
16 Housing

Governments play 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, guarantees and 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 the housing services covered in this chapter 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 services for people with a disability (chapter 13), mental health services (chapter 11) and aged care services, such as the Home and Community Care program (chapter 12).

A profile of housing and housing assistance is presented in section 16.1. This provides the context for assessing the performance indicators presented later in the chapter. All jurisdictions have agreed to develop and report comparable indicators, and a framework of performance indicators is outlined in section 16.2. The data are discussed in section 16.3, and future directions for performance reporting are discussed in section 16.4. Jurisdictions' comments are reported in section 16.5 and definitions are listed in section 16.6. Section 16.7 lists the supporting tables for this chapter and section 16.8 lists references used in the chapter.

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 2003 CSHA came into effect on 1 July 2003 and will run until 30 June 2008, and includes bilateral agreements between the Australian Government and each State and Territory government and an overarching multilateral agreement. There are generally separate bilateral agreements for mainstream and Indigenous housing in each jurisdiction. Bilateral agreements are intended to provide greater flexibility for states and territories to respond to their particular housing needs.

A national ten year strategy to improve Indigenous housing, Building a Better Future, was agreed in 2001 by Australian, State and Territory ministers. State Indigenous Bilateral Agreements are the primary vehicle for implementing the national Building a Better Future strategy. The desired strategy outcomes are better housing and housing services, more housing, improved partnerships, greater effectiveness and efficiency, and improved performance linked to accountability and coordination of services.

Funding arrangements

The majority of funding under the 2003 CSHA is provided by the Australian Government, taking 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 (CAP) and the Community Housing Program. The majority of CSHA funding is distributed to State and Territory governments on a modified per person basis, with the State and Territory governments contributing additional funding from their own resources to 'match' (in part) 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 (2003).

Public, State owned and managed Indigenous housing (SOMIH) and community housing information has been obtained from the 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 and reports. The data manuals and data reports are available from the AIHW web site at www.aihw.gov.au (AIHW 2006c, 2006d and 2006e). CRA data were obtained from the Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA). Data on satisfaction, location and amenity were obtained from national social housing surveys of public housing, community housing and SOMIH tenants.

Housing assistance not covered

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

- the Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP), including the Victorian Transitional Housing Management Program under the CSHA, which provides capital funding for accommodation for homeless people
- non-CSHA programs, including those provided by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA)
- CRA paid by the DVA or paid to Abstudy recipients on behalf of 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 Australian, State and Territory governments, land councils and Indigenous community organisations
- non-Indigenous community housing not funded under the CSHA
- home purchase assistance
- private rent assistance funded by States and Territories.

16.1 Profile of housing and housing assistance

Service overview

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2001 Census of Population and Housing (ABS 2002) 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.66). For a number of reasons, including non-response, misunderstanding, Census data are likely to underestimate the number of tenants in public housing.¹ Approximately 0.4 per cent of Australian households live in community housing.²

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 2002).

The average Indigenous household is larger than the average non-Indigenous household. In 2001, the average non-Indigenous Australian household size was 2.6 people, whereas the average household with at least one Indigenous person was 3.5 people (ABS and AIHW 2005).

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, location and/or adequacy. The price of rental dwellings can be prohibitive for people on lower incomes. 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

Each level of government has different roles and responsibilities in housing and housing assistance:

¹ Public housing tenants appear to be undercounted in the 2001 Census (and in previous censuses).

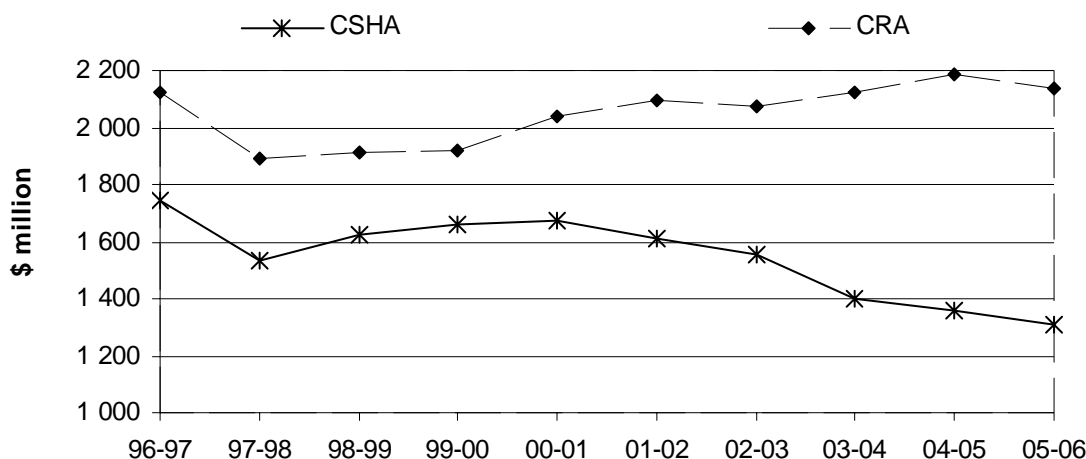
² This estimate is based on data received from jurisdictions regarding the number of community housing dwellings in each jurisdiction, combined with data from the ABS 2001 Census on the total number of dwellings in each jurisdiction.

-
- 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 assistance for the homeless, public housing, community housing, Indigenous rental housing, 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.

Funding

The Australian, State and Territory governments provided \$1.3 billion (contributing 72.2 per cent and 27.8 per cent respectively) for housing programs under the CSHA in 2005-06 (FaCSIA 2006). Public and community housing accounted for the majority of CSHA funding in 2005-06. The Australian Government also provided \$2.1 billion for CRA in 2005-06. Real expenditure on CSHA assistance declined by 25.1 per cent between 1996-97 and 2005-06 (figure 16.1). Real expenditure on CRA increased by 0.5 per cent over the same period (table 16A.73).

Figure 16.1 Real government expenditure on CSHA assistance and CRA (2005-06 dollars)^a



^a Data may not be comparable over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.73.

Source: CSHA (1999); FaCS (1999); FaCS (various years); FaCSIA (2006); FaCSIA (unpublished); table 16A.73.

Public housing is the largest form of assistance provided under the CSHA. Given the capital intensive nature of provision of social housing, additional assistance to annual funding is provided through the use of \$65 billion of housing stock owned by housing authorities in 2004-05 (calculated from 2004-05 State and Territory CSHA national financial statements).

Table 16.1 is a summary table that presents government expenditure including and excluding capital costs, on a per capita and per dwelling basis. It also includes the CRA per capita expenditure and per income unit figures to present the overall level of government housing assistance covered in this chapter. More detailed analysis of the cost components for public housing is presented in table 16.14.

Nationally, average direct cost per capita on public housing was approximately \$86 in 2005-06. Average direct cost plus capital costs per capita on public housing was \$346 (table 16.1).

Nationally, average direct cost per dwelling on public housing was approximately \$5145 in 2005-06. Average direct cost plus capital costs per capita on public housing was \$20 613 (table 16.1).

It is important to note the differences in housing assistance operations across jurisdictions when discussing expenditure per capita on public housing. It is also important to note that the per capita data could have been influenced by historic

arrangements (such as previous years' investment) that might have influenced the overall size of the public housing sector relative to the size of the population. Reporting direct cost per public housing dwelling addresses some of these issues.

Table 16.1 Government housing assistance, 2005-06^a

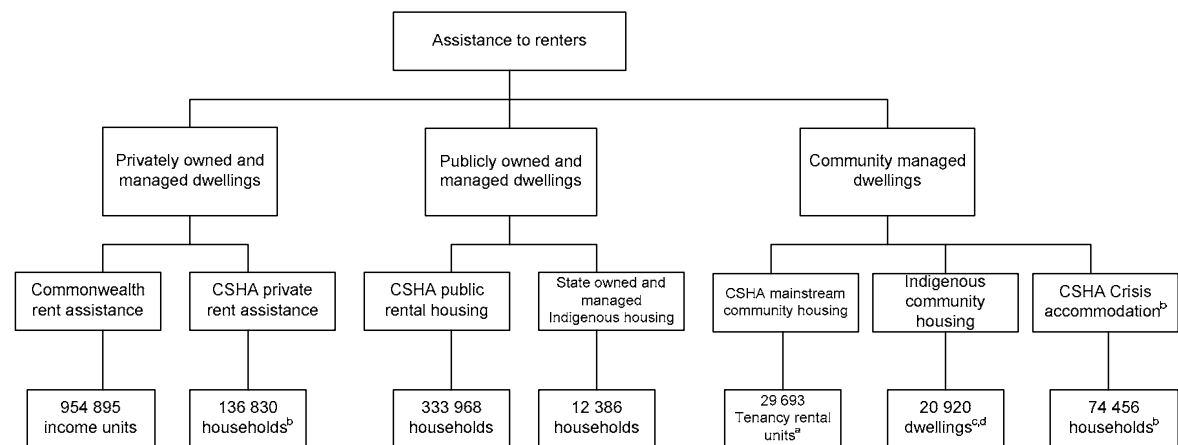
	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Government expenditure on public housing in \$									
<i>Per capita</i>									
Direct cost	93	55	59	83	154	164	256	247	86
Direct cost including capital cost	414	245	255	300	468	430	1 017	643	346
<i>Per dwelling</i>									
Direct cost	5 122	4 233	4 719	5 382	5 283	6 813	7 685	9 304	5 145
Direct cost including capital cost	22 721	18 988	20 402	19 456	16 088	17 877	30 477	24 174	20 613
CRA expenditure									
<i>Per capita</i>									
	107	92	134	92	96	110	52	59	105
<i>Per income unit</i>									
	2 250	2 213	2 279	2 206	2 169	2 207	2 073	2 182	2 236

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.80.

Source: FaCSIA (unpublished); State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.80.

Figure 16.2 illustrates the range of government assistance to renters.

Figure 16.2 Recipients of rental assistance across rental sector, 2006



^a Additional dwellings are funded under programs other than CSHA; however, data about these dwellings are not available. ^b For year ending 30 June 2005. ^c At 30 June 2006. ^d Includes permanent dwellings managed by funded or unfunded Indigenous community housing organisations. 18 927 of these dwellings were managed by organisations administered by the State governments and 1993 were managed by organisations administered by the Australian Government.

Source: AIHW (2007b).

CSHA funding data for 2004-05 and 2005-06 financial years are presented in table 16.2.

Table 16.2 **CSHA funding, 2004-05 and 2005-06 (\$ million)^a**

Funding arrangements	2004-05	2005-06
Base funding grants	733.8	743.9
Aboriginal Rental Housing Program	102.1	93.3
Crisis Accommodation Program	40.1	40.7
Community Housing Program	64.7	65.6
State matching grants	359.2	364.1
Total	1 299.9	1 307.6

^a Includes Public Housing, Home Purchase Assistance and Private Rental Assistance Programs.

Source: FaCSIA (2006); FaCSIA (unpublished).

Size and scope

Housing assistance is provided in various forms, and models for delivering assistance can vary 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, SOMIH, community housing, and CRA.

Box 16.2 **Forms of housing assistance**

There are several main forms of 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 along with internally generated rental revenues and the proceeds of asset sales.
- *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, and the housing stock may be owned by a variety of groups including government.
- *Indigenous housing*: State owned housing targeted at Indigenous households (referred to as 'SOMIH' in this report) and houses owned or leased and managed by Indigenous community housing organisations and community councils in major cities, regional and remote areas.

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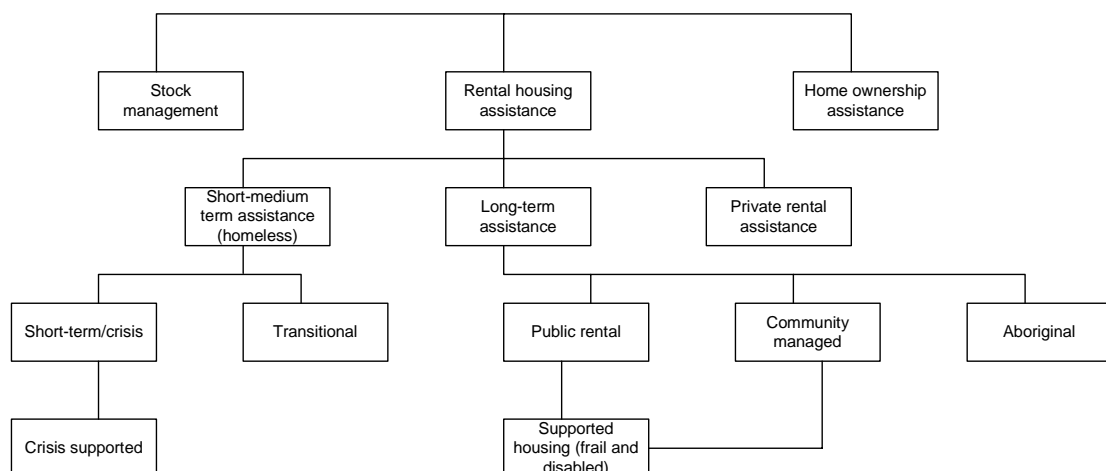
Box 16.2 (Continued)

- *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 CAP through 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 income households to help with home purchases or mortgage repayments does not fall within the CSHA, nor does the grant provided under the First Home Owner's Scheme, a Commonwealth initiative administered by State and Territory governments.
- *Private rental assistance*: assistance funded by State and Territory governments to low income households experiencing difficulty in securing or maintaining private rental accommodation. This assistance may include ongoing or one-off payments to help households meet rent payments, one-off payments for relocation costs, guarantees or loans to cover the cost of bonds, and housing assistance advice and information services. Assistance may be provided by community-based organisations funded by government.
- The chapter also reports on CRA, which is 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 the Family Tax Benefit Part A and who rent in the private rental market.

Source: CSHA (2003); FaCS (2003).

A snapshot presenting different forms of CSHA housing assistance for vulnerable people is presented through the example for Victoria (figure 16.3).

Figure 16.3 Forms of CSHA housing assistance for low income Victorians



Source: VDHS (2001, p. 4).

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 333 967 public housing dwellings were occupied at 30 June 2006 (table 16A.1). Public housing is available to people on low incomes and those with special needs. Although people with a disability represented 19 per cent of the total population in 2003, 40.6 per cent of public housing tenants were people with a disability (ABS 2003).³

Public housing rents are generally set at market levels, and rebates are granted to low income tenants (so they generally pay no more than 25 per cent of their assessable income in rent), to provide affordable housing. Public 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 (4.5 per cent nationally) is presented for all jurisdictions in table 16A.69. Information on the proportion of income paid in rent by public housing tenants is contained in table 16A.74. Details of multiple family composition, non-rebated and other public households excluded from data are presented in table 16A.81.

Community housing

Community housing is generally managed by not-for-profit organisations or local governments, 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 is also intended 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.

Community housing programs aim to achieve links between housing and services that are best managed at the community level, including services for people 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).

³ 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.

Box 16.3 **Models of community housing**

Community housing models vary across jurisdictions in terms of their scale, organisational structure and financing arrangements, and the extent to which the community or government has management responsibility and ownership of the housing stock. Table 16A.70 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
- *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 governments
- *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 governments. Australian Government funding for community housing amounted to 7.0 per cent (\$65.6 million) of total CSHA funding provided by the Australian Government in 2005-06 (FaCSIA unpublished). There were 29 693 CSHA community housing dwellings in Australia at June 2006 (table 16A.25).⁴ Table 16A.71 presents the proportion of all households residing in community housing in each jurisdiction in 2001 (0.4 per cent nationally).

⁴ Data are based on survey results except for Queensland and the NT. Results, therefore, are affected by survey non-response. Details of community housing survey response rates and associated information are presented in table 16A.83.

Indigenous housing

Government funded Indigenous housing includes both State managed and community managed housing. The State managed component is generally funded by ARHP and may be supplemented by untied CSHA funds and State matching funds. Community managed Indigenous housing may be financed from ARHP funds, supplementary State funds, untied CSHA funds, and funds from other sources. Details of mixed composition, non-rebated and other households excluded from data for SOMIH are presented in table 16A.82.

State Owned and Managed Indigenous Housing⁵

SOMIH dwellings are defined as those rental housing dwellings owned and managed by government and allocated only to Indigenous Australians (AIHW 2006d). They include dwellings managed by government Indigenous housing agencies for allocation to Indigenous tenants. There were 12 893 dwellings identified in the 2005-06 SOMIH collection (table 16A.14).

SOMIH is only one of a number of programs designed to provide housing assistance to Indigenous people. Indigenous Australians are eligible for assistance under Indigenous community 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).

The ACT and the NT are not included in the SOMIH data collection. 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. 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. Allocation of funds for the construction, major upgrade and renovation of dwellings in communities are based on highest need, determined by an objective needs measurement model. Housing management and maintenance funds are allocated to Indigenous Community Housing Organisations based on the quantum of their responsibilities. The NT

⁵ The territories are not included in the data collection for this program, so are not included in the section heading.

government cannot differentiate between the various funding sources, given its commitment under the CSHA and the Indigenous Housing and Infrastructure Agreement to ‘pool’ most funds earmarked for Indigenous housing and associated infrastructure in the NT.

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

Some other jurisdictions are increasingly pooling funding but currently report SOMIH 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 funding).

Indigenous community housing

There has been considerable progress in the development of national Indigenous community housing data over the last few years. In 2005 the AIHW published *Indigenous housing indicators 2003-04*, the first indicator based report on the National Reporting Framework for Indigenous housing (NRF). The report includes administrative data on Indigenous community housing provided by the jurisdictions, as well as data from other sources such as the ABS Census and the 2001 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey (CHINS). This is a biennial report with the 2005-06 report to be released in mid 2007.

The AIHW report *Indigenous housing needs 2005: a multi-measure needs model* was released in October 2005. The report presents data from the five endorsed dimensions of housing need — homelessness, overcrowding, affordability, dwelling condition and connection to essential services. The report examines the extent of need by tenure type and assesses differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous households.

In October 2005 Housing Ministers agreed to a reform strategy for Indigenous community housing that included the need to collect dwelling and organisation level data, including data on dwelling condition, in order to monitor improvements in the sector. The development of national organisation and dwelling level data will be the focus of data development activities over the next few years.

The most recent national Indigenous community housing data show that at 30 June 2006 there were 613 Indigenous community housing organisations in

Australia. Indigenous community housing organisations managed a total of 20 920 permanent dwellings (table 16A.37).

The average weekly rent collected for Indigenous community housing in 2005-06 was \$54 per dwelling (table 16A.40) and the rent collection rate was 94.0 per cent (AIHW 2007a). At 30 June 2006 the national occupancy rate for Indigenous community housing permanent was 90.4 per cent (table 16A.38).

