

PART G

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# HOUSING



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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. The Australian, 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, such as:

- 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)
- services delivered by the Australian, 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, such as, the Home and Community Care Program (chapter 12).

A four year CSHA came into effect on 1 July 1999 and ran until 30 June 2003. A performance framework for reporting under this 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 owned and managed Indigenous housing is based on this framework. The chapter includes data on the final year of the 1999 CSHA. A new CSHA took effect on 1 July 2003 and will run until 30 June 2008. Work will be undertaken on the performance indicator framework to reflect the objectives of the new agreement and to further improve the quality and scope of national performance information.

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

The CSHA is an agreement made between the Australian, State and Territory governments under the *Housing Assistance Act 1996* (Cwlth) 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.

The 1999 CSHA came into effect on 1 July 1999 and ran until 30 June 2003 and included, for the first time, bilateral agreements between the Australian Government 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. The 2003 CSHA took effect on 1 July 2003 and will run until 30 June 2008 (section 16.2).

#### **Funding arrangements**

The majority of funding under the 1999 CSHA was provided by the Australian Government and took 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 was 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' Australian Government funding allocations.

#### **Roles and responsibilities**

Under the CSHA, the Australian 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 Australian Government objectives to be achieved under the agreement
- 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 Australian, State and Territory government objectives and that best meet the circumstances of the State or Territory
- developing, implementing and managing services and programs to deliver agreed outcomes
- reporting on a basis that enables performance assessment by the Australian, State or Territory governments, based on agreed performance indicators.

*Source:* CSHA (1999, 2003).

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,

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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.

Public, community and State owned and managed Indigenous housing information has been obtained from the Australian, 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 web site at [www.aihw.gov.au](http://www.aihw.gov.au) (AIHW 2003a, 2003b and 2003j). This year data for public rental housing and for State owned and managed Indigenous housing were compiled for all jurisdictions from unit record data under the National Housing Data Repository at the AIHW. CRA data have been obtained from the Department of Family and Community Services (DFaCS).

#### *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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC)/Army Community Assistance Program, which provides new housing and improved infrastructure for Indigenous communities
- 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 the Australian Government 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
- non-Indigenous community housing not funded under the CSHA.

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## *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\2004\Attach16A.xls and in Adobe PDF format as \Publications\Reports\2004\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/2004/index.html](http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/2004/index.html)). 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 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2001 Census of Population and Housing 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, and 2.8 per cent resided in other tenure types (table 16A.67). Due to non-response, 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>

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 single 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 2001, the average non-Indigenous Australian household size was

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<sup>1</sup> Public housing tenants appear to be undercounted in the 2001 Census (and in previous Censuses).

<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 ABS 2001 Census on the total number of dwellings in each jurisdiction.

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2.6 people, whereas the average household with at least one Indigenous person was 3.5 people (ABS and AIHW 2003).

The Indigenous population is younger than the non-Indigenous population. The ABS 2001 Census showed that 39.0 per cent of the Indigenous population was aged under 15 years compared with 20.3 per cent of the non-Indigenous population. Only 2.8 per cent of the Indigenous population was aged over 65 years, compared with 12.7 per cent of the non-Indigenous population (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 can 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 and/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 the Australian, State and Territory governments can help these households.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

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

- The Australian Government provides CRA and shares responsibility with State and Territory governments for housing assistance provided under the CSHA (box 16.1). The Australian Government 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 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.
- Local governments implement planning regulations and are sometimes involved in providing community housing.

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## Funding

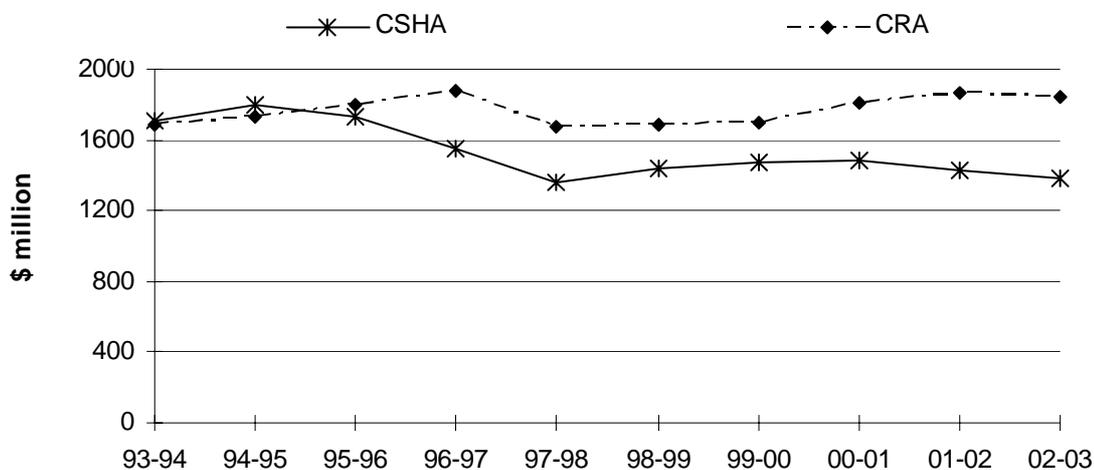
The Australian, State and Territory governments provided just under \$1.4 billion (contributing about 74 per cent and 26 per cent respectively) for housing programs under the CSHA in 2002-03. Public and community housing accounted for the majority of CSHA funding in 2002-03. The Australian Government also provided over \$1.8 billion for CRA in 2002-03.

Expenditure on CSHA assistance declined by approximately 18.6 per cent between 1993-94 and 2002-03 (figure 16.1). Included in CSHA expenditure in 2002-03 was \$89.7 million of goods and services tax (GST) compensation paid to State and Territory governments. Expenditure on CRA increased by approximately 9.8 per cent in real terms over the same period (table 16A.74).

Public housing is the largest program under the CSHA. Given the capital intensive nature of public housing, assistance additional to annual funding, is provided through the use of approximately \$42 billion of housing stock owned by housing authorities (calculated from 2001-02 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 result in fewer dwelling constructions or acquisitions.

Nationally, total government recurrent expenditure on public housing per person in the population was approximately \$77 in 2002-03. Across jurisdictions it ranged from \$271 in the NT to \$43 in Victoria in 2002-03. Including capital costs, total government expenditure on public housing per person in the population ranged from \$837 in the ACT to \$203 in Queensland. Average national total government expenditure on public housing per person in the population in 2002-03 was \$296 (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 (2002-03 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 \$42 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 1993-94 to 1995-96 have been adjusted to enable comparability (see the 2002 Report for further explanation). Australian Government CSHA expenditure differed from Australian Government budgetary allocations for the three years from 1996-97 to 1998-99 because some States and Territories chose CSHA funds as the source to offset their State Fiscal Contributions to the Australian Government's debt reduction program, which was agreed at the 1996 Premiers' Conference. <sup>c</sup> CSHA expenditure in the three years from 2000-01 to 2002-03 contained \$89.7 million of (GST) compensation paid to State and Territory governments.

Source: CSHA (1999), DFACS (1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2002); DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.74.

## Size and scope

Housing assistance is provided in various forms, and models for delivering assistance can vary both within and across jurisdictions. The main forms of assistance are outlined in box 16.2. This chapter focuses on four forms of assistance: public housing, community housing, State owned and managed Indigenous housing, and CRA.

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## Box 16.2 Forms of housing assistance

There are several main forms of CSHA housing assistance.

- *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 that are at least partly subsidised by government. Community housing models vary across jurisdictions.
- *Indigenous housing*: public rental housing targeted at Indigenous households and houses which are owned and managed by Indigenous community housing organisations and community councils in major cities, regional 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 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.
- *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:

- *Commonwealth Rent Assistance*: a non-taxable income support supplement paid by the Australian Government to income support recipients or people who receive more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A and who rent in the private rental market
- *Indigenous community housing*: in addition to housing funded under the CSHA, Indigenous housing and housing related infrastructure are funded through the Community Housing Infrastructure Program administered by ATSIC. State and Territory governments also provide funding from their own resources.

Source: CSHA (1999); DSS (1998).

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### *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 337 959 public housing dwellings were occupied at 30 June 2003. 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>

Australian 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).

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), to provide affordable housing to people on low incomes. Public and community housing allocations are constrained by the amount of housing stock available and are income tested. The proportion of total households residing in public housing in 2001 ranged from 8.6 per cent in the ACT to 3.2 per cent in Victoria (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 programs aim to achieve links between housing and services that are best managed at the community level, including services for people

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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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with a disability 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).

**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*, whereby the associations provide property and tenancy management services and community groups provide support services to tenants
- *headleasing*, whereby housing authorities or private landlords own the housing stock, which is managed by community groups
- *joint ventures and housing partnerships*, whereby a range of church, welfare, local government agencies and other organisations provide resources in cooperation with State and Territory government organisations
- *housing cooperatives*, which are responsible for tenant management and maintenance, while government, a central finance company or an individual cooperative owns the housing stock
- *community management and ownership*, whereby not-for-profit or community housing associations both own and manage housing
- *local government housing associations*, which 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
- *equity share rental housing*, whereby 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).

Funding for community housing is typically either fully or partly provided by governments to not-for-profit organisations or local government. Australian Government funding for community housing amounted to 6.2 per cent (\$64.0 million) of total CSHA funding provided by the Australian Government in 2002-03 (DFaCS, unpublished). There were 29 367 CSHA community housing

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dwellings in Australia at June 2003,<sup>4</sup> or 7.8 per cent of the total public and community housing stock supported under the CSHA (tables 16A.1 and 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 (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 that was not identified through the study.

### *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 other sources.

### *State owned and managed Indigenous housing*

Reporting on State owned and managed Indigenous housing was included for the first time in the 2002 Report.<sup>5</sup> That Report referred to such housing as the ARHP, but the title for the 2003 Report changed to reflect that the ARHP data collection refers to only State owned and managed Indigenous housing yet ARHP funds are also used to provide other forms of Indigenous housing, particularly Indigenous community housing. ‘State owned and managed Indigenous housing’ refers to rental housing owned and managed by the State government and allocated to Indigenous households only. It includes dwellings managed by government Indigenous housing agencies for allocation to Indigenous tenants. The framework for reporting on State owned and managed Indigenous housing is based on that used for public and community housing. There were 12 563 dwellings identified in the 2002-03 State owned and managed Indigenous housing collection (table 16A.27).

State 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

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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 non-response.

<sup>5</sup> The Territories are not included in the data collection for this program, so are not included in the section heading.

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managed housing (where community agencies carry out tenancy management functions), the mainstream public and community housing programs, CRA and other government housing programs (both Indigenous specific and mainstream). Some mainstream community housing providers target Indigenous Australians for the allocation of housing. In the 2002-03 CSHA community housing data collection, 20 mainstream community housing organisations nominated Indigenous Australians as their primary target group for the allocation of housing.

The ACT does not receive funding for or administer any Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing programs; in the NT, ARHP funding is directed to community managed Indigenous housing. The NT government cannot differentiate between the various funding sources due to its commitment under the CSHA Indigenous Agreement to 'pool' all funds earmarked for Indigenous housing and associated infrastructure in the NT. The ACT and the NT are not included in the State owned and managed Indigenous housing data collection.

### *Indigenous community housing*

For community managed Indigenous housing, it is not possible to report against a performance indicator framework. However, data from the ATSI/ABS Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey (CHINS) (ABS 2002b) 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 compare CHINS data and State owned and managed Indigenous housing data. The former is a survey, while reporting for State owned and managed Indigenous housing is based on administrative data.

The CHINS was conducted between March and June 2001 to collect information on 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. Trained ABS officers collected information via personal interviews with key community and Indigenous housing organisation representatives.

The 2001 CHINS identified 21 287 permanent Indigenous community housing dwellings (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 (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. Due to

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the diversity of funding arrangements across programs and jurisdictions, problems may occur with program boundaries (especially where the management of government owned stock has transferred to the Indigenous community sector) and, therefore, some government owned dwellings could 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 2001 CHINS, 47.2 per cent managed 1–19 dwellings, 33.6 per cent managed 20–49 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 were 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 58.0 per cent of Indigenous housing organisations during the financial year before the 2001 CHINS. Indigenous housing organisations in discrete communities were more likely (68.8 per cent) than urban Indigenous housing organisations (43.8 per cent) to receive grants. The main providers of grants were ATSIC (28.4 per cent of organisations) and the State and Territory governments (19.6 per cent of organisations), with joint State or Territory and Australian Government 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).

### *Commonwealth Rent Assistance*

Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) 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.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance is paid at 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 their number of children (table 16.1). For single people without dependent children, the maximum rate may also vary according to whether accommodation is shared with others. Rent thresholds and maximum rates are indexed twice per year (March and September) to reflect changes in the consumer price index.

**Table 16.1 Eligibility and payment scales for CRA, 2003 (\$ per fortnight)<sup>a, b</sup>**

<i>Income unit type<sup>c</sup></i>	<i>Minimum rent to be eligible for CRA</i>	<i>Minimum rent to be eligible for maximum CRA</i>	<i>Maximum CRA</i>	<i>Average CRA paid<sup>d</sup></i>
Single, no dependent children <sup>e</sup>	82.80	207.07	93.20	73.30
Single, no children, sharer	82.80	165.64	62.13	52.83
Couple, no dependent children	134.80	252.13	88.00	71.37
Single, 1 or 2 dependent children	109.06	255.03	109.48	83.68
Single, 3 or more dependent children	109.06	274.07	123.76	97.30
Partnered, 1 or 2 dependent children	161.42	307.39	109.48	82.24
Partnered, 3 or more dependent children	161.42	326.43	123.76	92.33
Partnered, illness separated, no dependent children	82.80	207.07	93.20	90.94
Partnered, temporarily separated, no dependent children	82.80	200.13	88.00	87.24

<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. <sup>b</sup> Income units are analogous to family units except that non-dependent children and other adults are treated as separate income units (table 16.24 has more detail). Rates of assistance depend on the number of dependent children under 16 years for whom Family Tax Benefit is paid at more than the basic rate. <sup>c</sup> A child is regarded as dependent on an adult only if the adult receives Family Tax Benefit for the care of the child. <sup>d</sup> Average for income units with ongoing entitlement to CRA at 13 June 2003. <sup>e</sup> The maximum rate of assistance is lower for some single persons without dependent children who share accommodation (definition of sharer is in table 16.24).

Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 11A.42.

Because 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 was received by 59.4 per cent of CRA recipients at 30 June 2003 (table 16A.49). This outcome and the national payment objective of CRA resulted in little variation in the average

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level of assistance across locations at that date (table 16A.61) even though rents varied considerably by location. At 30 June 2003, the average payment across Australia was \$73 per fortnight (approximately \$1888 per year). On a capital city/rest of State or Territory basis, Sydney had the highest average CRA payment (\$78 per fortnight). Excluding other Australian Territories, non-capital city Tasmania had the lowest average CRA payment (\$69 per fortnight) (table 16A.61).

There were 940 708 income units (where an income unit is defined as either a single person or a couple with or without dependents)<sup>6</sup> receiving CRA at 30 June 2003 (table 16.17). The mix of clients by payment type reflects the fact that the proportion of social security recipients receiving CRA varies by age. Clients aged 25 years are the most likely to receive CRA. Younger single clients without children generally have to live away from the parental home to qualify for CRA, while older clients are more likely to have entered into home ownership. At 29 November 2002, 43 per cent of all social security income units with a head aged 25 years received CRA. This proportion decreased to 39 per cent for those with a head aged 30 years, 30 per cent for those with a head aged 40 years, 26 per cent for those with a head aged 50 years and less than 14 per cent for those with a head aged 65 years or over.

## **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 the following additional information on the key operating parameters characterising housing assistance provision in their jurisdictions.

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<sup>6</sup> Dependents are defined as young persons for whom the person or partner receives Family Tax Benefit. Family Tax Benefit is not payable for children receiving Youth allowance or any other income security payment. Children over 16 years for whom Family Tax Benefit is not payable are regarded as separate income units.

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## *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 2003, income limits for a single person ranged from \$540 per week in SA to \$332 per week in Victoria and Tasmania. In most cases, jurisdictions require that applicants must be Australian citizens or permanent residents and must 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 2003 for a single person who does not own their own home) to \$28 079 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 years 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 an inability to access appropriate private market accommodation.
- *Term of tenure.* Most jurisdictions provide security of tenure after an initial probationary period. In 2002-03, NSW introduced renewable tenancies for most new tenants: tenants are placed on fixed term tenancies for a minimum of seven years, after which their tenancies become continuing. Renewal of tenancies depends on whether periodic reviews indicate that tenants are meeting the terms of their tenancy agreement. Changes in income are not considered in a tenancy review and do not determine whether a tenant can progress to a continuing tenancy. In Victoria, new tenants after November 1997 are subject to ongoing eligibility review. Tenants aged 65 years or over have lifetime tenure. In SA, tenants are housed on a six month probationary lease and, if they meet their conditions of tenancy, may be offered an ongoing lease. 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 introduced an income-to-rent ratio of 25 per cent for new tenants and the NT introduced a ratio of 23 per cent (or 18 per cent for aged pension recipients). In SA, most households pay 25 per cent of assessable income in rent, except aged residents in cottage flat and bedsitter flat accommodation (for whom the ratio is 19 per cent and 17 per cent respectively) and households receiving less than the single Newstart Allowance (for whom the ratio is 19.5 per cent). Definitions of assessable income vary across jurisdictions. In 2002-03, 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.
- *Rebated tenants.* The proportion of public housing tenants in receipt of a rebated rent at 30 June 2003 was 90.6 per cent in NSW, 88.9 per cent in Victoria, 87.6 per cent in Queensland, 91.0 per cent in WA, 85.5 per cent in SA, 86.3 per cent in Tasmania, 82.5 per cent in the ACT and 88.8 per cent in the NT. Nationally, 88.7 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.
- *Regional and remote area concentrations.* The proportion of public housing located in regional and remote areas using the Remoteness Area (RA) classification is shown in table 16.2.

**Table 16.2 Regional and remote area concentrations, 2003 (per cent)<sup>a</sup>**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas <sup>b</sup>	ACT <sup>c</sup>	NT	Aust
Regional <sup>d</sup>	19.4	28.2	35.7	19.5	21.4	99.2	0.1	68.9	26.6
Remote <sup>e</sup>	0.4	–	2.4	10.4	1.9	0.8	–	31.1	2.2

<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. <sup>b</sup> Under the RA classification, Tasmania consists of mainly regional areas with some remote areas. <sup>c</sup> Under the RA classification most of the ACT is classified as a capital city. <sup>d</sup> Comprises inner and outer regional areas. <sup>e</sup> Comprises remote and very remote areas. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: AIHW (2003h); table 16A.1.

### *Community housing*

- *Eligibility.* Eligibility for community housing is generally consistent with eligibility requirements for public housing in each jurisdiction.
- *Waiting list management.* Most jurisdictions do not require 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 in total public and community housing dwellings at June 2003 was approximately 7.5 per cent in NSW (excluding Crisis Accommodation Program dwellings), 11.2 per cent in Victoria, 9.4 per cent in Queensland, 4.6 per cent in WA, 6.9 per cent in SA, 1.9 per cent in Tasmania, 3.7 per cent in the ACT and 1.6 per cent in the NT (based on administrative data). Where based on survey data, these results are affected by survey non-response.
- *Regional and remote area concentrations.* For the data that are available, the proportion of community housing located in regional and remote areas using the RA classification are shown in table 16.3.

**Table 16.3 Regional and remote area concentrations, 2003 (per cent)<sup>a</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas<sup>b</sup></i>	<i>ACT<sup>c</sup></i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Regional <sup>d</sup>	28.8	27.1	52.3	29.3	12.4	100.0	–	62.1	30.8
Remote <sup>e</sup>	0.4	0.2	11.2	8.7	1.1	–	–	37.9	3.8

<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. <sup>b</sup> Under the RA classification, Tasmania consists of mainly regional areas with some remote areas. <sup>c</sup> Under the RA classification most of the ACT is classified as a capital city. <sup>d</sup> Comprises inner and outer regional areas. <sup>e</sup> Comprises remote and very remote areas. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: AIHW (2003f); table 16A.15.

