



Statistical Publication

NSW Inmate Population: Visualising the Trends to June 1996

Simon Eyland & Sylviane Mariasson

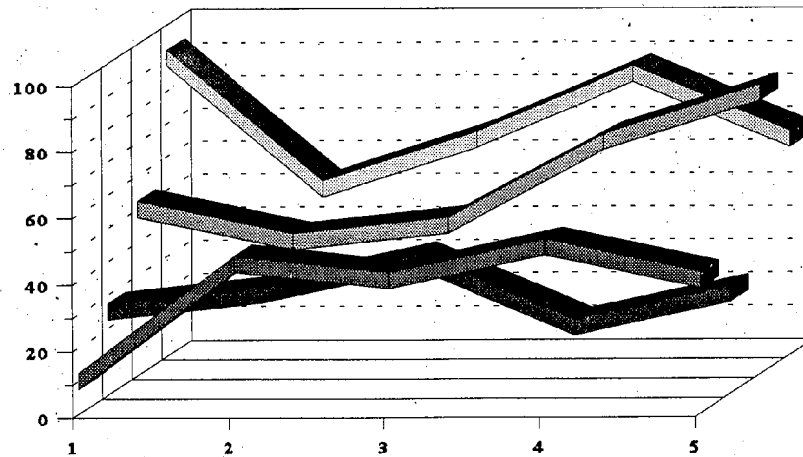
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NSW Department of Corrective Services



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Sylviane Mariasson

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The NSW data was collected by the staff of the Research and Statistics Unit either from returns from the correctional centres or retrieved from the computerised offender records system. Community Corrections Data was supplied by the Information Technology Branch. Data on imprisonment rates from other states was taken from "Australian Prison Trends" published by the Australian Institute of Criminology and "National Correctional Statistics: Prisons" published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Many thanks to all those involved over the years. Thank you in particular to Deputy Governors and Clerks for sending in weekly states returns, Nicolle Tierney the current clerical officer for collating these returns for the last few years. A special thanks to Barbara Thompson for her time and advice in editing this report.

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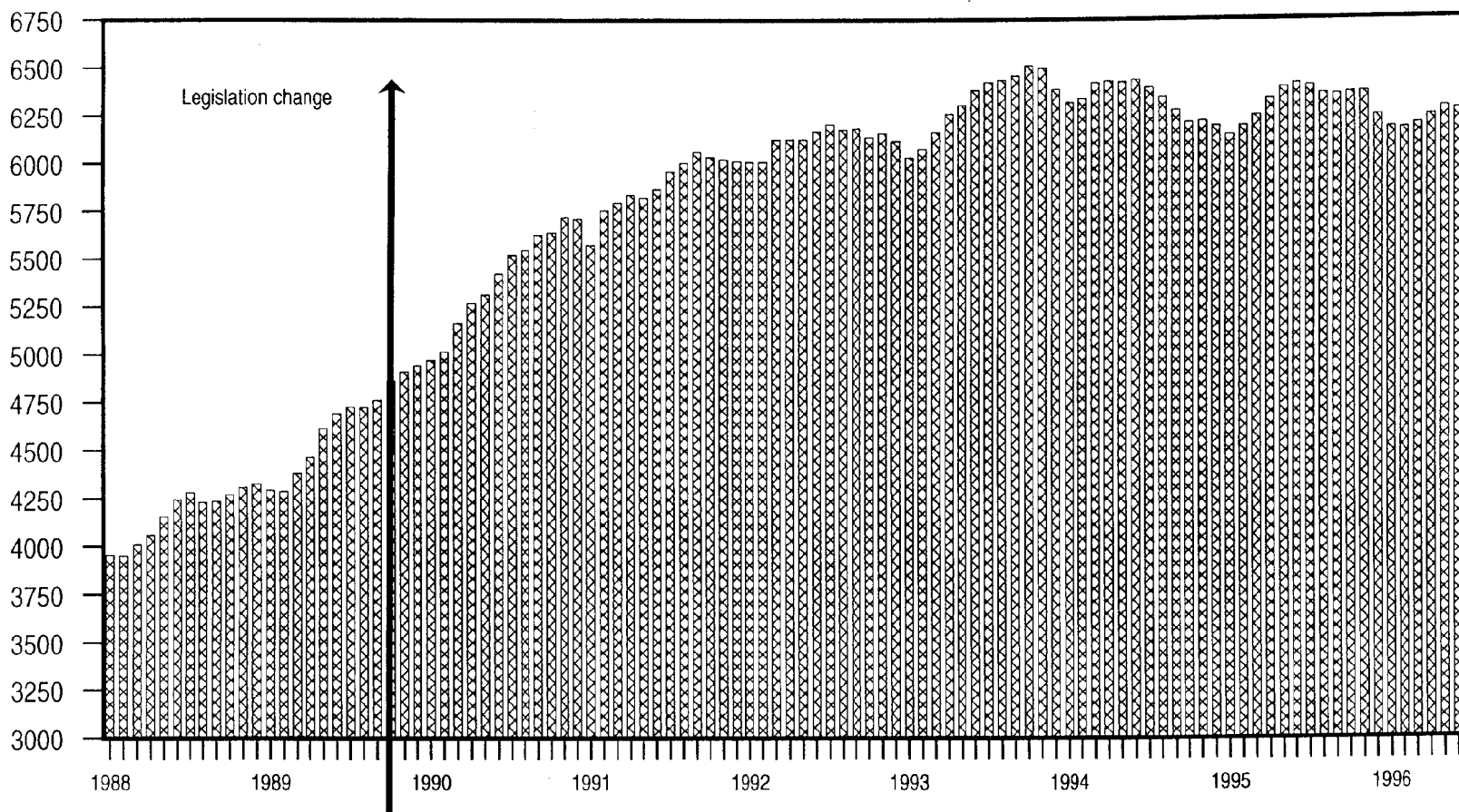
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I. TOTAL FULL-TIME CUSTODY

- ◆ Numbers were increasing prior to the introduction of the Sentencing Act (1989) on 25th September, 1989. After the introduction of the Sentencing Act numbers increased rapidly for about two years but the increase had stopped by the end of 1993. Numbers are now decreasing slightly.
- ◆ It is common for the correctional centre population to decrease in December, January and February each year (except 1989/90 following the introduction of the Sentencing Act) owing to court vacations.

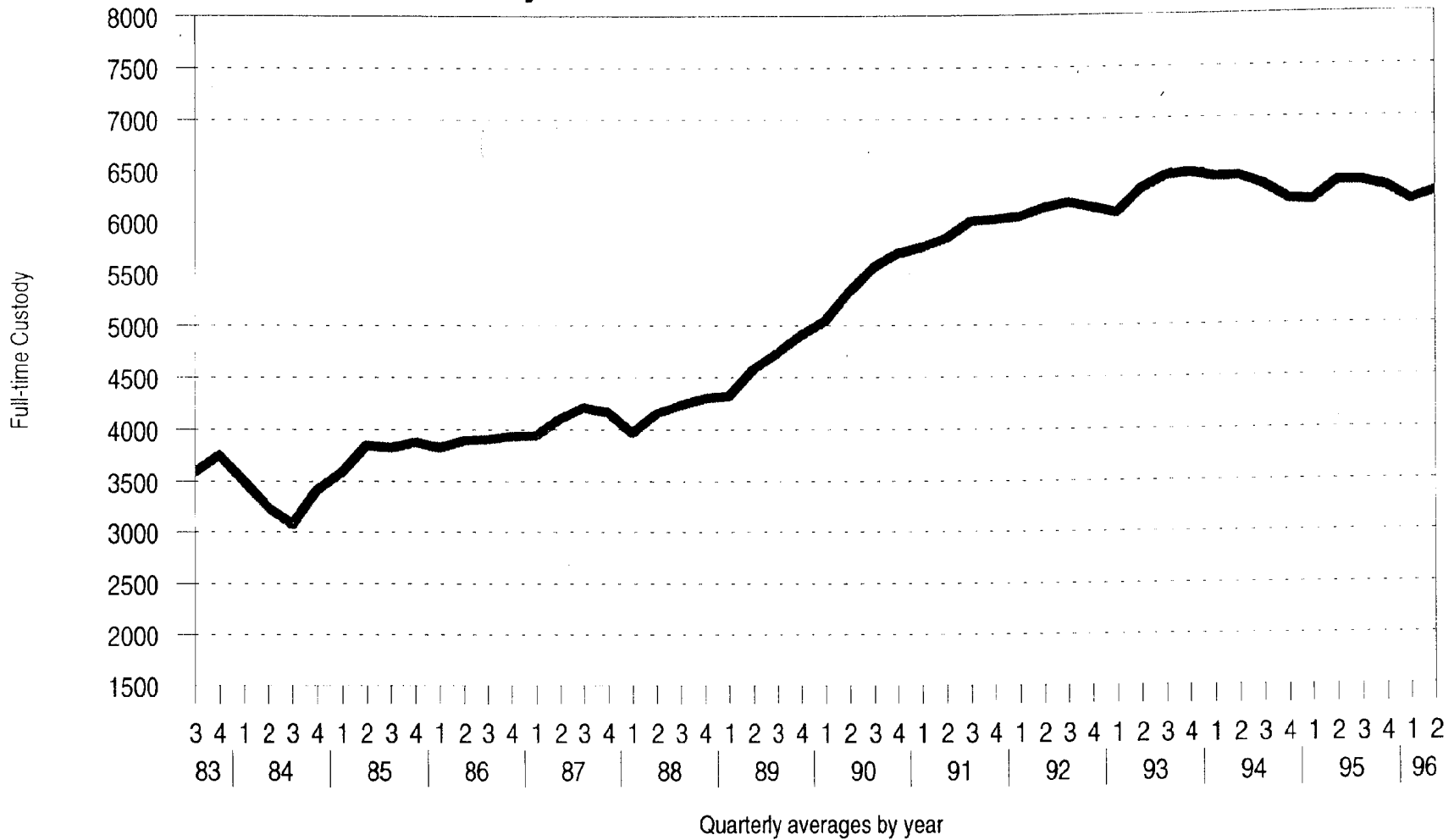
Daily Average Number of Inmates in NSW Correctional Centres (excludes Periodic Detainees)



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services.

Source: Supplied on weekly basis from Correctional Centres

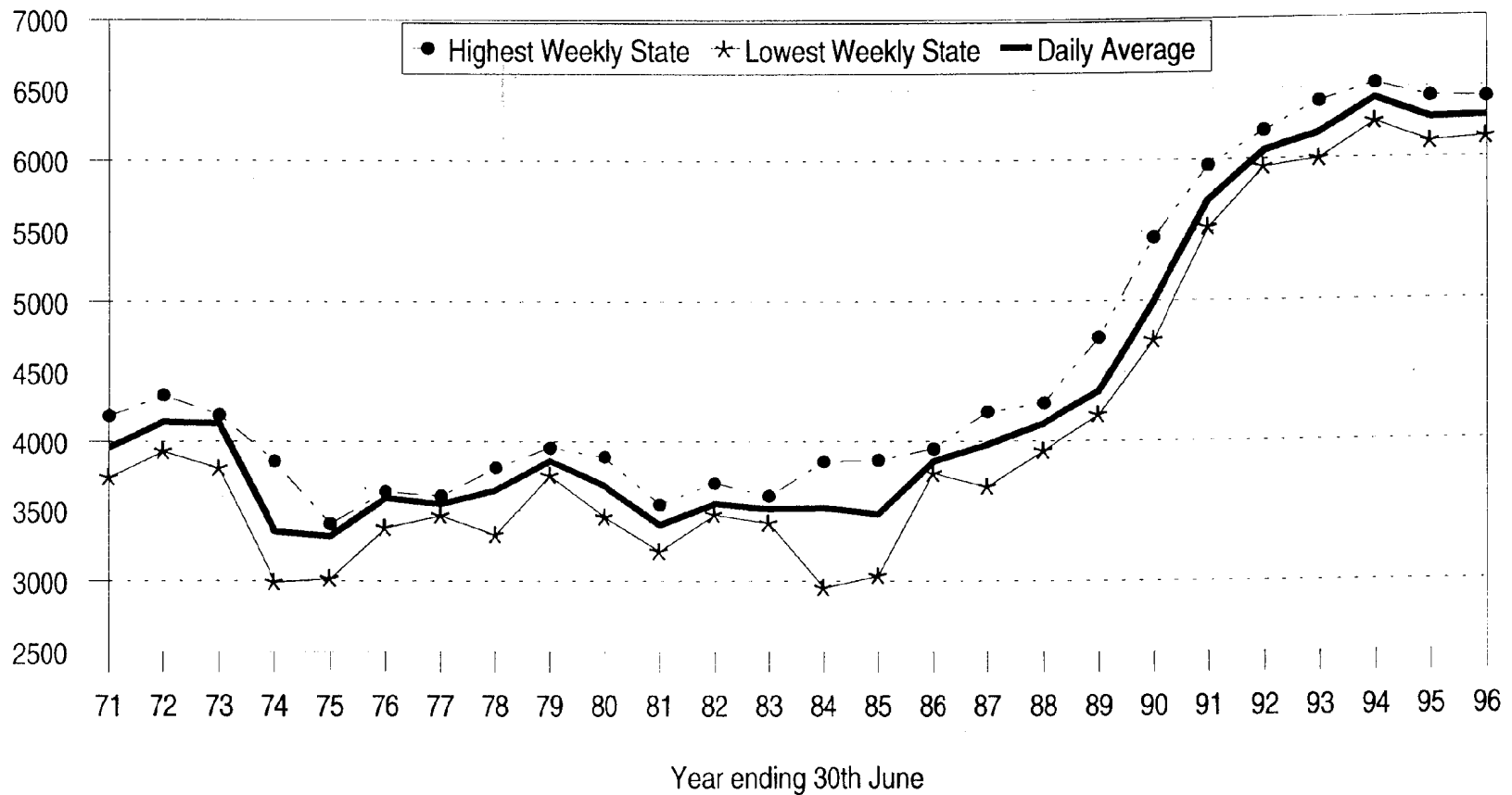
Quarterly Daily Average of Inmates July 1983 to June 1996



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services

Highest and Lowest Weekly States - 1971 to 1996

Full-time Inmates

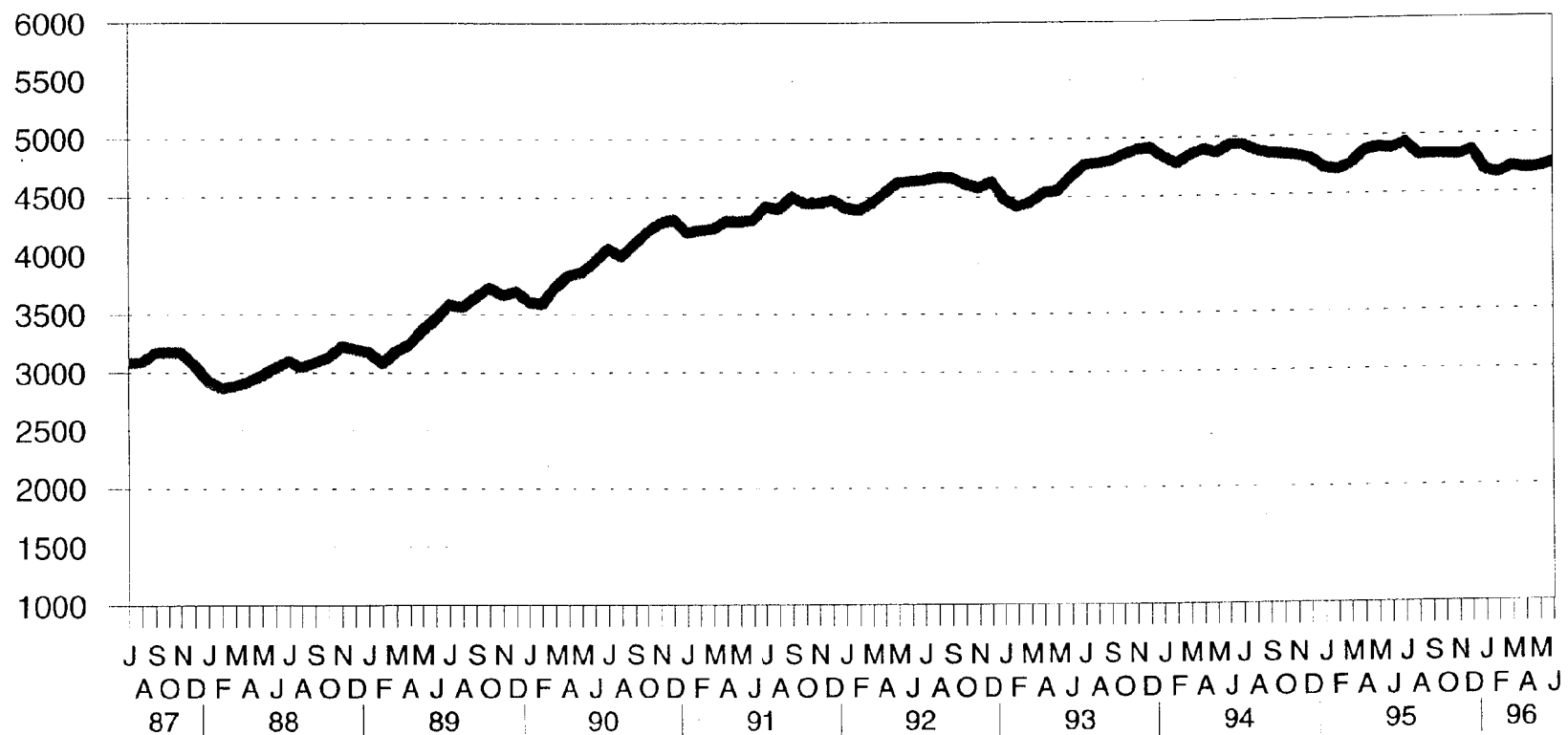


Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services.
 Source: Weekly States Returns

