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Suggestions:

The Steering Committee welcomes suggestions on the performance indicators contained in this Report. Please direct your suggestions to the Industry Commission Secretariat at the above address.

The goal of this Report is to develop and publish objective data on the performance of services important to all Australians, to facilitate well informed judgements and sound public policy action. By providing comparisons across jurisdictions, this information allows governments to assess agency performance and communities to assess how well governments are meeting their needs and at what cost. Such yardstick competition can be important for improving government services for all Australians.

When the Prime Minister, Premiers and Chief Ministers asked the Steering Committee to undertake this task in 1993, little of this type of information was available. Significant progress has been made in filling this information gap. It has not been easy — services and their objectives are often complex, indicators can be difficult to identify and measure, and variations in results hard to interpret — but, as a result of the work of the Steering Committee, we know a lot more today than we did five years ago about the provision of these important services.

Further progress

The scope of this Report has been expanded again this year, to include major emergency services — fire and ambulance services — and additional aspects of health, schools and housing.

Specific improvements in reporting include:

- for corrective services — reporting on aspects of prisoner care such as assaults by prisoners and prisoner education programs;
- for housing — reporting on tenant satisfaction, the level of provision compared with targets and coverage of community housing;
- for protection and support services — extensive reporting of special accommodation and assistance services based on new comprehensive data collection; and
- court administration — reporting on adjournment rates, a key determinant of timeliness.

Improved reporting on services to indigenous people was a particular focus this year, following a specific request from the Prime Minister supported by Premiers and Chief Ministers. For most services, the level of use by indigenous people is now reported separately, although much more needs to be done to provide comprehensive reporting in this area.

Continuing challenges

Important information gaps warrant comment, in particular — quality of care for health, learning outcomes for schools and unit cost data for police services.

Quality of health care

Despite the importance of quality of care for all health systems, the health sector has not developed reliable information about quality of care and nationally comparable data is very limited. Further, while there has been some recent work in the sector on development of quality measures, there has been little progress in reporting these measures and the health sector does not appear to have any detailed strategy in place to address this shortcoming.

School learning outcomes

Achievement of good literacy is a crucial outcome from our schools. Literacy is vital for establishing a skilled labour force and assisting with economic growth, and for maintaining a well functioning society. But it appears unlikely that comprehensive reporting of learning outcomes on a comparable basis across jurisdictions will occur for at least two more years.

Cost of police services

Information is not currently available on the allocation of police services expenditure across their wide range of tasks. However, all police agencies have recognised this shortcoming, and are involved in activity surveys to establish internal cost allocations and are exploring ways of establishing comparisons across jurisdictions.

A cooperative approach

Performance reporting relies on cooperation between many participants. These include the Steering Committee for the Review, members of Working Groups from service agencies and expert statistical agencies such as the ABS and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and the Secretariat from the Industry Commission. The Working Groups and the Secretariat also work closely with other groups involved in government performance measurement.

I would like to thank everyone involved in production of this Report for their dedicated work over the last year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Scales." The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Bill Scales, AO
Chairman

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACE	Adult and Community Education
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
ACHS	Australian Council on Healthcare Standards
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ACTH	ACT Housing
ACVETS	Australian Committee on Vocational Education and Training Statistics
AHC	Annual Hours of Curriculum
AHMAC	Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
AN-DRG	Australian National Diagnosis Related Group
ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
ATSI	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Aust	Australia
AVETMISS	Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard
CACP	Community Aged Care Package
CAP	Crisis Accommodation Program
CBLDC	Centre-based long day care
CHP	Community Housing Program
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
COPs	Community Options Projects
CRC	Commonwealth Respite for Carers
CRS	Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service
CSDA	Commonwealth/State Disability Agreement
CSF	Curriculum and Standards Framework
CSHA	Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DEA	Data Envelopment Analysis
DEETYA	Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs
DRG	Diagnosis Related Group
EMA	Emergency Management Australia
ESB	English Speaking Background
FDC	Family Day Care
FTE	Full-time equivalent
HACC	Home and Community Care
IC	Industry Commission
ICIDH	International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps
ITABs	Industry training advisory bodies
LAP	Learning Assessment Project
LOTE	Languages Other Than English
MAP	Multi-level Assessment Program
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs
MLCR	Module Load Completion Rate
MPS	Multi-Purpose Services
NACVETS	National Australian Committee on Vocational Education and Training Statistics
NCVER	National Centre for Vocational Education Research

NDSS	National Disability Services Standards
NESE	Non-English speaking background
NHIMG	National Health Information Management Group
NHMBWG	National Health Ministers Benchmarking Working Group
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NHTPs	Nursing home type patients
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
OSHC	Outside school hours care
PE	Physical Education
Qld	Queensland
Review	The Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision
SA	South Australia
SAAP	Supported Accommodation and Assistance Program
SCRCSSP	Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision
SES	Socio-economic status
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
Tas	Tasmania
TIMSS	Third International Mathematics and Science Study
VET	Vocational Education and Training
Vic	Victoria
WA	Western Australia

GLOSSARY

Descriptors	are statistics included in the Report which relate to the size of the service system, its client mix and the environment within which government services are delivered. They are provided to highlight and make more transparent the differences among jurisdictions.
Effectiveness	reflects how well the outputs of a service achieve the stated objectives of that service.
Efficiency	relates to how well organisations use their resources to produce services.
Unit costs	are used throughout this Report as an indicator of efficiency.
Inputs	are the resources (including land, labour and capital) used by a service area in providing the service.
Process	is the way in which a service is produced or delivered.
Outputs	are the services provided by a service area — for example, a treated case is an output of a public acute care hospital.
Outcomes	are the impact of the service on the status of individuals or a group. A service provider can influence an outcome but external factors can also apply. A desirable outcome for a school, for example, would be to add to the ability of the students to participate in and interact with society throughout their lives. Similarly, a desirable outcome for a hospital would be to improve the health status of an individual receiving a hospital service.

Definitions of the indicators and terminology used in each chapter can be found in the relevant attachments.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Review, to be conducted by a joint Commonwealth/State and Territory Government working party, is to undertake the following:

- establish the collection and publication of data that will enable ongoing comparisons of the efficiency and effectiveness of Commonwealth and State Government services, including intra-government services. This will involve:
 - establishing performance indicators for different services which would assist comparisons of efficiency and effectiveness. The measures should, to the maximum extent possible, focus on the cost effectiveness of service delivery, as distinct from policy considerations that determine the quality and level of services; and
 - collecting and publishing data that is consistent with these measures. The Review should also address the procedures for the ongoing collection and publication of benchmark data; and
- compile and assess service provision reforms that have been implemented or are under consideration by Commonwealth and State Governments.

The Review will cover all major types of reform, including those involving the separation of policy development from service provision. Case studies of particular reforms could be provided where appropriate.

The Review will need to keep abreast of developments in other relevant reviews and working parties, including the Commonwealth/State Government working party, initiated by COAG, investigating Commonwealth/State Government roles and responsibilities.

OVERVIEW

The aim of this Report is to publish ongoing, accurate comparisons across jurisdictions of government performance in the provision of services so as to promote continuing performance improvement.

Given the number of services and performance indicators covered, all results are not summarised in this overview. Rather, only key information in terms of its link to service objectives, its comparability across jurisdictions or its particular usefulness in interpreting the reported results, is presented. Readers mainly interested in a specific service are encouraged to read not only the chapter covering that service but also Chapter 1 (which discusses the general approach) and the preface introducing the chapter (which puts the service in context).

1 Approach to performance monitoring

Governments play two roles in ensuring services are available for the community. First, they specify, to varying degrees, the service to be provided and who should receive it, and they ensure it is supplied at an acceptable standard through funding and regulation. Second, they often operate the service. To judge how well governments fulfil these roles:

- performance needs to be measured across a comprehensive set of objectives;
- indicators need to focus on outcomes and/or outputs aimed at meeting those objectives; and
- reported data needs to be comparable across jurisdictions and time.

1.1 Aims of the Review

The Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision aims to provide objective information that facilitates well-informed judgements and sound public policy action (see page xxii for the Review's terms of reference).

To help meet this aim, a key task of the Review is to collect and publish ongoing comparisons of the efficiency and effectiveness of the provision of a broad range of government services across jurisdictions. Governments and service providers are able to use this information to help identify what improved level of service is possible and to improve the ways in which services are provided to the community.

1.2 A general framework for measuring performance

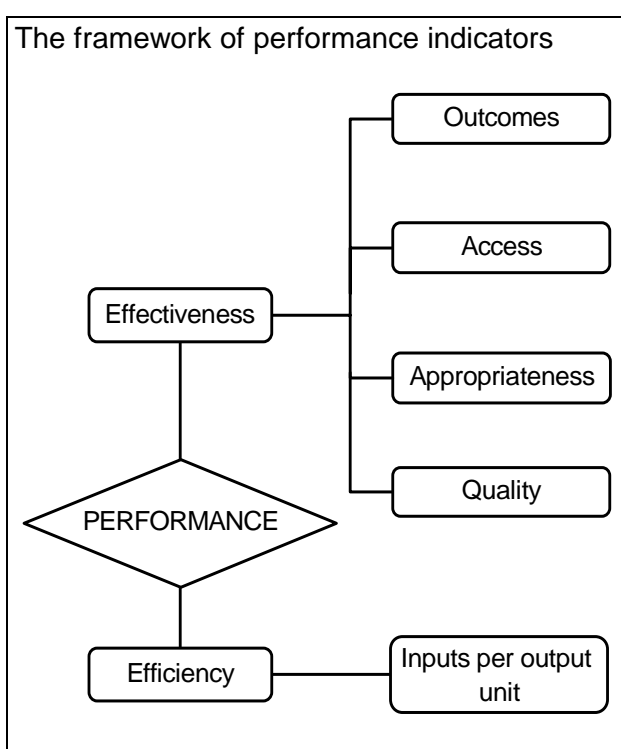
It is important to assess performance using a suite of indicators. Governments have competing objectives which force trade-offs in decision making — for example, there may be a trade-off between improving general services and improving those provided to some special needs groups. Those seeking to compare performance across jurisdictions, therefore, need indicators that measure performance against each of the key competing (and common) objectives. This allows the users of the information to assess overall performance according to their views on the appropriate trade-offs.

A general framework for measuring performance has been developed by the Steering Committee. It includes four major effectiveness indicator groupings:

- overall outcomes;
- access and equity;
- appropriateness; and
- quality.

Further, efficiency is measured, where possible, in terms of inputs by government per unit of output.

Within this general framework, the actual indicators used for each service differ to take account of the characteristics of the service, including its clients and providers.



Because the Report's scope extends across services and jurisdictions, it facilitates assessments of the relative quality of performance reporting and encourages improvement. Reporting under a common framework also provides opportunities to share insights into approaches to performance assessment.

The measurement of each dimension of performance involves complex conceptual and practical issues, and the Steering Committee's approach is iterative. The indicators and data collections are still being developed — users should note the cautions outlined and interpret the data with care.

2 Education and training

Government education operations include government primary and secondary schools, Technical and further education (TAFE) centres and universities. Governments also fund services delivered by non-government providers in the school and vocational education and training (VET) sectors. Performance indicators for all of these aspects of education, except universities, are included in this Report. Preschool services are included in Community Services.

Education has both intermediate objectives, such as preparation for further education, and final objectives, such as contribution to the workforce or to society in general. Access and participation in education by special needs groups can also be important for improving social outcomes and providing greater equality of opportunity across all sections of society. The achievement of these objectives has been captured to varying degrees through measures of the performance of various educational services.

The Steering Committee is eager to obtain data on the net contribution of education to learning and skills development as collected through longitudinal testing. It continues to seek publication of comparable school learning outcomes data across jurisdictions.

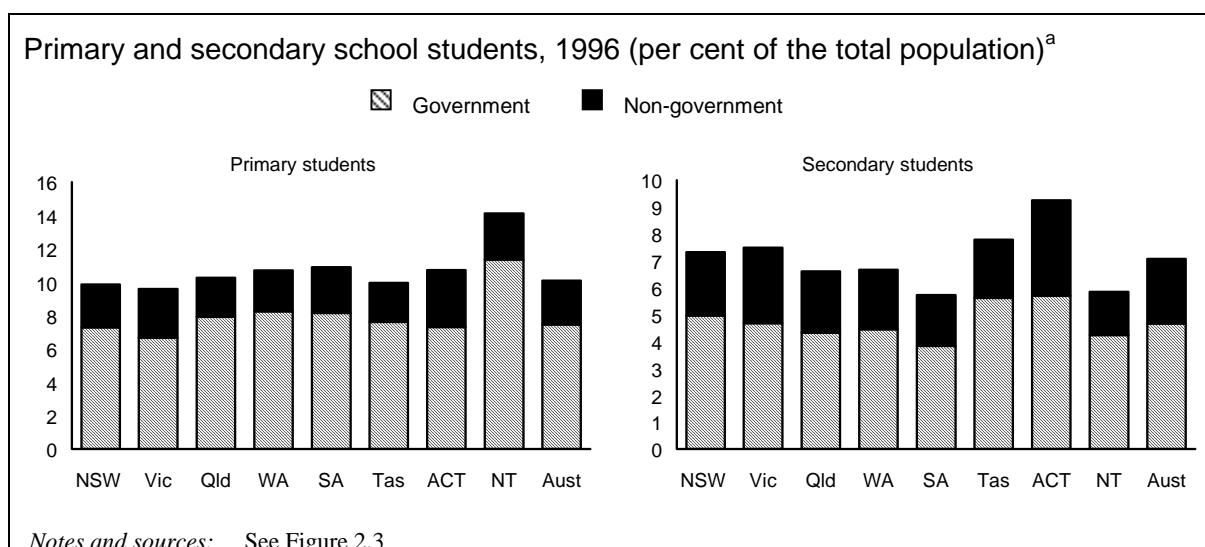
2.1 Government school education

Coverage expanded to include non-government schools

Some performance indicators for school education overall, including non-government schools, are reported here for the first time. This reflects governments' responsibility for ensuring that everyone receives school education. To this end, governments, for regulate non-government schools and contributing to their funding.

This report measures the outcome of school education overall in relation to government funding only, rather than the full cost to the community of providing this service. However, for government schools, efficiency of resource use is also relevant to the performance of government because governments own and manage these schools.

The proportion of the population at school and the breakdowns of student numbers between government and non-government schools and primary and secondary schools vary among jurisdictions.



Progress in establishing nationally comparable learning outcomes

The Steering Committee has a strong interest in the establishment of processes which will generate jurisdictional comparisons of learning outcomes for schools on an ongoing basis. The initial focus was on exploring the possible approaches to establishing equivalencies between existing jurisdictional testing programs.

