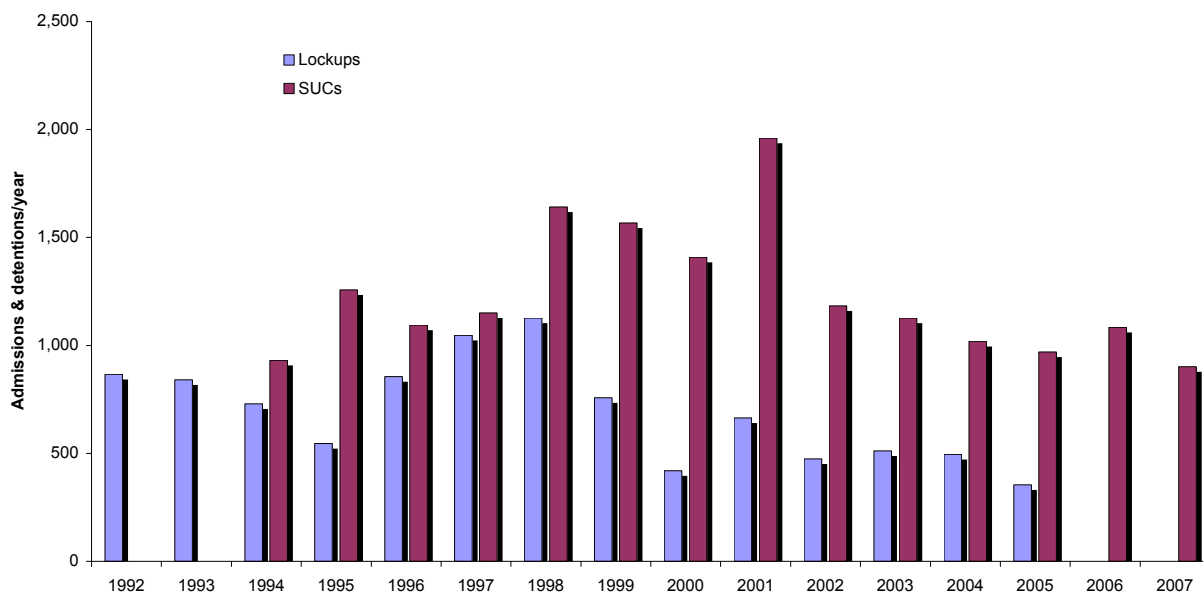


Figure A-8
Admissions to Kalgoorlie sobering up centre by age group, 1998 - 2007

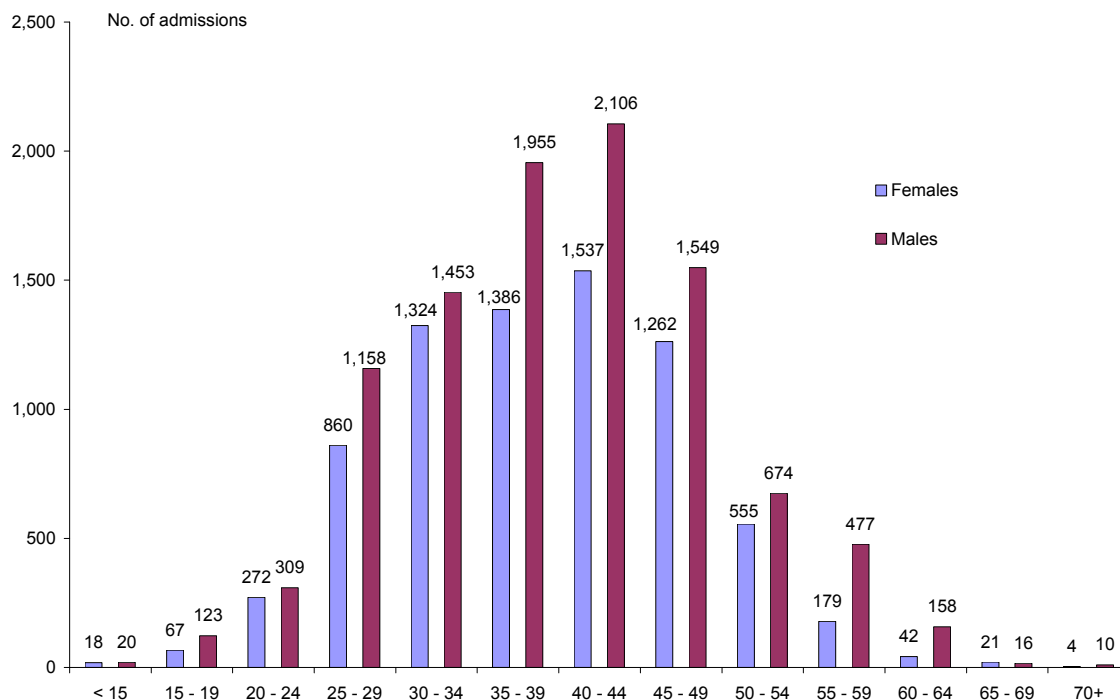


Figure A-9
Admissions to sobering up centres & detentions for drunkenness in police lockups
Midwest & Murchison Health Region, 1992 - 2007

