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# 16 Housing

Government plays a significant role in the Australian housing market, directly through housing assistance and indirectly through policies associated with land planning and taxation. Commonwealth, State and Territory governments share responsibility for housing assistance. Direct assistance includes public and community housing, home purchase and home ownership assistance, Indigenous housing, State and Territory rental assistance (such as State and Territory provided bond loans, assistance with rent payments and advance rent payments, relocation expenses and other one-off grants) and Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA).

This chapter focuses on the performance of governments in providing public, Indigenous and community housing under the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) (box 16.1) and CRA.

Close links exist between public and community housing services and other government programs and support services discussed elsewhere in the Report. These include:

- the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP), which provides accommodation and other services for homeless people or those at imminent risk of becoming homeless (chapter 15); and
- health services delivered by Commonwealth, State and Territory governments and community organisations to promote independent living, including disability services (chapter 13), mental health services (chapter 11) and aged care services, for example, the Home and Community Care Program (chapter 12).

A negotiated four-year CSHA came into effect on 1 July 1999. At this time a new performance framework for reporting under the CSHA was developed to reflect the national objectives of the agreement, to improve the quality of national performance information and to recognise the need for balanced reporting at the national and bilateral levels. Performance reporting in this chapter for public, community and State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing is based on this framework.

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### Box 16.1 **Commonwealth State Housing Agreement**

The CSHA is an agreement made under the *Housing Assistance Act 1996* (Cwlth) between the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments to provide strategic direction and funding certainty for the provision of housing assistance. The aim of this agreement is to provide appropriate, affordable and secure housing assistance for those who most need it, for the duration of their need.

A new four-year agreement came into effect on 1 July 1999 and includes, for the first time, bilateral agreements between the Commonwealth and each State and Territory government, as well as an overarching multilateral agreement. Bilateral agreements are intended to provide greater flexibility for States and Territories to respond to their particular housing needs.

#### **Funding arrangements**

The majority of funding under this agreement is provided by the Commonwealth Government and takes the form of general assistance funding (public housing, home purchase assistance and private rental assistance) and specified funding for identified programs — the Aboriginal Rental Housing Program (ARHP), the Crisis Accommodation Program and the Community Housing Program. The majority of CSHA funding is distributed to State and Territory governments on a modified per capita basis, with the State and Territory governments contributing additional funding from their own resources to partly 'match' Commonwealth funding allocations.

#### **Roles and responsibilities**

Under the CSHA, the Commonwealth Government has responsibility for:

- ensuring the outcomes pursued through the agreement are consistent with broader national objectives, particularly in relation to support for individuals and communities;
- advising State and Territory governments of Commonwealth objectives to be achieved under the agreement; and
- reporting to the Commonwealth Parliament on performance against agreed outcomes and targets of housing assistance provided under the agreement.

State and Territory governments have responsibility for:

- developing housing assistance strategies that are consistent with Commonwealth, State and Territory objectives and that best meet the circumstances of the State or Territory;
- developing, implementing and managing services and programs to deliver agreed outcomes; and
- reporting on a basis that enables performance assessment by the Commonwealth, State or Territory, based on agreed performance indicators.

*Source:* CSHA (1999).

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A profile of housing and housing assistance is presented in section 16.1, followed by a brief discussion of recent policy developments in section 16.2. Together, these provide the context for assessing the performance indicators presented later in the chapter. All jurisdictions have agreed to develop and report comparable indicators, and a framework of performance indicators is outlined in section 16.3. The data are discussed in section 16.4 and future directions for performance reporting are discussed in 16.5. The chapter concludes with jurisdictions' comments in section 16.6 and definitions in section 16.7.

The 2002 Report included for the first time performance reporting on State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing based on the new national framework. This program provides government owned housing to Indigenous Australians. This year's Report also contains selected information relating to the community Indigenous housing sector from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC)/ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2001 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey (CHINS).

Reporting on CRA has been improved this year, with a new performance indicator framework, providing more information on satisfaction with housing, and accessibility and affordability outcomes for special needs groups. Where appropriate, time series data are also presented for public, community and State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing.

Public, community and State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing information has been obtained from Commonwealth, State and Territory governments except where otherwise indicated. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) collects and collates these data and produces annual data collection manuals. The data manuals and data reports are available from the AIHW and can be accessed via the Institute's web site at [www.aihw.gov.au](http://www.aihw.gov.au) (AIHW 2002a, 2002b and 2002c).

### *Housing services not covered*

The chapter does not cover a number of government funded and provided housing services, including:

- the Crisis Accommodation Program under the CSHA, which provides capital funding for accommodation for homeless people;
- home purchase assistance and private rental assistance provided under the CSHA;
- the ATSIC/Army Community Assistance Program, which provides new housing and improved infrastructure to Indigenous communities;

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- non-CSHA programs, including those provided by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) and ATSIC;
  - CRA paid by the DVA or the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST);
  - The First Home Owners Grant, provided by Commonwealth Treasury and delivered through State and Territory governments;
  - some Indigenous housing and infrastructure assistance provided by ATSIC, State and Territory governments, land councils and Indigenous community organisations; and
  - non-Indigenous community housing not funded under the CSHA.

### *Supporting tables*

Supporting tables for chapter 16 are provided on the CD-ROM enclosed with the Report. The files are provided in Microsoft Excel 97 format as \Publications\Reports\2003\Attach16A.xls and in Adobe PDF format as \Publications\Reports\2003\Attach16A.pdf.

Supporting tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 16A.3 is table 3 in the electronic files). These files can be found on the Review web page ([www.pc.gov.au/gsp](http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp)). Users without Internet access can contact the Secretariat to obtain these tables (see details on the inside front cover of the Report).

## **16.1 Profile of housing and housing assistance**

### **Service overview**

The 2001 ABS Population Census identified just under 7.1 million households in Australia, where 'household' is classified as a person living alone or as a group of related or unrelated people who usually reside and eat together. Of these households, 66.2 per cent owned or were purchasing their own home, 21.8 per cent rented in the private sector, 4.5 per cent were in public rental accommodation, with 2.8 per cent residing in other tenure types (table 16A.67). Due to nonresponse, Census data are likely to underestimate the number of tenants in public housing.<sup>1</sup> Approximately 0.4 per cent of Australian households live in community housing.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Public housing tenants appear to be undercounted in the 2001 Census (and in previous Censuses). For NSW, the 2001 Census reported 114 130 public housing households out of a total of

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The composition of Australian households is changing. There is an increasing number of smaller households, including a rising number of single person households. The average Australian household size fell from 3.3 people to 2.6 people between 1971 and 2001, while the proportion of lone person households increased from 18.1 per cent to 22.9 per cent over this period (ABS 2002a).

The average Indigenous household is larger than the average non-Indigenous household. In 1996, the average non-Indigenous Australian household size was 2.7 people, whereas the average Aboriginal household was 3.7 people, and the average Torres Strait Islander household was 4.7 people in the Torres Strait and 3.4 people outside the Torres Strait (ABS and AIHW 2001).

The Indigenous population is a younger population than the non-Indigenous population. The 2001 ABS Population Census showed that 38.9 per cent of the Indigenous population was aged under 15 years but only 20.2 per cent of the non-Indigenous population was aged under 15 years. Only 2.8 per cent of the Indigenous population was aged over 65 years compared with 12.4 per cent of the non-Indigenous population (ABS 2002a and tables A.1 and A.7).

### *Why government provides housing assistance*

Australia's private housing stock houses the majority of the population. Most Australian households are able to access accommodation either through owner occupation or by renting from a private landlord. Many households, however, face problems in acquiring or accessing suitable private accommodation for reasons of cost, discrimination, availability or adequacy. The price of rental dwellings can be prohibitive for lower income families. Further, stock may not be available in the private rental market for households with special accommodation needs. Housing assistance from Commonwealth, State and Territory governments can help these households.

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2 343 667 (or 4.9 per cent), while NSW reports there are more than 125 000 public housing households in the state (representing around 5.3 per cent of households). Across Australia, the Census reports there were 317 000 households in public housing, but the 2001-02 public housing data collection indicates there were just under 343 000 such households.

<sup>2</sup> This estimate is based on data received from jurisdictions regarding the number of community housing dwellings in each jurisdiction combined with data from the 2001 ABS Population Census on the total number of dwellings in each jurisdiction.

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## Roles and responsibilities

Various levels of government have different roles and responsibilities in housing and housing assistance:

- the Commonwealth Government provides CRA and shares responsibility with State and Territory governments for housing assistance provided under the CSHA (box 16.1). The Commonwealth also influences the housing market through other direct and indirect means, including taxation and home purchase assistance;
- State and Territory governments provide housing assistance under the CSHA, such as public housing, community housing, Indigenous rental housing (both State and community managed), private rental assistance and home purchase assistance. Some State and Territory governments also contribute to the delivery of housing assistance through mechanisms such as home lending programs and joint ventures with the private sector. State and Territory governments are also responsible for land taxes, stamp duties and residential tenancy legislation; and
- local governments implement planning regulations and are sometimes involved in providing community housing.

## Funding

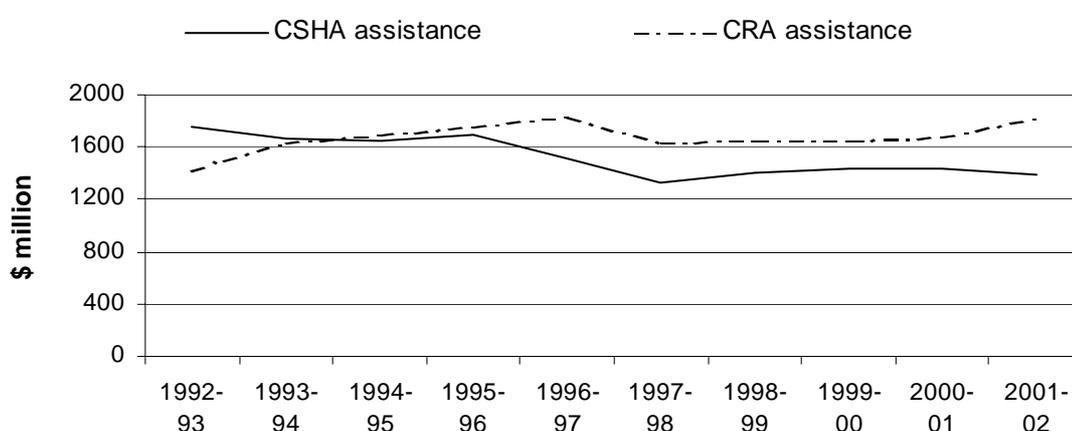
The Commonwealth Government provided over \$1.8 billion for CRA in 2001-02. The Commonwealth, State and Territory governments also provided just under \$1.4 billion (contributing about 74 per cent and 26 per cent respectively) for housing programs under the CSHA in 2001-02. Public and community housing accounted for the majority of CSHA funding in 2001-02 (CSHA 1999).

Expenditure on CRA increased by approximately 27.9 per cent in real terms between 1992-93 and 2001-02, while expenditure on CSHA assistance declined by approximately 20.8 per cent over the same period (figure 16.1). Included in CSHA expenditure in 2001-02 was \$89.7 million of GST compensation paid to State and Territory governments (table 16A.74).

Public housing is the largest program under the CSHA. Given the capital-intensive nature of public housing, in addition to annual funding, assistance is provided through the use of approximately \$40 billion of housing stock owned by housing authorities (2000-01 State and Territory financial statements). Reduced funding in any given year may not necessarily result in a decline in the level of housing stock provided for that year, although it may affect levels of maintenance and the ability to reconfigure stock, and may eventually result in fewer dwelling constructions or acquisitions.

Nationally, total government recurrent expenditure on public housing per person in the population in 2001-02 was approximately \$75. State and Territory recurrent expenditure on public housing per person in the population ranged from \$220 in the NT to \$40 in Victoria in 2001-02. Including capital costs, total government expenditure on public housing per person in the population ranged from \$693 in the ACT to \$176 in Queensland. Average national total government expenditure on public housing per person in the population in 2001-02 was \$247 (table 16A.82). It is important to note the diversity of housing assistance operations across jurisdictions when discussing expenditure per person on public housing.

Figure 16.1 **Real government expenditure on CSHA assistance and CRA (2001-02 dollars)<sup>a, b, c</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Care needs to be taken in interpreting data because CRA is a demand-driven recurrent expenditure program, whereas CSHA expenditure includes a component for capital investment that has resulted in around \$40 billion of public housing assets that are continually used for housing assistance. <sup>b</sup> CSHA data are not comparable to data published before the 2001 Report. The data for 1992-93 to 1995-96 have been adjusted to enable comparability (see the 2002 Report for further explanation). Commonwealth CSHA expenditure differed from Commonwealth budgetary allocations for the three years from 1996-97 to 1998-99 as some States and Territories chose CSHA funds as the source to offset their State Fiscal Contributions to the Commonwealth's debt reduction program, which was agreed at the 1996 Premiers' Conference. <sup>c</sup> CSHA expenditure in 2000-01 and 2001-02 contained \$89.7 million of Goods and Services Tax (GST) compensation paid to State and Territory governments.

Source: CSHA (1999), Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services (1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2001) and table 16A.74.

## Size and scope

Housing assistance is provided in various forms and models for delivering assistance can vary both within and between jurisdictions. The main forms of assistance are outlined in box 16.2.

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## Box 16.2 Forms of housing assistance

Forms of CSHA housing assistance include:

- *public housing*: dwellings owned (or leased) and managed by State and Territory housing authorities to provide affordable rental accommodation. The CSHA is the main source of funding for public housing;
- *community housing*: rental housing provided for low to moderate income or special needs households managed by community-based organisations which are at least partly subsidised by government. Community housing models vary across jurisdictions;
- *Indigenous housing*: includes public rental housing targeted at Indigenous households and houses which are owned and managed by Indigenous community housing organisations and community councils in urban, rural and remote areas;
- *crisis accommodation*: accommodation services to help people who are homeless or in crisis. Services are generally provided by non-government organisations and many are linked to support services funded through the SAAP. Sources of government funding include the Crisis Accommodation Program of the CSHA, which provides funding for accommodation, and SAAP funding for live-in staff, counselling and other support services;
- *home purchase assistance*: assistance provided by State and Territory governments to low to moderate income households to help with first home purchases or mortgage repayments; and
- *private rental assistance*: assistance funded by State and Territory governments to low income households experiencing difficulty in securing or maintaining private rental accommodation. This assistance may include ongoing or one-off payments to help households meet rent payments, one-off payments for relocation costs, guarantees or loans to cover the cost of bonds, and housing assistance advice and information services. Assistance may be provided by community-based organisations funded by government.

The chapter also reports on:

*CRA*: a non-taxable income support supplement paid by the Commonwealth Government to income support recipients or people who receive more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A who rent in the private rental market; and

*Indigenous community housing*: in addition to funding under the CSHA, Indigenous housing and housing-related infrastructure is funded through the Community Housing Infrastructure Program administered by ATSIC. State and Territory governments also provide funding from their own resources.

*Source*: Department of Social Security (1998) and CSHA (1999).

This chapter focuses on four forms of assistance: public housing, community housing, State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing, and CRA.

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CRA is available only to people receiving income support payments or more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A and is paid as a supplement to their other payments. Eligibility and assistance levels differ for each form of assistance. Eligibility for public and community housing tends to be reasonably consistent across jurisdictions. Eligibility for public and community housing is income tested but, unlike CRA, not limited to those receiving an income support payment or more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A. Access to public and community housing is restricted by the amount of housing stock available.

The level of assistance provided in public and community housing depends on the income of the household and the rental value of the property. Rent rebates are set to achieve an affordability outcome for low income tenants where tenants pay the lower of market rent or a maximum 25 per cent of their assessable income in rent. CRA payments are based on the amount of rent paid for a private rental dwelling. Income supplements paid under CRA are set subject to a minimum rent threshold and cannot exceed a maximum rate, with both the minimum rent threshold and maximum rate varying according to family structure. Unlike public and community housing, affordability outcomes for households receiving CRA will vary with the rental value of the property and with the amount of private income and benefits the households receive.

### *Public housing*

Public housing comprises those dwellings owned (or leased) and managed by State and Territory housing authorities. The CSHA is the main source of funding for public housing. A total of 342 819 public housing dwellings were occupied at 30 June 2002.

Public housing is available to people on low incomes and those with special needs. Although people with a disability represented 17 per cent of the total population aged between 15–64 years in 1998, 39 per cent of public housing tenants of this age group in 1998 were people with a disability (ABS 1999a, AIHW 1999b).<sup>3</sup>

Commonwealth Government pensions and allowances are the main source of income for the majority of households in public housing. The ABS estimated that approximately 80 per cent of households renting from a State or Territory housing authority in 1997-98 relied on pensions and allowances as their principal source of income (ABS 1999a).

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<sup>3</sup> Disability is defined as any restriction or lack of ability (resulting from an impairment) to perform an action in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being.

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Public housing rents are generally set at market levels and rebates are granted to low income earners (so tenants should pay no more than 25 per cent of their assessable income in rent), in order to provide affordable housing to people on low incomes. The proportion of total households residing in public housing ranged from 8.6 per cent in the ACT to 3.2 per cent in Victoria in 2001 (table 16A.70). Information on the proportion of income paid in rent by public housing tenants is contained in table 16A.75.

### *Community housing*

Community housing is generally managed by not-for-profit organisations or local government, which perform asset and tenancy management functions. A major objective of community housing is to increase social capital by encouraging local communities to take a more active role in planning and managing appropriate and affordable transitional and long term rental accommodation. Community housing also aims to provide a choice of housing location, physical type and management arrangements. Some forms of community housing also allow tenants to participate in the management of their housing.

The community housing program aims to achieve links between housing and services that are best managed at the community level, including disability services and home and community care. Notwithstanding their common objectives, community housing programs vary within and across jurisdictions in their administration and types of accommodation (box 16.3).

Funding for community housing is typically either fully or partly provided by governments to not-for-profit organisations or local government. Commonwealth funding for community housing amounted to 6.2 per cent (or \$64.0 million) of total CSHA funding provided by the Commonwealth in 2001-02. There were 29 114 CSHA community housing dwellings in Australia at June 2002<sup>4</sup>, or about 7.8 per cent of the total public and community housing stock supported under the CSHA (table 16A.15).

Reporting of community housing in this chapter focuses on community housing stock that is funded wholly or partly through the CSHA. A 1998 mapping study estimated that approximately 15 000 community housing dwellings (or 38 per cent of total community housing dwellings) across Australia at 30 June 1998 were funded and delivered through other means (AIHW 1999a). There is also likely to be additional community housing stock not identified through the study.

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<sup>4</sup> Data are based on survey results except for Victoria and the NT. Results are therefore affected by survey nonresponse.

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### Box 16.3 **Models of community housing**

Community housing models vary across jurisdictions in terms of their scale, organisational structure, financing arrangements and the extent to which the community or government has management responsibility and ownership of the housing stock. Table 16A.71 lists the relevant community housing programs in each jurisdiction.

Some community housing models are:

- *regional or local housing associations*: the associations provide property and tenancy management services and community groups provide support services to tenants;
- *headleasing*: housing authorities or private landlords own the housing stock, which is managed by community groups;
- *joint ventures and housing partnerships*: a range of church, welfare, local government agencies and other organisations provide resources in cooperation with State and Territory government organisations;
- *housing cooperatives*: the cooperatives are responsible for tenant management and maintenance, while government, a central finance company or individual cooperatives own the housing stock;
- *community management and ownership*: not-for-profit or community housing associations both own and manage housing;
- *local government housing associations*: the associations provide low cost housing within a particular municipality, are closely involved in policy, planning, funding and/or monitoring roles and may directly manage the housing stock; and
- *equity share rental housing*: housing cooperatives wholly own the housing stock and lease it to tenants (who are shareholders in the cooperative and therefore have the rights and responsibilities of cooperative management).

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished).

### *Indigenous housing*

Government funded Indigenous housing includes both State managed and community managed housing. The State managed component is generally funded by the ARHP and may be supplemented by untied CSHA funds and State matching funds. Community managed Indigenous housing may be funded from ARHP funds, supplementary State funds, untied CSHA funds, ATSIC funds and funds from a range of other sources.

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### *State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing*

Reporting on State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing was included for the first time in the 2002 Report. In the 2002 Report, this was referred to as the ARHP.<sup>5</sup> The title has changed for this Report to reflect that while the ARHP data collection referred only to State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing, ARHP funds are also used to provide other forms of Indigenous housing, particularly Indigenous community housing. State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing refers to rental housing owned and managed by the State or Territory government and allocated to Indigenous households only. This includes dwellings managed by government Indigenous housing agencies for allocation to Indigenous tenants. The framework for reporting on State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing is based on that used for public and community housing.

State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing is only one of a number of programs designed to provide housing assistance to Indigenous people. Indigenous Australians may also be eligible for assistance under Indigenous community managed housing (where tenancy management functions are carried out by community agencies), the mainstream public and community housing programs, CRA, and other government housing programs (both Indigenous-specific and mainstream). Some mainstream community housing providers specifically target Indigenous Australians for the allocation of housing. In the 2001-02 CSHA community housing data collection, 30 mainstream community housing organisations nominated Indigenous Australians as their primary target group for the allocation of housing.<sup>6</sup>

The ACT does not receive funding for or administer any Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing programs, while in the NT, ARHP funding is directed to community managed Indigenous housing. The NT government is unable to differentiate between the various funding sources because of its commitment under the CSHA Indigenous Agreement to specifically 'pool' all funds earmarked for

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<sup>5</sup> While the term State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing is used, the ACT and the NT are not included in the data collection for this program.

<sup>6</sup> In the 2001-02 mainstream community housing data collection for NSW, Queensland and Tasmania the data for this item were collected by survey. Survey non-response rates influence the figure reported (survey response rates were 86 per cent in NSW, 60 per cent in Queensland and 46 per cent in Tasmania). In NSW, there might be variation in the way providers who target groups with multiple characteristics (for example, Indigenous people with disabilities) responded. The reported number of targeted providers for any particular group may be understated. In the Community Housing Mapping Project conducted in 1999, 39 mainstream CSHA funded community housing organisations were identified as targeting assistance to Indigenous Australians.

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Indigenous housing and associated infrastructure in the NT. The ACT and the NT are not included in the State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing data collection.

### *Indigenous community housing*

Performance reporting on State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing is complemented in this year's Report by the inclusion of selected information on the Indigenous community housing sector from the 2001 ATSI/ABS CHINS.

For community managed Indigenous housing, it is not possible to report against a performance indicator framework, but CHINS data provide a snapshot of the sector. The CHINS data provide information on housing managed by Indigenous community housing organisations, including discrete community councils. Readers should not make comparisons between CHINS and State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing data. The former is a survey, while reporting for State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing is based on administrative data.

The CHINS was conducted between March and June 2001 to collect information about all discrete Indigenous communities and Indigenous organisations that provide housing to Indigenous people in urban, rural and remote locations in all States and Territories. The response rate was 98.1 per cent for discrete Indigenous communities and 98.6 per cent for Indigenous housing organisations. Information was collected by trained ABS officers in personal interviews with key community and Indigenous housing organisation representatives.

There were 12 579 dwellings identified in the 2001-02 State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing collection (table 16A.27). In the 2001 ATSI/ABS CHINS, 21 287 permanent Indigenous community housing dwellings were identified (table 16A.38) of which 7.8 per cent were unoccupied (table 16A.39). Cultural factors may influence the time taken to re-occupy Indigenous dwellings. Following the death of a significant person, for example, a dwelling may need to be vacant for a longer period of time (Morel and Ross 1993). In some cases, the dwelling may be so sub-standard as to be uninhabitable. The higher proportion of dwellings in rural and remote areas may also contribute to delays in completing administrative tasks and maintenance before dwellings can be re-tenanted. Due to the diversity of funding arrangements between programs and jurisdictions, problems may occur with program boundaries (especially where management of government owned stock has transferred to the Indigenous community sector) and, therefore, there is potential for some government owned

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dwellings to be reported in the CHINS results. In addition to the number of permanent dwellings mentioned above, the CHINS also identified 5600 people living in temporary dwellings.

Of the 616 Indigenous housing organisations included in the CHINS, 47.2 per cent managed one to 19 dwellings, 33.6 per cent managed 20 to 49 dwellings and 18.8 per cent managed 50 or more dwellings. The majority (56.7 per cent) of Indigenous housing organisations were in discrete Indigenous communities and the remainder in urban areas. Most (93.7 per cent) discrete Indigenous communities were in remote and very remote parts of Australia. The total population of discrete Indigenous communities was reported as 108 000, of whom 85.9 per cent lived in remote and very remote communities.

Housing grants were received by 57.9 per cent of Indigenous housing organisations during the financial year prior to the 2001 CHINS. Indigenous housing organisations in discrete communities were more likely to receive grants (68.8 per cent) than urban Indigenous housing organisations (43.8 per cent). The main providers of grants were ATSIIC (28.4 per cent of organisations) and the State and Territory governments (19.6 per cent of organisations), with joint State or Territory and Commonwealth funding reported for 16.6 per cent of organisations. No grants were received by 41.9 per cent of organisations.

In the 2001 CHINS, 70.4 per cent of permanent Indigenous community housing dwellings were classified as needing minor or no repair, 18.9 per cent were in need of major repair and 8.4 per cent were classified as needing replacement (table 16A.40).

Average annual maintenance expenditure per permanent Indigenous community housing dwelling in 2001 was \$1870 a year, while the average weekly rent paid by Indigenous community households was \$38 (table 16A.41) (ABS 2002b).

### *CRA*

Commonwealth Rent Assistance is a non-taxable supplementary payment to help with the additional cost of private rental housing. It is available to recipients of income support payments, including those who receive more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A and who pay private rent above minimum thresholds. Private rent includes rent paid under both formal tenancy agreements and informal arrangements, such as board and lodgings paid to a family member. It also includes mooring and site fees (for boats and caravans) and payments for retirement village services. Community housing tenants may also be eligible for CRA.

The rate at which CRA is paid is 75 cents for every dollar above the threshold until a maximum rate is reached. The maximum rates and thresholds vary according to a client's family situation and to their number of children (table 16.1). For single people without children, the maximum rate also varies according to whether accommodation is shared with others. Rent thresholds and maximum rates are indexed twice a year (March and September) to reflect changes in the consumer price index.

**Table 16.1 Eligibility and payment scales for CRA<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Personal circumstances</i>	<i>Minimum rent to be eligible for CRA (\$/fortnight)</i>	<i>Minimum rent to be eligible for maximum CRA (\$/fortnight)</i>	<i>Maximum CRA (\$/fortnight)</i>	<i>Average CRA paid (\$/fortnight)<sup>b</sup></i>
Single, no children	80.40	201.20	90.60	70.58
Single, no children, sharer	80.40	160.93	60.40	51.12
Couple, no dependant children	131.00	244.87	85.40	69.01
Single, 1 or 2 dependant children	105.84	247.52	106.26	80.83
Single, 3 or more dependant children	105.84	266.00	120.12	94.36
Partnered, 1 or 2 children	156.66	298.34	106.26	79.82
Partnered, 3 or more children	156.66	316.82	120.12	89.57
Partnered, illness separated, no children	80.40	201.20	90.60	87.00
Partnered, temporarily separated, no children	80.40	194.27	85.40	84.94

<sup>a</sup> Maximum rates and thresholds payable at 30 June 2002. <sup>b</sup> At June 2002.