A detailed work plan was subsequently completed in early 1997, but its implementation is on hold pending progress on a March 1997 resolution of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs to provide for assessment of students against common numeracy and literacy benchmarks. At least some reporting against the benchmarks is planned for 1999 using the 1998 results from State and Territory Government testing programs.

ABS survey of aspects of literacy

A recent ABS literacy survey assessed the literacy skills of those aged 15 years and over, but not students specifically. There was no control for differences in the level of educational attainment, but the skills of people in the survey's 15 to 19 age group (given the recency of their schooling) could be reasonably expected to indicate school education outcomes.

Recognising limitations caused by small sample sizes for the less populous jurisdictions, there still appeared to be higher proportions of persons attaining the higher skill levels (levels 3, 4 or 5) in WA, Victoria, SA and Queensland than in the other jurisdictions.

Literacy skill level attained by persons aged 15 to 19 years, 1996 (per cent)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
<i>Prose skill level</i>									
3	40.7	40.6	39.4	31.5	49.3	40.5	**35.4	**27.1	40.0
4 to 5	11.3	17.1	14.8	22.8	**15.8	**11.8	**9.3	**10.2	14.9
<i>Document skill level</i>									
3	42.8	39.4	42.0	37.9	37.0	36.6	45.4	**37.3	40.7
4 to 5	**8.3	20.1	16.4	19.4	**17.9	**9.4	**9.3	—	14.6
<i>Quantitative skill level</i>									
3	37.3	34.7	36.8	41.9	41.2	**25.7	**24.6	**37.3	36.8
4 to 5	**7.4	15.2	13.9	**12.1	**11.6	**14.4	**20.8	—	11.7

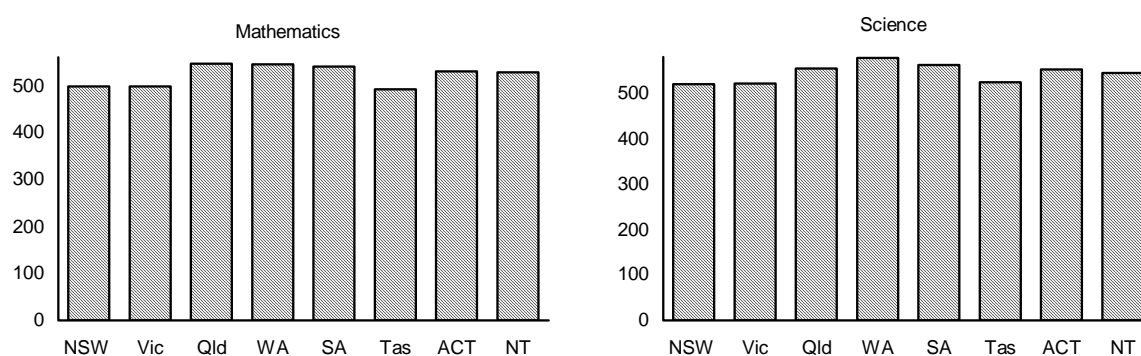
** Sampling variability was too high for comparisons to be made for most practical purposes.

Notes and sources: See Table 2.3

Third International Mathematics and Science Study

Results from the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), which compared performance across 45 different countries in 1994, have now been published for primary schools for Australian states and territories.

Relative performances across jurisdictions were very similar for primary students in both mathematics and science. Students in Queensland, WA and SA had the highest average achievement scores, and those in NSW, Victoria and Tasmania had the lowest. However, in assessing these scores, differences in years of primary schooling across the jurisdictions, notably for SA and Tasmania, should be considered.

Third International Mathematics and Science Study — achievement by primary students, 1994 (mean achievement scores)^{a,b}

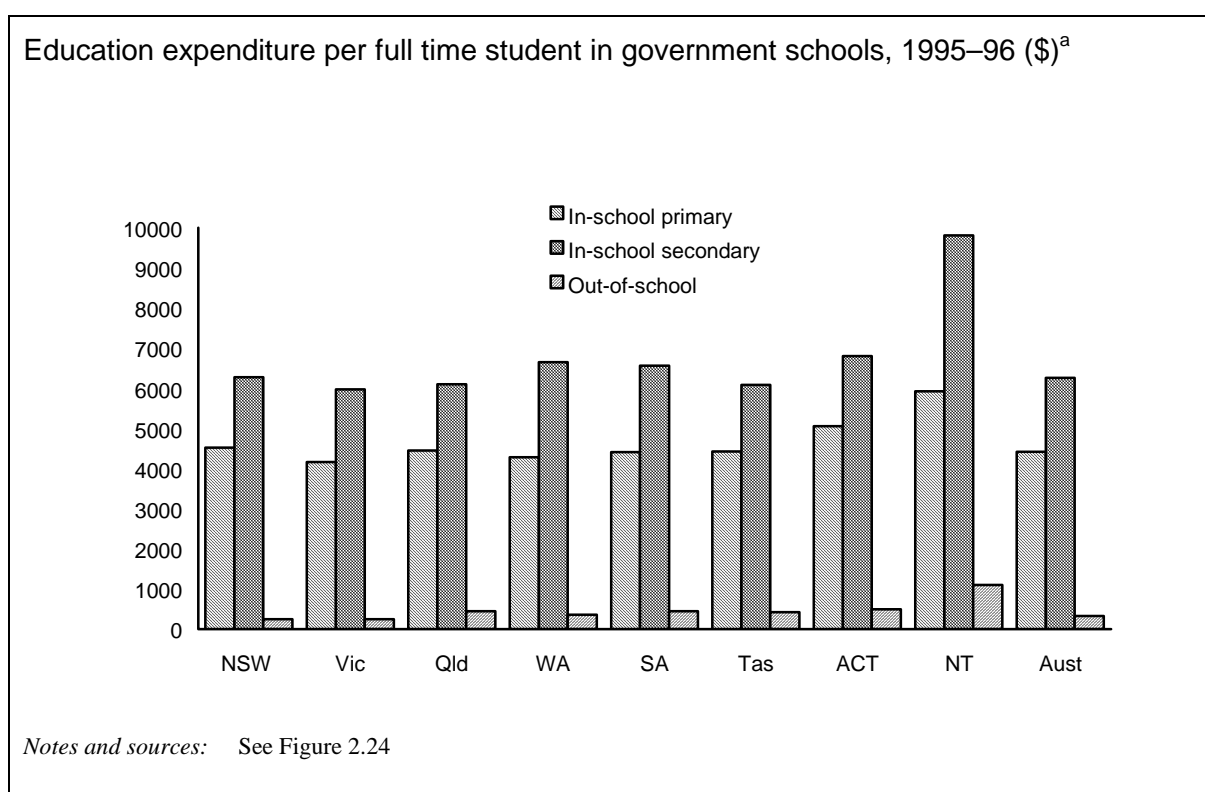
Notes and sources: See Figure 2.10

Notwithstanding that the ABS and TIMSS results are for quite different age groups, Queensland, WA and SA exhibited among the best outcomes in both surveys.

Government expenditure per student

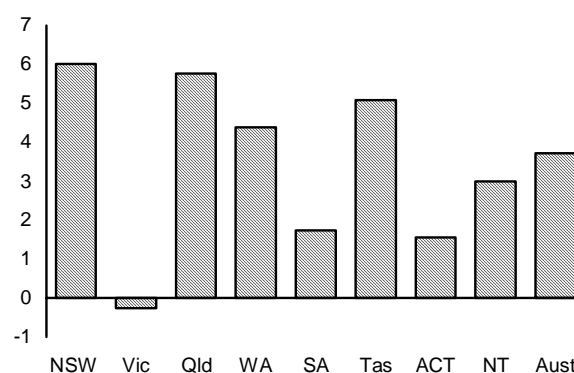
In-school government expenditure per student in government schools did not vary much across the six states (\$4164 to \$4525 for primary schools and \$5974 to \$6648 for secondary schools). It was somewhat higher in the NT (\$5925 for primary schools and \$9812 for secondary schools) and the ACT (\$5058 for primary schools and \$6800 for secondary schools).

Out-of-school departmental overheads per student in government schools were lowest in NSW (\$244) and Victoria (\$245) and highest in the NT (\$1098) and the ACT (\$492).



Average annual changes in real expenditure per student showed considerable variation across jurisdictions for government schools between 1992 and 1995-96. NSW (up 6.0 per cent) and Queensland (up 5.8 per cent) had the largest real expenditure rises, while Victoria (down 0.3 per cent) was the only jurisdiction to record a fall over the period.

Average annual change in real expenditure per full time student in government schools, 1992 to 1995-96 (per cent)^a



Notes and sources: See Figure 2.25

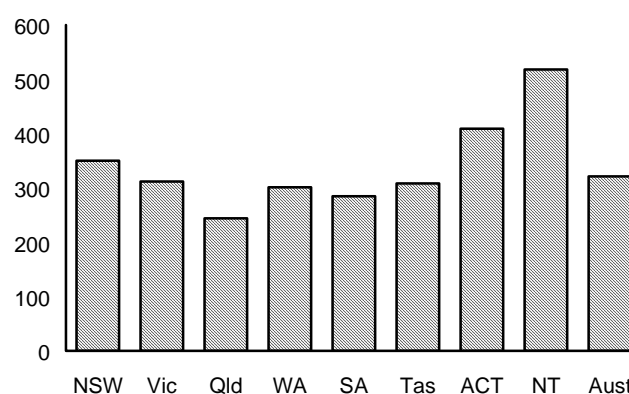
2.2 Vocational education and training

The focus of vocational education and training (VET) in this Report is government funded VET services supplied by technical and further education providers, selected adult community education providers and, to a limited extent, private providers. Publicly funded private providers have been included this year because they are becoming increasingly important deliverers of government funded VET services: they trained two per cent of VET clients in 1996.

Government expenditure

In 1996, government VET expenditure per person aged 15 to 64 years ranged from \$244 in Queensland to \$518 in the NT. Per head expenditure in the NT, the ACT (\$409) and NSW (\$350) was higher than the national average.

Government VET expenditure per person aged 15 to 64 years, 1996 (\$)



Notes and sources: See Figure 3.2

Student outcomes

A survey of TAFE students who graduated in 1996 found that, of those who did their course for vocational reasons, the proportion reporting that their course was highly relevant to their job was above the national average in the ACT, the NT, SA, Victoria, WA and Tasmania. The proportion who indicated high course relevance or some course relevance was highest in Tasmania (83.4 per cent) and SA (82.0 per cent). The proportion who received an increase in earnings as a result of completing their course ranged from 39 per cent in Tasmania to 26 per cent in Queensland.

Employed 1996 graduates who undertook their course for vocational reasons — relevance of course to their main job and increase in earnings, (per cent)

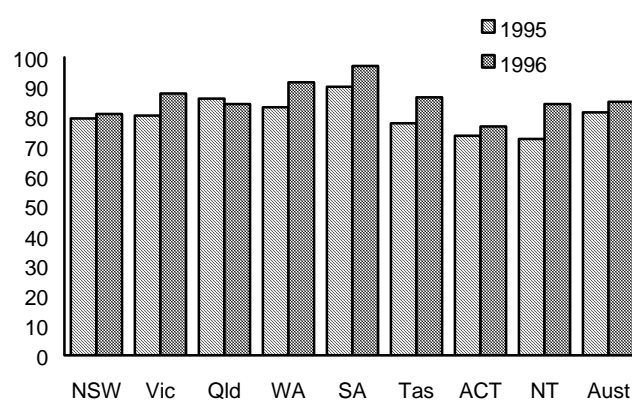
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
<i>Relevance of the course to main job</i>									
Highly relevant	51.6	56.0	51.3	58.2	55.8	68.2	53.9	54.9	53.7
Some relevance	26.5	24.1	26.2	18.4	26.2	15.2	23.0	25.3	25.1
Total relevant	78.1	80.1	77.5	76.6	82.0	83.4	76.9	80.2	78.8
<i>Received an increase in earnings as a result of doing the course</i>									
	31	32	26	33	34	39	31	30	na

Notes and sources: See Tables 3.8 and 3.9

Module load completion rates

Module load completion rates (MLCRs) broadly measure the extent to which students successfully complete the modules they start. The rates in 1996 ranged from 77 per cent in the ACT to 97 per cent in SA. Victoria (88 per cent), SA (97 per cent), WA (92 per cent) and Tasmania (87 per cent) reported MLCRs above the national average. All jurisdictions but Queensland had an increase in completion rates in 1996.

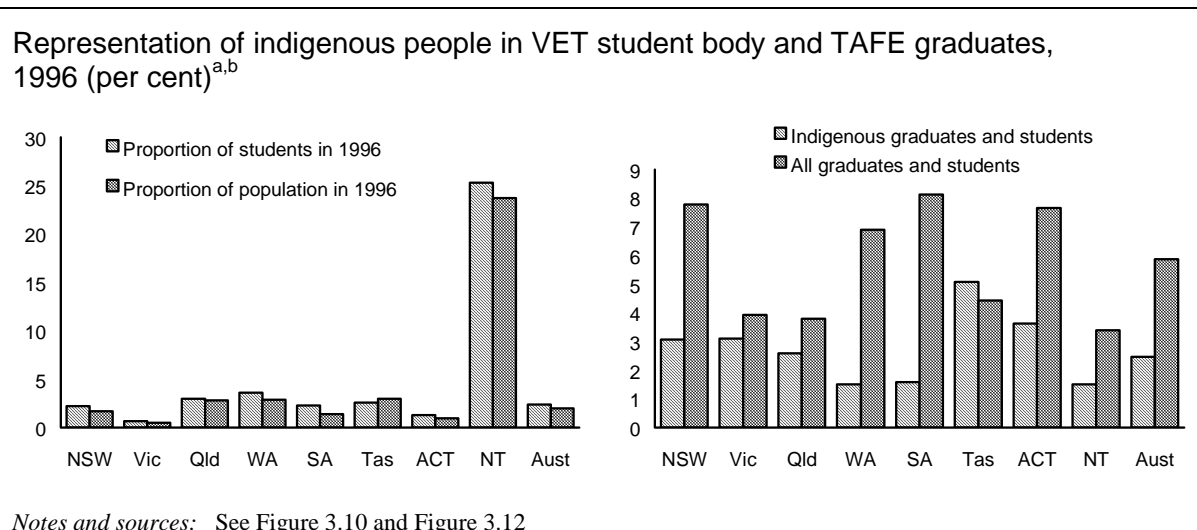
Module Load Completion Rates, 1995 and 1996 (per cent)



Notes and sources: See Figure 3.13

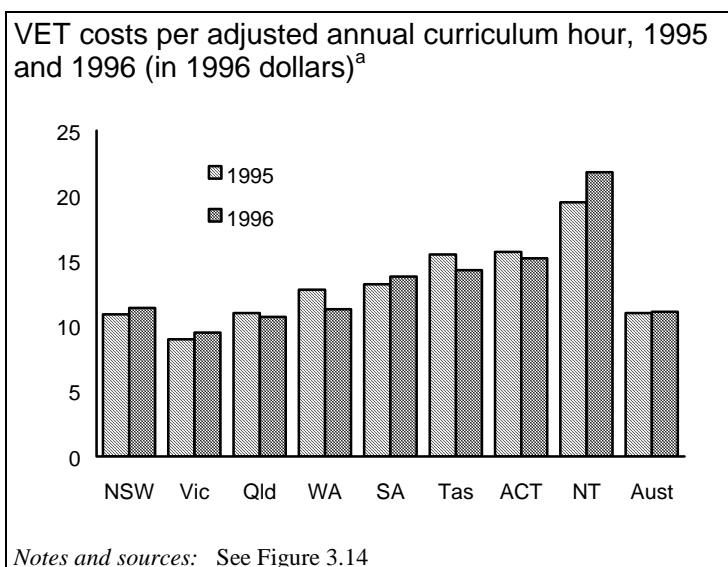
Involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Indigenous people were over-represented within the VET student body relative to their population share in all jurisdictions except Tasmania. For indigenous people, however, the ratio of TAFE graduates to VET students was lower than the same ratio for the general population except in Tasmania. Victoria and Queensland reported the smallest difference between these two graduation rates.