II. MALE INMATES IN FULL-TIME CUSTODY

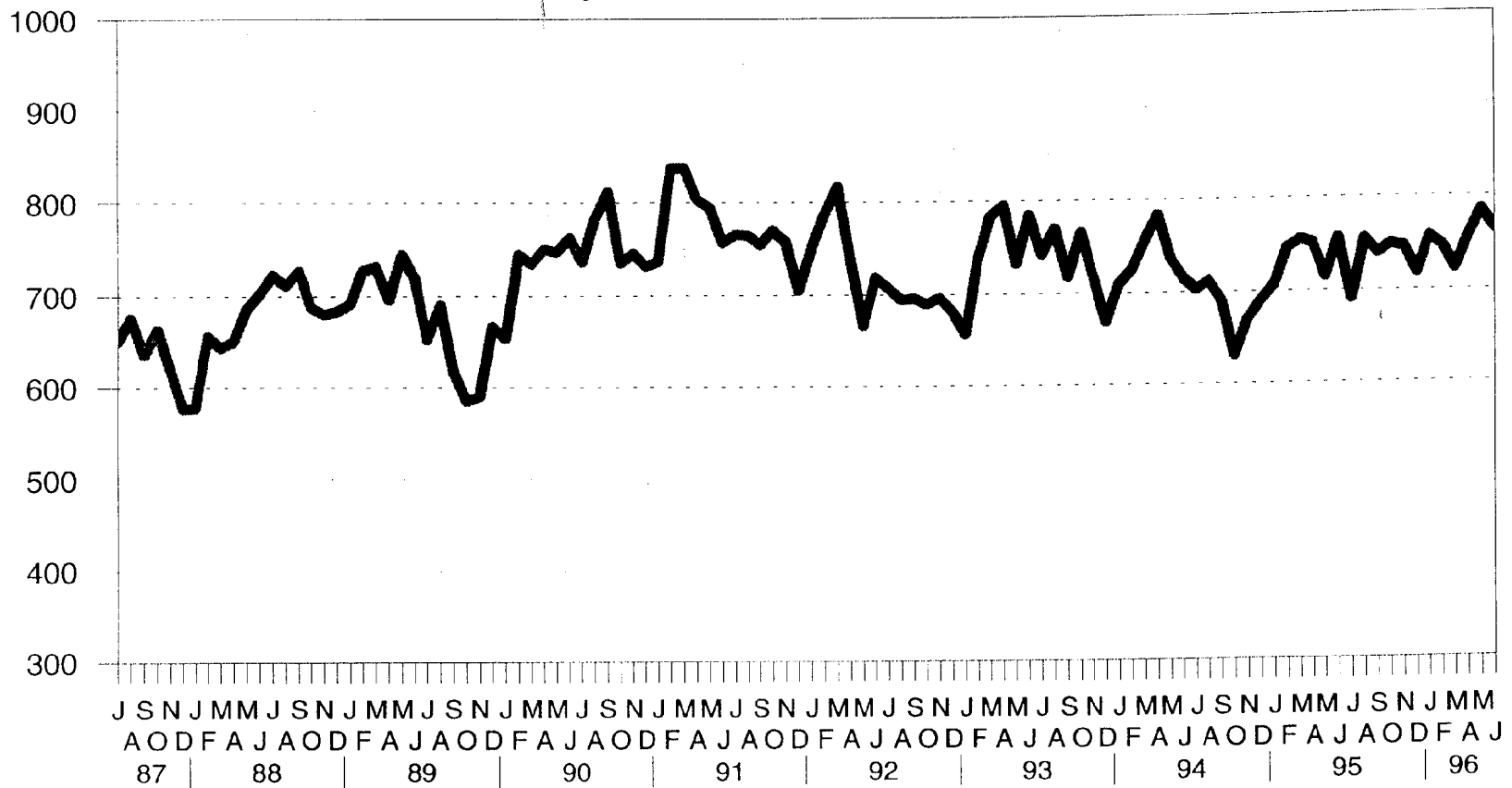
- ◆ Sentenced male inmates comprise the largest segment of the NSW correctional centre population. Hence trends in the number of sentenced males are closely reflected in the trends for the total number of inmates in full-time custody.
- ◆ The number of sentenced male inmates increased by approximately 2000 (66%) in less than 5 years (from January 1990 to June 1994) but is now decreasing slightly.
- ◆ The greatest rate of increase in sentenced males was between January 1989 and November 1990, as predicted from previous calculations on the effect of the introduction of the "Truth in Sentencing" legislation.
- ◆ The number of male inmates on remand, or awaiting trial or deportation fluctuates with a cyclic pattern of low numbers being held at the end of each calendar year prior to the Court's Summer recess.
- ◆ The number of male appellants increased sharply following the introduction of the Sentencing Act. Between September 1989 and June 1993 the number of male appellants increased from approximately 250 to 600 (140%). However, the number of male appellants has now fallen to an average of 434 (November 1995 to June 1996).

Male Inmate Population Sentenced (excludes appellants) July 1987 to June 1996



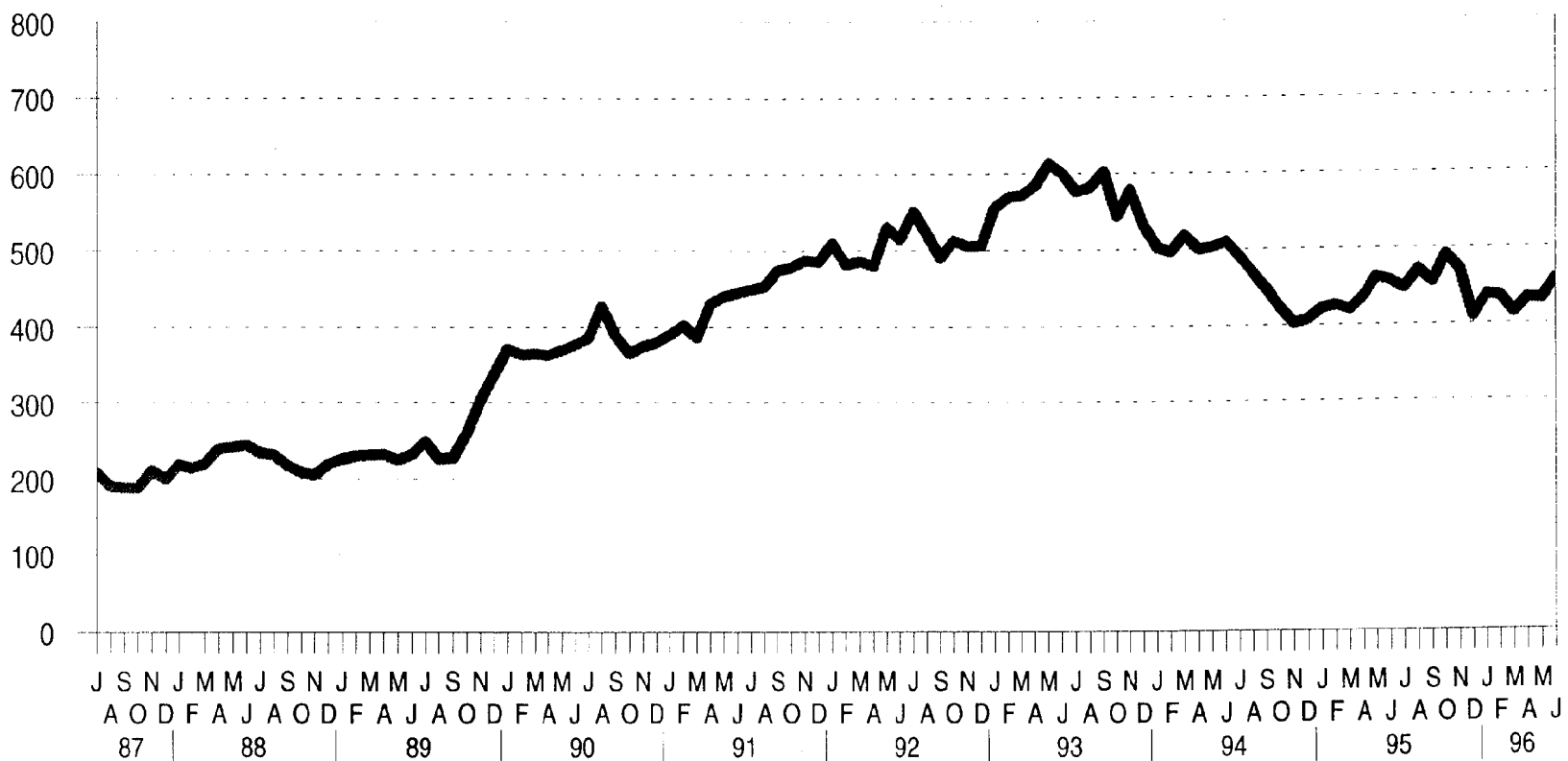
Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services
Source: Weekly states first Sunday of each month

N.S.W. Male Inmate Population Remands, Trials and Deportees July 1987 to June 1996



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services
Source: Weekly states first Sunday of each month

N.S.W. Male Inmate Population Appellants Only July 1987 to June 1996



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services
Source: Weekly states first Sunday of each month

III. FEMALE INMATES IN FULL-TIME CUSTODY

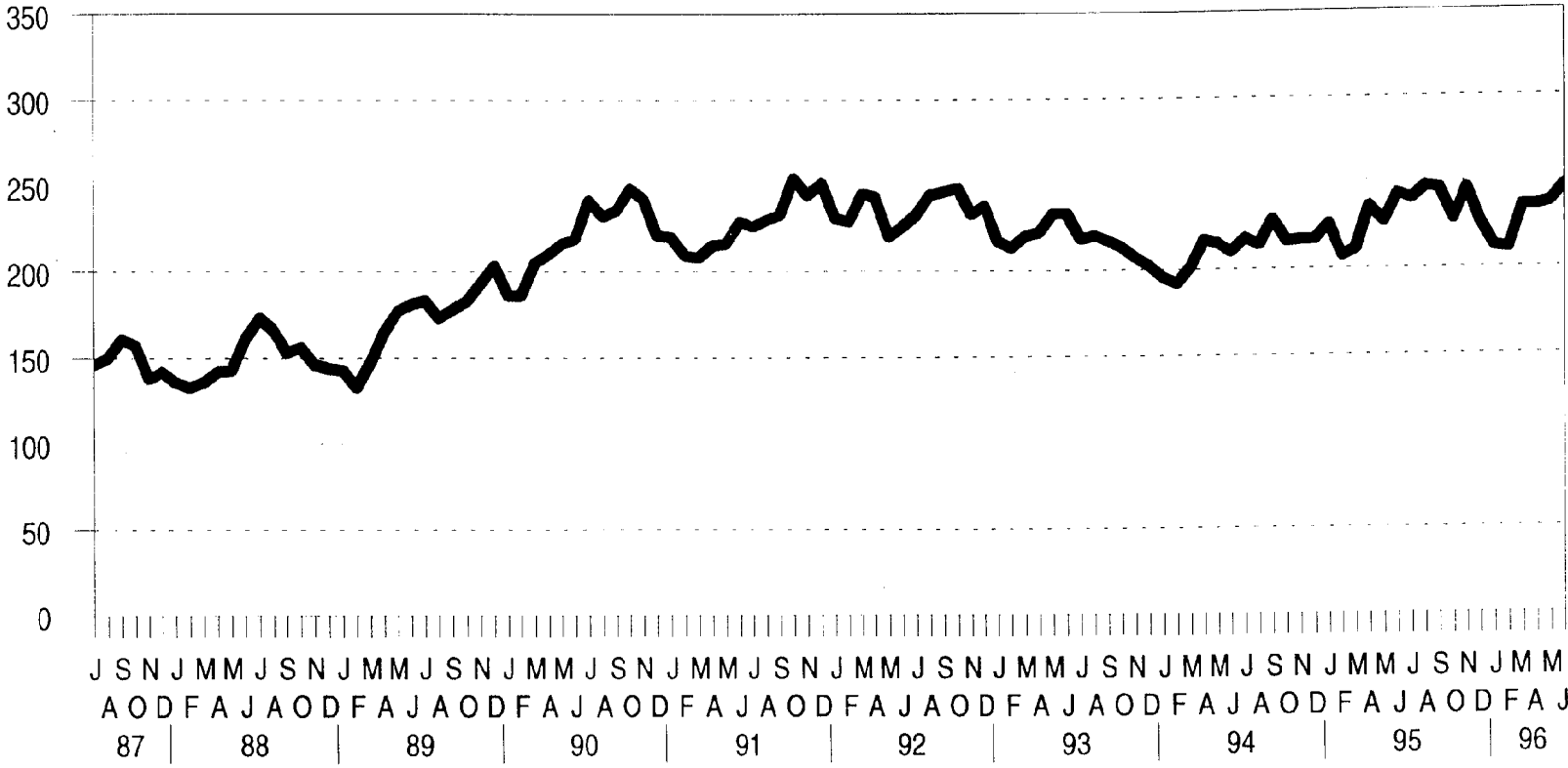
- ◆ Trends in the number of female inmates are more difficult to discern than those in the number of male inmates because of the small numbers involved.

- ◆ There was a substantial increase in female numbers from January 1989 to mid 1990 with a particular increase in sentenced females between January, 1989 and March, 1990. Since January 1990 the number of sentenced female inmates has fluctuated between 254 in October 1991 and 192 in February 1994.

- ◆ The number of female inmates on remand or awaiting trial or deportation has fluctuated between 33 and 75 since 1987.

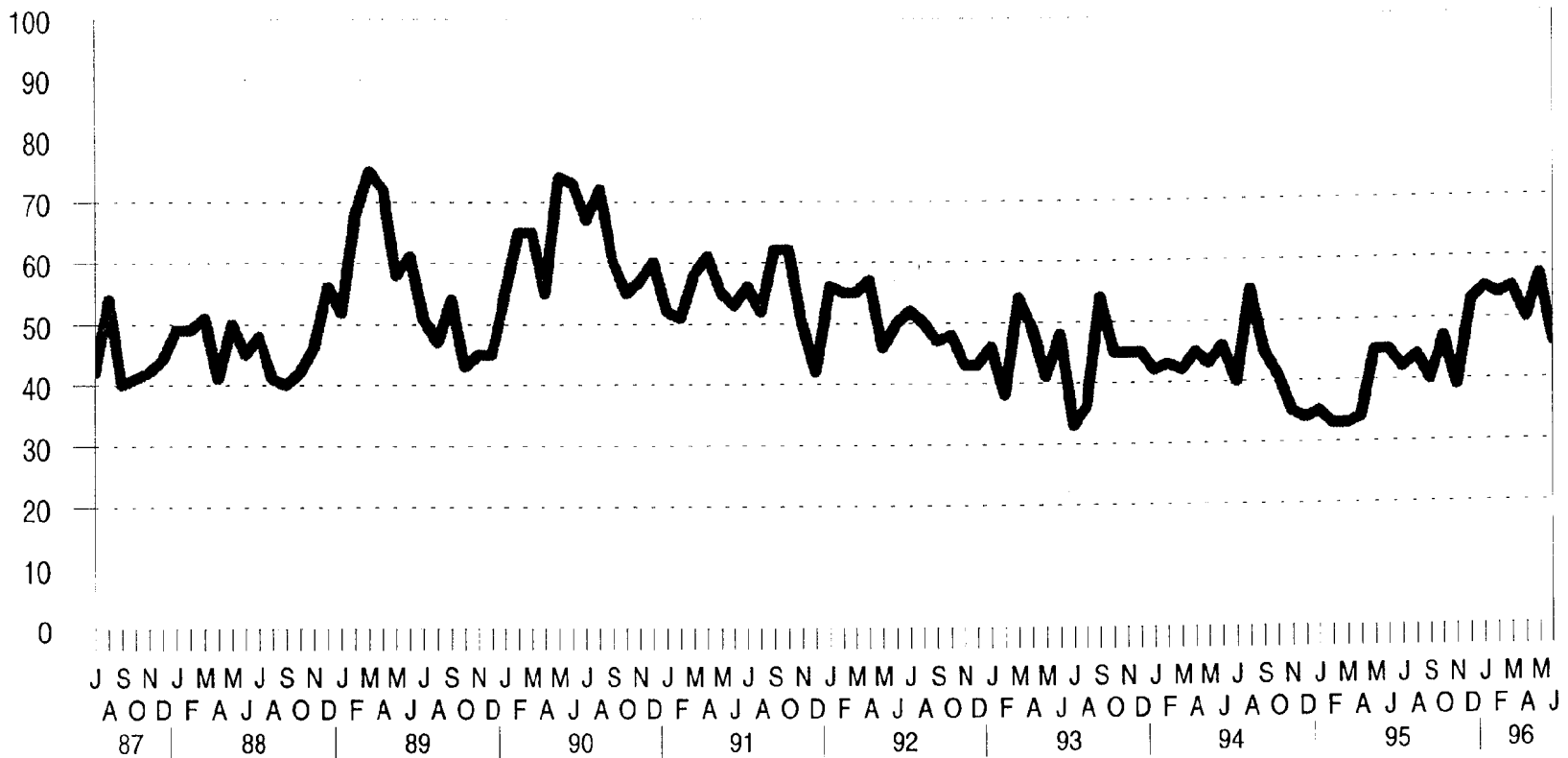
- ◆ The number of female appellants dropped from 55 in July 1993 to 24 in April 1995 but has now risen to 47 in June 1996.