### *State owned and managed Indigenous housing*

State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings are defined as those rental housing dwellings owned and managed by government and allocated to only Indigenous Australians (AIHW 2003a). 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. 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 Indigenous housing organisations that manage permanent dwellings for people in 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.

In NSW, a separate statutory organisation — the Aboriginal Housing Office — is responsible for planning, administering and expanding policies, programs and the asset base for Aboriginal housing in that State. Funding for the office comes from

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the CSHA, ATSIIC and the State Government (in addition to its CSHA commitments).

Some other jurisdictions are increasingly pooling funding but currently report State 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 owned and managed Indigenous housing.* In NSW, Victoria, WA, 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 because the program is aimed at addressing discrimination and a history of social disadvantage, and discrimination can occur regardless of income or age.
- *Management of the waiting list.* Management of waiting lists varies across jurisdictions for State owned and managed Indigenous housing. NSW, Victoria and WA each have 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 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 1 reflecting those in most urgent need of housing and category 4 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. Aboriginal customer service officers undertake assessments considering 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 for whom the provision of housing may enhance their educational or employment opportunities. Regional Aboriginal housing committees determine priority and allocate properties.

- *Term of tenure.* In NSW, Victoria, WA and SA, security of tenure is the same as that for public housing. In Queensland, security of tenure depends on State owned and managed Indigenous housing tenants meeting their responsibilities under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1994* (Qld) (which involves paying their rent, maintaining the property and keeping the peace of the neighbourhood). In Tasmania, tenants are signed to either a fixed term lease or 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.
- *Regional and remote area concentrations.* The proportion of State owned and managed Indigenous housing located in regional and remote areas using the RA classification is shown in table 16.4.

Table 16.4 **Regional and remote area concentrations, 2003 (per cent)<sup>a</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas<sup>b</sup></i>	<i>Aust</i>
Regional <sup>c</sup>	51.5	62.6	59.6	30.2	26.3	100.0	47.9
Remote <sup>d</sup>	7.4	0.4	27.8	40.8	13.0	–	18.1

<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. <sup>b</sup> Under the RA classification, Tasmania consists of mainly regional areas with some remote areas. <sup>c</sup> Comprises inner and outer regional areas. <sup>d</sup> Comprises remote and very remote areas. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: AIHW (2003d); table 16A.27.

### *Private rental markets*

- *Capital city vacancy rates.* Vacancy rates in the private rental market at June 2003 ranged from 6.5 per cent in Darwin to 2.4 per cent in Hobart. Tight private rental markets (vacancy rates below 3.0 per cent) were evident in Brisbane, Hobart and Canberra (table 16A.68). (Vacancy rates for Adelaide were not available.)
- *Capital city median rents.* Median rents for three bedroom houses at June 2003 were highest in Canberra at \$280 per week and lowest in Perth at \$177 per week. For two bedroom flats or units, median rents ranged from \$270 per week in Sydney to \$140 per week in Hobart (table 16A.69). (Median rents for Melbourne were not available.)

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## 16.2 Policy developments in housing assistance

### The new CSHA

A new CSHA took effect on 1 July 2003 and will run until 30 June 2008. Many aspects of the new agreement, such as funding arrangements and housing assistance roles and responsibilities, are similar to those of the previous agreement. The 2003 CSHA has a focus on reducing workforce disincentives and increasing private sector involvement in affordable housing. It also places greater emphasis on Australian, State and Territory governments improving housing outcomes for Indigenous people. Governments will work towards improving access to mainstream housing options for Indigenous people living in urban and rural areas (CSHA 2003). Work will be undertaken on the performance indicator framework to reflect the objectives of the new agreement and to further improve the quality and scope of reporting national performance indicators.

### 16.3 Framework of performance indicators

The framework of performance indicators for public, community and State 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 public, community and State owned and managed Indigenous housing indicator frameworks have been modified this year in line with the new general framework for performance indicators implemented across all chapters for the first time in this Report. The new approach reflects the adoption by governments of accrual accounting and clearly depicts the Review's focus on outcomes, consistent with demand by governments for outcome oriented performance information. The new framework also accentuates the importance of equity and draws out the distinction between equity and access. More detail on the new framework, along with the differences between outputs and outcomes, can be found in chapter 1.

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 was to provide housing assistance that was:

- affordable — that is, after accounting for housing assistance, housing costs for a household do not exceed agreed benchmarks relating to income
- appropriate — that is, 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.

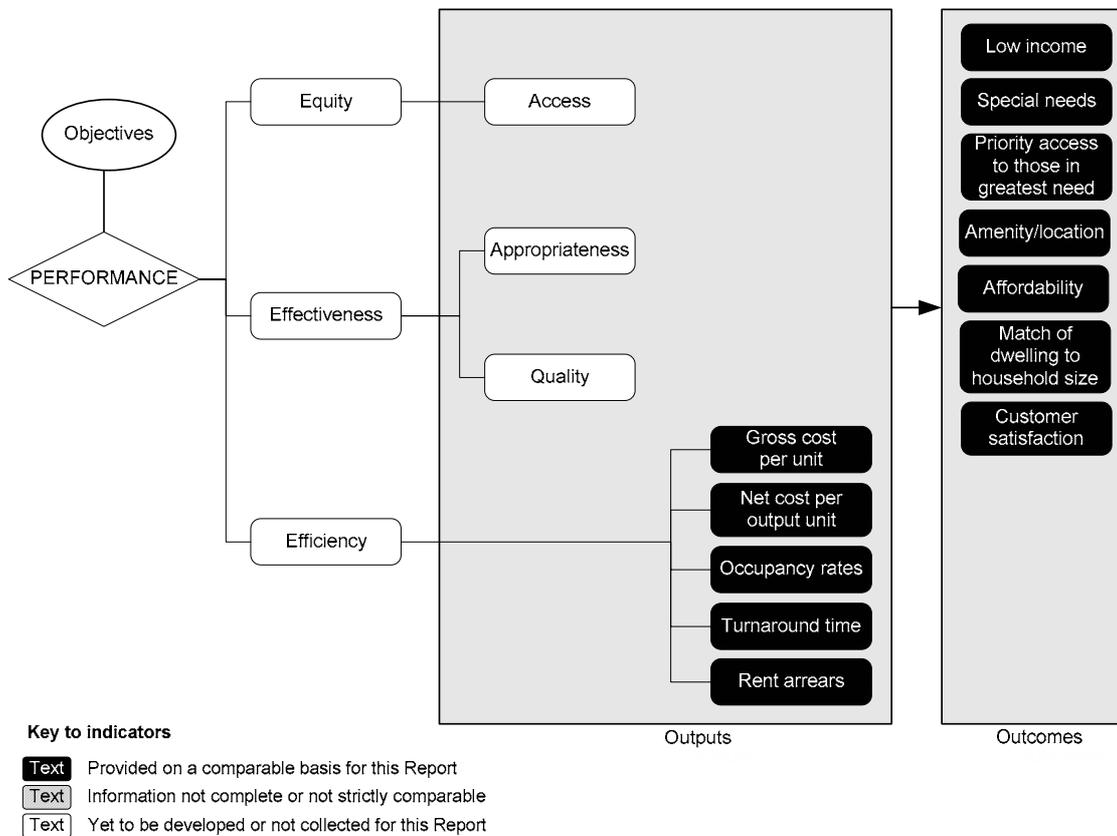
The guiding principles of the 1999 CSHA were to:

- 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
- provide assistance in a way that minimises workforce disincentives.

*Source:* DFACS (2002).

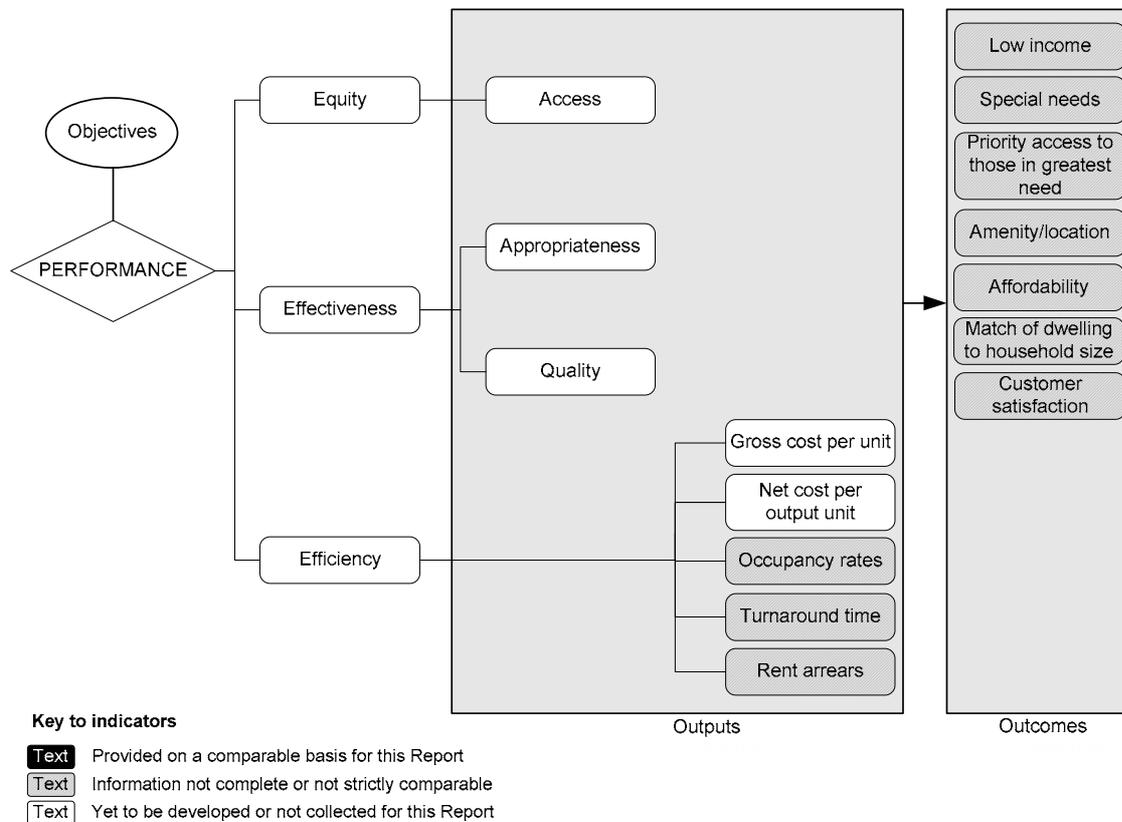
The performance indicator framework shows which data are comparable across jurisdictions in the 2004 Report (figures 16.2, 16.3 and 16.4). For data that are not considered strictly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary. Chapter 1 discusses data comparability from a Report-wide perspective (see section 1.6).

Figure 16.2 Performance indicators for public housing



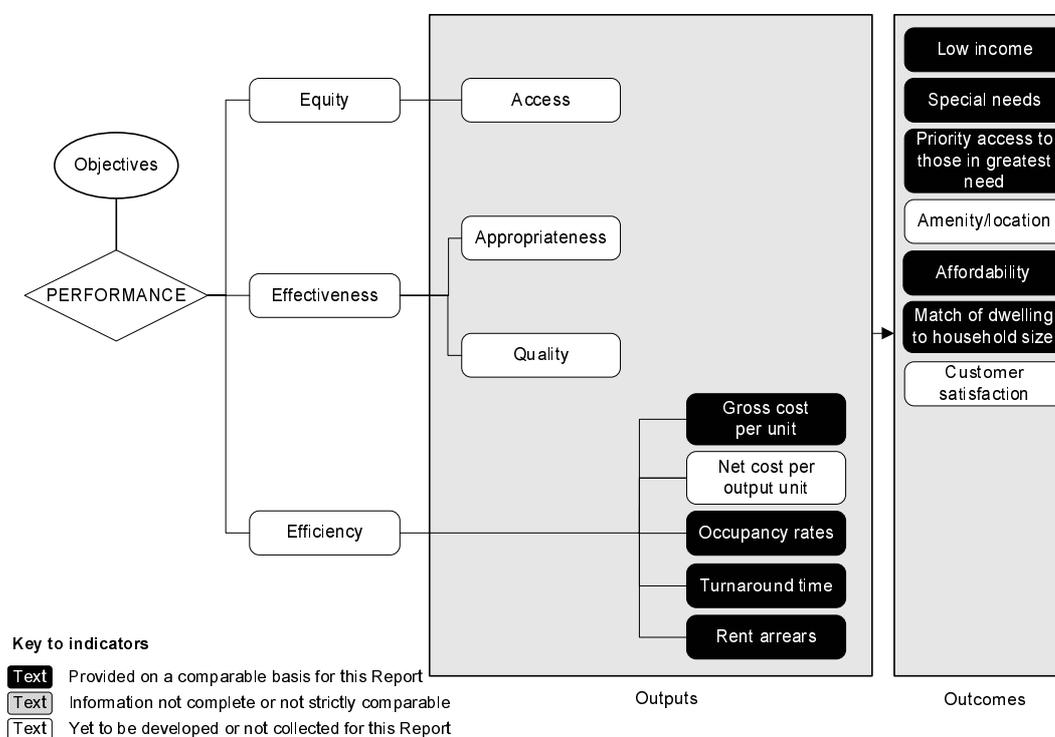
Performance indicator data are reported against the current public housing and community housing frameworks for the fourth consecutive year. Additional information on affordability, and moderate overcrowding and underuse can be found in tables 16A.75, 16A.76 and 16A.77 and tables 16A.78, 16A.79 and 16A.80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

**Figure 16.3 Performance indicators for community housing**



Comparable public housing data are presented for the full range of indicators in the performance measurement framework (figure 16.2). It has not been possible, however, to obtain nationally comparable performance information for community housing (figure 16.3) given current data standards and data collection capacity. Jurisdictions operate a variety of funding and asset management models (box 16.3), which are not always managed by State or Territory housing authorities.

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



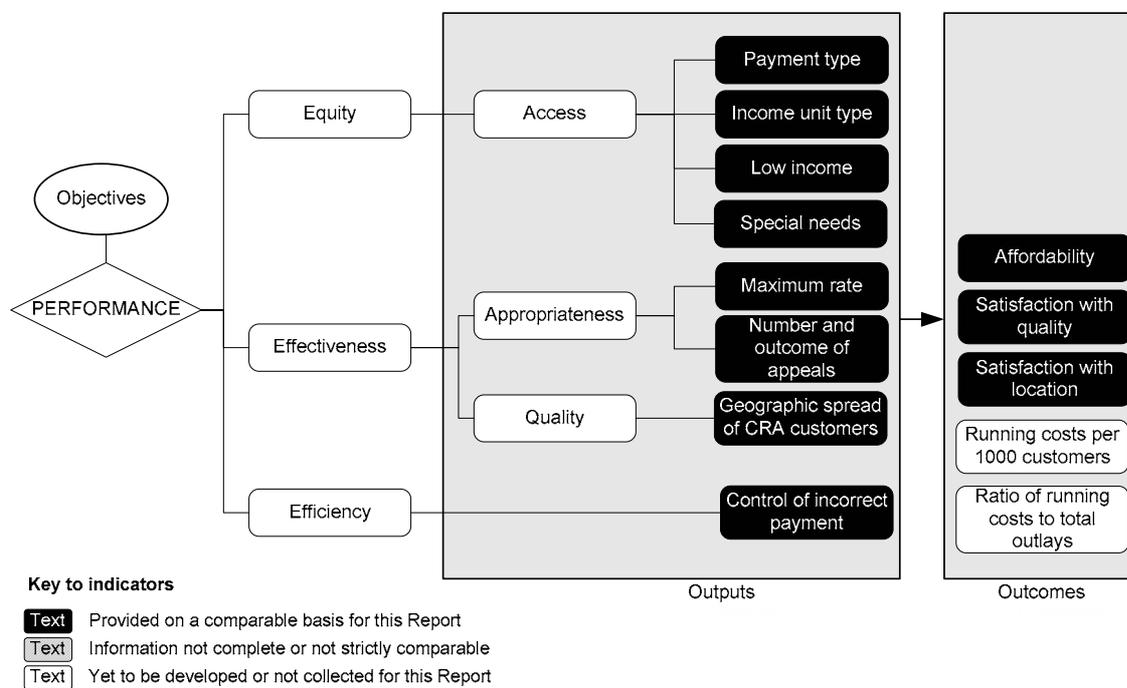
Performance reporting on State owned and managed Indigenous housing was included for the first time in the 2002 Report. While the performance indicator framework for State owned and managed Indigenous housing (figure 16.4) is the same as that for public and community housing, it is not appropriate to directly compare the performance of public housing and State owned and managed Indigenous housing because several definitions differ. Section 16.4 contains information on the differences between public housing and State owned and managed Indigenous housing.

The performance indicators for CRA differ from those for public, community and State owned and managed Indigenous housing because CRA has different objectives and delivery methods. Reporting for CRA uses a performance indicator framework (figure 16.5) based on the CRA objective outlined in box 16.5. The framework has been modified this year in line with the new general framework for performance indicators implemented for this Report. More detail on the new framework can be found in chapter 1. All indicators are defined in tables 16.23 and 16.24.

**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 that they face (Newman 1998). This assistance should be provided in an equitable and efficient manner. CRA is also governed by other objectives relating to the primary income support payment.

**Figure 16.5 Performance indicators for CRA**



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 output indicators within the performance measurement framework. It is not possible to report on two of the outcomes indicators because data are unavailable.

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## 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.

#### *Outputs*

#### *Efficiency*

Four performance indicators measure the efficiency of public housing provision. Each efficiency indicator is classified as an output.

#### *Efficiency — cost per output unit*

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
- the user cost of capital.

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). It makes explicit the opportunity cost of using the funds to deliver services rather than investing them elsewhere or using them to retire debt. It is

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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 across 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
- treated inconsistently (that 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 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 a 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 imputed costing is preferable to not costing government capital at all.

The indicative user cost of capital for land per public housing dwelling was highest in the ACT (\$11 485) and lowest in Tasmania (\$1186) in 2002-03. The full indicative cost of capital per dwelling ranged from \$18 085 in the ACT to \$4854 in Tasmania (table 16.5). Cost per dwelling is broken down into the gross cost to government (administration and operating costs plus capital costs) and the net cost to government (cost net of 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 the full gross cost and net cost to government, rendering these data not comparable with those published before 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. Prior to the 2002 Report, it had not been possible to avoid this double counting.

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

Payroll tax has been excluded from total recurrent cost for public housing calculations in the Housing chapter for the first time this year. As a result, the cost

data are not comparable with that published in previous reports (see chapter 2 for a discussion of the reasons for excluding payroll tax from the cost calculations).