Data from the 2001 CHINS provide information on dwelling condition and maintenance expenditure. Seventy percent of dwellings managed by Indigenous community housing organisations were in need of minor or no repair, 18.9 per cent were in need of major repair and 8.4 per cent were in need of replacement (table 16A.39). In 2001 the average annual maintenance expenditure per dwelling was \$1870 (table 16A.40).

CRA

CRA is a non-taxable supplementary payment provided by the Australian Government to help with the cost of private rental housing. It is available to recipients of income support payments, including those who receive more than the base rate of the 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 lodging paid to a family member. It also includes mooring and site fees (for boats and caravans) and payments for retirement village services.

CRA 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 customer's family situation and number of children (table 16.3). 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.

Because CRA is a national payment, FaCSIA seeks to ensure CRA customers who have the same income unit characteristics and who pay the same amount of rent receive the same amount of assistance wherever they live. There were 941 306 income units (where an income unit is defined as either a single person or a couple with or without dependents)⁶ receiving CRA at 3 March 2006 (table 16A.42). The

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

proportion of CRA recipients by income unit type is presented in table 16A.43. Data on the number and proportion of Indigenous income units receiving CRA by income unit type are presented in tables 16A.44 and 16A.45, respectively.

The maximum rate of assistance was received by 66 per cent of CRA recipients at 3 March 2006 (table 16A.57). There was little variation in the average level of assistance across locations at 3 March 2006 (table 16A.56), even though rents varied considerably by location. At 3 March 2006, the average payment across Australia was \$82 per fortnight (approximately \$2145 per year) (table 16A.56).

Table 16.3 Eligibility and payment scales for CRA, 20 March to 19 September 2006 (\$ per fortnight)^a

<i>Income unit type</i>	<i>Minimum rent to be eligible for CRA</i>	<i>Minimum rent to be eligible for maximum CRA</i>	<i>Maximum CRA</i>
Single, no dependent children	89.60	223.73	100.60
Single, no children, sharer	89.60	179.02	67.07
Couple, no dependent children	145.80	272.47	95.00
Single, one or two dependent children	117.88	275.61	118.30
Single, three or more dependent children	117.88	296.15	133.70
Partnered, one or two dependent children	174.44	332.17	118.30
Partnered, three or more dependent children	177.44	352.71	133.70
Partnered, illness separated, no dependent children	89.60	223.73	100.60
Partnered, temporarily separated, no dependent children	89.60	216.27	95.00

^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.41.

Source: FaCSIA (unpublished); table 16A.41.

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. Jurisdictions also face differing private housing markets. 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.

Public housing and State Owned and Managed Indigenous Housing

Eligibility criteria for access to public housing, such as income and asset definitions and limits, vary across jurisdictions. In most cases, jurisdictions require that applicants be Australian citizens or permanent residents and not own or part-own residential property. All jurisdictions require eligible applicants to be resident in the respective State or Territory. All State and Territory governments prioritise access to public housing by segmenting their waiting lists in some way. Segments are defined differently across jurisdictions, but generally reflect urgent need/homelessness and an inability to access appropriate private market accommodation. Most jurisdictions provide security of tenure after an initial probationary period. Most jurisdictions also have periodic reviews of eligibility to ensure that tenants are meeting the other terms of their tenancy agreement. Rebated rents result in the majority of households paying no more than 25 per cent of their assessable income in rent (the rent-to-income ratio). Definitions of assessable income vary across jurisdictions (table 16.4).

Table 16.4 Public housing policy context, 2006^a

	NSW ^b	Vic ^c	Qld	WA ^d	SA ^e	Tas ^f	ACT	NT ^g
Eligibility								
Income limit per week (\$) ^h	395	356	609	430	638	411	490	572
'Other' asset limits (\$) ^h	None	30 000	None	36 400 cash	270 500	34 473	40 000 liquid assets	40 500
Minimum age	18	15	None	18	None	16	16	16
Waiting listⁱ								
Segmented by:	Wait turn and priority (two segments)	Priority (four segments)	Priority (two segments)	Priority (three segments)	Need (four segments)	Need (four segments)	Need (three segments)	Wait turn and priority (two segments)
Tenure								
Probationary period	None	None	None	None	6 months	3–6 months	None	3–6 months
Fixed term	3, 6 or 18 months	5 years	None	3 months	None	1–3 years	None	2 year then 5 year
Ongoing	Yes	Lifetime after age 65	Yes	Ongoing	Ongoing after probation	In some cases, particularly older persons	Lifetime tenure	Leases extended
Tenancy review	Prior to the end of the tenancy	To commence in 2008	Review at 6 months and 4 or 10 years	Annual	None	Fixed term leases reviewed at end of each term	None	Prior to each lease extension
Rebated rent setting								
Rent-to-income ratio	25-30	25	25	23 or 25	25	23–25	25	18 or 23

(Continued on next page)

Table 16.4 (Continued)

a At 30 June. **b** Interest accrued from cash assets is assessed as income less the first \$5000 of each person's savings. Applicants under the age of 18 years must demonstrate living skills to be eligible for housing. New tenancies from 1 July 2005 were signed to 18-month interim tenancies. From 5 December 2005 new thresholds and rules determine whether a tenant is eligible for a rent subsidy and the percentage of income they will pay as rent. Their household's gross assessable income, household size and age of household members are used when assessing the household's eligibility for a rent subsidy. For rebated rents, varied concessional rates are applicable to certain age groups and some pensioners. For households whose tenancy commenced on or after 5 December 2005, the Family Tax Benefit Part A and Part B received are assessed at 15 per cent. Where the tenancy commenced prior to 5 December 2005 the Family Tax Benefit Part A and Part B received was assessed at 12 per cent from 5 December 2005, with an increase of 1 per cent every 6 months until the assessment rate reaches 15 per cent. **c** Public housing tenancies in Victoria are ongoing tenancies (not fixed term) that are subject to review after 5 years. For households that require major disability modifications, discretion may be applied to extend the asset limit to \$60 000. **d** Income limit for those in north west remote areas is \$550 per week. Those aged over 60 years are subject to a cash asset limit of \$80 000. A rent-to-income ratio of 23 per cent can apply for groups such as seniors, people with disabilities and people living in remote locations. **e** The same definition as the Centrelink asset test threshold for a single person who does not own their own home is used. Most households pay a rent-to-income ratio of 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). **f** For people aged over 55 years, the asset limit is \$35 000. **g** There is discretion to accept applications for people under 16 years. The rent-to-income ratio is 18 per cent for aged pension recipients. **h** Limits are for a single person. **i** Two segment lists generally consist of 'priority' and 'wait turn'.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished).

The proportion of public housing located in regional and remote areas using the Australian Standard Geographical Classification remoteness area structure (ASGC remoteness areas) is shown in table 16.5.

Table 16.5 Public housing — regional and remote area concentrations, 2005-06 (per cent)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Major cities	80.8	72.1	61.5	70.5	77.5	–	99.9	–	71.5
Inner regional	15.2	22.4	19.6	9.6	6.9	72.8	0.1	–	16.8
Outer regional	3.7	5.4	16.5	9.6	13.8	26.3	–	69.2	9.4
Remote	0.3	–	1.8	7.0	1.8	0.6	–	26.9	1.7
Very remote	0.1	–	0.6	3.3	0.2	0.3	–	3.9	0.5

^a Further information to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.1. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: AIHW (2006b); table 16A.1.

Eligibility criteria for access to SOMIH are generally consistent with those for public housing once an applicant has been confirmed as Indigenous. The management of waiting lists varies across jurisdictions — for example, a number of jurisdictions use the same list for both public housing and SOMIH. Terms of tenure are the same as those for public housing for a number of jurisdictions (table 16.6).

Table 16.6 SOMIH housing policy context, 2006^a

	NSW ^b	Vic ^c	Qld	WA ^d	SA ^e	Tas ^f
Eligibility						
Income limit per week (\$) ^g	395	356	609	430	638	411
'Other' asset limits (\$) ^g	None	30 000	None	36 400 in cash	270 500	34 473
Minimum age	18	15	None	18	None	16
Waiting list						
Details	Combined with public housing	Combined with public housing	Combined with public housing	Combined with public housing	Need (Four segment)	Priority, similar to public housing
Tenure						
Probationary period	None	None	None	None	6 months	3–6 months
Fixed term	3, 6 or 18 months	5 years	None	3 months	None	1–3 years
Ongoing	Yes	Lifetime after age 65	Yes	Ongoing	Ongoing after probation	Dependant on housing history
Tenancy review	Prior to the end of the tenancy	To commence in 2008	Review at 6 months and 4 or 10 years	Annual	None	Fixed term leases reviewed at end of each term

^a At 30 June. ^b Interest accrued from cash assets is assessed as income less the first \$5000 of each person's savings. Applicants under the age of 18 years must demonstrate living skills to be eligible for housing. New tenancies from 1 July 2005 were signed to 18-month interim tenancies. From 5 December 2005 new thresholds and rules determine whether a tenant is eligible for a rent subsidy and the percentage of income they will pay as rent. Their household's gross assessable income, household size and age of household members are used when assessing the household's eligibility for a rent subsidy. For rebated rents, varied concessional rates are applicable to certain age groups and some pensioners. For households whose tenancy commenced on or after 5 December 2005, the Family Tax Benefits Part A and Part B received are assessed at 15 per cent. Where the tenancy commenced prior to 5 December 2005 the Family Tax Benefits Part A and Part B received was assessed at 12 per cent from 5 December 2005, with an increase of 1 per cent every six months until the assessment rate reaches 15 per cent. CRA is assessed at 100 per cent. ^c Tenancies in Victoria are ongoing tenancies (not fixed term) that are subject to review after 5 years. For households that require major disability modifications, discretion may be applied to extend the asset limit to \$60 000. Indigenous households generally access long term accommodation through the General Rental program or housing managed by the Aboriginal Housing Board of Victoria. ^d The income limit for those in north west remote areas is \$550 per week. Those aged over 60 years are subject to a cash asset limit of \$80 000. ^e The same definition as the Centrelink asset test threshold for a single person who does not own their own home is used. Most households pay a rent-to-income ratio of 25 per cent of assessable income in rent and households receiving less than the single Newstart Allowance (for whom the ratio is 19.5 per cent). ^f For people aged over 55 years the asset limit is \$35 000. Applications outside the guidelines may be considered where there are extenuating circumstances in relation to income, asset and age criteria. ^g Limits are for a single person.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished).

The proportions of SOMIH located by ASGC remoteness areas are shown in table 16.7.

Table 16.7 SOMIH — regional and remote area concentrations, 2005-06 (per cent)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>Total</i>
Major cities	41.1	38.3	13.1	28.6	60.7	–	34.0
Inner regional	32.1	37.0	14.9	7.9	7.7	82.2	22.2
Outer regional	20.1	24.3	44.6	22.0	17.8	17.8	26.0
Remote	5.2	0.4	10.3	20.1	6.0	–	8.5
Very remote	1.5	–	17.1	21.4	7.8	–	9.3

^a Further information to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.14. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: AIHW (2006a); table 16A.14.

Community housing

Eligibility criteria for community housing are generally consistent with those for public housing in each jurisdiction. Most jurisdictions do not require community housing organisations to segment waiting lists.

For the data that are available, the proportions of community housing located in regional and remote areas using (ASGC remoteness areas) are shown in table 16.8.

Table 16.8 Community housing — regional and remote area concentrations, 2005-06 (per cent)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Major cities	68.5	71.6	37.3	54.6	85.8	–	100.0	–	64.5
Inner regional	23.9	23.7	24.9	25.9	8.4	63.7	–	–	21.9
Outer regional	7.4	4.4	26.9	13.4	4.4	35.7	–	71.3	10.9
Remote	0.1	0.3	4.2	5.8	1.3	0.6	–	20.7	1.5
Very remote	–	–	6.6	0.3	0.1	–	–	8.0	1.3

^a Further information to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.25. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: AIHW (2007c); table 16A.25.

Private rental markets

Tight private rental markets (vacancy rates below 3.0 per cent) were evident in all states in June 2006. Capital city vacancy rates in the private rental market for all jurisdictions are reported in table 16A.67. Capital city median rents varied across

jurisdictions. Median rents for three bedroom houses and two bedroom flats or units are reported in table 16A.68.

16.2 Framework of performance indicators

Previous reports presented separate performance indicator frameworks for public, SOMIH and community housing. Increasing convergence between the frameworks over time means that, for this Report, public, SOMIH and community housing adopt a common performance indicator framework. (CSHA funded community housing is presented in a separate framework, because of data comparability issues. No performance indicator data are currently reported for Indigenous community housing.)

The performance indicator frameworks are consistent with the general performance indicator framework agreed by the Steering Committee (see chapter 1). They also draw on the framework developed for the 1999 CSHA and reflect the national objectives of that agreement (and of the new CSHA that took effect in 2003 (box 16.4). The new CSHA places greater emphasis on Australian, State and Territory governments improving housing outcomes for Indigenous people, and governments have committed to improving access to mainstream housing options for Indigenous people living in urban and regional areas. This is the third year that data are reported under the new agreement. Work is being undertaken on the performance indicators to improve the quality and scope of national performance information. A separate performance indicator framework is adopted for reporting on CRA (figure 16.6).

Box 16.4 Objectives for public and community housing under the 2003 CSHA

The principles guiding the 2003 CSHA are to:

1. maintain a core Social Housing sector to assist people unable to access alternative suitable housing options
2. develop and deliver affordable, appropriate, flexible and diverse housing assistance responses that provide people with choice and are tailored to their needs, local conditions and opportunities
3. provide assistance in a manner that is non-discriminatory and has regard to consumer rights and responsibilities, including consumer participation
4. commit to improving housing outcomes for Indigenous people in urban, regional and remote areas, through specific initiatives that strengthen the Indigenous housing sector and the responsiveness and appropriateness of the full range of mainstream housing options
5. ensure housing assistance links effectively with other programs and provides better support for people with complex needs, and has a role in preventing homelessness
6. promote innovative approaches to leverage additional resources into Social Housing, through community, private sector and other partnerships
7. ensure that housing assistance supports access to employment and promotes social and economic participation
8. establish greater consistency between housing assistance provision and outcomes, and other social and economic objectives of government, such as welfare reform, urban regeneration, and community capacity-building
9. undertake efficient and cost-effective management which provides best value to governments
10. adopt a cooperative partnership approach between levels of government towards creating a sustainable and more certain future for housing assistance
11. promote a national, strategic, integrated and long term vision for affordable housing in Australia through a comprehensive approach by all levels of government.

Source: CSHA (2003, p.4).

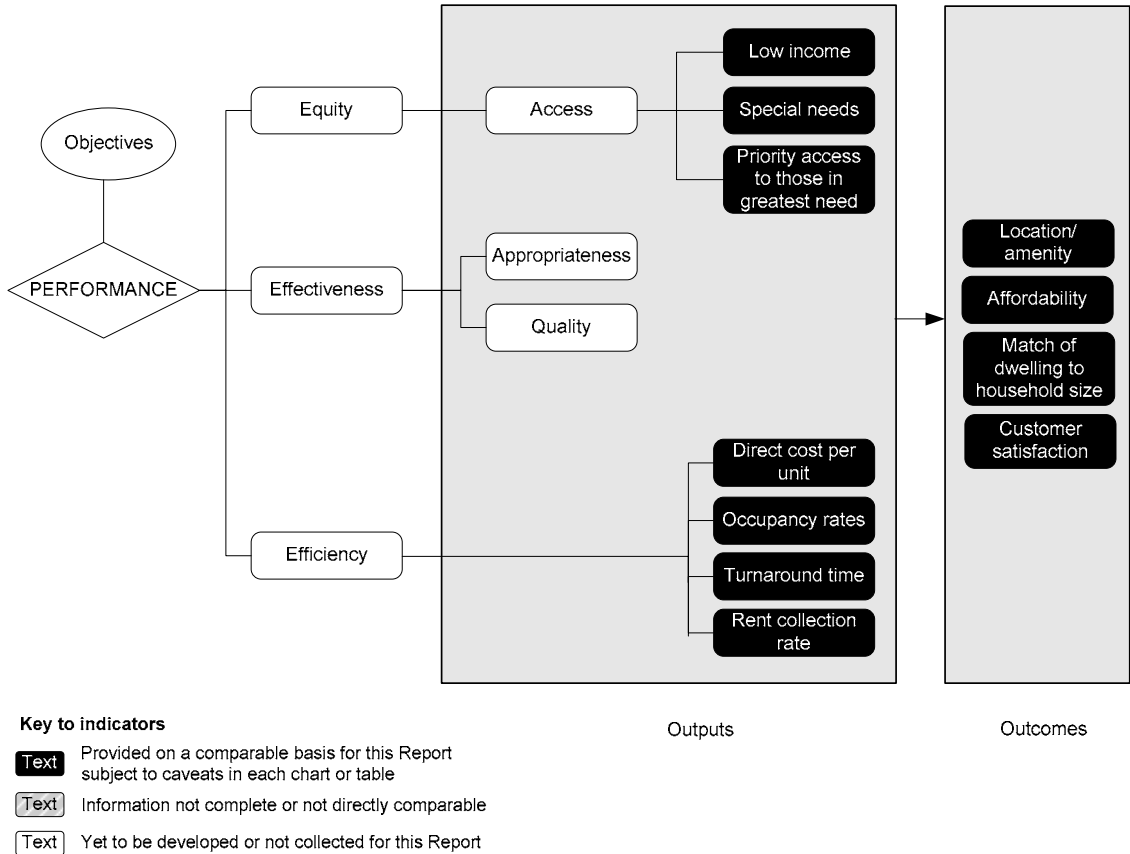
The performance indicator frameworks show which data are comparable in the 2007 Report (figures 16.4, 16.5 and 16.6). For data that are not considered directly comparable, the text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary. Chapter 1 discusses data comparability from a Report-wide perspective (see section 1.6).

The frameworks reflect the adoption by governments of accrual accounting and depict the Review's focus on outcomes, consistent with demand by governments for

outcome oriented performance information. The frameworks also accentuate the importance of equity. More detail on the general report framework, along with the differences between outputs and outcomes, can be found in chapter 1.