Source: DFACS (unpublished).

As CRA is a national payment, the Department of Family and Community Services (DFACS) seeks to ensure CRA clients who have the same household characteristics and who pay the same amount of rent receive the same amount of assistance wherever they live. The maximum rate of assistance is received by 56.9 per cent of CRA recipients. This outcome and the national payment objective of CRA result in little variation in the average level of assistance across locations (table 16A.56) even though rents vary considerably by location. At 30 June 2002, the average payment across Australia was \$72 per fortnight (or approximately \$1874 a year). On a capital city/rest of State or Territory basis, Sydney had the highest average CRA payment (\$75 a fortnight). Excluding other Australian Territories,<sup>7</sup> the lowest average CRA payment (\$66 a fortnight) was in non-capital city Tasmania (table 16A.56).

<sup>7</sup> 'Other Australian Territories' comprises Jervis Bay, Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Island.

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There were 943 877 income units — where an income unit is defined as either a single person or a couple with or without dependents<sup>8</sup> — receiving CRA at 30 June 2002 (table 16.15).

The mix of clients by payment type reflects the fact that the proportion of social security recipients receiving CRA decreases with age. Approximately 44 per cent of income units aged 25–27 years received CRA on 30 November 2001 (the most recent year for which data are available), but this proportion decreased to 36 per cent at age 34 years, 28 per cent at age 48 years, 20 per cent at age 59 years and less than 14 per cent at age 65 years or more. The proportion of clients receiving CRA also decreases for those aged under 25 years due to the home rules for recipients of Youth Allowances. In most cases this means they have to live away from home for study or training. The likelihood of this increases with age. The type of property rented may also affect CRA eligibility.

## **Diversity of State and Territory housing assistance operations**

State and Territory governments have similar broad objectives for providing housing assistance. Individual jurisdictions, however, emphasise different objectives depending on their historical precedents and ways of interacting with community sector providers. These differences lead to a variety of policy responses and associated assistance products. It is important to be aware of all the housing assistance operations in each State and Territory when analysing performance information.

Appendix A contains information on each State and Territory that may help in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter. State and Territory governments have provided some additional information on the key operating parameters characterising housing assistance provision in their jurisdictions.

### *Public housing*

- *Eligibility criteria for access to public housing.* Definitions of income and assets, and income and asset limits for access to public housing, vary across jurisdictions. At June 2002, income limits for a single person ranged from \$540 a week in SA to \$323 a week in Victoria and Tasmania. In most cases, jurisdictions require that applicants must be Australian citizens or permanent residents and do not own or part own residential property. ‘Other’ asset limits for a single person household ranged from \$249 750 in SA (with the same definition as the Centrelink asset test threshold at 30 June 2002 for a single person who

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<sup>8</sup> Children over 16 years of age are not regarded as dependent unless they are full time secondary students aged under 18 years and do not receive social security payments.

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does not own their own home) to \$25 460 in Tasmania (for people under 55 years of age). There are no 'other' asset limits in NSW and Queensland, although NSW assesses liquid assets as part of a household's weekly income when determining eligibility. The minimum age for eligibility also differs — 18 years in Queensland and WA; 16 years in Tasmania and the ACT; 15 years in Victoria; and no set minimum age in NSW, SA and the NT. Applicants under the age of 18 in NSW, however, must demonstrate living skills to be eligible for housing. All jurisdictions require eligible applicants to be resident in the respective State or Territory.

- *Management of the waiting list.* All State and Territory governments have at least a two-segment waiting list (generally 'priority' and 'wait turn'). NSW, Victoria, SA and the ACT have implemented more complex segmented waiting lists to categorise levels of priority, while Tasmania seeks to categorise levels of need. Segments are defined differently across jurisdictions, but generally reflect urgent need/homelessness and inability to access appropriate private market accommodation.
- *Term of tenure.* Most jurisdictions provide security of tenure after an initial probationary period. In Victoria, new tenants after November 1997 are subject to ongoing eligibility review. Tenants aged 65 years and over have lifetime tenure. In SA, tenants who applied after February 1998 and were housed after September 1999, who exceed set income limits over three consecutive years and who do not meet a needs test, have their tenure reviewed and may have a tenure premium applied. The ACT has introduced limited tenure with three- to five-year reviews for tenancies commenced after 1 January 2001. This is currently under review. In the NT, tenants are offered an initial three- or six-month probationary lease (depending on the circumstances). Those successfully completing a six-month lease are then offered a two-year lease, followed by a five-year lease. At the end of each lease period, ineligible tenants are required to find alternative housing.
- *Rebated rent setting.* Rebated rents in all jurisdictions are based on the majority of households paying no more than 25 per cent of their assessable income in rent (the income-to-rent ratio). In recent years, NSW, Victoria, Queensland, WA and the ACT have introduced an income-to-rent ratio of 25 per cent for new tenants and the NT has introduced a ratio of 23 per cent (or 18 per cent for aged pension recipients). In SA, the income-to-rent ratio ranges from 19.5 per cent (18.5 per cent in country regions) up to 25 per cent. In 2001-02, the income-to-rent ratio for tenants receiving a Centrelink Family Allowance was lower in most jurisdictions (ranging from 15 per cent to 10 per cent). Definitions of assessable income vary across jurisdictions.

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- *Rebated tenants.* The proportion of public housing tenants in receipt of a rebated rent at 30 June 2002 was 89.5 per cent in NSW, 88.7 per cent in Victoria, 89.6 per cent in Queensland, 86.7 per cent in WA, 84.9 per cent in SA, 88.6 per cent in Tasmania, 79.2 per cent in the ACT and 89.6 per cent in the NT. Nationally, 88.3 per cent of public housing tenants received a rebate.
  - *Priority access.* The proportion of public rental allocations made on the basis of greatest need is reported in section 16.4.
  - *Remote area concentrations.* The proportion of public housing in remote areas, based on the Rural Remote Classification System (known as RRMA), was below 2.0 per cent in NSW, Victoria, SA and Tasmania and was 3.7 per cent in Queensland, 12.3 per cent in WA and 31.2 per cent in the NT. There are no remote areas in the ACT (table 16A.1). The proportions calculated exclude properties where details of the location are unavailable.
  - *Rural area concentrations.* The proportion of public housing in rural (as distinct from remote) areas, based on RRMA classifications, was 17.7 per cent in NSW, 27.4 per cent in Victoria, 26.1 per cent in Queensland, 16.4 per cent in WA, 23.1 per cent in SA, 51.2 per cent in Tasmania, 0.1 per cent in the ACT and 1.3 per cent in the NT. Nationally, 21.7 per cent of public housing was located in rural (as distinct from remote) areas (table 16A.1). The proportions calculated exclude properties where details of the location are unavailable.

### *Community housing*

- *Eligibility.* Eligibility for community housing is generally consistent with eligibility requirements for public housing in each jurisdiction.
- *Waiting list management.* In most jurisdictions there is no requirement for community housing organisations to segment waiting lists. In March 2000, SA introduced a segmented waiting list for community housing consistent with the segmented waiting list in place for public housing.
- *Proportion of community housing dwellings.* The proportion of community housing dwellings to total public and community housing dwellings at June 2002 was approximately 6.7 per cent in NSW (excluding Crisis Accommodation Program dwellings), 10.7 per cent in Victoria, 7.3 per cent in Queensland, 10.1 per cent in WA, 7.2 per cent in SA, 1.8 per cent in Tasmania<sup>9</sup>, 3.7 per cent in the ACT and 2.0 per cent in the NT (based on administrative data). Nationally, community housing dwellings represented approximately

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<sup>9</sup> Tasmania advises that based on administrative data, the proportion of community housing dwellings to total public and community housing dwellings in Tasmania at June 2002 was 2.4 per cent.

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7.8 per cent of total public and community housing dwellings. Where based on survey data, these results are affected by survey nonresponse.

- *Remote area concentrations.* The proportion of community housing in remote areas was none (or negligible, at less than 2 per cent) in NSW, Victoria, SA and Tasmania, 13.0 per cent in Queensland, 16.0 per cent in WA and 34.4 per cent in the NT. There are no remote areas in the ACT. Nationally, 5.0 per cent of community housing was located in remote areas. These results may be affected by survey nonresponse (table 16A.15). The proportions calculated exclude properties where details of the location are unavailable.
- *Rural area concentrations.* The proportion of community housing in rural (as distinct from remote) areas was 27.0 per cent in NSW, 22.6 per cent in Victoria, 44.7 per cent in Queensland, 22.5 per cent in WA, 12.0 per cent in SA, 43.2 per cent in Tasmania and 4.1 per cent in the NT. There was no community housing located in rural areas in the ACT. Nationally, 25.8 per cent of community housing was located in rural (as distinct from remote) areas (table 16A.15). These results may be affected by survey nonresponse.

#### *State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing*

State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings are defined as those rental housing dwellings owned and managed by government and allocated only to Indigenous Australians (AIHW 2002c). The ACT and the NT are not included in the data collection reported in this chapter. The ACT does not receive funding for or administer any Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing programs. In the ACT, Indigenous people are housed predominantly in mainstream public and community housing.

In the NT, funding under the ARHP is directed at community managed Indigenous housing. The NT Government is unable to differentiate between the various funding sources as a result of its commitment under the CSHA Indigenous Agreement to specifically 'pool' all funds earmarked for Indigenous housing and associated infrastructure in the NT. All Indigenous housing programs in the NT are community managed and administered, and specific management issues, such as eligibility and waiting lists, are the responsibility of approximately 130 Indigenous housing organisations which, on 30 June 2002, were managing 6100 permanent dwellings for 46 128 people in 700 discrete Indigenous communities. The approaches of these organisations may differ significantly depending on the size of the organisations, the socioeconomic circumstances of particular communities and cultural considerations. The Indigenous Housing Authority of the NT (IHANT) allocates funds to the seven ATSIC regional councils in the NT, which in turn allocate funds to those communities most in need. During 2001-02, the IHANT oversaw the

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construction (or major refurbishment) of 241 houses, which provided better housing for 1928 people.

Some other jurisdictions are increasingly pooling funding but currently report State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing data separately. Queensland administers a separate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program, which includes ARHP funds, untied CSHA funds and State funds, and does not report separately against the ARHP component of the program funds, which forms more than one third of total expenditure.

- *Eligibility criteria for access to State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing.* In NSW, Victoria, SA and Tasmania, once an applicant is confirmed as being Indigenous, eligibility for State owned and managed Indigenous housing is consistent with eligibility requirements for public housing, although in Tasmania applications outside the guidelines may be considered where there are extenuating circumstances in relation to income, asset and age criteria. In Queensland, there are no income or age eligibility limits on State owned and managed Indigenous housing as the program is aimed at addressing discrimination and a history of social disadvantage, and discrimination can occur regardless of income or age. Provided other eligibility criteria are met, the Queensland Department of Housing will accept applications from people living interstate and newly arrived interstate applicants, with waiting times commencing from the date applications are received. Applicants who previously have had debts to the department are eligible to be placed on waiting lists for housing, although housing is not generally allocated until the debt is repaid, except in extenuating circumstances or where more than 75 per cent of the debt has been paid under agreed terms.
- *Management of the waiting list.* Management of waiting lists varies across jurisdictions for State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing. In Victoria, there is one waiting list for both State owned and managed Indigenous housing and public housing. Indigenous applicants are placed on the waiting list and provided housing under the first available program. In Queensland, State owned and managed Indigenous housing is provided on a 'wait turn' basis, with provision for a small number of applicants to be housed ahead of turn in very urgent circumstances. No more than 10 per cent of annual allocations are to be based on priority. SA has divided the State owned and managed Indigenous housing waiting list into four categories, with 'category one' reflecting those in most urgent need of housing and 'category four' reflecting the least urgent housing need. In Tasmania, although the Housing Assessment System developed for public rental housing may be used as a guide, applications for State owned and managed Indigenous housing are not subject to the allocation of points to determine overall housing need or relative priority. Assessments are undertaken

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by Aboriginal Customer Service Officers who consider an applicant's claim against criteria such as ill health, medical requirements, and the affordability and adequacy of current housing. Priority may be given to applicants with children and applicants who may have their educational or employment opportunities enhanced by the provision of housing. Regional Aboriginal housing committees determine priority and allocate properties.

- *Term of tenure.* In NSW, Victoria and SA, security of tenure is the same as that for public housing. In Queensland, security of tenure is dependent on State owned and managed Indigenous housing tenants meeting their responsibilities under the *Residential Tenancies Act* (Qld) (which involves paying their rent, maintaining the property and keeping the peace of the neighbourhood). In Tasmania, tenants are signed either to a fixed-term lease or to a lease of no fixed term, depending on their previous housing history. Tenure arrangements may be reviewed if, following family breakdown or death, a non-Indigenous person is the remaining tenant in a State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwelling.
- *Remote area concentrations.* State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings are more likely to be located in rural or remote areas than public or community housing dwellings. The proportion of the State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings located in remote areas was 6.5 per cent in NSW, 3.0 per cent in Victoria, 31.4 per cent in Queensland, 48.8 per cent in WA and 7.9 per cent in SA. No State owned and managed Indigenous housing was located in remote areas of Tasmania. Nationally, 20.1 per cent of State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings were located in remote areas (table 16A.27). The proportions calculated exclude properties where details of the location are unavailable. No data on State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing are available for the NT.
- *Rural area concentrations.* Across jurisdictions, the proportion of State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings located in rural (as distinct from remote) areas was 51.9 per cent in NSW, 58.8 per cent in Victoria, 42.1 per cent in Queensland, 21.6 per cent in WA, 31.4 per cent in SA and 60.6 per cent in Tasmania. Nationally, 41.5 per cent of the State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings were located in rural (as distinct from remote) areas (table 16A.27). The proportions calculated exclude properties where details of the location are unavailable. No data on State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing are available for the NT.

#### *Private rental markets*

- *Capital city vacancy rates.* Vacancy rates in the private rental market at June 2002 ranged from 9.6 per cent in Darwin to 2.0 per cent in Hobart. Tight

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private rental markets (vacancy rates below 3.0 per cent) were evident in Hobart and Canberra (table 16A.68).

- *Capital city median rents.* Median rents for three-bedroom houses at June 2002 were highest in Canberra at \$250 a week and lowest in Perth at \$172 a week. For two-bedroom flats or units, median rents ranged from \$265 a week in Sydney to \$139 a week in Perth (table 16A.69).

## **16.2 Policy developments in housing assistance**

### **Renegotiation of the CSHA**

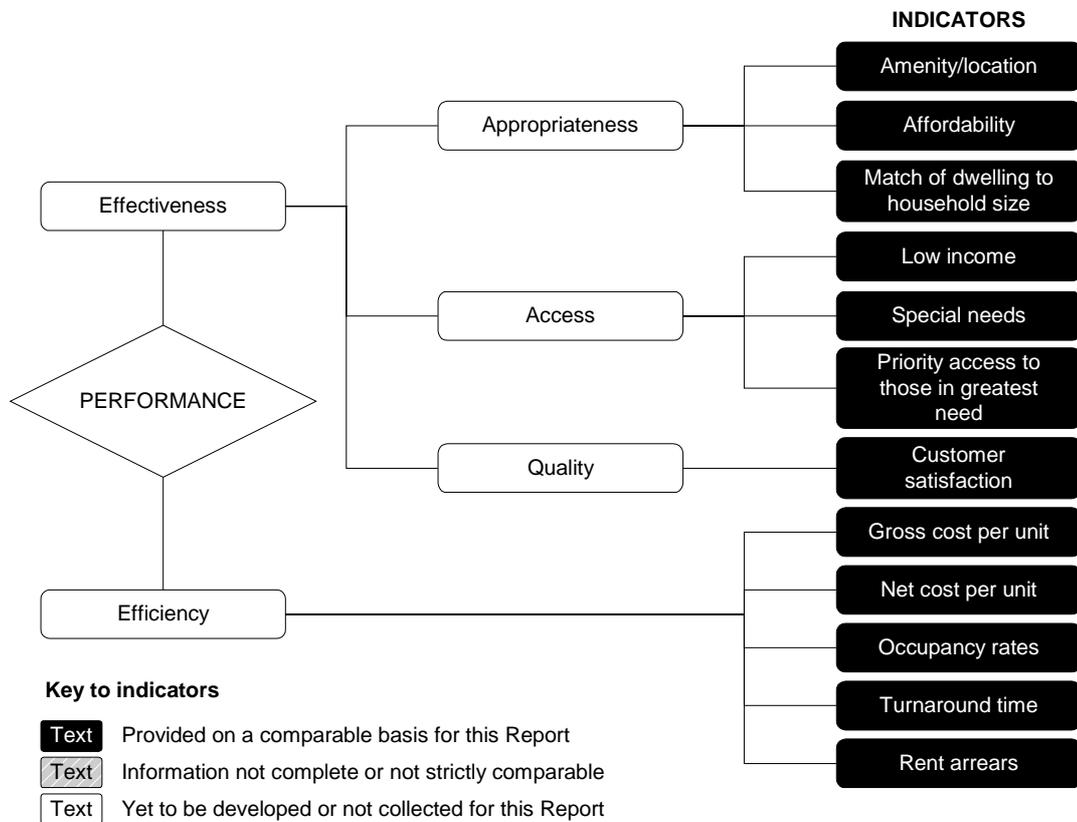
The current CSHA is due to expire in 2003 and funding arrangements for housing assistance beyond this time are being negotiated. The outcome of these negotiations may affect reporting in future years.

## **16.3 Framework of performance indicators**

The framework of performance indicators for public, community and State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing in this chapter is based on the performance indicator framework developed for the 1999 CSHA (figures 16.2, 16.3 and 16.4). The CSHA framework reflects the national objectives of the Agreement as outlined in a number of guiding principles (CSHA 1999).

The performance indicator framework shows which data are comparable in the 2003 Report (figures 16.2, 16.3 and 16.4). For data that are not considered strictly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary. Chapter 1 discusses data comparability from a Report-wide perspective (see section 1.6).

Figure 16.2 Performance indicators for public housing



The objectives for public and community housing services are similar (box 16.4). Both services aim to help eligible people obtain housing that is affordable, secure and appropriate to their needs. The delivery method for community housing differs from that for public housing however — community organisations and sometimes local government deliver community housing, while State and Territory governments deliver public housing.

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**Box 16.4 Objectives for public and community housing under the 1999 CSHA**

The aim of the 1999 CSHA is to provide housing assistance that is:

- affordable — after accounting for housing assistance, housing costs for a household do not exceed agreed benchmarks relating to income; and
- appropriate — housing assistance is provided in a range of forms to meet different needs of different households, so assistance is appropriate to household size, household type, special needs and cultural needs.

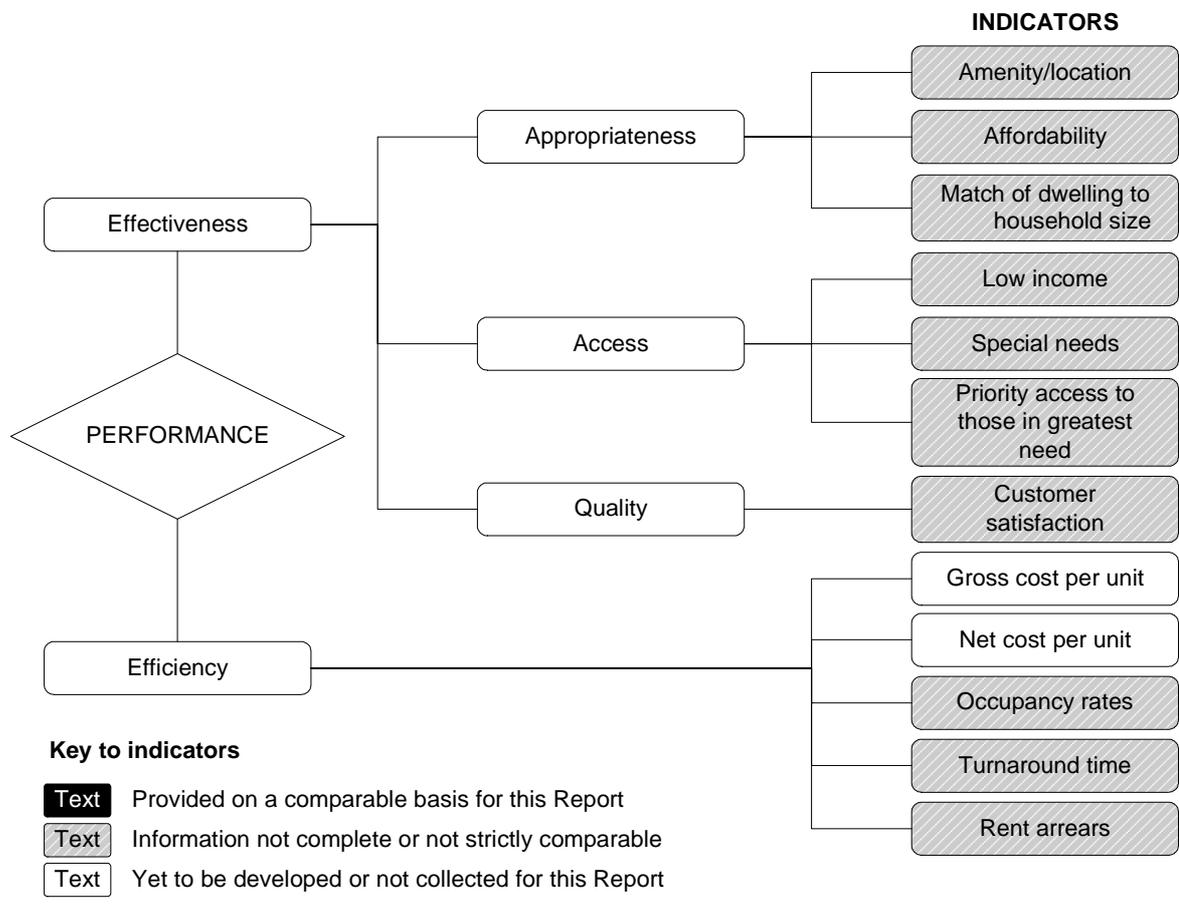
The guiding principles of the 1999 CSHA are to:

- assist those whose needs for appropriate housing cannot be met by the private market;
- provide assistance for the duration of the need;
- promote alternative methods of housing provision;
- ensure that the costs of assistance are transparent; and
- provide assistance in a way that minimises workforce disincentives.

*Source:* DFACS (2002).

Performance indicator data are reported against the current public housing and community housing frameworks for the third consecutive year. Some additional information on affordability, and moderate overcrowding and underuse can be found in tables 16A.75, 16A.76 and 16A.77, and 16A.78, 16A.79 and 16A.80.

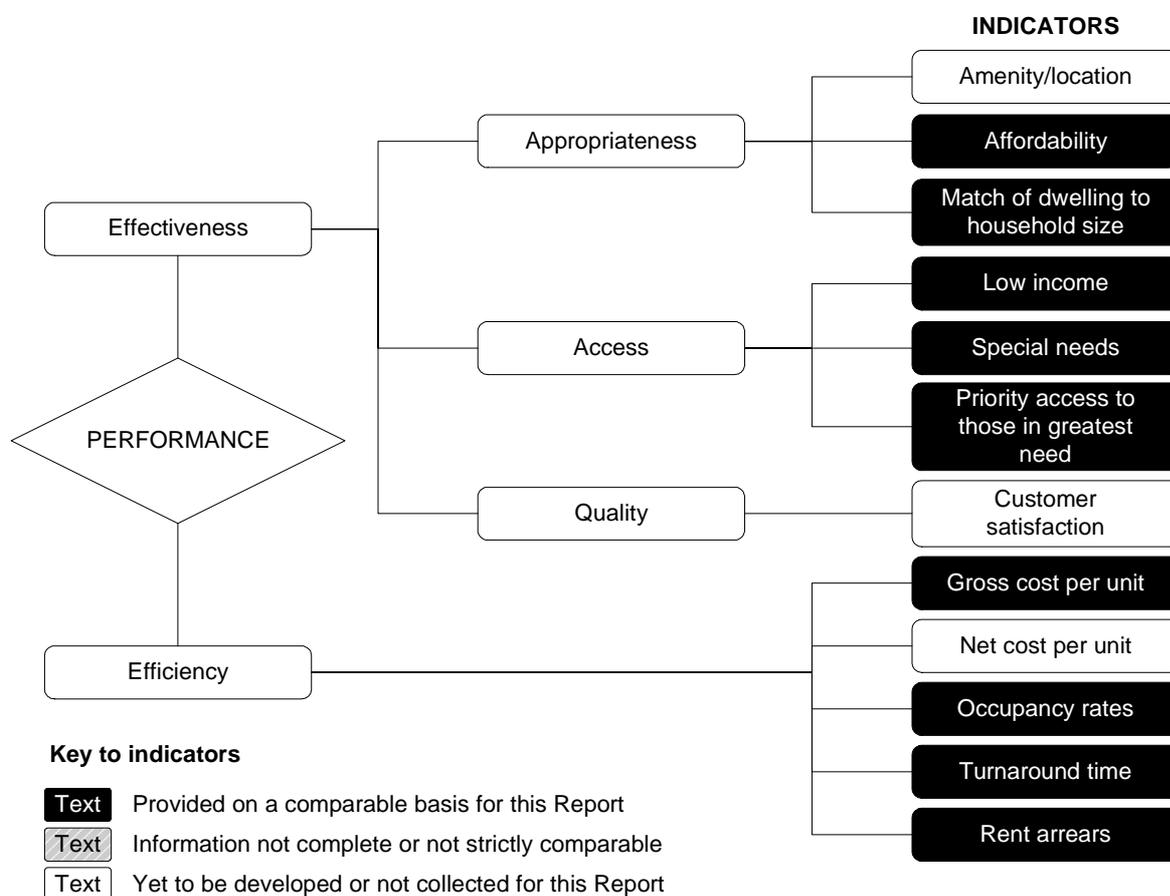
Figure 16.3 Performance indicators for community housing



As for other services, performance reporting this year is assessed in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. Comparable public housing data are presented for the full range of effectiveness and efficiency indicators in the performance measurement framework (figure 16.2).

It has not been possible to obtain nationally comparable performance information for community housing (figure 16.3) because current data standards and data collection capacity do not allow nationally comparable performance information to be reported in the community housing sector. Jurisdictions operate a variety of funding and asset management models (box 16.3) and they are not always managed by State or Territory housing authorities.

