

Media statement sent on behalf of the Chief Coroner, Judge Neil MacLean.

26 August 2011

Under embargo until 3pm Friday August 26 2011

The Chief Coroner Judge Neil MacLean has today released the latest provisional national suicide statistics drawn from information collected by the Ministry of Justice's database.

This follows on from last year when this type of information was first made publically available by Judge MacLean.

In releasing the information Judge MacLean said that although Coroners were not experts in suicide prevention, the coronial system has a legal responsibility and a pivotal role to play in stimulating discussion on issues that could help the explanation and prevention of suicide in New Zealand.

"The suicide toll is a really concerning commentary on our society, and I believe anything we can do to aid more accurate information can only be for the better.

"I have suggested that there may be room for a gentle opening up of the restrictions on media reporting of suicide, but we need to consider all viewpoints – especially those of families – so we can make informed decisions.

"These statistics clearly show that what we have done in the past is not bringing the toll down so we must look for new solutions," Judge MacLean said.

ENDS

Media contact for the Chief Coroner:

Steve Corbett

Steve.corbett@justice.govt.nz

027 666 8949

NOTE: All reasonable effort has been made to ensure that the following information is accurate and current, but as a lot of it is still provisional there may be some variances in final figures.

Table 1. Provisional Suicide Deaths and per 100,000 rates July 2007 – June 2011

Year	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	Total
Total	540	531	541	558	2170
Per 100,000	12.2	12.04	12.26	12.65	

Note: The per 100,000 population rate shown has been calculated following Statistics New Zealand annual population estimates.

Table 2. Male and female provisional suicide deaths and rates per 100,000 population between July 2007 and June 2011 (n=2170)

Year	Males		Females		Gender Rate Ratio (M:F)
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Rate
2007/2008	405	19.35	134	6.15	3.02:1
2008/2009	394	18.61	137	6.23	2.87:1
2009/2010	401	21.44	140	6.29	2.85:1
2010/2011	419	19.36	139	6.2	3.01:1

Note: The per 100,000 population rate shown has been calculated following Statistics New Zealand annual population estimates.

Table 3. Provisional Suicide deaths reported to the Coroner by age and gender between July 2010 and June 2011 (n=558)

Age Group (years)	Males		Females		Total	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
5-9	0		0			
10-14	4	2.68	4	2.79	8	2.73
15-19	40	24.53	16	10.38	56	17.66
20-24	53	31.73	16	10.19	69	21.23
25-29	37	25.34	15	9.55	52	17.74
30-34	28	21.37	13	9.21	41	15.07
35-39	33	23.91	10	6.57	43	14.82
40-44	36	24.16	9	5.52	45	14.42
45-49	43	27.92	14	8.5	57	17.92
50-54	39	26.89	17	11.11	56	18.79
55-59	33	26.19	10	7.64	43	16.73
60-64	30	25.86	4	3.33	34	14.34
65-69	10	11.49	3	3.26	13	7.22
70-74	13	18.84	2	2.17	15	10.34
75-79	8	16.32	2	2.66	10	9.52
80-84	7	19.44	1	1.78	8	9.75
85 +	5	20	3	6.36	8	4.62
Total	419	19.36	139	6.2	558	12.65

Note: The per 100,000 population rate shown has been calculated following Statistics New Zealand annual population estimates for the 2011 year.

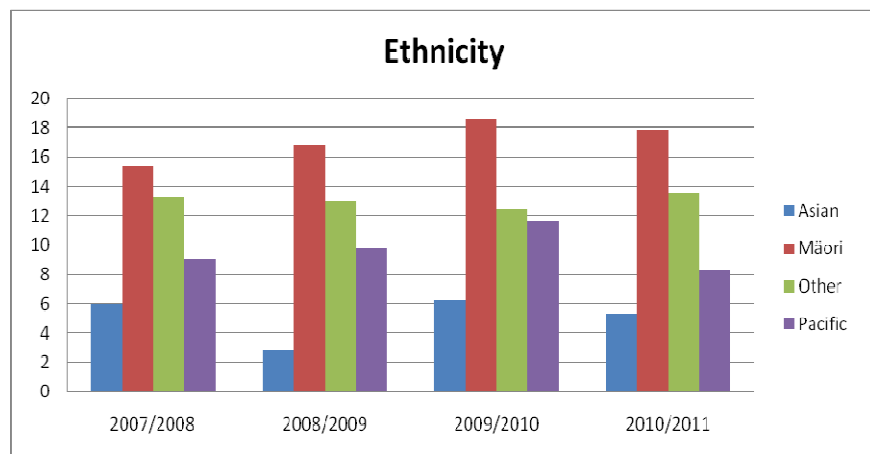
Table 4. Provisional suicide deaths reported to the Coroner by ethnicity between July 2007 and June 2011 (n=2170)