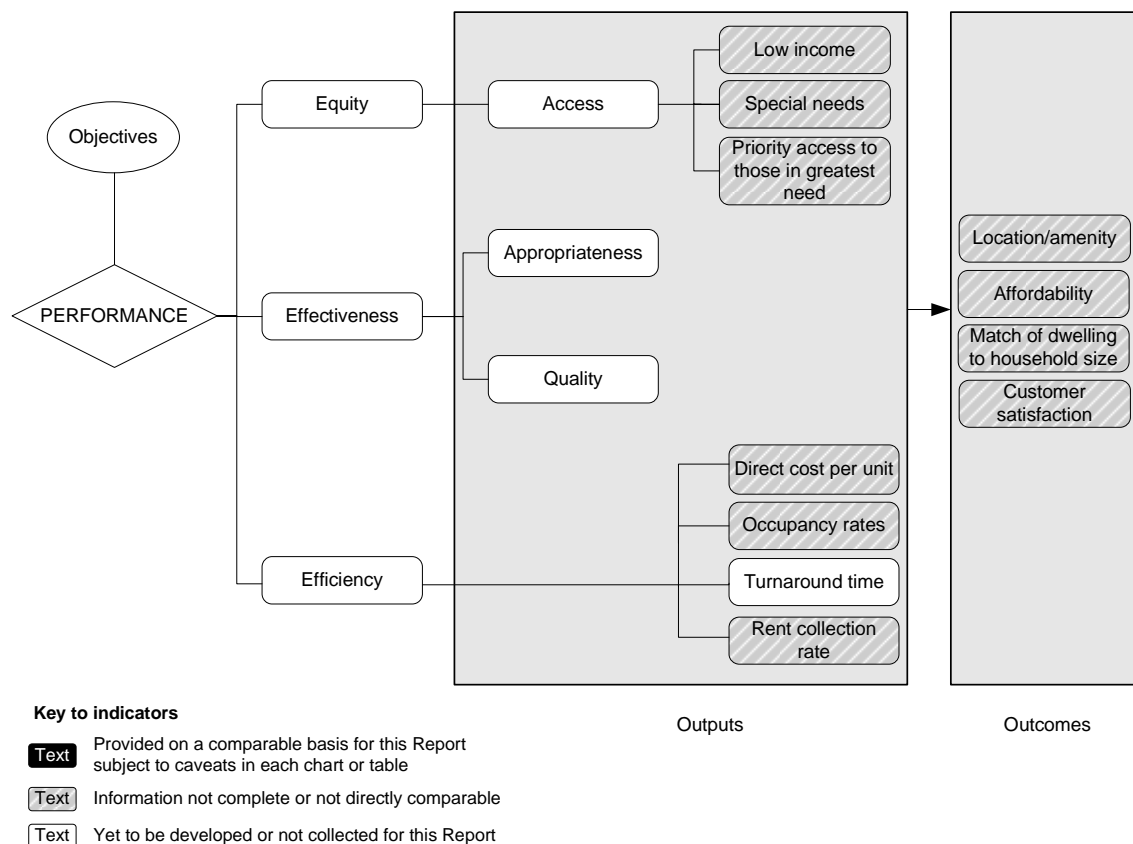
Comparable data are presented for the full range of indicators in the performance measurement framework for public housing and SOMIH (figure 16.4).

Figure 16.4 Performance indicators for public housing and SOMIH



While public, SOMIH and community housing use a common framework, the delivery method for public housing and SOMIH differs from that for community housing. State and Territory governments deliver public housing and SOMIH, while community organisations and sometimes local government deliver community housing. The turnaround time performance indicator has been removed from the CSHA community housing data collection by the National Housing Data Agreement Management Group following their review of the national performance reporting framework, and so no data were available for this Report.

Figure 16.5 Performance indicators for CSHA funded community housing

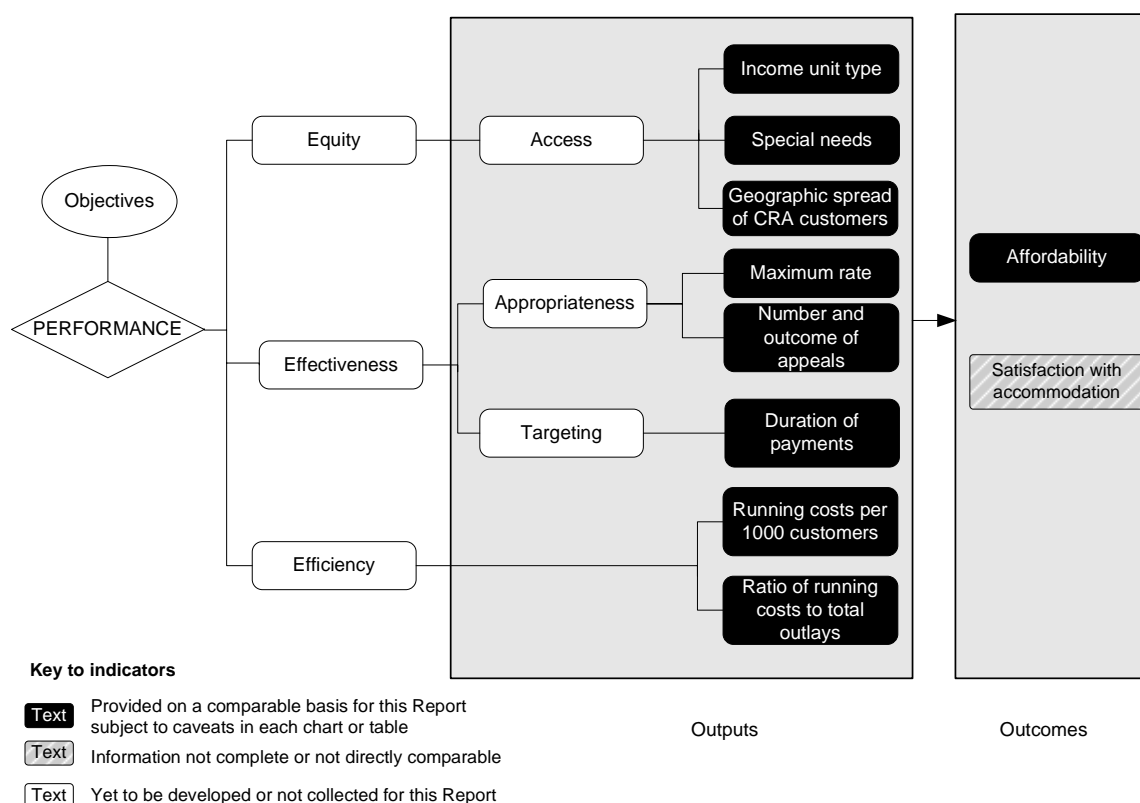


The performance indicators for CRA differ from those for public, SOMIH and CSHA funded community housing because CRA has different objectives and delivery methods. Reporting for CRA uses a performance indicator framework (figure 16.6) based on the CRA objective outlined in box 16.5.

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 delivered in an equitable and efficient manner. CRA is also governed by other objectives relating to the primary income support payment.

Figure 16.6 Performance indicators for CRA



16.3 Key performance indicator results

Performance indicator results are comparable between public housing and SOMIH, but are not comparable to community housing because data quality and coverage can differ. More information on definitions is provided in a box for each indicator.

Public housing and SOMIH

Different delivery contexts, locations and types of customer may affect the performance of public housing and SOMIH reported in this chapter. For example, SOMIH and Indigenous community housing dwellings are slightly more likely than main stream public or community housing dwellings to be located in regional or remote areas (tables 16.5 and 16.9). Care therefore needs to be taken in interpreting performance indicator results, and the qualifications presented with the data need to be considered.

Some contextual information on public housing can be found in table 16A.1. Some descriptive data on SOMIH are included in table 16A.14. As outlined in section 16.1, the ACT and the NT are not included in the SOMIH data collection.

Outputs

Equity — low income

The first equity indicator reported for public housing and SOMIH is ‘low income’ (box 16.6).

Box 16.6 Equity — low income

‘Low income’ is an output indicator of the CSHA guiding principles, measuring low income need status of all households receiving assistance. The ‘low income’ performance indicator measures the number of new low income households as a proportion of all new households. Two measures of low income performance indicator are reported:

- the proportion of new households with low income A — households where all members receive an income equivalent to or below 100 per cent of the government income support benefits at the pensioner rate (pension rates have been selected for calculating this indicator because they are higher than allowance rates)
- the proportion of new households with low income B — households with an income above 100 per cent of the government income support benefits at the pensioner rate, but below the effective cut-off for receiving any government support benefits.

High values for these measures indicate a high degree of access for low income households.

The proportion of new tenancies allocated to low income A households for public housing in 2005-06 is presented in table 16.9. The proportion of new tenancies allocated to low income B households is reported in the attachment (table 16A.2).

Table 16.9 Public housing — low income A households as a proportion of all new households (per cent)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
<i>New low income A households as proportion of all new households</i>									
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
2003-04	94.7	92.4	90.5	87.9	87.5	89.1	87.7	87.6	91.2
2004-05	94.0	92.5	88.1	85.8	87.1	80.8	89.4	85.6	90.0
2005-06	94.5	93.3	87.3	88.2	87.6	89.8	87.1	85.3	90.9

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.2.

Source: AIHW (2002c, 2003c, 2004c, 2005c, 2006b); table 16A.2.

The proportion of new tenancies allocated to low income A households for SOMIH in 2005-06 is presented in table 16.10. The proportion of new tenancies allocated to low income B households is reported in the attachment (table 16A.15).

Table 16.10 SOMIH — low income A households, as a proportion of all new households (per cent)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>New low income A households as proportion of all new households</i>							
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
2003-04	94.4	90.5	83.3	93.5	89.2	89.5	90.6
2004-05	94.2	87.7	76.1	92.9	86.0	86.0	88.0
2005-06	95.9	88.2	89.2	88.6	86.5	93.3	90.4

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.15.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003a, 2004a, 2005a, 2006a); table 16A.15.

The proportion of low income households to all new households was similar for public housing and SOMIH. There were only slight variations across jurisdictions.

Equity — special needs

The second equity indicator reported for public housing and SOMIH is 'special needs' (box 16.7).

Box 16.7 Equity — special needs

'Special needs' is an output indicator of the CSHA guiding principles, measuring special needs status of all households receiving assistance. The 'special needs' performance indicator presents the proportion of new tenancies allocated to households with special needs.

A high value for this measure indicates a high degree of access for special needs households.

New public housing tenancies allocated to households with special needs are presented in table 16.11.

Table 16.11 **Public housing — new tenancies allocated to households with special needs (per cent)^a**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
2001-02	50.9	35.3	36.2	36.2	73.5	48.1	31.4	52.0	43.9
2002-03	52.4	43.7	38.9	44.7	59.0	49.9	35.3	62.8	48.1
2003-04	53.6	45.9	58.2	49.9	58.9	65.7	33.0	73.0	53.5
2004-05	55.7	47.1	62.7	64.8	63.2	67.6	48.4	100.0	58.2
2005-06	55.7	58.9	61.9	67.7	61.1	66.1	52.7	63.1	59.8

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.3.

Source: AIHW (2002c, 2003c, 2004c, 2005c, 2006b); table 16A.3.

The proportion of new tenancies allocated to special needs households for SOMIH is presented in table 16.12.

Table 16.12 **SOMIH — new tenancies allocated to households with special needs (per cent)^a**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>Total</i>
2001-02	35.8	31.7	38.3	25.2	70.5	44.9	35.2
2002-03	35.8	49.7	41.0	37.4	37.8	50.6	39.5
2003-04	44.6	44.2	46.3	40.8	39.5	60.3	43.6
2004-05	51.5	45.4	45.2	49.2	42.1	66.7	48.1
2005-06	48.8	42.8	46.8	53.2	45.3	62.3	48.8

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.16.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003a, 2004a, 2005a, 2006a); table 16A.16.

The proportion of new tenancies allocated to households with special needs steadily increase over time for both public housing and SOMIH at the national level while there were fluctuations within the jurisdictions.

Equity — priority access to those in greatest need

The final equity indicator reported for public housing and SOMIH is ‘priority access to those in greatest need’ (box 16.8). Differences in State and Territory housing assessment policies can influence comparability for this indicator.

Box 16.8 Priority access to those in greatest need

‘Priority access to those in greatest need’ is an output indicator of the CSHA guiding principles to provide appropriate, affordable and secure housing to assist people who are unable to access suitable housing. This indicator provides information on whether allocation processes are such that those in greatest need have first access to housing. It measures the proportion of new allocations 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.

Reported data reflect the proportions of greatest need allocation overall and greatest need households waiting for less than three months to more than two years. As time to allocation reflects greatest need allocations as a proportion of all allocations for the time period, these numbers are not cumulative. A high value for this indicator, particularly for short time frames, represents a high degree of access of those in greatest need without these people waiting long periods of time.

The proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need in 2005-06 for public housing is presented in table 16.13.

Table 16.13 Public housing — proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need, 2005-06 (per cent)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Total for year ending 30 June	21.9	69.3	17.5	27.0	40.4	93.5	86.5	27.8	38.1
Proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need, by time to allocation									
<3 months	47.3	77.2	57.4	45.6	60.7	94.8	89.7	23.4	61.7
3–<6 months	39.4	70.2	56.0	66.1	60.9	95.1	88.0	41.9	60.8
6 months–<1 year	22.2	73.4	34.0	28.8	52.9	93.8	90.4	42.3	48.4
1–<2 years	13.8	69.6	13.7	2.0	30.9	86.5	80.3	19.7	28.3
2+ years	2.2	33.5	3.2	0.2	2.7	84.0	64.6	8.5	5.7

^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.4.

Source: AIHW (2006b); table 16A.4.

The proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need for 2005-06 for SOMIH is presented in table 16.14.

Table 16.14 **SOMIH — proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need, 2005-06 (per cent)^a**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>Total</i>
Total for year ending 30 June	8.2	23.9	11.9	28.4	79.4	na	26.3
Proportion of greatest need allocations to new allocations, by time to allocation							
<3 months	17.5	28.6	22.6	37.9	71.7	na	36.8
3—<6 months	11.9	35.7	40.0	72.5	100.0	na	41.7
6 months—<1 year	1.6	27.3	14.8	23.7	85.7	na	25.1
1—<2 years	5.2	31.3	4.8	—	88.6	na	20.7
2+ years	—	—	3.3	—	72.2	na	5.5

^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.17. **na** Not available. — Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: AIHW (2006a); table 16A.17.

Efficiency — direct cost per unit

The efficiency indicator identified for public housing and SOMIH is ‘direct cost per unit’ (box 16.9).

Box 16.9 Direct cost per unit

‘Direct cost per unit’ has been identified as an output indicator of the CSHA guiding principle to undertake efficient and cost-effective management. It measures the cost of providing assistance per dwelling. ‘Direct cost per unit’ can be defined as the total administration costs and the costs of maintaining the operation of dwellings. Two related measures are also reported for public housing:

- gross cost per unit — gross cost to government (administration and operating costs plus capital costs)
- net cost per unit — net cost to government (cost excluding rents received from tenants).

Holding other factors equal, a lower direct cost per unit suggests an improvement in efficiency.

Due to a high level of capital expenditure in housing, gross and net cost per unit are predominantly driven by the user cost of capital (box 16.10). Caution must therefore be used when interpreting the indicator because the user cost of capital and service delivery models differ across the jurisdictions. The cost per dwelling indicators also do not provide any information on the quality of service provided (for example, the standard of dwellings).

The costs incurred by jurisdictions in providing public housing and SOMIH 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 and SOMIH). Box 16.10 provides a discussion of the user cost of capital.

In 2001, the Steering Committee completed a research project to assess the impact of asset measurement factors (such as depreciation and asset valuation methods) on the comparability of cost data in the Report. The results of this study are summarised in chapter 2. Box 16.11 summarises the results relating to housing.

Treatment of assets by housing agencies for each jurisdiction is presented in table 16A.72.

Box 16.10 The user cost of capital

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 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. Land values make up a large part of the user cost of capital and are largely beyond the control of jurisdictions.

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).

(Continued on next page)

Box 16.10 (Continued)

The Steering Committee accepts that asset valuation data are imperfect. It also considers 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 rate used for the user cost of capital is based on a weighted average of rates nominated by jurisdictions (currently 8 per cent).

Box 16.11 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).

The direct, gross and net costs to government per dwelling in 2005-06 for public housing are presented in table 16.15.

Care needs to be taken in interpreting the cost of delivering public housing. Cost data for some jurisdictions are either more complete than other cost data or collected on a more consistent basis. Administration costs and operating costs, for example, may not capture all costs incurred by government, so could understate the total costs of public housing. In addition, some jurisdictions had difficulty separating costs for public housing from those for other housing assistance activities. There may also be double counting of some expenditure items in the cost calculations for some jurisdictions. The user cost of capital, for example, is intended to capture all the costs of funding assets used to produce the services, but reported operating costs (apart from interest payments, which have been adjusted for) may already include some of these costs.

Interest payments have been subtracted from other capital costs (depreciation and the indicative user cost of capital) to obtain the total capital cost, 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.

Payroll tax is excluded from total recurrent cost for public housing. This was done for the first time in the 2004 Report, making the cost data not comparable with the data published in prior reports. (Chapter 2 elaborates on the reasons for excluding payroll tax from the cost calculations.)

Table 16.15 Public housing — direct cost of providing assistance (excluding capital) per dwelling^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
2001-02	4 034	3 027	4 150	4 260	4 248	6 788	6 231	7 252	4 140
2002-03	4 494	3 247	4 179	4 258	4 538	6 392	6 375	9 285	4 407
2003-04	4 822	3 515	4 394	4 693	4 609	6 021	7 746	10 053	4 695
2004-05	4 743	3 735	4 476	5 119	4 885	6 175	8 153	9 475	4 801
2005-06	5 122	4 233	4 719	5 382	5 283	6 813	7 685	9 304	5 145

^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.5.

Source: AIHW (2006b); State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 16A.5.

The direct cost per dwelling for SOMIH is presented in table 16.16. Rent received from tenants has not been deducted.

As with other indicators, it is not appropriate to compare the direct cost of providing assistance per dwelling for public housing with the direct cost of providing assistance per dwelling for SOMIH, because there is greater scope for economies of scale in administration costs with public housing, which is a much larger program overall.

SOMIH dwellings are also slightly more concentrated in regional 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) may also affect the cost per dwelling. Finally, different cost structures may apply to the programs. Construction of dwellings, for example, under SOMIH may involve a skills development element to allow for training of apprentices in regional areas.

Table 16.16 SOMIH — direct cost of providing assistance per dwelling^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>Total</i>
2001-02	9 192	4 963	5 654	4 800	4 540	2 958	6 297
2002-03	5 056	4 682	6 028	5 397	7 917	3 686	5 690
2003-04	5 684	4 737	6 296	6 059	5 469	3 425	5 702
2004-05	5 057	4 794	6 134	6 857	4 116	4 886	5 451
2005-06	5 364	6 208	6 582	7 589	6 931	5 551	6 354

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.18.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003a, 2004a, 2005a, 2006a); table 16A.18.