N.S.W. Female Inmate Population Sentenced (excludes appellants) July 1987 to June 1996



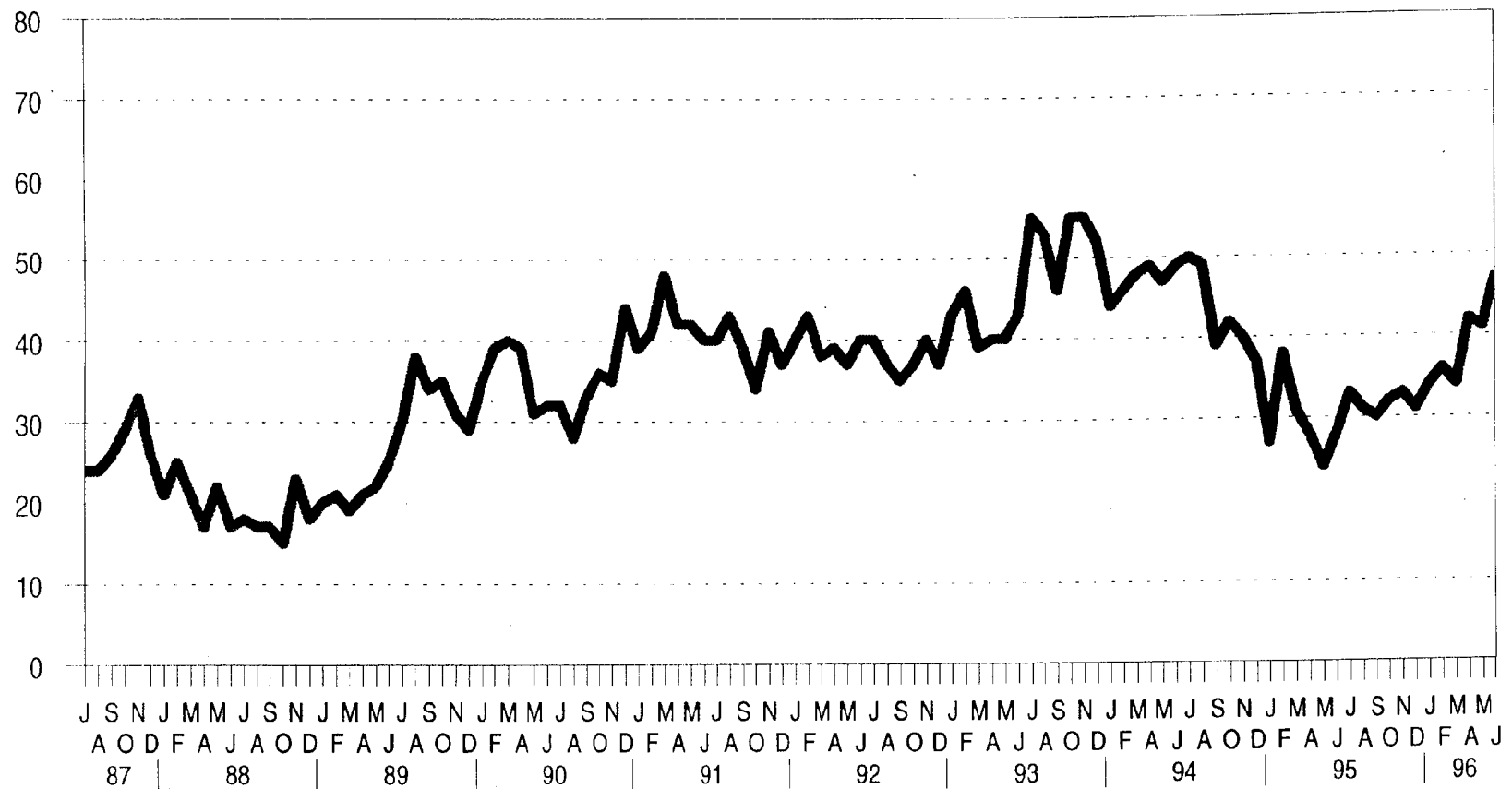
Research & Statistics , NSW Department of Corrective Services
Source: Weekly States first Sunday of the month

N.S.W. Female Inmate Population Remands, Trials and Deportees July 1987 to June 1996



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services
Source: Weekly States, first Sunday of the month

N.S.W. Female Inmate Population Appellants Only July 1987 to June 1996



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services

Source: Weekly States, first Sunday of the month

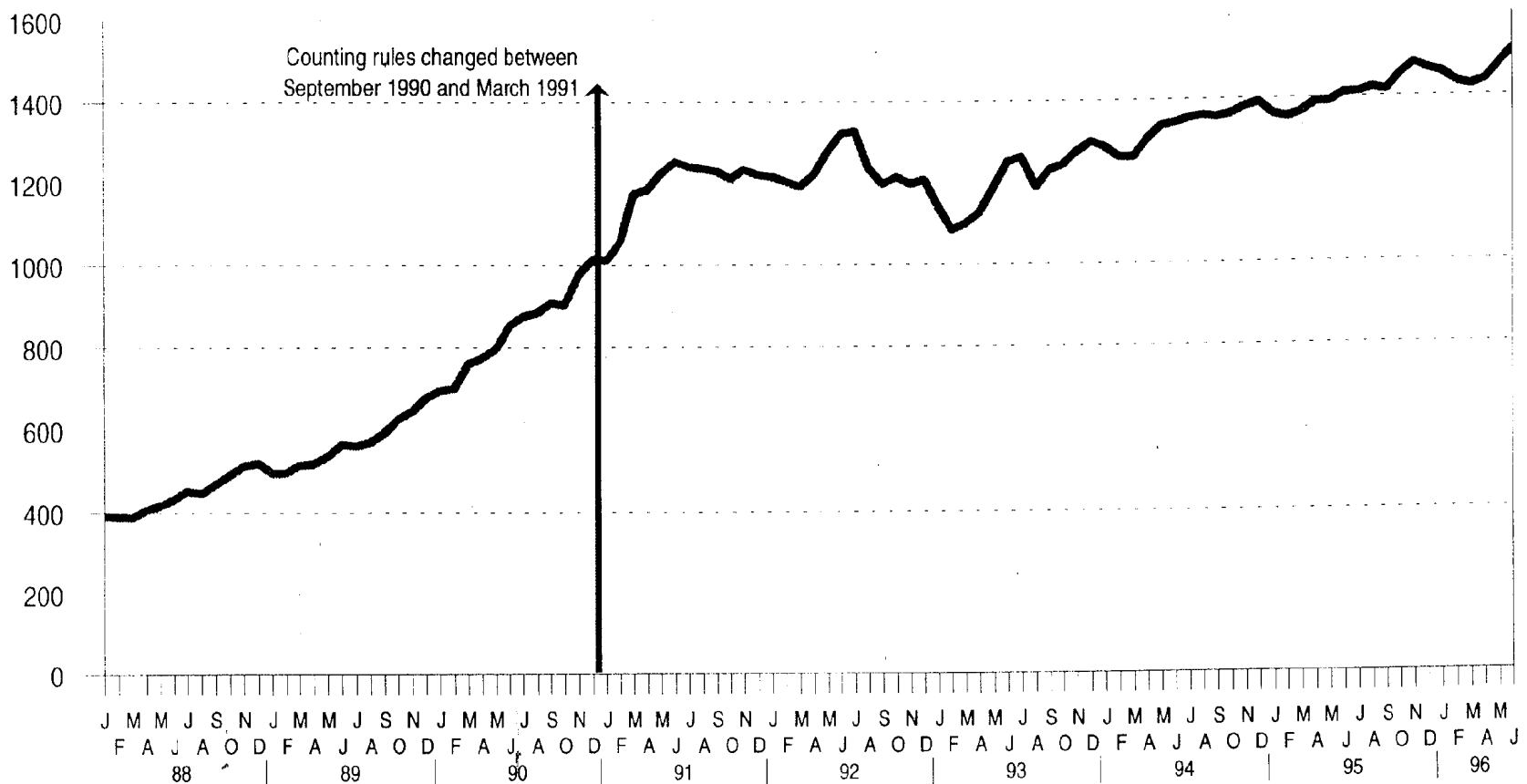
IV. PERIODIC DETAINEES

- ◆ Prior to October 1990 the number of Periodic Detention warrants for inclusion in the Weekly States report was accepted without question as notified to the Research and Statistics Unit. Since that time efforts have been made to standardise the definition of “live warrant” and to include all live warrants in the count. This has led to unavoidable sudden increases in the number of warrants appearing in the Weekly States report as the counting rules changed at a particular Periodic Detention Centre (PDC), or when a collection of old warrants, previously omitted from the Weekly States report, was included. Most of these jumps were in October or November 1990, although in late February 1991 there was an occurrence when 96 live warrants that had not been counted were notified to the Research and Statistics Unit for the first time.

- ◆ The numbers of periodic detainees increased from the beginning of 1989 up until the counting rules were changed in October 1990. Since January 1992 the numbers of periodic detainees with live warrants have risen from 1176 in January 1992 to 1493 in June 1996.

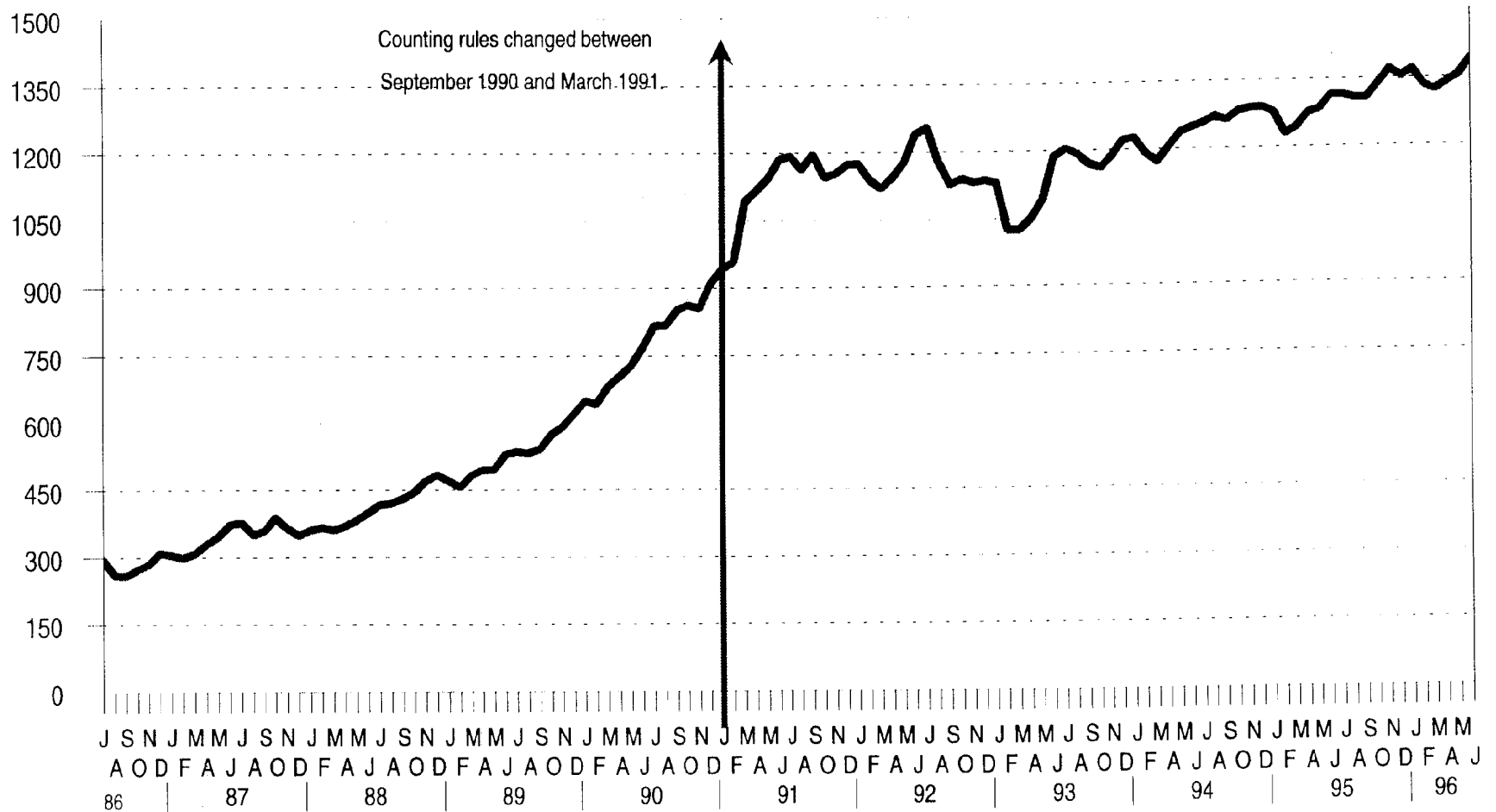
- ◆ The numbers of female periodic detainees are also increasing although the numbers overall are low compared to the number of male detainees.

Daily Average Number of Periodic Detainees in New South Wales January 1988 to June 1996



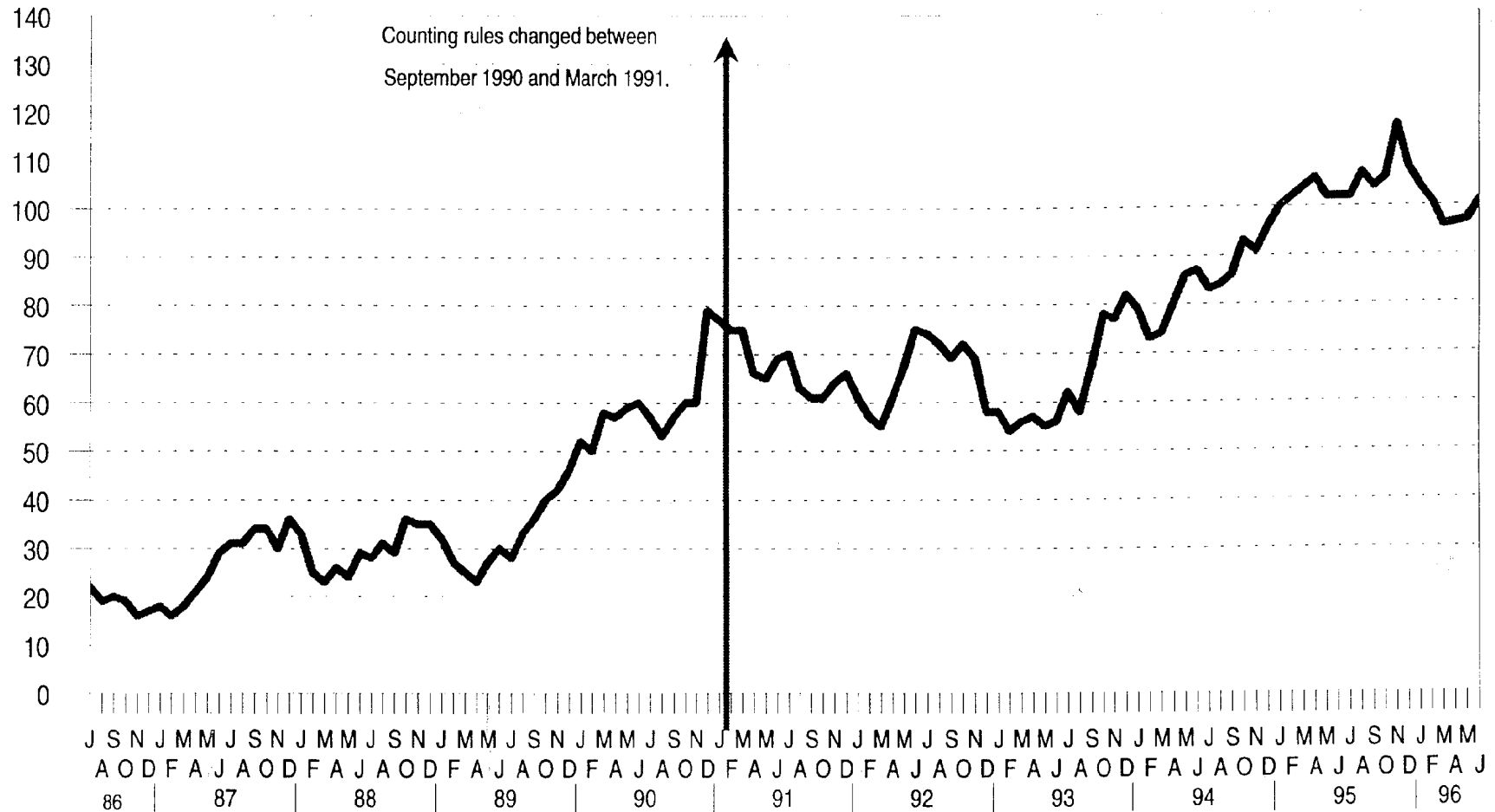
Research & Statistics, Department of Corrective Services
Source: Weekly States.