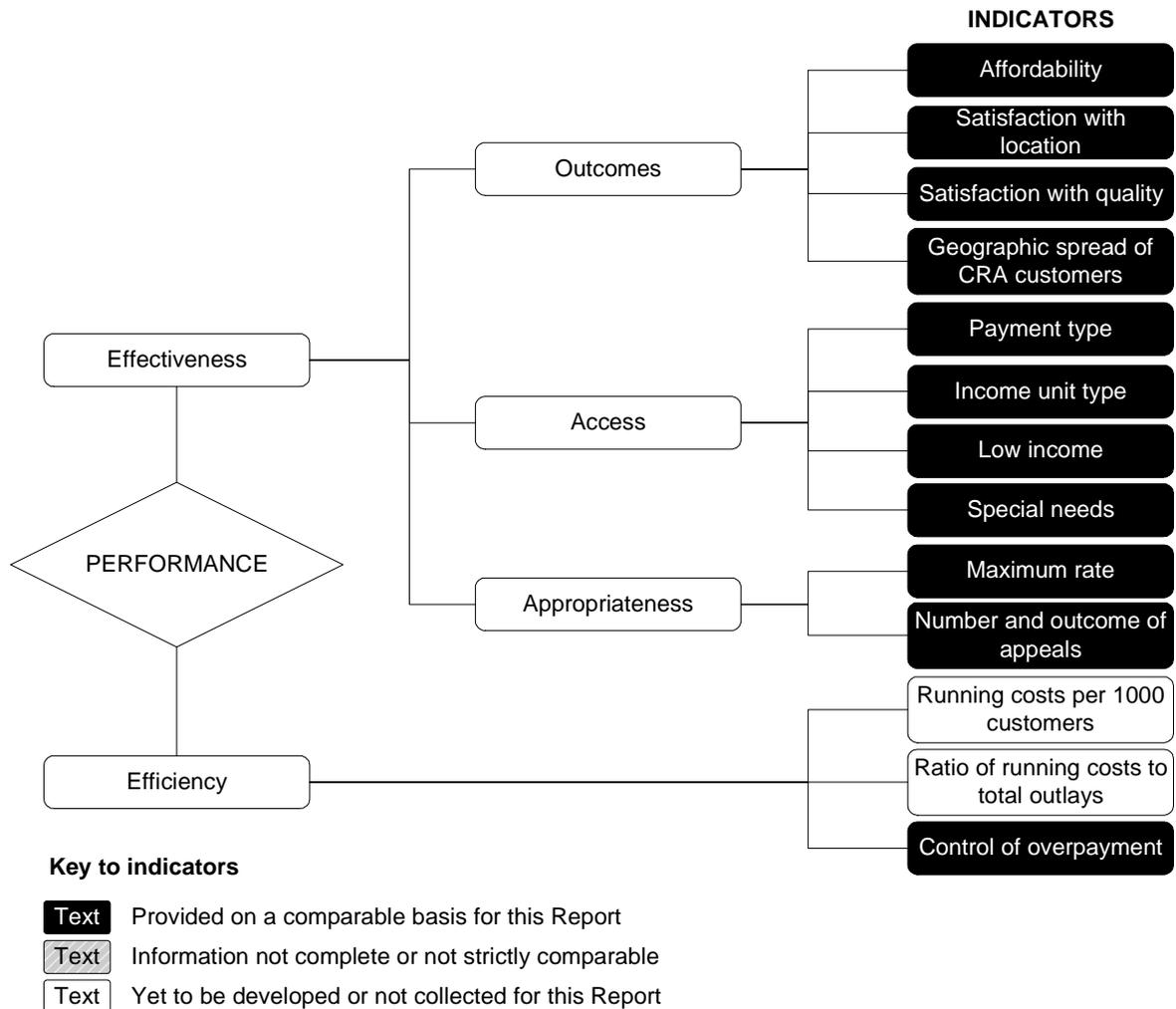
**Figure 16.4 Performance indicators for State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing**



Performance reporting on State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing was included for the first time in the 2002 Report. While the performance indicator framework for State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing is the same as that for public and community housing (figure 16.4), it is not appropriate to make direct comparisons between the performance of public housing and State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing as several definitions differ. The special needs indicator for public housing, for example, includes Indigenous households in the definition of ‘special needs’ households. Using this definition for State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing would result in 100 per cent of State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing households being regarded as having ‘special needs’. State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing uses a more appropriate definition of ‘special need’. More information on the differences between public housing and State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing is given in section 16.4.

The performance indicators for CRA differ from those for public, community and State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing because they have different objectives and delivery methods. Reporting for CRA this year uses a new performance indicator framework (figure 16.5), based on the objective outlined in box 16.5. Definitions for all indicators are provided in tables 16.21 and 16.22.

Figure 16.5 Performance indicators for CRA



**Box 16.5 Objective of CRA**

The objective of CRA is to provide income support recipients and low income families in the private rental market with additional financial assistance in recognition of the housing costs they face (Newman 1998). This assistance should be provided in an equitable and efficient manner. In addition to this objective, CRA is also governed by other objectives relating to the primary income support payment.

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Data are for CRA recipients who are clients of DFACS only. Data exclude those paid rental assistance by, or on behalf of, the DVA or DEST. Comparable data are presented for all effectiveness indicators within the performance measurement framework. It is not possible to report on two of the efficiency indicators as data are unavailable.

## 16.4 Key performance indicator results

### Public housing

Different delivery contexts, locations and types of client may affect the performance of public housing reported in this chapter. Care needs to be taken in interpreting performance indicator results and the qualifications presented with the data need to be considered. Some descriptive information on public housing can be found in table 16A.1.

#### *Effectiveness*

#### *Appropriateness*

This chapter reports three measures of appropriateness. The first is the match of rental dwellings to household size. Data are provided on the match of households to different size dwellings using a proxy occupancy standard based on the size of the dwelling and household structure (table 16.2).

Table 16.2 **Proxy occupancy standard for appropriate sized dwelling by household structure**

<i>Household structure</i>	<i>Bedrooms required</i>
Single adult only	1
Couple with no children	2
Sole parent or couple with 1 child	2
Sole parent or couple with 2 or 3 children	3
Sole parent or couple with 4+ children	4

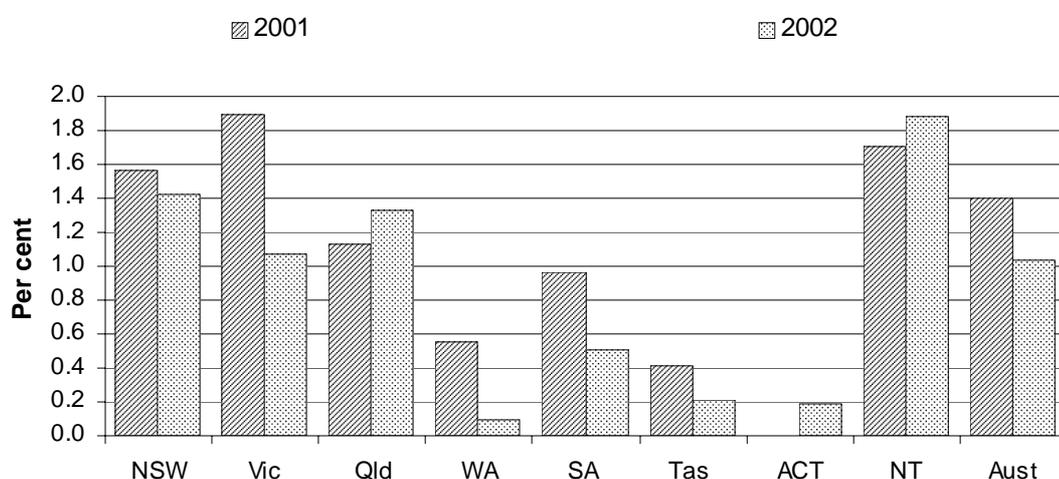
Source: AIHW (2002a).

Overcrowding is deemed to have occurred where two or more additional bedrooms are required to satisfy the proxy occupancy standard. The occupancy standards in table 16.2 may differ from the specific criteria used by State and Territory housing

authorities to match households to dwelling types, affecting interpretation of this indicator.

The NT had the highest proportion of overcrowded dwellings at June 2002 (1.9 per cent), while WA had the lowest proportion (0.1 per cent). Overcrowded dwellings represented 1.0 per cent of public housing dwellings nationally (figure 16.6). More information on overcrowding and underuse can be found in table 16A.80.

Figure 16.6 **Proportion of households in public housing with overcrowding at 30 June<sup>a, b, c, d, e, f, g</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Includes rebated and non-rebated tenants where household composition is known. Changes in data collection methods between years may affect results for some jurisdictions. <sup>b</sup> In NSW excludes all non-rebated tenants and those rebated tenants with missing household composition details. <sup>c</sup> For Victoria for 2002, data exclude 6446 households paying market rent (representing 10.4 per cent of households) that were included in 2000-01, influencing the change in results. <sup>d</sup> For WA for 2002 data exclude 2051 multiple family households (representing 6.7 per cent of households) that were included in 2001, influencing the change in results. <sup>e</sup> For SA for 2002, data exclude 2340 multiple family households (representing 5.2 per cent of households) that were included in 2000-01, influencing the change in results. <sup>f</sup> For the ACT in 2001, data exclude households where the relationship of household members was unknown (for example, a three-tenant household where it is not known if the household consists of a couple and a single person, or three single people). For 2002, data exclude 2285 non-rebated or multiple family households (representing 20.8 per cent of households). <sup>g</sup> For the NT, data for 2001 exclude 189 multiple family households (representing 3.3 per cent of households). Data for 2002 data exclude 160 multiple family households (representing 2.8 per cent of households).

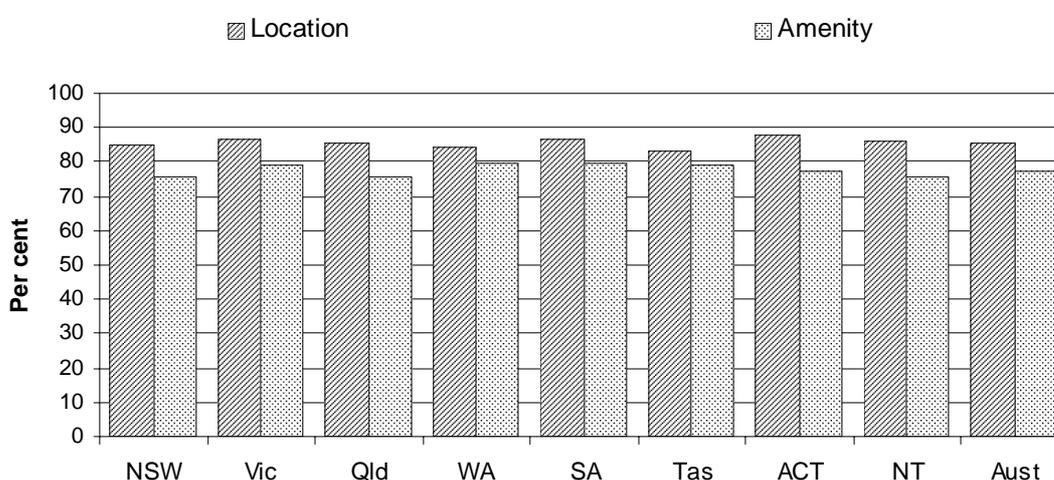
Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.2.

The second measure of the appropriateness of public housing assistance is obtained by surveying tenants about the amenity and location of their dwellings. The precision of survey estimates will depend on the survey sample size and the sample estimate. Larger sample sizes result in higher precision, as do larger sample estimates (for example, if 90 per cent of surveyed respondents chose an answer, there would be less uncertainty about the actual population's views than if

50 per cent of respondents chose it). Care needs to be taken in interpreting small differences in results. Further information on the sample size is provided in tables 16A.3 and 16A.4.

There was little difference across jurisdictions in the proportion of tenants satisfied with the location or amenity of their dwelling in 2001. Satisfaction with the location of dwellings was above the national average in Victoria, Queensland, SA, the ACT and the NT. Satisfaction with the amenity of dwellings was above the national average in Victoria, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT (figure 16.7).

**Figure 16.7 Proportion of tenants satisfied with location or amenity aspects of their dwelling, July-August 2001<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Care needs to be taken in interpreting small differences in the results that are affected by sample and estimate size.

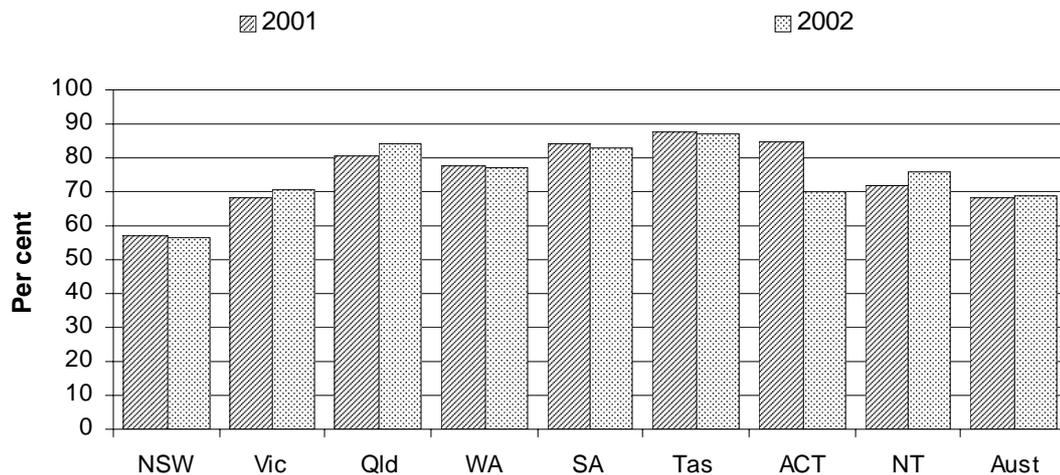
Source: NFO Donovan Research (2001b); tables 16A.3 and 16A.4.

These overall satisfaction results were obtained by surveying tenants about a number of aspects regarding the location and amenity of their dwellings. Tenants were asked whether particular aspects were important to them and, if so, whether they felt their needs were met. More information on this indicator can be found in tables 16A.3 and 16A.4. Information from 2001 on tenant assessments of the condition of public housing stock can be found in table 16A.81.

The third measure of appropriateness is affordability, which measures the rent charged to tenants as a proportion of the market rent for each dwelling, adjusted for CRA. The rent charged in 2001-02 as a proportion of the market rate for each dwelling (adjusted for CRA) ranged from 87.0 per cent in Tasmania to 56.5 per cent in NSW (figure 16.8).

More information on affordability, measured as the proportion of household income spent on housing costs, can be found at table 16A.75.

**Figure 16.8 Rent charged as a proportion of market rent, adjusted for CRA, at 30 June<sup>a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> The methodology used for calculations has changed and now uses more complex modelling developed in CRA modelling for CSHA re-negotiations. Caution should therefore be used comparing results between 2001 and 2002. <sup>b</sup> In NSW market rents are the valuations applied to each property. The market rents for 2001 and 2002 are the same and refer to the 2001 valuation. The method of adjusting for CRA entitlements differs between years, making comparisons between the years difficult. <sup>c</sup> In Queensland, market rents for dwellings have not been globally adjusted to reflect the current market for a number of years, leading to a gradual reduction in the proportion of households paying less than market rent and a corresponding increase in the proportion of those paying market rent due to consumer price index rent rises. The overall market rent value as listed here would therefore be somewhat less than the true value. For 2002, complex derivation of household entitlement results in an estimate below the simple sum of rents for all households. As calculations are used in a ratio to calculate public/private affordability, this discrepancy has no effect. <sup>d</sup> For WA data for 2001 exclude 1834 multiple family households (representing 6 per cent of households) that were included in 2001, influencing the change in results. <sup>e</sup> For SA data for 2001 exclude 3113 multiple family households (representing 6.5 per cent of households). Data for 2002 exclude 2340 multiple family households (representing 5.2 per cent of households). <sup>f</sup> Data for 2001 in Tasmania exclude 1261 multiple family households (representing 10 per cent of households). <sup>g</sup> Market rents in the ACT were increased after 30 June 2001, resulting in rebated rents charged decreasing as a proportion of market rent. For 2001, data exclude households where the relationship of household members was unknown (for example, a three tenant household where it is not known if the household consists of a couple and a single person, or three single people). For 2002, for multiple family households it was assumed that each adult would pay an equal share of the market rent for the dwelling. Data exclude 2285 non-rebated or multiple family households (representing 20.8 per cent of households). <sup>h</sup> For the NT for 2001, data exclude 189 multiple family households (representing 3.3 per cent of households). For 2002, data exclude 160 multiple family households (representing 2.8 per cent of households).

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.5.

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## *Access*

Three performance indicators measure access to public housing assistance for those in need. The first measures the 'low income' and 'special needs (but not low income)' status of households receiving public housing assistance (table 16.3). There are two household income measures for the purpose of this indicator:

- 'low income A' households — those in public housing where all members of the household have incomes at or below the maximum pension rate (pension rates have been selected for calculating this indicator because they are higher than allowance rates); and
- 'low income B' households — those in public housing that have incomes that would enable them to receive government income support benefits below the maximum pensioner rate.

Households with incomes below these levels are included in the measure, although they may not necessarily receive income support benefits.

The proportion of new tenancies allocated to 'low income A' households in 2002 ranged from 94.6 per cent in NSW to 83.8 per cent in WA. The proportion of new tenancies allocated to 'low income A' or 'special needs (not low income)' households varied from 97.4 per cent in NSW to 89.5 per cent in WA (table 16.3).

More information on 'low income B' households is contained in table 16A.6.

The second access indicator measures the proportion of new tenancies allocated to households with special needs. Special needs households are those that have either a household member with a disability, a principal tenant aged either 24 years or under or 75 years or more, or a household defined as being Indigenous.

The proportion of new tenancies allocated to 'special needs' households in 2001-02 ranged from 73.5 per cent in SA to 31.4 per cent in the ACT (figure 16.9).

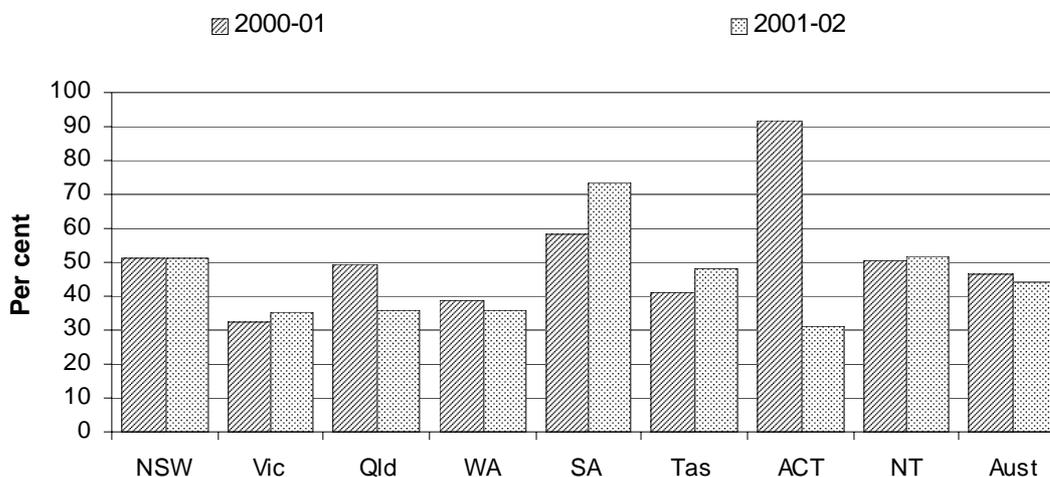
**Table 16.3 Low income and special needs households as a proportion of all new households at 30 June (per cent)<sup>a</sup>**

	NSW <sup>b</sup>	Vic <sup>c</sup>	Qld <sup>d</sup>	WA <sup>e</sup>	SA <sup>f</sup>	Tas <sup>g</sup>	ACT <sup>h</sup>	NT <sup>i</sup>	Aus <sup>j</sup>
<i>2001</i>									
<i>New 'low income A' households as proportion of all new households</i>									
	94.1	90.8	90.0	85.8	89.3	84.6	nr	83.6	89.5
<i>New 'low income A' households or special needs (not low income households) as proportion of all new households<sup>k</sup></i>									
	97.3	93.8	93.4	89.7	94.6	85.9	nr	nr	93.3
<i>2002</i>									
<i>New 'low income A' households as proportion of all new households</i>									
	94.6	93.0	90.4	83.8	89.7	93.1	92.0	87.0	91.4
<i>New 'low income A' households or special needs (not low income households) as proportion of all new households<sup>l</sup></i>									
	97.4	95.6	93.7	89.5	94.2	96.2	94.3	93.4	94.9

<sup>a</sup> In 2001, the introduction of a national 'special needs' definition influenced changes in jurisdiction results. The counting rules for distinguishing between 'low income A' and 'low income B' households were clarified for the 2001-02 data collection to ensure a household was not counted in both low income categories. It appears that these counting rules were followed in the 2000 and 2001 data collections, however, and this clarification should not therefore affect the data reported. Households are excluded as a result of missing or zero household income, missing person information, and multiple family households resulting in an unknown household composition. <sup>b</sup> Special need information is only available for households housed after November 1999. <sup>c</sup> For 2001 data only include single family households. Households with zero or missing income are also excluded. <sup>d</sup> For 2002, disability is calculated from a flag used for assessment of new tenancies and may underestimate the count for ongoing households. <sup>e</sup> The change in results in 2001 is influenced by the use of gross household income and not assessable income. Includes only single family households, representing 94 per cent of households. There were 1934 multiple family households excluded. For 2002, 2051 multiple households were excluded (representing 6.7 per cent of households) that were included in 2000-01, influencing the change in results. Changes in the way data were compiled between years has influenced the change in reported results. <sup>f</sup> Excludes new allocations for 2000-01 who left public housing prior to 30 June 2001. Data for 2001 include only single family households which represent 93.5 per cent of households. There were 3113 multiple family households excluded. For 2002, data exclude 926 households within the special needs program (for example, student housing, migrant housing). Excludes 2340 multiple family households (representing 5.2 per cent of households). <sup>g</sup> For 2001, income and household composition are calculated at tenancy start date. Income source is not taken into account and based on gross income only. Reported via spreadsheet return for about 100 per cent of new households. Results for 2002 differ as data repository records did not contain income and household composition details for new households who were no longer tenants at 30 June 2002. <sup>h</sup> For 2001, data were available for only 4.3 per cent of households allocated housing and were therefore not reported (94.1 per cent and 100.0 per cent respectively were calculated for the indicators). <sup>i</sup> For 2001 data exclude multiple family households. For 2002, data exclude 160 multiple family households (representing 2.8 per cent of households). <sup>j</sup> While the ACT provided a complete data set in 2001, they were excluded from the national average due to data problems. In 2002, data for the ACT excludes 77 new non-rebated or multiple family households (representing 6.5 per cent of households). <sup>k</sup> Data for the NT were not reported due to data problems (180 per cent was calculated for the indicator). This result is excluded from the national average. <sup>l</sup> Figure for the ACT may be understated due to a relatively high proportion of missing special need data. nr Not reported.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.6.

**Figure 16.9 Proportion of new tenancies allocated to households with special needs<sup>a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h</sup>**

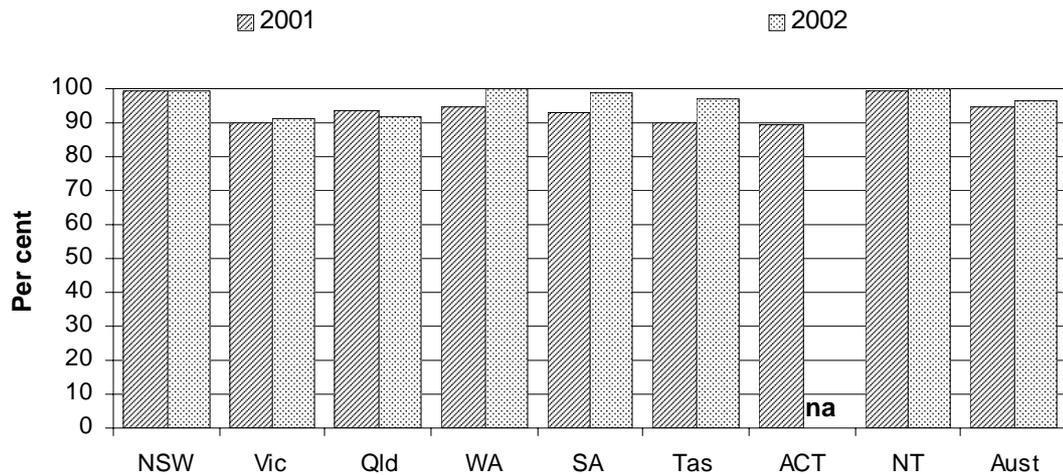


<sup>a</sup> The introduction of a national 'special needs' definition in 2000-01 influenced changes in jurisdiction results. <sup>b</sup> For NSW for 2000-01, there were 80 new households without 'special needs' information. In 2001-02, there were 56 new households without 'special needs' information. <sup>c</sup> For Queensland for 2000-01, the disability pension was the proxy for identifying households with a disability; in 2001-02 the disability identifier flag was the proxy, influencing changes in results reported. For 2001-02, household special need status was derived from the person file in the data repository. Where Indigenous or disability status was missing, it was assumed to be unknown and was excluded from the calculation. <sup>d</sup> Special needs details for WA are recorded only where they are known to exist. No record is kept if a household does not have special needs. All new households therefore are included so figure may represent an undercount. For 2000-01, data were reported about the special need status of 80 per cent of new households, influencing the change in results between years. For 2001-02, household special need status was derived from the person file in the data repository. Where Indigenous or disability status was missing, it was assumed to be unknown and was excluded from the calculation. <sup>e</sup> Special needs details for SA are recorded for the head tenant only. For 2001-02, data exclude 2340 multiple family households (representing 5.2 per cent of households). For 2001-02, household special need status was derived from the person file in the data repository. Where Indigenous or disability status was missing, it was assumed to be unknown and was excluded from the calculation. Data reports about 63 per cent of new allocations. For 2000-01 data are reported about the special need status of 83 per cent of new allocations, influencing the change in results. <sup>f</sup> For Tasmania data for 2001-02 reports about special need status of 90 per cent of new allocations. For 2000-01 data reports about the special need status of 100 per cent of new allocations, influencing the change in result. For 2001-02, household special need status was derived from the person file in the data repository. Where Indigenous or disability status was missing it was assumed to be unknown and were excluded from the calculation. <sup>g</sup> The ACT data for 2000-01 represent only 36 per cent of households allocated housing. Special needs information is unknown for the remainder of households. For 2001-02 some special needs are self identified. This can result in special needs being known for one household member, but not known for other household members in the dwelling. In these cases, unknown values are assumed to be a negative answer. Figure may be an undercount due to a relatively high proportion of missing special need data. For 2001-02, household special need status was derived from the person file in the data repository. Where Indigenous or disability status was missing, it was assumed to be unknown and was excluded from the calculation. <sup>h</sup> For the NT, special needs details are recorded only where they are known to exist. No record is kept if a household does not have special needs. All new households therefore are included so figure may represent an undercount. Excludes households with a disability because the NT does not include a disability identifier in their information management system. For 2000-01, 20 per cent of new households were excluded from the calculation, influencing the change in results.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.7.

The proportion of all households that pay less than market rent or that were special needs households paying market rent in 2001-02 ranged from 100.0 per cent in WA and the NT to 91.2 per cent in Victoria (figure 16.10).