The net cost to government per dwelling in 2002-03 ranged from \$19 464 in the ACT to \$6629 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, 2002-03 (dollars)<sup>a</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld<sup>b</sup></i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Total recurrent costs (excluding payroll tax)	4 494	3 196	4 139	4 204	4 495	6 340	6 304	9 198	4 375
Depreciation	1 575	1 597	2 245	1 323	823	966	1 126	2 450	1 528
Indicative user cost of capital									
land	9 399	4 467	3 869	4 140	2 495	1 186	11 485	4 327	5 963
other assets	5 773	6 185	5 162	4 770	3 495	3 691	6 012	5 750	5 294
total assets	15 172	10 652	9 030	8 910	5 990	4 877	17 496	10 077	11 257
Interest payments <sup>c</sup>	390	–	247	633	942	989	537	2 711	459
Total capital costs	16 357	12 249	11 028	9 601	5 871	4 854	18 085	9 816	12 325
<b>Full gross costs (excluding payroll tax)</b>	<b>20 851</b>	<b>15 445</b>	<b>15 167</b>	<b>13 804</b>	<b>10 365</b>	<b>11 194</b>	<b>24 389</b>	<b>19 014</b>	<b>16 700</b>
Rent collected from tenants	3 880	3 826	3 731	3 577	3 736	3 361	4 925	4 183	3 822
<b>Full net costs (excluding payroll tax)</b>	<b>16 970</b>	<b>11 618</b>	<b>11 436</b>	<b>10 227</b>	<b>6 629</b>	<b>7 834</b>	<b>19 464</b>	<b>14 831</b>	<b>12 878</b>
Dwellings (no.)	125 216	64 849	49 579	31 720	47 772	12 004	11 043	5 829	348 012

<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 2001). <sup>b</sup> For Queensland capital works in progress are excluded. <sup>c</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. Before the 2002 Report, it had not been possible to avoid this double counting. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: AIHW (2003g); State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.2.

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. Box 16.6 summarises the results relating to housing.

### 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 the study, *Asset Measurement in the Costing of Government Services* (SCRCSSP 2001). 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 impact. The results are discussed in more detail in chapter 2.

Source: SCRCSSP (2001).

### Efficiency — occupancy rate

The second indicator of efficiency measures the proportion of the housing stock occupied. The proportion of public rental stock occupied at 30 June 2003 ranged from 98.7 per cent in the ACT to 93.9 per cent in the NT. The national average occupancy rate was 97.1 per cent (table 16.6).

Table 16.6 Occupancy rates (per cent)<sup>a</sup>

	NSW <sup>b</sup>	Vic	Qld <sup>c</sup>	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
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
2003	98.3	96.5	97.9	95.7	94.9	96.8	98.7	93.9	97.1

<sup>a</sup> Proportion of public housing dwellings occupied at 30 June. <sup>b</sup> Data for NSW for 2003 are based on a different method from previous years and need to be interpreted with caution. For details of these variations, see table 16A.3. <sup>c</sup> For a more detailed explanation of the 2001 data, see SCRCSSP (2003).

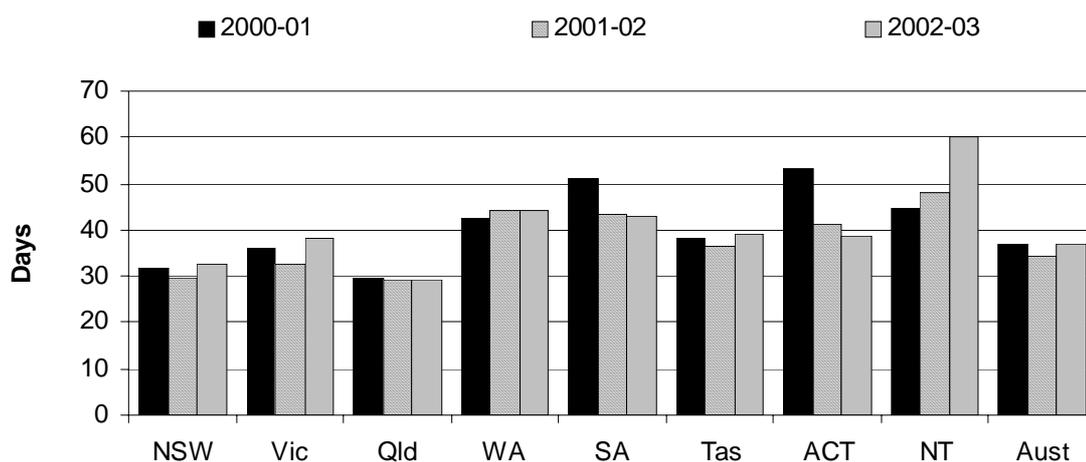
Source: AIHW (2002c, 2003g, 2003h); table 16A.3.

### Efficiency — turnaround time

The third indicator of efficiency — turnaround time — indicates the speed with which housing stock is re-occupied 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 2002-03 varied from 60 days in the NT to 29 days in Queensland (figure 16.6). This indicator may be affected by changes in maintenance programs, and some jurisdictions may have difficulty in excluding stock upgrades.

Figure 16.6 **Average turnaround times**<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>



<sup>a</sup> For NSW, the previous years data have been adjusted to ensure comparability. <sup>b</sup> Data for Victoria and SA for 2002-03 are based on a different method from previous years and need to be interpreted with caution. For a more detailed explanation of the 2000-01 and 2001-02 data, see SCRCSSP (2002) and SCRCSSP (2003). <sup>c</sup> For a more detailed explanation of Queensland and WA 2001-02 data, see SCRCSSP (2003). <sup>d</sup> Data for Tasmania for 2003-03 are based on a different method from that used for previous years data, and a direct comparison of 2002-03 data with previous years cannot be made. For details of these changes, see table 16A.4.

Source: AIHW (2002c, 2003g, 2003h); table 16A.4.

### *Efficiency — rent arrears*

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 2002-03 varied from 101.0 per cent in WA to 97.5 per cent in the NT (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.

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

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
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
2002-03	100.5	99.8	99.3	101.0	98.3	99.7	99.9	97.5	99.8

<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.

Source: AIHW (2002c, 2003g, 2003h); table 16A.5.

## Outcomes

### *Low income and special needs*

Special needs households are those that have either a household member with a disability, a principal tenant aged 24 years or under, or 75 years or over, or a household defined as being Indigenous. The first indicator measures the 'low income' and 'special needs (but not low income)' status of households receiving public housing assistance (table 16.8). The two household income measures for the purpose of this indicator are:

- low income A households — those in public housing in which 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).
- low income B households — those in public housing that have incomes that would enable them to receive government income support benefits below the maximum pension.

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 2002-03 ranged from 92.9 per cent in NSW to 86.8 per cent in WA. The proportion of new tenancies allocated to low income A or special needs (not low income) households varied from 96.1 per cent in NSW to 84.0 per cent in the ACT (table 16.8). Information on both low income A and low income B households is contained in table 16A.6.

The second indicator measures the proportion of new tenancies allocated to special needs households. In 2002-03 this proportion ranged from 62.8 per cent in the NT to 35.3 per cent in the ACT (figure 16.7).

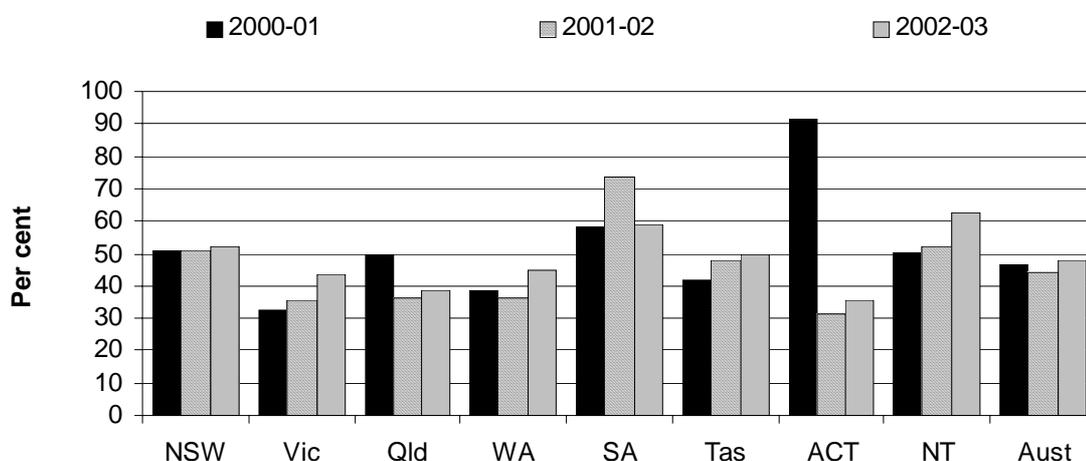
**Table 16.8 Low income and special needs households as a proportion of all new households (per cent)<sup>a, b</sup>**

	NSW <sup>b</sup>	Vic <sup>b</sup>	Qld <sup>c, d</sup>	WA <sup>c</sup>	SA <sup>c</sup>	Tas <sup>d</sup>	ACT <sup>c</sup>	NT <sup>d</sup>	Aust
New low income A households									
2000-01	94.1	86.1	90.0	85.8	89.3	84.6	np	83.6	89.5
2001-02	94.6	93.0	90.4	83.8	89.7	93.1	92.0	87.0	91.4
2002-03	92.9	90.4	90.3	86.8	89.6	90.6	88.9	87.4	90.4
New low income A households or special needs (not low income households)									
2000-01	97.3	90.6	93.4	89.7	94.6	85.9	np	np	93.3
2001-02	97.4	95.6	93.7	89.5	94.2	96.2	94.3	93.4	94.9
2002-03	96.1	94.0	93.3	91.9	94.1	94.2	84.0	92.1	93.9

<sup>a</sup> For details of multiple family and non-rebated households excluded, see table 16A.83. <sup>b</sup> Data for NSW and Victoria for 2002-03 are based on a different method from that used for their previous years data and a direct comparison of 2002-03 data with previous years cannot be made. For details of these changes, see table 16A.6. <sup>c</sup> Data for Queensland, WA, SA and the ACT are based on a different method from that used for the other data presented and need to be interpreted with caution. For details of these variations, see table 16A.6. <sup>d</sup> For a more detailed explanation of data for Queensland, Tasmania and NT, see table 16A.6. **np** Not published.

Source: AIHW (2002c, 2003g, 2003h); table 16A.6.

**Figure 16.7 New tenancies allocated to households with special needs<sup>a, b, c</sup>**



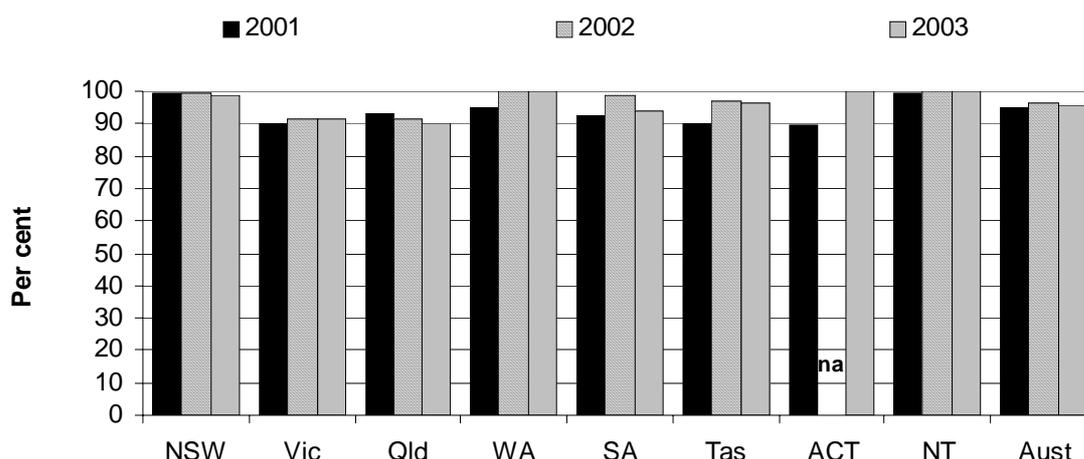
<sup>a</sup> Data for Victoria and SA for 2002-03 are based on a different method from that used for their previous years data, and a direct comparison of 2002-03 data with previous years cannot be made. For details of these changes, see table 16A.7. <sup>b</sup> Data for WA and the ACT are based on a different method from that used for the other data presented and need to be interpreted with caution. For details of these variations, see table 16A.7. <sup>c</sup> For a more detailed explanation of data for Queensland see SCRCSSP (2002) and SCRCSSP (2003). For a more detailed explanation of data for Tasmania, see SCRCSSP (2002) and SCRCSSP (2003). For a more detailed explanation of data for the NT, see SCRCSSP (2002), SCRCSSP (2003) and table 16A.7 NT footnotes.

Source: AIHW (2002c, 2003g, 2003h); table 16A.7.

The third low income and special need indicator is the proportion of all households that pay less than market rent or that were special needs households paying market

rent. At 30 June 2003, this proportion ranged from 100.0 per cent in WA, the ACT and the NT to 90.0 per cent in Queensland (figure 16.8).

**Figure 16.8 Households that pay less than market rent or special needs households paying market rent, as a proportion of all public housing households** a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h



**a** At 30 June. **b** Special need data for NSW are available only for households that were housed after November 1999, and direct comparison of 2002-03 data with previous years cannot be made. **c** For a more detailed explanation of Queensland data, see table 16A.8. **d** For more detail on Queensland data for 2002, see SCRCSSP (2003). **e** For more detail on WA data for 2002, see SCRCSSP (2003). **f** Data for SA are based on a different method from that used for previous years, and a direct comparison of 2002-03 data with previous years cannot be made. For details of these changes, see table 16A.8. **g** For more detail on Tasmanian data for 2002 see SCRCSSP (2003). **h** For more detail on NT data for 2001 and 2002, see SCRCSSP (2002) and SCRCSSP (2003). **na** Not available.

Source: AIHW (2002c, 2003g, 2003h); table 16A.8.

### *Priority of access given to those in greatest need*

This indicator 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 are homeless, in housing inappropriate to their needs, or in housing that is adversely affecting their health or placing their life and safety at risk, or that have very high rental housing costs.

Table 16.9 shows the proportion of all new allocations that are allocated to applicants with greatest need by time 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 2003 varied from 87.1 per cent in Tasmania and the ACT to 9.1 per cent in Queensland (table 16.9).

Table 16.9 **Greatest need allocations as a proportion of all new allocations, 2002-03, by time to allocation (per cent)**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT<sup>b</sup></i>	<i>Aust</i>
<b>Total for year ending 30 June 2003</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>66.9</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>22.9</b>	<b>42.2</b>	<b>87.1</b>	<b>87.1</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>37.9</b>
Proportion of greatest need allocations to new allocations by time to allocation									
< 3 months	59.0	76.1	20.9	37.2	56.5	89.1	93.3	28.0	58.5
3 — < 6 months	54.6	70.1	17.3	52.5	58.2	85.7	90.0	16.4	56.5
6 months — < 1 year	34.8	73.7	8.2	15.1	56.9	81.2	82.3	18.2	41.7
1 — < 2 years	17.9	61.0	4.5	0.4	35.4	75.4	73.8	9.3	22.9
2+ years	2.2	13.1	2.3	—	1.0	100.0	61.2	10.3	3.2

<sup>a</sup> The results for Queensland are not comparable with those for other jurisdictions. Data represent applicants who satisfied stringent priority housing criteria, but exclude clients in similar circumstances who were housed through Queensland standard wait turn criteria. <sup>b</sup> For a more detailed explanation of NT data, see table 16A.9. — Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: AIHW (2002c, 2003g, 2003h); table 16A.9.

### *Match of dwelling to household size*

This outcome indicator relates to the match of rental dwellings to household size. Data are provided using a proxy occupancy standard based on the size of the dwelling and household structure (table 16.10). 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 16.10 may differ from the specific criteria used by State and Territory housing authorities to match households to dwelling types, affecting interpretation of this indicator.

Table 16.10 **Proxy occupancy standard for appropriate sized dwelling, by household structure**

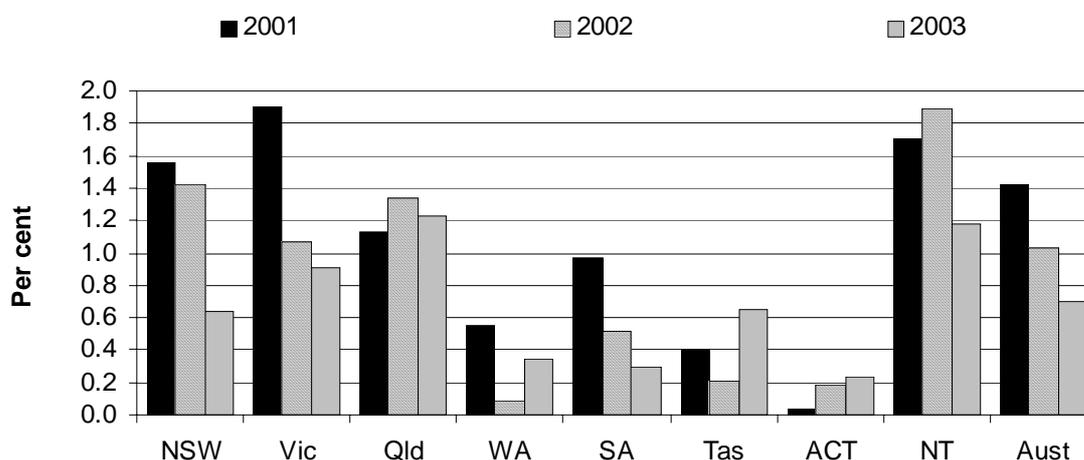
<i>Household structure</i>	<i>Bedrooms required</i>
Single adult only	1
Single adult (group)	1 (per adult)
Couple with no children	2
Sole parent or couple with 1 child	2
Sole parent or couple with 2 or 3 children	3
Sole parent or couple with 4+ children	4

Source: AIHW (2003i).

The proportion of dwellings that were overcrowded was similar across jurisdictions at 30 June 2003. Queensland and the NT had the highest proportion of overcrowded dwellings at 30 June 2003 (1.2 per cent), while the ACT (0.2 per cent) had the lowest proportion. Overcrowded dwellings represented 0.7 per cent of public

housing dwellings nationally (figure 16.9). More information on moderate overcrowding and underuse can be found in table 16A.80.

Figure 16.9 **Overcrowded dwellings**<sup>a, b, c, d, e</sup>



<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. <sup>b</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>c</sup> For details of multiple family and non-rebated households excluded, see table 16A.83. <sup>d</sup> Data for NSW and WA for 2002-03 are based on a different method from that used for previous years and a direct comparison of 2002-03 data with previous years cannot be made. For details of these changes for NSW see table 16A.10 and SCRCSSP (2002) and WA see SCRCSSP (2003). <sup>e</sup> Data for Victoria for 2002-03 and 2001-02 are not comparable to data for 2000-01.

Source: AIHW (2002c, 2003g, 2003h); table 16A.10.

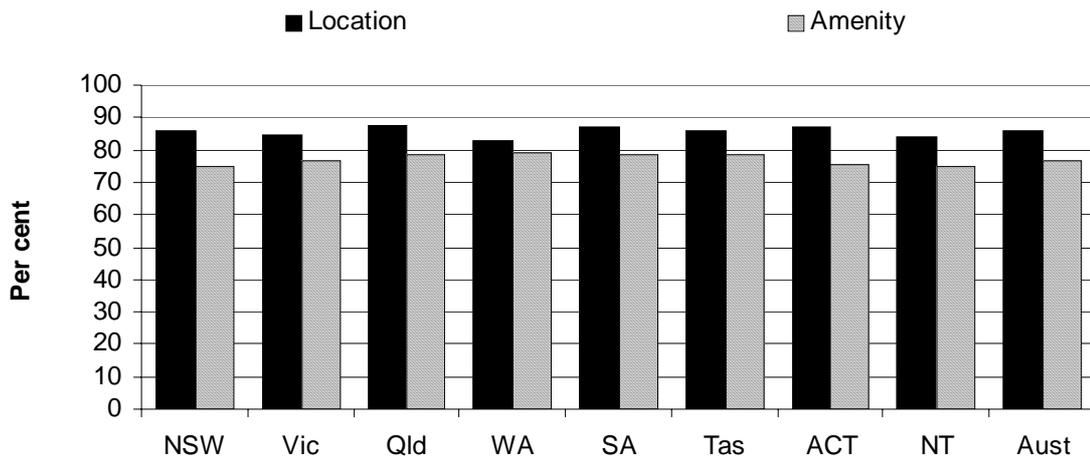
### *Amenity/location*

The amenity/location indicator measures tenant satisfaction with the amenity and location of their dwellings. Tenants were asked whether particular aspects of the location and amenity of their dwellings were important to them and, if so, whether they felt their needs were met. The precision of survey estimates depends on the survey sample size and the sample estimate. Larger sample sizes result in higher precision, as do larger sample estimates. If, for example, 90 per cent of surveyed respondents chose an answer, then 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.11 and 16A.12.