Efficiency — occupancy rate

The second efficiency indicator reported for public housing and SOMIH is the ‘occupancy rate’ (box 16.12).

Box 16.12 Occupancy rate

The ‘occupancy rate’ is an output indicator of the efficiency of housing utilisation. It represents the proportion of dwellings occupied. The term ‘occupied dwelling’ refers to dwellings occupied by tenants who have a tenancy agreement with the relevant housing authority. A high value for this indicator suggests higher efficiency of housing utilisation. Occupancy is influenced by both turnover and housing supply and demand.

The national average proportion of public rental stock occupied at 30 June 2006 was 97.8 per cent. There was only slight variation across jurisdictions (table 16.17).

Table 16.17 Public housing — occupancy rates (per cent)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
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
2004	98.7	96.6	98.7	95.3	95.4	97.4	97.2	93.8	97.4
2005	98.7	97.3	98.6	95.6	96.1	98.0	98.1	94.1	97.7
2006	98.6	97.5	98.9	96.2	96.2	98.4	98.7	95.6	97.8

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.6.

Source: AIHW (2002c, 2003c, 2004c, 2005c, 2006b); table 16A.6.

The proportion of total SOMIH stock occupied at 30 June 2006 is presented in table 16.18.

Table 16.18 SOMIH — occupancy rates (per cent)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>Total</i>
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
2004	98.0	96.7	96.8	94.1	92.2	98.2	96.0
2005	97.4	95.8	96.1	94.2	91.8	97.7	95.5
2006	97.4	96.7	96.8	94.1	93.5	98.3	96.1

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.19.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003a, 2004a, 2005a, 2006a); table 16A.19.

Efficiency — turnaround time

The third efficiency indicator reported for public housing and SOMIH is ‘turnaround time’ (box 16.13).

Box 16.13 Turnaround time

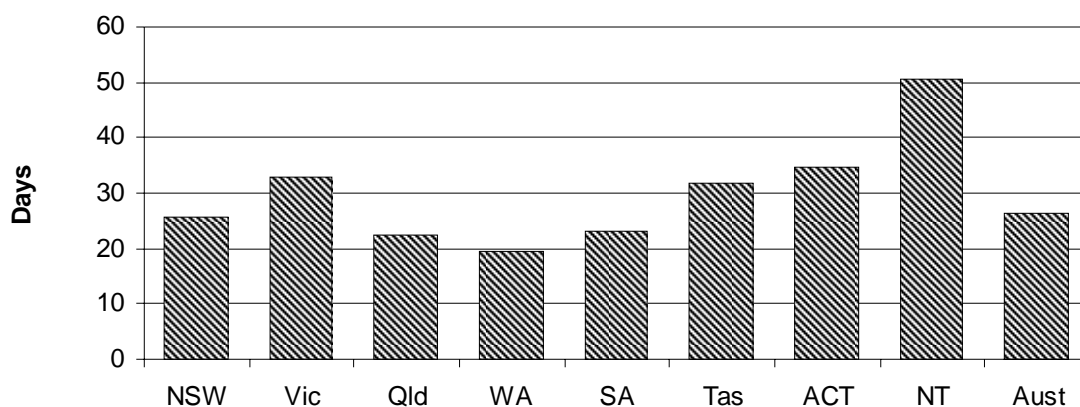
‘Turnaround time’ is an output indicator of the average time taken for occupancy of available dwelling stock to rent through normal processes. A low turnaround time suggests efficient housing allocation.

‘Normal’ vacancies exclude properties that are offline or are undergoing major redevelopment and where there is no suitable applicant but include hard-to-let properties as this relates to tenancy management.

This indicator may be affected by changes in maintenance programs and stock allocation processes, and some jurisdictions may have difficulty excluding stock upgrades. Cultural factors may also influence the national average turnaround time for SOMIH 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). A higher proportion of SOMIH dwellings in regional and remote areas may also contribute to delays in completing administrative tasks and maintenance before dwellings can be re-tenanted.

The average number of days for vacant stock to remain unallocated in 2005-06 is presented in figure 16.7 for public housing and figure 16.8 for SOMIH.

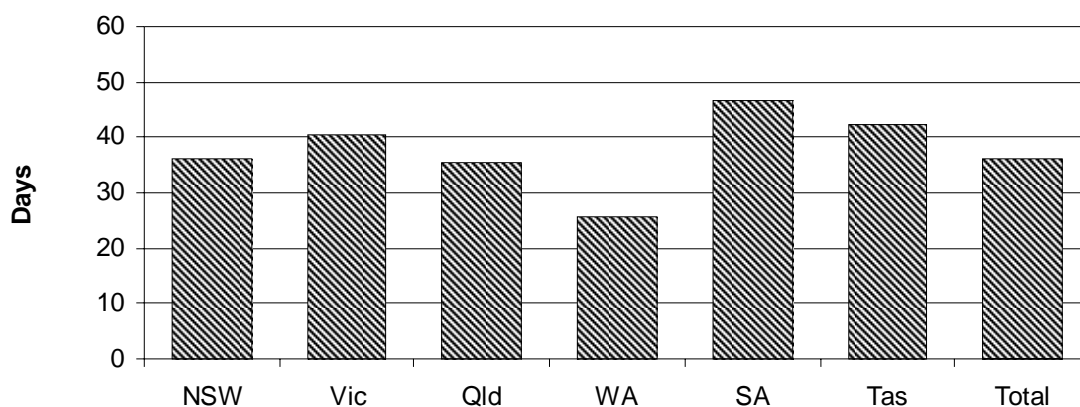
Figure 16.7 **Public housing — average turnaround time, 2005-06^a**



^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.7.

Source: AIHW (2006b); table 16A.7.

Figure 16.8 **SOMIH — average turnaround time, 2005-06^a**



^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.20.

Source: AIHW (2006a); table 16A.20.

Efficiency — rent collection rate

The final efficiency indicator reported for public housing and SOMIH is 'rent collection rate' (box 16.14).

Box 16.14 Rent collection rate

'Rent collection rate' is an output indicator of the CSHA guiding principle to undertake efficient and cost-effective management. It is the total rent actually collected as a proportion of the total rent charged. A high proportion suggests efficiency in collecting rent. All jurisdictions aim to maximise the rent collected as a proportion of the rent charged.

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. Further, 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.

Rent collected as a proportion of the total rent charged in 2005-06 is presented in table 16.19 for public housing and table 16.20 for SOMIH.

Table 16.19 **Public housing — total rent collected as a proportion of total rent charged (per cent)^a**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
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
2003-04	99.7	99.3	99.8	101.9	100.0	102.2	99.3	99.9	99.9
2004-05	101.2	101.1	100.6	103.2	100.5	99.7	100.0	102.8	101.1
2005-06	100.1	100.1	100.2	101.7	100.8	103.8	99.8	100.7	100.4

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.8.

Source: AIHW (2002c, 2003c, 2004c, 2005c, 2006b); table 16A.8.

Table 16.20 **SOMIH — total rent collected as a proportion of total rent charged (per cent)^a**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>Total</i>
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
2003-04	104.1	99.8	101.3	103.1	97.0	102.2	101.8
2004-05	97.7	100.6	100.4	103.9	93.8	99.6	99.2
2005-06	100.5	99.0	99.7	104.3	94.7	103.8	100.0

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.21.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003a, 2004a, 2005a, 2006a); table 16A.21.

Outcomes

Location/amenity

'Location/amenity' is an outcome indicator of success in meeting tenants' needs (box 16.15).

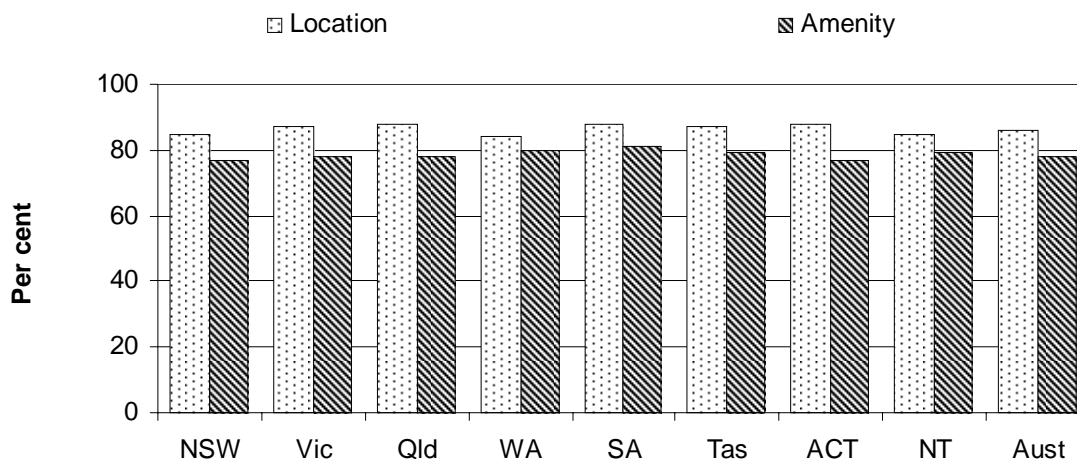
Box 16.15 Location/amenity

'Location/amenity' is an outcome indicator of the CSHA guiding principles to provide housing assistance that is appropriate to the needs of different households. The location/amenity indicator is a survey-based measure of the proportion of tenants rating location and amenity aspects as important and as meeting their needs. A higher level of satisfaction with location and amenity implies the provision of housing assistance more appropriate to household need.

The data for public housing are taken from the 2005 National Social Housing Survey for public rental housing. 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 respondent sample size and the size of the sample estimate. Larger sample sizes with high response rates result in higher precision, as do larger sample estimates for a given or similar sample size. If, for example, 90 per cent of surveyed respondents chose an answer, then there would be more certainty about the actual population's views than if 50 per cent of respondents chose it. Care thus needs to be taken in interpreting small differences in results. Further information on the sample size is provided in tables 16A.9 and 16A.10.

The proportion of public housing tenants rating their current home as meeting their needs is reported in figure 16.9.

Figure 16.9 Public housing — proportion of tenants rating their current home as meeting their location and amenity needs, 2005^a



^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in tables 16A.9 and 16A.10.

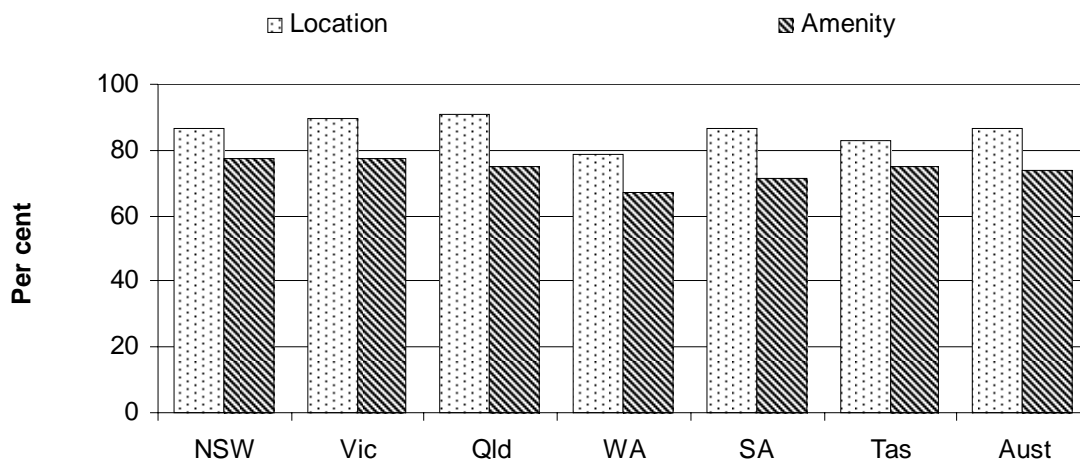
Source: AIHW (2006b); tables 16A.9 and 16A.10.

During 2004-05, all states participated in the first National Housing Survey of SOMIH. As for the National Social Housing Survey undertaken biennially for public and community housing, the survey seeks to determine tenants' level of satisfaction with various parameters of service and gauge housing outcomes.

SOMIH 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 methodology for the survey was face to face interviews with a clustered sample of tenants. This report includes results at both State and national levels.

Nationally, 86.5 per cent of tenants for whom location was important felt that their needs were met, and of those tenants for whom amenity was important 74.0 per cent felt that their needs were met (figure 16.10). Caution should be taken when comparing the SOMIH survey results with the public housing survey results, due to the different demographic profile of Indigenous customers and the different survey methodology issued that is a mail-out survey for the public housing survey and interviews for SOMIH survey. These differences may affect the results.

Figure 16.10 **SOMIH — proportion of tenants rating their current home as meeting their location and amenity needs, 2005^a**



^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.22.

Source: AIHW (2006a); table 16A.22.

Customer satisfaction

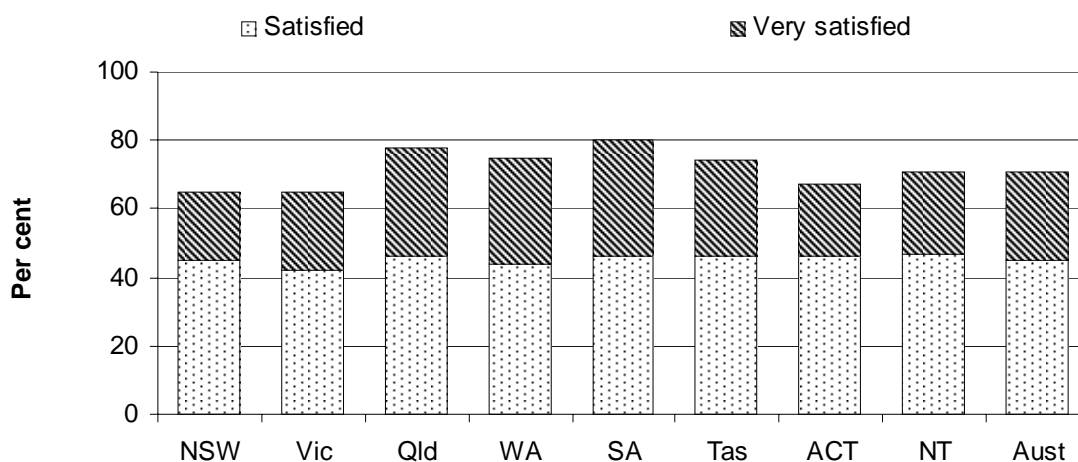
‘Customer satisfaction’ is an outcome indicator (box 16.16).

Box 16.16 Customer satisfaction

‘Customer satisfaction’ is an outcome indicator because one aim of the CSHA is to provide housing assistance that is appropriate for different households. Customer satisfaction is a survey measure of satisfaction with the overall service provided by the State or Territory housing authority. A higher percentage for customer satisfaction may imply better housing assistance provision.

Data for public housing are sourced from the 2005 National Social Housing Survey for public rental housing. Nationally in 2005, 71 per cent of tenants were either satisfied or very satisfied with the service provided (figure 16.11).

Figure 16.11 Public housing — customer satisfaction, 2005^a

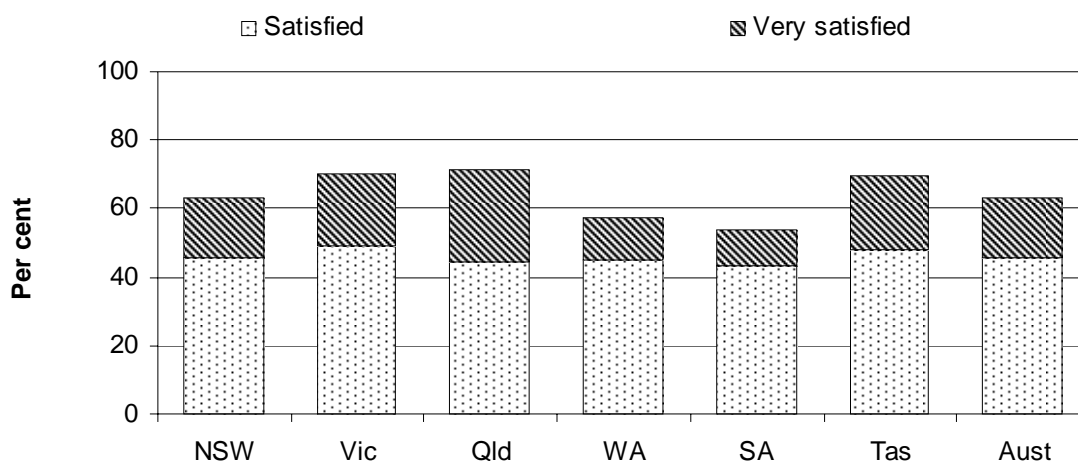


^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.13.

Source: AIHW (2006b); table 16A.13.

Results for SOMIH are taken from the 2005 National Social Housing Survey of SOMIH. Nationally 63 per cent of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the overall service provided by their State housing authority (figure 16.12).

Figure 16.12 SOMIH — customer satisfaction, 2005^a



^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.22.

Source: AIHW (2006a); table 16A.22.

Affordability

'Affordability' is an outcome indicator of ability to access suitable housing (box 16.17).

Box 16.17 Affordability

'Affordability' is an outcome indicator that aims to measure housing affordability for CSHA housing tenants. Two measures are reported:

- a subsidy per tenant derived by dividing the total rebated amount by the total number of households
- the proportion of rebated households spending less than 30 per cent of their income in rent.

High subsidy per tenant and high proportion of households spending less than 30 per cent of their income in rent imply better affordability.

The subsidy per tenant and the proportion of households spending less than 30 per cent of their income in rent for public housing at 30 June 2006 is presented in table 16.21. Information on the amount of income paid in rent by public housing tenants as a proportion of income can be found in table 16A.74.

Table 16.21 **Public housing — subsidy per tenant and proportion of households spending 30 per cent or less of their income in rent^a**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Subsidy per tenant (\$)									
2006	106.6	70.6	73.0	54.6	60.8	66.1	122.8	93.8	83.2
Proportion of rebated households spending 30 per cent or less of their income in rent									
2006	100.0	99.9	100.0	99.5	99.7	98.3	99.2	99.0	99.7

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.11.

Source: AIHW (2002c, 2003c, 2004c, 2005c, 2006b); table 16A.11.

The subsidy per tenant and the proportion of rebated households spending less than 30 per cent of their income in rent for SOMIH at 30 June 2006 is presented in table 16.22. Information on the amount of income paid in rent by SOMIH tenants as a proportion of income can be found in table 16A.75.