Number of Male Periodic Detainees in New South Wales July 1986 - June 1996



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services
Source: Weekly States First Sunday of the Month

Number of Female Periodic Detainees in New South Wales July 1986 - June 1996



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services
Source: Weekly States First Sunday of the Month

V. FINE DEFAULTERS

Fine Defaulters Received

- ◆ The moratorium on the reception of fine defaulters into NSW correctional centres at the end of 1987 and the legislative amendments introduced in January 1988 reduced the number of fine defaulters received into NSW correctional centres. There was a further moratorium on the execution of fine default warrants between March and June 1994.

- ◆ However, the number of inmates received into NSW correctional centres for the sole reason of default of fine increased from the end of 1988 to about the middle of 1992.

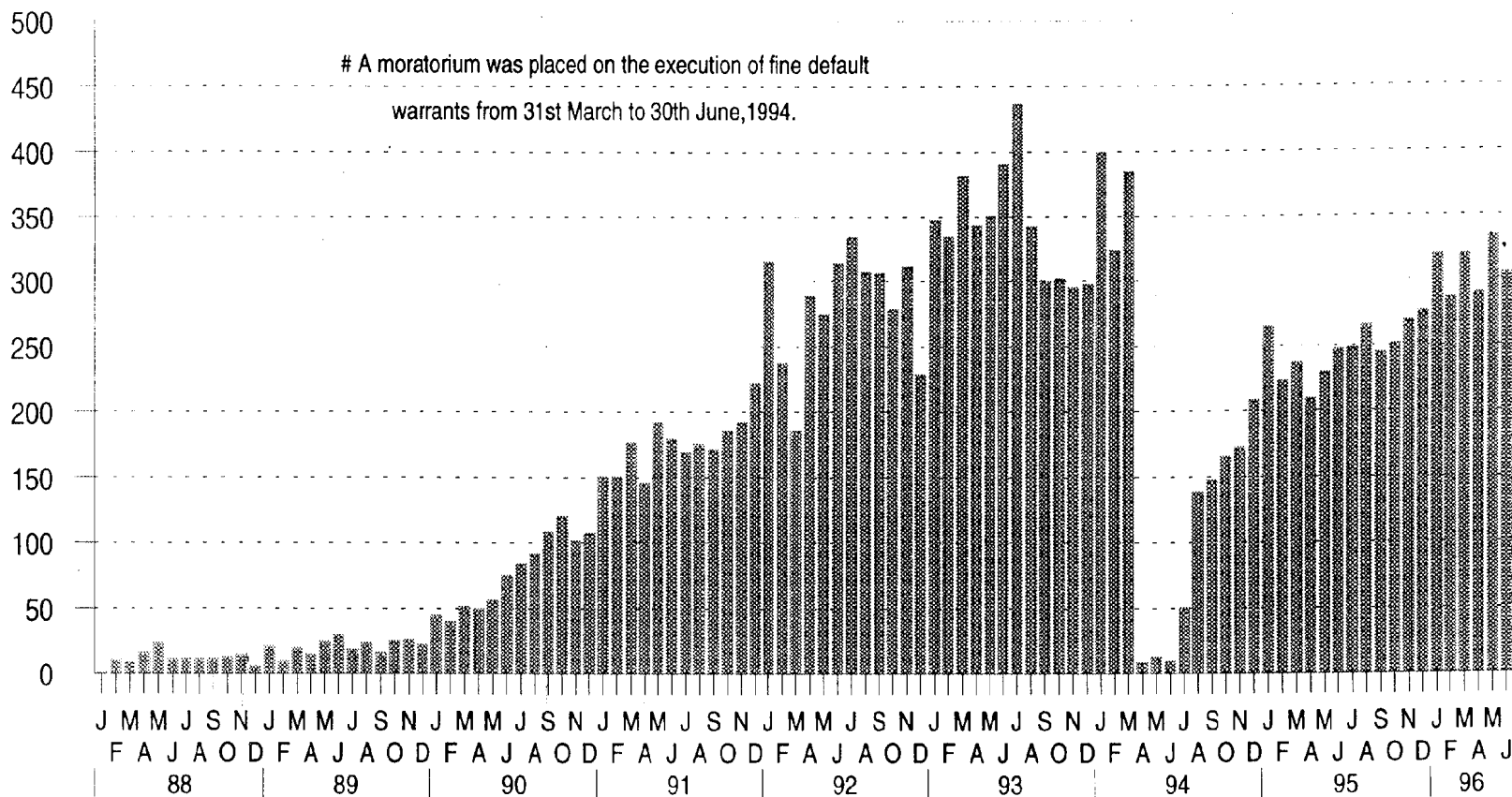
- ◆ These numbers represent a reduction from the high of 553 fine defaulters received in September 1983 (not shown on graph) although recent highs have reached over 300 fine defaulters received in a month.

Fine Defaulters Present on a Given Day

- ◆ The number of inmates held in correctional centres on a given day for the sole reason of default of fine has only been collected since November 1991. The relatively low number present on any one day combined with the large number received clearly illustrates the large flow of these kinds of inmates through the correctional centres for relatively short periods of stay.

- ◆ Note that the current rate of cut-out of fines changed from \$50.00 a day to \$100.00 a day on 1/12/92.

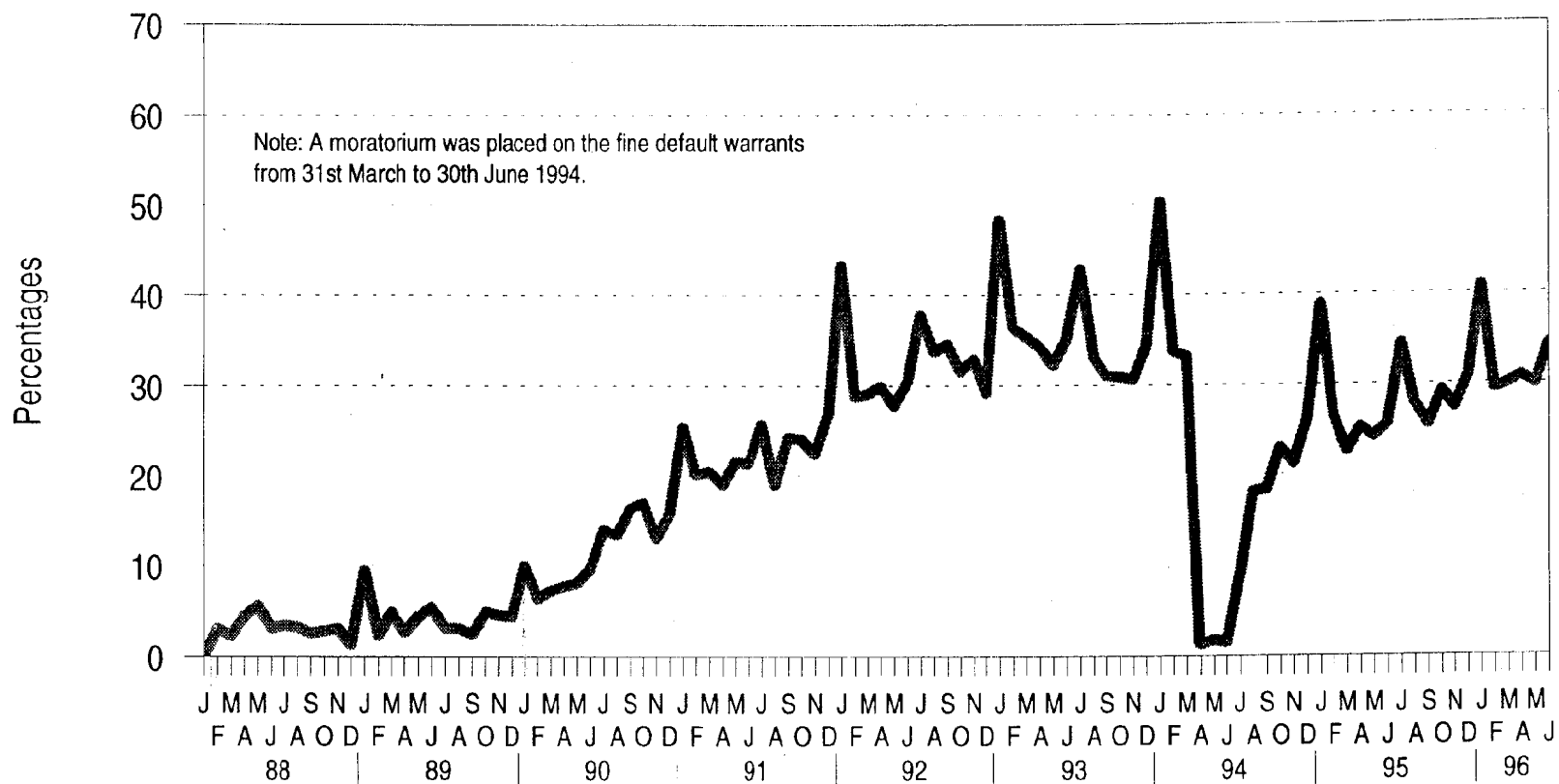
Number of Fine Defaulters Received January 1988 to June 1996



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services

Source: Based on individual returns from each institution up to February 1989. From March 1989 information supplied by Computer Services Division

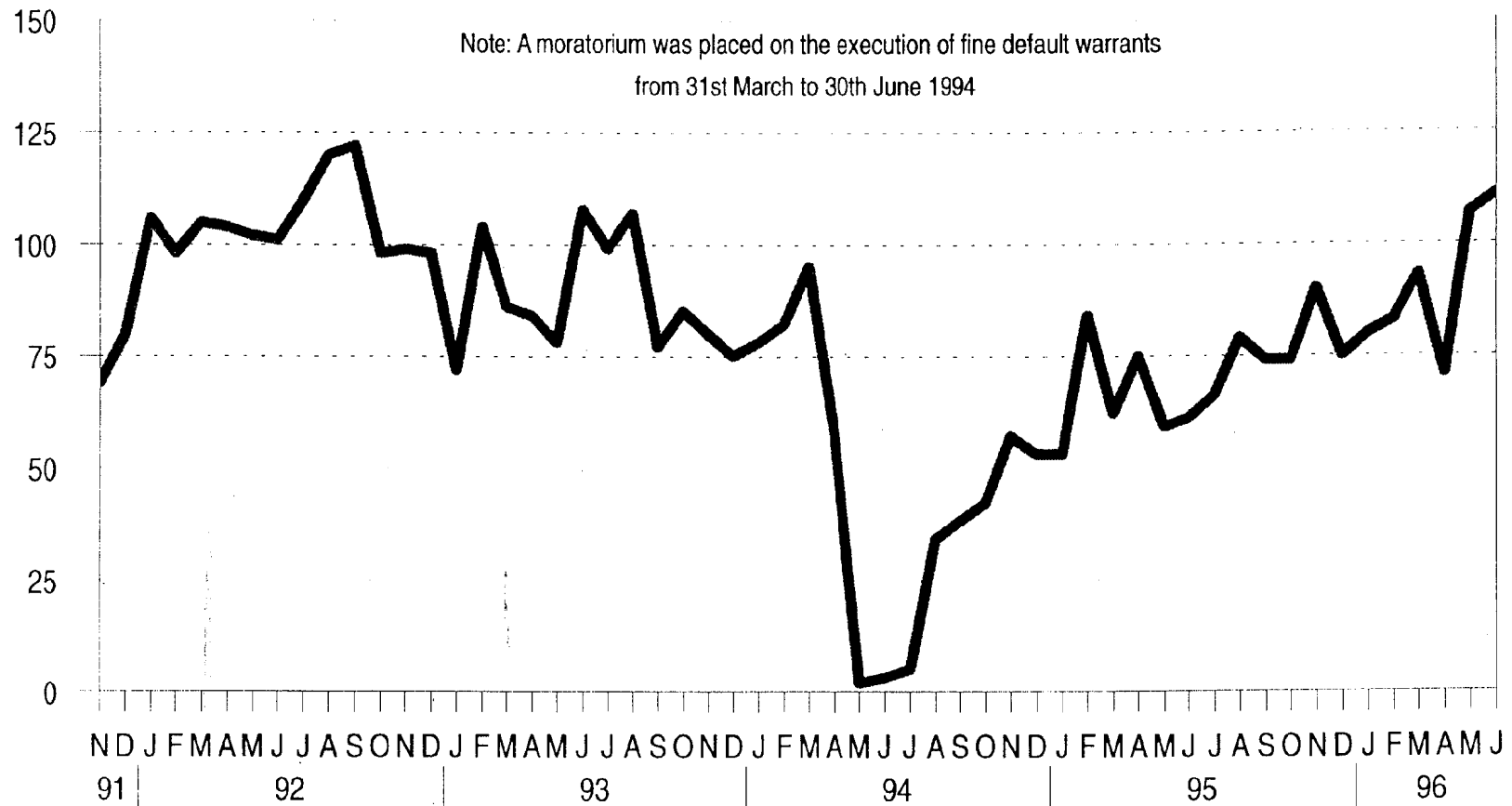
Fine Defaulters Received as a Percentage of Total Sentenced Receptions January 1988 - June 1996



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services

Source: Based on individual returns from each institution up to February 1989. From March 1989 information supplied by Computer Services Division .

Number of Fine Defaulters in NSW from November 1991



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services

Source: Weekly States first Sunday of the month

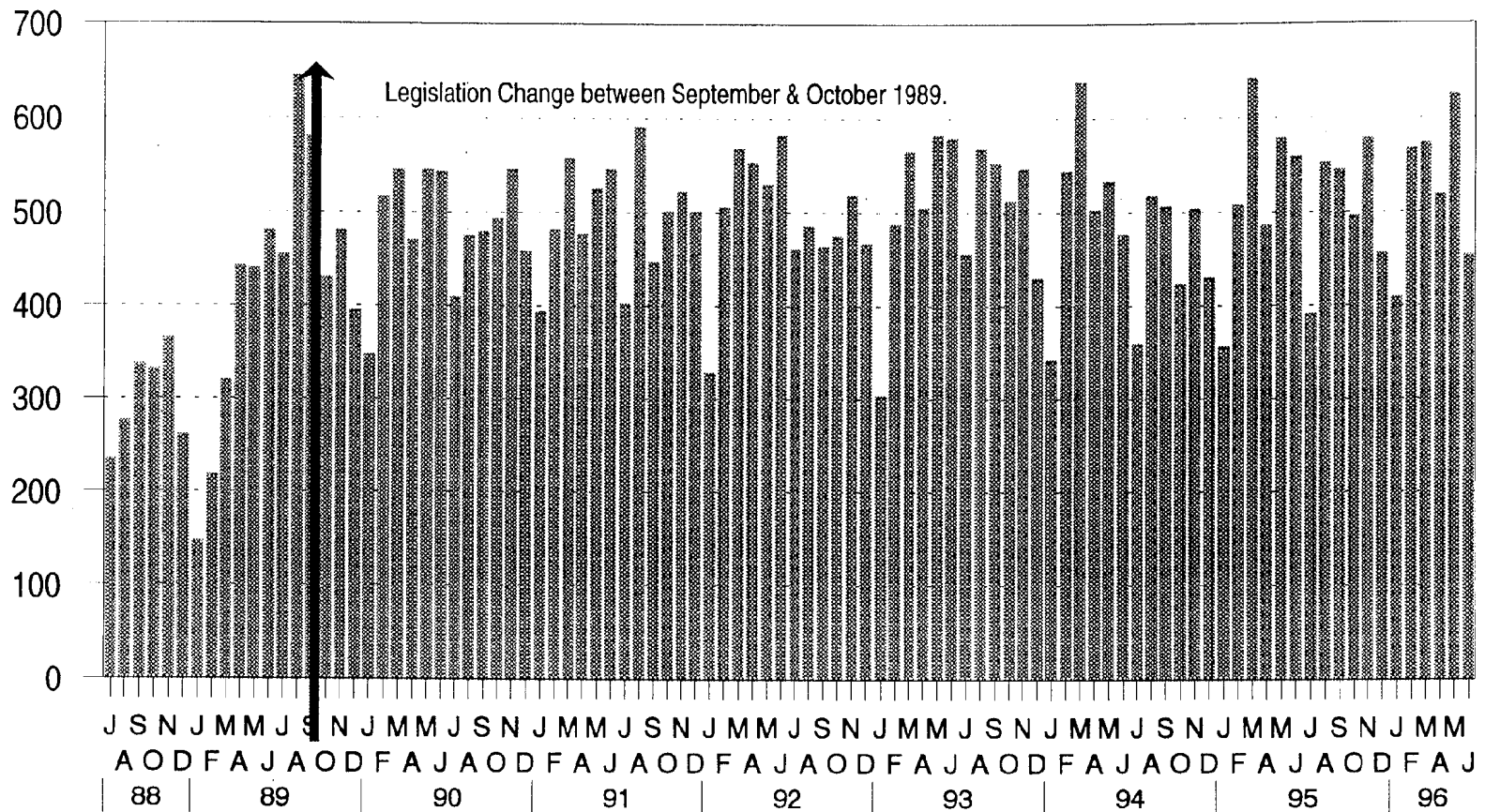
VI. SENTENCED INMATE RECEPTIONS

- ◆ The number of new sentenced receptions received each month fluctuates, with the lowest number of sentenced receptions in January and July each year, corresponding to court vacations.