There was little difference across jurisdictions in the proportion of tenants satisfied with the location or amenity of their dwelling in 2003. Satisfaction with the location of dwellings was above the national average in Queensland, SA, Tasmania and the ACT. Satisfaction with the amenity of dwellings was above the national average in

Queensland, WA, SA and Tasmania (figure 16.10). More detail on this indicator can be found in tables 16A.11 and 16A.12. Information from 2001 on tenant assessments of the condition of public housing stock can be found in table 16A.81. Data on the condition of public housing stock for 2003 will be available in 2004.

Figure 16.10 **Tenants satisfied with location or amenity aspects of their dwelling, 2003<sup>a</sup>**



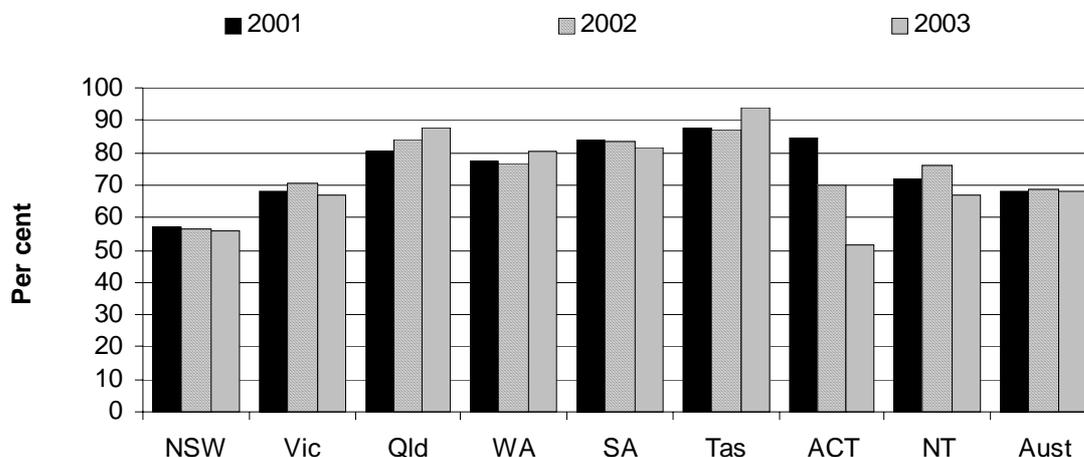
<sup>a</sup> Care needs to be taken in interpreting small differences in the results that are affected by sample and estimate size.

Source: AIHW (2003h); tables 16A.11 and 16A.12.

### *Affordability*

Affordability measures the rent charged to tenants as a proportion of the market rent for each dwelling, adjusted for CRA. The rent charged at 30 June 2003 as a proportion of the market rent for each dwelling (adjusted for CRA) ranged from 94.0 per cent in Tasmania to 51.3 per cent in the ACT (figure 16.11). More information on affordability, measured as the proportion of household income spent on housing costs, can be found at table 16A.75.

Figure 16.11 Rent charged as a proportion of market rent, adjusted for CRA<sup>a</sup>,  
b, c, d, e



<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. <sup>b</sup> The method used for calculations has changed and now uses more complex modelling developed for CSHA renegotiations. Caution, therefore, needs to be used in comparing results between 2001 and later years. <sup>c</sup> For details of multiple family and non-rebated households excluded, see table 16A.83. <sup>d</sup> Data for NSW are not comparable over the three years, due to changes in the way that households are excluded from the computation. Further, 2001 and 2002 figures are based on 2000 rent valuations, while 2003 data are based on 2002 valuations. The data are also affected by the one per cent rent increase in each of the three years. <sup>e</sup> The data for Queensland are not comparable (see detailed footnotes in table 16A.13).

Source: AIHW (2002c, 2003g, 2003h); table 16A.13.

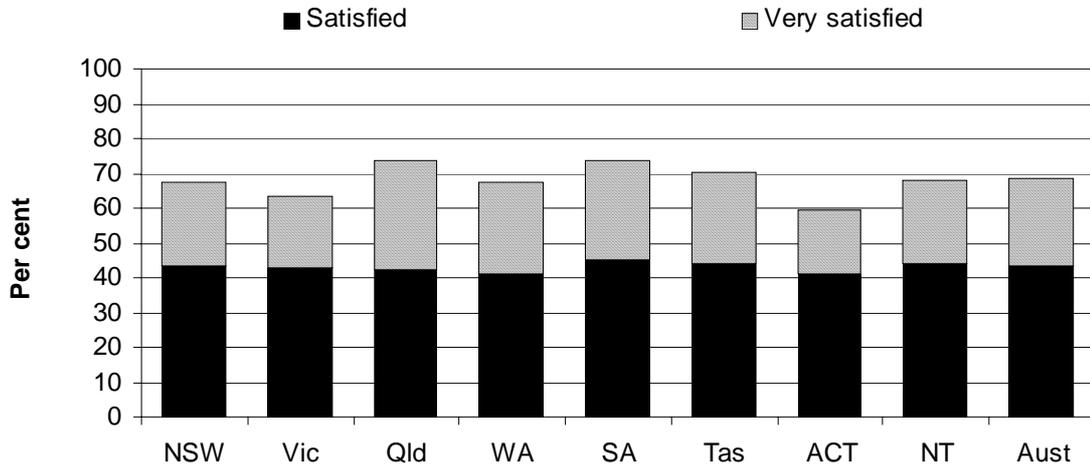
### Customer satisfaction

The last outcome indicator for public housing relates to customer satisfaction. Tenants are surveyed about their overall satisfaction with housing provided. The satisfaction outcomes for location and amenity influence the general satisfaction of public housing tenants, and these outcomes are reported under the appropriateness indicator (figure 16.10). A more comprehensive discussion of customer satisfaction results is provided in the *National Social Housing Survey of Public Housing Tenants 2003*, which is available on the DFACS website ([www.facs.gov.au](http://www.facs.gov.au)).

Nationally in 2003, 68.4 per cent of tenants were either satisfied or very satisfied with the housing provided. This proportion varied from 73.9 per cent and 73.6 per cent in Queensland and SA respectively to 59.4 per cent in the ACT (figure 16.12). The proportion increased slightly in NSW between 2001 (when survey data were last available) and 2003, but decreased in all other jurisdictions except Tasmania, where it remained constant. The largest change occurred in the ACT, where the proportion of tenants who were satisfied or very satisfied with the housing provided decreased by 2.6 percentage points over the period (table 16A.14). The proportion of public housing tenants surveyed in 2003 who

were very satisfied with the housing provided was the same as or above the national average in Queensland, WA, SA and Tasmania (figure 16.12).

Figure 16.12 **Tenant satisfaction, 2003<sup>a, b, c</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> For NSW, face-to-face interviews were conducted; mailout forms were used for all other jurisdictions. <sup>b</sup> Care needs to be taken in interpreting small differences in the results that are affected by sample and estimate size (see table 16A.14 for details of the sample size). <sup>c</sup> Data for Australia for 2003 calculated as simple numerical average due to a lack of raw data.

Source: AIHW (2003h); table 16A.14.

## 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
- 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 survey response rates can influence the reliability of the data. Comparisons over time using community housing data thus need to be made with care. Table 16A.84 outlines the survey response rates and associated information for each jurisdiction for 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2002-03. The

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NT provided data for one out of the 10 performance indicators for which data are reported this year.

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

### *Outputs*

#### *Efficiency*

This chapter reports three indicators of output efficiency for community housing.

##### *Efficiency — gross cost per unit*

The Review has identified this indicator for development and reporting in future.

##### *Efficiency — net cost per unit*

The Review has identified this indicator for development and reporting in future.

##### *Efficiency — occupancy rate*

For those jurisdictions able to provide data, the proportion of community housing occupied at 30 June 2003 ranged from 100.4 per cent in WA to 95.6 per cent in SA (table 16.11).

**Table 16.11 Occupancy rates (per cent)<sup>a, b</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic<sup>c</sup></i>	<i>Qld<sup>c</sup></i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT<sup>d</sup></i>	<i>NT<sup>c</sup></i>	<i>Aust</i>
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
2003	97.8	96.3	96.1	100.4	95.6	98.3	97.4	100.0	97.0

<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. <sup>b</sup> NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT data are based on surveys (see table 16A.84 for response rates and other relevant information). <sup>c</sup> For a more detailed explanation of Queensland and NT data, see table 16A.16. <sup>d</sup> Data for the ACT are based on a different method from that used for the other data presented and need to be interpreted with caution. For details of these variations, see SCRCSSP (2003). **na** Not available.

Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003e, 2003f); table 16A.16.

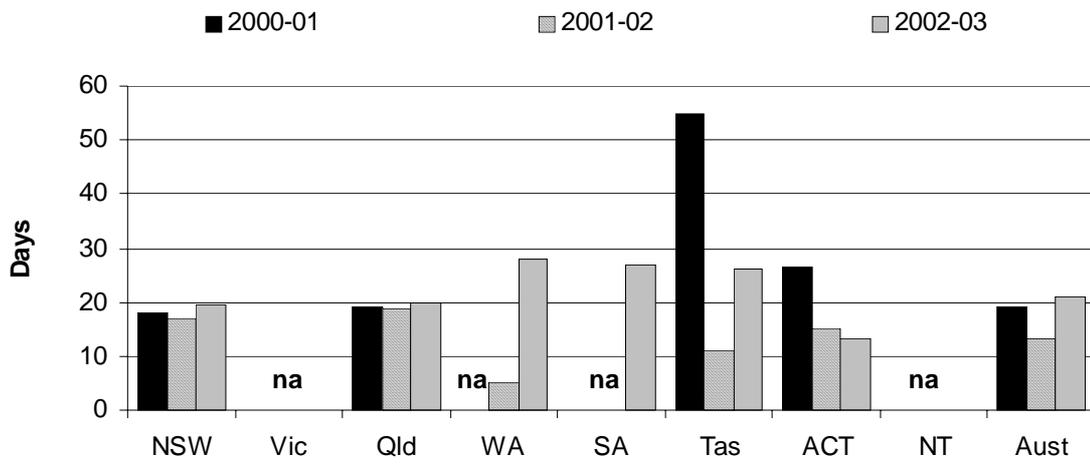
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### Efficiency — turnaround time

Turnaround time is the speed with which housing stock is reoccupied after it has been vacated or acquired. For those jurisdictions able to provide data, the average number of days for vacant stock to be allocated in 2002-03 varied from 28 days in WA to 13 days in the ACT (figure 16.13).

Figure 16.13 Average turnaround times<sup>a, b, c</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> For NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT, data are based on surveys (see table 16A.84 for response rates and other relevant information). <sup>b</sup> NSW data definitions differ from national definitions, and data for NSW are not comparable over the three years. For details of these variations, see table 16A.17. <sup>c</sup> Data for the ACT are based on a different method from that used for previous years and a direct comparison of 2002-03 data with previous years cannot be made. For details of these variations, see SCRCSSP (2003). **na** Not available.

Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003e, 2003f); table 16A.17.

### Efficiency — rent arrears

For community housing, data on the proportion of rent in arrears 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 98.9 per cent in the ACT to 92.6 per cent in Queensland at 30 June 2002 (table 16.12). As with public housing, payment arrangements for rent in some jurisdictions mean the rent collected over a 12 month period may be higher than rent charged over that period.

**Table 16.12 Total rent collected as a proportion of total rent charged (per cent)<sup>a, b</sup>**

	NSW	Vic <sup>c</sup>	Qld	WA <sup>d</sup>	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
2000-01	92.5	na	98.6	99.2	97.8	na	97.6	na	95.5
2001-02	98.5	na	92.6	97.5	97.9	98.7	98.9	na	97.1

<sup>a</sup> For NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT data are based on surveys (see table 16A.84 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 2000-01 are reported to provide additional time to collate financial data. Rent charged and collected for 2001-02 comes from the previous year's data collection (2001-02), not from the 2002-03 collection, so that data relate to a different number of providers and tenant households. <sup>c</sup> In Victoria, funding agreements for some community managed programs do not allow full transparency of rental information. <sup>d</sup> Data for WA are based on a different method from that used for the other data presented, and need to be interpreted with caution. For details of these variations, see SCRCSSP (2003). **na** Not available.

Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003e, 2003f); table 16A.18.

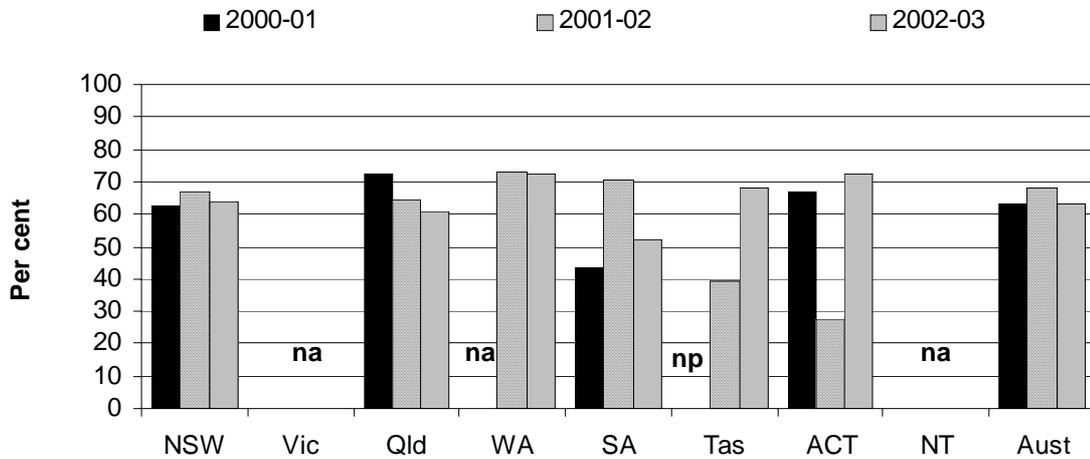
## Outcomes

### *Low income and special needs*

This chapter reports two low income and special needs indicators. The first is the proportion of new tenancies allocated to households with special needs. Special needs households are those that have a household member with a disability, those whose principal tenant is aged 24 years or under, or 75 years or over, or those defined as being Indigenous. The proportion of new tenancies allocated to special needs households in 2002-03 varied for those jurisdictions able to provide data, from 72.4 per cent in the ACT to 52.4 per cent in SA (figure 16.14).

The second indicator is the proportion of all households that pay less than market rent or that were special needs households paying market rent. At 30 June 2003, for those jurisdictions able to provide data, the proportion of all households that paid less than market rent or that were special needs households paying market rent ranged from 100.0 per cent in Victoria to 37.4 per cent in WA (figure 16.15).

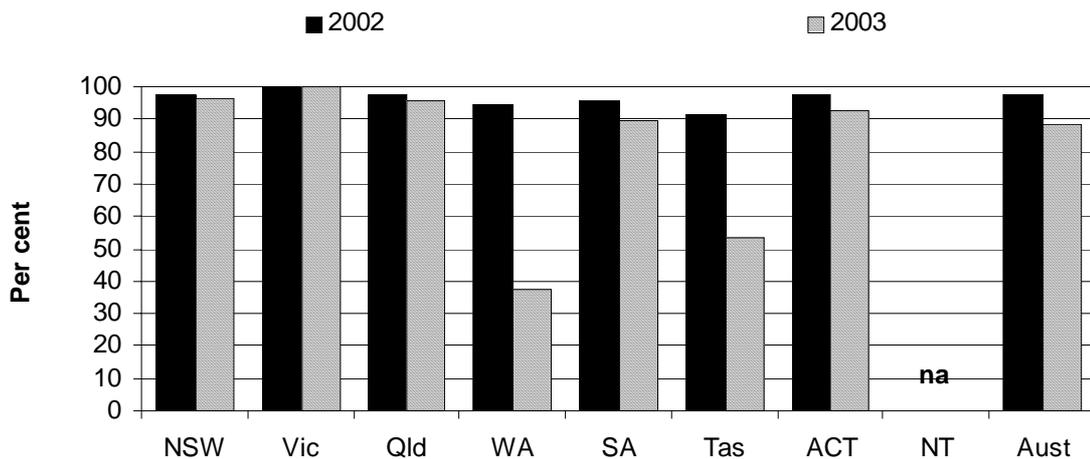
Figure 16.14 **New tenancies allocated to households with special needs<sup>a, b, c</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> For NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT, data are based on surveys (see table 16A.84 for response rates and other relevant information). <sup>b</sup> NSW data definitions differ from national definitions, and data for NSW are not comparable over the three years. For details of these variations, see table 16A.19. <sup>c</sup> Data for the ACT are based on a different method from that used for the other data presented and need to be interpreted with caution. For details of these variations see SCRCSSP (2003). **na** Not available. **np** Not published.

Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003e, 2003f); table 16A.19.

Figure 16.15 **Households paying less than market rent, or special needs households paying less than market rent, as a proportion of all community housing households<sup>a, b, c</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. <sup>b</sup> For NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT data are based on surveys (see table 16A.84 for response rates and other relevant information). <sup>c</sup> NSW data definitions differ from national definitions and data for NSW are not comparable over the three years. For details of these variations, see table 16A.20. **na** Not available.

Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003e, 2003f); table 16A.20.

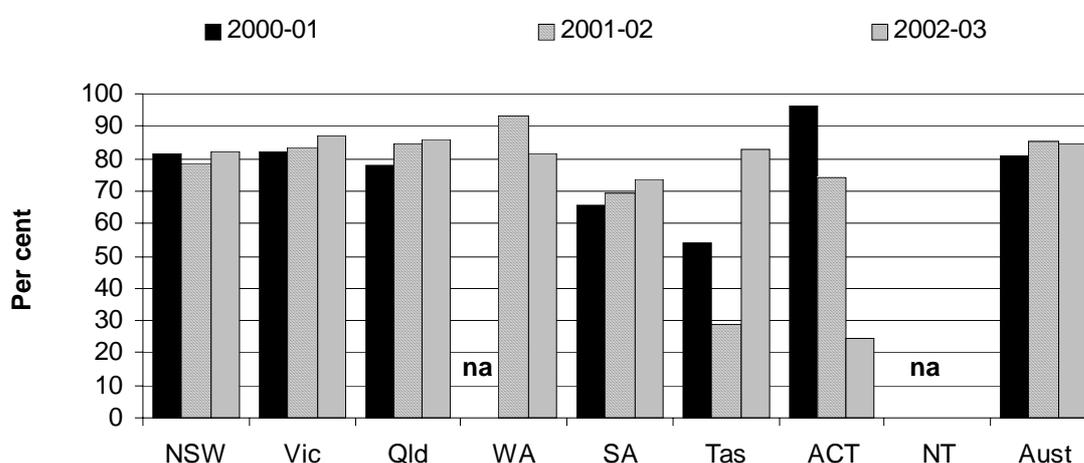
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### *Priority access to those in greatest need*

As with public housing this indicator 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 are homeless, in housing inappropriate to their needs, or in housing that is 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 in 2002-03 from 86.9 per cent in Victoria to 24.4 per cent in the ACT (figure 16.16).