**Figure 16.10 Households that pay less than market rent or that are special needs households paying market rent as a proportion of all public housing households at 30 June<sup>a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> The introduction of a national 'special needs' definition in 2001 influenced changes in jurisdiction results. <sup>b</sup> For NSW, special need information is only available for households that were housed after November 1999. There is a small number of households with missing 'special needs' information, which have been excluded from both years. <sup>c</sup> For 2001 for Victoria low income information includes only single family households. For 2001, households with zero or missing income were also excluded. <sup>d</sup> For 2002 for Queensland, disability is calculated from a flag used for assessment of new tenancies and may underestimate the count for ongoing households. <sup>e</sup> For WA, the change in results in 2001 is influenced by the use of gross household income and not assessable income. Includes only single family households, representing 94 per cent of households. There were 1834 multiple family households excluded (representing 6.0 per cent of households). For 2002 data exclude 2051 multiple family households (representing 6.7 per cent of households), influencing the change in results. <sup>f</sup> For SA data exclude new allocations for 2000-01 who left public housing prior to 30 June 2001. Data for 2000-01 include only single family households which represent 93.5 per cent of households. There were 3113 multiple family households excluded. For 2002, data exclude 926 households housed within the special needs program (for example, student housing, migrant housing). Data exclude 2340 multiple family households (representing 5.2 per cent of households). <sup>g</sup> For 2001 for Tasmania, income and household composition calculated as at tenancy start date. Income source not taken into account and based on gross income only. <sup>h</sup> For 2001 for the ACT, data for low income details were available for only 4.3 per cent of households. Data on 'special needs' represent only 36 per cent of all households allocated housing. Special needs information is unknown for the remainder of households. Data for 2002 unavailable as market rent data are outdated and unreliable. <sup>i</sup> For the NT, special needs details are only recorded where they are known to exist. No record is kept if a household does not have special needs. Inclusion of all new households in calculation (regardless of whether special needs status is known) means proportion could be understated. For both years, data exclude households with a disability as the NT data does not include a disability identifier in its information management system. For 2002, data exclude 160 multiple family households (representing 2.8 per cent of households). **na** Not available.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.8.

The third indicator of access measures the priority of access given to those in greatest need. 'Greatest need' households are defined as low income households

that at the time of allocation were either homeless, in housing inappropriate to their needs, in housing that was adversely affecting their health or placing their life and safety at risk, or that had very high rental housing costs.

Table 16.4 shows the proportion of all new allocations that are allocated to applicants with 'greatest need' for applicants spending various time periods on the waiting list. Data are provided for tenants waiting for periods from under three months to more than two years. These numbers are not cumulative. The proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need for the year ending 30 June 2002 varied from 84.5 per cent in the ACT to 4.9 per cent in Queensland (table 16.4).

**Table 16.4 Greatest need allocations as a proportion of all new allocations, 2001-02 (per cent)<sup>a</sup>**

	NSW <sup>b</sup>	Vic <sup>c</sup>	Qld	WA <sup>d</sup>	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
<b>Total for year ending 30 June 2002</b>	<b>31.4</b>	<b>62.3</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>41.9</b>	<b>80.5</b>	<b>84.5</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>35.9</b>
Proportion of greatest need allocations to new allocations with time to allocation:									
< 3 months	61.6	74.0	10.9	22.0	58.5	87.3	94.6	29.5	58.7
3 —< 6 months	52.8	63.8	6.0	33.4	55.4	85.5	90.2	11.2	46.1
6 months — < 1 year	35.5	61.6	3.9	26.8	43.3	80.3	74.3	8.8	32.7
1 —< 2 years	18.1	42.6	2.5	17.8	13.7	81.8	50.6	8.6	16.0
2+ years	1.5	7.6	2.0	6.8	0.0	55.6	15.8	3.0	2.8

<sup>a</sup> The waiting list time was clarified for the 2000-01 collection to refer to the time the applicant was eligible for 'greatest need' assistance to the date on which assistance commenced. If an applicant transfers between waiting list categories, then only the time spent on the waiting list from when the applicant met the 'greatest need' definition is counted. The introduction of a national 'greatest need' definition in 2000-01 influenced changes in jurisdiction results. For 2001-02, the number of days in each of the time to allocation groups were adjusted such that a calendar month is equal to approximately 30 days. The determination of households in greatest need for 2001-02 was based on waiting list priority reason data codes for all jurisdictions except the NT rather than priority category on the waiting list. For 2000-01 most jurisdictions determined greatest need status from priority category on the waiting list, influencing changes in results reported. A number of priority wait list data codes have been excluded in the calculation this year. <sup>b</sup> For NSW for 2000-01, data exclude those households paying very high rental housing costs due to data availability. Records with missing waiting time information are included in the total but could not be assigned to a breakdown group. For 2001-02, waiting time is calculated as the time between the date of application registration and the date housed. In previous years the date of accepting the offer was used rather than the date housed, which is the standard in NSW. <sup>c</sup> In 2001-02, there was a policy change to Special Housing Circumstances eligibility criteria that resulted in a significant increase in the number of these applicants assisted. <sup>d</sup> In 2000-01 data for five priority levels were collected and reported from 8 January 2001 to 30 June 2001 only. In 2001-02 data for these priority levels were reported for the entire financial year, influencing increases in numbers reported.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.9.

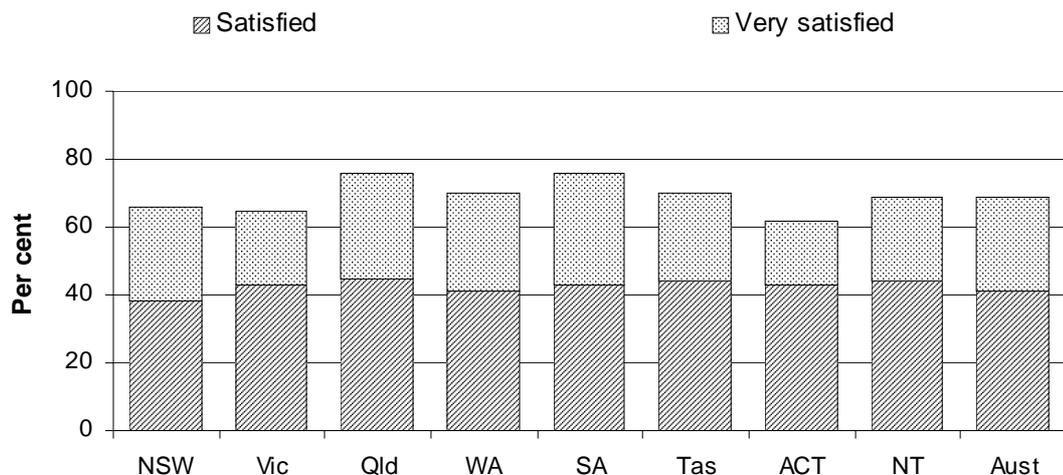
## Quality

The quality of public housing is reported by surveying tenants about their overall satisfaction with housing provided. Satisfaction with the location and amenity aspects of public housing is reported under the appropriateness indicator

(figure 16.7). The satisfaction outcomes for location and amenity influence the general satisfaction of public housing tenants. A more comprehensive discussion of customer satisfaction results is provided in the *Report of the National Social Housing Survey with Public Housing* (NFO Donovan Research 2001b) which is available on the DFACS website ([www.facs.gov.au](http://www.facs.gov.au)).

- Nationally, 69 per cent of tenants were either satisfied or very satisfied with the housing provided. This proportion varied from 76 per cent in Queensland and SA to 62 per cent in the ACT. This proportion increased in four jurisdictions between 2000 and 2001 and decreased in three. The largest change occurred in NSW, where the proportion of tenants who were satisfied or very satisfied with the housing provided decreased by 6 percentage points (table 16A.10).
- The proportion of public housing tenants surveyed who were very satisfied with the housing provided was the same as or above the national average in NSW, Queensland, WA, and SA in 2001 (figure 16.11).

Figure 16.11 Tenant satisfaction, July-August 2001<sup>a, b</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Care needs to be taken in interpreting small differences in the results that are affected by sample and estimate size (see table 16A.10 for details of the sample size). <sup>b</sup> Data for Australia calculated as simple numerical average due to a lack of raw data.

Source: NFO Donovan Research (2001b); table 16A.10.

### Efficiency

Four performance indicators measure the efficiency of public housing provision.

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### *Cost per unit of public housing*

The first efficiency indicator is cost per unit of public housing. The costs incurred by jurisdictions in providing public housing include:

- administration costs (the cost of the administration offices of the property manager and tenancy manager);
- operating costs (the costs of maintaining the operation of the dwelling, including repairs and maintenance, rates, the costs of disposals, market rent paid and interest expenses);
- depreciation costs; and
- the user cost of capital (the cost of the funds tied up in the capital used to provide public housing).

Some cost data are either more complete or collected on a more consistent basis than other cost data. Consequently, care needs to be taken in interpreting the total cost of delivering public housing. Administration costs and operating costs, for example, may not capture all costs incurred by government, so could understate the total costs of public housing.

The user cost of capital for government services is the cost of having funds tied up in the capital used to deliver services (for example, houses and land in public housing). The user cost of capital makes explicit the opportunity cost of using the funds to deliver services rather than investing them elsewhere or using them to retire debt.

The user cost of capital is calculated by applying a jurisdictional cost of capital rate to the value of government assets (see chapter 2 for details of the determination of a cost of capital rate). The costs of capital for land and other assets are shown separately to allow users to consider any differences in land values among jurisdictions when assessing the results.

When comparing costs of government services, it is important to account for the user cost of capital because it is often:

- a significant component of the cost of services; and
- treated inconsistently (that is, it is included in the costs of services delivered by many non-government service providers, but effectively costed at zero for most budget sector agencies).

The indicative user cost of capital for land per public housing dwelling was highest in the ACT (\$8131) and lowest in Tasmania (\$100) in 2001-02. The full indicative

cost of capital per dwelling ranged from \$13 354 in the ACT to \$4202 in Tasmania (table 16.5).

Cost per dwelling is broken down into gross cost to government (administration and operating costs plus capital costs) and the net cost to government (which nets out rents received from tenants). Interest payments have been subtracted from other capital costs (that is, depreciation and indicative user cost of capital) to obtain the total capital cost, and full gross and net cost to government, rendering these data not comparable with those published prior to the 2002 Report. Interest payments are included in recurrent costs and reported capital costs must be reduced by the amount of interest payments to avoid double counting of capital costs once the indicative user cost of capital is included. Previously, it has not been possible to avoid this double counting.

The net cost to government per dwelling in 2001-02 ranged from \$15 348 in the ACT to \$5772 in SA. Some jurisdictions had difficulty separating costs for public housing from those for other housing assistance activities, so care needs to be taken in interpreting these results (table 16.5).

**Table 16.5 Costs per dwelling, 2001-02 (dollars)<sup>a</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld<sup>b</sup></i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA<sup>c</sup></i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT<sup>d</sup></i>	<i>NT<sup>e</sup></i>	<i>Aust</i>
Total recurrent costs	4 034	3 027	4 150	4 260	4 248	6 788	6 231	7 252	4 140
Depreciation	1 510	1 450	2 052	1 231	814	846	1 004	1 931	1 421
Indicative user cost of capital									
– land	4 776	3 941	3 043	3 764	2 239	100	8 131	3 495	3 850
– other assets	5 380	5 601	3 990	4 374	2 933	4 102	5 224	4 587	4 727
– total assets	10 156	9 542	7 033	8 138	5 172	4 202	13 354	8 082	8 577
Interest payments <sup>f</sup>	401	–	370	639	926	954	547	2 226	474
Total capital costs	11 265	10 992	8 714	8 730	5 060	4 094	13 811	7 787	9 524
<b>Full gross costs</b>	<b>15 298</b>	<b>14 019</b>	<b>12 864</b>	<b>12 990</b>	<b>9 307</b>	<b>10 882</b>	<b>20 042</b>	<b>15 039</b>	<b>13 664</b>
Rent collected from tenants	3 654	3 693	3 521	3 378	3 535	3 181	4 694	4 154	3 625
<b>Full net costs</b>	<b>11 644</b>	<b>10 325</b>	<b>9 344</b>	<b>9 613</b>	<b>5 772</b>	<b>7 700</b>	<b>15 348</b>	<b>10 885</b>	<b>10 039</b>

<sup>a</sup> Issues surrounding the comparability of capital cost data are discussed in the Steering Committee research paper, *Asset Measurement in the Costing of Government Services* (SCRCSSP 2001b). <sup>b</sup> From the 2001-02 financial year, capital works in progress are excluded. <sup>c</sup> Excludes 990 dwellings under the special needs housing program (for example, student housing, migrant housing). <sup>d</sup> A high proportion of ACT Housing properties are in inner city areas. Land values have increased 80 per cent over the last three years. <sup>e</sup> Territory Housing only commenced depreciating public housing dwellings on 1 July 2000. The depreciation figure reported in the *Report on Government Services 2002* understated the actual depreciation amount included in the audited financial statements. <sup>f</sup> Interest payments are included in total recurrent costs, but they must be excluded from total capital costs and full gross and full net costs to avoid double counting of capital costs once the indicative user cost of capital is included. Prior to the 2002 Report, it had not been possible to avoid this double counting, and as a result, data are not comparable to those in earlier reports. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.11.

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Care needs to be taken in comparing the full gross costs of public housing because there may be double counting for some jurisdictions. The user cost of capital is intended to capture all the costs of funding assets used to produce the services, but some of these costs (apart from interest payments) may already be included in reported operating costs.

The Steering Committee accepts that asset valuation data are imperfect. It also recognises that non-recognition of the cost of capital used by departments to deliver services can result in significant underestimation of costs for those services for which government capital is a major input. While the measurement of capital costs in this Report is not perfect, using an imperfect costing is preferable to not costing government capital.

In 2001, the Steering Committee completed a research project to assess the impact of asset measurement factors (such as depreciation and asset valuation methods) on the comparability of cost data in the Report. The results of this study are summarised in chapter 2. A brief summary of the results relating to housing is featured in box 16.6.

**Box 16.6 Asset measurement in the costing of government services**

Costs associated with non-current physical assets (such as depreciation and the user cost of capital) are potentially important components of the total costs of many services delivered by government agencies. Differences in the techniques for measuring non-current physical assets (such as valuation methods) may reduce the comparability of cost estimates across jurisdictions. In response to concerns regarding data comparability, the Steering Committee initiated a study: *Asset Measurement in the Costing of Government Services* (SCRCSSP 2001b). The aim of the study was to examine the extent to which differences in asset measurement techniques applied by participating agencies affect the comparability of reported unit costs.

The relative capital intensity associated with the provision of public housing increases the potential for differences in asset measurement techniques to have a material impact on total unit costs. The results of this study suggest, however, that the adoption under the CSHA of a uniform accounting framework has largely avoided this. The results are discussed in more detail in chapter 2.

*Source:* SCRCSSP (2001b).

*Occupancy rates*

The second indicator of efficiency measures the proportion of the housing stock occupied by households. The proportion of public rental stock occupied at

30 June 2002 ranged from 98.7 per cent in the ACT to 94.2 per cent in SA. The national average occupancy rate was 96.8 per cent (table 16.6).

**Table 16.6 Housing stock occupancy rates at 30 June (per cent)**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i> <sup>a</sup>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
<i>Proportion of public housing dwellings occupied</i>									
2001	98.2	96.2	96.6	95.6	94.4	94.3	95.7	95.2	96.6
2002	98.1	96.4	97.5	95.4	94.2	95.7	98.7	95.0	96.8

<sup>a</sup> For 2001, dwellings are defined as the 'unit of accommodation to which a rental agreement can be made' and dwelling numbers here will exceed figures based on discreet dwelling structures.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.12.

### *Turnaround time*

The third indicator of efficiency — turnaround time — indicates the speed with which housing stock is reoccupied after it has been vacated, acquired or newly constructed. The length of time taken to rent untenanted stock affects allocations of public housing, waiting times, the length of waiting lists and rent forgone. All jurisdictions aim to minimise turnaround times.

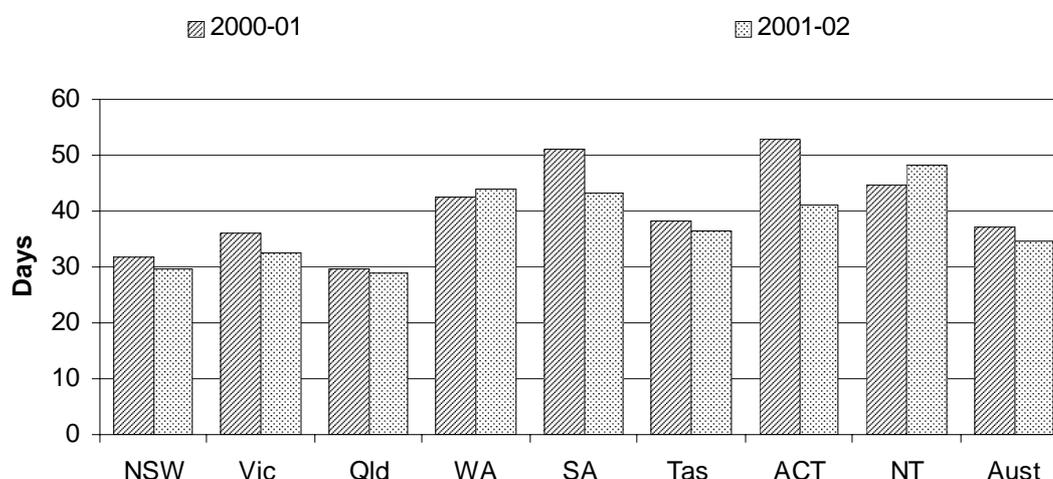
The average number of days for vacant stock to be allocated in 2001-02 varied from 48 days in the NT to 29 days in Queensland (figure 16.12). This indicator may be affected by changes in maintenance programs and some jurisdictions may have difficulty in excluding stock upgrades.

### *Rent collected as a proportion of the rent charged*

The fourth efficiency indicator — total rent collected as a proportion of the rent charged — indicates the extent to which rent in arrears represents a financial burden to housing authorities. Differences in recognition policies, write-off practices, the treatment of disputed amounts and the treatment of payment arrangements may affect the comparability of this indicator's reported results.

Rent collected as a proportion of the rent charged in 2001-02 varied from 101.0 per cent in WA to 97.8 per cent in SA (table 16.7). Payment arrangements for rent in some jurisdictions mean that the rent collected over a 12-month period may be higher than rent charged over that period.

Figure 16.12 Average turnaround times<sup>a, b, c, d, e, f, g</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Excludes dwellings undergoing major redevelopment. For 2000-01, the indicator measures the number of times a dwelling was vacated and subsequently retenanted. Previously, the indicator measured the number of dwellings vacated and subsequently retenanted. Prior to the 2001-02 collection, the denominator used to calculate turnaround times was described as 'total number of dwellings that are vacated and subsequently tenanted for year ending 30 June'. The intention of this data item, however, was to count the number of vacancy episodes for all public housing dwellings. This clarification was made to the 2001-02 data manual, however, as this counting rule was implemented for the 2000-01 data collection, this clarification should not affect the data reported in 2001-02 relative to 2000-01. <sup>b</sup> For NSW for 2000-01, data exclude 938 properties with obvious date errors and 66 properties with a void status commencing prior to 30 June 1999 because the data are considered erroneous. For 2001-02, data exclude 753 properties with obvious date errors and 23 properties with a void status commencing prior to 30 June 2000 because the data are considered erroneous. <sup>c</sup> For Victoria, for 2001-02, reletting restriction days were excluded because properties were off-line during this period (for example, undergoing major upgrade or redevelopment). Excludes all properties where the vacancy start date was void and where there were erroneous dates. <sup>d</sup> For Queensland, the data source for this item changed in 2000-01 from 1999-2000. It is derived from tenancy information and does not distinguish between the different types of vacancy, nor does it contain information about the lead time for new dwellings to be occupied. Calculations using alternative data sources indicate that data limitations have only a minimal impact on the performance indicator. <sup>e</sup> For WA includes time vacant due to redevelopment. <sup>f</sup> For SA, redevelopments were excluded from calculations in 2001-02, but were included in 2000-01, resulting in a reduction in the figure reported. <sup>g</sup> The change in the NT figure reported in 2000-01 is due to incorrect reporting of this data item in 1999-2000.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.13.

Table 16.7 Total rent collected as a proportion of total rent charged (per cent)<sup>a</sup>

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas <sup>b</sup>	ACT	NT	Aust
2000-01	100.0	99.6	99.4	101.4	98.6	101.4	98.2	97.4	99.7
2001-02	99.2	99.8	98.8	101.0	97.8	100.7	100.0	97.9	99.3

<sup>a</sup> Payment arrangements for rent in some jurisdictions mean that rent collected over a 12-month period may be higher than rent charged over that period. <sup>b</sup> Data for 2000-01 exclude the Aboriginal Rental Housing Program. These data were included in 1999-2000.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.14.

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## Community housing

Community housing data have three sources:

- administration data, collected by the State or Territory government body with responsibility for administering the community housing program in the jurisdiction;
- survey data, collected from the community organisations (providers) that manage the service delivery; and
- survey data, collected via the national social housing survey.

This chapter provides data on 10 of the 11 performance indicators in the community housing framework. Satisfactory data are unavailable for reporting against the direct cost per unit indicator. Community housing data are generally obtained by surveying community providers and the reliability of the data can be influenced by survey response rates. Comparisons over time using community housing data should therefore be made with care. Table 16.8 outlines the survey response rates and associated information for each jurisdiction for 2000-01 and 2001-02.

Some descriptive data on community housing are contained in table 16A.15. A list of State and Territory programs included in the community housing data collected is contained in table 16A.71.

**Table 16.8 Community housing survey response rates and associated information**

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Survey response rates/other details</i>
NSW	2000-01: Based on survey of 196 providers with 89 per cent response rate; 2001-02: Based on survey of 192 providers with 86 per cent response rate; Non-response was skewed to organisations managing a small number of dwellings.
Vic	2000-01: No survey; 2001-02: Survey data from 64 providers out of a total of 215 providers. The survey was not distributed to 19 agencies that manage 3151 properties under the Transitional Housing Management Program targeting homeless households. The survey instrument was tailored for each community program according to funding and service agreements. Some organisations completed two surveys as they manage stock under different agreements. Properties under joint venture arrangements where the state housing authority contributes a portion of capital funding to a property are excluded. No recurrent funding is provided. These agencies are not required to report on client or financial information and the only information retained internally relates to stock. The company reporting on Common Equity Housing Cooperative properties did not provide post codes for 2002. There has been no growth in the program, although a few properties may have been sold and replaced. Postcode information would be similar to 2001.
Qld	2000-01: Based on survey of 332 providers with 60 per cent response rate; 2001-02: Based on survey of 336 providers with 60 per cent response rate. Some organisations completed up to three surveys as they manage stock under different arrangements. As non-response was skewed to organisations managing a small number of dwellings, approximately 81 per cent of dwellings were included.
WA	2000-01: No survey; 2001-02: Based on survey of 239 providers with a 56 per cent response rate. Data include 394 Crisis Accommodation Program dwellings that are out of the scope of this collection.
SA	2000-01: Based on survey of 135 providers. Two surveys were mailed out with 94 per cent of household level surveys and 87 per cent of waiting list surveys returned; 2001-02: Based on survey of 134 providers. Two surveys were mailed out with 88 per cent of household level surveys and 58 per cent of waiting list surveys returned
Tas	2000-01: Based on survey of 73 providers with a 16 per cent response rate representing 104 households. The administrative data figure for number of dwellings is 260; 2001-02: Based on survey of 46 providers with a 46 per cent response rate.
ACT	2000-01: Data represent 87 per cent of community housing in the ACT. Data exclude 49 dwellings managed by 12 community housing providers including three targeted providers; 2001-02: Data from survey of 11 providers (out of a total of 20) managing 85 per cent of community housing in the ACT.
NT	2000-01 and 2001-02: No survey.

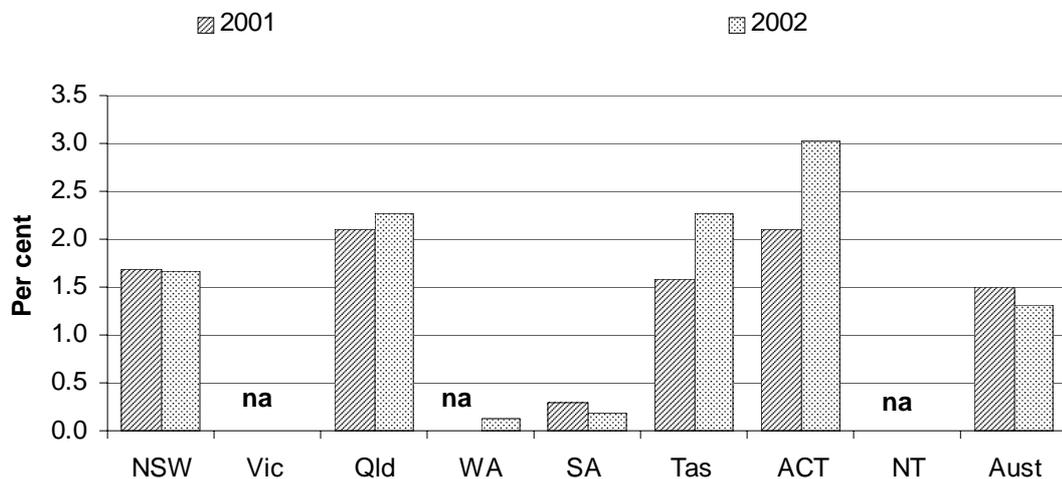
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## Effectiveness

### Appropriateness

This chapter reports three measures of appropriateness for community housing. As with public housing, the first is indicated by the match of rental dwellings to household size. For those jurisdictions able to provide data, the ACT had the highest proportion of overcrowded dwellings (3.0 per cent) at 30 June 2002, while WA had the lowest (0.1 per cent) (figure 16.13). More information on overcrowding for community housing can be found in table 16A.78.

Figure 16.13 **Overcrowding in community housing dwellings at 30 June<sup>a, b</sup>**



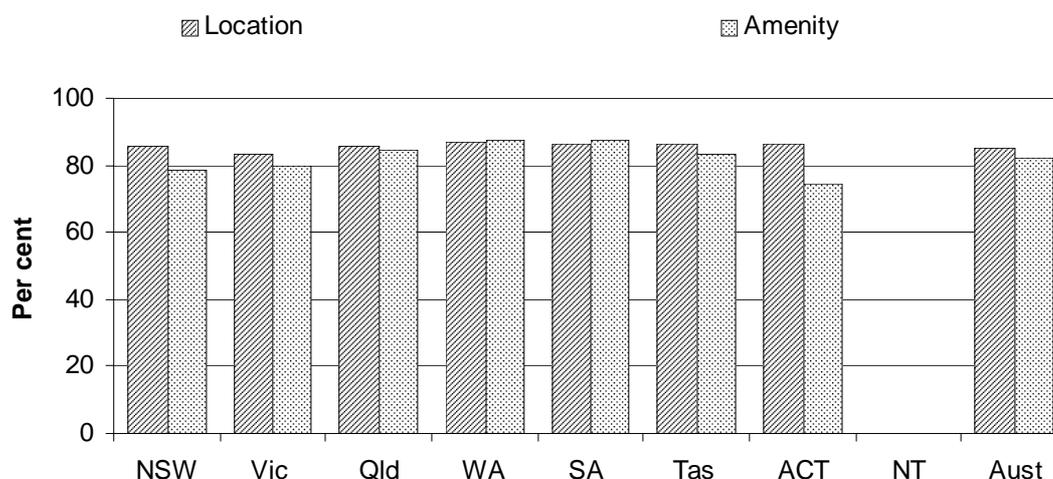
<sup>a</sup> For NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT data are based on surveys. See table 16.8 for response rates and other relevant information. <sup>b</sup> The ACT notes that the small numbers of community housing dwellings in the Territory means four households can make a one per cent difference to the figures. **na** Not available.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.16.