- ◆ The quarterly number of new sentenced receptions has continued to fluctuate around 1500 since the introduction of the Sentencing Act (1989).

- ◆ When sentenced receptions are graphed according to season, the number of sentenced inmates received in 1995/96 (by season) was similar to or higher than corresponding periods for the previous year. (Spring = September, October, November; Summer = December, January, February; Autumn = March, April, May; Winter = June, July, August).

Number of New Sentenced Receptions July 1988 to June 1996 (excludes Fine Defaulters and Periodic Detainees)



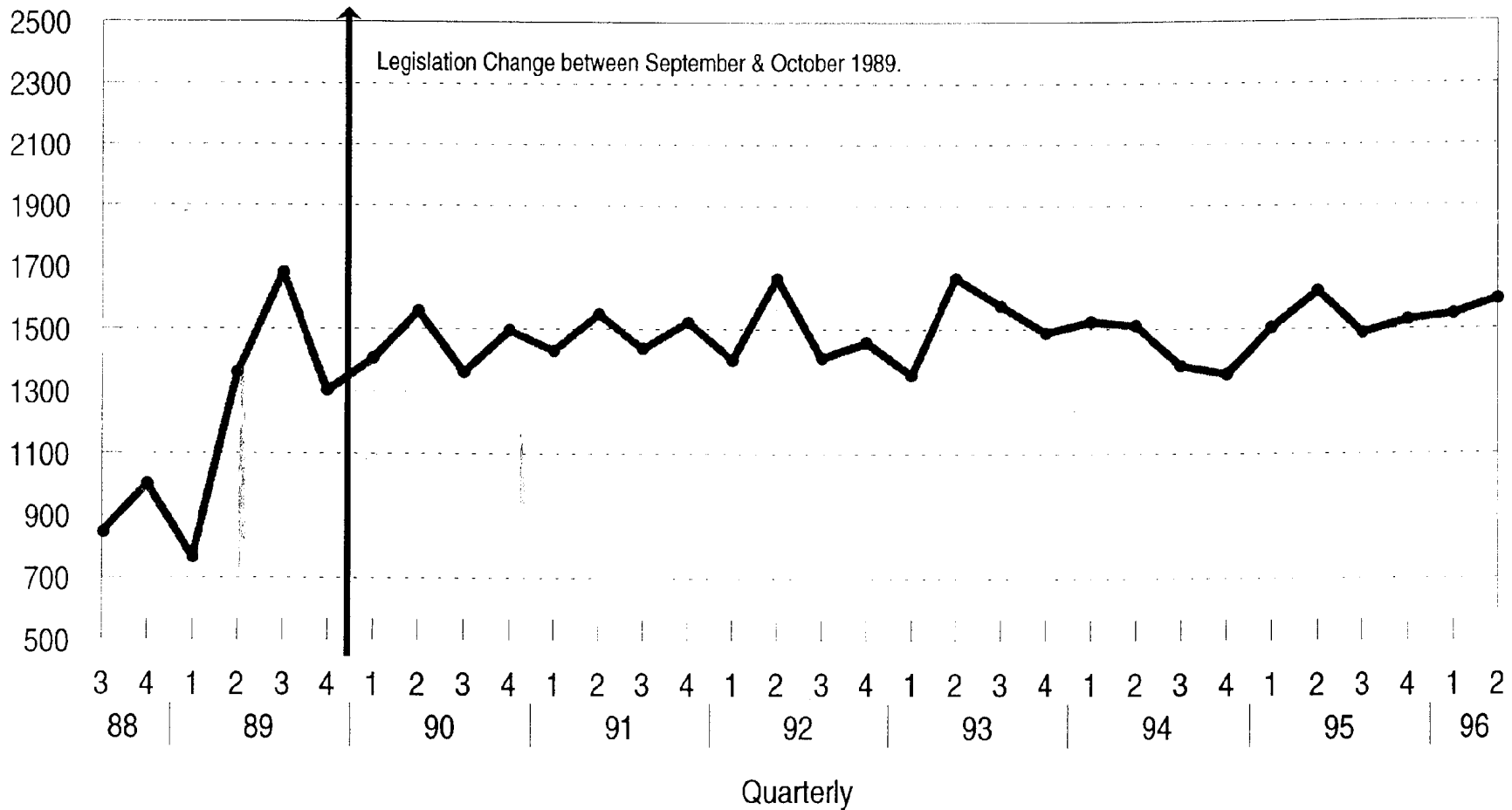
Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services

Source: Based on individual returns from each institution up to February 1989. From March 1989 based on information supplied by Computer Services Division.

Quarterly Number of New Sentenced Reception

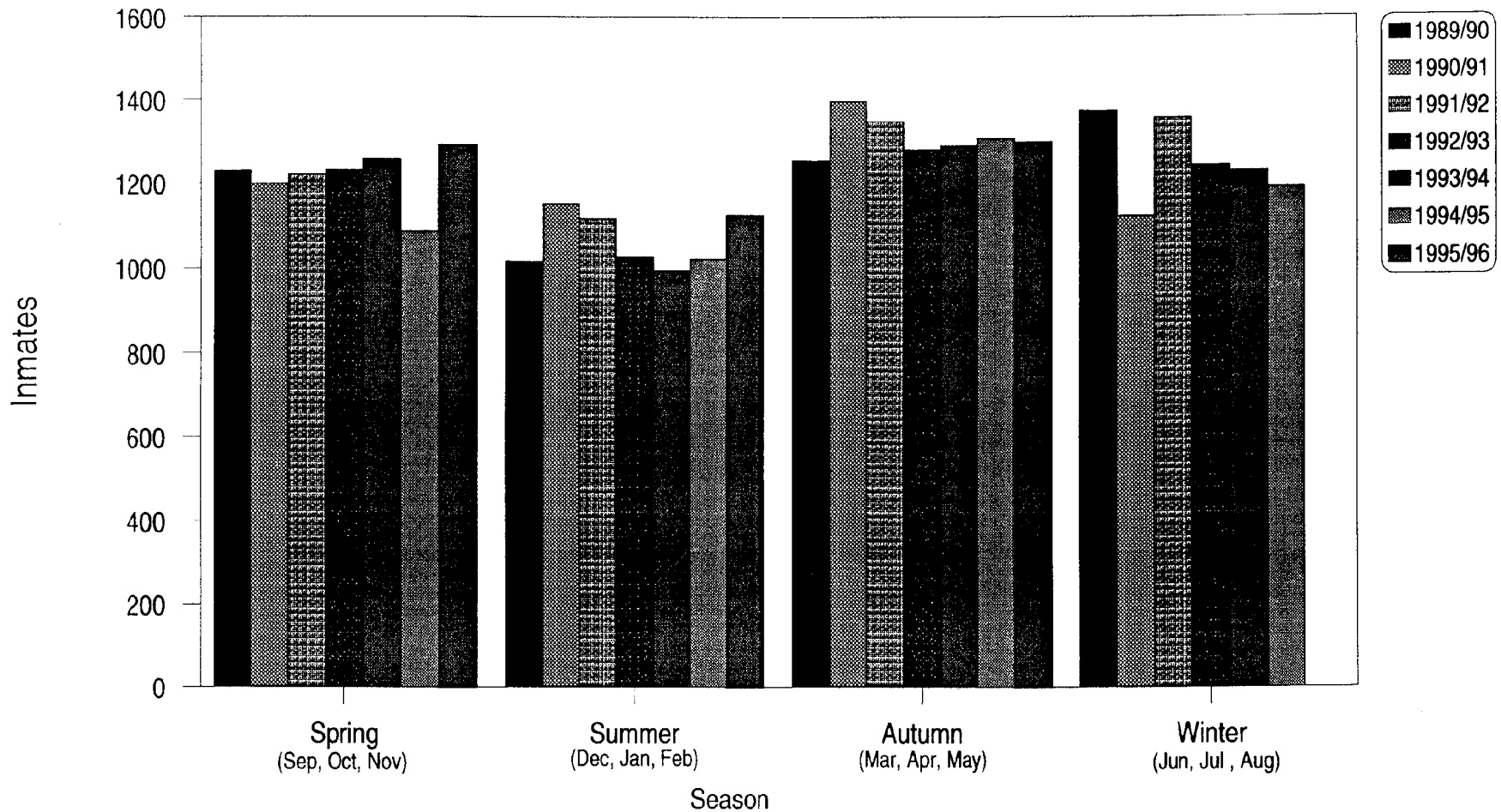
July 1988 to June 1996

(excludes Fine Defaulters and Periodic Detainees)



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services.

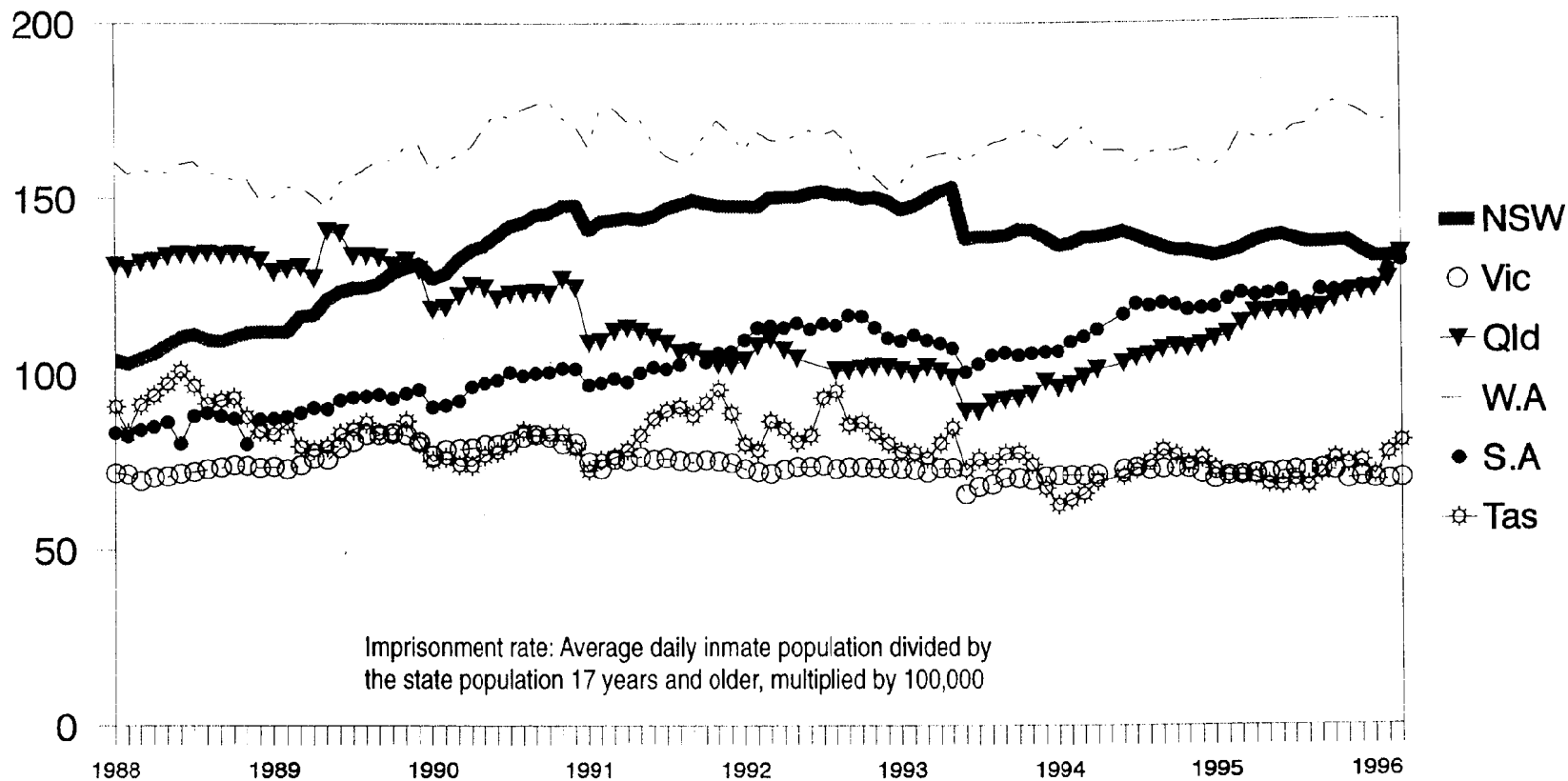
Seasonal Trends in Number of Inmates Received into NSW Correctional Centres Spring 1989 to Autumn 1996 (Excluding Periodic Detainees and Fine Defaulters)



VII. IMPRISONMENT RATE PER 100,000 ADULT POPULATION - NSW COMPARED TO OTHER STATES WITHIN AUSTRALIA

- ◆ As at March 1996 NSW imprisoned a higher proportion of its adult population (132.8 per 100,000) than did Tasmania (80.3) or Victoria (69.8).
- ◆ NSW (132.8) imprisoned a lower proportion of its adult population than did Western Australia (170.6), or the Northern Territory (388.2) (not shown on the graph).
- ◆ NSW imprisoned about the same proportion of its adult population as Queensland (132.9) and South Australia (131.1)
- ◆ Over the last 2 yrs Queensland has shown the biggest increase in imprisonment rate among the states (99 in March 1994 to 133 March 1996). There were smaller increases for South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania while Victoria stayed about the same and the imprisonment rate decreased in New South Wales and the Northern Territory. (Note that internal counting rules may confound these trends).

Imprisonment Rate per 100,000 Adult Population January 1988 to March 1996



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services

Note: Figures for May 1994 are not available.

Source: Australian Prison Trends, Australian Institute of Criminology and National Correctional Statistics: Prisons, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

VIII. SEGREGATION AND PROTECTION

- ◆ Inmates may be segregated from other inmates for the safety of another inmate or of a custodial officer, or for the security of the correctional centre, or for the preservation of good order and discipline within the correctional centre (Section 22, Prisons Act., 1952).

- ◆ Some inmates are separated from other inmates “on protection” at their own request.

