

# HIV and AIDS Case Reports: Trends in the Western Pacific Region

Increasing numbers of HIV infections and AIDS cases continue to be reported in the Western Pacific Region. A cumulative total of 24 156 AIDS cases, 116 568 HIV infections and 11 913 AIDS deaths had been reported as of September 1999. There was a 25% increase in reported AIDS cases and a 32% increase in reported HIV infection for the Region as a whole between 1997 and 1998. These statistics suggest that the Member States of the Western Pacific Region will continue to be affected by the still-growing AIDS epidemic. A summary of annual case reports is given in Table 1.

The case reporting rates for HIV and AIDS in the Region vary from fewer than 10% of estimated number of cases to as high as 90% of estimated cases. This implies that trends observed based on reported case data for AIDS and HIV infection must be interpreted with caution.

In **Australia** a continued decreasing trend in HIV infections and AIDS cases has been reported. Reported HIV infections have been decreasing since 1987, when they peaked at 2 316 (corrected for duplications of reporting), to 717 in 1998. Reported AIDS cases also declined from a high of 946 in 1994 to 264 in 1998. The significant decrease in AIDS reported cases observed in the last few years is probably attributable to the introduction of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART).

Reported HIV infections and AIDS cases in **Cambodia** continue to rise. There was a 64% increase in the number of reported HIV infections from 1997 to 1998. While

there was a decrease in reported AIDS cases between 1997 and 1998, this was followed by a significant increase in reported AIDS cases in the first half of 1999. During the first six months of 1999, 1 456 cases were reported, as compared to 401 cases reported in 1998.

The reported HIV and AIDS cases remained stable between 1997 and 1998 in **China, Hong Kong** and **Japan**.

**The Lao People's Democratic Republic** and **Macao** both continue to report small number of HIV and AIDS cases. In **Mongolia** the second case of HIV infection was detected in 1998; the first HIV case progressed to AIDS and eventually death in 1999.

**Malaysia** continues to report rising number of AIDS cases. Reported HIV infections fluctuates slightly, but have remained stable since 1995, the year in which the number exceeded 4 000.

Reported HIV infections in **New Zealand** had been declining, but there was a sudden 67% increase in the number of reported HIV infections in 1998. This appears to be related to an influx of refugees from HIV endemic area. Decreasing number of AIDS cases continued to be reported through 1998; HAART contributed to this decline over the last few years.

In **Papua New Guinea** both reported HIV infection and AIDS cases increased from 1997 to 1998 (81% for HIV and 93% for AIDS cases).

There continues to be a slow increase in reported HIV infections and AIDS cases in the **Philippines** and the **Republic of Korea**. A total

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***There was a 25% increase in reported AIDS cases and a 32% increase in reported HIV infection for the Region as a whole between 1997 and 1998.***

190 cases of HIV infections and 41 cases of AIDS were reported in the Philippines in 1998. In the same year, 129 cases HIV infections and 35 AIDS cases were reported in the Republic of Korea. These reported data do not yet suggest a rapid expansion of the epidemic in these two countries.

There has been a steady increase in reported HIV infections and AIDS cases in **Singapore**. Between 1997 and 1998, there was a 15% increase in HIV infections and a 42% increase in AIDS cases.

1998 year-end data from **Viet Nam** show a 59% increase in reported HIV infections and a 134% increase in reported AIDS cases as compared to 1997.

**The Pacific Islands** countries/ areas (excluding Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea) have to date reported a total of 614 HIV infections and 220 AIDS cases. There were 45 HIV infections and 13 AIDS cases reported in 1998. For both HIV and AIDS, more than 80% of all cases occurred in three areas: French Polynesia, Guam and New Caledonia. No cases of HIV infection or AIDS have been reported in American Samoa, Cook Island, Niue, Tokelau or Vanuatu.