Table 16.22 SOMIH — subsidy per tenant and proportion of households spending less than 30 per cent of their income in rent^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>Total</i>
Subsidy per tenant (\$)							
2006	89.7	87.9	84.3	69.3	72.2	74.0	81.8
Proportion of rebated households spending 30 per cent or less of their income in rent							
2006	100.0	99.6	100.0	99.5	99.1	97.0	99.2

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.23.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003a, 2004a, 2005a, 2006a); table 16A.23.

Match of dwelling to household size

‘Match of dwelling to household size’ is an outcome indicator (box 16.18).

Box 16.18 Match of dwelling to household size

‘Match of dwelling to household size’ is an outcome indicator of the CSHA guiding principles is to provide housing assistance that is appropriate to the needs of different households, such as household size. It measures the proportion of households where dwelling size is not appropriate due to overcrowding. The indicator uses a proxy occupancy standard based on the size of the dwelling and household structure (see table below). Overcrowding is deemed to have occurred where two or more additional bedrooms are required to satisfy the proxy occupancy standard.

The proxy occupancy standard was revised to remove the four bedroom cap. The revised occupancy measure has been applied for the first time in the 2007 Report. Data from previous years can not be compared.

Proxy occupancy standard for appropriate sized dwelling, by household structure

<i>Household structure</i>	<i>Bedrooms required</i>
Single adult only	1 bedroom
Single adult (group)	1 bedroom (per adult)
Couple with no children	2 bedrooms
Sole parent or couple with one child	2 bedrooms
Sole parent or couple with two or three children	3 bedrooms
Sole parent or couple with four children	4 bedrooms
Sole parent or couple with more than four children	equal to number of children

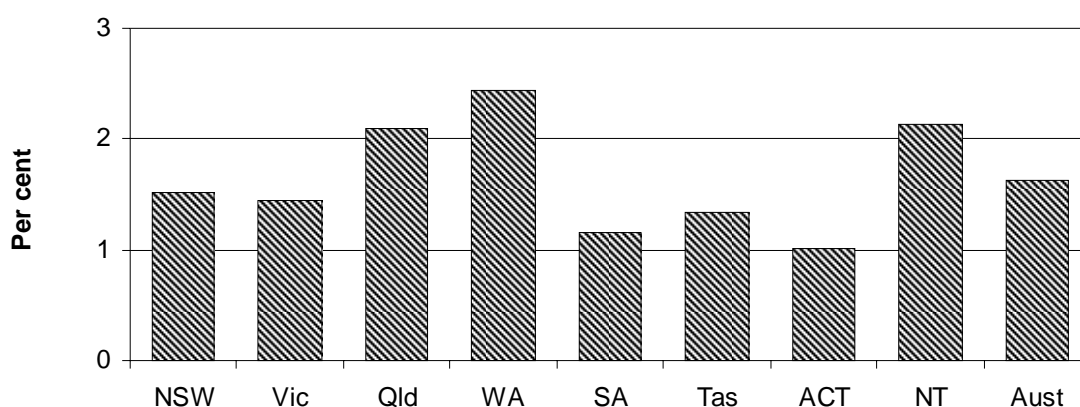
Source: AIHW (2006c).

A low proportion indicates a low proportion of overcrowded households.

Multi income unit households were included in the 2006 Report for Victoria and Queensland. They are included for the first time in the 2007 Report for NSW, WA, SA and the ACT. Therefore, multi income unit households are now included for all jurisdictions except Tasmania and the NT.

The proportion of households with overcrowding for public housing is illustrated in figure 16.13. Information on moderate overcrowding and underutilisation for public housing can be found in table 16A.77.

Figure 16.13 Public housing — proportion of households with overcrowding at 30 June, 2006^{a, b}

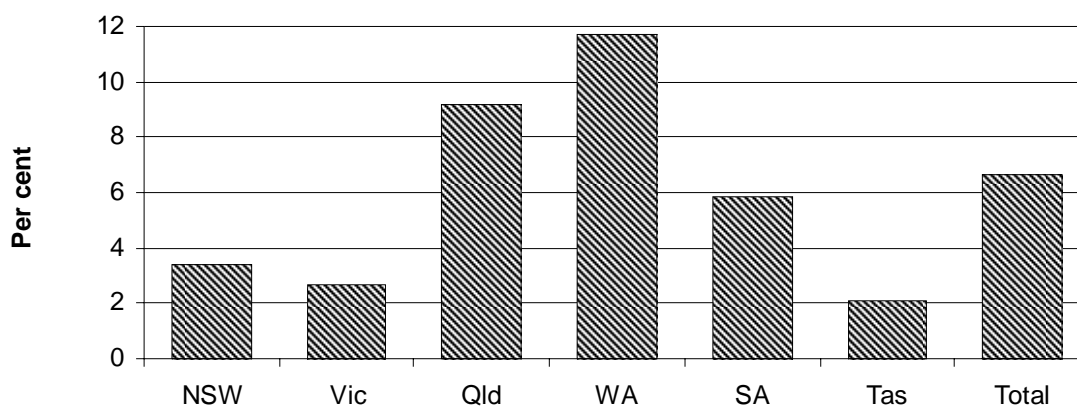


^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.12. ^b The proxy occupancy standard was revised to remove the four bedroom cap for the 2006 data. Data from previous years can not be compared.

Source: AIHW (2006b); table 16A.12.

The proportion of households with overcrowding for SOMIH is illustrated in figure 16.14. Information on moderate overcrowding and underutilisation for SOMIH can be found in table 16A.78.

Figure 16.14 **SOMIH — proportion of households with overcrowding at 30 June, 2006^{a, b}**



^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.24. ^b The proxy occupancy standard was revised to remove the four bedroom cap for the 2006 data. Data from previous years can not be compared.

Source: AIHW (2006b); table 16A.24.

Community housing

This section includes data on the 10 performance indicators in the community housing framework (figure 16.5).

Community housing data have three sources:

- Jurisdictions' administrative data, collected by the State or Territory government body with responsibility for administering the community housing program in the jurisdiction. The NT provided only administrative data.
- Community housing provider survey data, collected from the community organisations (providers) that manage the service delivery.
- Survey data collected via the National Social Housing Survey.

For the community housing provider survey data, response rates, along with changes to the definitions and counting rules used over time, can influence the comparability of the data. Comparisons over time using community housing data thus need to be made with care. Table 16A.83 outlines the survey response rates and associated information for each jurisdiction for each year from 2000-01 to 2005-06. Performance indicator results are not comparable between public, community housing and SOMIH sections.

Some descriptive data on community housing are contained in table 16A.25. Table 16A.70 lists State and Territory programs included in the community housing data collected.

Outputs

Equity — low income

The first equity indicator reported for community housing is 'low income' (box 16.19).

Box 16.19 Low income

'Low income' is an output indicator of the CSHA guiding principles is to provide appropriate, affordable and secure housing assistance to people who are unable to access suitable housing. This indicator assesses the low income need status of all households receiving assistance. It measures the number of low income households as a proportion of all households (new and existing). A high proportion indicates a high degree of access by low income households.

The low income indicator is measured differently for community housing than for public housing. The community housing indicator is based on the low income B cut-offs used in the public rental housing data collection. Data are reported on all households, rather than just new households.

At 30 June 2006, across those jurisdictions able to provide data, the number of low income households as a proportion of all households is presented in table 16.23.

Table 16.23 Community housing — the number of low income households as a proportion of all households^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
2002	97.6	100.0	97.4	94.6	95.6	91.2	97.4	na	97.6
2003	96.6	100.0	95.7	37.4	89.8	53.3	92.4	na	88.2
2004	96.6	99.5	93.3	95.7	94.0	72.2	95.6	na	95.6
2005	88.9	98.5	98.2	87.5	91.6	93.5	97.5	na	91.8
2006	89.8	93.8	81.9	97.8	97.3	95.1	97.7	na	90.3

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.26. **na** Not available.

Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003b, 2004b, 2005b, 2007c); table 16A.26.

Equity — special needs

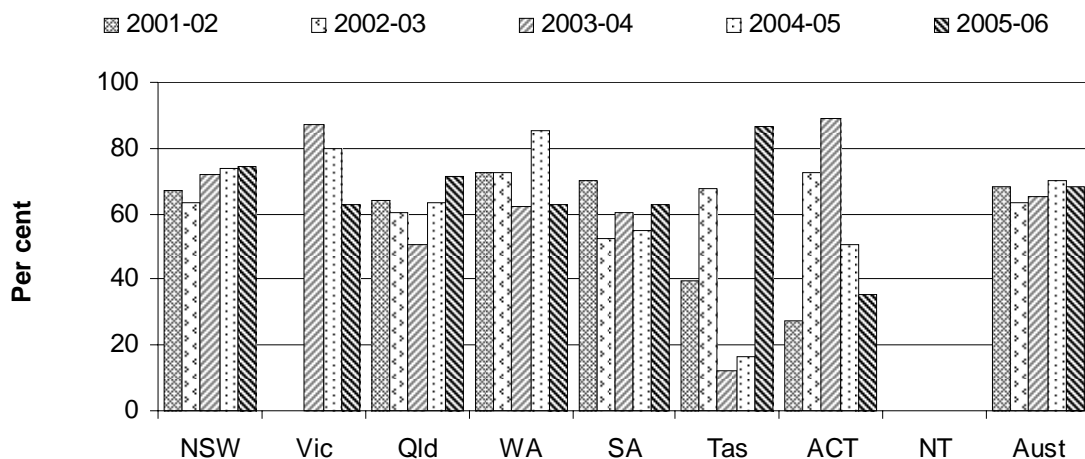
The second equity indicator reported for community housing is 'special needs' (box 16.20).

Box 16.20 Special needs

'Special needs' is an output indicator of the CSHA guiding principles is to provide appropriate, affordable and secure housing assistance to people who are unable to access suitable housing. It measures the proportion of new tenancies allocated to special needs households. New tenancies are reported as a proxy for all households receiving assistance. Special needs households are defined as those households that have either a household member with a disability, a principal tenant aged 24 years or under, or 75 years or over, or one or more Indigenous members. A high proportion indicates a high degree of access by these special needs households.

The proportion of new tenancies allocated to special needs households in 2005-06 is presented in figure 16.15.

Figure 16.15 **Community housing — new tenancies allocated to households with special needs^{a, b}**



^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.27. ^b Data for the NT and Victoria for 2001-02 and 2002-03 are not available.

Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003b, 2004b, 2005b, 2007c); table 16A.27.

Equity — priority access to those in greatest need

The final equity indicator reported for community housing is 'priority access to those in greatest need' (box 16.21).

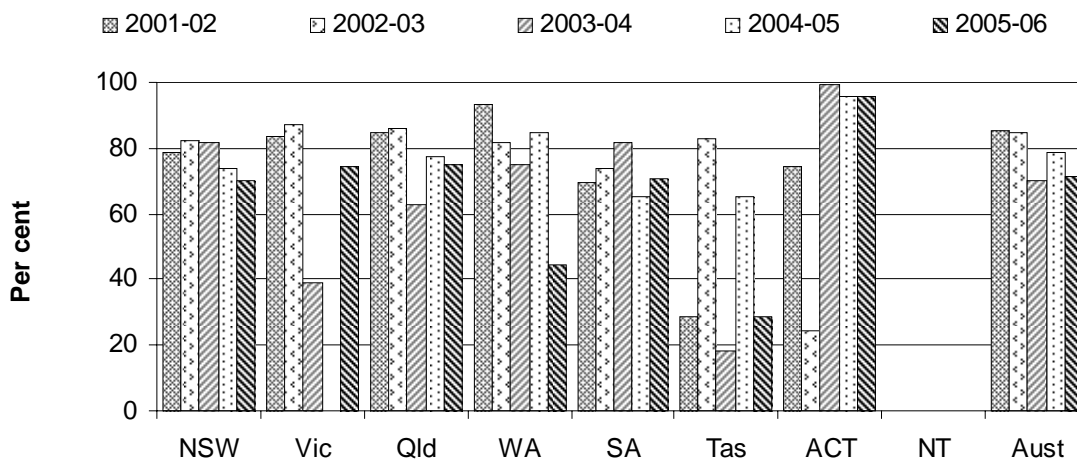
Box 16.21 Priority access to those in greatest need

‘Priority access to those in greatest need’ is an output indicator of the CSHA guiding principles is to provide appropriate, affordable and secure housing to assist people who are unable to access suitable housing. This indicator provides information on whether allocation processes are such that those in greatest need have first access to housing. It measures the proportion of new allocations 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. High values for this indicator represent a high degree of access by those in greatest need.

The proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need is presented in figure 16.16. Differences in State and Territory housing allocation policies can influence comparability for this indicator, because the majority of jurisdictions do not require community housing organisations to segment waiting lists.

Figure 16.16 Community housing — proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need^{a, b}



^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.28. ^b Data for the NT and Victoria for 2002-03 are not available.

Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003b, 2004b, 2005b, 2007c); table 16A.28.

Efficiency — direct cost per unit

The efficiency indicator identified for community housing is ‘direct cost per unit’ (box 16.22).

Box 16.22 Direct cost per unit

‘Direct cost per unit’ has been identified as an output indicator of the CSHA guiding principle to undertake efficient and cost-effective management. It measures the cost of providing assistance per dwelling. ‘Direct cost per unit’ can be defined as the total administration costs and the costs of maintaining the operation of dwellings. It does not include any cost of capital.

Holding other factors equal, a lower cost per unit suggests an improvement in efficiency.

The cost per dwelling indicators do not provide any information on the quality of service provided (for example, the standard of dwellings).

The ‘direct cost per unit’ at 30 June 2005 is presented in table 16.24. For community housing, data on direct cost per unit are reported with a one year lag to allow community housing providers an extra year to collate financial data.

Table 16.24 Community housing — direct cost per unit (dollars)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
2000-01	2 767	na	3 600	7 626	3 791	na	na	na	4 058
2001-02	2 722	na	3 221	3 844	3 614	7 236	na	na	3 210
2002-03	8 036	3 679	4 187	5 048	4 362	5 173	na	na	5 636
2003-04	9 224	5 167	4 291	7 861	3 751	7 712	na	na	6 529
2004-05	9 400	6 667	5 509	8 013	6 995	11 365	na	na	7 744

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.29. **na** Not available.

Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003b, 2004b, 2005b, 2007c); table 16A.29.

Efficiency — occupancy rate

A second efficiency indicator reported for community housing is the ‘occupancy rate’ (box 16.23).

Box 16.23 Occupancy rate

The 'occupancy rate' is an output indicator of the efficiency of housing utilisation. It is the proportion of dwellings occupied. The term 'occupied dwelling' refers to dwellings occupied by tenants who have a tenancy agreement with the relevant community housing organisation. A higher occupancy rate suggests higher efficiency of housing utilisation. Occupancy is influenced by both turnover and housing supply.

The proportion of community housing occupied at 30 June 2006 is presented in table 16.25. The NT occupancy rates are based on the assumption that all dwellings are occupied.

Table 16.25 Community housing — occupancy rates (per cent)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
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
2004	98.6	98.1	95.0	99.8	95.4	99.8	95.8	100.0	97.5
2005	98.2	94.5	95.7	98.0	95.1	98.9	89.8	100.0	96.5
2006	98.4	93.7	97.2	94.1	96.5	99.8	89.8	100.0	96.6

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.30.

Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003b, 2004b, 2005b, 2007c); table 16A.30.

Efficiency — turnaround time

The third efficiency indicator identified for community housing is 'turnaround time' (box 16.24).

Box 16.24 Turnaround time

'Turnaround time' is an output indicator of the time taken to reallocate normally vacant properties after they have been vacated, acquired or newly constructed. The indicator measures the average time taken in days for normal vacant dwellings to be occupied. The length of time taken to rent untenanted dwellings affects allocations of housing, waiting times, the length of waiting lists and rent foregone. A low turnaround time suggests efficient housing allocation. All jurisdictions aim to minimise turnaround times.

'Normal' vacancies exclude properties that are offline or are undergoing major redevelopment and where there is no suitable applicant but include hard-to-let properties as this relates to tenancy management.

Data for turnaround time are not reported for community housing due to the complex and diverse nature of tenant allocation processes which impact on data quality.

Efficiency — rent collection rate

The fourth efficiency indicator reported for community housing is ‘rent collection rate’ (box 16.25).

Box 16.25 Rent collection rate

‘Rent collection rate’ is an output indicator of the CSHA guiding principle to undertake efficient and cost-effective management. It is the total rent actually collected as a proportion of the rent charged. A high proportion suggests efficiency in collecting rent. All jurisdictions aim to maximise the rent collected as a proportion of the rent charged.

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. 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.

For community housing, data on rent collection rate are reported with a one year lag to allow community housing providers an extra year to collate financial data (table 16.26). 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 16.26 Community housing — total rent collected as a proportion of total rent charged (per cent)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
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
2002-03	98.8	98.6	83.8	100.5	97.3	98.9	99.7	na	95.7
2003-04	99.4	96.1	98.6	98.0	97.8	101.2	92.6	na	98.3
2004-05	99.5	96.3	98.3	102.6	97.8	100.4	100.3	na	99.0

^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.31. **na** Not available.

Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003b, 2004b, 2005b, 2007c); table 16A.31.

Outcomes

Location/amenity

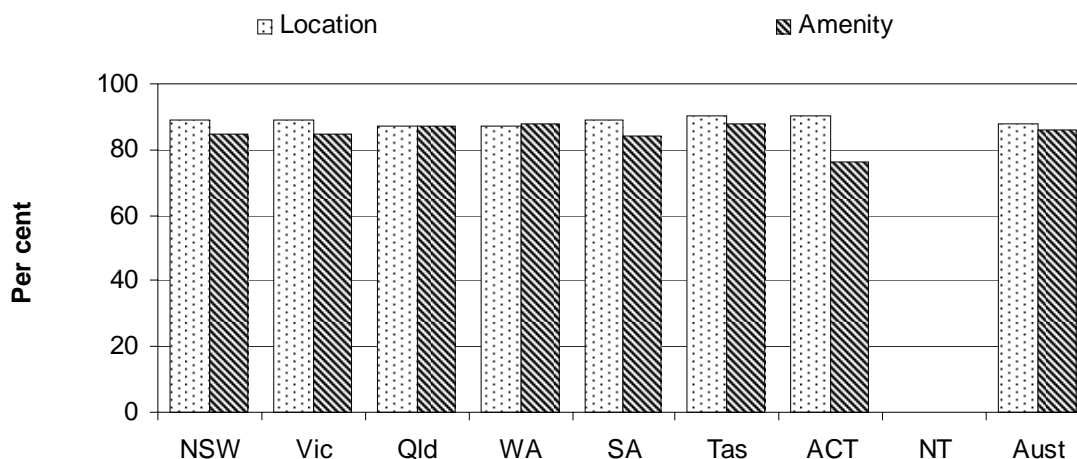
‘Location/amenity’ is an outcome indicator of success in meeting tenants’ needs (box 16.26).