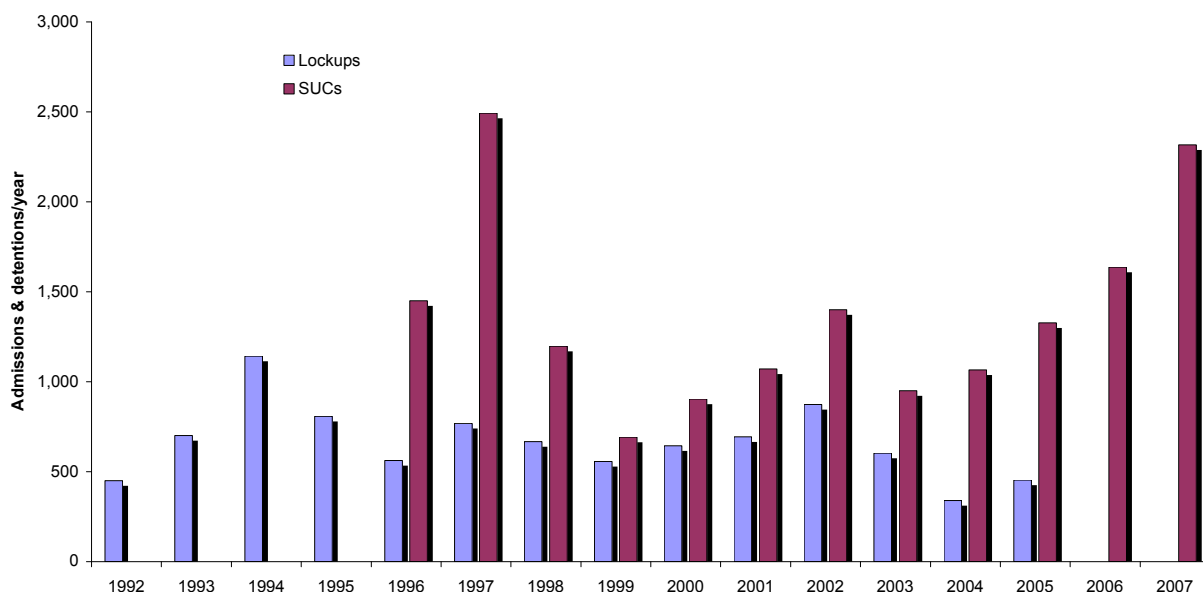


Figure A-10
Admissions to Wiluna sobering up centre by age group, 1996 - 2007

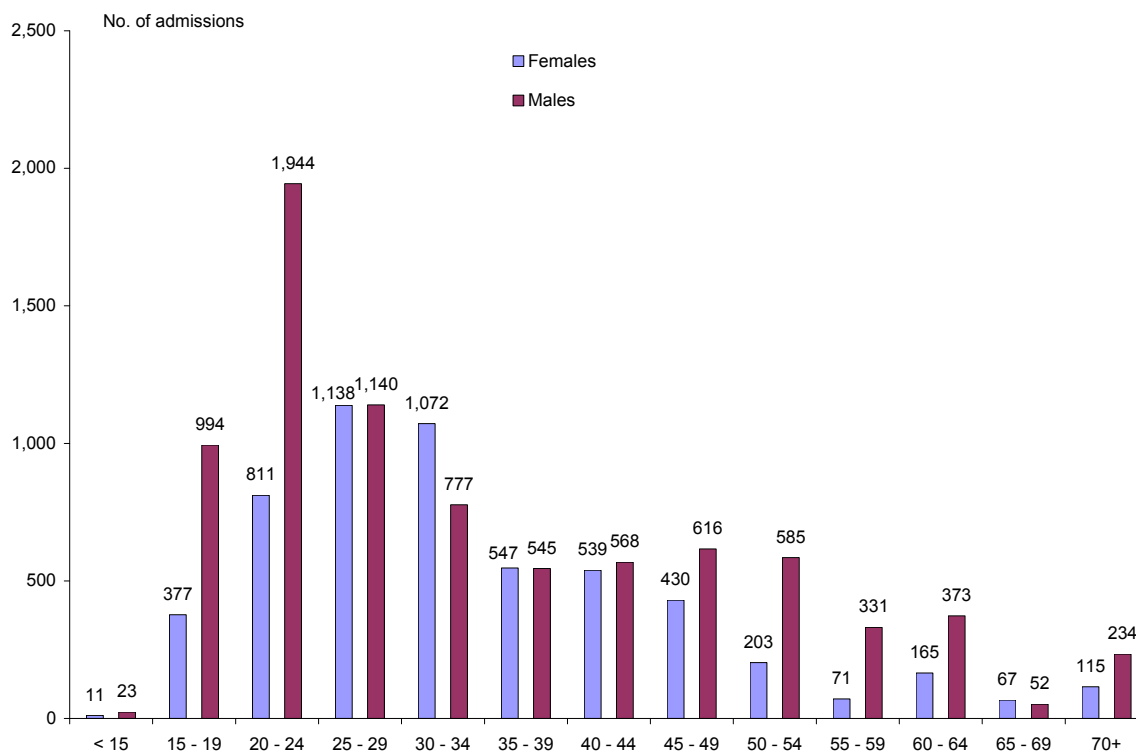


Figure A-11
Admissions to Geraldton sobering up centre by age group, 2003 - 2007

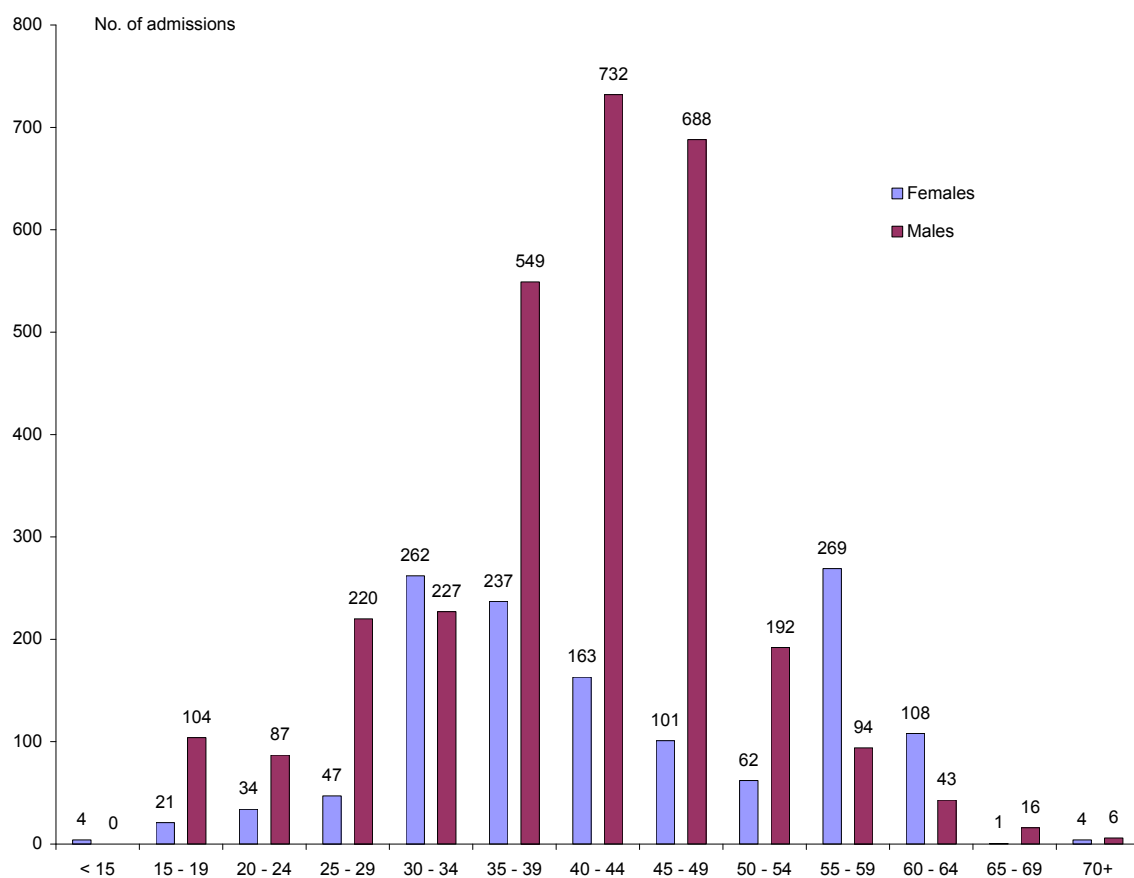


Figure A-12
Admissions to sobering up centres & detentions for drunkenness in police lockups
Pilbara & Gascoyne Health Region, 1991 - 2007