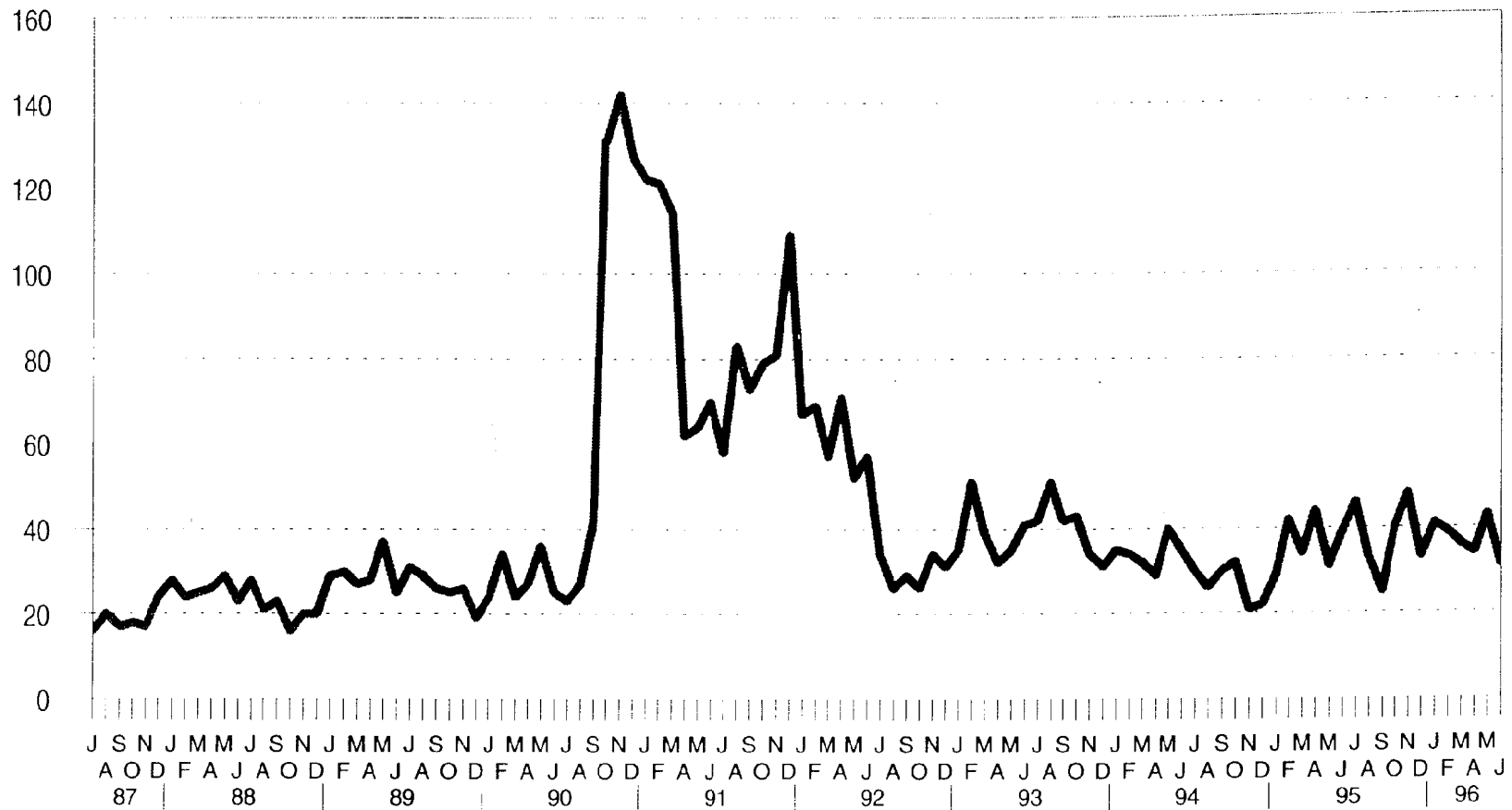
- ◆ The number of male inmates on segregation increased markedly during September 1990, the time of the correctional centre disturbances related to the introduction of a new inmate property policy.

- ◆ Recent numbers of males on segregation have approximately returned to pre September 1990 levels.

- ◆ The number of male inmates seeking protection fell to almost 300 in 1992 but had risen to around 700 in 1996.

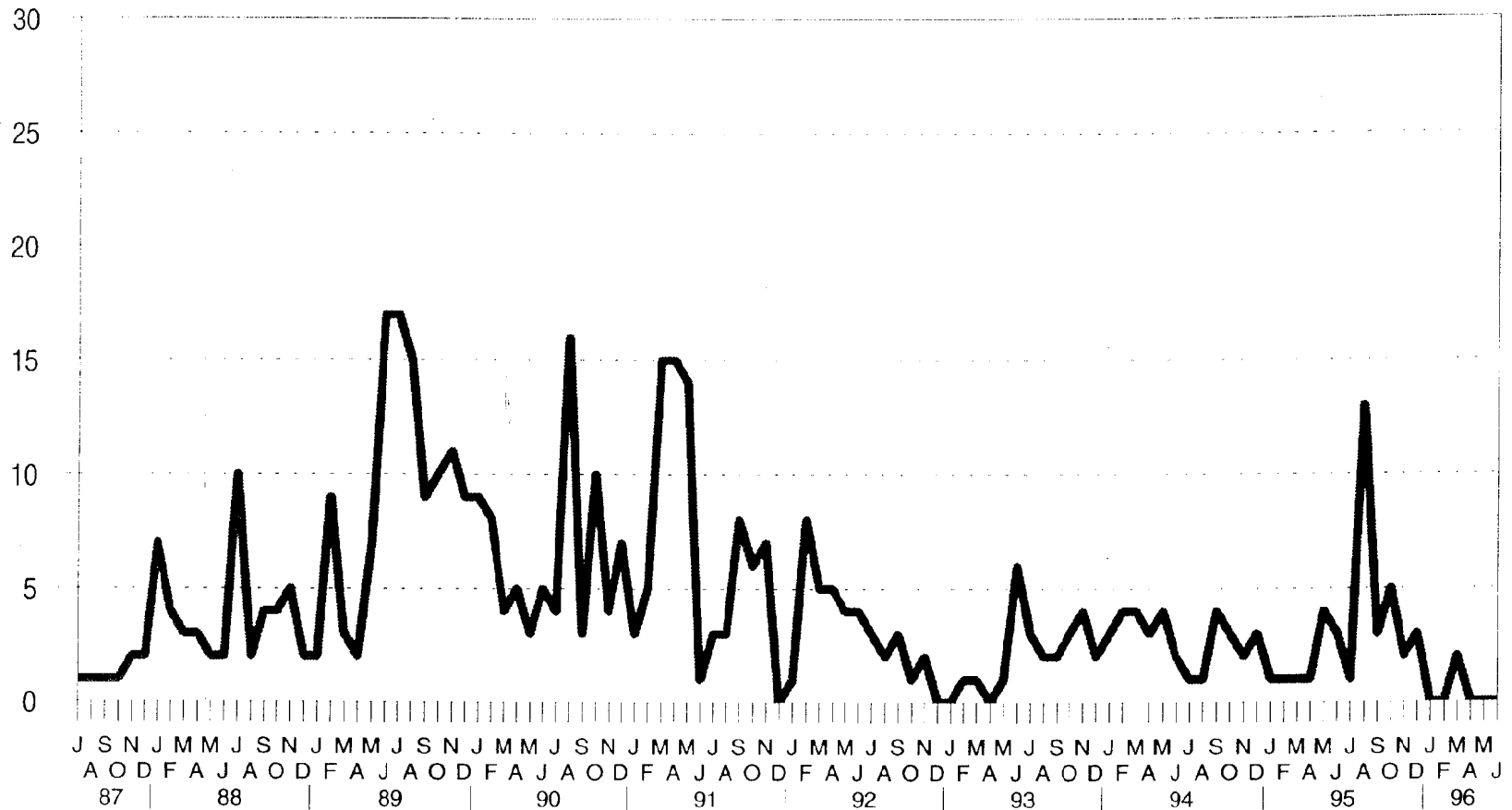
- ◆ The number of females on segregation averaged 3 and the number of females on protection averaged 10 between July 1993 and June 1996.

Number of Male Inmates on Segregation



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services
Source: Weekly States, first Sunday of each month

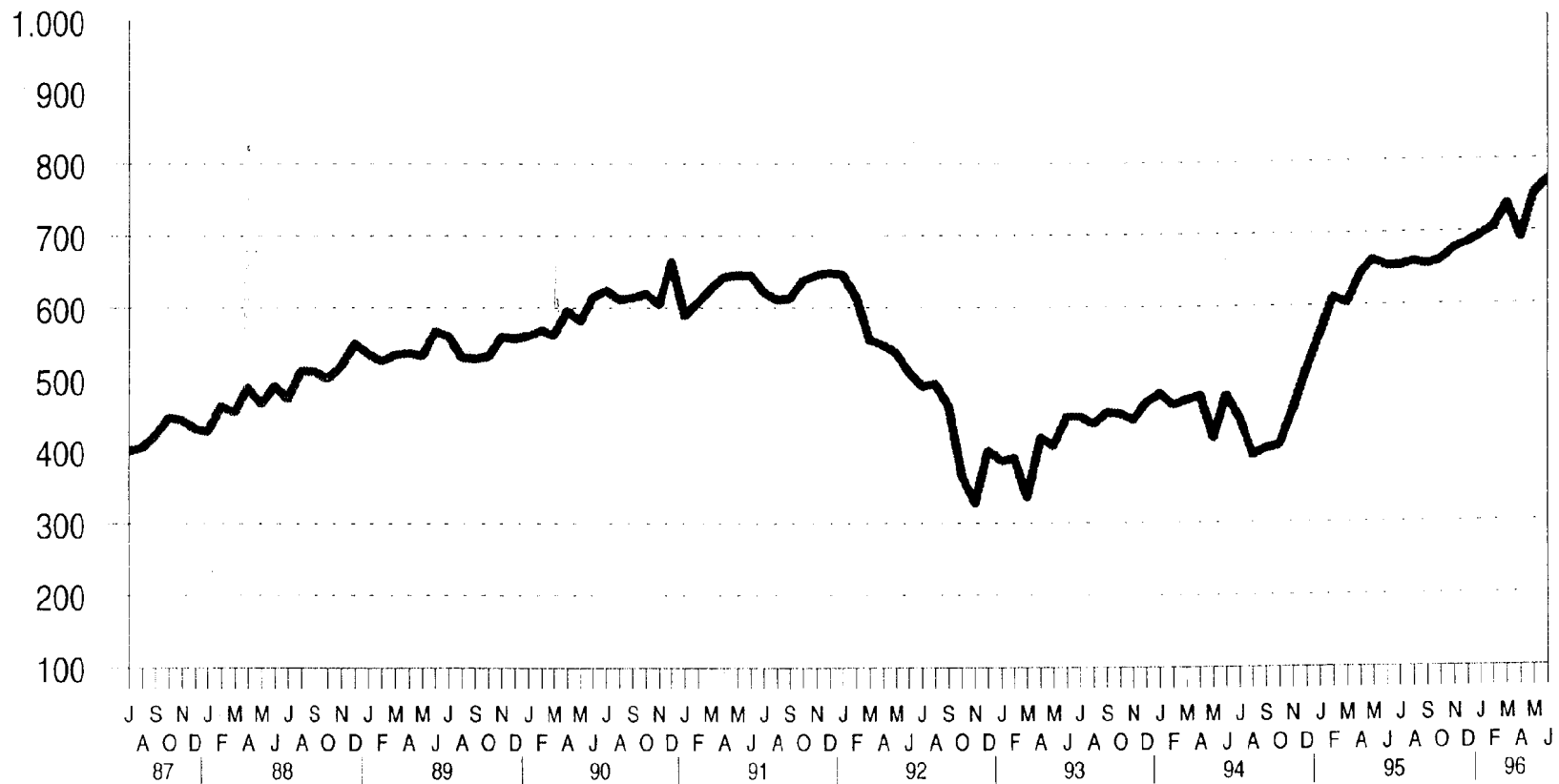
Number of Female Inmates on Segregation



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services
Source: Weekly States, first Sunday of each month

Number of Male Inmates on Protection

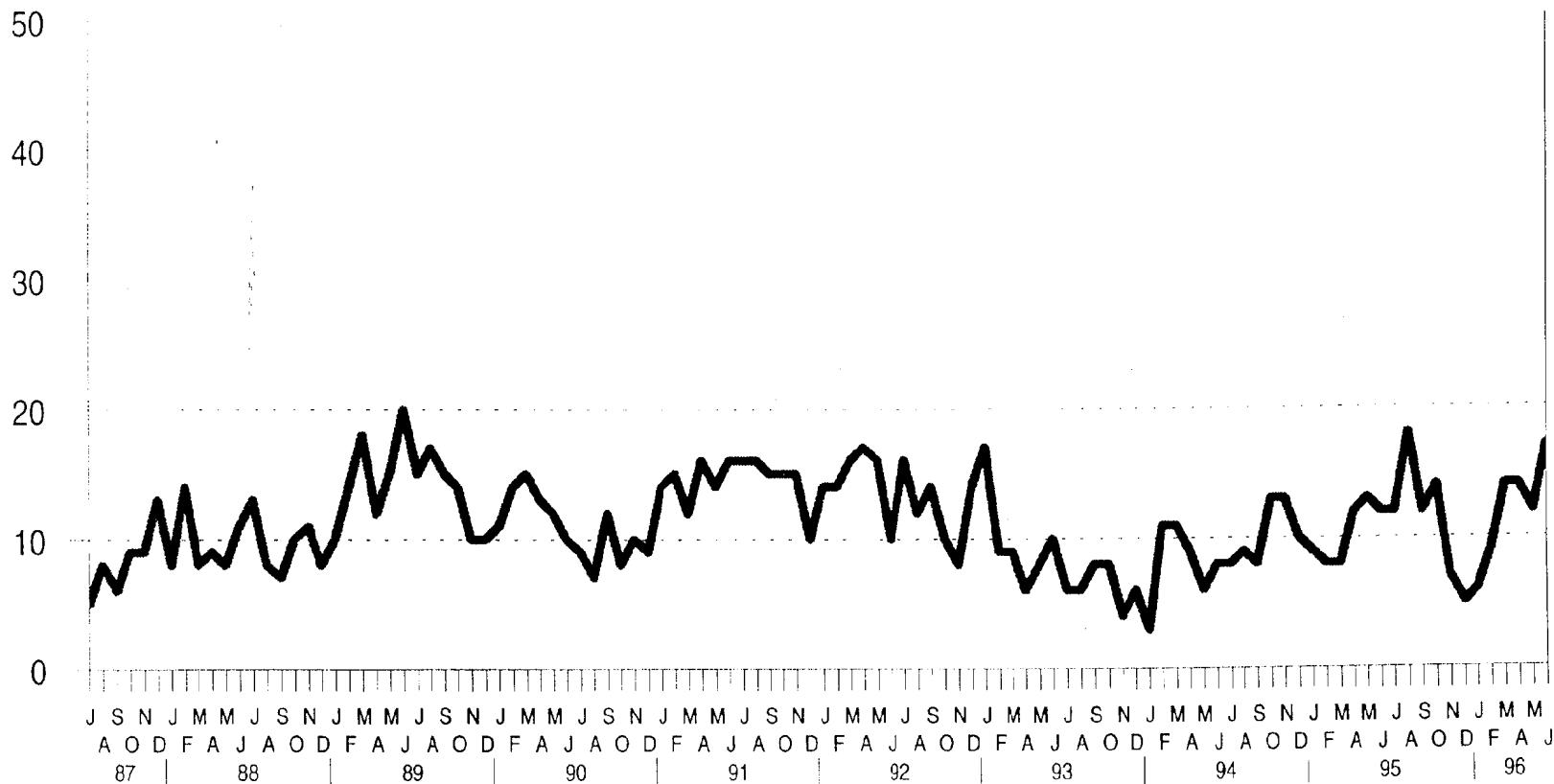
(On protection: at inmate's own request)



Research & Statistics , NSW Department of Corrective Services
Source: Weekly States , first Sunday of each month

Number of Female Inmates on Protection

(On protection: at inmate's own request)



Research & Statistics , NSW Department of Corrective Services
Source: Weekly States , first Sunday of each month

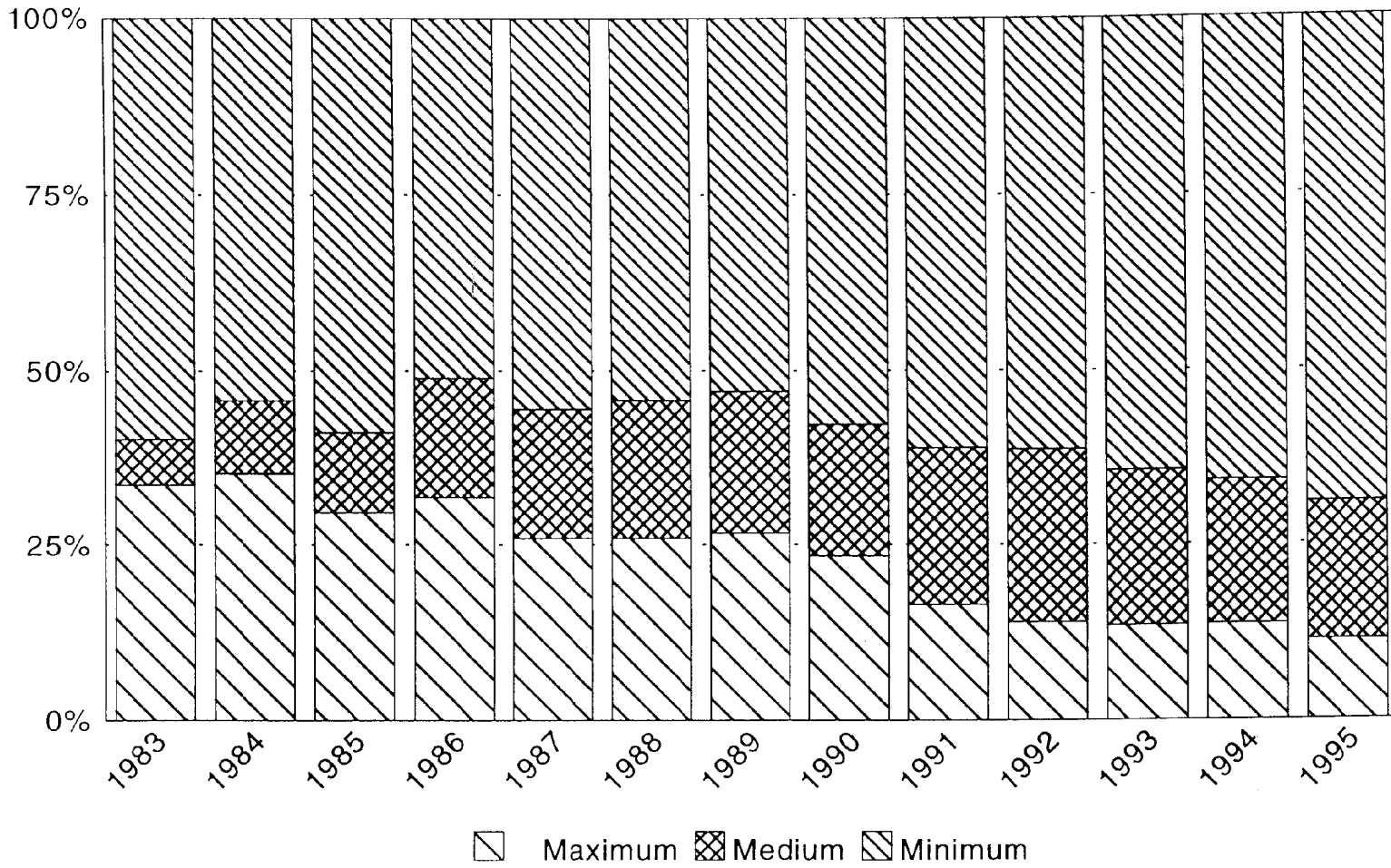
IX. INMATE CLASSIFICATION

- ◆ The following graphs show trends in inmate security classification as at census day (30th June) each year from 1983 to 1995 for full-time classified inmates.