**Figure 16.16 Greatest need allocations as a proportion of all new allocations<sup>a, b, c</sup>**

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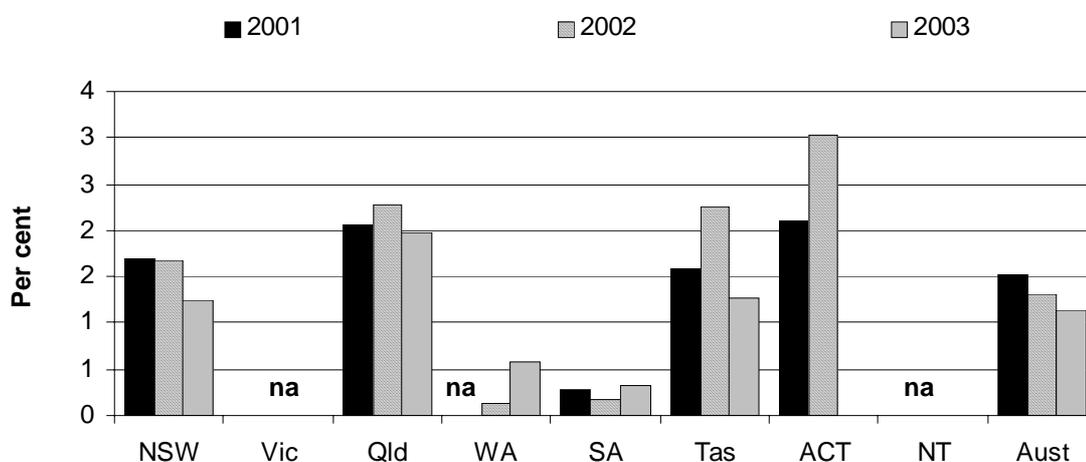
<sup>a</sup> For NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT, data are based on surveys (see table 16A.84 for response rates and other relevant information). <sup>b</sup> Data for NSW are based on a different method from that used for the other data presented and need to be interpreted with caution. For details of these variations, see table 16A.21. <sup>c</sup> Data for the ACT for 2002-03 are based on a different method from that used for previous years and a direct comparison of 2002-03 data with previous years cannot be made. For details of these changes see table 16A.21. **na** Not available.

Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003e, 2003f); table 16A.21.

### *Match of dwelling to household size*

As with public housing, the match of rental dwellings to household size is reported. For those jurisdictions able to provide data, Queensland had the highest proportion of overcrowded dwellings (2.0 per cent) at 30 June 2003, while the ACT had the lowest (0.0 per cent) (figure 16.17). More information on overcrowding for community housing can be found in table 16A.78.

Figure 16.17 Overcrowded dwellings<sup>a, b</sup>



<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. <sup>b</sup> For NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT, data are based on surveys (see table 16A.84 for response rates and other relevant information). **na** Not available.

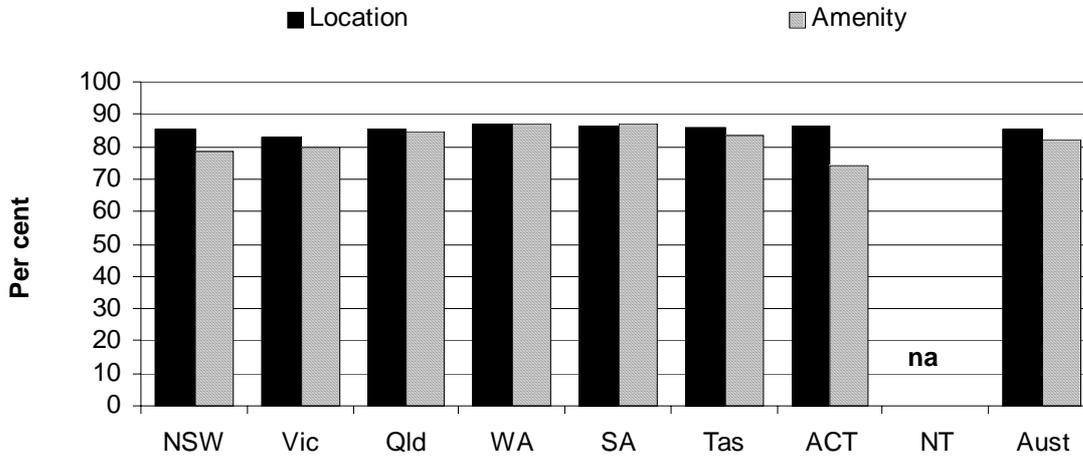
Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003e, 2003f); table 16A.22.

### *Amenity/location*

This outcome indicator measures tenant satisfaction with the amenity and location of their dwellings (figure 16.18). Tenants were asked whether particular aspects of the amenity and location of their dwellings were important to them, and if so, whether they felt their needs were met. As with public housing, the precision of survey estimates depends on the survey sample size and the sample estimate (see the discussion of amenity/location for public housing). More information on the sample size is provided in tables 16A.23 and 16A.24.

The National Social Housing Survey for Community Housing Tenants was not conducted for 2003, so results for 2002 are reported again this year. The proportion of tenants satisfied with the location of their dwelling in February 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 16.18). More information on this indicator can be found in tables 16A.23 and 16A.24.

Figure 16.18 Tenants satisfied with location or amenity aspects of their dwelling, 2002<sup>a, b, c</sup>



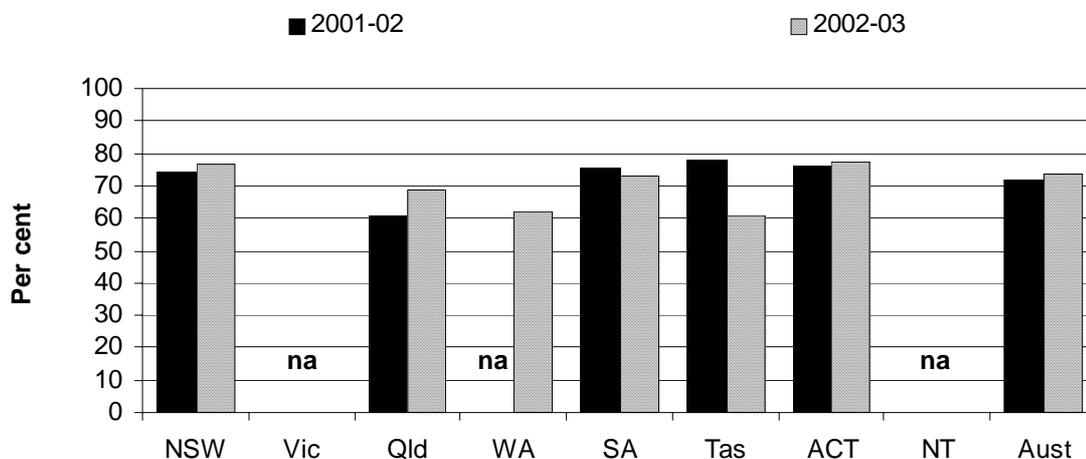
<sup>a</sup> At February. <sup>b</sup> Care needs to be taken in interpreting small differences in the results that are affected by sample and estimate size (see attachment 16A for details of the sample size). Not applicable for the NT because it chose not to participate in the survey due to its small community housing tenant population. National total is an unweighted average. <sup>c</sup> Data for NSW and WA are based on a different method from that used for the other data presented and need to be interpreted with caution. For details of these variations (including sample size and response rates), see NFO Donovan Research (2002). **na** Not available.

Source: NFO Donovan Research (2002); table 16A.23 and 16A.24.

### Affordability

As with public housing, affordability is measured as the proportion of household income remaining after paying rent. In 2002-03, for those jurisdictions able to provide data, this proportion ranged from 77.4 per cent in the ACT to 60.6 per cent in Tasmania (figure 16.19).

Figure 16.19 Household income left after paying rent<sup>a, b, c, d, e</sup>



<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. <sup>b</sup> For NSW, Queensland, WA, SA, Tasmania and the ACT data are based on surveys (see table 16A.84 for response rates and other relevant information). <sup>c</sup> It is the Victorian Office of Housing's policy not to charge greater than 25 per cent of household income in rent for community managed programs. <sup>d</sup> Data for Queensland for 2002-03 are based on a different method from that used for previous years and a direct comparison of 2002-03 data with previous years cannot be made. For details of these changes, see table 16A.25. <sup>e</sup> Data for WA are based on a different method from that used for the other data presented and need to be interpreted with caution. For details of these variations, see SCRCSSP (2003). **na** Not available.

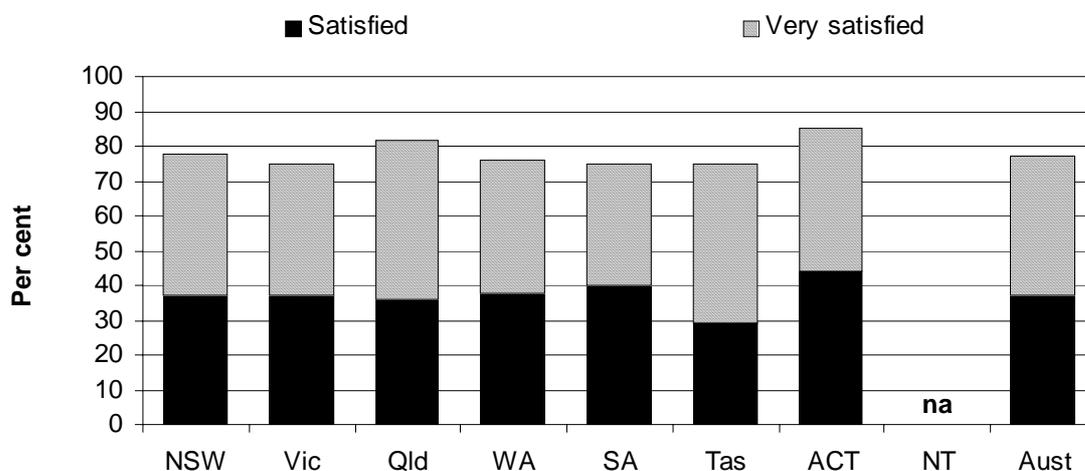
Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003e, 2003f); table 16A.25.

### Customer satisfaction

The last outcome indicator for community housing relates to customer satisfaction. Tenants are surveyed about overall satisfaction with their housing. Satisfaction with the location and amenity aspects of community housing is reported earlier (figure 16.18). The satisfaction outcomes for these aspects influence the general satisfaction of community housing tenants.

These results are obtained from the 2002 *National Social Housing Survey for community housing* (NFO Donovan Research 2002). Survey data for 2003 are not available, so results for 2002 are reported again this year. Nationally in February 2002, 77.0 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 are available, this proportion ranged from 85.0 per cent in the ACT to 75.0 per cent in Victoria, SA and Tasmania (figure 16.20).

Figure 16.20 Tenant satisfaction, 2002<sup>a, b, c</sup>



<sup>a</sup> At February. Care needs to be undertaken in interpreting small differences in the results that are affected by sample and estimate size (see table 16A.26 for details of the sample size). <sup>b</sup> Data for WA are based on a different method from that used for the other data presented and need to be interpreted with caution. For details of these variations (including sample size and survey response rate), see NFO Donovan Research (2002). <sup>c</sup> Data are not available for NT because it chose not to participate in the survey due to its small community housing tenant population. **na** Not available.

Source: NFO Donovan Research (2002); table 16A.26.

### State 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. Further, there may have been some difficulties in separating Indigenous housing data from public housing data. Variations in the funding and administration of State owned and managed Indigenous housing across jurisdictions may also influence the comparability of data. Some descriptive data on State owned and managed Indigenous housing are included in table 16A.27. (As outlined in section 16.1, the ACT and the NT are not included in the State owned and managed Indigenous housing data collection.) State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings are more likely than public or community housing dwellings to be located in rural or remote areas (table 16.4).

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## *Outputs*

### *Efficiency*

Four performance indicators measure the efficiency of State owned and managed Indigenous housing. Each efficiency indicator is classified as an output.

#### *Efficiency — net cost per unit*

The Review has identified this indicator for development and reporting in future.

#### *Efficiency — gross cost per unit*

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
- 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) are not available for reporting on State owned and managed Indigenous housing. The cost per dwelling shown in figure 16.21 represents gross recurrent expenditure (that is, administration and operating costs) per dwelling. Rent received from tenants has not been deducted. For those jurisdictions able to provide data, the gross cost per dwelling (excluding capital costs) ranged from \$7917 in SA to \$3686 in Tasmania (figure 16.21). On average, gross cost per dwelling was \$5703.

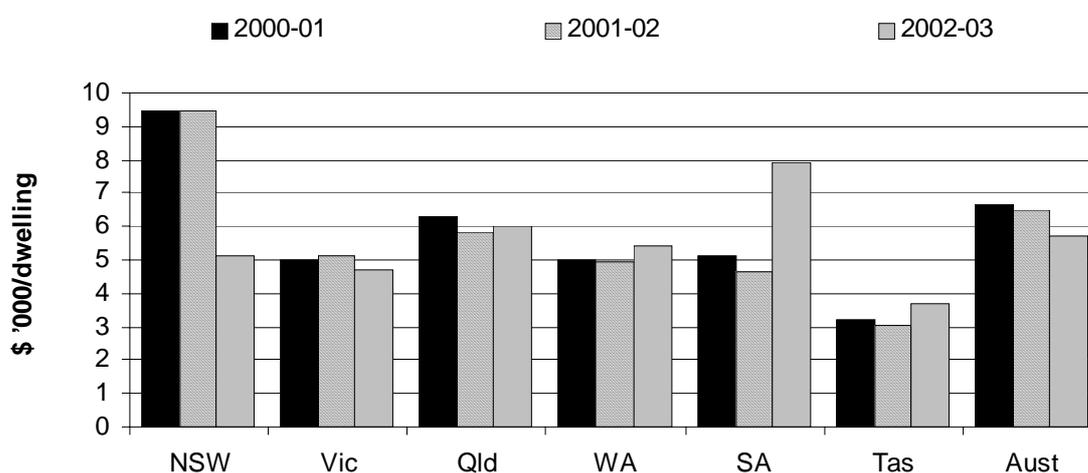
As with other indicators, it is not appropriate to compare the gross cost per State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwelling with the recurrent cost per dwelling for public housing (which would be the public housing equivalent of this indicator) because there is greater scope for economies of scale in administration costs with public housing, which is a much larger program overall.

State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings are also more highly concentrated in rural and remote areas where the cost of providing housing assistance is potentially greater. 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 owned and managed Indigenous housing may involve a skills development element to allow for training of apprentices in rural areas.

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 the total costs of housing provision could be understated.

Figure 16.21 **Real gross cost per dwelling, excluding capital costs (2002-03 dollars)<sup>a, b</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> NSW data for 2000-01 and 2001-02 include one-off capital expenditure resulting from maintenance liabilities incurred before the Aboriginal Housing Office took possession of the stock, so data are not comparable over the three years. <sup>b</sup> For a more detailed explanation of WA data, see SCRCSSP (2003).

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); table 16A.28.

### *Efficiency — occupancy rates*

There was little variation across jurisdictions in the proportion of State owned and managed Indigenous housing stock (including untenable dwellings) occupied at 30 June 2003, with an average of 95.2 per cent nationally (table 16.13).

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**Table 16.13 Occupancy rates<sup>a</sup>**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>Aust</i>
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
2003	97.6	96.1	94.2	94.4	91.8	95.8	95.2

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

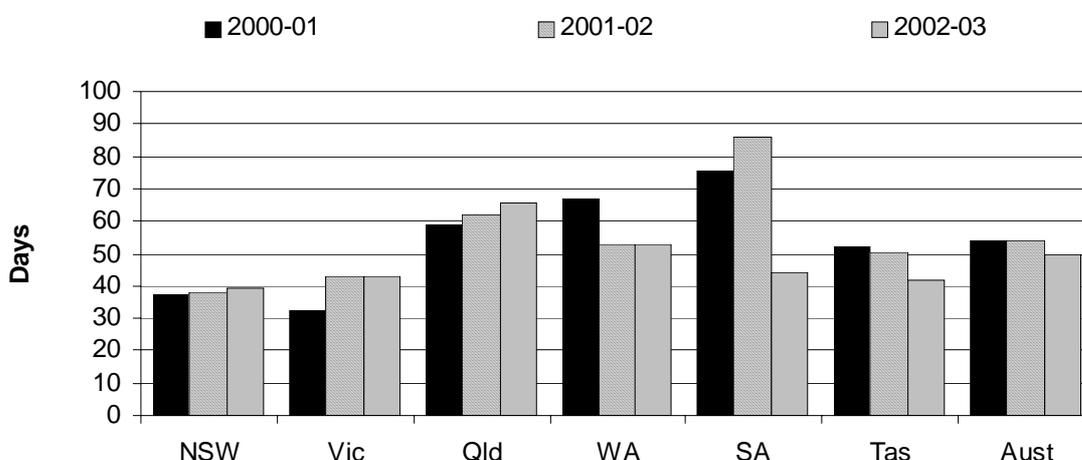
Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); table 16A.29.

### *Efficiency — turnaround time*

Turnaround time indicates the speed with which housing stock is re-occupied after it has been vacated or acquired. The length of time taken to rent untenanted stock affects allocations of State 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 2002-03 varied from 66 days in Queensland to 39 days in NSW (figure 16.22). This indicator may be affected by changes in maintenance programs, and some jurisdictions may have difficulty excluding stock upgrades. Cultural factors may also influence the turnaround time for State 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.

Figure 16.22 Average turnaround times<sup>a, b, c</sup>



<sup>a</sup> For NSW the previous years data have been adjusted to ensure comparability. <sup>b</sup> Data for Victoria are based on a different method from that used for the other data presented and need to be interpreted with caution. For further details of these variations, see table 16A.30. <sup>c</sup> WA and SA data for 2002-03 are based on a different method from that used for previous years, and a direct comparison with previous years cannot be made. For details of these changes, see SCRCSSP (2003).

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); table 16A.30.

### Efficiency — rent arrears

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 2002-03 varied from 107.9 per cent in SA to 97.2 per cent in Queensland (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.

Table 16.14 Total rent collected 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
2002-03	102.3	98.1	97.2	101.9	107.9	98.8	101.4

<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 WA are based on a different method from that used for the other data presented and need to be interpreted with caution. For details of these variations, see SCRCSSP (2003).

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); table 16A.31.

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## Outcomes

### *Low income and special needs*

Three performance indicators relate to low income and special needs. The first measures the low income and special needs (but not low income) status of households receiving State owned and managed Indigenous housing assistance (table 16.15). As with public housing, there are two household income measures for the purpose of this indicator:

- low income A households — those in State owned and managed Indigenous housing in which 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).
- low income B households — those in State owned and managed Indigenous housing that have incomes that would enable them to receive government income support benefits below the maximum pension.

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 2002-03 from 91.5 per cent in NSW to 86.5 per cent in SA. The proportion of new tenancies allocated to low income A or special needs (not low income) households were fairly similar across jurisdictions (table 16.15). Table 16A.32 contains information on both low income A households and low income B households.

**Table 16.15 Low income and special needs households as a proportion of all new households (per cent)**

	NSW <sup>a</sup>	Vic <sup>b</sup>	Qld <sup>c</sup>	WA <sup>a, d</sup>	SA <sup>a, d</sup>	Tas <sup>a</sup>	Aust
<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
2002-03	91.5	87.8	89.7	89.1	86.5	87.2	89.2
<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
2002-03	92.9	92.9	94.6	92.1	93.2	92.3	93.0

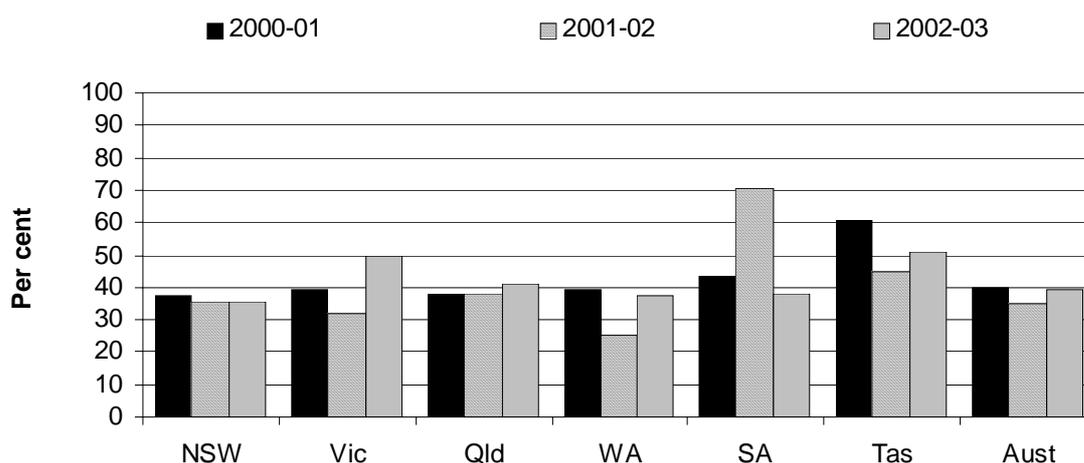
<sup>a</sup> Excludes some multiple family and non-rebated households (see table 16A.85 for further details). <sup>b</sup> Data for Victoria for 2002-03 are based on a different method from that used for their previous years and a direct comparison of 2002-03 data with previous years cannot be made. For details of these changes, see table 16A.32. <sup>c</sup> For a more detailed explanation of Queensland data, see table 16A.32. <sup>d</sup> Data for WA and SA are based on a different method from that used for the other data presented and need to be interpreted with caution. For details of these variations, see table 16A.32.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c; 2003d); table 16A.32.