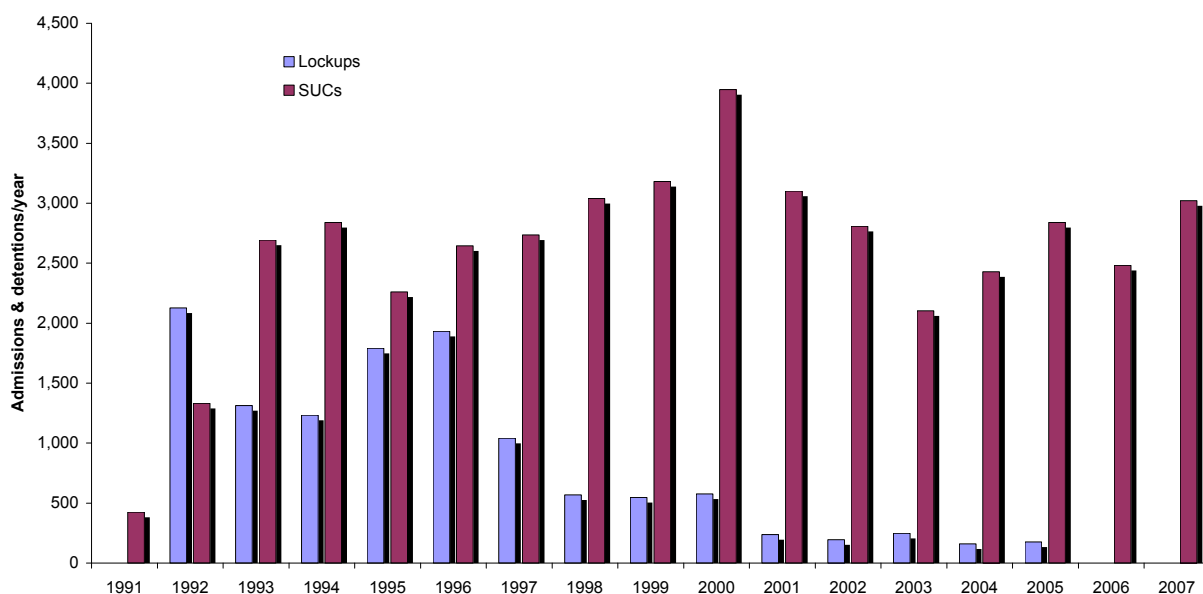


Figure A-13
Admissions to Hedland sobering up centre by age group, 1991 - 2007

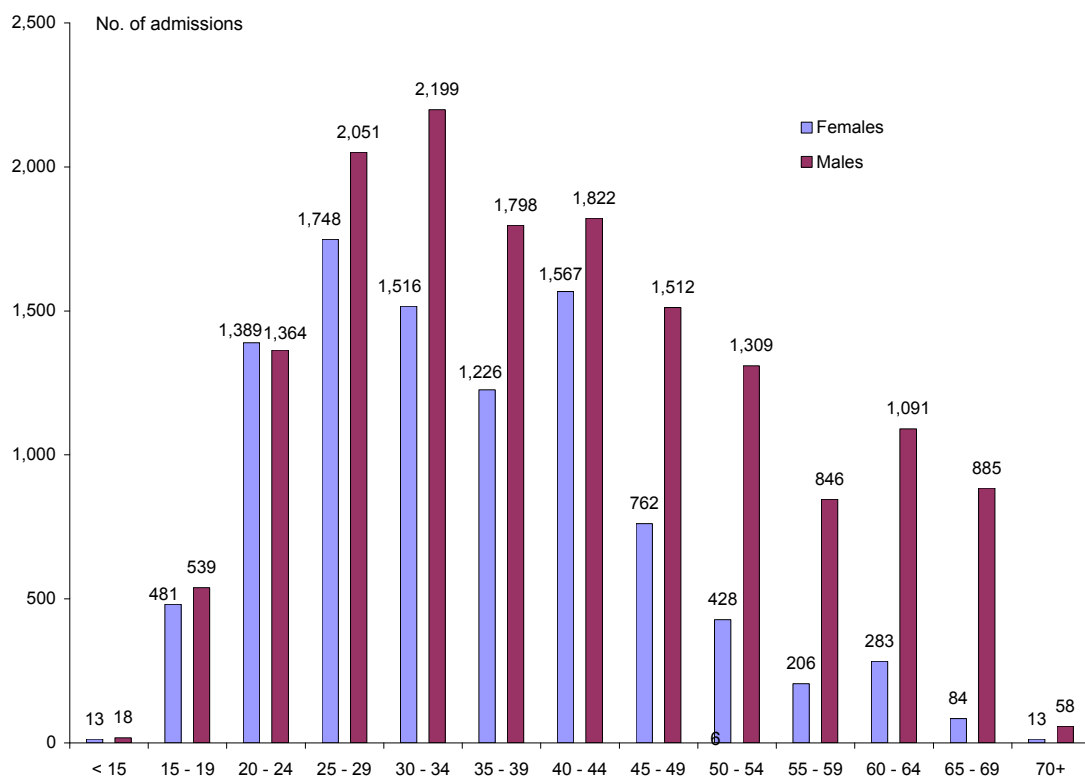


Figure A-14
Admissions to Roebourne sobering up centre by age group, 1993 - 2007

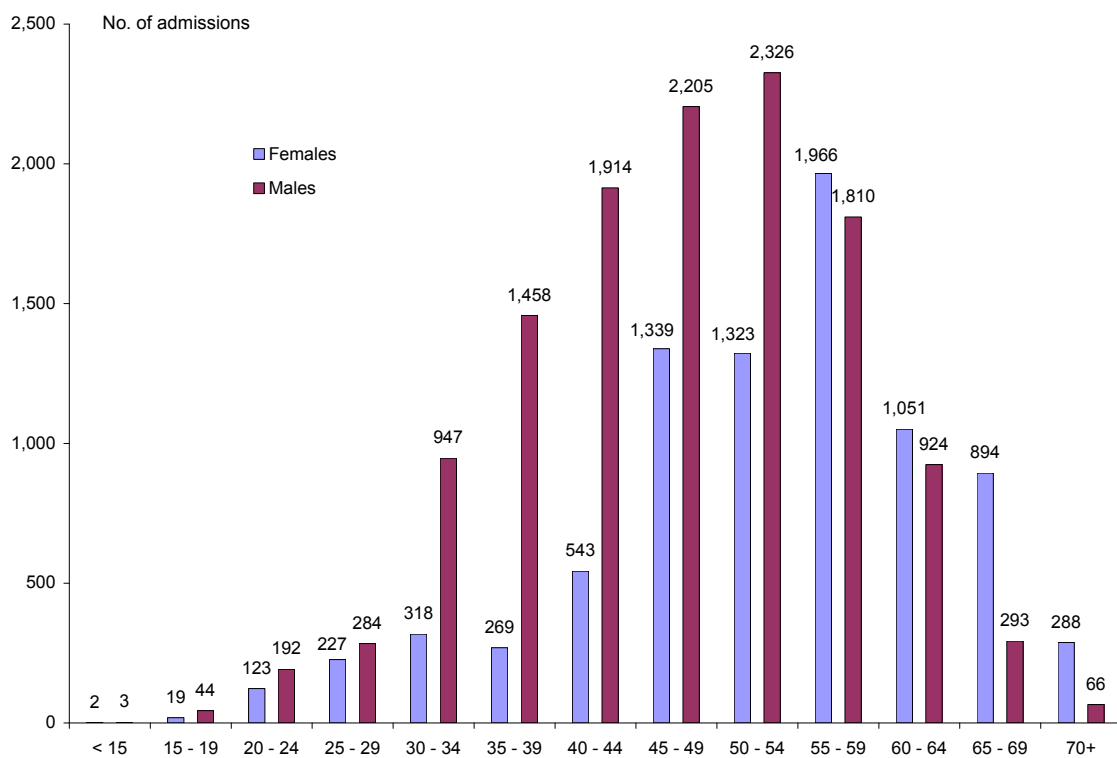


Figure A-15
Admissions to sobering up centres & detentions for drunkenness in police lockups
Kimberley Health Region, 1992 - 2007

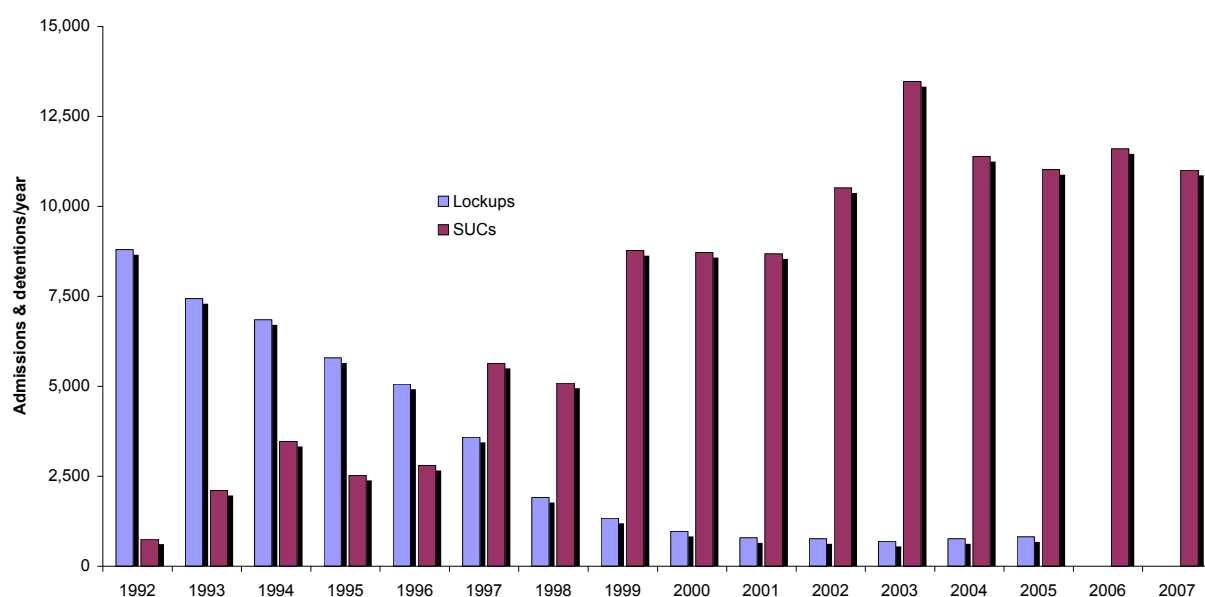


Figure A-16
Admissions to Halls Creek sobering up centre by age group, 1992 - 2007