Year	Asian		Māori		Pacific		Other	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
2007/2008	21	5.93	87	15.39	24	9.05	408	13.26
2008/2009	10	2.82	95	16.81	26	9.81	400	13
2009/2010	22	6.21	105	18.58	31	11.69	383	12.45
2010/2011	19	5.36	101	17.87	22	8.3	416	13.52

Note: The per 100,000 population rate shown has been calculated following Statistics New Zealand annual population for the 2006 census year.

Table 4 shows provisional suicide deaths by ethnicity between July 2007 and June 2011. The small numbers and volatile nature of these data for Pacific and Asian peoples makes reliable estimation of the patterns very difficult and may be misleading.

Figure 1. Provisional suicide rates by ethnicity per 100,000 population between July 2007 and June 2011 (n=2170)



Note: The per 100,000 population rate shown has been calculated following Statistics New Zealand annual population for the 2006 census year.

Ethnic groups have classified in the following groups: Māori, Pacific peoples, Asian, Other (including European, Not Elsewhere classified and New Zealand European). The small numbers and volatile nature of these data for Pacific and Asian peoples makes reliable estimation of the patterns very difficult and may be misleading.

Table 5. Provisional Suicide deaths reported to the Coroner by method between July 2007 and June 2011 (n=2170)

Method Type	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	Total
Cutting & piercing instrument	10	15	9	4	38
Fire	4	10	3	10	27
Firearms & explosives	45	50	50	38	183
Hanging, strangulation & suffocation	295	277	321	306	1199
Jumping from high place	11	17	19	12	59
Other poisoning (overdose/self-poisoning)	72	82	66	96	316
Other Type			1	2	3
Poisoning by gases & vapours	83	56	56	61	256
Submersion (drowning)	11	9	10	17	47
Transport	9	15	6	12	42
Total	540	531	541	558	2170

Figure 2. Provisional Suicide deaths by method used between July 2010 and June 2011 (n=558)