Efficiency

Government recurrent expenditure per annual curriculum hour of government funded VET — adjusted for jurisdictional variations in course mix — ranged from \$9.50 in Victoria to \$21.80 in the NT in 1996. Only Victoria and Queensland reported unit costs below the national average. NSW, Victoria, SA and the NT reported an increase in real unit costs between 1995 and 1996; Queensland, the ACT, Tasmania, and WA reported a decline.



3 Health

The coverage of health has been expanded to include public and community health services and to consider performance in the control of particular health issues — in the first instance, breast cancer. Information on the performance of public acute care hospitals continues to be reported.

Some services, such as those provided to people with a disability and the aged, may have a significant health component. These are covered under Community Services.

The lack of generally accepted indicators of the quality of care provided in Australia's public acute care hospitals continues to be a major concern. The Steering Committee has continued to report all available information, even though both the indicators and the data are far from ideal, pending the development of something better by the sector.

National Public Health Partnership

A recent major development in the field of public health has been the establishment of the National Public Health Partnership between the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments. The Partnership principally deals with services conceived and delivered for the whole population and their health status (that is, the components of the health system outside the framework of the Medicare Agreement).

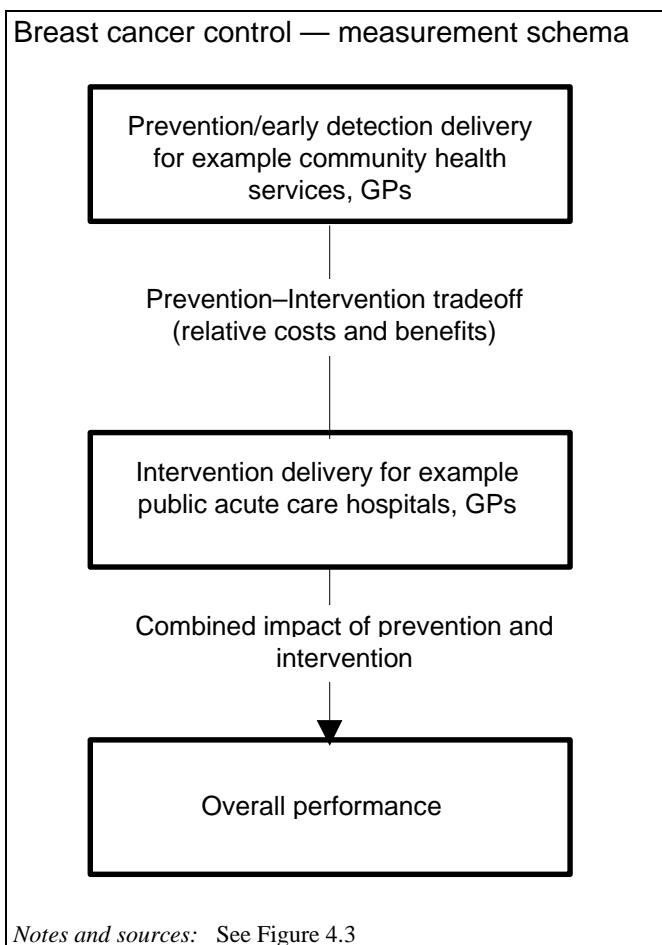
The work of the National Public Health Partnership includes promoting the collection, analysis, and application of information required for monitoring and evaluating public health strategy implementation. The initial focus is on five National Health Priority Areas — diabetes mellitus, cardiovascular health, cancer control, injury prevention and control, and mental health.

Framework for breast cancer control

The overall performance of the health system in controlling a particular health issue depends on the appropriateness of the mix of services provided, and how well each specific service is provided, as well as on the efficiency and effectiveness of services. Information on both of these aspects needs to be available for a full assessment.

Breast cancer control, for example, could involve the following performance measures:

- overall effectiveness could be measured by the incidence of more severe breast cancer conditions; overall efficiency by the expenditure on early detection and treatment per episode of illness;
- indicators of effectiveness of early detection programs could include the number of women in target age groups screened, and indicators of efficiency could include the cost per woman screened; and
- indicators of the effectiveness of hospital treatment could include compliance with clinical guidelines for treatment of early breast cancer, and indicators of efficiency could include the cost per separation for each diagnostic related group.



Waiting times

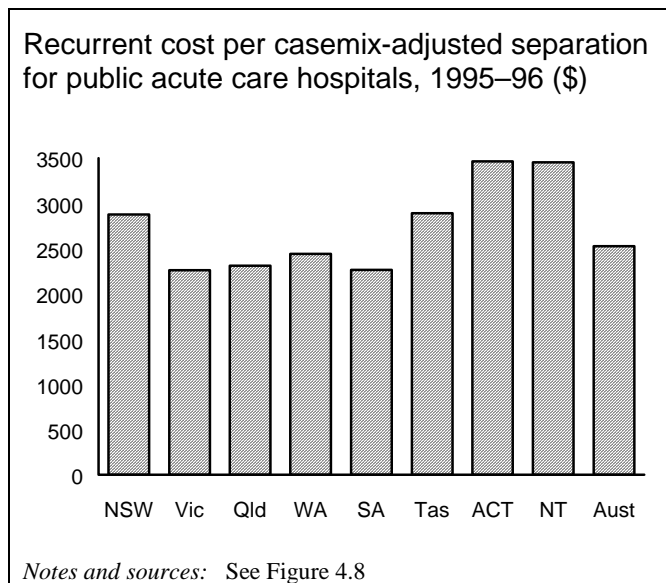
No additional data on waiting times for elective surgery were available to that presented in the 1997 Report. Four jurisdictions provided waiting times for their emergency departments for 1995–96, but the results were not comparable. Notable jurisdiction-level results were:

- in NSW, the number of emergency department patients admitted within the recommended time ranged from 92 per cent for non-urgent patients to 67 per cent for emergency and urgent patients;
- in Victoria, the proportion of emergency department patients seen within the recommended time ranged from 100 per cent for patients requiring immediate

- attention to 77 per cent for urgent patients;
- in WA, all resuscitation patients were admitted within the recommended time, compared with 66 per cent of semi-urgent patients (that is, patients requiring admission within 60 minutes); and
- in Tasmania, almost all resuscitation, emergency and non-urgent patients were admitted within the recommended time period, compared with almost three-quarters of urgent and semi-urgent patients.

Recurrent cost per casemix-adjusted separation

Victoria recorded the lowest recurrent cost per casemix-adjusted separation (\$2261) while the ACT recorded the highest (\$3466), in 1995–96. The national average was \$2529.



4 Justice

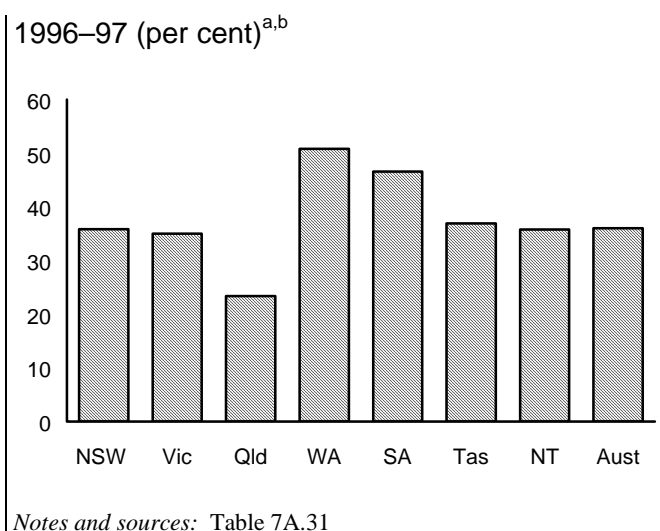
The justice system comprises services and agencies dealing with crime and civil disputes, including crime detection and prevention, law enforcement, judicial processes and dispute resolution, offender containment and rehabilitation services. The focus here is on the core services of police, court administration and corrective services.

Individuals who pass through the criminal justice system often interact in succession with police, courts and corrections. Given the integrated nature of the justice system, some aspects of performance cannot be attributed to any one agency and some performance indicators reflect the combined influence of many services. Recidivism — the extent to which persons passing through the criminal justice system re-offend — is such an indicator.

Queensland showed the lowest Recidivism rate for prison custody,

proportion of sentenced prisoners returning to corrective services within two years of release (23.4 per cent) and WA had the highest proportion (50.8 per cent). in 1996–97.

All but one jurisdiction showed rates comparable with the previous year — the exception was Queensland which showed a declining rate (down from 31.6 to 23.4 per cent).



The ABS release of the Australian Standard Offence Classification in October 1997 provides the basis for consistent national collections in the justice area. Priority is also being given to developing and implementing national standards for identification of indigenous people in crime, courts and corrective services statistical collections, starting with a survey of existing administrative collections.

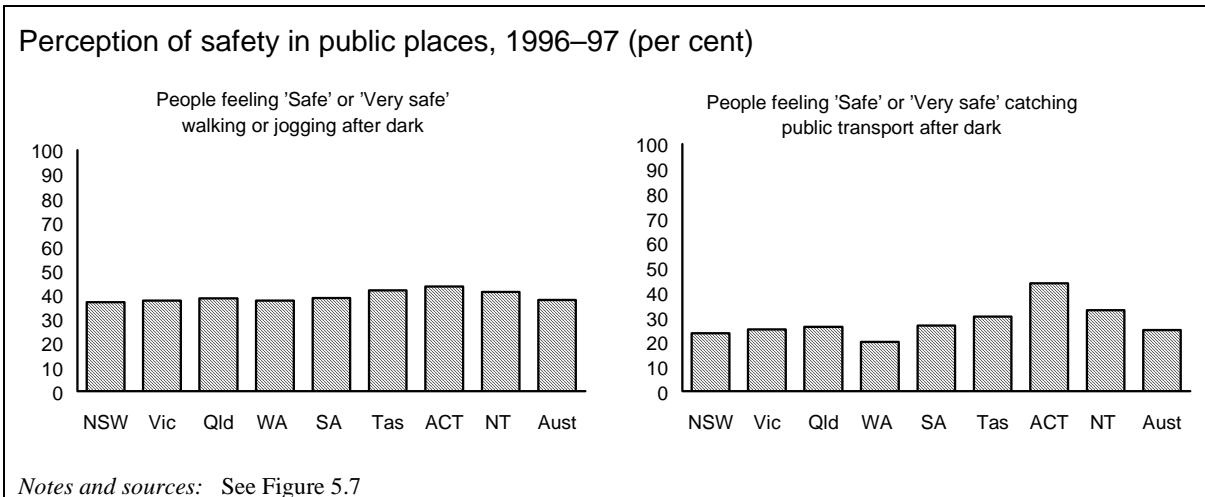
4.1 Police

Police services are the principal agencies through which State and Territory Governments pursue their law enforcement objectives: to protect, help and reassure the community; to prevent crime; and to enforce the law.

The major data gap in reporting on police services continues to be in the area of efficiency. However, all police services are either involved in undertaking, or are looking into the feasibility of undertaking, activity surveys to establish internal cost allocations and are exploring ways of establishing activity equivalencies across jurisdictions which will allow comparable efficiencies to be reported.

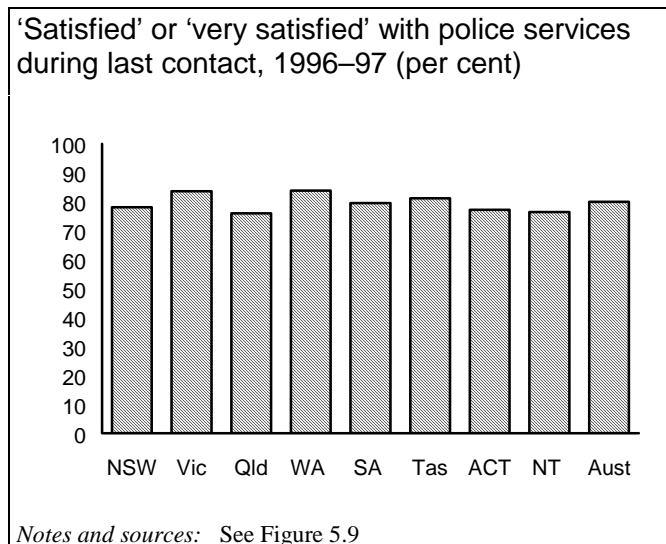
Public safety

Perception of safety while walking or jogging after dark, as indicated by the proportion of people reporting feeling 'safe' or 'very safe', was highest in the ACT (44 per cent) and lowest in NSW (37 per cent). When travelling on public transport after dark the proportion of respondents who felt 'safe' or 'very safe' was highest in the ACT (44 per cent) and lowest in WA (20 per cent).



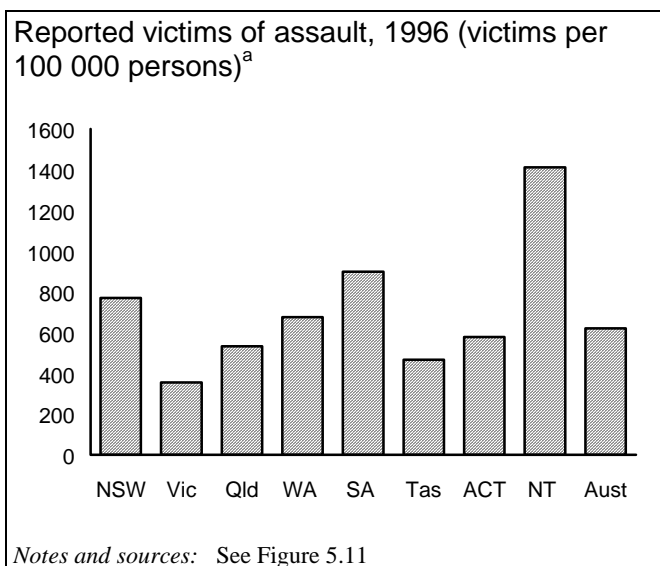
Satisfaction with police services

In both Victoria and WA, 84 per cent of people were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service they received during their last contact with police; in both Queensland and the NT, 76 per cent of people were in these categories.