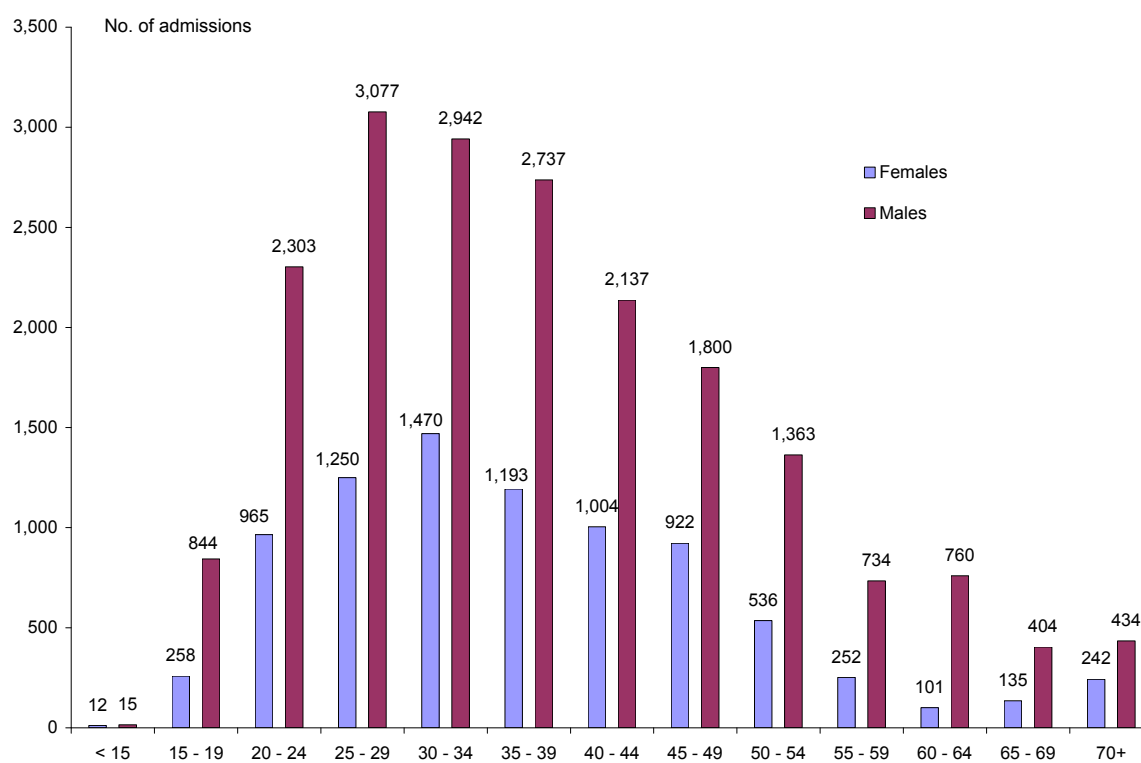


Figure A-17
Admissions to Fitzroy Crossing sobering up centre by age group, 1994 - 2006