## New Requirements for HIV and AIDS Reporting

In March 1998, the WHO/UNAIDS HIV/AIDS epidemiology group made a decision to modify the reporting requirements for HIV and AIDS worldwide. This decision was prompted by the need to improve the monitoring of the epidemic among the younger age group, who are at highest risk of being infected. With such information, better estimates of HIV and AIDS incidence would be possible.

### What are the new requirements?

1. Reporting will be done once a year. Data will be collected by WHO in September each year, and will be published by 1 December, at the Regional and Global levels.
2. Reporting will be done (1) by 5 year age group (starting from age group less than 5 years of age until 50 years; followed by older and unknown); and (2) by sex (male, female, unknown).
3. In addition to (1) and (2), reporting by the Western Pacific Regional Office will include (i) mode of HIV transmission (Mother to child, Injecting drug use, homo/ bisexual, blood or blood products recipients, heterosexual transmission and unknown); by (ii) sex (male, female, unknown). Data on STI/HIV prevalence will also be collected.

The new requirements will take effect from January 1999. Countries which already have these data for the previous years are encouraged to forward them to the Regional Office. Other Member States are encouraged to respond to these requirements at local and central level. As a follow-up to this decision on the new requirements, the Regional Office has developed new reporting forms.

Member states are encouraged to contact the Regional Office for technical guidance, if required.