Crimes against the person — assault

The number of reported victims of assault per 100 000 persons in 1996 was highest in the NT (1411 victims per 100 000 persons), SA (899) and NSW (770). It was lowest in Victoria (356 victims per 100 000 persons) and Tasmania (466).



For cases of assault investigated by police between July and October 1996, the highest proportion of investigations finalised within 90 days was in SA (74 per cent) and the lowest in Tasmania (48 per cent). Proceedings against an alleged offender had begun after 90 days in 55 per cent of cases in Victoria compared with 45 per cent in Tasmania. Information was not available for NSW, WA and the NT.

Assault: outcomes of investigations after 90 days, 1 July to 31 October 1996 (per cent) ^a								
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT
Investigation not finalised	na	38	32	na	26	52	28	na
Investigation finalised:								
– no offender proceeded against	na	7	19	na	27	3	25	na
– offender proceeded against	na	55	49	na	47	45	47	na
Total investigation finalised	na	62	68	na	74	48	72	na

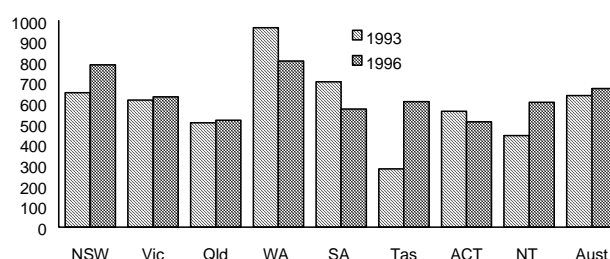
Notes and sources: See Table 5.2

Crimes against property — motor vehicle theft

Motor vehicle theft made up 12 per cent of all recorded theft in 1996. The highest incidence of motor vehicle theft was in WA, where there were 804 recorded victims per 100 000 persons. The lowest incidence, 510 victims per 100 000 persons, was in the ACT.

The biggest decreases in the incidence reported motor vehicle theft over the four-year period to 1996 were in (967 victims per 100 000 persons in 1993 to 804 in 1996) and SA (704 to 572). The largest increases were recorded in Tasmania, where the rate climbed from 282 to 608 (although this was still below the national rate), NSW (651 to 786) and the NT (444 to 604).

Reported victims of motor vehicle theft, 1993 and 1996 (victims per 100 000 persons)^a



Notes and sources: See Figure 5.13

Generally, few investigations of reported motor vehicle theft reached a finalised status after 90 days. After 90 days, investigations of reported motor vehicle theft were finalised in 21 per cent of cases in Queensland but in only 3 per cent of cases in Tasmania. Proceedings against an alleged offender after 90 days occurred in 15 per cent of investigations in Queensland, compared with only 3 per cent in Tasmania. Information was not available for NSW, WA and the NT.

Motor vehicle theft: outcomes of investigations after 90 days, 1 July to 31 October 1996 (per cent)^a

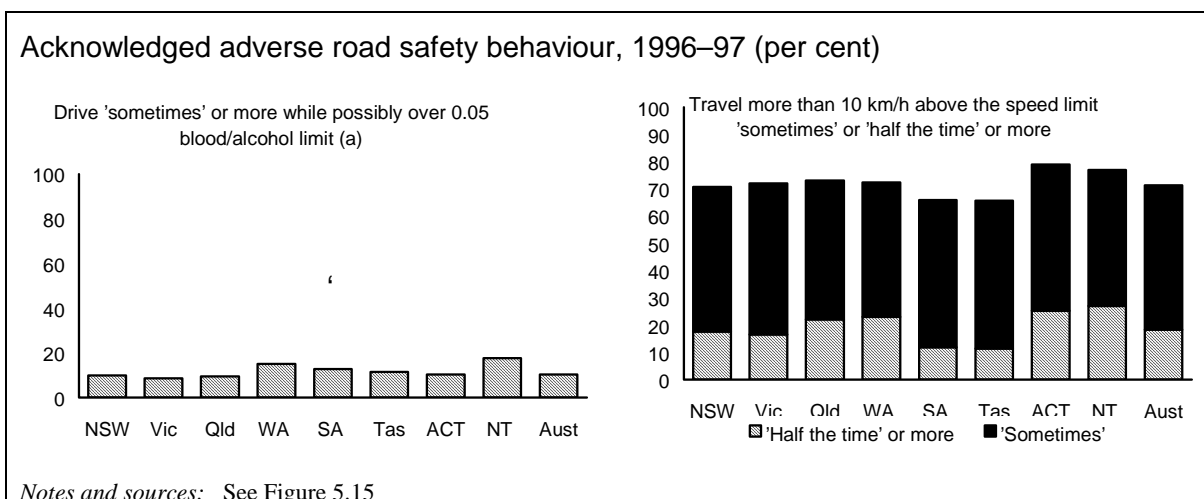
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT
Investigation not finalised	na	89	78	na	89	97	90	na
Investigation finalised:								
- no offender proceeded against	na	3	6	na	3	0	3	na
- offender proceeded against	na	9	15	na	8	3	7	na
- Total	na	12	21	na	11	3	10	na

Notes and sources: See Table 5.4

Road safety

Nationally, 18 per cent of drivers surveyed reported driving more than 10 kilometres per hour above the speed limit 'half the time' or more — the proportion was highest in the NT (27 per cent) and lowest in Tasmania (11 per cent).

Ten per cent of drivers indicated that they ‘sometimes’ or more often drive when possibly over the 0.05 blood alcohol limit, with the range across jurisdictions being from 18 per cent in the NT to 9 per cent in Victoria and Queensland.



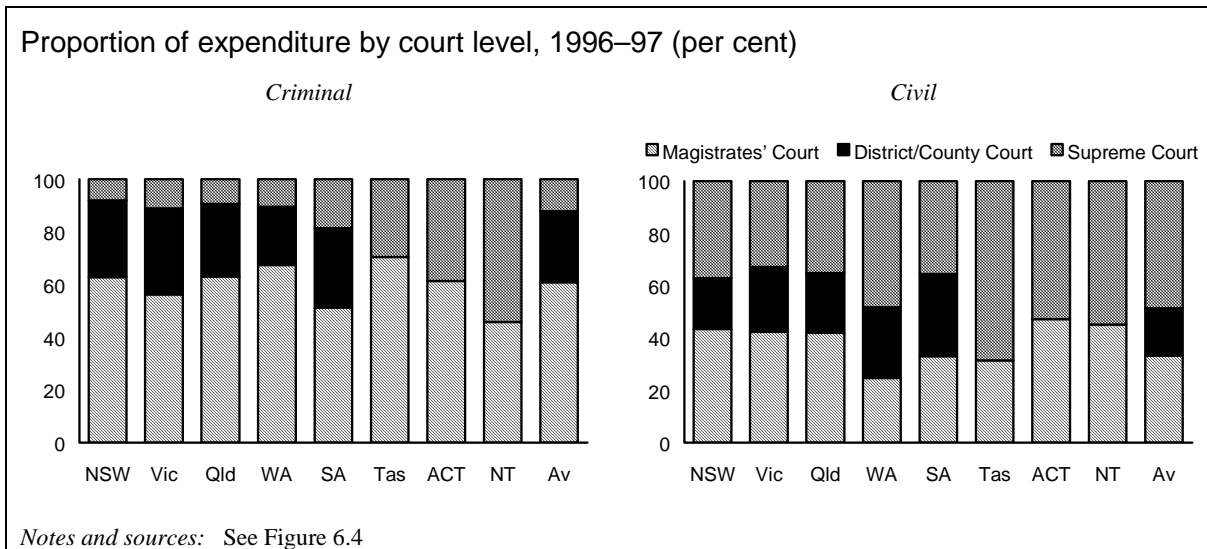
4.2 Court administration

Court administration agencies work with the judiciary to provide a court system which allows for the prompt resolution of disputes and appropriate access to justice for the community. In this Report, coverage has been expanded from past years to include the State and Territory Coroner’s Courts and probate registries. There is also a discussion of timeliness and time standards.

Distribution of costs across the various courts

The Magistrates’ Court (in states and territories having all three court levels) represented 50 per cent to 75 per cent of total criminal expenditure in 1996–97, followed by the District/County Court then the Supreme Court. On an individual court jurisdiction basis, WA had the highest Magistrates’ Court share; SA and Victoria had the highest District Court share; and SA had the highest Supreme Court share.

Expenditure in the civil jurisdictions was more equally distributed among the court levels. The Magistrates’ Courts generally still received the highest proportion of expenditure, followed by the Supreme Courts and the District/County Courts.



Timeliness

Ensuring the timely resolution of disputes is a primary objective of courts. Most courts now employ some type of case flow management system to enforce and monitor the delivery of justice with an appropriate degree of timeliness. Time standards are an integral component of these systems.

There was a wide variation in the scope and length of standards across Australian courts as at June 1997. The ACT Supreme Court, for example, aimed to conclude the hearing of 100 per cent of civil lodgements within two years (104 weeks) of the issue of a certificate of readiness, while the WA Magistrates' Court aimed to finalise 100 per cent of residential tenancy disputes within two weeks of filing. Some courts applied a single standard across their entire case load while others established time standards for particular components of their case load. There were also differences across jurisdictions in the degree to which the time standards were publicised and enforced.

Nationally a steady proportion of over 90 per cent of criminal matters were finalised within six months but defended civil matters finalised within 12 months decreased from 72 per cent to 65 per cent from 1994–95 to 1996–97. However, the finalisation rates varied significantly across jurisdictions over this period.

The Victorian Supreme Court increased its proportion of defended civil cases finalised within 12 months from 28 per cent in 1995–96 to 97 per cent in 1996–97. An improvement occurred in the WA District Court where civil cases finalised within 12 months increased from 11 per cent in 1995–96 to 90 per cent in 1996–97. A number of courts and jurisdictions recorded reductions in finalisation rates including the ACT Magistrates' Court where the proportion of matters finalised in

six months decreased from 88 per cent in 1995-96 to 39 per cent in 1996-97 and the NT Supreme Court where the proportion of matters finalised within 12 months decreased from 100 per cent to 26 per cent.

Efficiency

Nationally, expenditure per lodgement in the criminal jurisdiction fell by 14 per cent in real terms from 1994-95 to 1996-97 and unit costs in the civil jurisdiction rose by 5 per cent. In part these changes reflect the impact of the application of new cost apportionments resulting from a reassignment of expenditure from the criminal to the civil jurisdictions. In addition, NSW shifted resources to the civil jurisdiction of the District Court in order to reduce case backlogs which were resulting in increasing finalisation times.

There were other significant changes to the unit costs of individual courts. For example, reductions in expenditure per criminal case occurred in the WA District Court, ACT Supreme Court and Victorian Supreme Court while expenditure per civil case increased in the Federal Court and the Victoria and SA Supreme Courts.

Change in real expenditure per lodgement, 1994-95 to 1996-97 (per cent)										
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Cwlth	Av
<i>Criminal</i>										
Magistrates' Court	-38	-7	2	54	-7	-31	-9	-24	—	-14
District/County Court	-19	3	-9	-12	15	—	—	—	—	-10
Supreme Court	-7	-33	-10	11	-11	na	-19	-43	—	-7
All Courts	-35	-3	0	35	-8	-41	-6	-30	—	-14
<i>Civil</i>										
Magistrates' Court	46	39	-10	-52	0	na	17	-56	—	10
District/County Court	222	33	-43	2	-38	—	—	—	—	39
Supreme & Federal Court	4	49	-29	-16	70	na	-20	-61	29	23
All Courts	25	24	-32	-15	6	na	16	-54	29	5
Family Court	—	—	—	-13	—	—	—	—	-8	-9
<i>Criminal and civil</i>										
Magistrates' Court	-21	5	-3	10	-7	11	5	-39	—	-8
District/County Court	32	19	-21	-7	-17	—	—	—	—	8
Supreme & Federal Court	2	32	-24	-14	49	na	-18	-51	29	17

Notes and sources: See Table 6.9

4.3 Corrective services

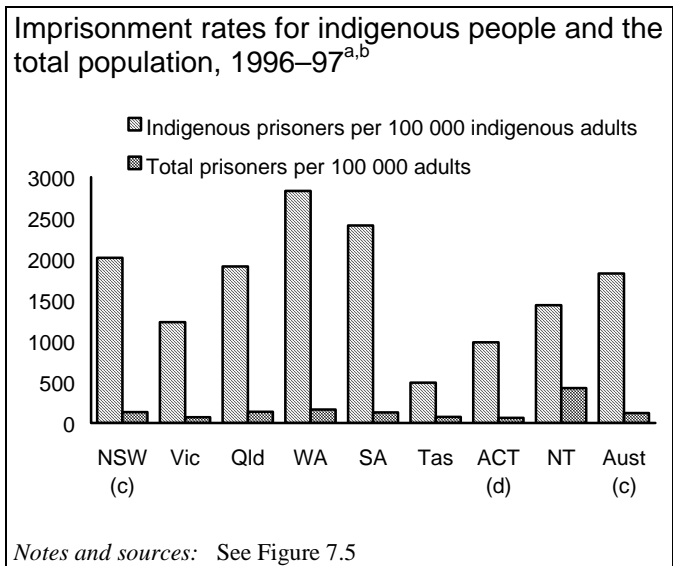
Contracting and corporatisation

Contracting and corporatisation are changing the correctional environment and the way governments pursue their corrective services responsibilities. Four jurisdictions (NSW, Queensland, Victoria and SA) had private prison services in 1996–97, and a total of 1862 prisoners (11 per cent of all prisoners excluding periodic detainees), were held in such facilities across Australia. Further, Queensland determined in 1996 to corporatise the service delivery elements of the Corrective Service Commission, effective from July 1997.

Governments are clearly responsible for the overall management of the corrective services system, whether actual delivery of corrective services is achieved through private contractors or government operated corrective facilities. The framework of performance indicators adopted in this Report has been modified to reflect government responsibilities as both manager of the corrections system and as an operator of correctional facilities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners

The imprisonment rate per 100 000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged over 17 years was generally 12 to 17 times that for the general population except in the NT and Tasmania (where the rates were three and six times those for the general population respectively). The imprisonment rate per 100 000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over 17 years ranged from 392 in Tasmania to 2674 in WA. The number of prisoners per 100 000 of the general population aged over 17 years ranged from 61 in the ACT and 71 in Victoria to 428 in the NT.