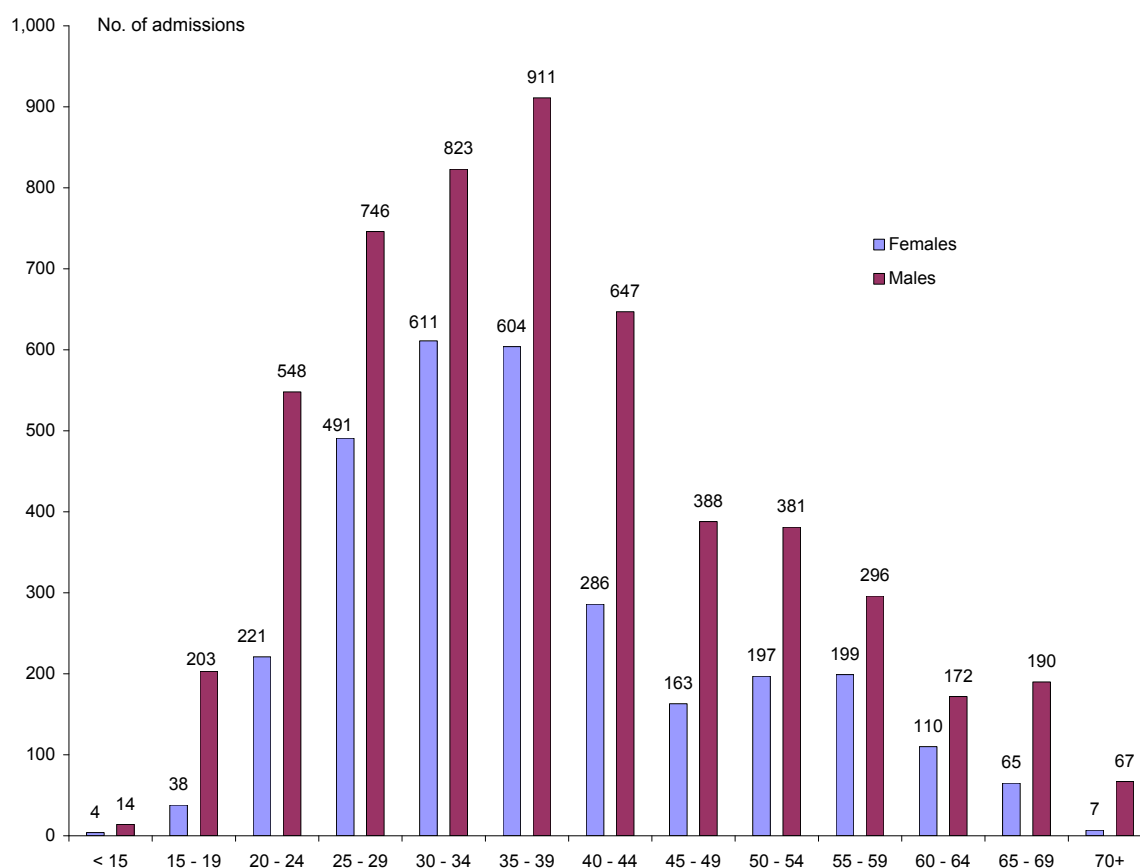


Figure A-18
Admissions to Kununurra sobering up centre by age group, 1996 - 2007

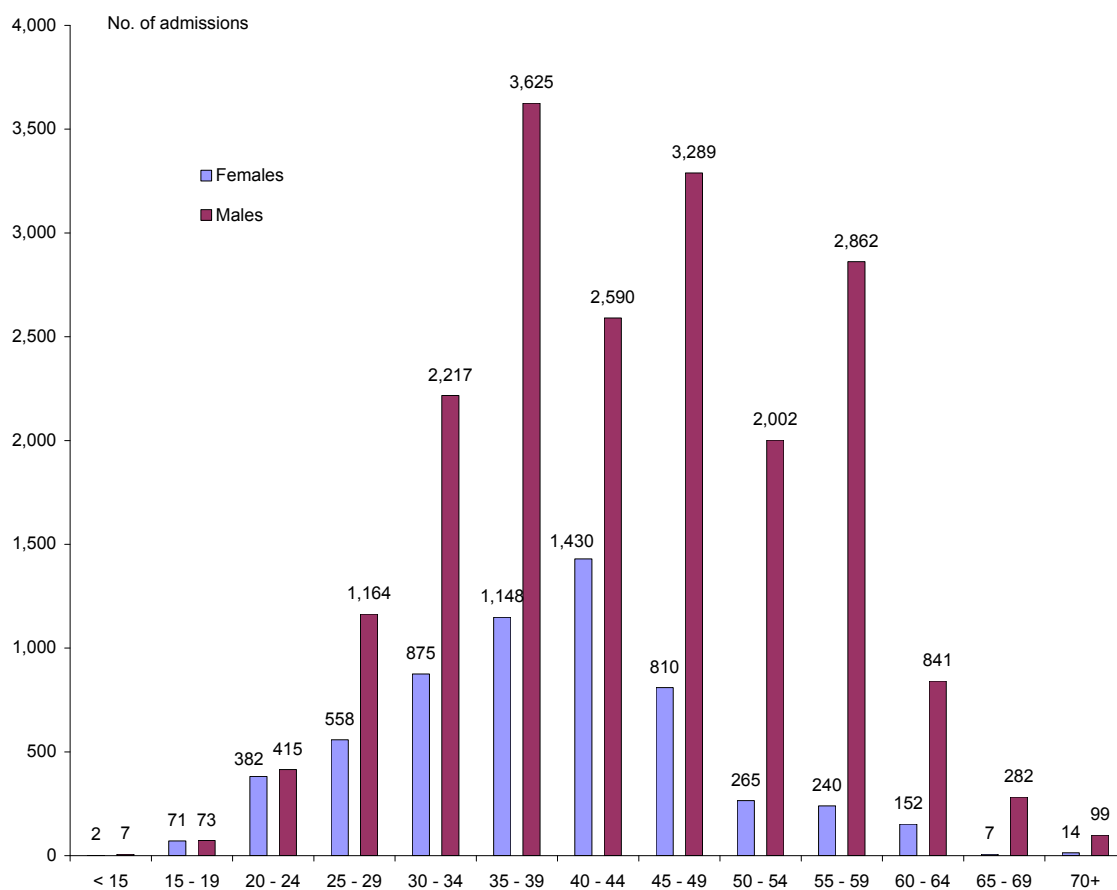


Figure A-19
Admissions to Derby sobering up centre by age group, 1998 - 2007

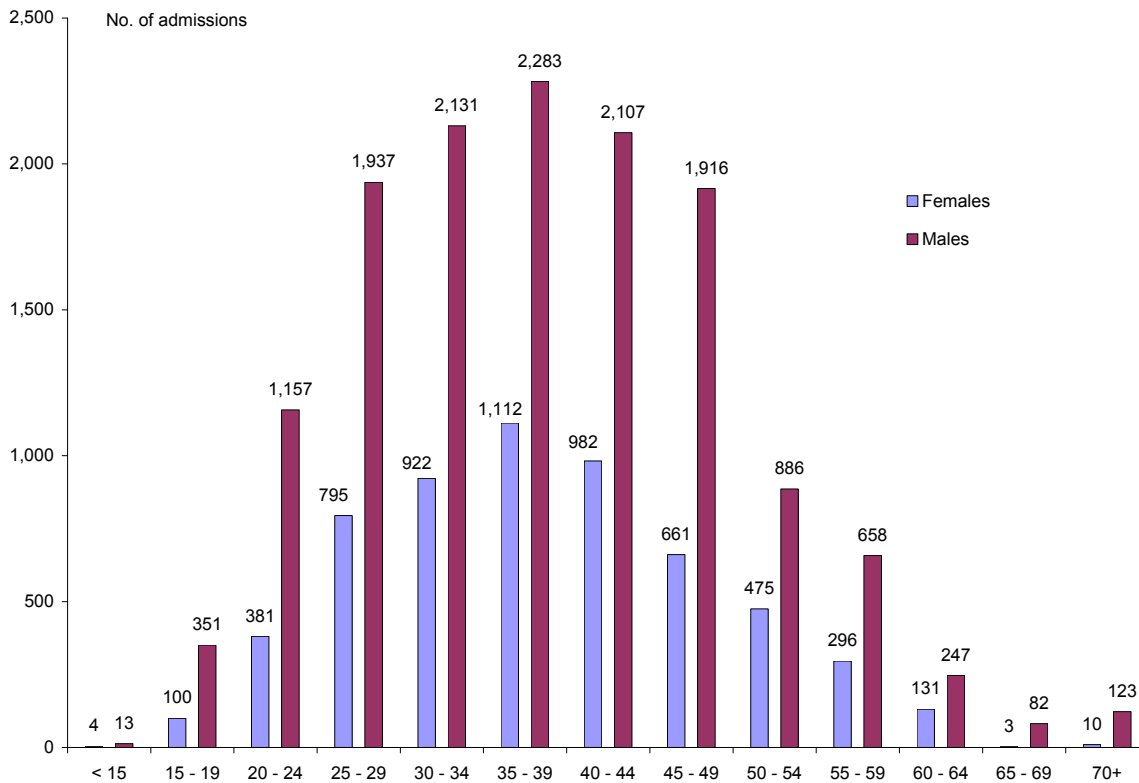


Figure A-20
Admissions to Broome sobering up centre by age group, 1999 - 2007

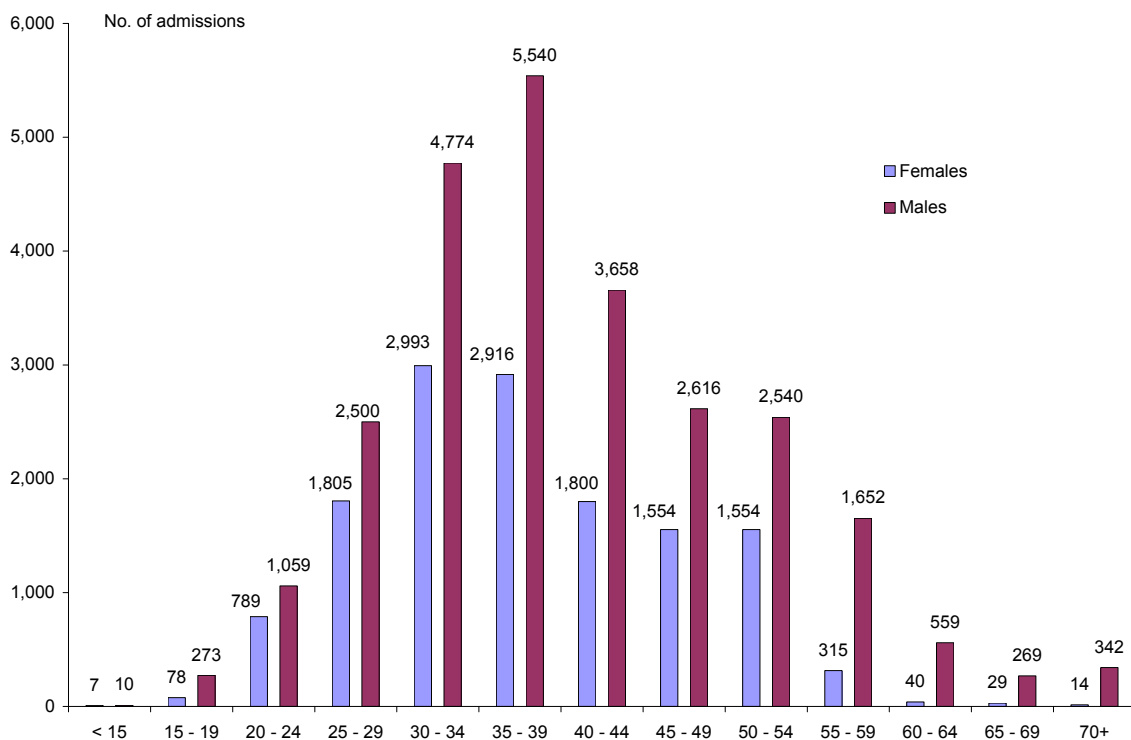


Figure A-21
Admissions to Wyndham sobering up centre by age group, 2002 - 2007

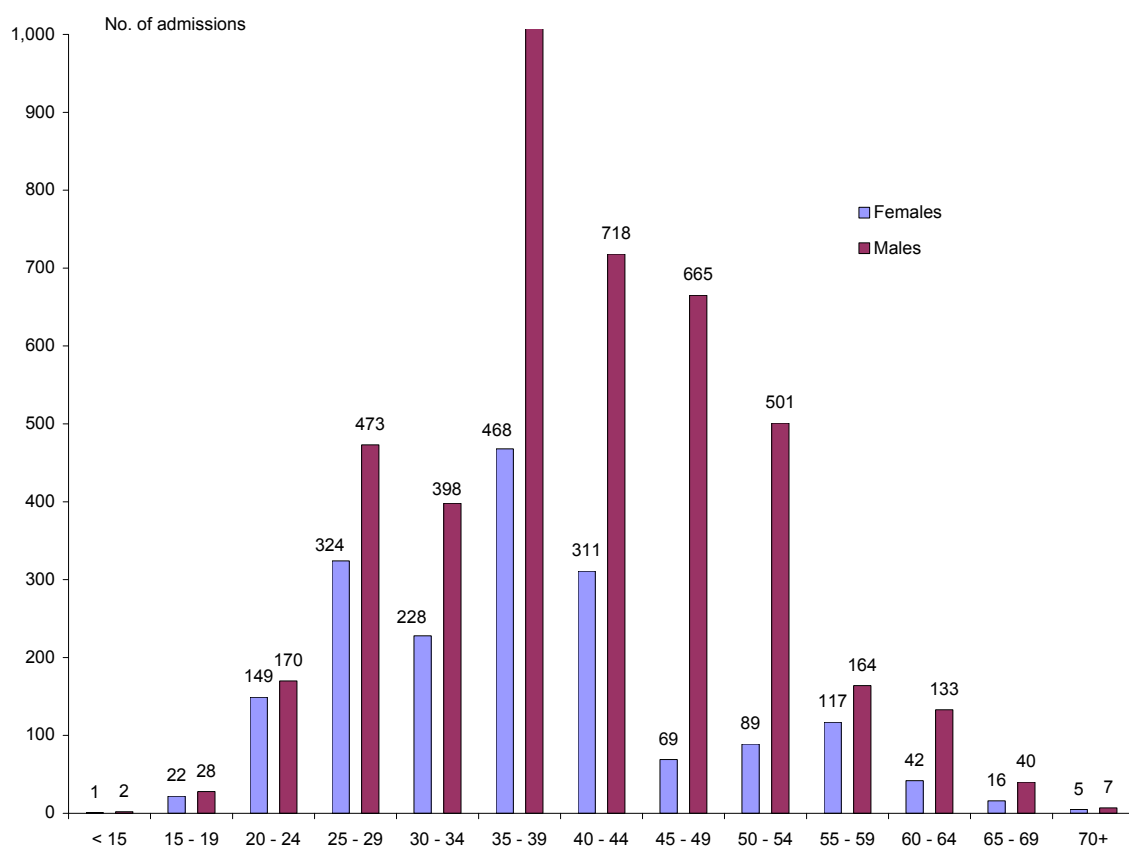


Table A-4
Quarterly admissions to all sobering up centres by sex, 1990 - 2000

	Males	Females	Unknown	Total		Males	Females	Unknown	Total