Box 16.26 Location/amenity

'Location/amenity' is an outcome indicator of the CSHA guiding principles to provide housing assistance that is appropriate to the needs of different households. The location/amenity indicator is a survey-based measure of the proportion of tenants rating location and amenity aspects as important and as meeting their needs. Higher levels of satisfaction with location and amenity imply the provision of housing assistance that satisfies household needs.

The data for this indicator are from the 2005 Community Housing National Social Housing Survey. Community housing 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 proportions of tenants satisfied with the location and amenity of their dwelling in April/May 2005 are presented in figure 16.17. As with public housing, the precision of survey estimates depends on the survey sample size (see the discussion of location/amenity for public housing). More information on the sample size is provided in tables 16A.32 and 16A.33.

Figure 16.17 Community housing — tenants satisfied with location and amenity aspects of their dwelling, 2005^{a, b}



^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in tables 16A.32 and 16A.33. ^b Data for the NT are not available.

Source: AIHW (2007c); tables 16A.32 and 16A.33.

Affordability

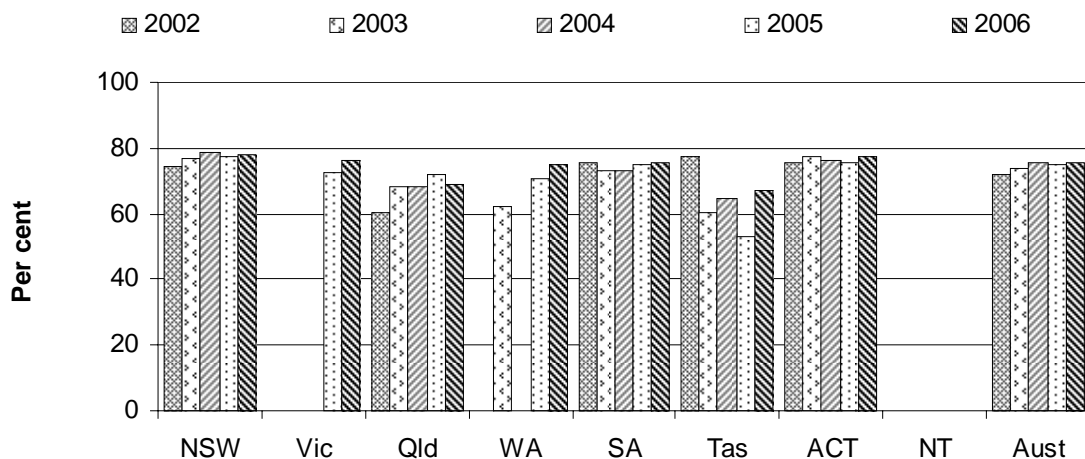
'Affordability' is an outcome indicator (box 16.27).

Box 16.27 Affordability

'Affordability' is an outcome indicator of the CSHA guiding principles to provide affordable housing to assist people who are unable to access suitable housing. It measures the proportion of household income left after paying rent. A high proportion indicates that housing is affordable. This affordability measure differs from that reported for public housing and SOMIH.

The proportion of household income left after paying rent is presented in figure 16.18. Differences in the definition of assessable income, including the treatment of CRA in rent assessment, may affect the comparability of this indicator's reported result. More information on affordability for community housing can be found in table 16A.76.

Figure 16.18 **Community housing — proportion of income left after paying rent^{a, b, c}**



^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.34. ^b Data for the NT, Victoria for 2002, 2003 and 2004 and WA for 2002 are not available. ^c Data for WA for 2004 are not published.

Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003b, 2004b, 2005b, 2007c); table 16A.34.

Match of dwelling to household size

'Match of dwelling to household size' is an outcome indicator (box 16.28).

Box 16.28 Match of dwelling to household size

'Match of dwelling to household size' is an outcome indicator of the CSHA guiding principles to provide housing assistance that is appropriate to the needs of different households, such as household size. It measures the proportion of households where dwelling size is not appropriate due to overcrowding. The indicator uses a proxy occupancy standard based on the size of the dwelling and household structure (see table below). Overcrowding is deemed to have occurred where two or more additional bedrooms are required to satisfy the proxy occupancy standard.

The proxy occupancy standard was revised to remove the four bedroom cap. The revised occupancy measure has been applied for the first time in the 2007 Report. Data from previous years can not be compared.

Proxy occupancy standard for appropriate sized dwelling, by household structure

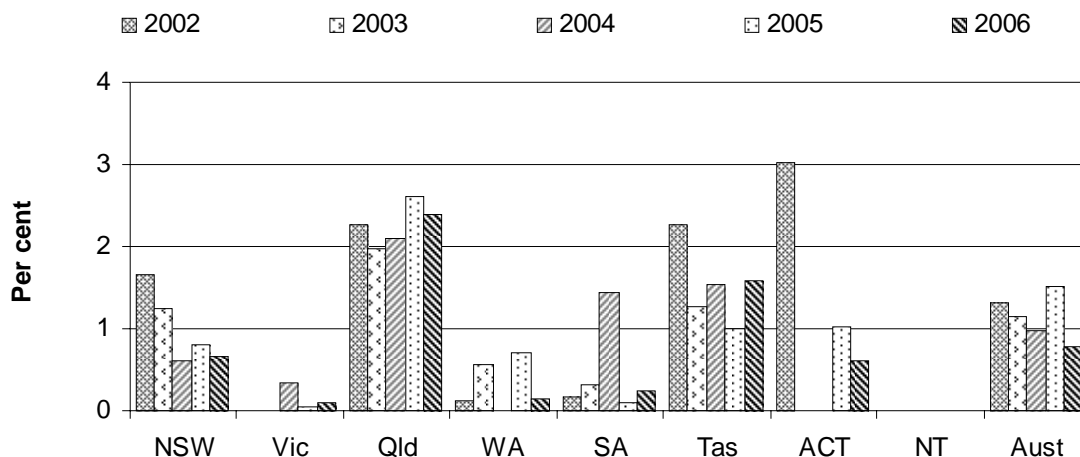
<i>Household structure</i>	<i>Bedrooms required</i>
Single adult only	1 bedroom
Single adult (group)	1 bedroom (per adult)
Couple with no children	2 bedrooms
Sole parent or couple with one child	2 bedrooms
Sole parent or couple with two or three children	3 bedrooms
Sole parent or couple with four children	4 bedrooms
Sole parent or couple with more than four children	equal to number of children

Source: AIHW (2006c).

A low proportion indicates a low proportion of overcrowded households.

The proportion of community households with overcrowding is illustrated in figure 16.19. Information on moderate overcrowding and underutilisation for community housing can be found in table 16A.79.

Figure 16.19 **Community housing — proportion of households with overcrowding^{a, b}**



^a Data may not be comparable between jurisdictions and over time and making comparisons between them could be misleading. Reasons for this are provided in table 16A.35. ^b Data for the NT, Victoria for 2002 and 2003 and WA for 2004 are not available.

Source: AIHW (2002b, 2003b, 2004b, 2005b, 2007c); table 16A.35.

Customer satisfaction

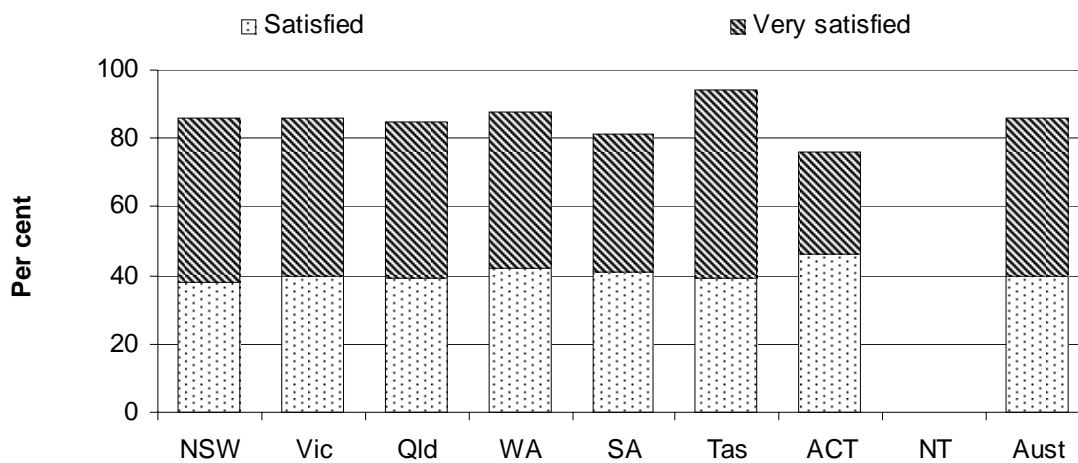
‘Customer satisfaction’ is an outcome indicator (box 16.29).

Box 16.29 Customer satisfaction

‘Customer satisfaction’ is an outcome indicator because one aim of the CSHA is to provide housing assistance that is appropriate to different households. Customer satisfaction is a survey measure of satisfaction with the overall service provided by the State or Territory housing authority. A higher proportion of satisfied customers may imply better housing assistance provision.

The data for this indicator are from the 2005 Community Housing National Social Housing Survey. Nationally, in April/May 2005, 86.0 per cent of tenants were satisfied or very satisfied with the services provided by their community housing organisation (figure 16.20).

Figure 16.20 Community housing — customer satisfaction, 2005^{a, b}



^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.36. ^b Data for the NT are not available.

Source: AIHW (2007c); table 16A.36.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance

Data for CRA recipients are only for individuals and families paid CRA by Centerlink under the *Social Security Act 1991* or family assistance law. It includes amounts paid under the Social Security Act with payments now administered by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and DEST. It does not include equivalent payments made by the Department of Veterans Affairs, or payments made with Abstudy on behalf of DEST.

Data are generally for those entitled to CRA at 3 March 2006. Centerlink recorded 941 306 individuals and families as being entitled to CRA with a social security or family assistance payment for that day. Other published figures may include individuals and families who were paid CRA in the previous fortnight, some of whom were only entitled to payment for an earlier period (table 16.27).

Important eligibility requirements for CRA (which is paid automatically once eligibility has been established) are (1) the receipt of an income support payment or more than the base rate of the Family Tax Benefit Part A, and (2) liability to pay rent.

Outputs

Equity — access — income unit type

The first access indicator is 'income unit type' (box 16.30).

Box 16.30 Income unit type

Access to CRA by 'income unit type' is an output indicator of the objective of CRA to provide financial assistance in an equitable manner. This indicator measures the number and proportion of eligible income support recipients receiving CRA by income unit type. The level of access experienced by different income unit types across States and Territories is influenced by a number of factors, including (but not restricted to) the size of their respective base populations and the levels of home ownership. CRA is a demand driven payment that has no benchmark in terms of the mix of customers. This indicator provides descriptive information only.

Of the 941 306 income units receiving CRA at 3 March 2006, 30 168 (approximately 3.2 per cent) self-identified as Indigenous. Single people with no children represented approximately 51.5 per cent of income units receiving CRA and 37.5 per cent of Indigenous income units receiving CRA (table 16.27). The figures for the total number and proportion of income units by the income unit type

disaggregated at the jurisdiction level are presented in tables 16A.42, 16A.43, 16A.44 and 16A.45.

Table 16.27 Income units receiving CRA, by income unit type, 2006^a

<i>Type of income unit</i>	<i>Income units</i>	<i>Proportion of CRA recipients</i>		<i>Proportion of Indigenous CRA recipients</i>	
		<i>no.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>no.</i>	<i>%</i>
Single, no dependent children aged under 16	363 736	38.6	8 741	29.0	
Single, no children, sharer	121 227	12.9	2 583	8.6	
Single, one or two dependent children aged under 16	189 598	20.1	8 152	27.0	
Single, three or more dependent children aged under 16	36 746	3.9	2 708	9.0	
Partnered, no dependent children aged under 16	79 965	8.5	1 610	5.3	
Partnered, one or two dependent children aged under 16	102 456	10.9	3 738	12.4	
Partnered, three or more dependent children aged under 16	44 803	4.8	2 508	8.3	
Partnered, illness or temporarily separated	2 594	0.3	na	na	
Partnered, temporarily separated	194	–	na	na	
Unknown income unit	na	na	na	na	
Total	941 306	100.0	30 168	100.0	

^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in tables 16A.42, 16A.43, 16A.44 and 16A.45. **na** Not available. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: FaCSIA (unpublished); tables 16A.42, 16A.43, 16A.44 and 16A.45.

Equity — access — special needs

The second access indicator is ‘special needs’ (box 16.31).

Box 16.31 Special needs

'Special needs' access to CRA is an output indicator of the objective of CRA to provide income support recipients and low income families with financial assistance. This indicator provides the proportions of special needs income units receiving CRA, including Indigenous income units, those with a member receiving a Disability Support Pension and CRA recipients by geographic classification. This indicator provides an overview of the level of assistance provided to disadvantaged groups and facilitates comparison with special needs groups in public housing. CRA is a demand driven payment that has no benchmark in terms of the level of assistance provided to special needs customers. Additional measures of special need, which include a geographic dimension, are reported under 'affordability'.

Table 16.28 illustrates the number and proportion of income units receiving CRA at 3 March 2006 by jurisdiction, Indigenous status and geographic location.

Overall, 58.7 per cent of total income units receiving CRA at 3 March 2006 were located in capital cities, while 41.3 per cent were in the rest of the State/Territory. For Indigenous income units receiving CRA, 34.3 per cent were located in capital cities, while 65.7 per cent lived in the rest of the State/Territory. For non-Indigenous income units receiving CRA, 59.5 per cent were located in capital cities, while 40.5 per cent lived in the rest of the State/Territory (table 16.28).

People who own their own home are not entitled to CRA. Indigenous people receiving social security benefits are less likely to own their own home, and therefore are more likely to receive CRA. Nationally, 6.4 per cent of Indigenous income units are home owners receiving social security benefits, while 44.1 per cent of non-Indigenous income units are home owners receiving social security benefits (FaCSIA unpublished).

Table 16.28 Income units receiving CRA, by Indigenous status and geographic location, 2006^a

	Unit	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
<i>Non-Indigenous</i>										
Income units	no.	307 678	203 414	219 540	79 373	65 967	22 984	7 592	4 356	911 138
In capital city	%	55.0	70.2	44.3	76.6	77.3	42.6	99.5	79.5	59.5
In rest of State	%	45.0	29.8	55.7	23.4	22.7	57.4	0.5	20.5	40.5
Non-Indigenous income units as proportion of all CRA recipient income units	%	96.3	99.1	95.5	96.8	98.0	95.8	98.4	80.9	96.8
Non-Indigenous population, as proportion of total population	%	97.9	99.4	96.6	96.5	98.2	96.2	98.7	70.2	97.6
<i>Indigenous</i>										
Income units	no.	11 692	1 945	10 377	2 612	1 368	1 007	124	1 031	30 168
In capital city	%	26.8	46.9	28.3	55.5	62.6	34.9	100.0	56.4	34.3
In rest of State	%	73.2	53.1	71.7	44.5	37.4	65.1	–	43.6	65.7
Indigenous income units as proportion of all CRA recipient income units	%	3.7	0.9	4.5	3.2	2.0	4.2	1.6	19.1	3.2
Indigenous population, as proportion of total population	%	2.1	0.6	3.4	3.5	1.8	3.8	1.3	29.8	2.4
Total income units	no.	319 370	205 359	229 917	81 985	67 335	23 991	7 716	5 387	941 306

^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.46. – Nil or rounded to zero.

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

Equity — access — geographic spread of CRA customers

The third access indicator is the ‘geographic spread of CRA customers’ (box 16.32).

Box 16.32 Geographic spread of CRA customers

The ‘geographic spread of CRA customers’ provides descriptive information about rents, average levels of assistance, and the proportion of private rental stock occupied by CRA recipients within regions. This information is useful in examining differences across states and territories, and capital cities/rest of State. The indicator can provide some insight into the responsiveness of CRA to regional variations in rent and the extent to which recipients are able to exercise choice in where to live.

Two measures are presented:

- maps showing CRA recipients as a proportion of private rental stock (from 2001 Census) across Australia and within each capital city
- the average CRA entitlement across locations.

Additional measures of geographic spread are reported under ‘affordability’.

Results for income units receiving CRA as a proportion of income units in each capital city receiving a social security income support benefit or more than the base rate of the Family Tax Benefit are mapped in tables 16A.47–16A.55. Information on the average CRA entitlement across locations is contained in table 16A.56.

The ratio of CRA recipients to private rental stock between and within capital cities varies but the patterns are complex. The maps should be interpreted with caution because they compare CRA recipients in March 2006 with 2001 Census data and make no allowance for changes in private rental stock (FaCSIA unpublished).

Effectiveness — appropriateness — maximum rate

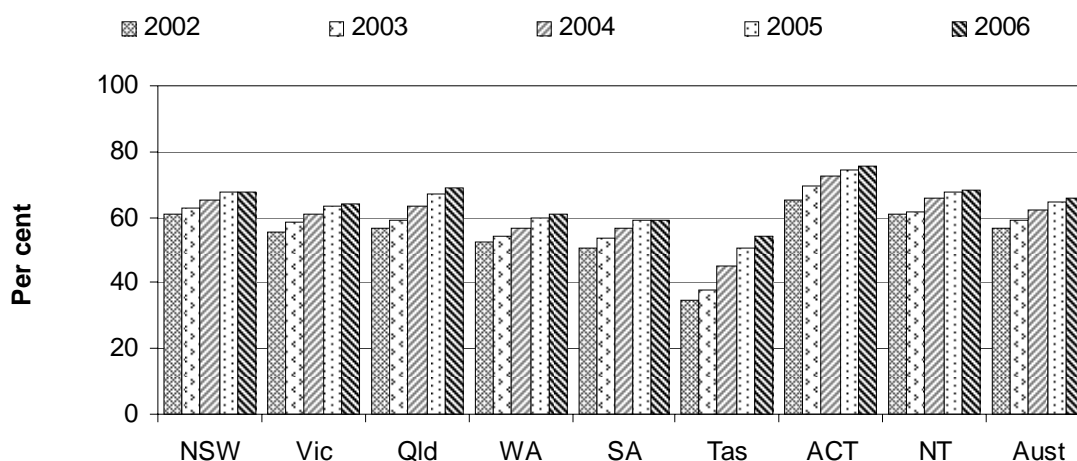
The first effectiveness indicator is the proportion of income units receiving the ‘maximum rate of CRA’, by jurisdiction and payment type (box 16.33).