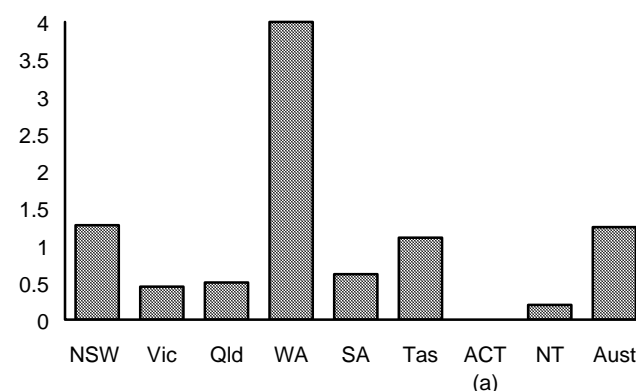


Escapes

The total prisoner escape rate per 100 prisoner years, for open and secure prisons combined, ranged from zero in the ACT to 4.0 in WA in 1996–97. The total prison escape rate declined from that of the previous year in five jurisdictions but increased slightly — to a level commensurate with the 1994–95 rate — in both WA and Tasmania.

The escape rate from secure custody per 100 prisoner years ranged from zero in the NT, Tasmania and the ACT to 0.3 in NSW in 1996–97. The escape rate from open custody ranged from 2.4 in Victoria to 11.5 in WA.

Total prisoner escape rate, 1996–97 (escapes per 100 prisoner years)



Notes and sources: See Figure 7.8

Deaths from apparent unnatural causes

Deaths from apparent unnatural causes per 100 prisoner years ranged from zero in Tasmania, ACT and NT to 0.4 (nine deaths) in WA in 1996–97. Deaths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners from apparent unnatural causes per 100 indigenous prisoner years ranged from zero in Victoria, SA, Tasmania, the ACT and the NT to 0.33 in NSW. Although there were large differences in the death rate by unnatural causes between indigenous and all prisoners for individual jurisdictions, there did not appear to be any consistent difference across all jurisdictions.

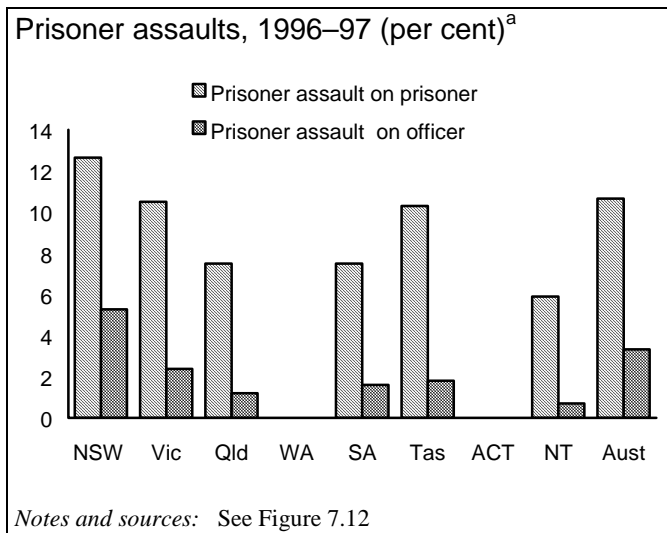
Prisoner death rates by unnatural causes, 1996–97 (deaths per 100 prisoner years)^a



Notes and sources: See Figure 7.11

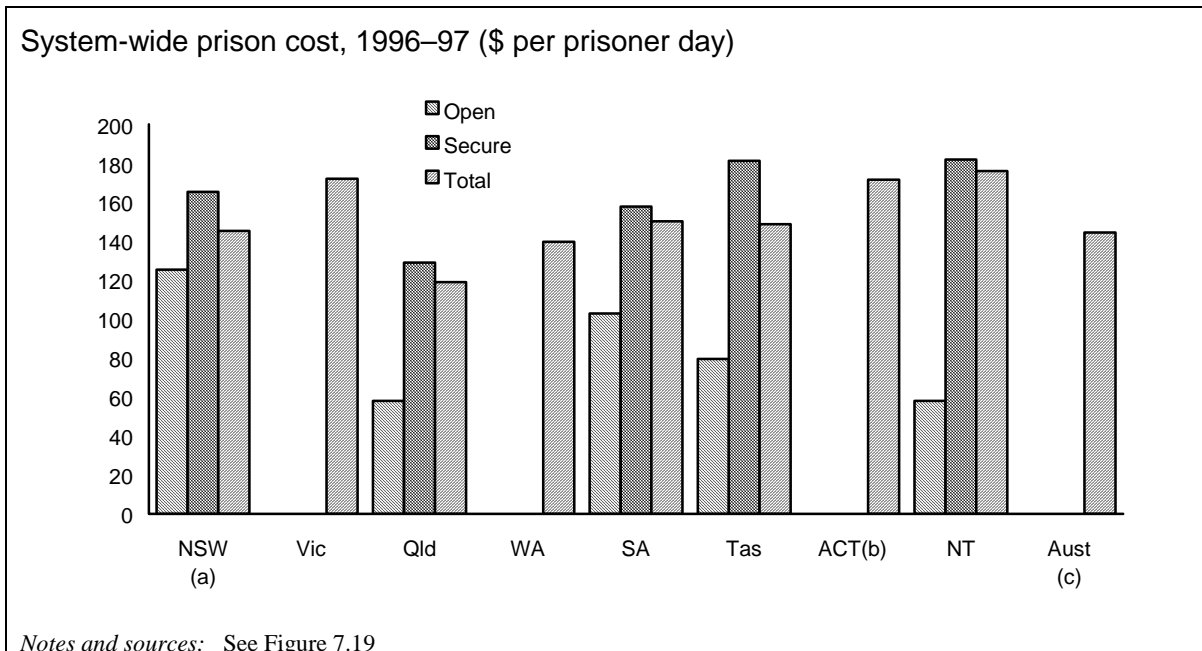
Prisoner assaults

The rate of assault by prisoners on other prisoners ranged from 5.9 per cent in the NT to 12.7 per cent in NSW in 1996–97 and the rate of assaults by prisoners on officers ranged from 0.7 per cent in the NT to 5.3 per cent in NSW. The ACT and WA did not report on either measure.



Unit costs

Average cost per prisoner per day for open and secure prisons combined ranged from \$119 in Queensland to \$176 in the NT. Queensland had the lowest unit cost for secure prisons (\$129), while the NT had the lowest unit cost for open prisons (\$58). There was significant variation in unit costs across jurisdictions, particularly for open prisons.



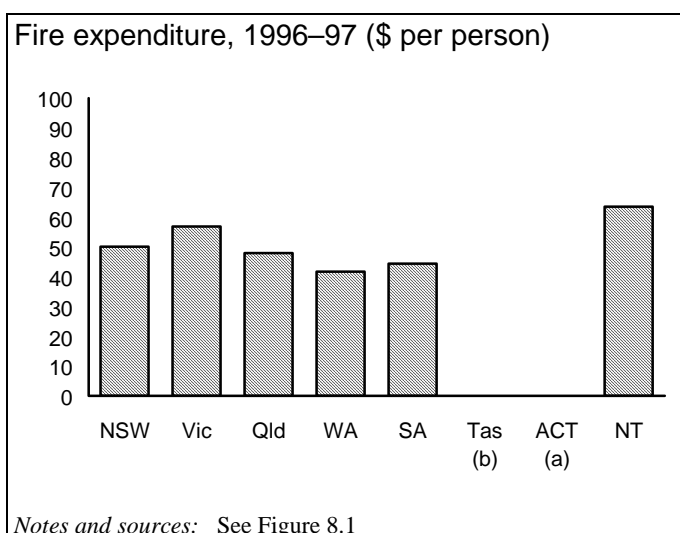
5 Emergency management

Emergency management encompasses the services provided by or on behalf of governments in relation to a wide range of emergencies such as medical emergencies, hazardous materials, floods, earthquakes, landslides, fires, storms and motor vehicle accidents. Collectively, these services reduce the negative impact of emergencies and improve the level and perception of safety in the community.

At this stage, Report coverage is confined to two common forms of emergencies: structural and bush fires; and medical emergencies. The agencies in each jurisdiction primarily responsible for these emergencies are fire and ambulance services respectively. This being the first year of coverage for emergency management, the focus has been on developing indicator frameworks and identifying data sources. Reporting is largely descriptive.

Fire

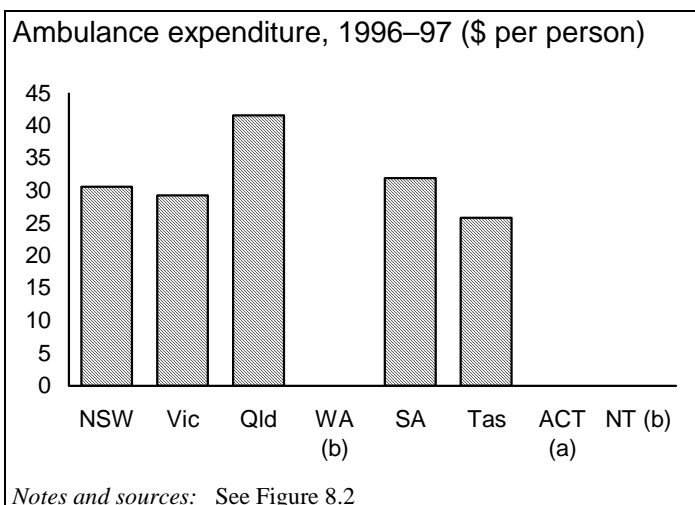
The total expenditure by the fire services for which data was available for 1996–97 was approximately \$860 million. Apparent expenditure per person by fire services in each jurisdiction was highest in the NT (\$64 per person) and lowest in WA (\$42 per person).



Ambulance

The number of incidents for which ambulances turned out in 1995–96 ranged from 682 000 in NSW to 15 000 in the ACT. For those jurisdictions where data was available, a patient was transported in 66 per cent of responses in Victoria and 75 per cent of responses in NSW. For most jurisdictions the most common vehicle dispatched was an emergency stretcher ambulance.

The total spending by ambulance services in the states and territories in 1996–97 was over \$540 million. Per person expenditure was highest in Queensland (\$42 per person) and lowest in Tasmania (\$26 per person).



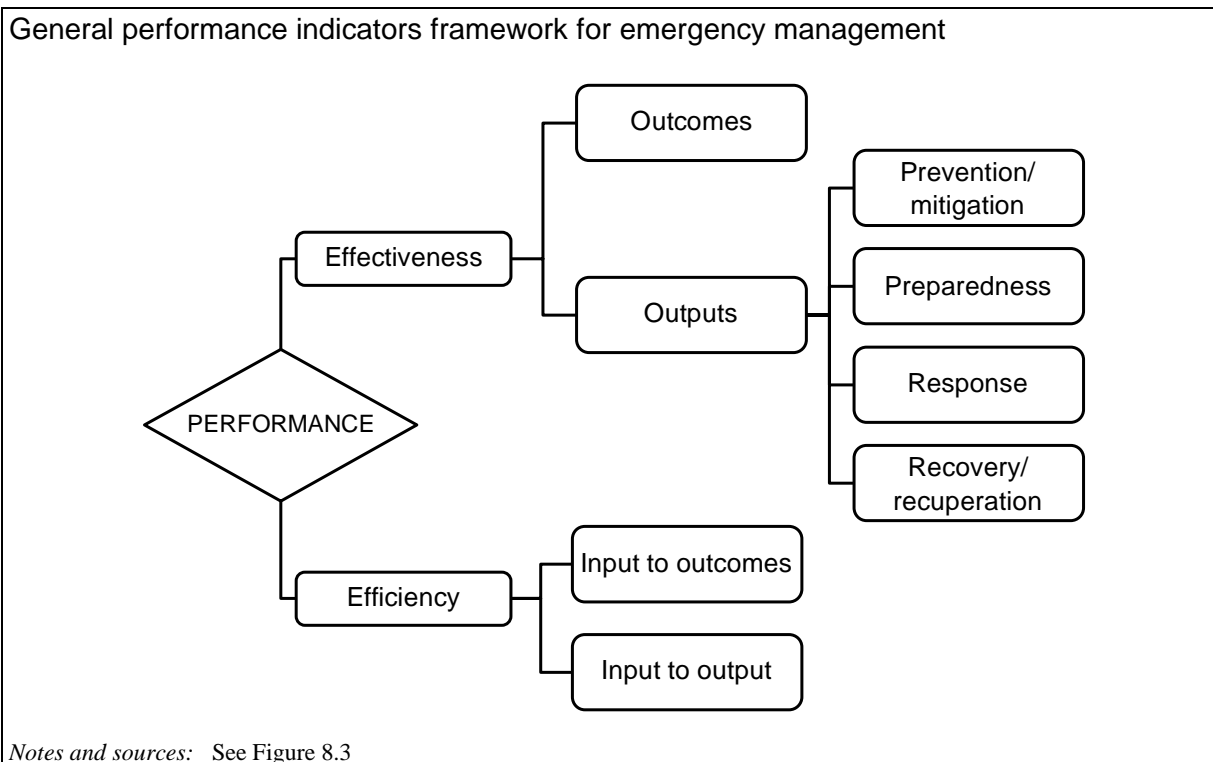
Reporting framework

A general framework of indicators has been developed which could apply to the different types of emergencies. It groups effectiveness indicators around the following themes:

- *outcomes* — the overarching impact of the service on the community, economy and environment (for example, value of property saved);
- *prevention and mitigation* — strategies and services to stop emergency events or lessen their impact;
- *preparedness* — strategies and services to position providers and the community to respond quickly and effectively to emergency events;
- *response* — strategies and services to control, limit or modify the emergency to reduce the consequences; and
- *recovery*:
 - *emergency services* — strategies and services to return agencies to a state of preparedness after emergency situations; and
 - *community* — strategies and services to support affected communities in their reconstruction of physical infrastructure and restoring emotional, social, economic and physical wellbeing.

Note that effective prevention will reduce the requirement to respond to, and recover from, emergencies. Therefore high levels of response may not provide the most effective or the most efficient means of managing emergencies.

Potential efficiency indicators relating input to output could cover the unit cost of operations as well as expenditure per person, response or case. Use rates for staff (full-time and supplementary volunteers) and equipment is another potential indicator, although a use ratio of 100 per cent may not be the most desirable outcome because services may need to maintain a contingent response capacity.



One aspect of fire management for which data were available, as a result of ABS surveys conducted over recent years, was the installation of fire safety equipment. A survey conducted in 1997 in Queensland identified that, for that state, approximately 57 per cent of households had smoke detectors, 36 per cent had fire extinguishers, 12 per cent had fire blankets and 67 per cent had electrical safety switches.

An earlier survey conducted in NSW revealed generally lower levels of the installation of fire safety equipment than had been identified in the Queensland study.