1990					1995				
Qtr 1	-	-	-	-	Qtr 1	1,825	712	1	2,538
Qtr 2	38	5	-	43	Qtr 2	1,127	455	2	1,584
Qtr 3	85	9	-	94	Qtr 3	1,358	401	5	1,764
Qtr 4	192	42	-	234	Qtr 4	1,306	503	1	1,810
Total	315	56	-	371	Total	5,616	2,071	9	7,687
1991					1996				
Qtr 1	223	35	-	258	Qtr 1	1,554	709	-	2,263
Qtr 2	266	56	-	322	Qtr 2	1,573	777	5	2,355
Qtr 3	361	74	-	435	Qtr 3	1,677	821	-	2,498
Qtr 4	436	82	-	518	Qtr 4	1,837	750	-	2,587
Total	1,286	247	-	1,533	Total	6,641	3,057	5	9,698
1992					1997				
Qtr 1	590	186	-	776	Qtr 1	2,620	1,229	-	3,849
Qtr 2	529	168	-	697	Qtr 2	2,260	1,006	13	3,279
Qtr 3	594	224	-	818	Qtr 3	2,672	1,143	-	3,815
Qtr 4	908	328	-	1,236	Qtr 4	2,470	1,386	-	3,856
Total	2,621	906	-	3,527	Total	10,022	4,764	13	14,786
1993					1998				
Qtr 1	1,105	448	-	1,553	Qtr 1	2,244	1,063	-	3,307
Qtr 2	1,200	392	-	1,592	Qtr 2	2,608	1,198	-	3,806
Qtr 3	1,219	339	-	1,558	Qtr 3	2,239	939	-	3,178
Qtr 4	1,200	410	-	1,610	Qtr 4	2,421	1,138	-	3,559
Total	4,724	1,589	-	6,313	Total	9,512	4,338	-	13,850
1994					1999				
Qtr 1	1,360	543	-	1,903	Qtr 1	3,176	1,472	1	4,649
Qtr 2	1,296	519	-	1,815	Qtr 2	2,891	1,523	-	4,414
Qtr 3	2,131	830	-	2,961	Qtr 3	2,471	1,284	-	3,755
Qtr 4	1,713	635	1	2,349	Qtr 4	2,685	1,481	-	4,166
Total	6,500	2,527	1	9,027	Total	11,223	5,760	1	16,983