The second indicator measures the proportion of new tenancies allocated to households with special needs. Special needs households are those that have a household member with a disability or a principal tenant aged 24 years or under, or 50 years or over. The proportion of new tenancies allocated to special needs households in 2002-03 varied from 50.6 per cent in Tasmania to 35.8 per cent in NSW (figure 16.23).

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

Figure 16.23 New tenancies allocated to households with special needs<sup>a, b</sup>

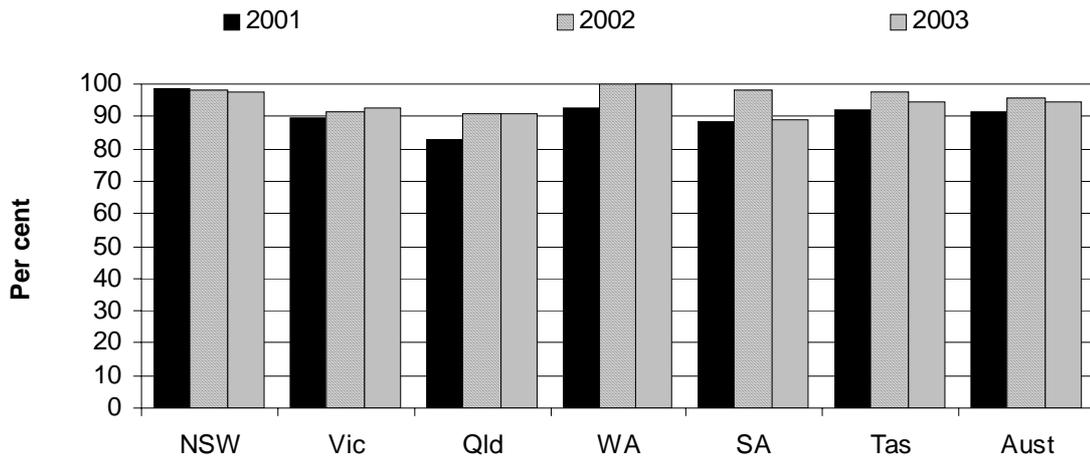


<sup>a</sup> Data for 2002-03 for Victoria and SA are based on a different method from that used for previous years and a direct comparison of 2002-03 with previous years cannot be made. For details of these changes, see table 16A.33. <sup>b</sup> For more detailed explanation of Queensland and WA data see table 16A.33.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); table 16A.33.

The third indicator is the proportion of all households that pay less than market rent or that are special needs households paying market rent. At 30 June 2003, this proportion ranged from 100.0 per cent in WA to 89.0 per cent in SA (figure 16.24).

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



<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. <sup>b</sup> Data for NSW on special need are available only for households that were housed after November 1999, and direct comparison of 2002-03 with previous years data cannot be made. <sup>c</sup> For a more detailed explanation of Queensland data, see table 16A.34 footnotes and SCRCSSP (2003). <sup>d</sup> SA data for 2003 are based on a different method from that used in previous years, and a direct comparison with previous years cannot be made. For details of these changes see table 16A.34.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); table 16A.34.

### *Priority access to those in greatest need*

This indicator 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 are homeless, in housing inappropriate to their needs or, in housing that is adversely affecting their health or placing their life and safety at risk, or that have very high rental housing costs.

The proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need varied for 2002-03, ranging from 70.7 per cent in SA to 3.5 per cent in Queensland (table 16.16). The relatively low level of priority allocations in Victoria was partly because Indigenous tenants in greatest need are likely to be housed under the State's general public housing program. Table 16.16 shows the proportion of new allocations to applicants with greatest need by time on the waiting list. Data are provided for tenants waiting for under three months to more than two years. These numbers are not cumulative.

It may not be appropriate to compare the performance of public housing and State 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 16.16 Greatest need allocations as a proportion of all new allocations (per cent)**

	NSW <sup>a</sup>	Vic	Qld <sup>b</sup>	WA	SA	Tas	Aust
<b>Total for year ending 30 June 2003</b>	14.4	21.9	3.5	22.4	70.7	na	23.3
Proportion of greatest need allocations to new allocations, by time to allocation							
< 3 months	33.8	31.5	3.3	35.9	61.4	na	36.7
3 — < 6 months	15.0	35.3	6.5	41.1	94.9	na	35.7
6 months — < 1 year	1.4	18.4	5.7	7.7	95.0	na	19.9
1 — < 2 years	8.9	3.8	2.7	—	65.0	na	8.3
2+ years	0.9	—	—	—	8.3	na	0.8

<sup>a</sup> In NSW, annual changes tend to reflect the small sample, rather than changes in performance. <sup>b</sup> Data for Queensland are not comparable with other data presented because those in greatest need are priority A on a waitlist. This is an underestimation of the true greatest need figure because a priority A flag is rarely used in low wait time areas. **na** Not available. — Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); table 16A.35.

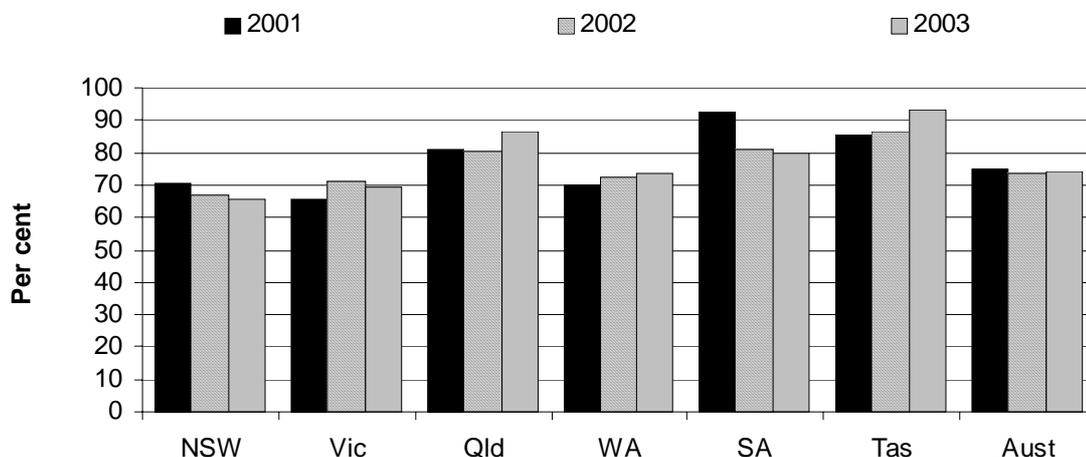
### *Amenity/location*

The Review has identified this indicator for development and reporting in future.

### *Affordability*

As with public and community housing, affordability 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. For those jurisdictions able to provide data, the rent charged at 30 June 2003 as a proportion of the market rent for each dwelling (adjusted for CRA), ranged from 93.2 per cent in Tasmania to 65.7 per cent in NSW (figure 16.25). 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 16.25 Rent charged as a proportion of market rent, adjusted for CRA<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>



<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. <sup>b</sup> Data for NSW are not comparable over the three years due to changes in the way that households are excluded from the computation. Further 2001 and 2002 figures are based on 2000 rent valuations, while 2003 data are based on 2002 valuations. The data are also affected by a 1 per cent rent increase in each of the three years. <sup>c</sup> For more detailed explanation of WA data, see SCRCSSP (2003). <sup>d</sup> Excludes some multiple family and non-rebated households (see table 16A.85 for further details).

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); table 16A.36.

### *Match of dwelling to household size*

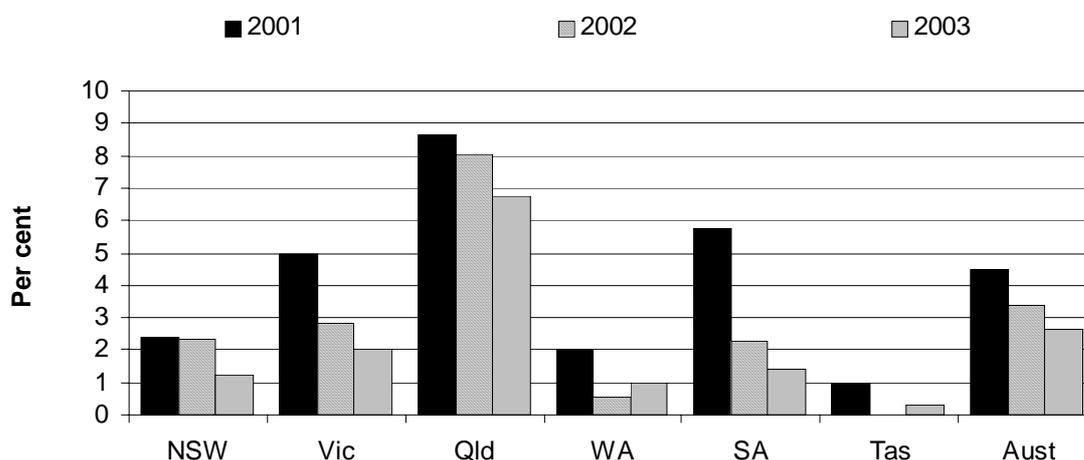
As with public and community housing, the match of rental dwellings to household size is reported for State owned and managed Indigenous housing. Queensland had the highest proportion of overcrowded dwellings at 30 June 2003 (6.7 per cent), while Tasmania had the lowest (0.3 per cent) (figure 16.26).

Care needs to be taken in comparing the performance of public housing and State owned and managed Indigenous housing in relation to overcrowding. Two major factors potentially result in a higher incidence of overcrowding in the latter relative to public housing dwellings:

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

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

Figure 16.26 **Overcrowded dwellings**<sup>a, b, c, d, e, f, g</sup>



<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. <sup>b</sup> Data for NSW not comparable over the three years due to changes in the way that households are excluded from the computation. <sup>c</sup> Data for Victoria for 2002-03 and 2001-02 are not comparable to data for 2000-01. <sup>d</sup> For a more detailed explanation of Queensland data, see table 16A.37. <sup>e</sup> For a more detailed explanation of WA data, see SCRCSSP (2003). <sup>f</sup> SA data for 2003 are based on a different method from that used in previous years, and a direct comparison with previous years cannot be made. For details of these variations, see SCRCSSP (2003). <sup>g</sup> Excludes some multiple family and non-rebated households. For further details, see table 16A.85.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); table 16A.37.

### *Customer satisfaction*

Indicators relating to customer satisfaction with State owned and managed Indigenous housing (tenant surveys) cannot be reported this year. However, SA and Tasmania undertook surveys.

### **Commonwealth Rent Assistance**

Performance reporting for CRA is based on a performance indicator framework first used in the 2003 Report. Data for CRA recipients are for clients of DFACS only and generally for the fortnight ending either 13 June 2003 or 29 November 2002. Data exclude those recipients paid rental assistance by, or on behalf of, the DVA or DEST. Centrelink and DFACS collected data centrally.

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## *Outputs*

### *Equity*

#### *Access — income unit type*

There are four indicators of access to CRA. One measure of access to CRA is the 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.

Important eligibility requirements for CRA (which is paid automatically once eligibility has been established) 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. There were 940 708 income units (where income units are analogous to family units, except that non-dependent children and other adults living in the same household are treated as separate income units) receiving CRA at 30 June 2003. Of these, 23 546 (approximately 2.5 per cent) self-identified as Indigenous. Single people with no children represented approximately 54.2 per cent of CRA recipients and 42.4 per cent of Indigenous CRA recipients (table 16.17).

For all jurisdictions except the NT, the proportion of income units receiving CRA at 30 June 2003 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 (18.1 per cent), which compared with the Indigenous proportion of the NT population of 29.1 per cent. Victoria had the lowest proportion of self-identifying Indigenous people receiving CRA (0.7 per cent) and the lowest Indigenous population as a proportion of the State population (table 16.18).

**Table 16.17 Income units receiving CRA by income unit type, 2003<sup>a, b</sup>**

<i>Income unit type<sup>c</sup></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 dependent children	362 637	38.5	7 430	31.6
Single, no children, sharer <sup>d</sup>	147 272	15.7	2 555	10.9
Single, 1 or 2 dependent children	184 464	19.6	6 359	27.0
Single, 3 or more dependent children	34 798	3.7	2 055	8.7
Partnered, no dependent children	77 135	8.2	1 023	4.3
Partnered, 1 or 2 dependent children	91 819	9.8	2 328	9.9
Partnered, 3 or more dependent children	37 806	4.0	1 577	6.7
Partnered, illness separated, no dependent children	2 195	0.2	37	0.2
Partnered, temporarily separated, no dependent children	182	–	7	–
Unknown income unit	2 400	0.3	175	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>940 708</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>23 546</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. 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> Income units are analogous to family units except that non-dependent children and other adults are treated as separate income units (see table 16.24 for more detail). <sup>c</sup> A child is regarded as dependent on an adult only if the adult receives Family Tax Benefit for the care of the child. <sup>d</sup> The maximum rate of assistance is lower for some single persons without dependent children who share accommodation (see the definition of sharer in table 16.24). – Nil or rounded to zero.

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

**Table 16.18 Income units receiving CRA by Indigenous status and geographic location, 2003**

	Unit	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust <sup>a</sup>
<i>Non-Indigenous</i>										
Individual recipients	no.	306 227	199 558	227 318	83 841	64 299	22 384	8 128	4 631	916 386
In capital city	no.	168 277	142 687	100 574	65 114	50 719	9 549	8 114	3 646	548 680
In rest of State	no.	137 950	56 871	126 744	18 727	13 580	12 835	14	985	367 706
Share of all recipients	%	97.3	99.2	96.3	97.2	98.3	97.0	98.6	80.7	97.4
Non-Indigenous population, as a proportion of total population <sup>b</sup>	%	98.0	99.4	96.6	96.6	98.3	96.3	98.8	70.9	97.7
<i>Indigenous</i>										
Individual recipients	no.	8 141	1 412	8 709	2 311	1 075	679	112	1 037	23 476
In capital city	no.	2 196	684	2 462	1 315	643	233	112	553	8 198
In rest of State	no.	5 945	728	6 247	996	432	446	–	484	15 278
Share of all recipients	%	2.6	0.7	3.7	2.7	1.6	2.9	1.4	18.1	2.5
Indigenous population, as a proportion of total population <sup>b</sup>	%	2.0	0.6	3.4	3.4	1.7	3.7	1.2	29.1	2.3
<b>Total individual recipients</b>	no.	<b>314 565</b>	<b>201 078</b>	<b>236 120</b>	<b>86 244</b>	<b>65 392</b>	<b>23 087</b>	<b>8 240</b>	<b>5 742</b>	<b>940 708</b>

<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. National total includes postcodes that could not be classified. <sup>b</sup> Based on ABS 2001 estimated residential populations. – Nil or rounded to zero.

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

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### *Access — payment type*

Data are also available based on the type of primary payment received by CRA recipients. The highest proportion of CRA recipients (20.6 per cent) at 30 June 2003 were recipients of the Parenting Payment (Single), followed by recipients of the Newstart Allowance (20.5 per cent of CRA recipients). These proportions were higher for Indigenous Australians (32.5 per cent and 32.0 per cent respectively). Only 3.0 per cent of Indigenous CRA recipients received the Age Pension, compared with 16.7 per cent for all Australians (table 16.19).

**Table 16.19 Income units receiving CRA, by benefit type, 2003<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Benefit type</i>	<i>Income units<sup>b</sup></i>	<i>Proportion of CRA recipients</i>	<i>Indigenous income units</i>	<i>Proportion of Indigenous CRA recipients</i>
	no.	%	no.	%
Newstart	192 819	20.5	7 533	32.0
Parenting Payment, Single	193 583	20.6	7 657	32.5
Disability Support Pension	166 163	17.7	3 744	15.9
Age Pension	157 518	16.7	703	3.0
Youth Allowance	88 653	9.4	1 358	5.8
Family Tax Benefit	79 551	8.5	1 435	6.1
Parenting Payment, Partnered	25 347	2.7	601	2.6
Other qualifying payments	37 074	3.9	515	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>940 708</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>23 546</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>a</sup> At 30 June. 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> Income units are classified as Family Tax Benefit only if neither the person nor partner receives an income support payment. Income units are classified as Parenting Payment Partnered only if a partner does not receive an income support payment.

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

### *Access — low income*

This indicator shows income of CRA recipients, by quintiles of family income received per week. Among all income unit types in 2002, the bottom 20 per cent of CRA recipients had family income of \$197 or less per week, while the top 20 per cent had family income in excess of \$521 per week (table 16.20).

Among those income units paying enough rent to receive maximum CRA payments in 2002, the bottom 20 per cent of CRA recipients had family income of \$206 or less per week, while the top 20 per cent had family income in excess of \$583 per week (table 16A.46). Data for income units receiving maximum CRA payments and

those not paying enough rent to receive maximum CRA payments are also shown in table 16A.46.

**Table 16.20 Income of CRA recipients, by quintiles of income, all income units, 2002 (\$ per week)<sup>a, b, c</sup>**

<i>Income unit type<sup>d</sup></i>	<i>Income quintile (weekly family income received \$)</i>			
	<i>20 per cent of recipients</i>	<i>40 per cent of recipients</i>	<i>60 per cent of recipients</i>	<i>80 per cent of recipients</i>
Single, no dependent children	188.45	217.60	219.03	248.03
Single, no children, sharer <sup>e</sup>	151.85	187.45	190.35	229.60
Single, 1 or 2 dependent children	340.32	391.77	453.45	604.29
Single, 3 or more dependent children	468.04	522.56	579.61	680.77
Partnered, no dependent children	347.73	362.72	405.37	479.86
Partnered, 1 or 2 dependent children	454.81	559.40	700.12	846.84
Partnered, 3 or more dependent children	593.49	718.79	865.13	1 030.19
Partnered, illness separated, no dependent children	406.77	442.63	476.63	544.58
Partnered, temporarily separated, no dependent children	182.55	338.10	362.72	432.72
<b>All income unit types</b>	<b>196.55</b>	<b>225.45</b>	<b>351.15</b>	<b>520.57</b>

<sup>a</sup> At 29 November. 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> Quintiles represent one fifth of the respective income unit type population ranked by income. Dollar amounts do not represent average income they reflect the upper boundary that defines the quintile. For example the lowest quintile of singles with no dependent children have income less than \$188.45 per week. The respective second quintile has incomes between \$188.45 and \$217.60. Incomes for the highest quintile are above the upper boundary of the fourth quintile. <sup>c</sup> Income units are analogous to family units except that non-dependent children and other adults are treated as separate income units (see table 16.24 for more detail). <sup>d</sup> A child is regarded as dependent on an adult only if the adult receives Family Tax Benefit for the care of the child. <sup>e</sup> The maximum rate of assistance is lower for some single persons without dependent children who share accommodation (see the definition of sharer in table 16.24).

Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.46.

### *Access — special needs*

This indicator measures both the access of special needs groups to CRA and the extent to which CRA assists with housing affordability. Overall, approximately 64.4 per cent of CRA recipients were located in major cities, 34.2 per cent were in regional areas (as distinct from remote areas) and 1.3 per cent were in remote areas at June 2003 (table 16A.47). Of Indigenous CRA recipients, approximately

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35.7 per cent were located in major cities, 54.9 per cent were in regional areas (as distinct from remote areas) and 9.2 per cent were in remote areas (table 16A.48).

### *Effectiveness*

There are two categories for output effectiveness indicators: appropriateness and quality. The two indicators of appropriateness are:

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

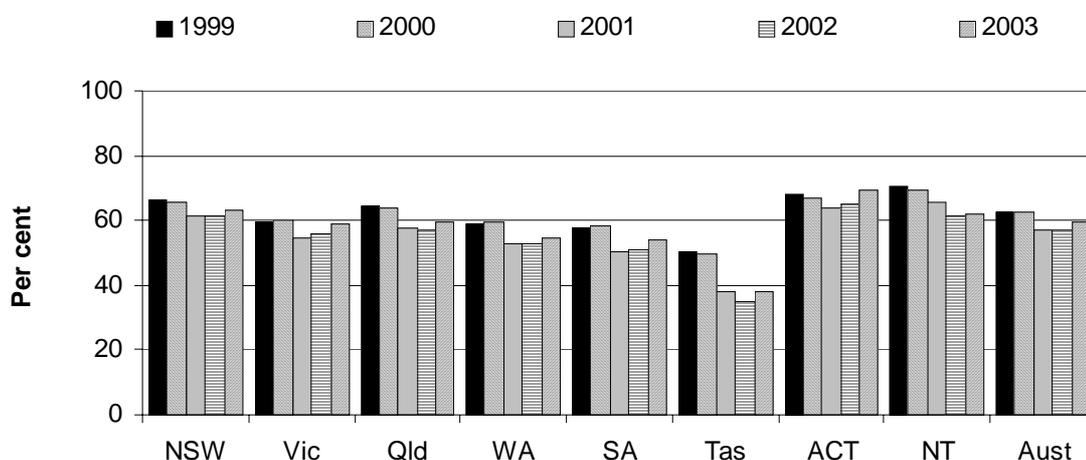
The indicator of quality is the geographic spread of CRA customers.

### *Appropriateness — 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 low rents — that is, that the rent threshold is too low or that the maximum rate of assistance is too low and needs to be increased.

At 30 June 2003, 59.4 per cent of CRA recipients across Australia qualified for the maximum rate of CRA payments. This proportion varied from 69.4 per cent in the ACT to 38.3 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 16.27). Table 16A.49 contains data showing the proportion of CRA recipients qualifying for maximum CRA payments by the type of primary payment received.

Figure 16.27 **Income units receiving CRA paying enough rent to receive maximum assistance<sup>a, b, c, d</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> At June. <sup>b</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>c</sup> Income units are analogous to family units except that non-dependent children and other adults are treated as separate income units. See table 16.24 for more detail. <sup>d</sup> Proportion of income units with ongoing entitlement to CRA paying enough rent to receive maximum assistance.

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

### *Appropriateness — 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, which is an independent body with decision making powers. Either the customer or DFACS can seek an Administrative Appeals Tribunal review of Social Security Appeals Tribunal decisions.

There were 387 finalised appeals to an authorised review officer in 2002-03, which represented approximately 0.04 per cent of people receiving CRA. Approximately 49.6 per cent of finalised appeals to an authorised review officer and 59.1 per cent of finalised appeals to the Social Security Appeals Tribunal led to the original decision being affirmed. The Administrative Appeals Tribunal affirmed 16.7 per cent (one decision) of original decisions (table 16.21).

**Table 16.21 Outcome of all CRA appeals finalised in 2002-03<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	192	49.6	39	59.1	1	16.7
Original decision set aside	152	39.3	22	33.3	3	50.0
Original decision varied	35	9.0	3	4.6	1	16.7
Appeal withdrawn/dismissed	8	2.1	2	3.0	1	16.7
<b>Total finalised</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0</b>

ARO = authorised review officer. SSAT = Social Security Appeals Tribunal. AAT = Administrative Appeals Tribunal. <sup>a</sup> Totals may not add to 100 as a result of rounding.

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

### *Quality — geographic spread of CRA customers*

The geographic spread of CRA customers relates 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.52–16A.60. Information on the average CRA entitlement across locations is contained in table 16A.61.

### *Efficiency*

Data remain unavailable for two of the three efficiency indicators for CRA (running costs per 1000 customers and the ratio of running costs to total outlays). The only indicator reported is control of incorrect payment.

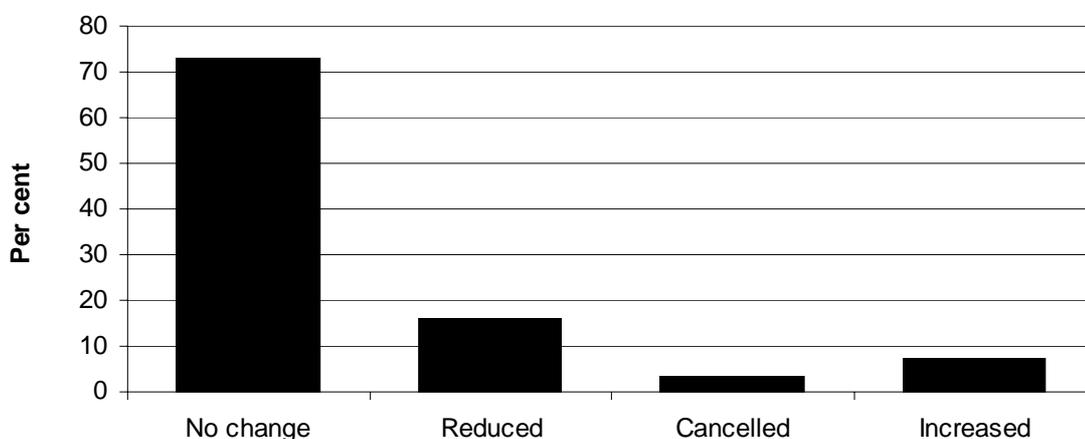
### *Efficiency — control of incorrect payment*

Centrelink relies on risk-based review activities to control overpayment, some of which are targeted at CRA. In total, Centrelink conducted 129 545 risk-based reviews relating to CRA in 2002-03. CRA was cancelled in 3.5 per cent of cases, reduced in 16.2 per cent of cases and increased in 7.4 per cent of cases. For the majority of cases (73.0 per cent), there was no change (figure 16.28).

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Figure 16.28 **CRA payments adjustments resulting from a risk-based review, 2002-03**

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Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.62.

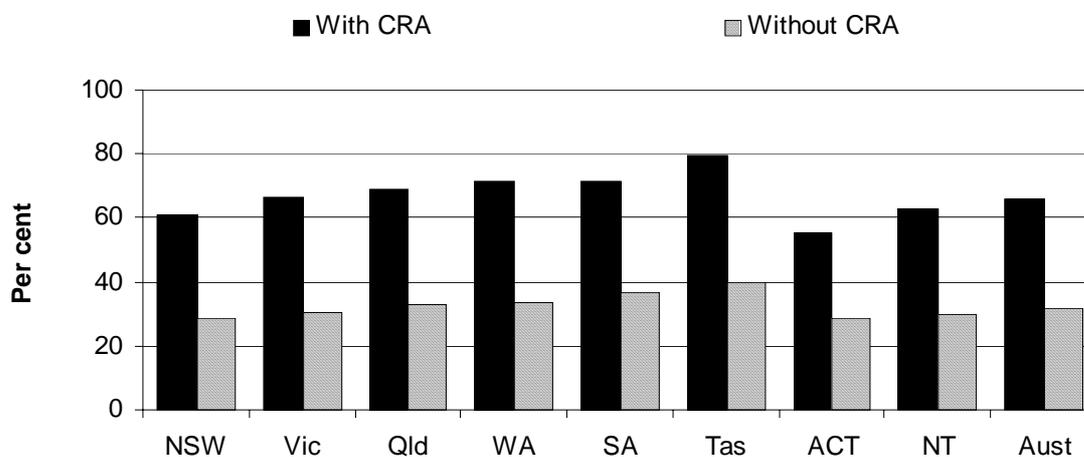
### *Outcomes*

#### *Affordability*

This indicator relates to the proportions of recipients spending more than 30 per cent and 50 per cent of their income on rent with and without CRA, by Indigenous and rural and remote status. Nationally, if CRA was not payable, then 31.4 per cent of those income units receiving CRA would have spent less than 30 per cent of income on rent at 29 November 2002. Across jurisdictions, this proportion ranged from 39.8 per cent in Tasmania to 28.4 per cent in the NSW. 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 at 29 November 2002 increases to 66.1 per cent. Across jurisdictions, this proportion ranged from 79.4 per cent in Tasmania to 55.5 per cent in the ACT (figure 16.29).

Similarly, if CRA was not payable, then 72.6 per cent of income units across Australia would have spent less than 50 per cent of income on rent at 29 November 2002. Accounting for CRA payments, this proportion increases to 91.1 per cent (table 16A.63).

**Figure 16.29 CRA recipients paying less than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, 2002<sup>a</sup>**



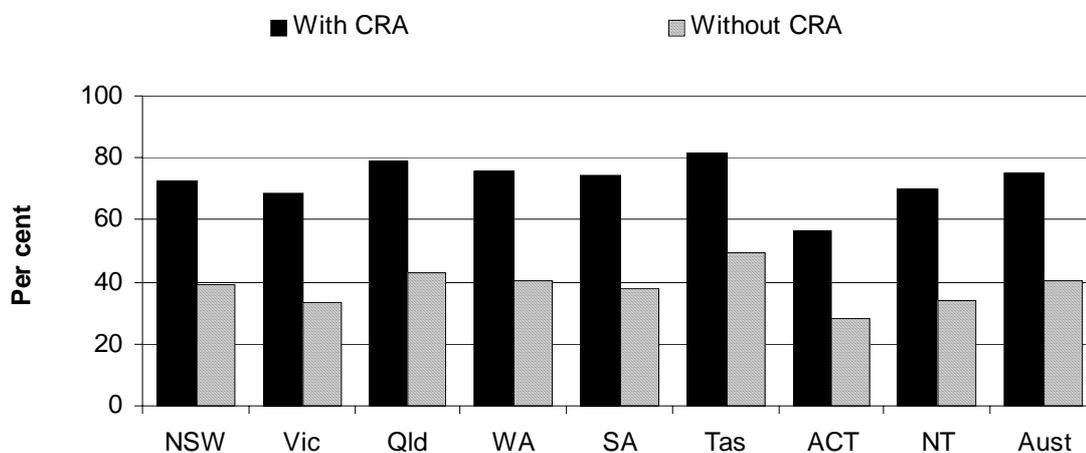
<sup>a</sup> At 29 November.

Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.63.

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 40.5 per cent of those Indigenous income units receiving CRA would have spent less than 30 per cent of income on rent at 29 November 2002. Across jurisdictions, this proportion ranged from 49.3 per cent in Tasmania to 28.1 per cent in the ACT. 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 29 November 2002 increases to 75.1 per cent. Across jurisdictions, this proportion ranged from 81.1 per cent in Tasmania to 56.2 per cent in the ACT (figure 16.30).

Similarly, if CRA was not payable, then 79.6 per cent of Indigenous income units across Australia would have spent less than 50 per cent of income on rent at 29 November 2002. Accounting for CRA payments, this proportion increases to 94.6 per cent (table 16A.64).

Figure 16.30 Indigenous CRA recipients paying less than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, 2002<sup>a</sup>



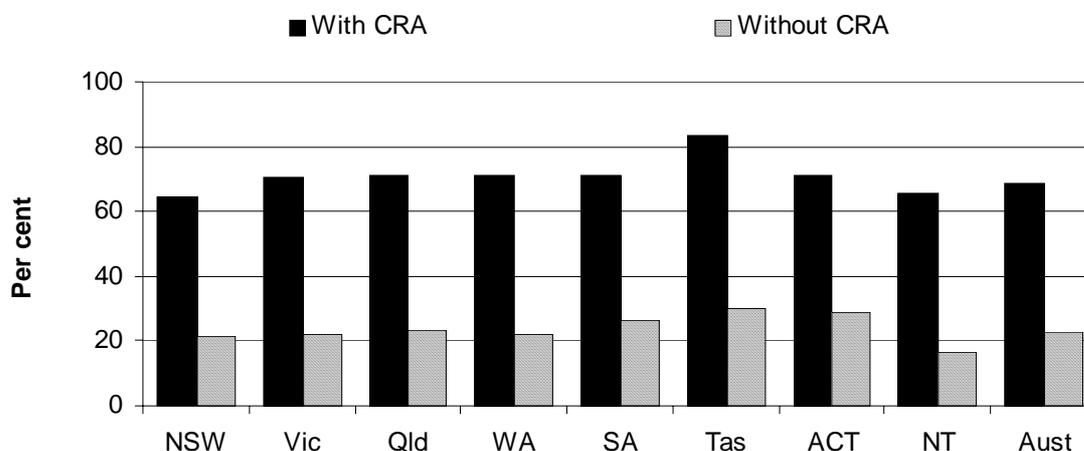
<sup>a</sup> At 29 November.

Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.64.

If CRA was not payable, then 22.7 per cent of Disability Support Pension recipients across Australia would have spent less than 30 per cent of income on rent at 29 November 2002. Across jurisdictions, this proportion ranged from 29.8 per cent in Tasmania to 16.4 per cent in the NT. Accounting for CRA payments (thereby reducing the rent paid by the amount of the assistance), the national proportion of Disability Support Pension recipients spending less than 30 per cent of income on rent at 29 November 2002 increases to 69.0 per cent. Across jurisdictions, this proportion ranged from 83.2 per cent in Tasmania to 64.3 per cent in NSW (figure 16.31).

Similarly, if CRA was not payable, then 70.4 per cent of Disability Support Pension recipients across Australia would have spent less than 50 per cent of income on rent at 29 November 2002. Accounting for CRA payments, this proportion increases to 93.8 per cent (table 16A.65).

**Figure 16.31 Disability Support Pension recipients paying less than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, 2002<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> At 29 November.

Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.65.

### *Satisfaction with location and quality*

Data showing CRA recipients' satisfaction with both the location and quality of their housing are obtained from the most recent DFACS customer survey conducted between March 2002 and January 2003. Results are based on 615 responses from those individuals paying enough rent to qualify for CRA and receiving a relevant primary payment type. Overall, 82 per cent of respondents described their location as 'good' or 'great', while only 2 per cent described the location as 'poor'. Regarding the quality of their housing, 70 per cent of respondents described their housing as 'good' or 'great', and only 3 per cent described it as 'poor' (table 16.22).

**Table 16.22 Satisfaction with location and quality of housing, 2002-03 (per cent)<sup>a, b</sup>**

Thinking about the location of the place you live in, would you say it is:			
Poor	Just OK	Good	Great
2	16	49	33
Thinking about the quality of the place you live in, would you say it is:			
Poor	Just OK	Good	Great
3	28	45	25

<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. <sup>b</sup> The CRA survey method differs from the method used for the National Social Housing Survey for public and community housing tenants, so satisfaction parameters between the two areas should not be compared.

Source: DFACS (unpublished); table 16A.66.

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*Running costs per 1000 customers*

The Review has identified this indicator for development and reporting in future.

*Ratio of running costs to total outlays*

The Review has identified this indicator for development and reporting in future.

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

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

A new CSHA took effect on 1 July 2003 and will run until 30 June 2008. Work will be undertaken on the performance indicator framework to reflect the objectives of the new CSHA and to further improve the quality and scope of the national performance indicators in some areas.

Improved reporting on housing provision to Indigenous Australians continues to be a priority, with work to be done over the next year to improve the availability of data on Indigenous Australians accessing public and community housing. Work will also be done to improve reporting on both State owned and managed Indigenous housing and the Indigenous community housing sector. The National Indigenous Housing Information Implementation Committee is developing a national reporting framework for Indigenous housing.

## **16.6 Jurisdictions' comments**

This section provides comments from each jurisdiction on the services covered in this chapter. Appendix A contains data that 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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## Australian 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.

The outcomes based performance reporting framework introduced for the Report on Government Services is better suited to Rent Assistance which is an outcomes based program delivering an income support payment rather than a service. The Geographic spread of Rent Assistance customers has been further refined and is provided in a mapped form using 2003 Statistical Local Area.

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 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 recognize the element of choice exercised by customers who place a higher value on housing than others in comparable circumstances.

The Australian Government allocates \$91 million annually through ARHP for the provision of state/territory managed and Indigenous community managed housing. In the 2001 Budget, an additional \$75 million over four years was allocated to state and territories for Indigenous housing and housing related infrastructure. As part of the initiative, the Australian Government requires improved accountability, focusing on outcomes, for all national Indigenous-specific housing funds (ARHP and CHIP). The Common Reporting Framework (CRF) was developed by FaCS and ATSIC in 2001 as a reporting tool for state, territory and ATSIC Indigenous housing plans and performance reports. The CRF provided a starting point for the development in 2003 of the National Reporting Framework (NRF). Based on Building a Better Future: Indigenous Housing to 2010, the NRF has the capacity to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of reporting on Indigenous housing outcomes and performance.”

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## **New South Wales Government comments**

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Housing prices in Sydney and coastal New South Wales have continued to increase significantly in 2002-2003 and average house prices in Sydney remain the highest in Australia. Despite historically low interest rates, home purchase affordability in Sydney as measured by standard indices is at its lowest point for twelve years.

The declining affordability of home purchase means that a larger proportion of households are renting, and renting for longer periods. Record levels of investor borrowing in housing, particularly for new flats and houses, have contributed to relatively high rental vacancy rates, particularly in Inner Sydney. However the increase in the supply of rental accommodation does not translate into affordable rental housing for all households. Although in the traditionally lower cost areas of outer Sydney rents have remained stable or increased only slightly over the last three years, average rents are still higher than in all other capital cities except Canberra. Affordability remains a critical issue for many low income households in both Sydney and coastal NSW.

The demand for housing assistance therefore remains high. The NSW Department of Housing has continued to introduce a range of new housing assistance products to provide low to moderate income households with a greater range of options to meet their housing need in the private market, either through home purchase or in affordable private rental. In 2002-03, the Department has called for applications for grants to local councils and non-Government organisations for the conduct of group self build projects, and has significantly expanded a system of Government guaranteed loans for households which may otherwise have difficulty in securing housing finance. For renters, the Government is offering guarantees to landlords as an inducement for them to rent to tenants who might otherwise find it difficult to secure a lease, for example, because of a lack of a tenancy or credit history.

Aboriginal people have the highest relative housing need in the community. With the largest number of Indigenous people in Australia, NSW is strongly committed to the principles and objectives of Building a Better Future: Indigenous Housing to 2010 Statement. Through the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office there is an ongoing focus on addressing outstanding housing need as well as improving sustainability in the sector by upgrading poor quality dwellings, building community and organisational capacity, linkages to employment and training and better monitoring and reporting.

New South Wales has continued to achieve good performance outcomes against the Productivity Commission's indicators for equity, efficiency and effectiveness for the delivery of public, community and Aboriginal housing assistance. Against most indicators, NSW has improved performance outcomes relative to 2001-02, and in general, NSW is still achieving performance levels above the Australian average.

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## Victorian Government comments

“ Victoria continues to respond to the needs of low-income households through affordable housing supply, improvement and upgrade of existing social housing and the provision of housing assistance and support to people experiencing homelessness. In accordance with the goals of the Victorian Government’s vision for the future, *Growing Victoria Together*, Victoria is also pursuing significant community building initiatives through Neighbourhood Renewal projects in areas of concentrated social disadvantage.