Households, fire safety equipment (per cent)

	<i>NSW, October 1994</i>			<i>Queensland, 1997</i>		
	<i>Does</i>		<i>Total</i>	<i>Does</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Has</i>	<i>not have</i>		<i>Has</i>	<i>not have</i>	
Smoke alarm or smoke detector	21	79	100	57	43	100
Fire extinguisher	17	83	100	36	64	100
Fire blanket	6	94	100	12	88	100
Home fire sprinkler system	0	100	100	1	99	100
Electrical safety switch	35	65	100	67	33	100

Notes and sources: Table 8.7

Future directions

It is planned that the 1999 Report will include the first reporting of performance data. As with all new areas, the development of detailed indicators and data collection will be an iterative process extending over several years.

For structural and bush fires the indicators for which reporting is expected in 1999 are:

- outcomes;
- responsiveness; and
- efficiency.

For medical emergencies the indicators for which reporting is expected in 1999 are:

- outcomes;
- preparedness;
- responsiveness; and
- two indicators of efficiency.

Other indicators in the frameworks may not be reported on for a number of years.

6 Community services

Government community services supplement support provided by the non-government sector or informally through family, friends and the community as a whole. They encompass financial assistance to those in crisis and short-term or transitional housing support. Community services covered in this Report are child care services, aged care services, disability support, and protection and support services (encompassing child protection, supported placements, and supported accommodation and assistance).

Government involvement in community services has changed in recent years. Not-for-profit organisations undertook 54 per cent of direct service expenditure in 1995–96, while for-profit institutions accounted for a further 19 per cent. Only 5 per cent of the 8036 employing businesses and organisations that provided community services in 1996 were government service providers, although these organisations accounted for 27 per cent of all community service expenditure.

The needs of many clients in community services may be met by a single service provider, but there are a number of clients with complex needs who rely on services provided by more than one organisation, funded through more than one program, and often administered by different departments. There is no information on the performance of these services as a package, although the introduction of case management and the coordination of policy at a higher level are both developments which may improve the delivery of services.

Links also exist between the community service sector and other areas of service provision covered in other sections of the Report. The effectiveness of community services may substantially effect education, health, housing and the justice system, while in return, these areas may influence the community services sector outcomes.

6.1 Aged care

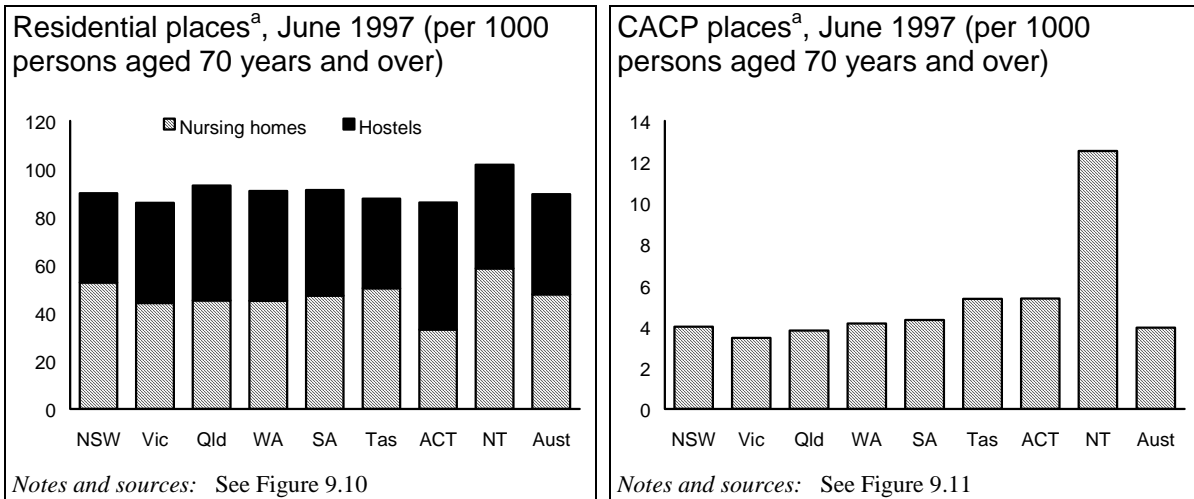
Coverage

The focus of the aged care sector coverage is on services provided to frail older people. The main services include residential services — in nursing homes, hostels and nursing home-type patients in hospitals — respite services, community services and assessment services.

The ACT and the NT have the lowest proportions of older people and SA has the highest proportion. Other jurisdictions have reasonably similar population age distributions.

Residential and CACP places

The combined number of nursing home and hostel places per person aged 70 years and over in June 1997 was reasonably similar across most jurisdictions. The ACT had proportionally more hostel places and fewer nursing home places than the other jurisdictions and the NT had proportionally more nursing home places.



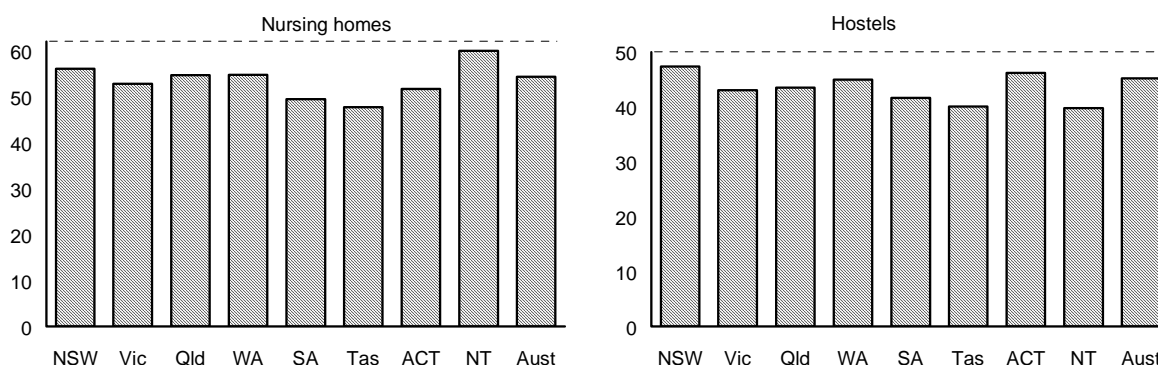
The number of community aged care package (CACP) places per 1000 persons aged 70 and over has grown in recent years but still remains small relative to residential places. The smaller population jurisdictions (the NT, the ACT and Tasmania) had the highest proportion of CACP places relative to the target number of places, and Victoria, Queensland and NSW had the lowest.

Quality indicators

Outcome standards of nursing homes and hostels targeted for assessment by the Commonwealth Government do not indicate the average quality of care provided in a given year because inspectors target facilities considered to be high risk, not a random sample of facilities. However, some interjurisdictional comparisons of the outcomes of the assessments can be made because there was similar targeting across jurisdictions.

Standards of those nursing homes targeted in 1996–97 were highest in the NT (60.0) and NSW (56.1) and lowest in Tasmania (47.7) and SA (49.5). The standard for hostels was highest in NSW (47.4) and the ACT (46.2) and lowest in the NT (39.8) and Tasmania (40.1).

Average score of Nursing homes and Hostels assessed against outcome standards, 1996–97 (nursing homes out of 62; hostels out of 50)^{a,b}



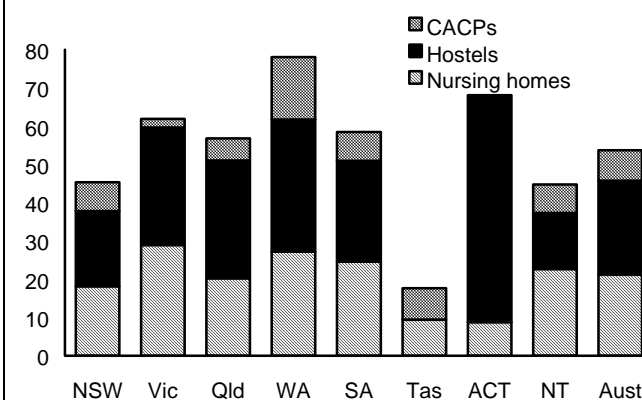
Notes and sources: See Figure 9.13

Access by indigenous people

Indigenous people tend to require aged care services at a younger age than the general population. Thus, use for indigenous people was measured in relation to the number of indigenous people 50 years and over.

The intensity of use of aged care facilities by indigenous people in this age group in 1996–97 was highest in WA (78.1 per 1000 indigenous people) and lowest in Tasmania (17.6 per 1000 indigenous people).

Indigenous aged care recipients, June 1997 (recipients per 1000 indigenous people aged 50 years and over)^{a,b,c}

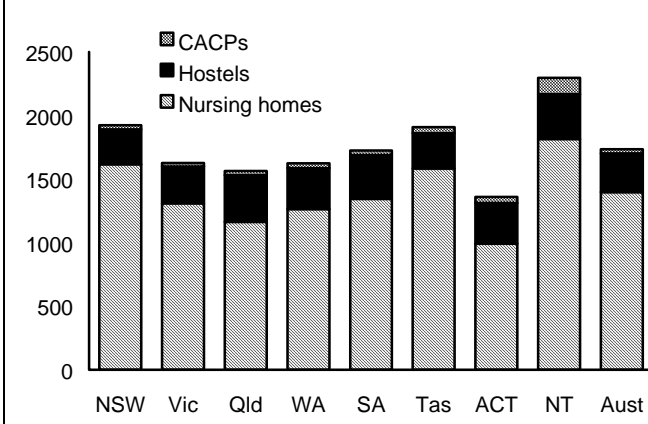


Notes and sources: See Figure 9.14

Expenditure and efficiency

Government expenditure on residential (and equivalent) care services per person aged 70 years and over was dominated by nursing homes expenditure, with a smaller but substantial amount of expenditure on hostels. Expenditure per person aged 70 years and over for nursing homes was highest in the NT (\$1815) and that for hostels was highest in Queensland (\$366). CACP absorbed only a small amount of the aged care budget, but its importance has grown over the past several years.

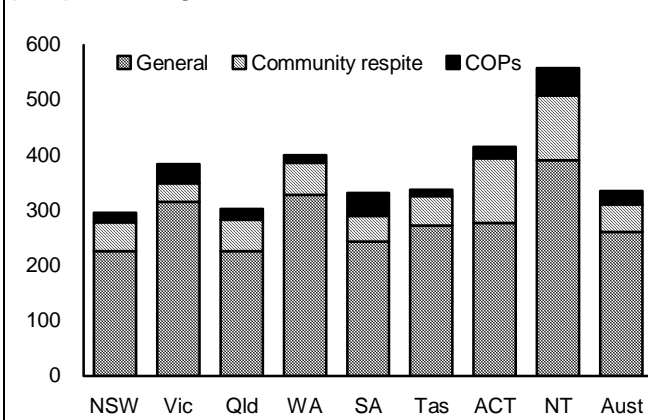
Composition of Commonwealth Government expenditure on residential and equivalent aged care services, 1996–97 (dollars per person aged 70 years and over)^{a,b}



Notes and sources: See Figure 9.16

Home and Community Care (HACC) program expenditure is jointly funded by the Commonwealth, State and Territory and Local Governments. It is dominated by general HACC service types such as Home Help, Home Nursing and Respite Care. HACC expenditure per person aged 70 years and over tended to display an inverse relationship with residential expenditure across jurisdictions. For example, HACC expenditure per person was lowest in NSW (\$296) although residential expenditure in this state was among the highest. HACC expenditure per person was highest in the NT (\$559).

Expenditure on HACC services, 1996–97 (dollars per person aged 70 and over)^a



Notes and sources: See Figure 9.16

6.2 Disability

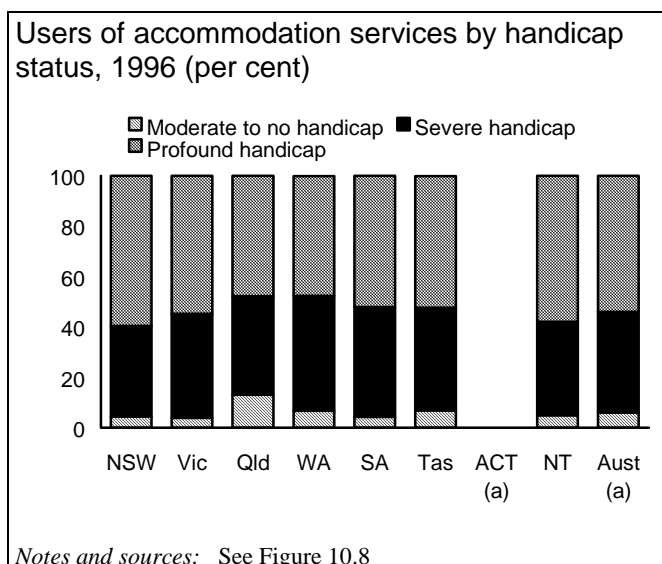
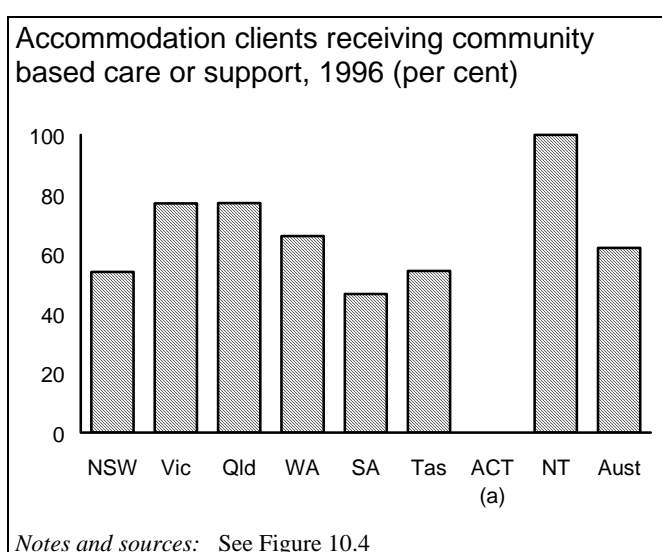
The focus of reporting for disability services is on services provided under the Commonwealth/State Disability Agreement (CSDA). These services are targeted at people under the age of 65 years with a disability who require ongoing support. Reporting includes detailed analysis of accommodation support and employment services and has been expanded to include descriptive information on the total expenditure on CSDA service types across jurisdictions.

Accommodation clients receiving community-based care or support

Community-based accommodation care and support — such as group homes, attendant care, outreach support and alternative family placement programs — is considered to provide the best opportunities for retaining people with a disability in the community. Only Queensland exhibited a decline in this form of assistance in 1996 — but there continues to be considerable variation across jurisdictions. All clients of accommodation services in the NT in 1996 were in community-based accommodation and support, but only 46 per cent of clients were provided with this form of accommodation in SA.

Service use by level of handicap

There was generally little variation across jurisdictions in the handicap status of people with a disability using accommodation support services in 1996. Most jurisdictions had less than 5 per cent of clients with low support needs accessing accommodation services.