**Table 4 - Reported HIV/AIDS Cases by Year of Report**

| Country/<br>Area    |      | pre-1989 or<br>unknown | Y E A R |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |           |           |  |  |  |  | Cumulative<br>TOTAL | Date<br>cumulative<br>to |
|---------------------|------|------------------------|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|-----------|--|--|--|--|---------------------|--------------------------|
|                     |      |                        | 1989    | 1990  | 1991  | 1992  | 1993  | 1994  | 1995  | 1996  | 1997  | 1998  | 1999   |           |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| Australia           | AIDS | 1 334                  | 614     | 671   | 802   | 786   | 838   | 946   | 786   | 642   | 351   | 264   | 22     | 8 102     | 31 Mar 99 |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 8 210                  | 1 642   | 1 428 | 1 414 | 1 247 | 1 109 | 1 033 | 942   | 927   | 781   | 717   | 157    | 19 580    |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| Brunei              | AIDS | 0                      | 0       | 2     | 0     | 0     | 1     | 3     | 2     | 2     | 2     | 0     | 0      | 12        | 31 Jul 99 |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 3                      | 0       | 3     | 0     | 1     | 69    | 153   | 80    | 78    | 63    | 34    | 14     | 498       |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| Darussalam          | AIDS | 0                      | 0       | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1     | 14    | 91    | 300   | 572   | 401   | 1 456  | 30 Jun 99 |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 0                      | 0       | 0     | 0     | 0     | 205   | 660   | 2 611 | 4 541 | 4 674 | 7 646 | 2 691  | 24 028    |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| China               | AIDS | 3                      | 0       | 2     | 3     | 5     | 23    | 29    | 52    | 38    | 126   | 136   | 417    | 31 Dec 98 |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 22                     | 171     | 299   | 216   | 261   | 274   | 531   | 1 567 | 2 649 | 3 343 | 3 306 | 12 639 |           |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| Fiji                | AIDS | 0                      | 1       | 2     | 1     | 1     | 1     | 2     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 8      | 11 Aug 98 |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 0                      | 4       | 3     | 3     | 4     | 3     | 6     | 8     | 4     | 4     | 4     | 43     |           |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| French<br>Polynesia | AIDS | 9                      | 5       | 9     | 7     | 3     | 8     | 3     | 6     | 4     | 0     | 0     | 54     | 31 Oct 97 |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 57                     | 17      | 22    | 19    | 8     | 12    | 9     | 13    | 7     | 10    | 10    | 174    |           |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| Guam                | AIDS | 5                      | 1       | 2     | 4     | 2     | 5     | 11    | 2     | 10    | 5     | 7     | 6      | 60        | 31 Jul 99 |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 13                     | 1       | 12    | 13    | 11    | 10    | 9     | 12    | 15    | 10    | 15    | 8      | 129       |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| Hong Kong           | AIDS | 16                     | 17      | 13    | 14    | 14    | 19    | 37    | 45    | 70    | 64    | 63    | 37     | 409       | 30 Jun 99 |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 134                    | 38      | 34    | 60    | 71    | 79    | 104   | 122   | 134   | 181   | 189   | 109    | 1 255     |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| Japan               | AIDS | 670                    | 21      | 31    | 38    | 51    | 86    | 136   | 169   | 235   | 250   | 231   | 148    | 2 065     | 27 Jun 99 |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 1 537                  | 101     | 97    | 238   | 493   | 363   | 434   | 543   | 610   | 647   | 653   | 386    | 6 019     |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| Kiribati            | AIDS | 4                      | 0       | 0     | 2     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 2     | 2     | 0      | 12        | 31 Jul 99 |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 2                      | 0       | 0     | 2     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1     | 11    | 4     | 2     | 3      | 25        |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| Lao PDR             | AIDS | 0                      | 0       | 0     | 1     | 0     | 5     | 4     | 4     | 16    | 48    | 27    | 105    | 31 Dec 98 |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 0                      | 0       | 1     | 8     | 11    | 18    | 17    | 31    | 71    | 108   | 102   | 367    |           |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| Macao               | AIDS | 0                      | 1       | 0     | 1     | 2     | 2     | 2     | 0     | 1     | 2     | 4     | 2      | 17        | 30 Jun 99 |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 1                      | 1       | 1     | 4     | 13    | 40    | 33    | 29    | 21    | 19    | 31    | 4      | 197       |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| Malaysia            | AIDS | 2                      | 2       | 18    | 58    | 70    | 64    | 98    | 218   | 327   | 538   | 818   | 540    | 2 894     | 30 Jun 99 |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 14                     | 200     | 778   | 1 794 | 2 512 | 2 507 | 3 393 | 4 198 | 4 597 | 3 924 | 4 624 | 2 052  | 30 593    |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| Marshall<br>Islands | AIDS | 2                      | 0       | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 2      | 31 Dec 97 |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 6                      | 0       | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1     | 1     | 0     | 1     | 0     | 0     | 9      | 28 Feb 98 |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| Micronesia          | AIDS | 0                      | 1       | 1     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 2      |           |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 0                      | 1       | 1     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 2      |           |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| Mongolia            | AIDS | 0                      | 0       | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1      | 4 Aug 99  |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 0                      | 0       | 0     | 0     | 1     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1     | 0      | 2         |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
| Nauru               | AIDS | 0                      | 0       | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0      | 0         | 24 Sep 99 |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |
|                     | HIV  | 0                      | 0       | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0      | 1         |           |  |  |  |  |                     |                          |