The supply of affordable private rental housing remains a significant issue for low income Victorians. There has been a decline in the availability of low cost rental housing, particularly in the inner and middle suburbs of Melbourne, with most affordable housing now located in the outer metropolitan area and in regional centres. Social housing stock, particularly in established areas, therefore provides crucial access to housing for low-income households.

Victoria has continued to increase the supply of social housing, which increased to 76 167 at June 2003, in an environment of declining CSHA funds and continued property price increases. This has been possible only through the addition of \$94.5 million in State Government funding, in excess of CSHA obligations, over the three year period to June 2003 and through equity contributions from non-government organisations via joint venture arrangements.

In an environment of increasing demand, Victoria has targeted public housing to low income clients in greatest need and expanded assistance to people experiencing homelessness. Implementation of the Victorian Homeless Strategy has continued, with significant expansion of housing in Crisis and Transitional Housing programs in 2002-03.

A priority for Victoria is to revitalise disadvantaged communities through the Neighbourhood Renewal Program. This program is enabling tenant input to community decisions, increasing opportunities for work, training and social engagements and creating community enterprises such as building and recycling projects.

Underpinning community renewal, and sound asset management principles, is a significant physical improvement and upgrade program for ageing housing stock. In 2002-03, a total of 2847 properties received major upgrades, with minor improvements to many more. Considerable improvement and upgrade work was undertaken in ten Neighbourhood Renewal project areas across Victoria.

A focus on affordable housing supply strategies, Neighbourhood Renewal, housing upgrades and homelessness support will continue, with the Victorian government committing an additional \$88.8 million funding to these programs for 2003–2007. Development of new information systems for housing and an integrated data collection for homelessness programs is also underway and expected to provide significantly improved information for future program assessment and planning.

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## Queensland Government comments

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The Queensland Department of Housing is committed to ensuring the viability of its traditional housing services as well as exploring innovative solutions to meet long-term housing needs for Queenslanders.

The Department made a real difference to people's lives by assisting around 240 000 households with products and services such as long-term public housing for low-income families, crisis and transitional accommodation, assistance to rent in the private rental market and financial assistance to help boarding house owners upgrade their premises.

Around 57 000 households were assisted through Public Rental Housing and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing, and community organisations received funds to assist about 16 000 households with community housing accommodation. As well, around 59 500 private renters received tenancy advice and over 50 500 older people and people with disabilities received advice and help with home maintenance, repairs and personal security needs.

The Department offers a wide range of products, services and programs to meet the diverse housing needs of Queenslanders. In addition to funds committed to traditional housing provision, a number of non-traditional projects in partnership with industry, government and the community to help improve people's lives through housing have been implemented.

The Department is increasingly exploring opportunities to develop partnership to deliver both traditional and innovative housing solutions. With housing affordability a matter of concern to many Australians, in 2002-03 the Department of Housing continued to implement elements of its Affordable Housing Strategy. This included developing policy and planning measures and promoting partnerships to influence and increase the supply of affordable housing in high growth, high need areas. Queensland is actively involved at the national level to explore opportunities to increase affordable housing.

New housing legislation was tabled in Parliament in May 2003 to replace the State Housing Act 1945. The legislation supports traditional social housing provided by the Department as well as many of the new approaches to social and affordable housing provision.

2002-03 has seen a strengthened focus on providing responsive, integrated and sustainable services to the community and we are well placed to pursue innovative, collaborative housing outcomes for Queenslanders into the future.

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## Western Australian Government comments

“ The mission of The State Housing Commission is; ***Responding to the hopes of all Western Australians for their housing and construction needs.*** The 2002-03 financial year saw the Commission meeting this commitment in a variety of ways.

- The Keystart Home Loan Scheme approved 3424 loans; A network of 700 mortgage brokers was introduced to the Keystart program, providing wider access and information.
- The Commission spent a total of \$58.6 million on maintenance and improvements to its rental properties.
- The Homeless Helpline, introduced in 2001-02, received 1533 contacts and assisted 1109 families into housing.
- Funding of the Supported Housing Assistance Program received a funding boost of \$0.5 million, allowing the program to expand to seven additional country towns.
- The Bond Assistance Scheme provided 15 539 bond loans.
- 93 rental properties were sold to tenants under the Rental Sales Scheme.
- 1848 dwelling units were commenced, and 1678 were completed.
- As at the end of the financial year there were seven separate New Living Projects underway in metropolitan Perth and a further eight in country areas.
- Continued in-house development of broadhectare holdings to assist in the supply of lots for the construction of rental housing, provide a continual supply of affordable land with an emphasis on first home buyers and a revenue stream to fund the Commission's social programs.

The New Living Program which aims to reduce high concentrations of public housing, provide opportunities for tenants to purchase their homes, encourage more private homebuyers into the area and to revitalise and redevelop communities received two significant awards during the year;

- The Eastern Horizons project won the Western Australia Planning Institute of Australia award for 'Excellence in Community-Based Planning'.
  - The Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Awards (one of three national winners). These awards are designed to reward best practice in the prevention or reduction of violence and other types of crime in Australia, encourage public initiatives and to assist in identifying and developing practical projects to meet these objectives.
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## South Australian Government comments

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South Australia's social housing sector continues to play a major role in alleviating poverty and social exclusion through the provision of affordable housing for low income and special needs households and the facilitation of a range of other housing and support services. At 30 June 2003 there were over 55 000 social housing dwellings managed through a vibrant multi-provider system. These include:

- Aboriginal Housing Authority (AHA) — 1812 dwellings managed through direct provision with support provided to 46 Indigenous Community Housing Organisations that manage 942 dwellings.
- South Australian Community Housing Authority (SACHA) — 123 Community Housing Organisations managing 4022 dwellings.
- South Australian Housing Trust (SAHT) — 48 271 public housing dwellings.

During 2002-03, the Housing Management Council (HMC) further consolidated its role through its management of the development of the State Housing Plan, which will provide a 10 year plan for the provision of housing for South Australians. It is expected that the plan will be finalised in late 2003 and will feature strategies to improve the long-term financial sustainability of the social housing sector in light of continuing reductions in CSHA funds and the withdrawal of GST compensation for social housing activities.

During the year a number of major initiatives were undertaken, including:

- Nine significant urban regeneration and renewal projects managed by SAHT in areas with high proportions of aged public housing dwellings.
- Increased support for the Indigenous community housing program through the development of integrated management tools to increase community capacity in the provision of housing, tenancy and asset management.
- The development and implementation of protocols by the various social housing agencies and the Disability Services Office for joint planning and co-ordination in the allocation of housing to supported accommodation and respite services.
- A focus on sustainability in the community housing sector with significant work undertaken on strategic asset management programs, simplification of management processes, increasing quantity and quality of training for community housing organisation, clearer information systems and the renegotiation of the funding agreement and reporting expectations between SACHA and community housing organisations.
- The launch of the first AHA Strategic Directions to achieve improved, co-ordinated housing outcomes for the Aboriginal community of South Australia.
- The development of a range of new services in the Aboriginal rental program to access supports to sustain tenancies.
- Participation in the renegotiation of the CSHA.
- The HMC and the Department of Human Services have also made major contributions to the development of strategies under the Social Inclusion initiative aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness.

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## Tasmanian Government comments

“ Housing Tasmania provides a range of affordable housing options, including public, community and Aboriginal housing, home ownership assistance, and ongoing support for private renters on low incomes. Housing Tasmania works from the premise that affordable, appropriately located housing plays a vital role in enabling Tasmanians to access social and economic opportunities, and the support networks they need. Consequently, affordable housing makes a significant contribution to improving health and well being outcomes for people on low incomes.

Recognition of these links is visible through the Division's continued leading role in community capacity building initiatives in areas with high proportions of public housing and social disadvantage. Housing Tasmania has continued to actively promote opportunities for capacity building in communities characterised by fewer opportunities to participate in the workforce, lower educational achievement, higher numbers in receipt of pensions and benefits, and poorer health outcomes.

Throughout the year, effort has focused on developing an *Affordable Housing Strategy* for low income Tasmanians, who are an increasingly diverse client group often with high and complex needs. The *Affordable Housing Strategy* is driven by Tasmania's ageing population, higher levels of unemployment and lower average household income, combined with decreasing affordability of private rental and home ownership alternatives. The Strategy will consider options which can be implemented in the short term to alleviate some immediate pressures, and those which require implementation over the long term to ensure a sustainable and viable social housing system in the State. Development of the Strategy 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 and consideration of new models and new mechanisms for funding, delivering and managing affordable housing.

Housing Tasmania is pleased with improved performance in the delivery of social housing programs. The last year has seen levels of overall satisfaction remain higher than the National average and levels of dissatisfaction remain lower, a reduction in the average cost of providing assistance compared to previous years, and the allocation of homes to households with special needs exceeding National averages. In addition, households in greatest need continue to gain timely access to public rental housing compared to other States and Territories.”

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## Australian Capital Territory Government comments

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While the ACT has a high proportion of public housing stock relative to other jurisdictions, it also currently has the highest median private rental costs in Australia. Median rents increased for 3 bedroomed houses by 12 per cent and for 2 bedroomed flats by 10.6 per cent over the year to 30 June 2003. Median house prices have increased by 34 per cent, and flats, units and townhouses have increased by 37.8 per cent over the year to 30 June 2003. These costs are reflected in increased rental rebate amounts, illustrated by a figure of 51.3 per cent for rent charged as a proportion of market rent (adjusted for CRA). The price of land and a lack of the cheaper rural stock that reduces averages in other jurisdictions is a significant factor in the high total net costs per dwelling for public housing. The loss of 500 homes due to the January bushfires has exacerbated this trend.

The ACT continues to rejuvenate and re-configure its older stock. Many large flat complexes are over 40 years old and require improvements, in particular to meet changing stock needs. The re-development and up-grading has included a focus on fire safety. The work is partly funded from asset sales, resulting in a modest reduction in stock levels in the immediate future. Reliance on asset sales as a source of funding is a consequence of the continued decline in Commonwealth funding, including the loss of GST funding, internalising the cost burden of rental rebates and the high costs of property and land.

A continued focus has been on public housing for those in greatest need, who constituted 87.1 per cent of all new tenants for 2003-03. Days required to prepare and re-let properties has been reduced to 39 and the occupancy rate is 98.7 per cent. Programs to assist tenants to sustain their tenancies, form links to their communities and to obtain appropriate supports have continued to develop. The Community Linkages program funded 25 projects in 2002-03.

The small community housing sector has been involved in the development of a framework for community housing, launched in early 2003. The strategic framework offers opportunities to build on progress achieved over the past decade and to address emerging issues requiring collaborative and concerted attention from stakeholders. The ACT allocated \$3 million in 2002-03 towards the expansion of affordable community housing and funded a pilot accreditation process, using the New South Wales Standards and Accreditation Unit, resulting in the formal accreditation of the ACT's largest community housing provider.

The ACT does not receive ARHP funding. Development of Indigenous housing is progressing with the establishment of a steering committee to oversee the recently signed Tri-lateral Agreement on Indigenous Housing, between ATSIS, the Commonwealth and the ACT Government.

An Affordable Housing Taskforce, consisting of community, business and government members, released its report during 2003, which the Government responded to in 2003. A number of initiatives were announced, including an expanded land release program, additional funding for properties destroyed by bushfires and the commencement of a rental bonds program.

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## Northern Territory Government comments

“ In September 2002 Territory Housing launched a new direction for the provision of publicly funded housing assistance in the Territory – ‘Home Territory: Secure affordable Housing to 2010’. This policy framework will address the community’s housing and related needs and drive the strategic housing policy direction for the next seven-years.

Key achievements for 2002-2003 included:

- Opening of the Alice Springs Gillen Seniors Village, a purpose built low density village style accommodation, in April 2003.
- Successful renegotiation of five year Mortgage Management Agreement signed with the Territory Insurance Office to administer the HomeNorth loan portfolio.
- Expended \$6.08 million on the completion of 56 public housing dwellings.
- Developed strategies to improve the accessibility and suitability of accommodation for people with special needs.
- Provided \$1.4 million in grants to community organisations for purchasing, constructing, repairing and renting buildings via the Community Housing Program.
- Transferred five Housing Business Services properties to Kalano Community Association Incorporated to assist in increasing the availability of housing for Indigenous people in the Katherine region.
- Upgraded security in all high density accommodation, and fitted security screening to 1052 houses.

The Northern Territory 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 Northern Territory Government’s commitment to the provision of housing and related infrastructure to Indigenous communities, delivered by IHANT.

Other than Indigenous community delivered housing, the community housing sector is extremely small in the Northern Territory. Due to the size of the sector, the Northern Territory community housing data for this report is incomplete. The Northern Territory’s emphasis for housing provider models, particularly targeting the provision of specific, unmet housing needs.

The Northern Territory’s results in the National customer Satisfaction Survey demonstrate consistent improvement in performance over the seven years that the survey has been undertaken.”

## 16.7 Definitions

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

Table 16.23 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 and 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</li> <li>• contracted public housing management services.</li> </ul>
Affordability	The level of housing affordability within the public housing, community or State 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	An indicator measuring tenant satisfaction with the amenity and location of their dwellings. Tenants were asked whether particular aspects of the location and amenity of their dwellings were important to them and, if so, whether they felt their needs were met.
Appropriate	The size of a dwelling, or the number of bedrooms that 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 16.7).
Assessable income	The income used to assess eligibility for housing assistance and to calculate the rental housing rebate that allows the household to pay a rent lower than the market rent. Definition may vary across jurisdictions.
Community housing rental dwelling	Includes properties covered by the CSHA. Excludes properties for which the tenancy management functions are undertaken and administered under the Public Rental Housing Program, the ARHP or transitional/emergency accommodation for people who are homeless and in crisis (the Crisis Accommodation Program).
Customer satisfaction	The proportion of customers expressing different degrees of satisfaction with 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 the costs of maintaining the operation of dwellings.

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**Table 16.23 (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 owned and managed Indigenous housing collections, 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 being at risk in their accommodation</li> <li>• their health condition being aggravated by their housing</li> <li>• their housing being inappropriate to their needs</li> <li>• their rental housing costs being very high.</li> </ul>
Household	For the purpose of the public, community and State owned and managed Indigenous housing collections, a tenancy agreement. 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. Counting the number of tenancy agreements is the proxy for counting the number of households.
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 (1) marriage (registered or <i>de facto</i> ) and (2) 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</li> <li>• married couple only (registered or <i>de facto</i>) with no dependent children present</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> It is defined differently for CRA.
Indigenous household	A household with one or more members (including children) who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

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**Table 16.23 (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 in 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 pension.</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 proportion of households whose dwelling size is inappropriate, calculated as the percentage of occupied public, community or State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings with overcrowding, based on the following definition of overcrowding: 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 that commenced receiving assistance for the financial year and were waitlist type 'new applicant/household.'</p>
Occupancy rate	<p>The use of rental housing stock, where 'occupied' is defined as tenantable 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 live in, regardless of its intended purpose. The structure may or may not be tenantable.</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</li> <li>• total.</li> </ul>
Principal tenant	<p>The person or principal person whose name appears on the tenancy agreement. Where this is not clear, it should be the person who is responsible for rental payments.</p>

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**Table 16.23 (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 owned and managed Indigenous housing sectors, calculated as the proportion 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</li> <li>• greater than or equal to 31 per cent.</li> </ul> <p>It was 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>Public rental properties covered by the CSHA. Excludes properties administered under Community Rental Housing, the ARHP or transitional/emergency accommodation for people who are homeless and in crisis (the Crisis Accommodation Program).</p>
Relocated household	<p>A household, either rebated or market renting, that relocates (transfers) from one public or community rental dwelling to another public or community rental dwelling.</p>
Rent arrears	<p>Total rent actually as a proportion of total rent charged.</p>
Rent charged	<p>The amount in dollars that households are charged based on the rents they are expected to pay. The rents charged to tenants may or may not have been received.</p>
Rent collected	<p>The rent received from tenants.</p>
Special needs household	<p>A household that has a member(s) with a disability or a principal tenant aged 24 years or under, or 75 years or over (50 years or over for State owned and managed Indigenous housing) or, except for State owned and managed Indigenous housing, that is defined as Indigenous.</p>
Special needs but not low income household	<p>Where a household member 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>A dwelling 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 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 16.23 (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.
Underuse	Where there are two or more bedrooms additional to the number required in the dwelling to satisfy the proxy occupancy standard.
Untenantable dwelling	A dwelling 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 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• still reside in the State or Territory of application</li> <li>• are still eligible for public, community or State owned and managed Indigenous housing</li> <li>• still wish to pursue their application.</li> </ul> Potential applicants awaiting eligibility assessment at 30 June are excluded.

Source: AIHW (2003a, 2003b, 2003j).

## Commonwealth Rent Assistance

Table 16.24 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.
Dependent child	<p>A person under 18 years may be regarded as the dependant of another person (an adult) if the adult is legally responsible for the day-to-day care, welfare and development of the child in the adult's care, if the child is not a dependent child of another person, and the child is wholly or substantially in the adult's care.</p> <p>A young person aged 18–24 years may be regarded as the dependant of another person if he or she is wholly or substantially dependent on that other person.</p> <p>A young person aged 21 years or over cannot be regarded as a dependant unless undertaking full time study. A young person cannot be regarded as a dependant if he or she receives an income support payment.</p> <p>Operationally, a child is regarded as a dependant of another person (the parent) if the parent receives Family Tax Benefit for the care of the child. A dependent child is regarded as a member of the parental income unit.</p> <p>The maximum rate of CRA depends on the number of children for whom the recipient or partner receives more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A. Although Family Tax Benefit may be paid for a child aged 16 years or over it cannot be paid at more than the base rate. It may also be paid at not more than the base rate if a parent has not taken appropriate steps to obtain maintenance from a child's other parent.</p>
Eligible income support clients	Clients in receipt of an income support payment or more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A. 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.
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 unit	<p>One person or a group of related people within a household who share command over income. The only recognised relationships are (1) marriage (registered or defacto) and (2) adult and dependent child. Operationally, an income unit may consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a single person, with no dependent child</li> <li>• a sole parent with a dependent child</li> <li>• a couple (registered or defacto) with no dependent child</li> <li>• a couple (registered or defacto) and any dependent children.</li> </ul> <p>A non-dependent child, including any child receiving Youth Allowance or some other income support payment, is not regarded as part of the parental income unit. Rather, he or she is regarded as a separate income unit.</p>

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**Table 16.24 (Continued)**

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Low income	Income units receiving CRA, 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 30 per cent and 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) divided by total income from all sources, excluding CRA</li> <li>• without CRA: rent divided by total income from all sources, excluding CRA.</li> </ul>
Ratio of running costs to total outlays for CRA	Total running costs for the CRA program as a proportion of total outlays.
Rent	Amount 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 cannot 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.
Sharer	Some single people are subject to a lower maximum (sharer) rate of CRA. The lower rate may apply to only a single person (with no dependent child) who shares a major area of accommodation. The lower rate does not apply to those receiving the Disability Support Pension or Carer Payment, those in nursing homes or boarding house accommodation, or those paying for both board and lodgings. A person is not regarded as a sharer solely because he or shares with a child (of any age) if the child does not receive CRA.

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**Table 16.24 (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. This measure reports on individuals paid CRA in the fortnight before interview.
Satisfaction with quality of housing	Satisfaction with the quality of housing as measured by the DFACS General Customer Survey. This measure reports on individuals paid CRA in the fortnight before interview.
Special needs	The proportion of income units spending less than 30 per cent and 50 per cent of their income on rent, both with and without CRA, for CRA recipients who are Indigenous, in rural and remote areas and receiving the Disability Support Pension.
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</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 Tax Benefit but no other income support payment.</p>

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Source: DFACS (unpublished).

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