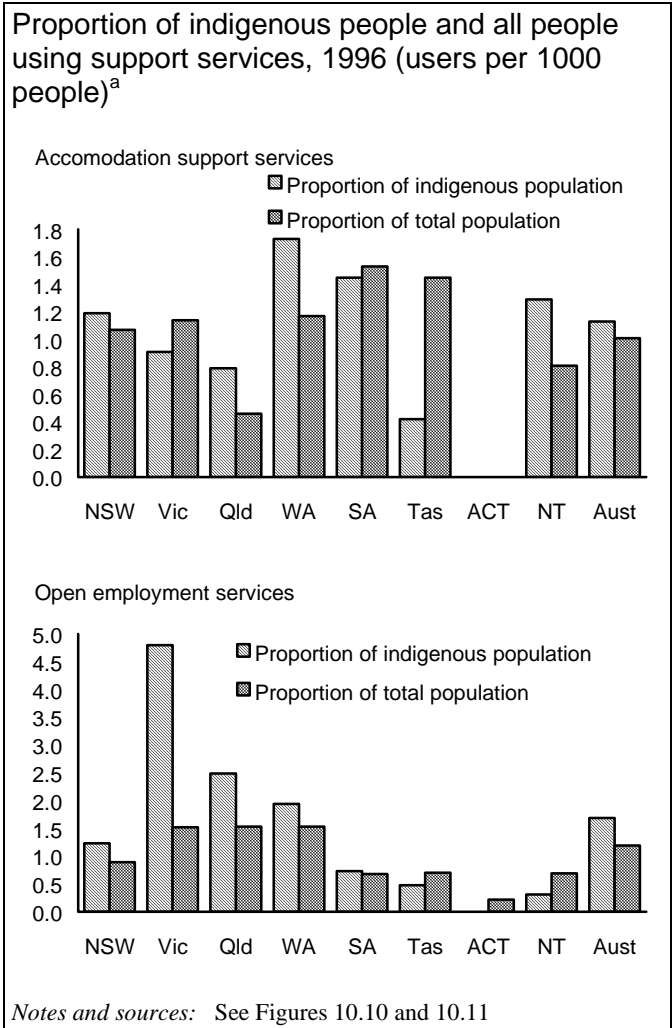
Queensland was the exception, with 13 per cent of clients of accommodation support services having low support needs.

Access by special needs groups

Some people with a disability, such as indigenous people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, have special access difficulties.

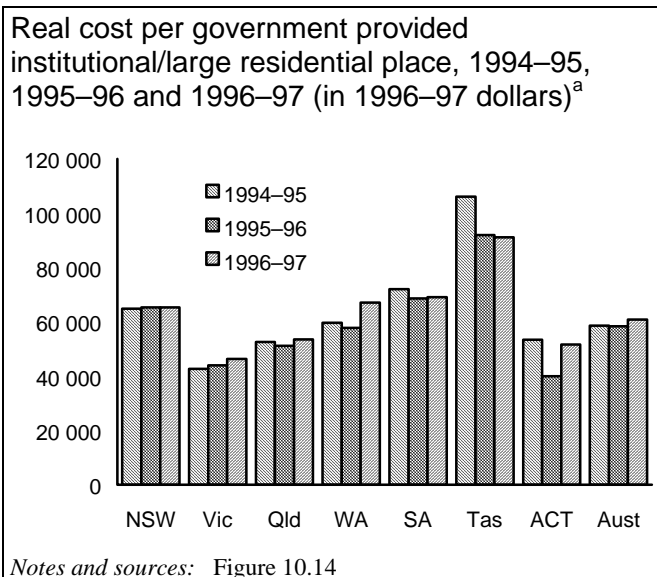
The indigenous population's use of accommodation support services was higher than that of all people in NSW, Queensland, WA and the NT but less than one-third of that of the general population in Tasmania.

Generally, open employment services (provided by Commonwealth funded organisations to enable people with a disability to participate in the open labour market) were used more by indigenous people (1.7 per 1000 persons) than by all people (1.2 per 1000 persons) in 1996. The highest proportional use by people from indigenous backgrounds was in Victoria (almost 5 per 1000) — compared with 1.5 per 1000 for the total Victorian population. A use rate of only 0.3 per 1000 indigenous persons was recorded in the NT— less than half that for the overall NT population.

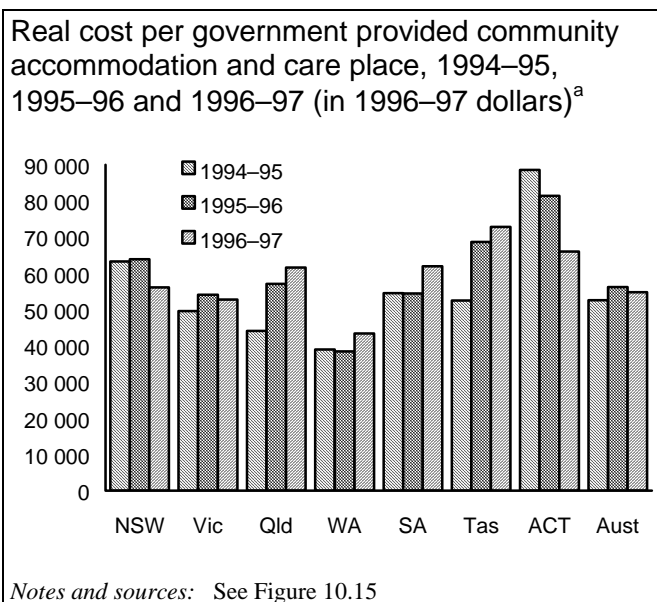


Cost to government of government provided accommodation support places

Nationally, the cost to government of providing an institutional or large residential accommodation place for a person with a disability was \$58 127 per place in 1996–97. Tasmania had the highest government expenditure per place (around \$91 000) and Victoria had the lowest (\$46 327). Nationally, there was little change in the real cost of a government provided institutional or large residential accommodation place between 1994–95 and 1996–97. Across jurisdictions, it fell in Tasmania (from \$106 126 to \$91 144) but rose in Victoria (from \$42 655 to \$46 327) and WA (from \$59 689 to \$67 014).



The move from institutional-based care to community based accommodation and care has contributed to less variation in expenditure per government provided place across jurisdictions. Tasmania had the highest level of expenditure per community-based accommodation and care place (\$72 864) in 1996–97, while WA had the lowest (\$43 405 per place). Government expenditure per place rose in most jurisdictions between 1994–95 and 1996–97. The exceptions were NSW (down 11 per cent) and the ACT (down 26 per cent).



6.3 Children's services

Government services provided for children include formal child care (such as before and after school hours care and vacation care) and preschool. All these services seek to provide appropriate care to, and foster the educational and social development of, children.

This Report is the second to include children's services, and State and Territory Governments have been able to play a significant part in primary data collection for the first time. This has resulted in more comprehensive data. All jurisdictions have agreed to continue their efforts to develop new indicators for future collections, particularly qualitative ones.

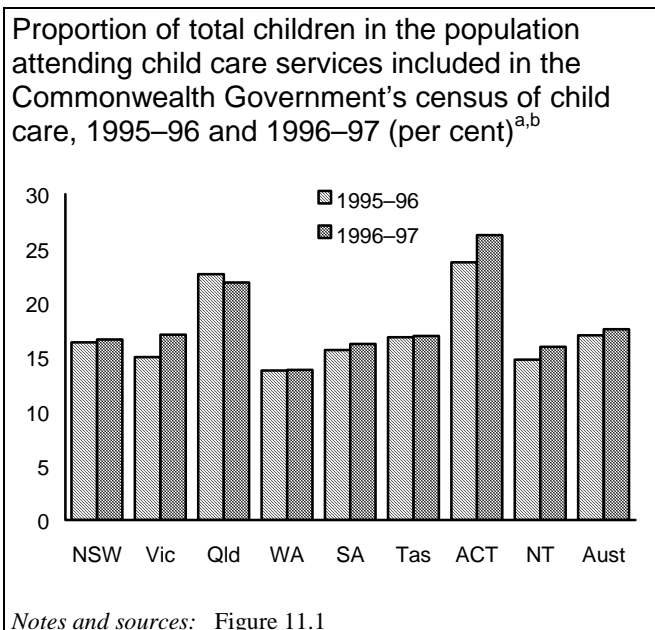
The scope of the reporting has been broadened to include preschool services offered to children other than those in the year immediately before commencement of full-time schooling.

Attendance at child care services

A complete data collection for all child care services was not available so it was not possible to quantify the full attendance at child care services. Based on available data, government funded and/or provided child care services were being accessed by at least 607 281 children (18 per cent of the population aged 12 years and under) at June 30 1997.

The relative participation in child care across jurisdictions is at least partially indicated by data from the Commonwealth Government's census of child care services which covers most services receiving at least some assistance from the Commonwealth Government.

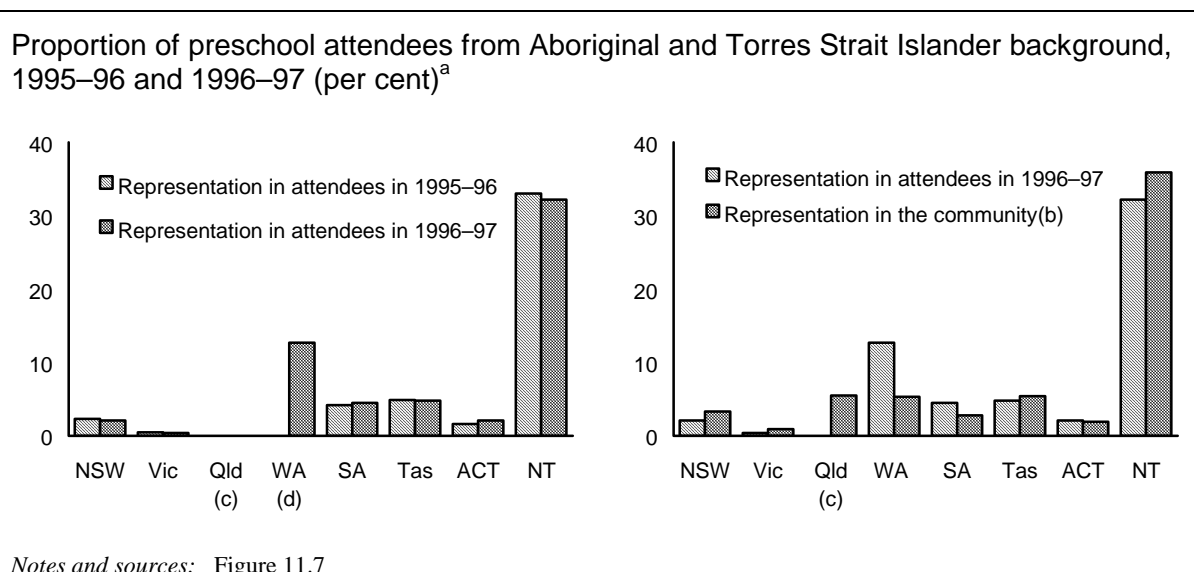
Approximately 26 per cent of children in the ACT and 21 per cent of children in Queensland attended services included in the census of child care, while the proportion ranged from 14 per cent to 16 per cent in other states and territories. Between 1995–96 and 1996–97,



the largest increases in the rate of attendance were in Victoria (up 2.1 percentage points) and the ACT (up 2.5 percentage points). The proportion fell 0.5 percentage points in Queensland.

Access for special needs groups

Generally, the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in users of preschool services was consistent with their representation in the general population. Moreover, their representation was similar in 1995–96 and 1996–97 in each state or territory.



Data on representation of children from non-English speaking backgrounds in preschool services were only available for Victoria, SA and the ACT. Their representation in preschool services was higher than their representation in the community in all cases. Similarly, the participation of children from rural and remote areas was also above their representation in the community for those jurisdictions for which information was available (NSW, SA and Tasmania).

Unit costs

Although data were collected for all government expenditure by service type, these data were incomplete making comparisons across service types and over time difficult.

Occasional care services generally recorded the highest level of Commonwealth Government recurrent funding per hour of services across states and territories in 1996–97 (\$1.37 per hour in the ACT to \$11.50 per hour in the NT).

Outside school hours care services generally recorded the lowest hourly expenditure (\$0.54 per hour in the ACT to \$0.77 per hour in SA). Moreover, between 1995–96 and 1996–97 there was very little change across service types and across jurisdictions.

Data on recurrent expenditure per hour of service were available for preschool services in NSW, Queensland, WA and the ACT for 1996–97. Recurrent expenditure per hour of service ranged from \$1.80 in NSW to \$3.40 in Queensland.

6.4 Protection and support services

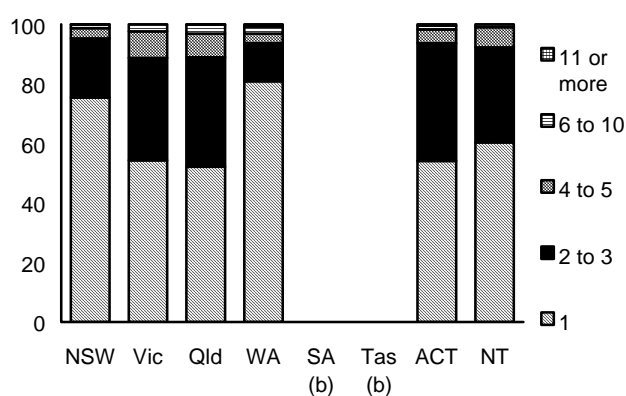
Protection and support services are provided to individuals and families, with the aim of alleviating difficulties and reducing the potential for recurrence. The specific services covered in this Report are child protection, supported placement and supported accommodation and assistance.

The major improvement in reporting is the inclusion of data for performance indicators relating to supported accommodation and assistance. Further, efficiency indicators for supported accommodation and assistance have been developed.

Stability in placement

Stability in placements is an indicator of service quality particularly for those children who require long-term placements. Data were collected on the number of placements in the 12 months following admission to out-of-home care in 1995–1996. The proportion of children having no more than three placements was highest in NSW (95 per cent) and lowest in Queensland and Victoria (89 per cent).