|                     |      |        |       |       |       |       |       |       |        |        |        |        |       |         |           |
|---------------------|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|---------|-----------|
| New Caledonia       | AIDS | 13     | 4     | 5     | 9     | 1     | 8     | 9     | 4      | 2      | 8      | 3      | 1     | 67      | 23 Jul 99 |
|                     | HIV  | 28     | 13    | 9     | 16    | 11    | 18    | 21    | 14     | 8      | 20     | 20     | 11    | 189     |           |
| New Zealand         | AIDS | 123    | 71    | 71    | 69    | 62    | 53    | 47    | 59     | 59     | 30     | 26     | 12    | 684     | 30 Jun 99 |
|                     | HIV  | 389    | 108   | 104   | 111   | 106   | 88    | 88    | 82     | 92     | 63     | 105    | 34    | 1 371   |           |
| N. Mariana Islands. | AIDS | 3      | 0     | 0     | 1     | 0     | 0     | 2     | 0      | 1      | 1      | 0      | 0     | 8       | 14 Apr 98 |
|                     | HIV  | 5      | 1     | 1     | 2     | 0     | 1     | 1     | 0      | 0      | 1      | 3      |       | 15      |           |
| Palau               | AIDS | 0      | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1     | 0     | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0     | 1       | 28 Feb 98 |
|                     | HIV  | 0      | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1     | 0     | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      |       | 1       |           |
| Papua New Guinea    | AIDS | 11     | 6     | 17    | 21    | 19    | 12    | 26    | 44     | 69     | 120    | 232    | 41    | 618     | 31 Mar 99 |
|                     | HIV  | 18     | 17    | 35    | 36    | 32    | 40    | 69    | 124    | 192    | 351    | 635    | 192   | 1 741   |           |
| Philippines         | AIDS | 44     | 8     | 19    | 13    | 19    | 36    | 56    | 52     | 51     | 23     | 41     | 41    | 404     | 31 Jul 99 |
|                     | HIV  | 114    | 39    | 68    | 79    | 69    | 100   | 119   | 117    | 156    | 117    | 190    | 91    | 1 259   |           |
| Rep. of Korea       | AIDS | 4      | 1     | 2     | 1     | 2     | 6     | 11    | 14     | 22     | 33     | 35     | 14    | 145     | 30 Jun 99 |
|                     | HIV  | 36     | 37    | 54    | 42    | 76    | 78    | 90    | 108    | 102    | 124    | 129    | 88    | 964     |           |
| Samoa               | AIDS | 0      | 0     | 1     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 2     | 1      | 2      | 0      | 0      | 0     | 6       | 31 Jul 99 |
|                     | HIV  | 0      | 0     | 1     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 2     | 1      | 5      | 0      | 0      | 1     | 10      |           |
| Singapore           | AIDS | 10     | 5     | 8     | 12    | 18    | 22    | 48    | 56     | 92     | 88     | 125    |       | 484     | 31 Dec 98 |
|                     | HIV  | 34     | 10    | 17    | 42    | 55    | 64    | 86    | 111    | 139    | 173    | 199    |       | 930     |           |
| Solomon Islands     | AIDS | 0      | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0     | 0       | mid 99    |
|                     | HIV  | 0      | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1      | 0      | 0      | 1      | 0     | 2       |           |
| Tonga               | AIDS | 1      | 1     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1     | 2     | 0      | 2      | 0      | 0      | 0     | 8       | 31 Aug 99 |
|                     | HIV  | 1      | 2     | 0     | 0     | 2     | 0     | 1     | 0      | 3      | 0      | 2      | 0     | 11      |           |
| Tuvalu              | AIDS | 0      | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0     | 0       | 8 Oct 97  |
|                     | HIV  | 0      | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0      | 0      | 1      | 0      |       | 1       |           |
| Viet Nam            | AIDS | 0      | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 106   | 116   | 201    | 380    | 400    | 935    | 319   | 2 736   | 07 Aug 99 |
|                     | HIV  | 0      | 0     | 1     | 0     | 11    | 1 148 | 1 340 | 1 405  | 1 660  | 2 680  | 4 271  | 1 916 | 14 509  |           |
| Wallis & Futuna     | AIDS | 0      | 0     | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1     | 0     | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0     | 1       | 01 Jan 98 |
|                     | HIV  | 0      | 0     | 0     | 0     | 1     | 1     | 0     | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      |       | 2       |           |
| TOTAL               | AIDS | 2 253  | 761   | 871   | 1 064 | 1 060 | 1 306 | 1 608 | 1 806  | 2 325  | 2 683  | 3 351  | 2 602 | 24 156  |           |
|                     | HIV  | 10 621 | 2 396 | 2 947 | 4 146 | 5 092 | 6 239 | 8 192 | 12 121 | 16 023 | 17 298 | 22 879 | 7 757 | 116 568 |           |

**NOTE:** No cases of HIV infection or AIDS have been reported from American Samoa, Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau or Vanuatu. HIV totals include AIDS cases.