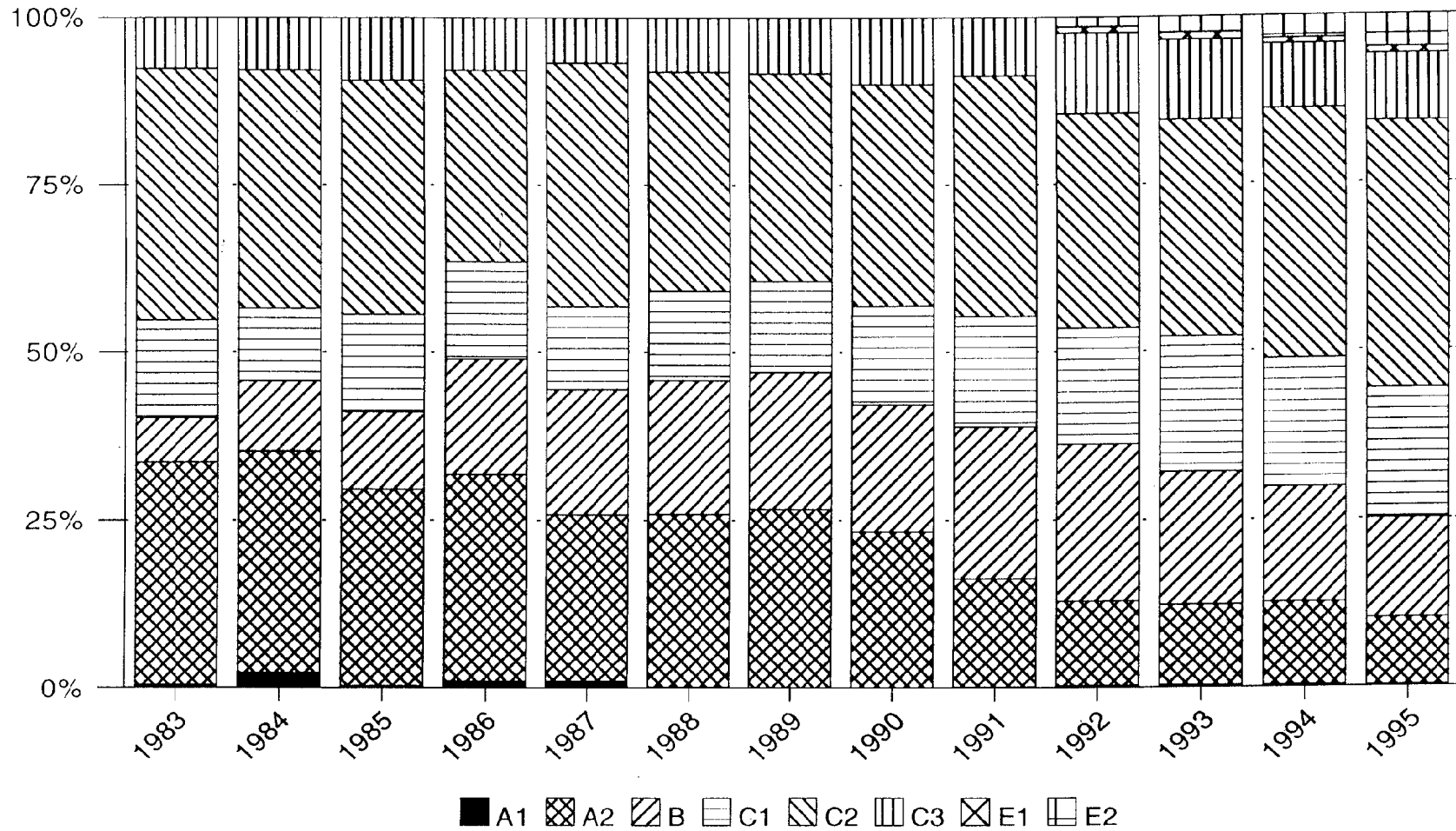
- ◆ From these graphs it can be seen that during this time period the percentage of the full-time correctional centre population classified as maximum security (A1, A2) has decreased while the percentage classified as medium (B) increased until 1992 but has since decreased again to below the 1986 level. There has been a substantial increase in the number of inmates held as minimum security inmates (C1, C2, C3) to reach a new high of 69%. Inmates who escaped after 18/5/90 are classified as E1 (equivalent to maximum security) or E2 (medium security).

- ◆ The percentage of C3 inmates (the lowest security rating) was highest in 1992 and 1993 but has now fallen slightly. In 1995 the percentage of maximum security inmates was the lowest for the last 13 years.

Inmates Security Classification 30 June each year Full-time Sentenced Inmates (Three Categories)



Inmates Security Classification 30 June each year Full-time Sentenced Inmates (Eight Categories)

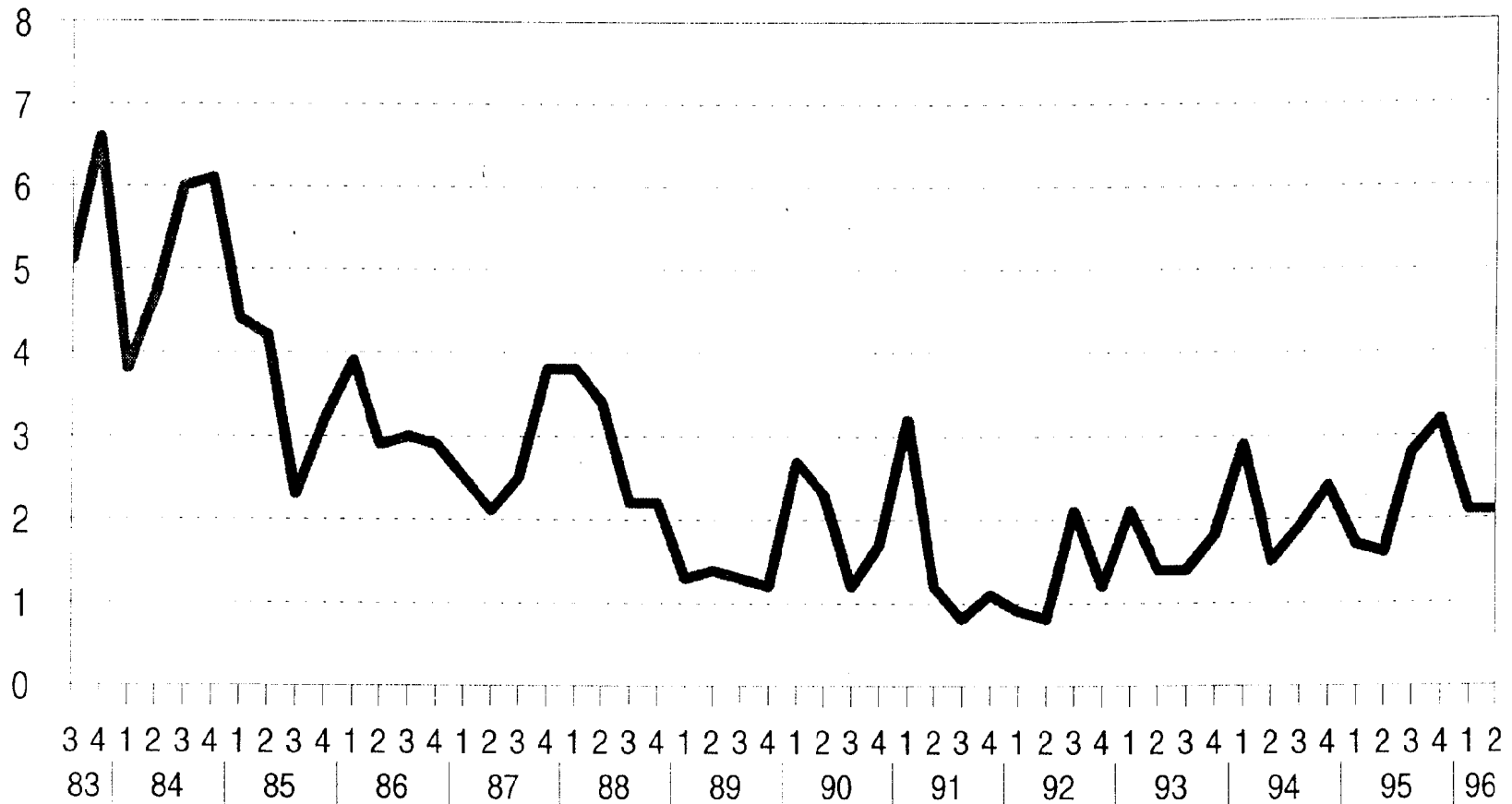


X. ESCAPE RATE

- ◆ The yearly escape rate, measured as the number of escapes per 100 inmate years, is calculated by dividing the number of escapes in a year by the average number of inmates held in that year and multiplying by 100. The quarterly escape rate is calculated by dividing the number of escapes in the quarter by the average number of inmates and multiplying by 400 to produce a figure comparable to the yearly rate.

- ◆ Following the four quarters (12 months) of 1991/92 where the escape rate remained lower than any quarterly escape rate previously recorded in NSW, the escape rate rose again to 1989/90, 1990/91 levels.

Escape Rate for each Quarter July 1983 - June 1996



Research & Statistics, NSW Department of Corrective Services

Source: Based on individual returns from each Institution.

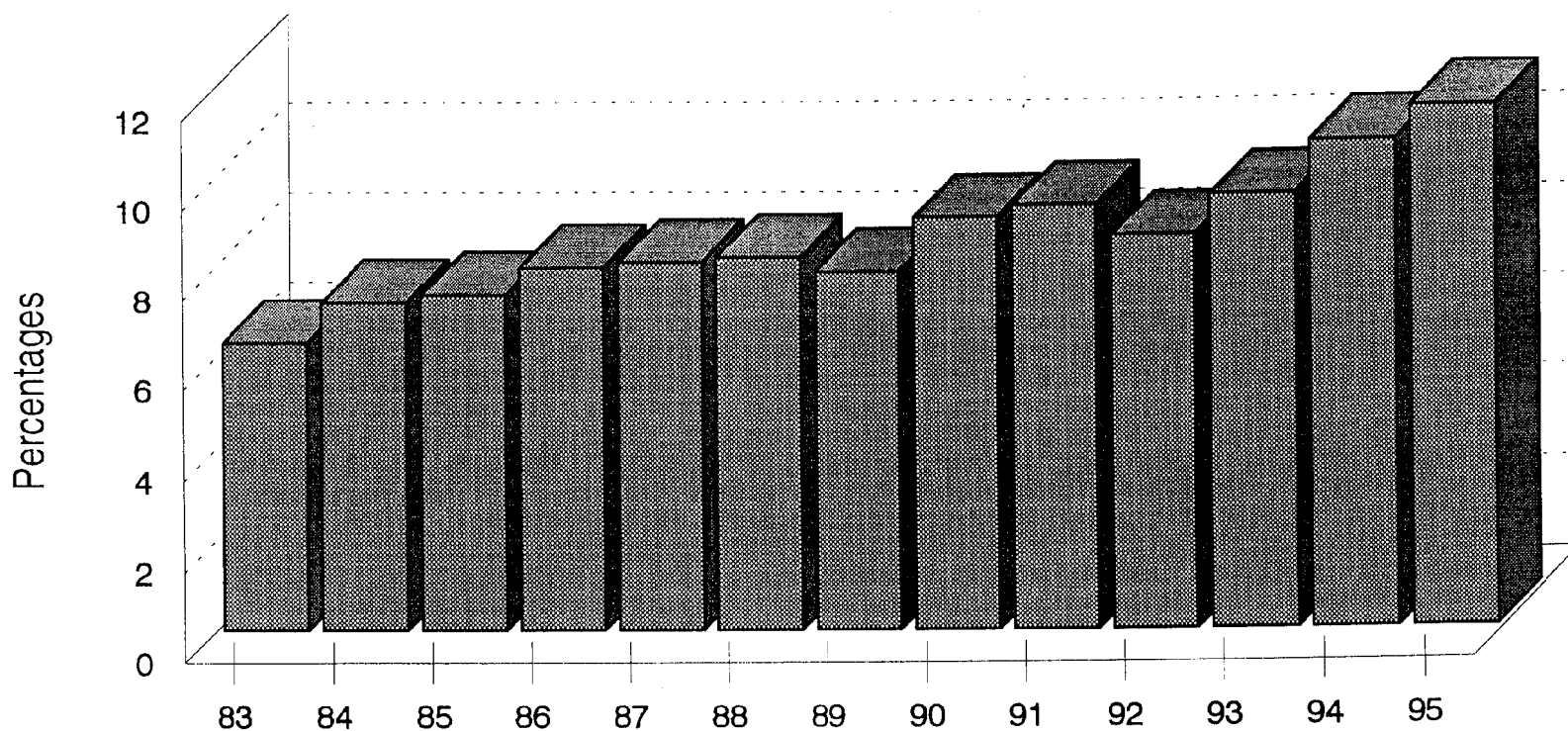
Escape rate: Number of escapes divided by the daily average, multiplied by 100

XI. A SNAPSHOT OF THE NSW INMATE POPULATION, 30 JUNE 1995

On 30th June, 1995 the NSW inmate population was composed of:

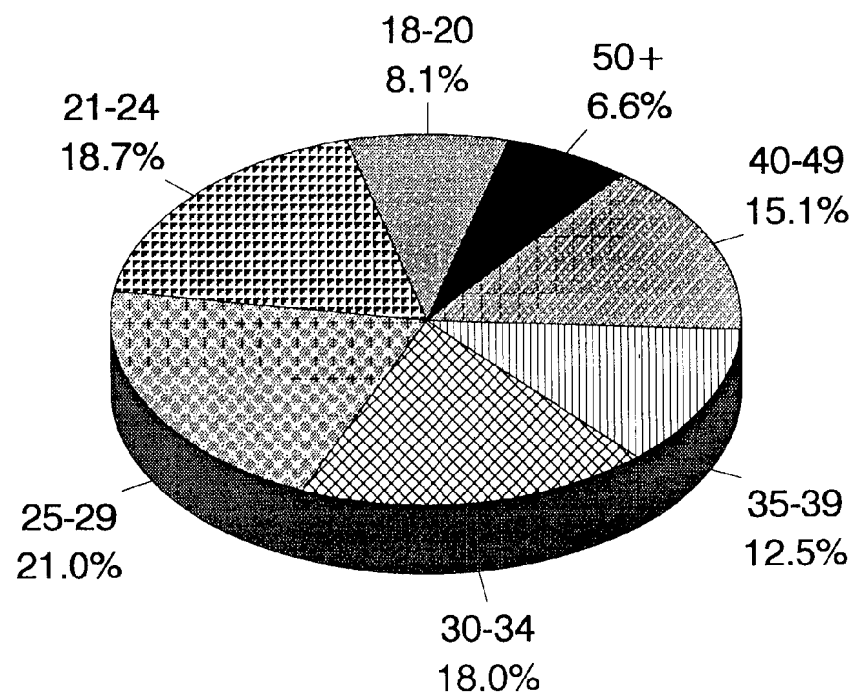
- ◆ Around 12% of inmates who identified themselves as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent;
- ◆ Twenty seven percent of inmates who were aged 24 years or younger;
- ◆ Forty nine percent of inmates who had never married;
- ◆ Fifty three percent of inmates having a minimum and additional term to serve;
- ◆ Fifty three percent of those inmates being sentenced to either a fixed or minimum term of imprisonment having an aggregate sentence (minimum plus additional term) of less than 5 years.
- ◆ Twenty four percent of inmates who had a most serious offence in the property category.
- ◆ Fifty two percent of inmates who said they had been imprisoned before.