Distribution of number of placements in the subsequent 12 months for children admitted to out-of-home care, 1996–97 (per cent)^a



Notes and sources: Figure 12.5

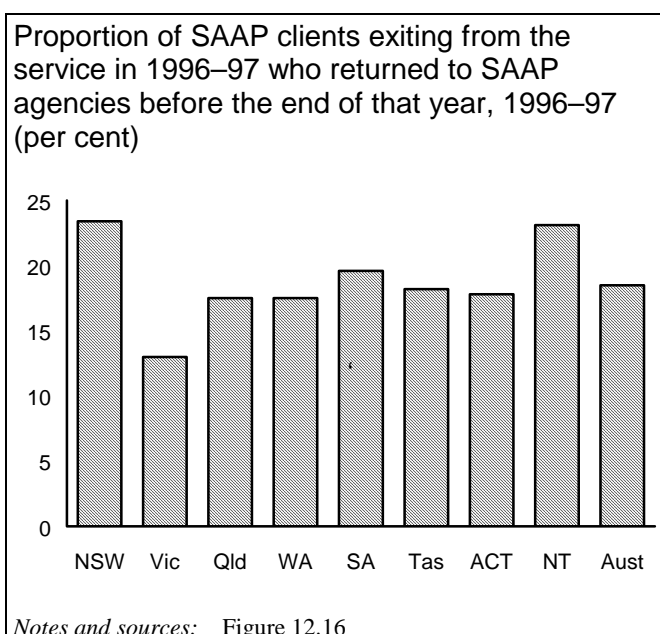
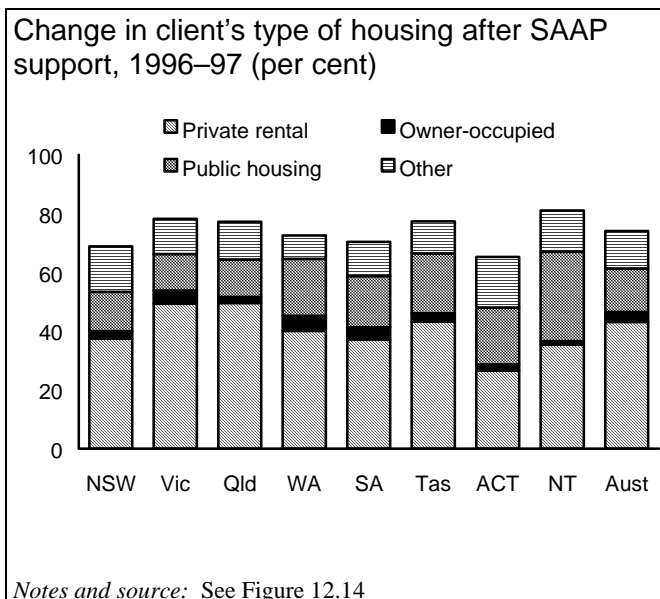
People in supported accommodation achieving independent housing

An important measure of the success of the Supported Accommodation and Assistance Program (SAAP) is the change in housing status of the client after support, because the main aim of the program is to improve the ability of individuals to achieve self-reliance and independence.

Nationally, 74 per cent of clients achieved independent housing at the end of a support period in 1996–97. Across jurisdictions, the proportion achieving independent housing was highest in the NT (81 per cent) and lowest in the ACT (65 per cent).

Some indications of the sustainability of independent living is provided by the proportion of clients who return to SAAP agencies within the same year.

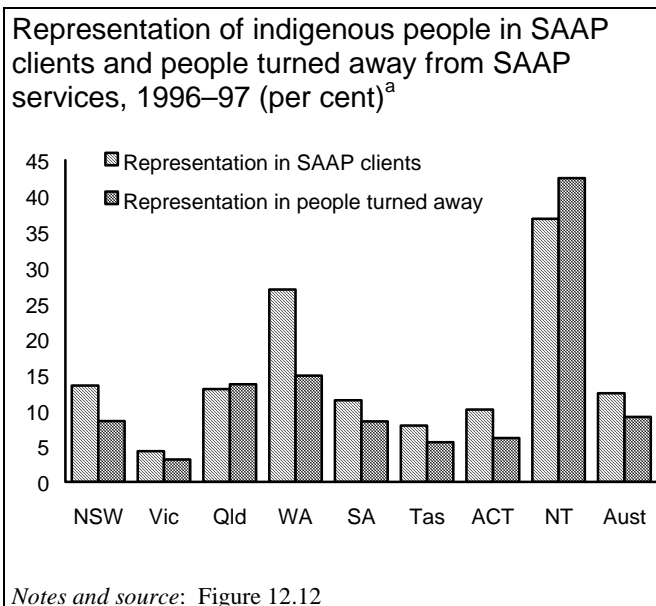
Nationally, 18.5 per cent of SAAP clients exiting from the service in 1996–97 returned to SAAP agencies before the end of that year. The highest proportion of clients returning was in NSW and the NT (23 per cent). The proportion was lowest in Victoria (13 per cent).



SAAP services to indigenous people

Supported accommodation services target homeless persons in general, but access by special needs groups, such as indigenous people, is also important.

Nationally, 9 per cent of people unable to be provided with a service were from indigenous backgrounds in 1996–97; 12 per cent of SAAP clients were from indigenous backgrounds. The proportion of indigenous people unable to be provided with a service was lower than the proportion of SAAP clients from indigenous backgrounds except in Queensland and the NT.



7 Housing

Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments fund and deliver a range of housing assistance services which aim to provide choice for low-income individuals and families and to assist those who are unable to access the private rental market for reasons such as discrimination or special needs. The two main types of assistance are housing programs and rent assistance. The focus of this Report is on public rental housing and community housing programs rather than rent assistance.

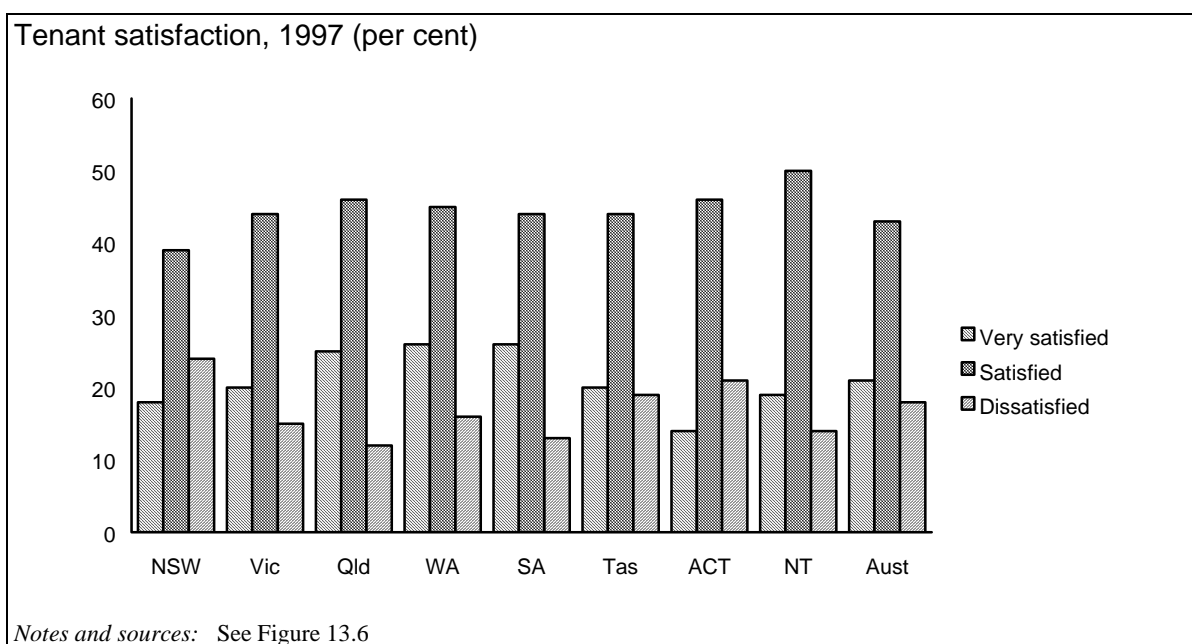
The users of public and community housing services not only include those on low incomes, but also people who previously received crisis accommodation, are older or have a disability and require additional support services. Given these characteristics, close links also exist between housing and other health and community services.

Customer satisfaction

A national consumer satisfaction survey of public housing tenants was undertaken in 1997. Some main results of the survey were:

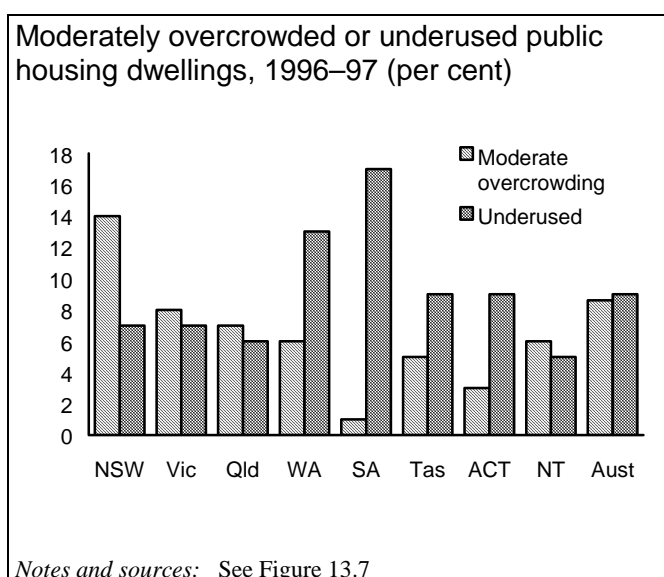
- Queensland, WA and SA had proportions of very satisfied tenants above the national average;
- NSW, Tasmania and the ACT had proportions of dissatisfied tenants higher

- than the national average;
- the proportion of satisfied tenants in the NT increased by 8 percentage points from the level in 1996 (to reach 50 per cent); and
- the proportion of dissatisfied tenants in Victoria fell by 5 percentage points from the level in 1996 (to reach 15 per cent).



Appropriateness

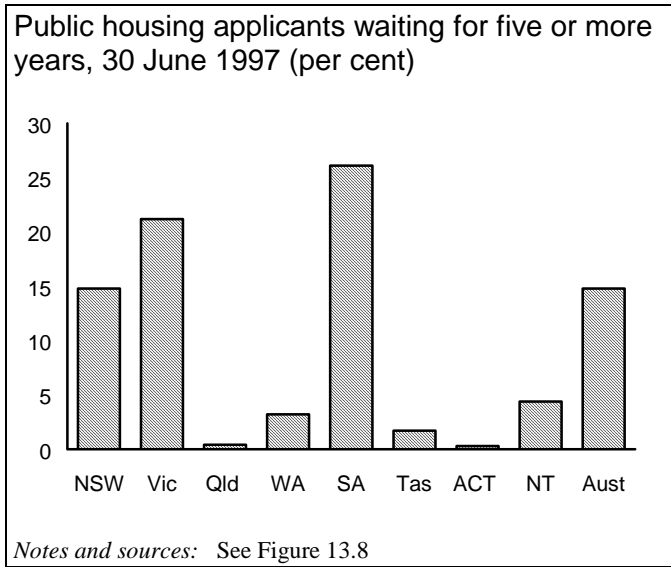
Indicators of appropriateness — how well dwellings match household size — are overcrowding and underuse. The NT had the best match of household size to dwelling size in 1996–97. NSW had the highest percentage of moderately overcrowded dwellings (14 per cent) and SA had the highest proportion of underused dwellings (17 per cent). Nationally, in 1996–97, moderately overcrowded dwellings increased to 8.6 per cent (from 6 per cent in 1995–96).



Accessibility

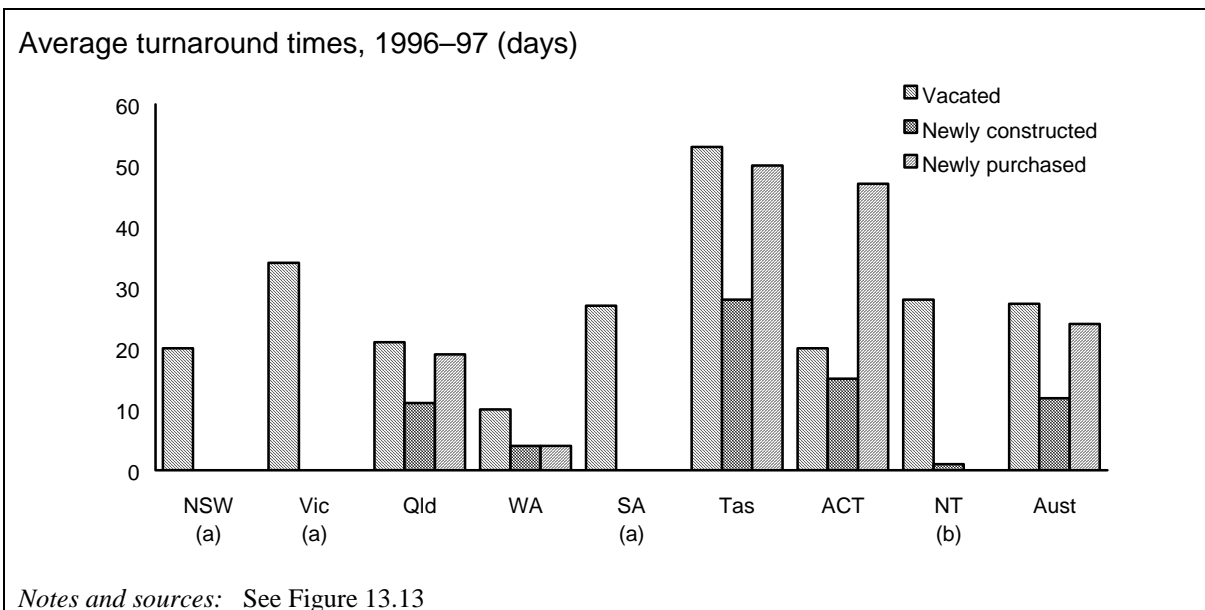
Waiting lists at least partly reflect the extent to which housing authorities meet the demand for housing assistance — although they may also reflect applicants’ willingness to wait for public housing in particular locations, eligibility criteria and the frequency with which the list is reviewed.

Twenty-six per cent of households seeking public housing in SA in 1996–97 had been waiting five years or more — very few households in Queensland or the ACT had been waiting as long.



Turnaround times

The speed with which jurisdictions re-let vacant housing stock has an impact on the extent of housing services provided for a given housing stock. It also affects the rent forgone as a result of stock being untenanted. Average turnaround times for vacated premises were highest in Tasmania (53 days) and Victoria (34 days) and lowest in WA (10 days) and NSW and the ACT (20 days in each).



Cost of stock production and cost of purchase

State and territory housing authorities construct and purchase dwellings. While the average cost of construction and purchase of housing stock is affected by location and the value of land, it can be useful to compare the relative costs of construction and purchase in each jurisdiction.

Nationally, the costs of construction and purchase of two-bedroom houses, one of the most common types of dwellings constructed or purchased by housing authorities, were similar in 1996–97. But the relative costs of construction and purchase in the jurisdictions with the biggest construction and purchase programs, NSW and Victoria, were the reverse of each other. Construction was cheaper in NSW whereas purchase had a lower average cost in Victoria. Given the small number of dwellings constructed or purchased in some of the jurisdictions (SA, Tasmania, the ACT and the NT) the cost data may not be representative of the general situation in those jurisdictions.