The second measure of the appropriateness of community housing assistance is provided by surveying tenants about the amenity and location of their dwellings (figure 16.14). As with public housing, the precision of survey estimates will depend on the survey sample size and the sample estimate. Larger sample sizes result in higher precision, as do larger sample estimates; for example if 90 per cent of surveyed respondents chose an answer, there would be less uncertainty about the actual population's views than if 50 per cent of respondents chose it. Care needs to be taken in interpreting small differences in results that are affected by sample and estimate size. More information on the sample size is provided in tables 16A.17 and 16A.18.

The proportion of tenants satisfied with the location of their dwelling in 2002 ranged from 87.1 per cent in WA to 83.1 per cent in Victoria. Satisfaction levels were above average in NSW, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT. The proportion of tenants satisfied with the amenity of their dwelling ranged from 87.3 per cent in WA and SA to 74.2 per cent in the ACT. Satisfaction levels were above average in Queensland, WA, SA and Tasmania (figure 16.14).

Figure 16.14 **Proportion of tenants satisfied with location or amenity aspects of their dwelling, February 2002<sup>a, b, c</sup>**



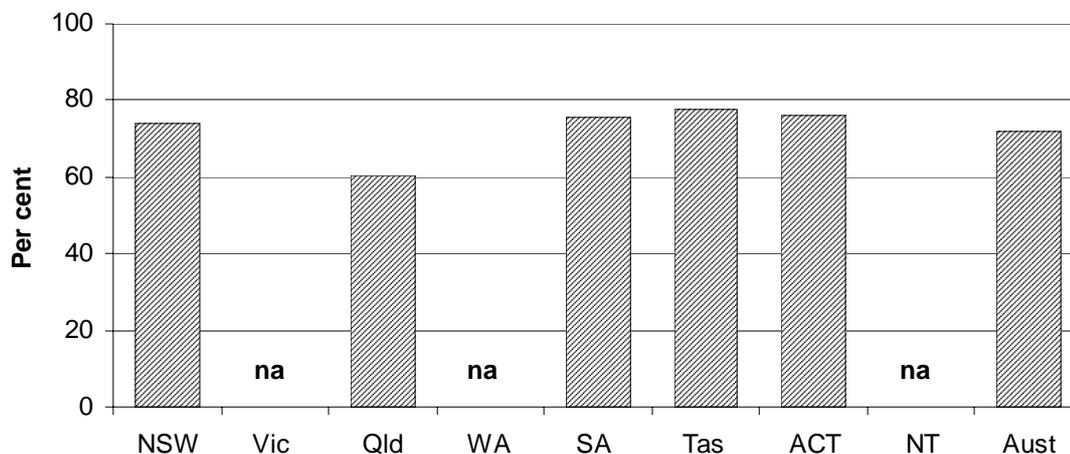
<sup>a</sup> Care needs to be taken in interpreting small differences in the results that are affected by sample and estimate size (see attachment 16A for details of the sample size). <sup>b</sup> Not applicable for the NT as it chose not to participate in the survey due to its small community housing tenant population. <sup>c</sup> National total is an unweighted average.

Source: NFO Donovan Research (2001a); table 16A.17 and 16A.18.

These overall satisfaction results were obtained by surveying tenants about a number of aspects of the location and amenity of their dwellings. Tenants were asked whether particular aspects were important to them and if so, whether they felt their needs were met. More information on this indicator can be found in tables 16A.17 and 16A.18.

The third measure of appropriateness for community housing is affordability, measured as the proportion of household income remaining after paying rent. For those jurisdictions able to provide data, this proportion ranged from 77.7 per cent in Tasmania to 60.6 per cent in Queensland (figure 16.15).

Figure 16.15 Proportion of household income left after paying rent  
2001-02<sup>a, b</sup>



<sup>a</sup> For NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT data are based on surveys. See table 16.8 for response rates and other relevant information. <sup>b</sup> For Queensland, only includes figures for the 103 organisations that responded to all four data items and may not be representative of the community housing sector. **na** Not available.

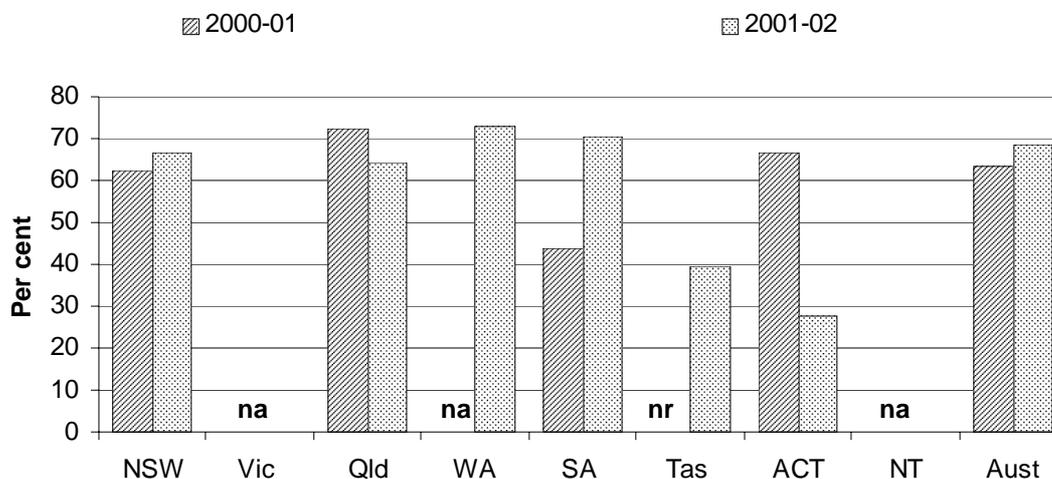
Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.25.

### Access

This chapter reports three measures of access to community housing assistance for those in need. The first of these is the proportion of new tenancies allocated to households with special needs. Special needs households are those that have either a household member with a disability, a principal tenant aged either 24 years or under or 75 years or more, or a household defined as being Indigenous.

The proportion of new tenancies allocated to 'special needs' households in 2001-02 varies for those jurisdictions able to provide data, from 72.8 per cent in WA to 27.5 per cent in the ACT (figure 16.16).

**Figure 16.16 Proportion of new tenancies allocated to households with special needs<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>**

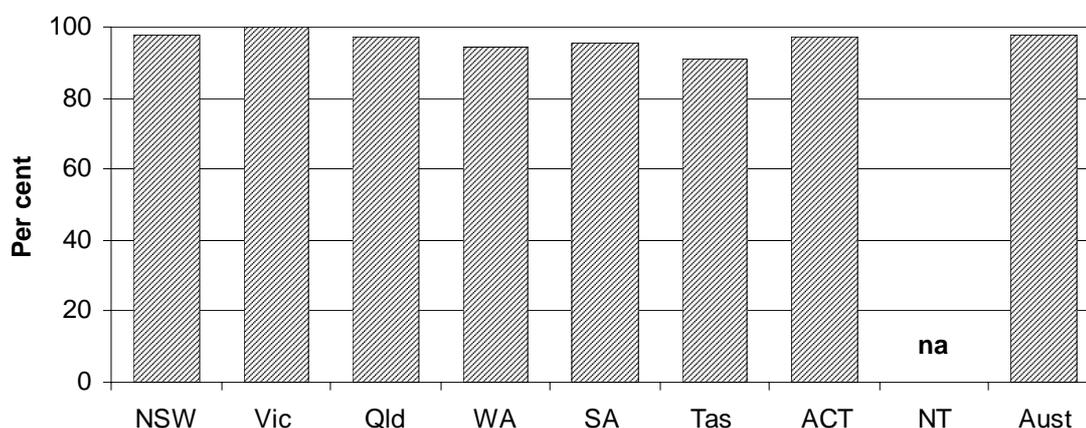


<sup>a</sup> For NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT data are based on surveys. See table 16.8 for response rates and other relevant information. <sup>b</sup> For NSW, for 2000-01 special needs categories include Indigenous households, households with a disability, households with older or young principal tenants, non-English speaking background households, households with support needs and other categories nominated by providers. <sup>c</sup> For Queensland, in 2000-01 data based on 74 per cent of allocations compared to 95 per cent in 2001-02, influencing variation in results. <sup>d</sup> For SA, in 2000-01 data based on 100 per cent of allocations compared to 85 per cent in 2001-02, influencing variation in results. <sup>e</sup> For the ACT in 2000-01 data based on 32 per cent of allocations compared to 96 per cent in 2001-02, influencing variation in results. Data may be unreliable because some organisations provided incorrect data about special need allocations. **na** Not available. **nr** Not reported.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.19.

The proportion of all households that pay less than market rent or that were special needs households paying market rent in 2001-02, for those jurisdictions able to provide data, ranged from 100.0 per cent in Victoria to 91.2 per cent in Tasmania (figure 16.17).

Figure 16.17 Households paying less than market rent, or special needs households paying market rent at 30 June 2002, as a proportion of all households<sup>a, b, c</sup>

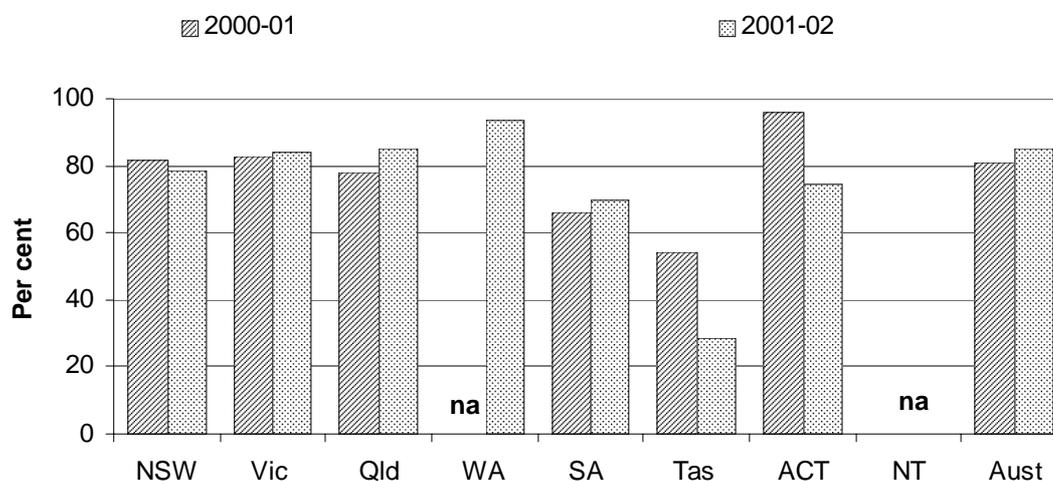


<sup>a</sup> For NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT data are based on surveys. See table 16.8 for response rates and other relevant information. <sup>b</sup> Data items are consistent with those for the equivalent indicator in the public housing collection. The proxy for identifying low income households is households paying a rent which is less than the market value of the dwelling. <sup>c</sup> For SA, the South Australian Community Housing Authority uses its own scales of 'ceiling rent', as opposed to market rent. Generally, the ceiling rent amount is below the market rent amount. Ceiling rent is worked out as follows: For properties worth up to \$94 000, annual ceiling rent is the capital value of the property multiplied by 7.53 per cent (the weekly amount is this figure divided by 52). For properties valued between \$94 001 and \$101 500, the rate is fixed at \$136.20 per week. For properties worth more than \$101 500, the annual rent payable is 7 per cent of capital value (the weekly amount is this figure divided by 52). Special needs figure includes five Indigenous tenants, 115 non-English speaking background tenants (including 13 with disabilities), 104 others with disabilities, 52 aged people and 26 young people. There are 27 properties for which it is not known if the tenant is paying ceiling rent or not. **na** Not available.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.24.

The second indicator of access measures the proportion of new dwellings allocated to those in greatest need. 'Greatest need' households are defined as low income households whose members at the time of allocation were either homeless, in housing inappropriate to their needs, in housing that was adversely affecting their health or placing their life and safety at risk, or those with very high rental housing costs. For those jurisdictions able to supply data, this proportion varied from 93.5 per cent in WA to 28.7 per cent in Tasmania (figure 16.18).

**Figure 16.18 Greatest need allocations as a proportion of all new allocations<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> For NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT data are based on surveys. See table 16.8 for response rates and other relevant information. **na** Not available.

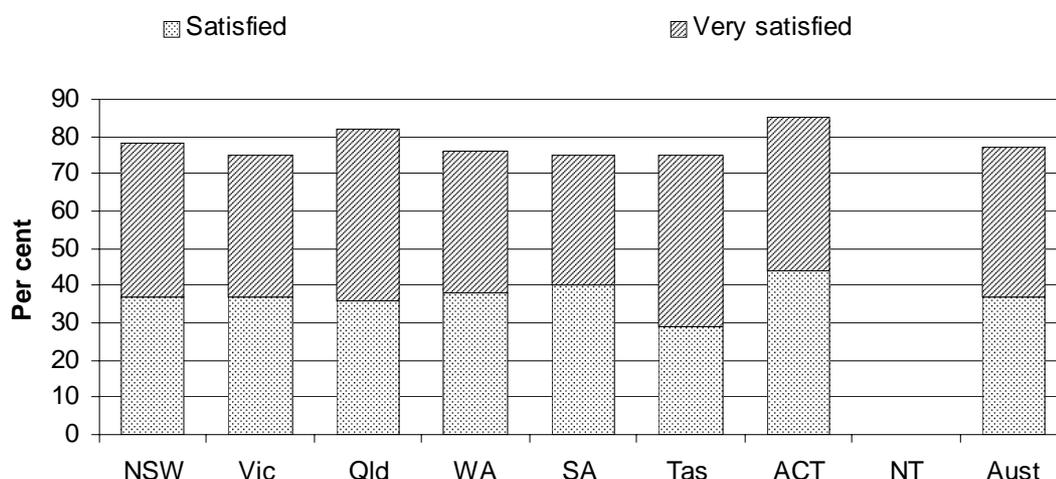
Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.20.

### Quality

The quality of community housing is reported by surveying tenants about their overall satisfaction with their housing. Satisfaction with the location and amenity aspects of community housing is reported under the appropriateness indicator (figure 16.14). The satisfaction outcomes for these areas influence the general satisfaction of community housing tenants.

Nationally in 2002, 77 per cent of tenants were satisfied or very satisfied with their community housing dwellings and the services provided by their community housing organisation (including benefits derived from living in community housing and involvement in the organisation). For jurisdictions for which robust survey data were available, this proportion ranged from 85 per cent in the ACT to 75 per cent in Victoria, SA and Tasmania. The proportion of community tenants who were satisfied or very satisfied was above the national average in NSW, Queensland and the ACT (figure 16.19). The proportion of community housing tenants who were very satisfied was above the national average in NSW, Queensland, Tasmania and the ACT (table 16A.21). These results are obtained from the 2002 National Social Housing Survey for community housing.

Figure 16.19 Tenant satisfaction, February 2002<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Care needs to be undertaken in interpreting small differences in the results that are affected by sample and estimate size (see attachment 16A for details of the sample size). <sup>b</sup> Categories do not add to 100 per cent because nonresponses and neutral responses are not included. <sup>c</sup> Comparisons may be influenced by a range of factors beyond quality of service, such as age profile of tenants. <sup>d</sup> Not applicable for NT as it chose not to participate in the survey due to its small community housing tenant population.

Source: NFO Donovan Research (2001a); table 16A.21.

### Efficiency

This chapter reports three measures of efficiency for community housing. The first is the proportion of community housing occupied, which, at 30 June 2002 for those jurisdictions able to provide data, ranged from 100.0 per cent in Tasmania and the NT to 94.7 per cent in the ACT (table 16.9).

Table 16.9 Community housing occupancy rates at 30 June (per cent)

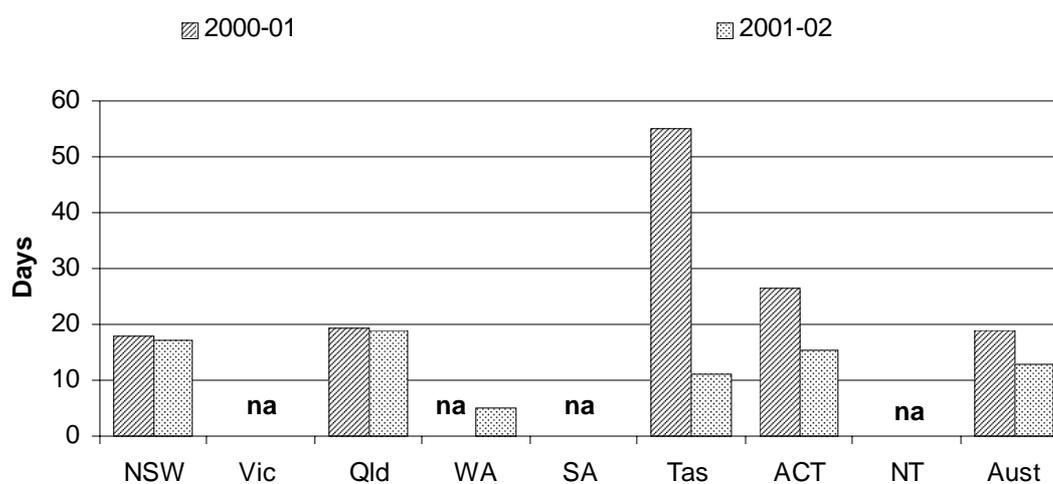
	NSW <sup>a</sup>	Vic <sup>b</sup>	Qld <sup>c</sup>	WA	SA	Tas	ACT <sup>d</sup>	NT <sup>e</sup>	Aust
2001	97.9	94.6	95.8	na	94.7	90.4	94.3	100.0	95.9
2002	98.2	95.6	94.8	97.2	95.8	100.0	94.7	100.0	96.5

<sup>a</sup> For NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT data are based on surveys. See table 16.8 for response rates and other relevant information. <sup>b</sup> For Victoria, data are an estimate only. <sup>c</sup> For Queensland data for 2001-02 are based on administrative data on Boarding House Program and Long Term Community Housing Program dwellings at 8 July 2002 and Community Rent Scheme dwellings (including private leases) at 30 June 2002. <sup>d</sup> For the ACT, as at 30 June 2002, data include properties funded under the Community Housing Program (43), Community Organisations Rental Housing Assistance Program properties used for community housing (36), Havelock House (98), Abbeyfield Society (2), properties transferred to Community Housing Canberra (209) and 80 properties head-leased on the private market. <sup>e</sup> In the NT, it is estimated that dwellings are fully occupied as a majority of organisations turn away people seeking accommodation. **na** Not available.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.23.

The second efficiency measure is turnaround time, or the speed with which housing stock is reoccupied after it has been vacated or acquired. The average number of days for vacant stock to be allocated in 2001-02 varied for those jurisdictions able to provide data from 19 days in Queensland to five days in WA (figure 16.20). This indicator may be affected by changes in maintenance programs and some jurisdictions may have difficulty excluding stock upgrades.

Figure 16.20 **Average turnaround times<sup>a, b, c</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> For NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT data are based on surveys. See table 16.8 for response rates and other relevant information. <sup>b</sup> Excludes dwellings undergoing major redevelopment. <sup>c</sup> For NSW, for 2001-02 providers reported on the number of dwellings occupied at 30 June 2002 which were vacant during the year. **na** Not available.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.26.

The third measure of efficiency for community housing is the proportion of rent in arrears indicator. For community housing, data are reported with a one-year lag to allow community providers an extra year to collate financial data. Rent collected as a proportion of rent charged varied from 99.2 per cent in WA to 92.5 per cent in NSW at 30 June 2001 (table 16.10). As with public housing, payment arrangements for rent in some jurisdictions means that the rent collected over a 12-month period may be higher than rent charged over that period.

Table 16.10 **Total rent collected as a proportion of total rent charged (per cent)<sup>a</sup>**

	<i>NSW<sup>b</sup></i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA<sup>c</sup></i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
2000-01	92.5	<b>na</b>	98.6	99.2	97.8	<b>na</b>	97.6	<b>na</b>	95.5

<sup>a</sup> For NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT data are based on surveys. See table 16.8 for response rates and other relevant information. <sup>b</sup> Payment arrangements for rent in some jurisdictions mean that rent collected over a 12-month period may be higher than rent charged over that period. Data for the 2000-01 financial year are reported to provide additional time to collate financial data. <sup>c</sup> Only 120 providers responded to these questions. **na** Not available.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.22.

## State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing

Different delivery contexts, locations and types of client may affect the performance reported in this section. Care needs to be taken in interpreting performance indicator results and the qualifications presented with the data need to be considered. There may also have been some difficulties in separating Indigenous housing data from public housing data. Variations in the funding and administration of State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing across jurisdictions may influence the comparability of data. Some descriptive data on State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing are included in table 16A.27.

The ACT and the NT are not included in the Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing data collection. As stated earlier, the ACT does not receive funding for or administer any Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing programs, while in the NT, funding under the ARHP is directed at community managed Indigenous housing. The NT Government is unable to differentiate between the various funding sources as a result of its commitment under the CSHA Indigenous Agreement to specifically ‘pool’ all funds earmarked for Indigenous housing and associated infrastructure in the NT. Some other jurisdictions are increasingly pooling funding, although they can report State owned and managed Indigenous housing data separately. While Queensland administers a separate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program, it includes ARHP funds, untied CSHA funds and State funds, and there is no separate reporting against the ARHP component of the programs funds, which forms more than one third of expenditure.

As discussed in section 16.1, State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings are more likely to be located in rural or remote areas than public or community housing dwellings. Nationally, 20.1 per cent of State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings were located in remote areas

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and 41.5 per cent of State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings were located in rural (as distinct from remote) areas (table 16A.27).

### *Effectiveness*

### *Appropriateness*

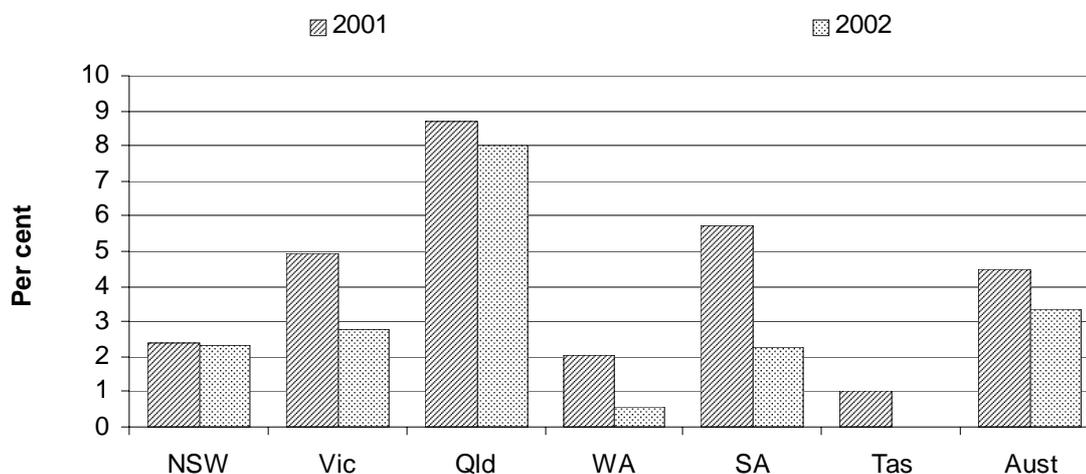
This chapter reports two measures of appropriateness for State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing. As with public and community housing, the first is indicated by the match of rental dwellings to household size. Queensland had the highest proportion of overcrowded dwellings at June 2002 (8.0 per cent), while Tasmania had the lowest (0.0 per cent) (figure 16.21).

Care needs to be taken in comparing performance in relation to overcrowding between public housing and State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing. There are two major factors that potentially result in a higher incidence of overcrowding in State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings relative to public housing dwellings:

- differences in Indigenous housing arrangements (for example, several generations living in one house or the possibility of visitors having ‘right of access’ in some circumstances) (Pholeros, Rainow and Torzillo 1993); and
- the influence of climate and culture (in rural areas people may live outside houses rather than inside and the proxy occupancy standard does not allow for verandahs or larger shared living spaces) (Pholeros *et al.* 1993).

More information on overcrowding and underuse for State owned and managed Indigenous housing can be found in table 16A.79.

Figure 16.21 **Proportion of State owned and managed Indigenous housing households with overcrowding**<sup>a, b, c, d, e</sup>



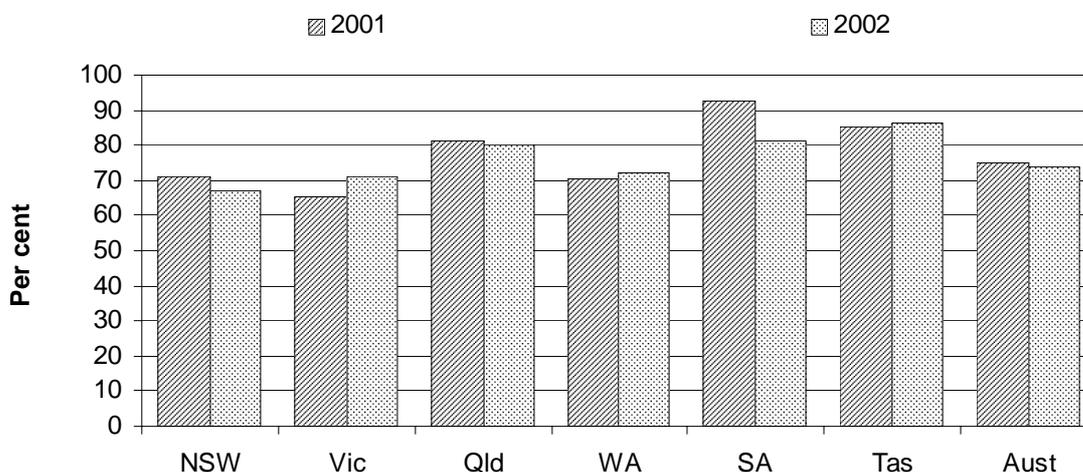
<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. <sup>b</sup> NSW data for 2002 exclude 475 non-rebated households (representing 12.3 per cent of households). <sup>c</sup> Victorian internal data showed an increase of 0.1 per cent from 1999-2000 to 2000-01 using consistent methodology. For 2001, Victoria had serious concerns about the credibility and validity of this data item and performance indicator. For 2002, Victorian data exclude 119 households paying market rent (10.7 per cent of households) that were included in 2000-01, influencing changes in results. <sup>d</sup> WA data for 2002 exclude 311 multiple family households (representing 23.8 per cent of households) that were included in 2000-01, influencing changes in results. <sup>e</sup> SA data for 2002 exclude 332 multiple family households (representing 20.3 per cent of households) that were included in 2000-01, influencing changes in results.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.28.