Box 16.33 Maximum rate of CRA

The 'maximum rate of CRA' indicator is an output indicator of the appropriateness of CRA. It measures the proportion of income units receiving the maximum rate of CRA, and can be used to monitor the adequacy of CRA over time. The effectiveness of the payment against rents is reflected in increasing/decreasing proportions of units on the maximum rates of assistance. An increasing proportion of income units receiving the maximum rate of assistance suggests that CRA is becoming less effective against rent increases. A decreasing proportion suggests that CRA is increasing faster than rents.

At 3 March 2006, 66 per cent of income units receiving CRA across Australia qualified for the maximum rate of CRA payments (figure 16.21). The figure indicates an upward trend in the measure.

Figure 16.21 Proportion of income units receiving CRA paying enough rent to receive maximum assistance^a



^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.57.

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

Effectiveness — appropriateness — number and outcome of appeals

The second effectiveness indicator is the 'number and outcome of appeals' (box 16.34).

Box 16.34 Number and outcome of appeals

The 'number and outcome of appeals' is an output indicator of the appropriateness of decisions related to the payment of CRA. There is a formal review process for decisions related to the payment of CRA. Customers 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 FaCSIA, DEWR or DEST can seek an Administrative Appeals Tribunal review of the Social Security Appeals Tribunal's decisions. The indicator measures the outcomes of all CRA appeals finalised. A high proportion of original decisions affirmed would imply that the original decisions were appropriate.

There were 305 finalised appeals to an authorised review officer in 2005-06, which represented approximately 0.03 per cent of income units receiving CRA. The original decision was affirmed or appeal dismissed for approximately 62.6 per cent of finalised appeals to an authorised review officer (ARO), 56.4 per cent of appeals to the Social Security Appeals Tribunal (SSAT) and 28.6 per cent of appeals to the Administrative Tribunal (AAT) (table 16.29).

Table 16.29 Outcome of all CRA appeals finalised in 2005-06

<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Appeals to ARO</i>		<i>Appeals to SSAT</i>		<i>Appeals to AAT</i>	
	<i>no.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>no.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>no.</i>	<i>%</i>
Original decision affirmed or appeal dismissed	191	62.6	31	56.4	4	28.6
Original decision set aside	59	19.3	15	27.3	2	14.3
Original decision varied	45	14.8	4	7.3	–	–
Appeal withdrawn	10	3.3	5	9.1	8	57.1
Total finalised^a	305	100.0	55	100.0	14	100.0

– Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: FaCSIA (unpublished); table 16A.58.

Effectiveness — targeting — duration of payments

'Duration of payments' is an indicator of the effectiveness of targeting (box 16.35).

Box 16.35 Duration of payments

'Duration of payments' is a targeting indicator whose objective is to provide information on the level of long-term and short-term dependence on CRA payments. The indicator presents the number of customers receiving CRA benefits at the beginning and at the end of the year, as well as the number of CRA recipients who were in receipt of CRA benefits at the beginning of the year and still in receipt a year later.

Nationally, 941 120 income units were receiving CRA payments at March 2005, and 941 306 income units were receiving CRA at the end of March 2006. Out of those, 665 715 income units were receiving CRA at both times, implying a high degree of dependence on CRA (table 16.30). The remaining 275 591 income units started to receive CRA during the year and were receiving assistance at the end of the year. Other families received assistance for only part of the year. Unpublished FaCSIA data show that while CRA was paid on average to just over one million individuals each fortnight in 2005-06, over 1.4 million individuals were entitled to assistance during the financial year (FaCSIA unpublished).

Table 16.30 Duration of Payments, 2006^a

<i>State/Territory</i>	<i>Number of Income units at the beginning of the year</i>	<i>Number of Income units at the end of the year</i>	<i>Number of same Income units at the beginning and the end of the year</i>
	no.	no.	no.
NSW	315 414	319 370	230 010
Victoria	204 309	205 359	144 617
Queensland	231 820	229 917	162 688
WA	85 122	81 985	57 416
SA	67 040	67 335	47 474
Tasmania	23 726	23 991	16 466
ACT	7 969	7 716	4 296
NT	5 385	5 387	2 630
Total	941 120	941 306	665 715

^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.59.

Source: FaCSIA (unpublished); table 16A.59.

Efficiency — running costs per 1000 customers

The first efficiency indicator reported for the CRA is 'running costs per 1000 customers' (box 16.36).

Box 16.36 Running costs per 1000 customers

'Running costs per 1000 customers' is an output indicator of CSHA guiding principles to provide financial assistance in an efficient manner. Low running costs per 1000 customers would imply high efficiency for a given service level.

Nationally, the running costs per 1000 customers were 54 000 for 2005-06 (table 16A.60).

Efficiency — ratio of running costs to total outlays

The second efficiency indicator reported for the CRA is the 'ratio of running costs to total outlays' (box 16.37).

Box 16.37 Ratio of running costs to total outlays

The 'ratio of running costs to total outlays' is an output indicator of CRA's guiding principles to provide financial assistance in an efficient manner. A low ratio would imply high efficiency for a given service level.

Nationally, the ratio of running costs to total outlays was 2.4 per cent for 2005-06 (table 16A.61).

Outcomes

Affordability

'Affordability' is one of two outcome indicators reported for CRA (box 16.38).

Box 16.38 Affordability

'Affordability' is an outcome indicator of the CRA objective to provide income support recipients and low income families in the private rental market with financial assistance. CRA is intended to improve affordability, not to achieve a particular benchmark. Program performance is best judged by trends over a number of years. This indicator measures the proportions of income units spending more than 30 per cent and 50 per cent of their income on rent with and without CRA. A lower proportion of recipients spending 30 per cent and 50 per cent of income on rent with CRA implies improved affordability.

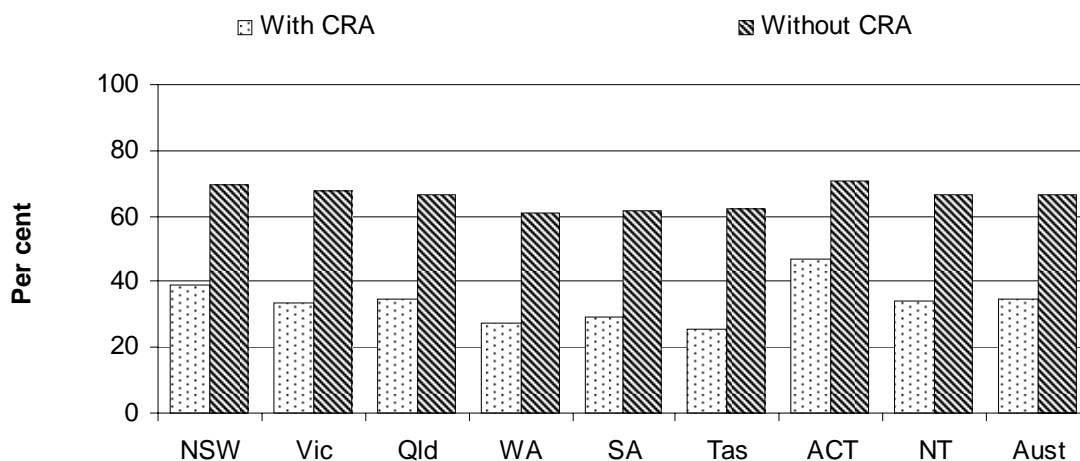
Affordability outcomes (with and without CRA) have been provided for all income units receiving CRA, Indigenous income units receiving CRA, and Disability Support Pension income units receiving CRA.

Information on the proportion of income spent on rent (with and without CRA) by Australians living in State capital cities and rest of State regions, income units where one or more members' self-identify as Indigenous Australians and income units where one or more members receive a Disability Support Pension is presented in tables 16A.62–16A.64.

Nationally, if CRA were not payable, then at 3 March 2006, 66.7 per cent of income units receiving CRA would have paid more than 30 per cent of their income on rent. Accounting for CRA payments (thereby reducing the rent paid by the amount of the assistance) this proportion falls to 34.9 per cent (figure 16.22).

Without CRA, 26.0 per cent of recipients across Australia would have spent more than 50 per cent of their income on rent, while with CRA the proportion is 9.0 per cent (table 16A.65).

Figure 16.22 **Income units paying more than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, 2006^a**

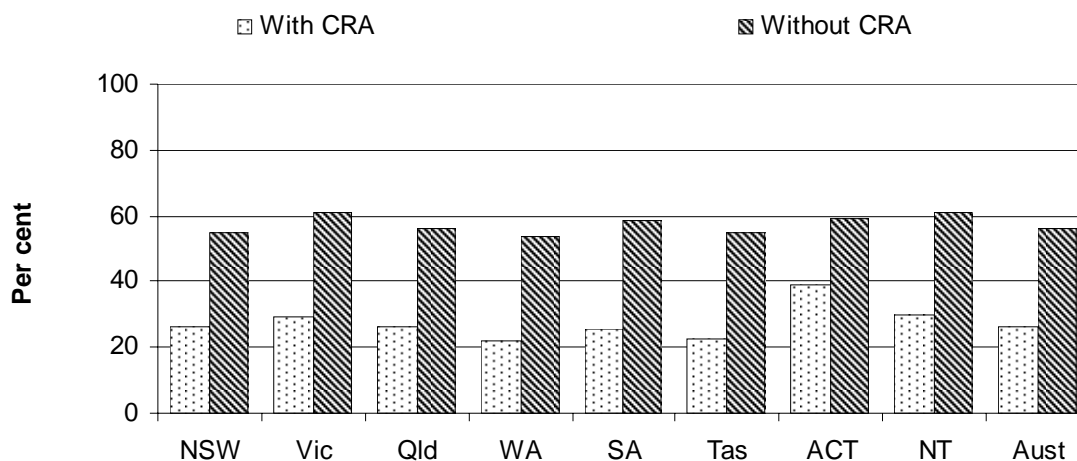


^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.62.

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

Nationally, if CRA were not payable, then 55.9 per cent of the Indigenous income units receiving CRA would have spent more than 30 per cent of income on rent at 3 March 2006. Taking CRA into account, this proportion falls to 26.1 per cent (figure 16.23). Similarly, if CRA were not payable, then 19.1 per cent of Indigenous income units across Australia would have spent more than 50 per cent of income on rent at 3 March 2006. Accounting for CRA payments this proportion decreases to 5.9 per cent (table 16A.65).

Figure 16.23 Indigenous income units receiving CRA paying more than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, 2006^a

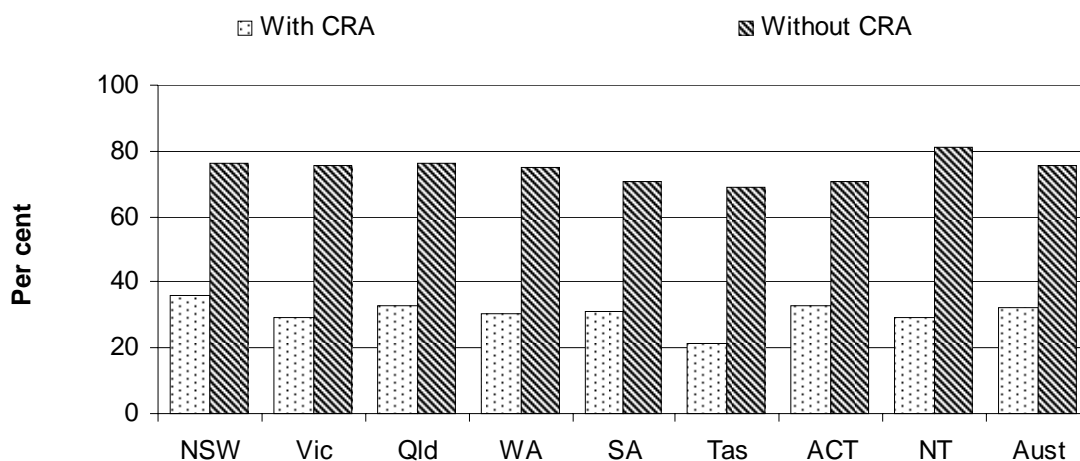


^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.63.

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

Nationally, if CRA were not payable, then 75.5 per cent of all income units with a member receiving a Disability Support Pension would have spent more than 30 per cent of income on rent at 3 March 2006. Accounting for CRA payments this proportion decreases to 32.6 per cent (figure 16.24). Similarly, if CRA were not payable, then 27.8 per cent of income units receiving a Disability Support Pension would have spent more than 50 per cent of income on rent at 3 March 2006. Accounting for CRA payments, this proportion decreases to 6.3 per cent (table 16A.65).

Figure 16.24 **Income units receiving a Disability Support Pension paying more than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, 2006^a**



^a Further information pertinent to the data included in this table and/or its interpretation is provided in table 16A.64.

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

Satisfaction with accommodation

The second outcome indicator is ‘satisfaction with accommodation’ (box 16.39). The survey used for this indicator in previous reports has been discontinued and data for this indicator were not available for the 2007 Report.

Box 16.39 Satisfaction with accommodation

‘Satisfaction with accommodation’ is an outcome indicator of whether the housing is appropriate to the needs of the CRA recipient.

Data for this indicator were not available for the 2007 Report.

Some information about satisfaction with accommodation has been derived from the Household Income and Labour Dynamics Australia (HILDA) survey. The survey does not reliably identify all CRA recipients but can be used to identify social security recipients who reside in private rental accommodation and are potentially eligible for CRA.

Information from Wave 4 of the survey, conducted from August 2004 to February 2005 is presented in tables 16.31 and 16.32.

Overall, 67 per cent of social security recipients living in private rental properties expressed a preference to stay in the area in which they live, while 13 per cent expressed a preference to leave the area. When asked to rate their satisfaction with the home in which they live using a scale of 0 to 10, 11 per cent expressed some dissatisfaction (rating it less than 5) and 37 per cent expressed high satisfaction with a rating of 9 or 10.

Table 16.31 Satisfaction with location of housing (per cent)^{a, b}

	<i>Strong preference to stay</i>	<i>Moderate preference to stay</i>	<i>Unsure/no strong preference to stay or leave</i>	<i>Moderate preference to leave</i>	<i>Strong preference to leave</i>
Location %	40.6	26.1	20.5	6.7	6.1

^a Respondents getting income support and living in private rental accommodation ^b Based on 861 valid responses.

Source: FaCSIA (unpublished).

Table 16.32 Satisfaction with quality of housing (per cent)^{a, b}

	<i>Totally dissatisfied</i>						<i>Totally satisfied</i>				
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Quality %	0.8	1.3	2.1	3.4	3.6	9.2	7.0	13.4	22.1	15.6	21.5

^a Respondents getting income support and living in private rental accommodation ^b Based on 902 valid responses.

Source: FaCSIA (unpublished).

16.4 Future directions in performance reporting

Further developing indicators and data

Improved reporting on housing provision to Indigenous Australians continues to be a priority. All states, territories and the Australian Government have committed to improving their reporting against the NRF, the nationally endorsed performance indicator framework for Indigenous housing.

Jurisdictions have implemented action plans to improve the availability and reliability of data on Indigenous Australians accessing main stream housing assistance.

In the 2008 Report, a performance indicator framework for Indigenous community housing will be developed and data for some indicators will be reported.

The Working Group will continue to improve the quality of mainstream community housing and financial data that are published in the Report.

Affordable housing

In August 2005, State, Territory and Australian Government Ministers for Housing, Local Government and Planning adopted a three-year Framework for National Action on Affordable Housing. This national framework and program for action has been developed to provide practical support for individual agency endeavours, and will guide coordinated efforts, across jurisdictions and portfolios.

The framework extends beyond traditional public and community housing responses to affordability and acknowledges that no individual housing lever is sufficient to resolve affordability in its own right and combinations of certain levers are mutually reinforcing and could amplify benefits.

It includes the identification of delivery, financing and management vehicles to support increased investment in affordable housing, and to develop parallel policies that impact on the housing market as a whole. These include market efficiency measures, financing, land supply and planning mechanisms and taxation. Housing Ministers have acknowledged that many of these fall outside their own areas of portfolio responsibility.

16.5 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).

Australian Government comments

“ The 2003 Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) aims to maintain a core Social Housing sector to assist people unable to access alternative housing options in the private rental market. It is recognised that states are implementing wide-ranging reforms to the management and delivery of housing assistance and that these reforms will continue. The performance framework introduced under the 1999 CSHA continues to support the measurement of the guiding principles of the 2003 CSHA. The 2003 CSHA has a particular emphasis on timely reporting and demonstrated progress in achieving performance objectives.

A total of around \$4.75 billion over five years to 2007-08 provides strategic direction and funding certainty. Programs funded include public housing, Aboriginal rental housing program (ARHP) community housing program (CHP) and crisis accommodation program (CAP).

Over \$280 million has also been allocated in the 2005-06 Budget through the Community Housing and Infrastructure Program (CHIP) to increase access to safe, healthy and sustainable housing and related services for Indigenous families and communities. CHIP provides for community housing and housing related environmental health infrastructure in rural and remote areas, and for community housing in urban areas. This funding is either directed through state and territory governments or to specific community housing organisations. CHIP funding was formerly appropriated to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services (ATSIS).

In the 2005 Budget, the Australian Government committed \$102.8 million over four years for the *Healthy Indigenous Housing* measure which will focus on progressing the principles and objectives of *Building a Better Future — Indigenous Housing to 2010*, with an emphasis on the delivery of sustainable outcomes, and contributing to sustainable Indigenous communities.

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 trade-off with other expenses and with the consumer's after-housing income.

The Rent Assistance program has no specific benchmark for affordability. The adoption of an affordability benchmark would fail to recognise the element of choice exercised by customers who place a higher value on housing than others in comparable circumstances. Customers may, for example, choose to pay higher rent for a property that is well-located, thus trading off housing and transport costs.

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New South Wales Government comments

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The past year has been one of significant change in social housing in NSW. Changes arising from the *Reshaping Public Housing Reforms* announced in April 2005 have been progressively introduced to the Department of Housing's clients of public housing and to clients of the Aboriginal Housing Office. The reforms are designed to provide a more sustainable and fair public housing system that will help those in greatest need.

Changes to income eligibility to enter public housing and the introduction of fixed term tenancies of two, five or ten years for new tenants will mean public housing is provided to those in greatest need for the duration of their need. Improving the sustainability of tenancies for the increasingly complex social housing tenant profile has underpinned the development of a Housing and Human Services Accord. This is a formal agreement between NSW Government human service agencies providing an overarching framework for both government and non-government agencies to work in partnership linking support and housing services.