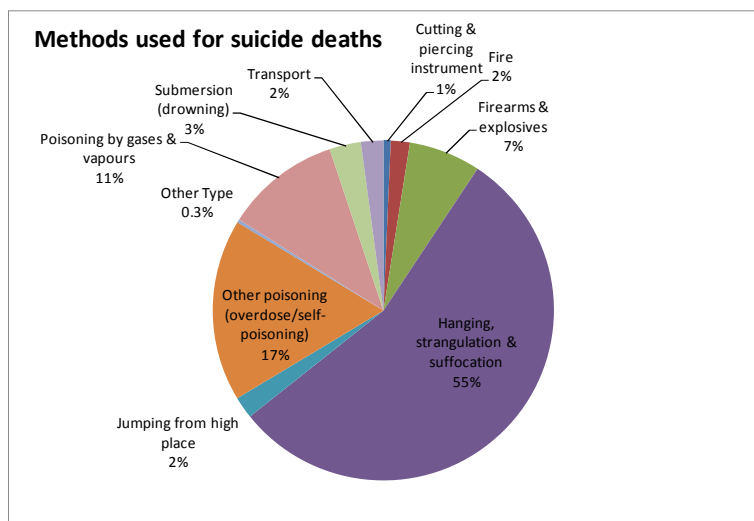
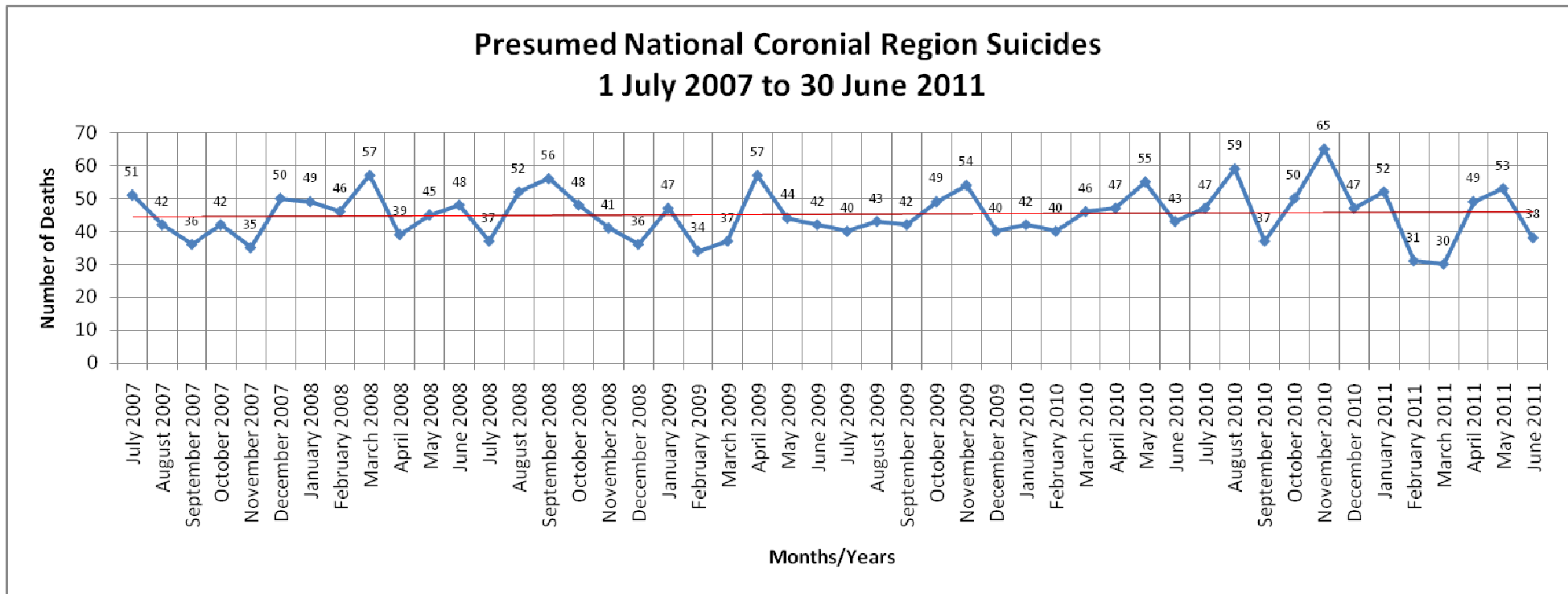


Table 6. Provisional Suicide deaths by Coronial Region between 1 July 2007 and 30 June 2011

Coronial Court Name	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Auckland CS	155	146	139	151
Christchurch CS	92	70	80	89
Dunedin CS	37	50	60	45
Hamilton CS	48	68	55	49
Hastings CS	35	32	32	37
Palmerston North CS	53	53	54	53
Rotorua CS	35	53	44	60
Wellington CS	64	40	57	52
Whangarei CS	22	19	20	22
Total	541	531	541	558