The second measure of appropriateness is affordability, which measures the rent charged to tenants as a proportion of the market rent for each dwelling, adjusted for CRA. Variations in the definition of market rent will influence the results for this indicator.

The rent charged in June 2002 as a proportion of the market rent for each dwelling (adjusted for CRA) for those jurisdictions able to provide data ranged from 86.6 per cent in Tasmania to 67.0 per cent in NSW (figure 16.22). More information on the proportion of income paid in rent by State owned and managed Indigenous housing tenants can be found in table 16A.77.

Figure 16.22 **Rent charged for State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings as a proportion of market rent, adjusted for CRA<sup>a, b, c, d, e, f, g</sup>**



**a** At 30 June. **b** Calculation of CRA entitlements for 2001 are based on an estimate of the actual entitlements that a low income household would receive if they were in the private rental sector. The 2000 calculation is based on an estimate of the average CRA payment for each State and Territory. The methodology for calculations has changed for 2002 and uses more complex modelling developed in CRA modelling for CSHA renegotiations. Caution should therefore be exercised in comparing results across the years. **c** In NSW market rents are the valuations applied to each property. The market rents for 2001 and 2002 are the same, and refer to the 2001 valuation. The method of adjusting for CRA entitlements differs between the years, making comparisons between the years difficult. **d** For Queensland, market rents for dwellings have not been globally adjusted to reflect the current market for a number of years. This has led to a gradual reduction in the proportion of households paying less than market rent, and a corresponding increase in the proportion paying market rent as a result of income increases. Consequently, the overall market rent value would also be somewhat less than the true value. Complex derivation of household entitlement resulted in an estimate below the simple sum of rents for all households in 2002. These figures are used in a ratio to calculate relative public/private affordability so this discrepancy has no effect. **e** For WA, data include only single family households, representing 89.7 per cent (2001) and 86.2 per cent (2002) of households. Data for 2001 exclude 237 multiple family households. Data for 2002 exclude 311 multiple family households (representing 13.8 per cent of households) that were included in 2000-01, influencing changes in results. WA data for 2001 have been revised since the 2002 Report. **f** SA data for 2002 exclude 332 multiple family households (representing 20.3 per cent of households) that were included in 2000-01, influencing changes in results. **g** National total for 2001 was revised from that in the 2002 Report as a result of revision of WA data for 2001.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.29.

### Access

Three performance indicators measure access to State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing assistance for those in need. The first measures the low income and special needs (but not low income) status of households receiving State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing assistance (table 16.11).

As with public housing, there are two household income measures for the purpose of this indicator:

- ‘low income A’ households — those in State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing where all members of the household have incomes at or below the maximum pension rate (pension rates have been selected for calculating this indicator because they are higher than allowance rates); and
- ‘low income B’ households — those in State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing that have incomes that would enable them to receive government income support benefits below the maximum pensioner rate.

Households with incomes below these levels are included in the measure, although they may not necessarily receive income support benefits.

The proportion of new tenancies allocated to ‘low income A’ households varied in 2001-02 from 95.5 per cent in Tasmania to 81.3 per cent in WA. The proportion of new tenancies allocated to ‘low income A’ or ‘special needs (not low income)’ households varied from 97.0 per cent in Tasmania to 84.4 per cent in WA (table 16.11).

**Table 16.11 Low income and special needs households as a proportion of all new State owned and managed Indigenous housing households (per cent)<sup>a</sup>**

	NSW <sup>b</sup>	Vic	Qld <sup>c</sup>	WA <sup>d</sup>	SA <sup>e</sup>	Tas	Aust <sup>f</sup>
<i>New ‘low income A’ households as proportion of all new households</i>							
2000-01	91.3	80.0	81.4	89.3	88.9	76.8	86.5
2001-02	89.6	88.1	83.1	81.3	87.3	95.5	85.8
<i>New ‘low income A’ households or special needs (not low income) households as proportion of all new households</i>							
2000-01	96.9	83.3	87.0	92.0	97.9	81.7	91.4
2001-02	92.6	91.7	89.5	84.4	90.1	97.0	89.6

<sup>a</sup> The counting rules for distinguishing between ‘low income A’ and ‘low income B’ households have been clarified for the 2001-02 data collection to ensure a household is not counted in both low income categories. As it appears that these counting rules were implemented in the 1999-2000 and 2000-01 data collections, this clarification should not affect the data reported for this indicator. Households are excluded for having missing or zero household income, missing person information or for being multiple households with an unknown household composition. <sup>b</sup> Special needs information is only available for households that were housed after November 1999. <sup>c</sup> Disability is calculated from a flag used for assessment of new tenancies rather than ongoing disability, and will underestimate count for all households. <sup>d</sup> WA data for 2000-01 have been revised since the 2002 Report. Data only include single family households. For 2000-01, data exclude 237 multiple family households (or 51.9 per cent of households allocated housing). For 2001-02, data exclude 311 multiple family households (13.8 per cent of households) that were included in 2000-01, influencing changes in results. The change in results is also influenced by a change in the way market renter households are identified this year. <sup>e</sup> Data exclude new 2000-01 allocations that left State owned and managed Indigenous housing prior to 30 June 2001. For 2001-02, data exclude 332 multiple family households (representing 20.3 per cent of households) that were included in 2000-01, influencing changes in results. <sup>f</sup> National totals for 2001 have been revised from those in the 2002 Report as a result of a revision of WA figures.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.30.

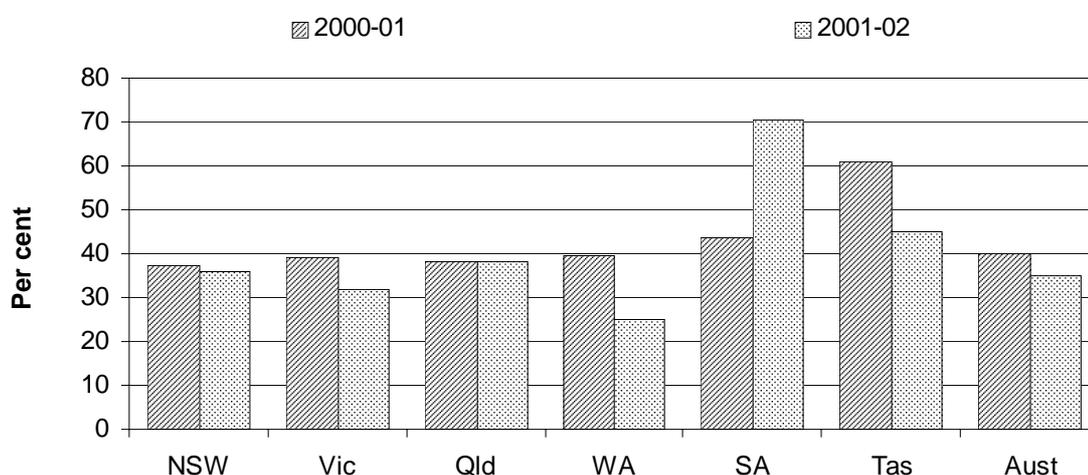
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Table 16.11 only shows information on 'low income A' households. Information on both 'low income A' households and 'low income B' households is in table 16A.30.

The second indicator of access measures the proportion of new tenancies allocated to households with special needs. Special needs households are those that either have a household member with a disability or a principal tenant aged either 24 years or under or 50 years or more. The proportion of new tenancies allocated to 'special needs' households in 2001-02 varied from 70.5 per cent in SA to 25.2 per cent in WA (figure 16.23).

It is not appropriate to use this indicator to make comparisons between the performance of public housing and State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing. The special needs indicator for public housing includes Indigenous households in the definition of 'special needs' households. Using this definition for State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing would result in 100 per cent of State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing households being regarded as having 'special needs'. State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing uses a definition of 'special needs' more appropriate to the program. The definition of 'special needs' households also differs for 'aged' households: households with a principal tenant aged 50 years or more considered as 'special needs' households for State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing, while for mainstream public and community housing, households with a principal tenant aged 75 years or more are considered 'special needs' households. This difference reflects the lower life expectancy and the higher burden of illness among Indigenous Australians.

Figure 16.23 Proportion of new State owned and managed Indigenous housing tenancies allocated to households with special needs, a, b, c, d, e

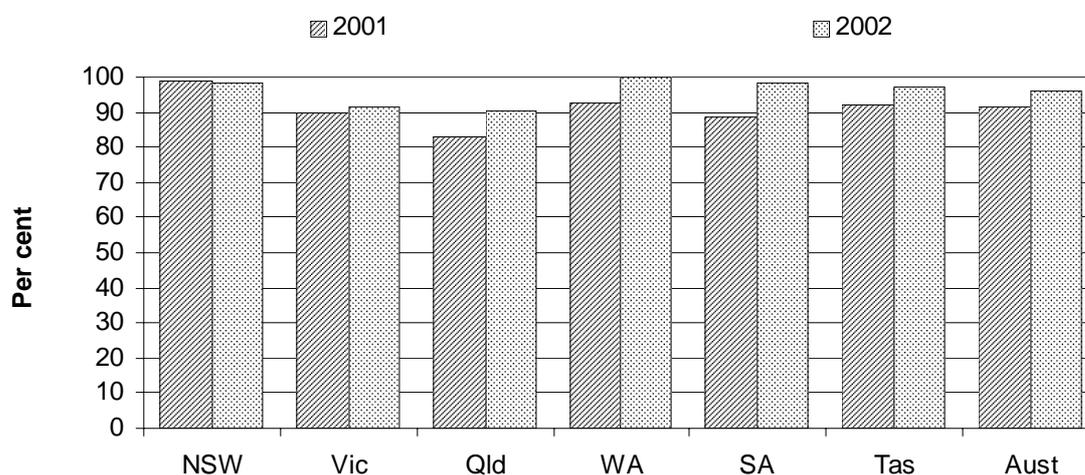


<sup>a</sup> For NSW, there were 25 new households without special needs information in 2000-01 and seven new households without special needs information in 2001-02. <sup>b</sup> For Queensland in 2000-01, the introduction of the special need national standard resulted in a reduction in the number of special needs households. Disability is calculated from a flag used for assessment of new tenancies rather than ongoing disability, and will underestimate current need. <sup>c</sup> For WA, special needs details are only recorded where they are known to exist – no record is kept if a household does not have special needs. All new households are included in the count and the figure may therefore represent an undercount. In 2000-01 data were reported about the special need status of 85 per cent of new households, influencing the change in results. <sup>d</sup> For SA, special needs details are recorded for the head tenant only. For 2001-02, the SA data exclude 124 new households (representing 58 per cent of new households). Results based on the special need status of 42 per cent of new allocations. In 2000-01, reported about the special need status of 100 per cent of new allocations, influencing the change in results. <sup>e</sup> For Tasmania, results for 2001-02 are based on the special need status of 92 per cent of new allocations. For 2000-01, data reported about the special need status of 100 per cent of new allocations, influencing the change in results.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.31.

The proportion of all households that pay less than market rent or that are special needs households paying market rent in 2001-02 ranged from 99.9 per cent in WA to 90.5 per cent in Queensland (figure 16.24).

Figure 16.24 **Households that pay less than market rent or that are special needs households paying market rent as a proportion of all State owned and managed Indigenous housing households<sup>a, b, c, d, e, f</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. <sup>b</sup> For NSW, there are seven new households without special needs information. Special needs information is only available for households that were housed after November 1999. <sup>c</sup> Market rents in Queensland have not been globally adjusted to reflect the current market for a number of years, leading to a reduced proportion of households paying less than market rent and a corresponding increase in the proportion of those paying market rent as a result of consumer price index rent rises. Consequently, the overall market rent value as listed here would be somewhat less than the true value. Disability is calculated from a flag used for assessment of new tenancies rather than ongoing disability, and will underestimate the count for all households. <sup>d</sup> WA data for 2001 has been revised since the 2002 Report. Data only include single family households. In 2001 excludes 237 multiple family households (or 51.9 per cent of households allocated housing). Data for 2002 excludes 311 multiple family households (representing 13.8 per cent of households) that were included in 2000-01, influencing changes in results. <sup>e</sup> For SA, data exclude 332 multiple family households in 2002 (representing 20.3 per cent of households). <sup>f</sup> National average for 2001 has been revised since 2002 Report as a result of a revision of WA data.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.32.

The third indicator of access measures the priority of access given to those in greatest need. ‘Greatest need’ households are defined as low income households that at the time of allocation were either homeless, in housing inappropriate to their needs, in housing that was adversely affecting their health or placing their life and safety at risk, or that had very high rental housing costs.

The proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need varied for the year ending 30 June 2002, from 54.7 per cent in SA to 14.8 in Victoria (table 16.12). The relatively low level of priority allocations in Victoria is partly because Indigenous tenants in greatest need are likely to be housed under the general public housing program. Table 16.12 shows the proportion of new allocations to applicants with greatest need for applicants spending various time periods on the waiting list. Data are provided for tenants waiting for periods from under three months to more than two years. These numbers are not cumulative.

It may not be appropriate to compare performance of public housing and State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing in relation to priority access to those in greatest need. In some jurisdictions, different priority allocation guidelines may be used to allocate targeted housing. Further, where allocation is made at the community level, reasons for allocation may not be recorded in information management systems.

**Table 16.12 Greatest need allocations as a proportion of all new State owned and managed Indigenous housing allocations<sup>a</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i> <sup>b</sup>	<i>Vic</i> <sup>c</sup>	<i>Qld</i> <sup>d</sup>	<i>WA</i> <sup>e</sup>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i> <sup>f</sup>	<i>Aust</i>
<b>Total for year ending 30 June 2002</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>54.7</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>24.1</b>
Proportion of greatest need allocations to new allocations with time to allocation <sup>g</sup> :							
< 3 months	36.0	18.9	na	21.6	69.6	na	35.0
3 —< 6 months	21.0	27.6	na	30.4	68.8	na	33.7
6 months — < 1 year	9.3	13.8	na	29.9	36.8	na	21.8
1 —< 2 years	4.7	5.3	na	11.8	14.3	na	8.5
2+ years	—	—	na	12.7	7.7	na	4.5

<sup>a</sup> Includes all greatest need allocations, regardless of whether they have missing application dates. <sup>b</sup> For NSW, eight records with missing waiting time information are included in the total but could not be assigned into a breakdown group. <sup>c</sup> For Victoria State owned and managed Indigenous housing shares a waiting list with public housing, and therefore the relatively low level of priority allocations in Victoria is partly because Indigenous tenants in greatest need are likely to be housed under the general public housing program. <sup>d</sup> The public housing priority waiting list is not administered in State owned and managed Indigenous housing. <sup>e</sup> For WA 2000-01 data for five priority levels were collected and reported from 8 January 2001 to 30 June 2001 only. In 2001-02, data for these priority levels are reported for the entire financial year, influencing increases in numbers reported this year. <sup>f</sup> There is no determination of 'greatest need' in the allocation of State owned and managed Indigenous housing properties and therefore no data are available. <sup>g</sup> For 2001-02, the number of days in each of the time allocation groups was adjusted such that a calendar month was equal to approximately 30 days. The determination of households in greatest need for all jurisdictions was based on waiting list priority reason data codes rather than priority category on the waiting list. This may influence the results for those jurisdictions that may have used priority category on the waiting list or other data sources to determine households in greatest need for the 2000-01 collection. A number of data codes were excluded for the collection for 2001-02 which may have influenced results for some jurisdictions (except the NT). **na** Not available. — Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.33.

### *Quality*

The quality of housing provided under State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing is measured by surveying tenants about their overall satisfaction with housing provided. Survey data for State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing are not available for this year's Report, although surveys were undertaken by Queensland, WA, SA and Tasmania.

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## *Efficiency*

Four performance indicators measure the efficiency of the provision of housing under State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing. The first is cost per dwelling. The costs incurred by jurisdictions in providing housing include:

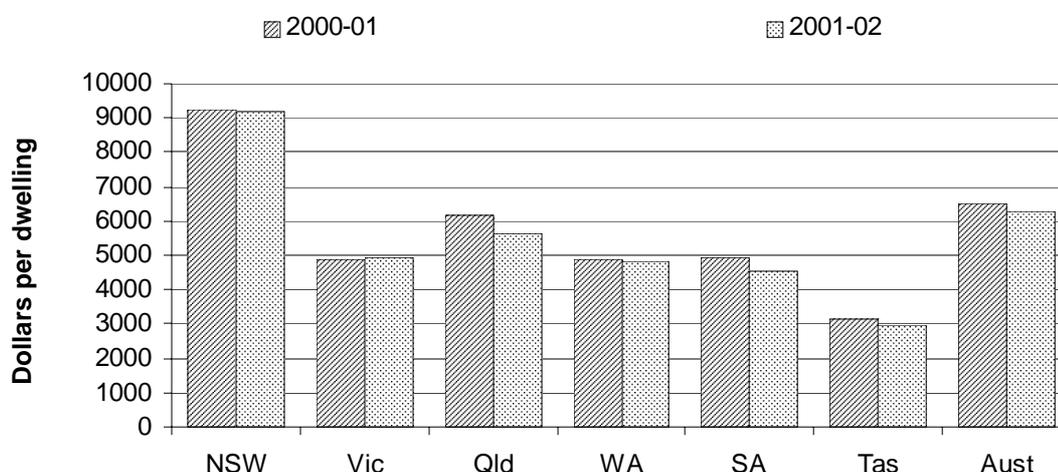
- administration costs (the cost of the administration offices of the property manager and tenancy manager);
- operating costs (the costs of maintaining the operation of the dwelling, including repairs and maintenance, rates, the costs of disposals, market rent paid and interest expenses);
- depreciation costs; and
- the user cost of capital (the cost of the funds tied up in the capital used to provide public housing).

Depreciation costs and the user cost of capital (capital costs) were not available for reporting on State owned and managed Indigenous housing. The cost per dwelling shown in figure 16.25 represents gross recurrent expenditure (that is, administration and operating costs) per dwelling. Rent received from tenants has not been deducted.

The gross cost per dwelling (excluding capital costs) for those jurisdictions able to provide data, ranged from \$9192 in NSW to \$2958 in Tasmania (figure 16.25).

As with other indicators, it is not appropriate to compare the gross cost per State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing dwelling with the recurrent cost per dwelling for public housing (which would be the public housing equivalent of this indicator). There is greater scope for economies of scale in relation to administration costs with public housing as the overall program is much larger. State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings are also more highly concentrated in rural and remote areas and the cost of providing housing assistance is potentially greater in these areas. The need to construct culturally appropriate housing (possibly requiring a higher standard of amenities, such as communal cooking, laundry and toilet facilities) may also affect the cost per dwelling. Finally, different cost structures may apply to the programs. Construction of dwellings, for example, under State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing may involve a skills development element to allow for training of apprentices in rural areas.

Figure 16.25 **Real gross cost per State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwelling, excluding capital costs (2001-02 dollars)<sup>a, b, c</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> The calculation for NSW for 2001-02 includes \$22.285m 'capital upgrade' expenditure. This is one-off expenditure resulting from maintenance liabilities incurred before the Aboriginal Housing Office took possession of the stock. A total of 61 per cent of the direct cost per dwelling is attributable to capital upgrading. Excluding expenditure on upgrading, the direct cost per dwelling is \$3567. <sup>b</sup> Expenditure on maintenance by Queensland influenced the reduction in direct costs reported this year. <sup>c</sup> Expenditure in the maintenance budget in 2000-01 resulted in a cut-back to the maintenance budget in 2001-02. <sup>c</sup> The increase in costs in WA in 2000-01 over the previous year results from a rise in general rental costs, implementation of a tenant support initiative and more accurate apportionment of administrative costs between public housing and State owned and managed Indigenous housing.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.34.

Care needs to be taken in interpreting the total cost of delivering housing. Administration costs and operating costs, for example, may not capture all costs incurred by government, so could understate the total costs of housing provision.

The second indicator of efficiency measures the proportion of the housing stock (including untenable dwellings) occupied by households. There was little variation across jurisdictions in the proportion of State owned and managed Indigenous housing stock occupied at 30 June 2002, which averaged 95.4 per cent nationally (table 16.13).

Table 16.13 **State owned and managed Indigenous housing stock occupancy rates<sup>a</sup>**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	Aust
2001	98.0	95.4	94.0	96.0	94.3	93.1	95.8
2002	97.9	96.6	94.6	95.2	91.2	92.7	95.4

<sup>a</sup> At 30 June.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.35.

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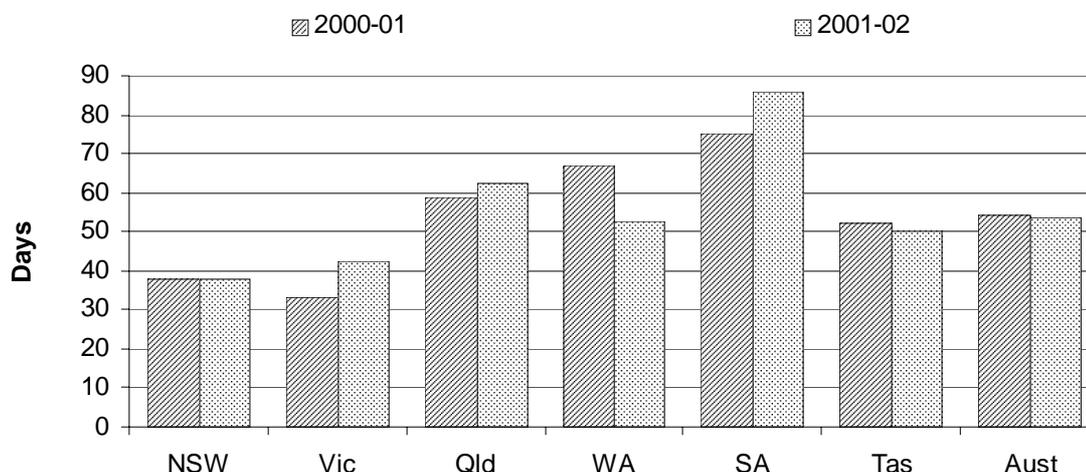
The third indicator — turnaround time — indicates the speed with which housing stock is reoccupied after it has been vacated or acquired. The length of time taken to rent untenanted stock affects allocations of State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing, waiting times, the length of waiting lists and rent forgone. All jurisdictions aim to minimise turnaround times.

The average number of days for vacant stock to be allocated in 2001-02 varied from 86 days in SA to 38 days in NSW (figure 16.26). This indicator may be affected by changes in maintenance programs and some jurisdictions may have difficulty excluding stock upgrades. Cultural factors may influence the turnaround time for State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings relative to public housing dwellings. Following the death of a significant person, for example, a dwelling may need to be vacant for a longer period of time (Morel and Ross 1993). The higher proportion of dwellings in rural and remote areas may also contribute to delays in completing administrative tasks and maintenance before dwellings can be re-tenanted.

The fourth efficiency indicator — total rent collected as a proportion of the rent charged — measures whether unpaid rent represents a financial burden to housing authorities. Differences in recognition policies, write-off practices, the treatment of disputed amounts and the treatment of payment arrangements may affect the comparability of this indicator's reported results.

Rent collected as a proportion of the rent charged in 2001-02 varied from 103.0 per cent in WA to 92.6 per cent in SA (table 16.14). Payment arrangements for rent in some jurisdictions mean that the rent collected over a 12-month period may be higher than rent charged over that period.

Figure 16.26 **Average State owned and managed Indigenous housing turnaround times<sup>a, b, c, d, e, f</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> Excludes dwellings undergoing major redevelopment. Before 2001-02, the denominator in the calculation of turnaround time was described as 'total number of dwellings that are vacated and subsequently tenanted for the year ending 30 June'. The intention of this data item was to count the number of vacancy episodes for all public housing dwellings. This clarification has been made to the 2001-02 data manual, however, as this counting rule was implemented in the 2000-01 data collection, this clarification should not affect data reported for turnaround time in the 2001-02 collection. For 2000-01, the indicator measured the number of times a dwelling was vacated and subsequently retenanted. For 1999-2000, the indicator measured the number of dwellings vacated and subsequently retenanted. <sup>b</sup> For NSW, 2000-01 data exclude 50 void properties with obvious date errors and 2001-02, data exclude 62 void properties with obvious date errors. <sup>c</sup> For Victoria, improved asset management influenced the result for 2000-01 as the amount of time a dwelling remains off line was minimised. <sup>d</sup> For Queensland for 2000-01, this was calculated according to the definition. The data item for 2000-01 was derived from tenancy information and did not distinguish between different vacancy types or contain information about the lead time of new dwellings to be occupied. Calculations using alternative data sources indicated that data limitations had only a minimal impact on the performance indicator. <sup>e</sup> This includes time vacant due to redevelopment in WA in 2001-02 that was excluded in 2000-01, influencing changes in results. <sup>f</sup> Some properties in SA undergoing redevelopment are included due to data coding errors.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.36.

Table 16.14 **Total rent collected for State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings as a proportion of total rent charged (per cent)<sup>a</sup>**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA <sup>b</sup>	SA	Tas	Aust
2000-01	99.3	99.5	99.1	101.1	95.0	94.8	98.8
2001-02	99.9	98.8	97.3	103.0	92.6	99.1	98.5

<sup>a</sup> Payment arrangements for rent in some jurisdictions mean that rent collected over a 12-month period may be higher than rent charged over that period. <sup>b</sup> These figures increased in 2000-01 as water consumption costs were retrospectively deducted from rent paid during 1999-2000. This deduction covered more than one year. While this deduction occurred for 2000-01, it only related to the one year.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.37.

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## Commonwealth Rent Assistance

Performance reporting for CRA is based on a new performance indicator framework for the 2003 Report. Data for CRA recipients are for clients of DFACS only and are for the year to 30 June 2002. Data exclude those recipients paid rental assistance by, or on behalf of, the DVA or DEST. Data are collected centrally by Centrelink and DFACS.

### *Effectiveness*

#### *Access*

Access to CRA is measured by number and proportion of eligible income support recipients receiving the payment. Data are available both by type of income unit and type of payment received. This indicator also provides information on Indigenous recipients.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance is automatically paid once eligibility has been established. Important eligibility requirements are the receipt of an income support payment or more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A, and liability to pay rent. The only eligible clients who are not paid are those affected by recording errors or program errors.

There were 943 877 income units (where income units are analogous to family units with the distinction that non-dependent children and other adults living in the same household are treated as separate income units) receiving CRA at 30 June 2002 across Australia. Of these, over 21 535 (or approximately 2.3 per cent) self identified as Indigenous. Single people with no children represented approximately 38.8 per cent of CRA recipients and 30.7 per cent of Indigenous CRA recipients (table 16.15).

Nationally, the proportion of income units receiving CRA who identified as Indigenous was virtually identical to Indigenous representation in the overall community. The NT had the highest proportion of self identified Indigenous people receiving the payment (16.7 per cent) in 2002. This compared with the Indigenous proportion of the NT population of 28.6 per cent. Victoria had the lowest proportion of self identifying Indigenous people receiving the payment (0.6 per cent) (table 16.16).