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders
as a percentage of Total Inmate Population 30th June at each Year
(including Periodic Detainees)

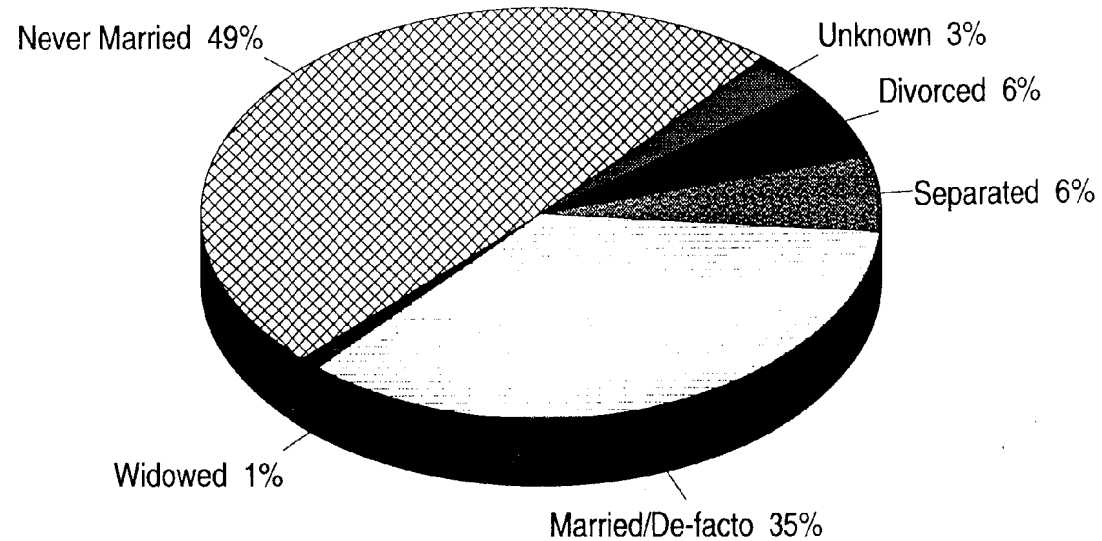


Age of NSW Inmates

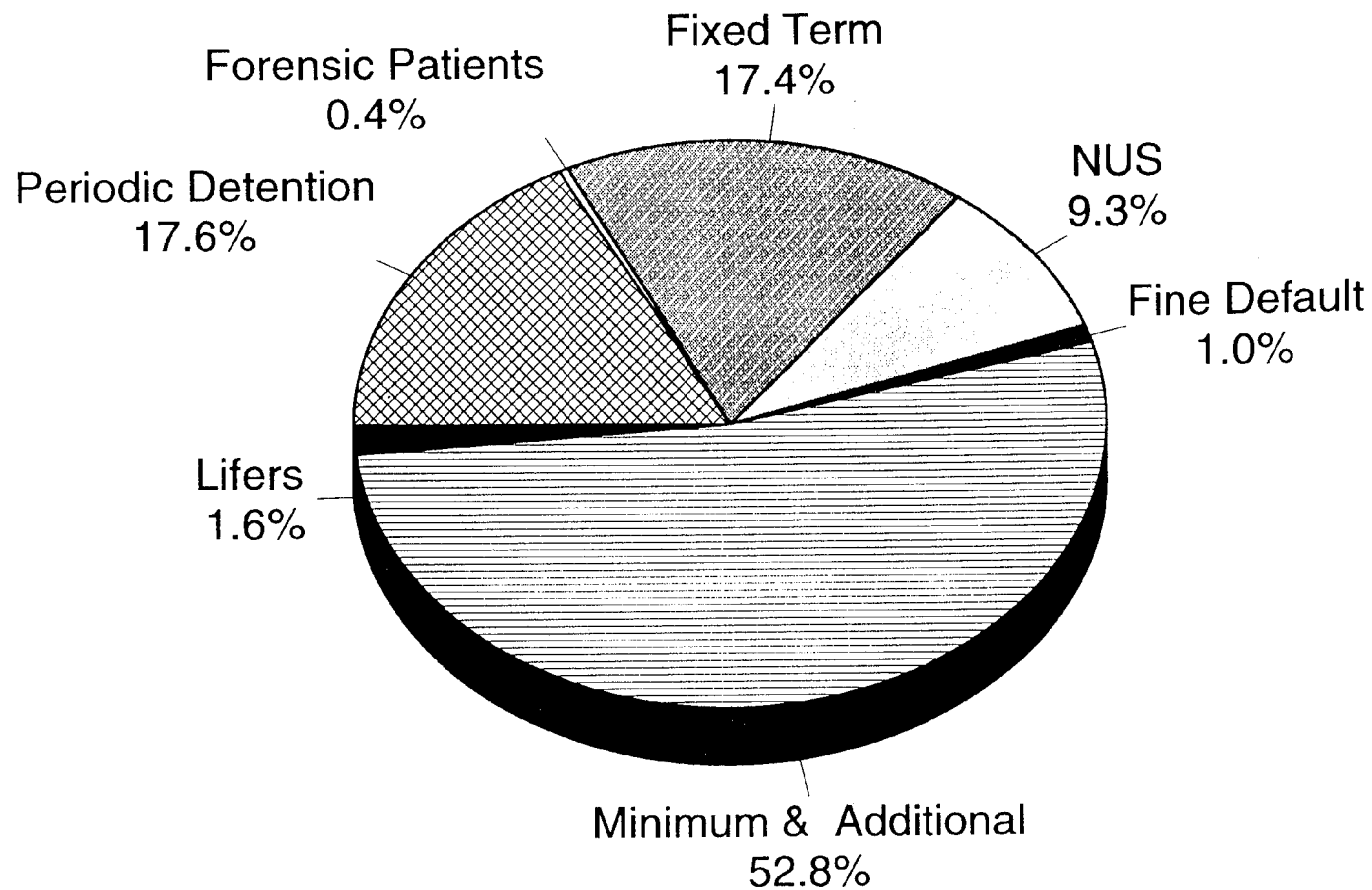
30 June 1995



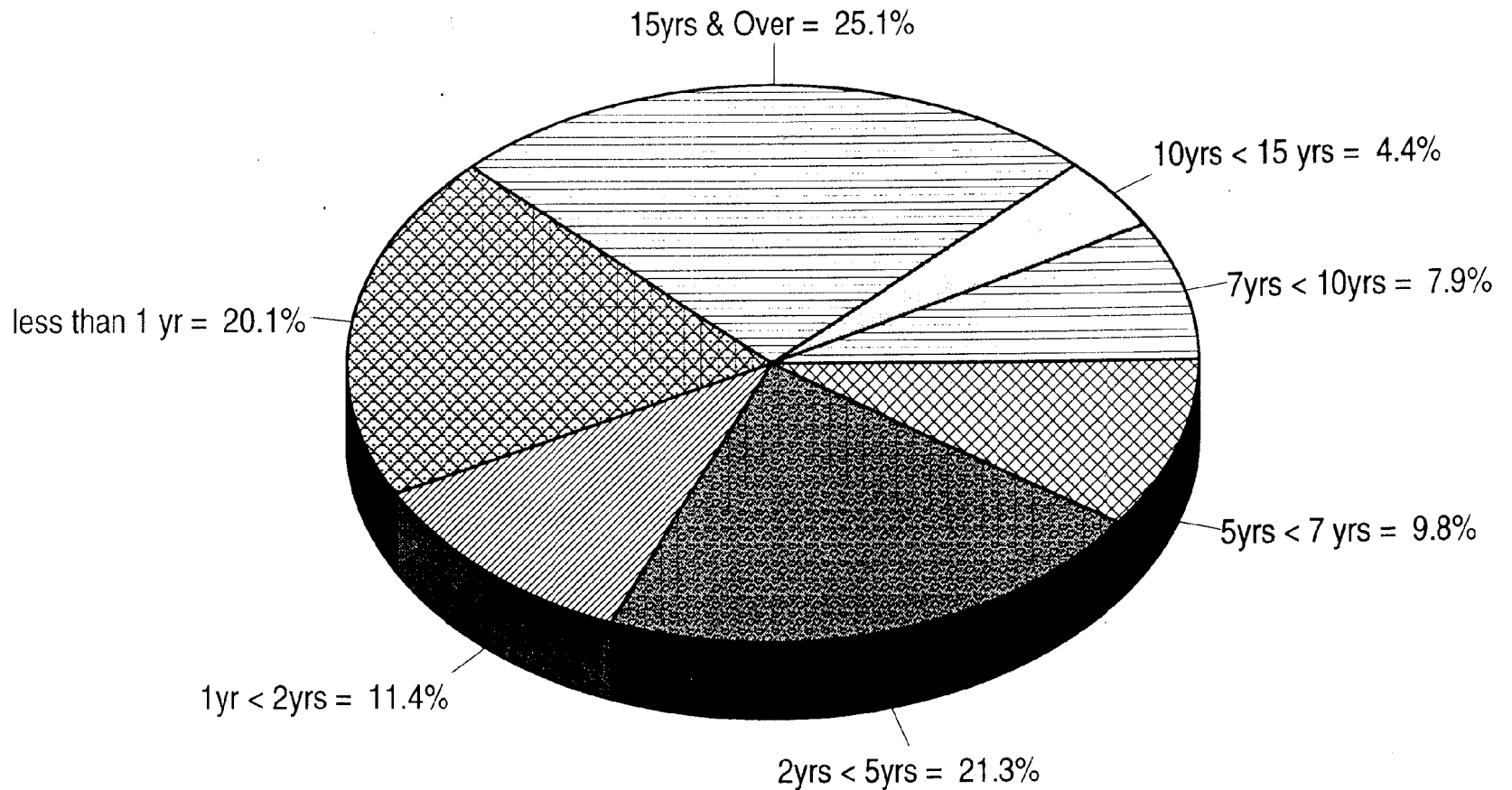
Marital Status of NSW Inmates 30 June 1995



Sentence Type for NSW Inmates 30 June 1995

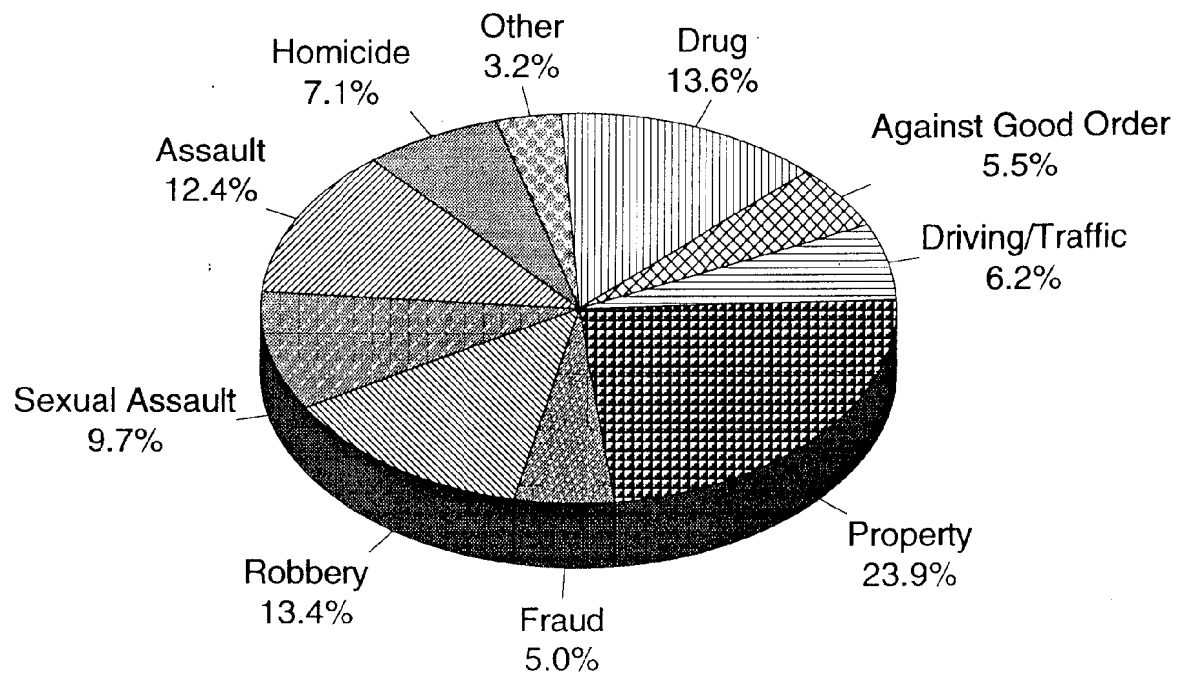


Aggregate Sentence* for NSW Inmates June 1995



Inmates sentenced to either a fixed or minimum term of imprisonment (Excluding life, forensic patient and periodic detention)
* (Minimum + Additional Term).

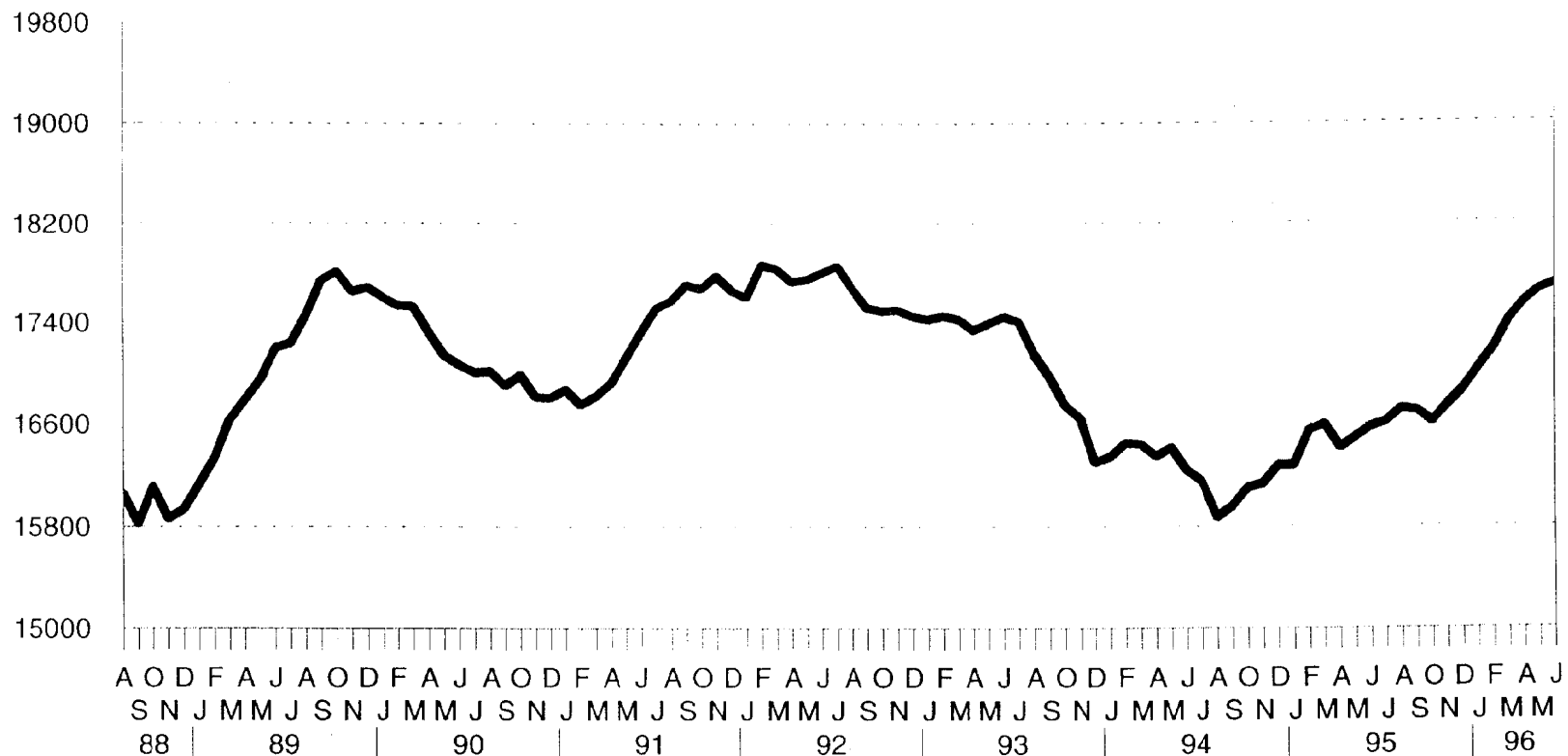
Most Serious Offence of NSW Inmates 30 June 1995 (including Periodic Detainees)



XII. PERSONS UNDER COMMUNITY SUPERVISION IN NSW

- ◆ The data in this graph are drawn from NSW Probation Service database physically located on the NSW Department Corrective Services computer mainframe.
- ◆ The number of persons under community supervision declined by about 2,000 between 1992 and mid 1994 but has since increased to the 1992 level.

Total Number of Persons Under Community Supervision in NSW from August 1988 to June 1996



Source: Australian Community Based Corrections Data on 1st day of each month supplied by Information Technology Branch of the NSW Department of Corrective Services. Research & Statistics, NSW Dept of Corrective Services.