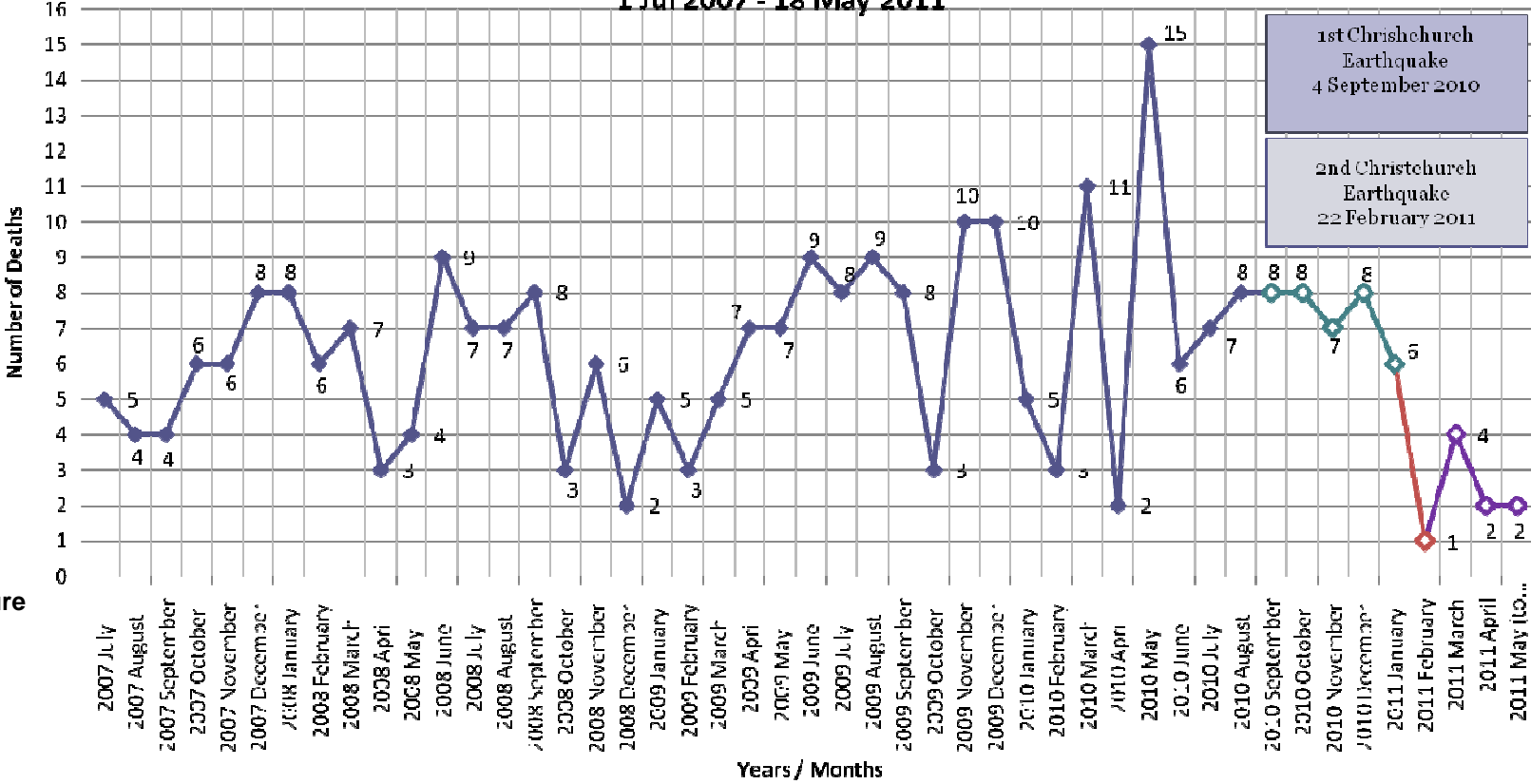
Graph 1. National trendline



Graph 2. Provisional Suicide deaths in relation to the Christchurch earthquakes

Christchurch Self Inflicted Deaths

1 Jul 2007 - 18 May 2011



Figure

3. Mental Health History, Known Attempts/Threats to Self Harm and Drug/Alcohol use for provisional suicide deaths between July 2010 and June 2011

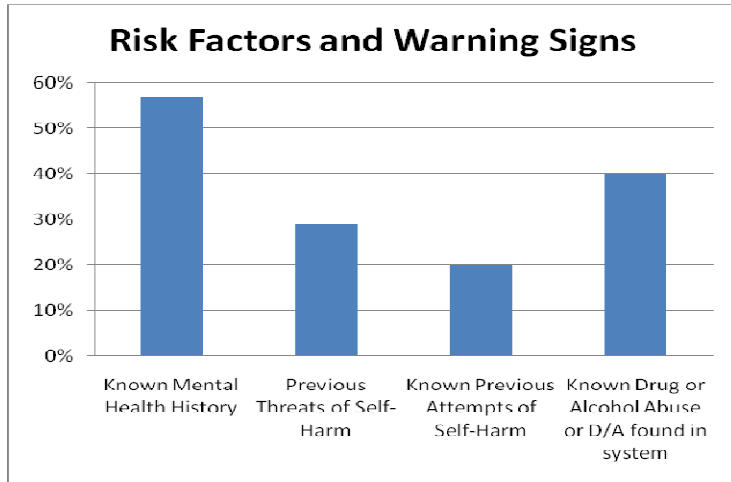


Table 7. Provisional Suicide deaths by employment status between July 2007 and June 2011

Employment Status	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	Total
Child not at school			1		1
Employed	232	207	208	200	847
Home Duties	9	13	13	7	42
Other	29	17	11	21	78
Prisoner	4	3	5	9	21
Retired/Pensioner	56	56	54	53	219
Still Enquiring		1	6	13	20
Student	37	51	42	50	180
Unavailable	2	6	4	4	16
Unemployed	140	138	163	157	598
Unlikely to be known	31	39	34	44	148
Total	540	531	541	558	2170