Table 16.15 **Income units receiving CRA by income unit type, 30 June 2002<sup>a, b</sup>**

<i>Benefit type</i>	<i>Income units</i>	<i>Proportion of CRA recipients</i>	<i>Indigenous income units</i>	<i>Proportion of Indigenous CRA recipients</i>
	no.	%	no.	%
Single, no children	365 800	38.8	6 612	30.7
Single, no children, sharer	146 626	15.5	2 286	10.6
Single, 1 or 2 children	181 102	19.2	5 869	27.3
Single, 3 or more children	34 715	3.7	1 914	8.9
Partnered, no children	74 547	7.9	844	3.9
Partnered, 1 or 2 children	95 687	10.1	2 254	10.5
Partnered, 3 or more children	40 655	4.3	1 582	7.3
Partnered, illness separated, no children	2 078	0.2	36	0.2
Partnered, temporarily separated, no children	149	–	7	–
Unknown income unit	2 518	0.3	131	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>943 877</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>21 535</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>a</sup> Data are for CRA recipients who were clients of DFACS only. Data exclude those paid rent assistance by, or on behalf of, the DVA or DEST. Components may not sum to 100 per cent as a result of rounding. <sup>b</sup> An income unit is the basic unit used to determine eligibility for social security payments. Income units are analogous to family units with the distinction that non-dependent children and other adults living in the same household are treated as separate income units. Children are regarded as dependent until 16 years of age. Children aged 16–18 years may also be regarded as dependent if they are full time students, wholly or substantially dependent on another person and not in receipt of an income support payment. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.43.

**Table 16.16 Income units receiving CRA by Indigenous status and geographic location, 30 June 2002**

	Unit	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust <sup>a</sup>
<i>Non-Indigenous</i>										
Individual recipients	no.	309 122	200 219	229 073	84 708	63 725	22 094	8 282	4 885	922 342
In capital city	no.	170 209	143 441	100 717	65 444	50 241	9 690	8 270	3 402	551 413
In rest of State	no.	138 913	56 778	128 356	19 264	13 484	12 404	12	1 483	370 929
Share of all recipients	%	97.7	99.4	96.6	97.4	98.7	97.3	98.9	83.3	97.7
Non-Indigenous population, as a proportion of total population <sup>b</sup>	%	98.1	99.5	96.7	96.7	98.4	96.4	98.9	71.4	97.8
<i>Indigenous</i>										
Individual recipients	no.	7 423	1 258	8 052	2 248	861	610	93	976	21 535
In capital city	no.	1 957	620	2 274	1 191	555	220	93	481	7 391
In rest of State	no.	5 466	638	5 778	1 057	306	390	0	495	14 144
Share of all recipients	%	2.3	0.6	3.4	2.6	1.3	2.7	1.1	16.7	2.3
Indigenous population, as a proportion of total population <sup>b</sup>	%	1.9	0.5	3.3	3.3	1.6	3.6	1.1	28.6	2.2
<b>Total individual recipients</b>	no.	<b>316 545</b>	<b>201 477</b>	<b>237 125</b>	<b>86 956</b>	<b>64 586</b>	<b>22 704</b>	<b>8 375</b>	<b>5 861</b>	<b>943 877</b>

<sup>a</sup> National total includes postcodes that could not be classified. <sup>b</sup> Based on low series population projections (ABS 1999b).

Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.48.

Data are also available based on the type of primary payment received by CRA recipients. The highest proportion of CRA recipients (21.9 per cent) are recipients of the Newstart Allowance, followed by the Parenting Payment (Single), representing 20.1 per cent of CRA recipients. These proportions are higher for Indigenous Australians (at 32.9 per cent and 32.1 per cent respectively). Only 2.8 per cent of Indigenous CRA recipients receive the age pension, compared with 16.0 per cent for all Australians (table 16.17).

**Table 16.17 Income units receiving CRA by benefit type, 30 June 2002<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Benefit type</i>	<i>Income units<sup>b</sup></i>	<i>Proportion of CRA recipients</i>		<i>Proportion of Indigenous CRA recipients</i>	
		<i>no.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>no.</i>	<i>%</i>
Newstart	206 317	21.9	7 085	32.9	
Parenting Payment, Single	189 782	20.1	6 908	32.1	
Disability Support Pension	162 048	17.2	3 315	15.4	
Age Pension	151 120	16.0	596	2.8	
Youth Allowance	90 741	9.6	1 268	5.9	
Family Tax Benefit	81 179	8.6	1 335	6.2	
Parenting Payment, Partnered	26 160	2.8	558	2.6	
Other qualifying payments	36 530	3.9	470	2.2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>943 877</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>21 535</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

<sup>a</sup> Data are for CRA recipients who were clients of DFACS only. Data exclude those paid rental assistance by or on behalf of the DVA or DEST. Components may not sum to 100 per cent as a result of rounding. <sup>b</sup> An income unit is the basic unit used to determine eligibility for social security payments. Income units are analogous to family units with the distinction that non-dependent children and other adults living in the same household are treated as separate income units. Children are regarded as dependent until 16 years of age. Children aged 16–18 years may also be regarded as dependent if they are full time students, wholly or substantially dependent on another person and not in receipt of an income support payment.

Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.45.

This year's Report includes a new 'low income' indicator showing income units receiving CRA broken down by quintiles of family income received per week. Among all income unit types, the bottom 20 per cent of CRA recipients have family income of \$185.20 or less a week, while the top 20 per cent have family income in excess of \$498.31 a week (table 16.18).

Among those income units paying enough rent to receive maximum CRA payments, the bottom 20 per cent of CRA recipients have family income of \$185.20 or less a week, while the top 20 per cent have family income in excess of \$552.20 a week (table 16A.44). Data for income units receiving maximum CRA payments and those not paying enough rent to receive maximum CRA payments are shown in table 16A.44.

**Table 16.18 Income units receiving CRA by quintiles of income at 30 November 2001 (all income units)<sup>a, b</sup>**

<i>Income unit</i>	<i>Income quintile (weekly family income received \$)</i>			
	<i>20 % of recipients</i>	<i>40 % of recipients</i>	<i>60 % of recipients</i>	<i>80 % of recipients</i>
Single, no children	145.05	182.30	185.20	214.67
Single, no children, sharer	182.30	208.15	209.53	235.05
Single, 1 or 2 children	332.83	346.88	385.65	456.34
Single, 3 or more children	451.94	506.16	560.22	656.78
Partnered, no children	326.39	375.46	433.13	577.67
Partnered, 1 or 2 children	428.58	530.48	670.28	814.95
Partnered, 3 or more children	565.36	683.98	821.86	984.07
Partnered, illness separated, no children	403.24	422.55	453.30	530.10
Partnered, temporarily separated, no children	316.69	340.15	346.88	368.88
All income unit types	185.20	213.53	335.28	498.31

<sup>a</sup> Data are for CRA recipients who were clients of DFACS only. Data exclude those paid rental assistance by or on behalf of the DVA or DEST. <sup>b</sup> An income unit is the basic unit used to determine eligibility for social security payments. Income units are analogous to family units with the distinction that non-dependent children and other adults living in the same household are treated as separate income units. Children are regarded as dependent until 16 years of age. Children aged 16–18 years may also be regarded as dependent if they are full time students, wholly or substantially dependent on another person and not in receipt of an income support payment.

Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.44.

A new ‘special needs’ indicator has been included to measure both access of special needs groups to CRA and the extent to which CRA assists with housing affordability. Overall, approximately 70.0 per cent of CRA recipients were located in capital city and other metropolitan areas, 28.2 per cent were in rural (as distinct from remote) areas and 1.6 per cent were in remote areas (table 16A.46). Of Indigenous CRA recipients, approximately 43.1 per cent were located in metropolitan areas, 45.8 per cent in rural (as distinct from remote) areas and 10.7 per cent were in remote areas (table 16A.47).

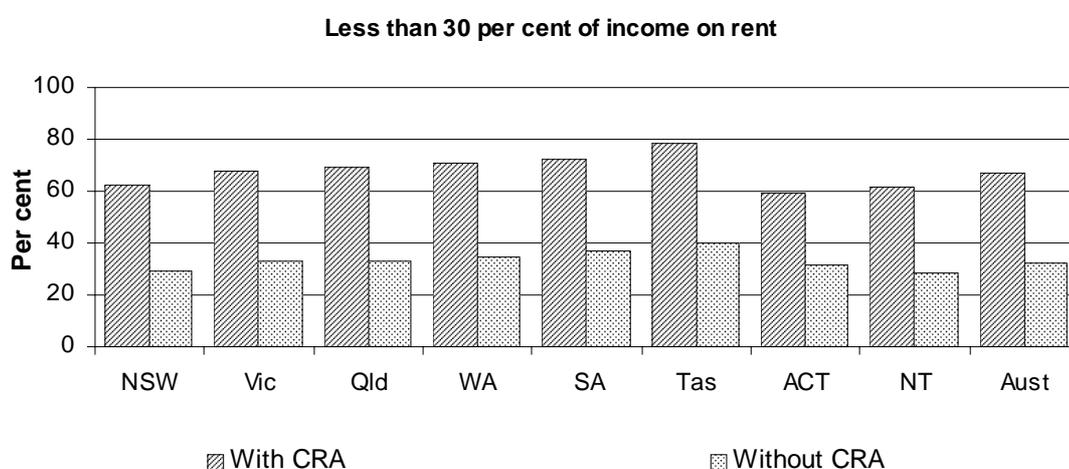
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## Outcomes

### Affordability

The affordability measure provides information on the proportion of recipients who spend more than 30 and 50 per cent of their income on rent with and without CRA, disaggregated by Indigenous and rural and remote status. Nationally, if CRA was not payable, 32.4 per cent of those income units currently receiving CRA would have spent less than 30 per cent of income on rent at 30 November 2001. Across jurisdictions, this proportion ranged from 39.8 per cent in Tasmania to 28.3 per cent in the NT. Accounting for CRA (thereby reducing the rent paid by the amount of the assistance), the national proportion of income units who spent less than 30 per cent of income on rent increased to 66.9 per cent at 30 November 2001. Across jurisdictions, this proportion ranged from 78.7 per cent in Tasmania to 58.9 per cent in the ACT (figure 16.27).

**Figure 16.27 Recipients by proportion of income spent on rent with and without CRA, 30 November 2001**



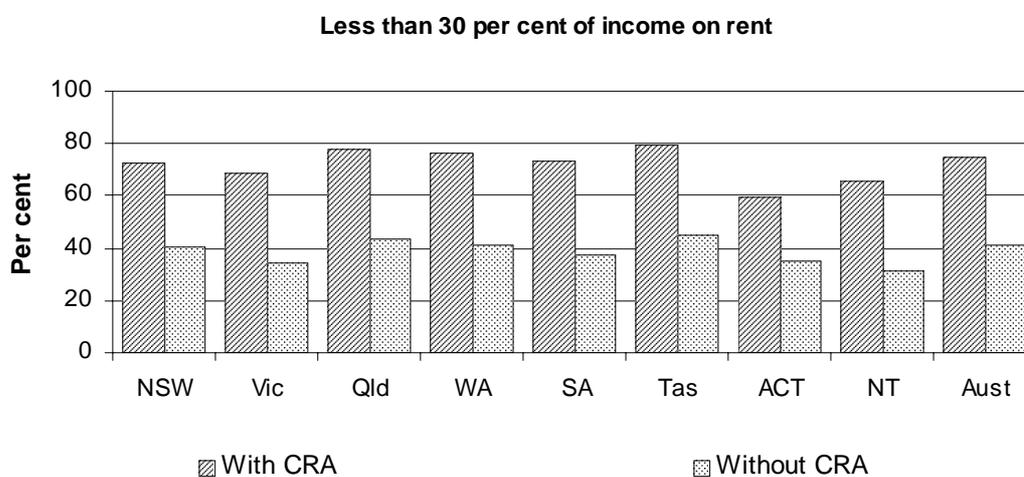
Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.49.

Similarly, if CRA was not payable, 73.8 per cent of income units across Australia would have spent less than 50 per cent of income on rent at 30 November 2001. Accounting for CRA payments, this proportion increases to 91.4 per cent (table 16A.49).

Data are also available on the proportion of income spent on rent with and without CRA by Indigenous Australians, Australians living in rural and remote areas, and disability support pension recipients. Nationally, if CRA was not payable, only

41.0 per cent of those Indigenous income units currently receiving CRA would have spent less than 30 per cent of income on rent at 30 November 2001. Across jurisdictions, this proportion ranged from 45.3 per cent in Tasmania to 31.3 per cent in the NT. Accounting for CRA payments (thereby reducing the rent paid by the amount of the assistance), the national proportion of Indigenous income units who spent less than 30 per cent of income on rent at 30 November 2001 increases to 74.7 per cent. Across jurisdictions, this proportion ranged from 79.5 per cent in Tasmania to 59.4 per cent in the ACT (figure 16.28).

**Figure 16.28 Indigenous recipients by proportion of income spent on rent with and without CRA, 30 November 2001**



Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.50.

Similarly, if CRA was not payable, 79.7 per cent of Indigenous income units across Australia would have spent less than 50 per cent of income on rent at 30 November 2001. Accounting for CRA payments, this increases to 94.5 per cent (table 16A.50).

If CRA was not payable, 24.8 per cent of disability support pension recipients across Australia would have spent less than 30 per cent of income on rent at 30 November 2001. Across jurisdictions, this proportion ranged from 32.3 per cent in Tasmania to 19.1 per cent in the NT. Accounting for CRA payments, the national proportion of disability support pension recipients spending less than 30 per cent of income on rent at 30 November 2001 increases to 71.3 per cent. Across jurisdictions this proportion ranges from 83.7 per cent in Tasmania to 62.9 per cent in the NT (figure 16.29).

Similarly, if CRA was not payable, 73.5 per cent of disability support pension recipients across Australia would have spent less than 50 per cent of income on rent

at 30 November 2001. Accounting for CRA payments, this increases to 94.0 per cent (table 16A.51).

**Figure 16.29 Disability support pension recipients by proportion of income spent on rent with and without CRA, 30 November 2001**



Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.51.

For the first time this year, the Report contains indicators of the satisfaction of CRA recipients with both the location and quality of their housing. Data are obtained from the most recent DFACS customer survey conducted in 2000. Results are based on 477 responses from those individuals paying enough rent to qualify for CRA and receiving a relevant primary payment type.

Overall, 79 per cent of respondents described their location as ‘good’ or ‘great’, while only 5 per cent described the location as ‘poor’. Regarding the quality of their housing, 75 per cent of respondents described their housing as ‘good’ or ‘great’ and only 4 per cent as ‘poor’ (table 16.19).

**Table 16.19 Satisfaction with location and quality of housing, 2000 (per cent)<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Thinking about the location of the place you live in, would you say it is:</i>			
Poor	Just OK	Good	Great
5	16	48	31
<i>Thinking about the quality of the place you live in, would you say it is:</i>			
Poor	Just OK	Good	Great
4	21	49	26

<sup>a</sup> Includes responses by individuals paying enough rent to qualify for CRA and receiving a relevant payment type. CRA may not be payable, or may be paid to a partner.

Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.57.

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Reporting of the ‘geographic spread of CRA customers’ indicator has changed this year, with the indicator now relating to CRA recipients as a proportion of income units in each capital city receiving a social security income support benefit or more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit. Results are shown in tables 16A.58 to 16A.66.

Information on the average CRA entitlement across locations is contained in table 16A.56.

### *Appropriateness*

This chapter reports on two indicators of appropriateness:

- the proportion of CRA recipients receiving the maximum rate of CRA (by jurisdiction and payment type); and
- the number and outcome of appeals.

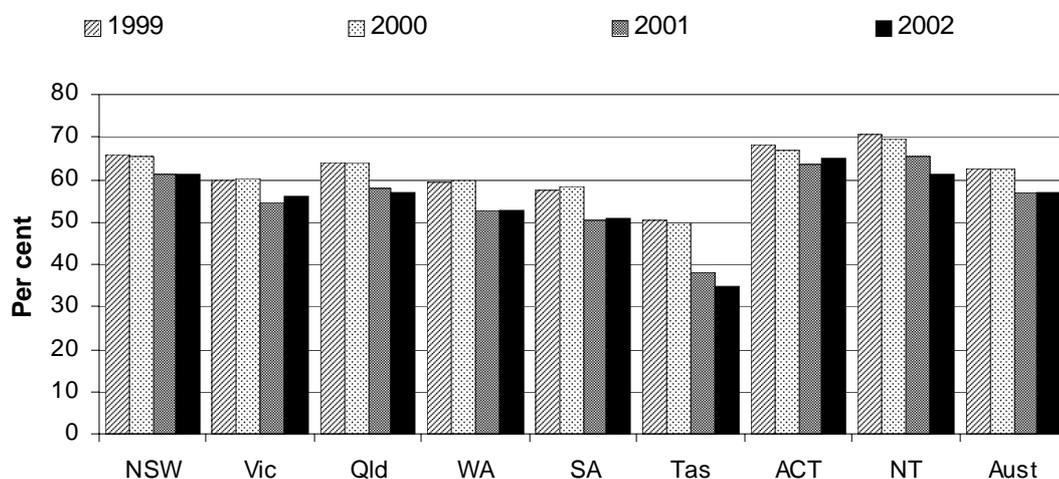
### *Maximum rate*

One way of measuring the appropriateness of CRA provision is to consider the proportion of recipients receiving the maximum rate of CRA. A high proportion of recipients receiving maximum assistance may suggest that too much assistance goes to those paying moderate rents or that the maximum rate of assistance is too low.

At 30 June 2002, 56.9 per cent of CRA recipients across Australia qualified for the maximum rate of CRA payments. This varied from 65.1 per cent in the ACT to 34.9 per cent in Tasmania. The proportion of income units receiving the maximum rate of CRA has fallen over time. In June 1999, 62.7 per cent of CRA recipients qualified for the maximum rate of CRA payments (figure 16.30).

Data showing the proportion of CRA recipients qualifying for maximum CRA payments by the type of primary payment received are in table 16A.52.

Figure 16.30 Proportion of income units receiving CRA paying enough rent to receive maximum assistance<sup>a, b, c</sup>



<sup>a</sup> Data are for CRA recipients who were clients of DFACS only. Data exclude those paid rental assistance by, or on behalf of, the DVA or DEST. <sup>b</sup> An income unit is the basic unit used to determine eligibility for social security payments. Income units are analogous to family units with the distinction that non-dependent children and other adults living in the same household are treated as separate income units. Children are regarded as dependent until 16 years of age. Children aged 16–18 years may also be regarded as dependent if they are full time students, wholly or substantially dependent on another person and not in receipt of an income support payment. <sup>c</sup> Proportion of income units with ongoing entitlement to CRA paying enough rent to receive maximum assistance.

Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.53.

### *Number and outcome of appeals*

There is a formal review process for decisions related to the payment of CRA. Clients who are dissatisfied with a decision are encouraged to discuss the matter with the original decision maker before taking the matter further, although this is not a necessary step. Authorised review officers conduct a quick and informal internal review of the decision. Generally, customers who are dissatisfied with the authorised review officer's decision can appeal to the Social Security Appeals Tribunal. The Tribunal is an independent body with decision making powers. Either the customer or DFACS can seek a further review of tribunal decisions by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

There were 267 finalised appeals to an authorised review officer in 2001-02, which represent approximately 0.03 per cent of people receiving CRA. Approximately 59.9 per cent of finalised appeals to an authorised review officer and 51.1 per cent of finalised appeals to the Social Security Appeals Tribunal led to the original decision being affirmed. In the case of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, three finalised appeals led to the original decision being set aside (table 16.20).

**Table 16.20 Outcome of all CRA appeals finalised in 2001-02<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Appeals to ARO</i>		<i>Appeals to SSAT</i>		<i>Appeals to AAT</i>	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Original decision affirmed	160	59.9	23	51.1	1	25.0
Original decision set aside	63	23.6	10	22.2	3	75.0
Original decision varied	42	15.7	4	8.9	0	0.0
Appeal withdrawn/dismissed	2	0.7	8	17.8	0	0.0
<b>Total finalised</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>a</sup> ARO = Authorised Review Officer; SSAT = Social Security Appeals Tribunal; AAT = Administrative Appeals Tribunal. Totals may not add to 100 as a result of rounding.

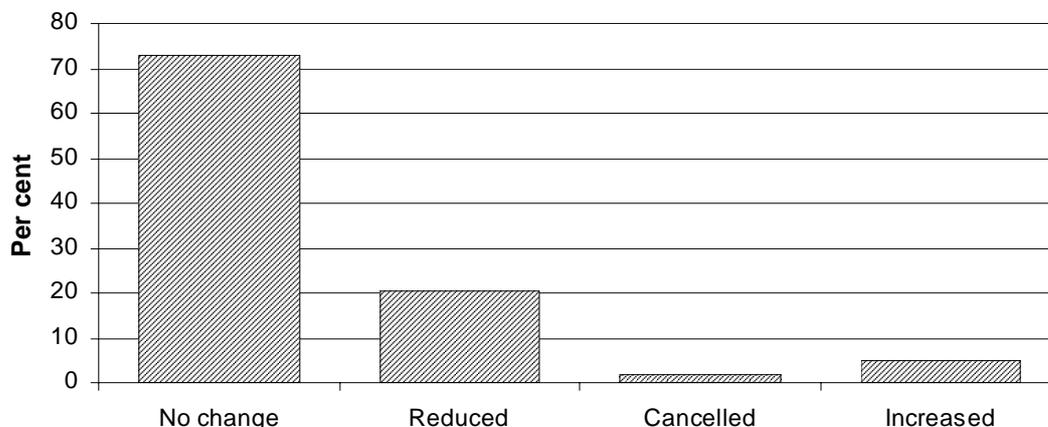
Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.54.

### *Efficiency*

It has not been possible to report two of the three efficiency indicators for CRA (running costs per 1000 customers and ratio of running costs to total outlays) this year as data are not available. Data are available for the control of overpayment indicator.

Centrelink relies on risk-based review activities to control overpayment, some of which are targeted at CRA. In total, Centrelink conducted 104 648 risk-based reviews relating to CRA in 2001-02. In 1.6 per cent of cases, CRA was cancelled, in 20.4 per cent of cases it was reduced and in 5.1 per cent of cases it was increased. For the majority of cases (72.9 per cent), there was no change (figure 16.31).

**Figure 16.31 CRA payments adjustments resulting from a risk-based review, 2001-02**



Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.55.

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## **16.5 Future directions in performance reporting**

### **Further developing indicators and data**

As the housing chapter data are already extensive, much of the work being undertaken is around filling the gaps in the data and improving reliability and comparability across jurisdictions. Work on improving the quality and comparability of data collected will continue, particularly for community housing. Improved financial reporting for the community housing sector is a high priority.

Improved reporting on housing provision to Indigenous Australians continues to be a priority, with work to be done over the next year to improve data availability on Indigenous Australians accessing public and community housing. Work will also be done to improve reporting on both State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing and the Indigenous community housing sector.

## **16.6 Jurisdictions' comments**

This section provides comments from each jurisdiction on the services covered in this chapter. Appendix A contains data which may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter. These data cover a range of demographic and geographic characteristics, including age profile, geographic distribution of the population, income levels, education levels, tenure of dwellings and cultural heritage (including Indigenous and ethnic status).

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## Commonwealth Government comments

“ The Commonwealth negotiated a more comprehensive performance reporting framework with the States and Territories under the 1999 CSHA. The *Report on Government Services* covers the core of national performance information, but reporting under the CSHA goes beyond this and includes in-depth evaluation, much of it qualitative rather than quantitative, of specific initiatives at the jurisdiction level. The format of the *Housing Assistance Act Annual Report* has been modified to reflect this change in approach.

A new performance indicator framework for Rent Assistance has been introduced this year, which includes additional information relating to customer satisfaction with the standard and location of their housing, and low income/special needs customers. The geographic spread of Rent Assistance customers has also been refined and is provided in a mapped form.

Rent Assistance performance information is reported separately from public and community housing performance information. In addition, the indicators need to be interpreted with some caution as Rent Assistance is paid as a supplement to other income support payments, which have their own objectives.

Rent assistance is provided as a financial supplement and has the flexibility to cope with changing demand and to provide customers with more choice about where they live and the quality of their housing. This choice can involve a tradeoff with the consumer's after-housing income. Therefore, it is important to recognise that the rent assistance program has no specific benchmark for affordability.

The adoption of an affordability benchmark would fail to recognise the element of choice exercised by customers who place a higher value on housing than others in comparable circumstances.

As ARHP funds of \$91 million a year are used for State/Territory managed and Indigenous community managed housing, indicators that provide information on both sectors are needed. The Commonwealth provided an additional \$75 million over four years for Indigenous housing and housing related infrastructure in the 2001-02 Budget. As part of the initiative, the Commonwealth requires improved accountability, focusing on outcomes, for all Commonwealth Indigenous-specific housing funds (ARHP and CHIP). ATSIC and FaCS, in consultation with State and Territory governments, have prepared a Common Reporting Framework (CRF) to assist in the development of State, Territory and ATSIC Indigenous housing strategic plans and performance reports. The CRF is based on *Building a Better Future: Indigenous Housing to 2010* and contains national Indigenous housing minimum data set items developed by the Standing Committee on Indigenous Housing. Common reporting will give a more complete, national picture of the progress being made to improve housing for Indigenous people. ”

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## **New South Wales Government comments**

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Pressures on the availability of affordable housing for low to moderate income households in Sydney in particular have continued through 2001-02. Strong growth in housing prices in Sydney and coastal NSW has continued, along with a surge in new construction of both houses and flats. Rental vacancy rates have been relatively high in much of 2002. As a result, median rent levels for both houses and flats have stagnated or fallen for relatively higher-cost housing in the inner and middle rings of Sydney. In contrast, rents for both houses and flats in traditionally lower-cost areas of outer Sydney have continued to increase.

In this context, demand for housing assistance remains high. In 2001-02 the NSW Department of Housing introduced a number of new housing assistance products that will provide people with more options for meeting their housing needs, both in the private rental market and through home purchase. These products will be introduced progressively over the next three years.

The department has completed condition audits of all of its properties and has increased expenditure in 2001-02 on maintenance, upgrading and the Accelerated Improvement Program. This may have made some tenants more aware of some of the problems with their homes that the Department has not yet been able to address, contributing to a fall in customer satisfaction to 66 per cent in 2001. The department is continuing to give priority to asset strategies to improve client satisfaction with maintenance and condition of home. These asset strategies are being complemented by the implementation of the Estates Strategy and other community renewal work to strengthen public housing communities, including employment and training programs, trials of e-communities and internet café projects, and funding to community groups for tenant participation activities.

NSW has continued to achieve effective results in targeting assistance to those most in need. Of all new tenancies in 2001-02, 97 per cent were in the lowest income category or had special needs and 51 per cent were special needs households. NSW achieved an occupancy rate of 98.1 per cent at 30 June 2002, and the turnaround time for re-letting vacant stock was 30 days—a 7 per cent reduction from the previous year.

In 2001-2002, for the first time, the department has been able to provide an estimate, based on 2001 Census figures, of the number of Indigenous households in mainstream public housing — 8 700 (almost 7 per cent).

In community housing, overall tenant satisfaction is above the national average at 78 per cent, and tenant satisfaction with the amenity and location of their homes was even higher at 79 per cent and 85 per cent respectively.