Table A-5
Quarterly admissions to all sobering up centres by sex, 2000 - 2007

	Males	Females	Unknown	Total		Males	Females	Unknown	Total
2000					2004				
Qtr 1	3,304	1,914	1	5,219	Qtr 1	4,161	1,019	-	5,180
Qtr 2	2,856	1,469	-	4,325	Qtr 2	3,764	916	-	4,680
Qtr 3	2,592	1,255	-	3,847	Qtr 3	3,102	785	-	3,887
Qtr 4	2,680	1,458	-	4,138	Qtr 4	3,604	928	1	4,533
Total	11,432	6,096	1	17,528	Total	14,631	3,648	1	18,280
2001					2005				
Qtr 1	3,170	1,760	-	4,930	Qtr 1	3,346	1,533	1	4,880
Qtr 2	2,582	1,287	-	3,869	Qtr 2	2,977	1,781	-	4,758
Qtr 3	2,744	1,360	-	4,104	Qtr 3	3,124	1,586	2	4,712
Qtr 4	2,830	1,553	1	4,384	Qtr 4	3,253	1,776	1	5,030
Total	11,326	5,960	1	17,286	Total	12,700	6,676	4	19,380
2002					2006				
Qtr 1	3,488	1,901	-	5,389	Qtr 1	3,607	2,236	-	5,843
Qtr 2	2,843	1,675	-	4,518	Qtr 2	3,333	1,986	-	5,319
Qtr 3	2,498	1,530	-	4,028	Qtr 3	2,691	1,453	-	4,144
Qtr 4	3,134	1,917	2	5,053	Qtr 4	3,106	1,794	3	4,903
Total	11,963	7,023	2	18,986	Total	12,737	7,469	3	20,209
2003					2007				
Qtr 1	4,021	2,267	-	6,288	Qtr 1	3,700	2,088	1	5,789
Qtr 2	3,507	1,918	-	5,425	Qtr 2	3,401	1,944	-	5,345
Qtr 3	3,302	1,710	-	5,012	Qtr 3	3,309	1,535	1	4,845
Qtr 4	2,962	1,636	-	4,598	Qtr 4	3,324	1,805	-	5,129
Total	13,792	7,531	-	21,323	Total	13,734	7,372	2	21,108

Background

The *Detention of Drunken Persons Act 1989* was enacted on 27 April 1990 and decriminalised public drunkenness in Western Australia (WA). The impetus for the decriminalisation of public drunkenness and the establishment of sobering up centres (SUCs) arose from recommendations contained in the report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

The management, development and funding of SUCs presently rests with the Drug and Alcohol Office. *(Initial responsibility for establishing SUCs was with the Alcohol and Drug Authority, now known as Next Step Specialist Alcohol & Drug Services, was transferred to the Health Department of WA in July 1997, shifted to the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office in July 1998 and then assigned to the Drug and Alcohol Office in December 2001.)*

These services generally operate five nights per week, apart from the Perth SUC, which operates seven nights per week. Sobering up services involve the provision of a substantial meal, clean bedding and sleepwear and laundering of clothes. The short stay aims to break the negative cycle of alcohol induced harm by providing care to intoxicated persons most at risk to themselves, their families and their community.

The expansion of SUCs throughout WA provides a more appropriate option to manage public intoxication. The positive impact of SUCs on the management of intoxicated persons rather than being detained in police lockups has been demonstrated at the regional level as well as for the whole state. The gains from the expansion in SUCs include:

- reductions in police time and resources previously involved in detaining and monitoring intoxicated people in lock ups;
- reduced use of court time and resources;
- reduced levels of domestic violence and other problems associated with alcohol abuse; and
- reduced burden on hospitals because of fewer hospitalisations for alcohol related illnesses and accidents.

Experience has shown that over a period of time the opening of a SUC usually encourages the community to develop additional services to address alcohol related problems. These include outreach programs, community patrols, homeless support programs, alcohol and other drug education programs and community support for initiatives to restrict alcohol availability.

Development & expansion

The first SUC was opened in the Perth inner metropolitan area in 1990. Since then SUCs have opened progressively in identified high priority localities throughout the State, as follows: Perth (May 1990), Port Hedland (April 1991), Halls Creek (September 1992), Roebourne (February 1993), Fitzroy Crossing (March 1994), Kalgoorlie (June 1994), Wiluna (April 1996), Kununurra (September 1996), Derby (May 1998), Broome (February 1999), Midland (June 2002), Wyndham (December 2002), Anawim (February 2003) and Geraldton (December 2003).

Two SUCs have closed, in Midland and Fitzroy Crossing, in May 2006 and December 2006, respectively.

This publication updates the data on the utilisation of sobering up centres previously published in *Statistical Bulletin No. 5* (June 1999), *Statistical Bulletin No. 11* (April 2001), *Statistical Bulletin No. 20* (June 2004) and *Statistical Bulletin No. 36* (June 2007).

Cost effectiveness

The annual cost of sobering up services has gradually increased as the number of SUCs has expanded from, \$318,733 in 1990/1991 to \$3,228,246 million in 2006/2007 (Table 1). This data shows that SUCs are a very cost effective service as they avoid costs that would otherwise be incurred if people had been detained or admitted to a hospital.

In the year 2004/2005 there were 14 SUCs which cost a total of \$3,517,495, an average cost of \$293,925 per centre and an average of \$192 per admission (based on 18,280 admissions in 2004).

In the year 2006/2007 there were 12 SUCs, which cost a total of \$3,228,246, an average cost of \$311,929 per centre and an average of \$177 per admission (based on 21,108 admissions in 2007).

This publication is available online at
<http://www.dao.health.wa.gov.au>