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## Victorian Government comments

“ In Victoria the housing market has continued to experience increases in property prices and reduced availability of affordable housing. This has placed further pressure on low income households in the private rental sector, particularly in metropolitan areas of high demand. There has been a consequent decrease in the number of households exiting public housing, restricting the number of units available for new housing allocation.

The Victorian social housing sector expanded to 75 344 units at June 2002. This was despite property price increases and an environment of declining CSHA funds. This has been possible due to additional funds of \$94.5 million over the three budget years to June 2003 and through equity contributions by non-government organisations in the provision of social housing.

In an environment of increasing demand and moderate housing growth, Victoria has responded to clients in greatest need of housing assistance, particularly homeless clients. This is reflected in the high proportion (60 per cent) of allocations to ‘greatest need’ clients and significant expansion of the transitional housing sector. Strategic leasing of stock in high demand areas has also been an important contributor to improved outcomes for clients.

Community building in areas of social and economic disadvantage continues to be a priority, in regional Victoria and inner city high rise estates. Many such areas have high concentrations of public housing, which are increasingly impacted by the housing of high need clients. Neighbourhood Renewal initiatives to tackle these issues include upgrading housing and the local environment, linked to employment and training programs, improved access to local and support services and increased community participation and decision making.

In order to maintain an aging public housing stock and support community renewal initiatives, Victoria has increased expenditure on property improvements and upgrades by 7 per cent to \$162m in 2001-2002, resulting in major upgrades to 2 984 properties and significant fire and safety works. Additionally \$25 million has been spent on redevelopment of existing stock, an increase of 34 per cent over the previous year.

Victoria has a positive performance against CSHA performance indicators and maintains its position as the State with the lowest recurrent operating cost per dwelling. Further development of performance indicators for the community housing sector has been undertaken in 2001-02. Victoria conducted for the first time the Community Housing Survey for long term community housing providers and expects coverage to expand to all agencies in 2002-2003. Development of integrated information systems to support a range of social housing providers is currently a major focus. ”

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## Queensland Government comments

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The Queensland Department of Housing is committed to achieving the Government's vision of equitable access to high standards of housing for all Queenslanders. The department is increasingly working in partnership with communities, other levels of government, other Queensland Government agencies and the private sector to deliver improved housing outcomes through integrated, client-focused programs.

Considerable effort has been devoted to addressing the challenges to the long term viability and effectiveness of traditional housing solutions. The Department continues to make a real difference to people's lives through its assistance programs with:

- assistance to more than 58 000 households in public rental and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing; and
- funding to community organisations provided to assist over 120 000 households with accommodation, tenancy advice and minor home modifications.

As well as these traditional forms of assistance, innovative responses to the diverse housing needs of Queenslanders include the development of the Brisbane Housing Company, the continuing joint work with the Queensland University of Technology on the Kelvin Grove Urban Village and the completion of the Rockhampton Research House.

The Department's efforts in collaborative work and community engagement over this past financial year have resulted in some significant achievements. In particular, the two bilateral agreements for mainland Queensland and the Torres Strait region and the implementation of the Thursday Island Redevelopment Project are practical examples of what strong working relationships can achieve.

The department also undertook significant work to prepare a new legislative framework that will recognise its role in delivering traditional forms of housing assistance but will also facilitate finding new ways to meet the housing needs of Queenslanders. In addition, the Government endorsed the preparation of a State Planning Policy for Affordable Housing and Residential Development after public consultations on the options available to promote affordable housing planning and delivery.

The department is well placed to pursue innovative, collaborative housing outcomes for Queenslanders.

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## Western Australian Government comments

“ Since July 2001, the State Housing Commission has operated as part of the Department of Housing and Works, which was formed in accordance with the recommendations of the Machinery of Government Taskforce Review. During the year significant progress was made on the department’s housing and related programs such as ‘New Living’ estate redevelopment, the deinstitutionalisation strategy, the State Homelessness Strategy, provision of bond assistance for private renters, home ownership and the employment of Indigenous people.

The New Living program refurbished 623 dwellings, with 206 being retained as rental stock. The ‘New North’ project, which forms part of this program, won the UDIA WA 2001 Award for Excellence.

Under the deinstitutionalisation strategy, 56 purpose-built mobility homes were completed and 23 were purchased from the private sector. Bond assistance remains a popular option with customers and the real estate industry. A total of 15 254 bond assistance loans were approved during the year.

Homelessness remains a high priority and in May 2001 a Homeless Help Line, with a free call access point for homeless people, was made available. The high demand for the service has resulted in the facility being made permanently available. During the year, the Help Line received 2082 calls, resulting in 936 people in need being assisted through bond assistance, rental assistance in public housing, and via the Crisis Accommodation Program.

Home ownership continued to be a high priority and Government-backed loan schemes helped 3998 Western Australian households with home finance, providing 843 loans for building new homes and 3155 to buy existing homes. The effect of these loan approvals is an injection of \$372.2 million into the State’s housing industry. They assist low-income people who would otherwise have difficulty obtaining a mortgage to achieve home ownership and reduce the call on limited low-price rental stock.

The housing procurement program for the year delivered:

- the completion of 943 dwellings for the rental program;
- an additional 99 dwellings for Aboriginal families;
- commencement of 88 dwellings for Community Housing, which included a major program to construct Women’s Refuges in the north of the State;
- refurbishment of 477 older properties; and,
- the conversion of bedsitter accommodation into 49 one-bedroom units.

In order to meet measures of fairness and equity, housing policies are continually reviewed. During the year changes were made to priority assistance, tenancy management and tenant liability policies. To enable customers to access up-to-date policy information and to keep abreast of changes, policies are available on the Department of Housing and Works Internet site. The address is [www.dhw.wa.gov.au](http://www.dhw.wa.gov.au)”

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## South Australian Government comments

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SA has a significant investment in its social housing sector. According to Census 2001 public housing accounted for approximately 7.7 per cent of SA households, with community housing accounting for 0.7 per cent of households. The Indigenous housing sector is also strong with the Aboriginal Housing Authority managing 1798 properties at the end of June 2002.

During 2001-02, the three social rental housing agencies, the South Australian Housing Trust (SAHT), Aboriginal Housing Authority (AHA) and the South Australian Community Housing Authority (SACHA), joined with HomeStart Finance to form the Housing Management Council within the Human Services portfolio. These new administrative arrangements will ensure that housing issues are given prominent attention within the new portfolio structure.

While each of the social housing agencies continue to target housing resources to those in greatest need, the impacts of this policy on financial and organisational sustainability and community stability are becoming apparent.

During the year, the independent Triennial Review of the SAHT was undertaken in accordance with the SAHT Act. The review found that the SAHT was an effective and cost efficient housing provider. However, the review noted the pressures placed upon the SAHT as a result of ongoing reductions in funding through the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement, increasing rental rebates due to targeting to those in greatest need, increased costs associated with managing a more complex customer base and the high costs of managing and maintaining aged assets.

The AHA worked during the year to ensure that its programs are in line with the Australian Housing Ministers' 10-year Statement of New Directions for Indigenous Housing — 'Building a Better Future — Indigenous Housing to 2010'. The fundamental principles behind this approach are to work with Aboriginal communities in developing a sustainable and accountable Aboriginal housing sector that addresses housing need and empowers the Aboriginal community in South Australia. The range of housing programs managed by AHA include a statewide housing rental program, a community housing program in rural and remote areas and a home ownership program.

SACHA, through its funding and regulation of the community housing sector, continues to play an important role in supporting the provision of housing and supports for particularly vulnerable population groups, in partnership with a range of community housing organisations and service agencies. This assists the continuing de-institutionalisation of people with disabilities and older people, and is providing stable accommodation for people with long histories of homelessness. Joint ventures with local government and support agencies and fostering partnerships with key stakeholders are key to the success of these programs.

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## Tasmanian Government comments

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Housing Tasmania continues to contribute to improved health and well-being outcomes for people on low incomes through a range of housing programs. These include public, community and Aboriginal housing, home ownership assistance, ongoing support for private renters on low incomes, and community capacity building initiatives in areas with high proportions of public housing. As the private rental sector in Tasmania has tightened, demand for public rental housing has steadily increased during the past year, reducing opportunities for low income renters to secure affordable housing.

In partnership with Mission Australia (Mission Employment), Housing Tasmania has implemented a key community development strategy which seeks to link employment opportunities with positive housing outcomes by providing traineeship opportunities for long term unemployed Tasmanians who live in, or in close proximity to, broadacre public housing areas. These projects proved extremely successful, with 60 percent of participants obtaining full-time employment at the conclusion of the program.

To support strategic decision making relative to Housing Tasmania's asset portfolio, a comprehensive analytical tool has been developed to inform continued realignment of social housing stock. The Asset Decision Model was developed and reviewed during 2001-02, and provides the basis for consistency in asset retention / disposal decisions.

Tasmania has an ageing population, higher levels of unemployment and lower average household income, compared to other jurisdictions. The division is therefore developing strategies to improve the range of safe, adequate and affordable housing options for an increasingly diverse client group.

One initiative, GET*Smart* Homes aims to incorporate requirements for adaptable housing (housing suitable for people with disabilities), sustainable design principles, and affordable living as developed by the Australian Greenhouse Office. The GET*Smart* Homes program constructs homes that are well located, require low maintenance, are durable and energy efficient, and, most importantly, are suitable for a wide range of client groups — particularly the elderly and people with disabilities.

Development of an affordable housing strategy for the State will continue to build on existing links between all tiers of government and the community sector and private industry, ensuring a whole-of-system approach.

A highly decentralised stock with higher maintenance costs and other cost disadvantages, as well as locally based service delivery, contributes substantially to the administrative overheads per unit of public rental stock in Tasmania being one of the highest in the nation. In order to ameliorate these cost disadvantages, Housing Tasmania continues to review all areas of its business to ensure programs and services are delivered in the most efficient and effective manner possible. It is unlikely that the figure will ever conform closely to the national average.

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## Australian Capital Territory Government comments

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The ACT has a relatively high proportion of public housing stock (10 per cent compared to the national average of around 5 per cent) and a relatively small proportion of affordable housing in the private rental market. The high total net cost per dwelling in part reflects the high cost of land in the ACT, the fact that there is a concentration of housing dwellings in the inner city and no cheaper, rural stock to bring the ACT average cost down. Much of the stock is also in poor condition, with many large flat complexes being over 40 years old.

An Affordable Housing Task Force has been convened to examine the issues and to recommend strategies across the Government, non-government and private sectors for the provision of affordable housing. The Task Force is due to report in December 2002.

The rejuvenation and restructuring of the ACT's public housing stock has again been a high priority in 2001-02. The redevelopment and upgrading processes is partly funded from the proceeds of asset sales and, as a result, there will be a modest reduction in stock levels in the forward years. The requirement to use this source of funding is a consequence of the continued decline in funding under the 1999 CSHA, as well as of internalising the cost of rental rebates.

The ACT has housed, as a priority, those in greatest need. Of all new allocations, 84.5 per cent were to households in the greatest need category. The ACT focus on quality service provision is intended to support those households to obtain relevant support, connect with appropriate networks and to maintain their tenancies. Program initiatives such as the Housing Manager Specialists and the Community Linkages Program are tools to assist ACT households to sustain their tenancies.

The community housing sector is relatively small in the ACT, though it is expanding. The ACT Government has held extensive community consultations as the basis for the development of a framework for community housing. The process has involved the sector in discussions on standards, accreditation, regulatory frameworks and appeals mechanisms. The Government has funded a peak body for community housing organisations (Coalition of Community Housing Organisations of the ACT).

The ACT does not receive any ARHP funding. However the ACT Government is working with ATSIC and the Commonwealth Government to develop a Trilateral Agreement on Indigenous Housing for the provision of culturally appropriate housing for Indigenous people in the ACT. A viability study exploring Indigenous housing options is currently underway.

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## Northern Territory Government comments

“ The Northern Territory Government provides secure, affordable housing as a key component of a collective, cooperative response to the diverse range of housing needs of Territorians. In the third year of the Commonwealth State Housing Bilateral Agreement 1999–2003 many accomplishments have been achieved against the strategies and objectives, including:

- construction of a seniors' village specifically designed and constructed to meet the needs of senior Territorians;
- provision of funding to community organisations enabling them to pursue housing options to meet the needs of people with disabilities;
- the introduction of a Security Screening Policy, which will increase the safety and security of all public housing dwellings by raising standards to include security screening;
- provision of funding to implement a targeted project to address itinerancy in the Darwin area;
- provision of urban living skills programs designed to increase the success rate of indigenous tenants moving to urban areas from rural communities;
- further reduction of wait times in most areas for public housing tenants; and
- provision of consultative forums with the community, progressing work on key priorities.

The NT Government delivers housing assistance to Indigenous people through its partnership with the Indigenous Housing Authority of the Northern Territory (IHANT) and through improving access for Indigenous people to public housing in urban and rural centres (approximately a quarter of public housing tenants are Indigenous). Information in this Report does not include the NT Government's commitment to the provision of housing and related infrastructure to Indigenous communities, delivered by IHANT.

Under an agreement that pools available Indigenous housing funding to IHANT, ARHP contributed 47 percent of IHANT's funding in 2001-02. Using a needs model as a basis for allocations under its Construction Program, IHANT allocates funds to the seven ATSIC Regional Councils in the Territory, who in turn make allocations to those communities most in need. During 2001-02 the IHANT Construction Program oversaw the construction (and/or major refurbishment) of 241 houses, thereby providing better housing for 2 000 Indigenous people.

Other than Indigenous community-delivered housing, the community housing sector is extremely small in the NT. The NT's emphasis for community housing is to continue to encourage the development of flexible housing provider models, particularly targeting the provision of specific, unmet housing needs. ”

## 16.7 Definitions

### Public, community and State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing

Table 16.21 Terms

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Administration costs	Those costs associated with the administration offices of the property manager and tenancy manager. They include the general accounting and personnel function costs relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employee expenses (for example, superannuation, compensation, accrued leave, training);</li> <li>• supplies and services expenses (including stationery, postage, telephone, office equipment, information systems and vehicle expenses);</li> <li>• rent;</li> <li>• grants and subsidies (excluding rental subsidies);</li> <li>• expenditure incurred by other government agencies on behalf of the public housing agency; and</li> <li>• contracted public housing management services.</li> </ul>
Affordability	The level of housing affordability within the public housing, community or State and Territory owned and managed housing sectors, measured as the rent charged as a proportion of the market rent for each dwelling (adjusted for CRA).
Amenity/location	The amenity of public, community or State and Territory owned and managed housing stock, measured as the percentage of tenants expressing different degrees of satisfaction in relation to the amenity and location of their dwelling.
Appropriate	The size of a dwelling, or the number of bedrooms a household is deemed to require based on the number of adults and children residing in it, as determined by the proxy occupancy standard (table 16.3).
Assessable income	The income used in the assessment of eligibility for housing assistance and to calculate the rental housing rebate that allows the household to pay a rent lower than the market rent. Actual definition may vary across jurisdictions.
Community housing rental dwelling	Includes properties covered by the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement. Excludes properties for which the tenancy management functions are undertaken and administered under the Public Rental Housing Program, the Aboriginal Rental Housing Program or transitional/emergency accommodation for people who are homeless and in crisis (Crisis Accommodation Program).
Customer satisfaction	The percentage of customers expressing different degrees of satisfaction in relation to various service aspects of their dwelling.
Depreciation costs (as per the Australian Accounting Standards 13–17)	Depreciation calculated on a straight-line basis at a rate that realistically represents the useful life of the asset.
Direct costs	Total administration costs and costs of maintaining the operation of dwellings.

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**Table 16.21 (Continued)**

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Disability (as per the ABS Survey of Disability Ageing and Carers)	Any restriction or lack of ability (resulting from an impairment) to perform an action in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being.
Dwelling	For the purpose of the public, community and State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing collections, a dwelling equals a tenancy (rental) unit. A tenancy (rental) unit is defined as the unit of accommodation to which a tenancy agreement can be made. A tenancy (rental) unit is a way of counting the maximum number of distinct rentable units that a dwelling structure can contain. A dwelling structure can be a house, townhouse, duplex, flat or boarding/rooming house.
Greatest need	Low income households that at the time of allocation were subject to one or more of the following circumstances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• homelessness;</li> <li>• their life or safety was at risk in their accommodation;</li> <li>• their health condition was aggravated by their housing</li> <li>• their housing was inappropriate to their needs; or</li> <li>• they had very high rental housing costs.</li> </ul>
Household	For the purpose of the public, community and State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing collections a household equals a tenancy agreement. Counting the number of tenancy agreements is the proxy for counting the number of households. A tenancy agreement is defined as a formal written agreement between a household (a person or group of people) and a housing provider specifying details of a tenancy for a particular dwelling.
Income unit	One person or a group of related people within a household who share command over income. The allowable relationships in the definition of income unit are restricted to marriage (registered or <i>de facto</i> ) and parent and dependent child who usually reside in the same household. Operationally, an income unit is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a married couple (registered or <i>de facto</i>) or sole parent, and dependent children only; or</li> <li>• married couple only (registered or <i>de facto</i>) with no dependent children present; or</li> <li>• a person in a private dwelling who is not related to any other household member either by marriage (registered or <i>de facto</i>) or by a parent/dependent child relationship.</li> </ul> (Defined differently for CRA).
Indigenous household	A household with one or more members (including children) who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders.

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Table 16.21 (Continued)

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Low income household	<p>A household whose members are assessed as having a low income according to the following definitions. Households are assigned an income status based on total household gross income and the composition of the household.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'low income A' households are those in public housing for which all household members have incomes at or below the maximum pension rate.</li> <li>• 'low income B' households are those in public housing that have incomes that would enable them to receive government income support benefits below the maximum pensioner rate.</li> </ul>
Maintenance costs	<p>Costs incurred to maintain the value of the asset or to restore an asset to its original condition. The definition includes: day-to-day maintenance reflecting general wear and tear; cyclical maintenance, performed as part of a planned maintenance program; and other maintenance, such as repairs as a result of vandalism.</p>
Market rent	<p>Aggregate market rent that would be collected if the public rental housing properties were available in the private market.</p>
Match of dwelling and household size	<p>The percentage of households where dwelling size is inappropriate, calculated as the percentage of occupied public, community or State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings with overcrowding based on the following definition of <i>overcrowding</i>: two or more additional bedrooms are required to satisfy the proxy occupancy standard.</p> <p>To derive the number of households in this category, every household is assigned a proxy occupancy status based on the size of the dwelling — that is, the number of bedrooms; the number of adults; the number of children; and the family relationships of household members.</p>
New household	<p>Households who commenced receiving assistance for the financial year and were waitlist type 'new applicant/household'.</p>
Occupancy rate	<p>The use of rental housing stock as measured by the occupancy rate of the stock, where 'occupied' is defined as tenable dwellings occupied by tenants who have a public housing tenancy agreement with the relevant State housing authority.</p>
Occupied dwelling	<p>Any structure that people actually live in regardless of its intended purpose. The structure may or may not be tenable.</p>
Overcrowding	<p>Where two or more additional bedrooms are required to meet the proxy occupancy standard.</p>
Priority access to those in greatest need	<p>Allocation processes to ensure those in greatest need have first access to housing. This is measured as the proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need in the following timeframes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• under three months;</li> <li>• three months to under six months;</li> <li>• six months to under one year;</li> <li>• one year to less than two years;</li> <li>• two years or more; and</li> <li>• total.</li> </ul>

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**Table 16.21 (Continued)**

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Proportion of income paid in rent	<p>A measure of housing affordability within the public, community or State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing sectors, calculated as the percentage of assessable household income spent on housing costs — that is, the number of rebated public rental households (or community housing households) paying X per cent of assessable income on rent at 30 June, divided by the total number of rebated public rental households (or community housing households) occupying public (or community) housing, multiplied by 100. 'X' is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0–20 per cent;</li> <li>• 21–25 per cent;</li> <li>• 26–30 per cent; or</li> <li>• greater than or equal to 31 per cent.</li> </ul> <p>Previously reported as a performance indicator.</p>
Proxy occupancy standard	<p>The standard used to determine overcrowding/underuse. The standard used in the public and community housing collections is based on the Canadian model. (For further discussion on measuring household bedroom requirements, see Foard, <i>et al.</i> 1994).</p>
Public rental dwelling	<p>Includes only public rental properties covered by the Commonwealth–State Housing Agreement. Excludes properties administered under Community Rental Housing, the Aboriginal Rental Housing Program or transitional/emergency accommodation for people who are homeless and in crisis (Crisis Accommodation Program—CAP).</p>
Relocated household	<p>Households, either rebated or market renters, who relocate (transfer) from one public or community rental dwelling to another public or community rental dwelling.</p>
Rent arrears	<p>Total rent actually collected as a percentage of total rent charged.</p>
Rent charged	<p>The amount in dollars that households are charged based on the actual rents they are expected to pay. The rents charged to tenants may or may not have been received.</p>
Rent collected	<p>The actual rent received from tenants.</p>
Special needs household	<p>A household that has a member(s) with a disability, a principal tenant aged either 24 years or under or 75 years or more (50 years or more for State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing) or, except for State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing, a household defined as being Indigenous.</p>
Special needs but not low income household	<p>Where a household member(s) has a special need but the household income is assessed as not being 'low income' according to a household income cut-off value.</p>
Tenantable dwelling	<p>Dwellings where maintenance has been completed, whether occupied or unoccupied at 30 June. All occupied dwellings are tenantable.</p>
Tenant or tenant household	<p>The usual members of a household occupying a public, community or State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing dwelling where there is a tenancy agreement with the housing authority. A tenant household either receives rebated assistance or pays the market rent as determined by the agency.</p>

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**Table 16.21 (Continued)**

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Total gross household income	The value of gross weekly income from all sources (before deductions for income tax, superannuation etc.) for all household members expressed as dollars per week. The main components of gross income are current usual wages and salary, income derived from self employment, government pensions, benefits and allowances, and other income comprising investments and other regular income.
Turnaround time	The time taken to use vacant stock.
Underutilisation	Where there are two or more bedrooms additional to the number required in the dwelling to satisfy the proxy occupancy standard.
Untenantable dwelling	Dwellings not currently occupied by a tenant where maintenance has been either deferred or not completed at 30 June.
Waiting list applicant	A household that has applied for public, community or State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing assistance and is deemed eligible but has not yet received the assistance. Includes current public housing tenants who are applicants for assistance other than that currently received (for example, transfer applicants).
Waiting list — total number of households on waiting list	The total number of applicants on the tenant manager/agency's waiting list at 30 June. The waiting list population refers to applicants who at 30 June are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• still residing in the State or Territory of application;</li> <li>• still eligible for public, community or State and Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing; and</li> <li>• still wish to pursue their application.</li> </ul> Potential applicants still awaiting eligibility assessment at 30 June are excluded.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2002b, 2002c).

## Commonwealth Rent Assistance

**Table 16.22 Terms**

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
ARO	Administrative review officer.
Control of overpayment	The number of reviews conducted targeted at CRA and their outcomes — that is, the number and value of any increases in assistance, decreases in assistance and overpayments detected. Although the reviews are targeted at CRA, they may also result in variations to the primary payment.
Customer and community satisfaction surveys	Surveys not specific to CRA that may be broadly indicative of the views of CRA recipients. This measure provides information about overall customer satisfaction with service delivery, customer service centre staff and call centre staff (the Centrelink telephone service).
Eligible income support clients	Clients in receipt of an income support payment or more than the minimum rate of family allowance. CRA is automatically paid once eligibility is established. The only eligible clients who are not paid are those affected by Centrelink errors in recording information or by program errors.

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**Table 16.22 (Continued)**

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Geographic spread of CRA customers	CRA customers as a proportion of all income units in each capital city receiving a social security support payment or more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit.
Income units	The basic units used to determine eligibility for social security payments. Income units are analogous to family units with the distinction that non-dependent children and other adults living in the same household are treated as separate income units. Children are regarded as dependent until 16 years of age. Children aged 16–18 years may also be regarded as dependent if they are full time students, wholly or substantially dependent on another person and not in receipt of an income support payment. (Defined differently for public and community housing).
Low income	Income units receiving CRA broken down by quintiles of family income per week.
Maximum rate	Proportion of CRA recipients receiving the maximum rate of CRA by payment type.
Number and outcome of appeals	The number of customers who appealed to an authorised review officer as a proportion of the number of customers receiving CRA and the proportion of appeals where the decision was affirmed, set aside or varied, or the appeal withdrawn.
Number and proportion of CRA recipients by income unit type	A point in time indicator, showing the number of CRA recipients by income unit type, and the proportion of recipients within each income unit category. Includes data on Indigenous recipients.
Number and proportion of CRA recipients by payment type	A point in time indicator showing the number of CRA recipients by the type of primary payments received, and the proportion of recipients within each payment type category.
Proportion of income spent on rent with and without CRA	A point-in-time indicator, measuring the proportion of income units spending less than (a) 30 per cent, and (b) 50 per cent of their income on rent, both with and without CRA. The proportion of income spent on rent is calculated as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• with CRA: rent minus CRA/total income from all sources, excluding CRA; or</li> <li>• without CRA: rent/total income from all sources, excluding CRA.</li> </ul>
Ratio of running costs to total outlays for the CRA program	Total running costs for the CRA program as a proportion of total outlays.
Rent	Amounts payable as a condition of occupancy of a person's home. Includes site fees for a caravan, mooring fees and payment for services provided in a retirement village. Rent encompasses not only a formal tenancy agreement, but also informal agreements between family members, including the payment of board or board and lodgings. Where a person pays board and lodgings and is unable to separately identify the amount paid for lodgings, two-thirds of the payment is deemed to be for rent. There is no requirement that rent be paid; a person whose rent is in arrears may remain eligible for assistance provided Centrelink is satisfied that the liability is genuine.
Running costs per 1000 CRA customers	Total running costs for the CRA program per 1000 CRA customers.

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**Table 16.22 (Continued)**

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<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Satisfaction with location of housing	Satisfaction with the location of housing as measured by the DFACS General Customer Survey. Reports on individuals paid CRA the fortnight before interview.
Satisfaction with quality of housing	Satisfaction with the quality of housing as measured by the DFACS General Customer Survey. Reports on individuals paid CRA the fortnight before interview.
Special needs	The proportion of income units spending less than(a) 30 per cent, and (b) 50 per cent of their income on rent, both with and without CRA, for Indigenous CRA recipients, those in rural and remote areas and disability support pension recipients.
Total income from all sources	<p>Income received by the customer or partner, excluding income received by a dependent. Includes regular social security payments and any maintenance and other private income taken into account for income testing purposes. Excludes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• one-time payments;</li><li>• arrears payments;</li><li>• advances;</li><li>• Employment or Education Entry Payments;</li><li>• Mobility Allowance;</li><li>• Maternity Allowance; and</li><li>• Child Care Assistance Rebate.</li></ul> <p>In most cases, private income reflects the person's current circumstances. Taxable income for a past financial year, or an estimate of taxable income for the current financial year, is used where the income unit receives more than the minimum rate of family allowance but no other income support payment.</p>

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Source: DFACS (unpublished).

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