Changes designed to improve viability include a rent policy to better reflect tenant circumstances and the introduction of tenant water usage charges. Improvements to the delivery of maintenance services as well as a major public housing asset reconfiguration program to align changing client housing needs with the size, location and disability modifications of properties will also improve viability and the capacity to provide appropriate cost effective services.

The last ten years have seen rising housing values across many areas of NSW. However, for many people, particularly first home buyers and low income vulnerable households, there has been a corresponding increase in difficulty in finding appropriate and affordable housing. The NSW Government, whilst not holding the majority of levers to address these issues, has been developing innovative ways to boost the stock of affordable housing.

The NSW social housing sector continues to play a vital role in the provision of affordable housing for low income and special needs clients. In 2005-06, the Department of Housing managed over 127 600 public housing properties. The community housing sector, with over 14 300 properties, is also a major provider and a recently announced growth strategy proposes a significant expansion in this sector. The Aboriginal Housing Office currently owns nearly 4300 properties and registered Aboriginal community housing organisations manage around 5000 properties. A range of innovative products, initiatives and services to respond to changing mainstream and Indigenous housing needs and priorities continue to be developed and implemented across the social housing sector.

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Victorian Government comments

“ Victoria continues to provide innovative solutions to address demand for social housing in an environment characterised by diminishing housing affordability in the private sector, increasing complexity of customer needs, declining capital funding through the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement and the ageing of social housing properties.

A key focus for Victoria is the expansion of social housing for low-income households. In 2005-06, Victoria funded the acquisition of 1017 new social housing units, including 24 properties for the Aboriginal Rental Housing Program. Acquisition strategies employed by Victoria ensure that customers are housed in locations with accessibility to employment opportunities, transport and amenities.

Victoria has continued to develop a platform for the growth of a strong and viable social housing sector. In 2005-06, the Office of the Registrar of Housing Agencies was established to implement the new regulatory provisions of the *Housing Act 1983* made in 2004-05. The Office of the Registrar is responsible for the registration and monitoring of non-government not-for-profit housing agencies. So far, five agencies have been registered as Housing Associations and one agency has been registered as a Housing Provider. In 2005-06 partnership approaches to housing acquisition led to the delivery of 260 new homes.

An environment of strong demand for public housing and declining capital funding has necessitated a highly targeted approach to housing allocations in Victoria, ensuring that priority is given to people who are homeless, those with specific medical or support needs and those experiencing family violence. The high level of targeting has contributed to a growing level of complexity in customer need to which the Office of Housing is continuing to respond with a range of tailored programs that integrate homelessness services with long-term housing and support.

To improve areas experiencing economic and social disadvantage, Victoria is undertaking community renewal and improving economic participation through the Neighbourhood Renewal program. Four new sites were launched in 2005-06, bringing the total number of sites in the program to 19. One of the program's most important outcomes is providing employment opportunities through specific job creation programs. Work experience and accredited training has been provided to over 1000 neighbourhood renewal residents, 60 per cent of which proceeded into further employment and/or training.

Recognising the importance of maintaining the asset in line with community standards, Victoria has upgraded 2607 properties in 2005-06, 633 of which were in Neighbourhood Renewal areas.

Since 1999 the Victorian government has provided an additional \$453 million above its matching obligations under the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement to improve services and grow social housing.

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Queensland Government comments

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In 2005-06, the department began implementing major reforms to the way housing services are delivered. The department is confronting the challenges of growing and changing demand by increasing the supply of social housing, greater targeting services to the housing needs faced by clients, ensuring greater coordination of social housing resources across providers and investigating new and innovative approaches to provide housing. Clients will benefit from this integration of housing programs by finding it easier to navigate through the social housing system. The department, through the phased implementation of one social housing system, is moving from a wait-turn allocation system for social housing, to allocating assistance based on the level of housing need.

- The waiting lists for public housing and SOMIH have been combined so that all Indigenous peoples are automatically considered for public housing and SOMIH and common eligibility criteria apply. Tenancies commencing after 1 January 2006 or in dwellings with five or more bedrooms or full wheelchair accessibility, will have their ongoing eligibility regularly assessed to ensure clients are assisted for the duration of their housing need.
- The department is continuing to work on reforms with the 450 community and local government providers that manage approximately 10 000 social housing dwellings, including about 4000 in discrete Indigenous communities. The reforms will achieve a more robust and planned network of funded organisations that coordinate services as part of one social housing system.
- While promoting access to mainstream programs and services, the department will continue to provide grant funding to the 34 discrete Indigenous communities to enable community councils to continue to provide and maintain rental properties. In 2005-06, the department conducted a property condition audit and tenant survey on all government-funded housing in these communities. The results will inform the development of a plan for each community to raise and sustain the standard of housing and improve the provision of housing services within Indigenous communities.
- The department has continued working on increasing the availability of affordable housing to Queenslanders on low incomes. This is being achieved by leading Queensland's response to affordable housing issues, with measures including grant funding to affordable housing providers such as the Brisbane Housing Company, providing grant funding to support the residential services industry and residential budget accommodation providers, responding to the decline of traditional low-cost private sector housing such as caravan parks, and working in partnership with local government in planning for affordable housing.

The department will continue to contribute to initiatives that coordinate housing and support services in the areas of homelessness and mental health, improving housing in Indigenous communities, influencing the private market for affordable housing and addressing systemic barriers to the provision of affordable housing.

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Western Australian Government comments

“ The Real Estate Institute of Western Australia reports that the median house price in Perth for the year 2005-06 increased by 33.9 per cent and by 29.4 per cent for the State as a whole. Land values increased by 48.3 per cent for Perth and by 49.3 per cent for the state. The median weekly rent in Perth increased by 23.1 per cent. Additionally during 2005-06 the building industry was working at capacity, with demand outstripping supply. This has resulted in fewer contractors tendering on housing construction projects, and increased costs.

These increases have had, and will continue to have, an impact across the entire housing sector. The public housing waiting list has increased by 7.8 per cent over the last two years, and continues to rise. The number of new occupations has decreased by 20.9 per cent over the same period. The main reason for this is that there are fewer options for people wishing to leave public housing – home purchase has become too expensive and private rents have increased considerably. Less people leaving public housing reduces the number of people on the waiting list who can be offered housing. These factors have also resulted in the median waiting time for public housing increasing by 13.8 per cent since 2003-04.

The state's population is expected to grow to 2.5 million people by 2026, an increase of 32 per cent. The Commission currently caters for a high proportion of people with disabilities and seniors, and this demand will grow as WA's population ages. Homelessness also remains a major challenge.

A priority in 2005-06 was to establish a strategic direction to improve the services and products available to our clients. In order to better cater for these challenges a statement of Strategic Intent was released. The idea behind the statement is to focus on three key areas:

- having more people in houses
- improving Aboriginal communities
- improving buildings and infrastructure

By focusing attention on these key areas, significant health, community and economic benefits should be delivered to the WA community.

Some 70 000 WA households on incomes of \$40 000 or less are increasingly experiencing housing stress as they struggle to access affordable housing. In September 2005 the draft Housing Strategy Western Australia, a framework for the future delivery of affordable housing was released, with a consultation period ending 31 March 2006. Cabinet has agreed to the Department of Housing and Works and the Department for Planning and Infrastructure leading and implementing affordable housing initiatives on behalf of the State Government. Among the initiatives are ongoing development and sale of low cost housing lots, increased rental bonds limits and development of models for the incorporation of affordable housing in land held by the East Perth Redevelopment Authority and the WA Land Authority.”

South Australian Government comments

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2005-06 was a significant year for housing in SA with the announcement of major housing reforms and the pursuit of affordable housing outcomes at both a State and National level. In May 2006 a major structural reform of current governance arrangements in housing was announced to achieve more effective delivery of the Government's strategic policy agenda and improved housing outcomes for South Australians.

During the year a number of significant initiatives were undertaken including:

- Establishment of the Affordable Housing Innovations Unit to pursue private, community and government partnerships for the supply of new affordable and high needs housing. During 2005-06, the Affordable Housing Innovations Fund (AHIF) balance grew from \$15.4 million to \$40.5 million.
- Commitment of \$16.7 million (46.5 per cent) from additional funding approved for the AHIF in 11 affordable and high need partnership projects totalling \$35.9 million to produce 137 houses and a 14 bedroom residential facility. The 11 projects involve management by Not-for-Profit Organisations, various needs groups and combinations of partner equity, borrowing and CRA inclusive rent models.
- Continue management of approximately 52 777 properties and allocation of approximately 4300 properties to new tenants. The Office for Aboriginal Housing housed 229 in Indigenous specific dwellings in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yanunytjatjara Lands program.
- Construction of over 550 new social housing properties. Most achieved 5 star energy ratings and met the Department's Adaptability Standards.
- Acquisition of 27 dwellings for Indigenous housing which included transfers from mainstream public housing programs and purchases on the open market. In addition the Fixing Houses for Better Health Program surveyed and undertook significant repairs to houses in eight Indigenous communities.
- Assistance to approximately 17 000 low income South Australians access private rental accommodation through the provision of bond assistance and advance rental payments.
- Development of a new Vision Plan for Community Housing.
- Opening of the Lakeview Transitional Accommodation Centre in Port Augusta.
- Launch of 'Common Ground Adelaide' modelled on the successful New York program to provide an integrated range of support services available on-site for both homeless and low income tenants.
- Investment of an additional \$15 million to accelerate urban renewal programs in areas with high concentrations of older social housing stock. Existing projects were progressed as well as the announcement of the new Playford North project.

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Tasmanian Government comments

“ As a part of the Department of Health and Human Services, Housing Tasmania works collaboratively with internal and external partners to provide a range of housing assistance options for people on low incomes. A number of challenges are faced by Housing Tasmania, in that the client group is changing and now presents with multiple needs in addition to a requirement for affordable housing; and in the current climate of limited resources, available funds are declining in real terms and new supply responses are necessary to meet demand.

During the year, Housing Tasmania continued to focus on developing a range of innovative housing models to meet the increasingly diverse needs of its client base. Achievements included the acquisition of a supported residential facility to house up to 30 people who prefer living in a communal environment; a significant program of public housing property acquisition and modification, particularly addressing the needs of people with a disability; an enhanced private rent assistance program that provides increased support for tenancies at risk; and home ownership assistance.

In 2005-06 the first phase of a Service Delivery Review was progressed. Its aim is to improve the capacity of the organisation to respond to emerging service delivery issues through increased role clarity, skill development, clearly identified service standards, better communication and enhanced organisational support structures.

Housing Tasmania also supported the implementation of community capacity building and urban renewal initiatives. This included a community grants program, and education and training initiatives involving the upgrade of public housing properties. These initiatives build on community development activities undertaken in previous years.

Opportunities to provide innovative housing options and increase investment in social housing were also progressed. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with six 'not for profit' organisations to contribute to the establishment of an Affordable Housing Organisation (AHO). Ongoing funding of \$6 million per annum was committed to support the AHO and to provide a secure lease for investors who lease properties to the Organisation. Up to 700 new dwellings will be generated via this program and will be leased to low income earners.

In 2005-06, the Bilateral Indigenous Housing and Infrastructure Agreement (IHIA) 2005–2008 was also endorsed. Upon the successful completion of the staged implementation process, it is planned that Housing Tasmania will undertake responsibility for program management including strategic planning and management of pooled funds for SOMIH and Indigenous Community Housing Organisations.

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Australian Capital Territory Government comments

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The ACT Government strives to meet public and community housing objectives under the 2003 Commonwealth State Housing Agreement through organisational development initiatives and innovative partnership arrangements.

Spotless P & F Pty Ltd was contracted to manage the delivery of repairs and maintenance services for public housing in the ACT from 1 July 2005. The new contract contains a number of enhancements including a performance management system with measures for client satisfaction with maintenance delivery as well as cost and quality. 60 700 works orders were raised in the first year of the contract, expending \$27 million in repairs, maintenance and improvement works.

Housing and Community Services continued to work on sustainable tenancies and communities through a comprehensive consultation process undertaken to inform future developments in housing in the ACT through the Ministerial Housing Summit and the Consumer Housing Forum, both held in February 2006. The Summit and Consumer Forum were preceded by five Ministerial Advisory Forums on the topics of tenant participation, community housing, appeals and complaints; disability housing and public/private partnerships. The reconstitution of the Joint Champions Group, comprising tenant representatives and Housing and Community Services staff, and Regional Tenant Forums held in June 2006 has further enhanced tenant participation by providing opportunities for tenants to have direct contact with staff from tenancy regions and to identify local issues and concerns.

Annual Client Service Visits for existing tenants (including a visit within the first three months of a new tenancy) continue to be an important tool in helping to ensure housing assistance is appropriate and tailored to peoples needs. The meeting of targets for these visits is directly reflected in the significant increase in ACT tenants' overall satisfaction with service reported in the National Social Housing Survey 2005 with the ACT achieving its highest satisfaction rating since the survey commenced. A local client satisfaction survey conducted during 2006 used the same parameters as the National Social Housing Survey with the outcome being that overall tenant satisfaction increased to 69 per cent. This result reflects a continuing improvement in how tenants view Housing and Community Services' service delivery.

Amendments to the Public Rental Housing Assistance Program were introduced on 7 June 2006 to ensure that the allocation of housing assistance is targeted towards clients most in need. The changes will ensure Housing ACT has the flexibility to more appropriately respond to the needs of applicants with high and complex needs. In line with these amendments, all applicants on the wait turn list will be re-assessed and their priority status updated in accordance with the new housing needs categories. The intention is to house people in the new Priority category within three months. The changes position Housing and Community Services' as the post crisis-housing provider and as part of the service continuum where SAAP provides the crisis response.

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Northern Territory Government comments

“ The NT has continued to implement the overarching housing strategy *Home Territory 2010*. This has seen a consolidation of the financial viability of the State housing authority, Territory Housing, and an increasing focus on providing better services to those Territorians with special needs and increasing the availability of affordable housing options.

A total of 513 households were assisted into home ownership during 2005-06. This included:

- 78 sales to public housing households;
- 406 low to middle income households assisted through the HomeNorth Xtra scheme; and
- 29 public housing households assisted through the HomeNorth Xtra scheme.

There has been an increase in the proportion of Indigenous public housing tenants from 25 per cent in June 2003 to 32 per cent in June 2006.

In the Territory overall, 32 per cent of public housing households are classified as Indigenous, although this varies greatly by region — for instance, in Tennant Creek 66 per cent of public housing households are classified as Indigenous.

Territory Housing is committed to meeting the current and emerging needs of Indigenous clients, both through programs such as Indigenous Housing Assistance Scheme and living skills initiatives. Urban Living Skills training is provided for tenants without previous experience living in urban areas.

As part of the 20 Year Plan to improve health, education and safety outcomes for Indigenous Territorians, the Northern Territory Government has announced a significant package of measures that will improve economic and social outcomes for Indigenous Territorians and provide a significant boost to the regional economy.

The centrepiece of this package is an extra \$100 million investment in remote housing over the next five years. The package also includes a commitment that Territory Housing will work in partnership with existing Indigenous housing organisations to manage delivery and maintenance in the bush.

The 20 Year Plan will be realised through a transformation of Indigenous housing from welfare housing to a strong mix of social community and public housing, private rental housing and private ownership. The Plan will also target private sector investment in housing and it will involve partnerships between government, Aboriginal organisations and private investors.

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16.6 Definitions of key terms and indicators

Public, community and SOMIH

Administration costs	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• employee expenses (for example, superannuation, compensation, accrued leave and training)• supplies and services expenses (including stationery, postage, telephone, office equipment, information systems and vehicle expenses)• rent• grants and subsidies (excluding rental subsidies)• expenditure incurred by other government agencies on behalf of the public housing agency• contracted public housing management services.
Affordability	<p>'Affordability' is an outcome indicator that aims to measure housing affordability for CSHA housing tenants. Two measures are reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a subsidy per tenant derived by dividing the total rebated amount by the total number of households• the proportion of households spending less than 30 per cent of their income in rent.
Assessable income	<p>The income used to assess eligibility for housing assistance and to calculate the rental housing rebate that allows a household to pay a rent lower than the market rent. Definition may vary across jurisdictions.</p>
Customer satisfaction	<p>A survey measure of the proportion of customers expressing different degrees of satisfaction with the overall service provided.</p>
Depreciation costs (as per the Australian Accounting Standards 13–17)	<p>Depreciation calculated on a straight-line basis at a rate that realistically represents the useful life of the asset.</p>
Direct costs	<p>Total administration costs and the costs of maintaining the operation of dwellings.</p>
Disability (as per the ABS Survey of Disability Ageing and Carers)	<p>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.</p>
Dwelling	<p>A structure or a discrete space within a structure intended for people to live in or where a person or group of people live. Thus a structure that people actually live in is a dwelling regardless of its intended purpose, but a vacant structure is only a dwelling if intended for human residence. A dwelling may include one or more rooms used as an office or workshop provided the dwelling is in residential use.</p>
Greatest need	<p>Low income households that at the time of allocation were subject to one or more of the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• homelessness• their life or safety being at risk in their accommodation• their health condition being aggravated by their housing• their housing being inappropriate to their needs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their rental housing costs being very high.
Household	For the purpose of the public, community and SOMIH collections, the number of tenancy agreements is the proxy for counting the number of households. A tenancy agreement is defined as a formal written agreement between a household (a person or group of people) and a housing provider, specifying details of a tenancy for a particular dwelling.
Indigenous household	A household with one or more members (including children) who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
Location/amenity	A survey-based measure of the proportion of tenants rating location and amenity aspects as important and meeting their needs.
Low income household	<p>A public housing or SOMIH 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"> • low income A households are those in which all household members have incomes at or below the maximum pension rate • low income B households are those that have incomes that would enable them to receive government income support benefits below the maximum pension. <p>A community housing household which has a gross weekly income equivalent to or below the income cut-off specified for their household composition. The community housing low income measure is based on the low income B cut-offs as outlined above.</p>
Maintenance costs	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.
Market rent	Aggregate market rent that would be collected if the public rental housing properties were available in the private market.
Match of dwelling to household size	The proportion of households where dwelling size is not appropriate due to overcrowding. The indicator uses a proxy occupancy standard based on the size of the dwelling and household structure. Overcrowding is deemed to have occurred where two or more additional bedrooms are required to satisfy the proxy occupancy standard.
Moderate Overcrowding	Where one additional bedroom is required to satisfy the proxy occupancy standard.
New household	Households that commence receiving assistance for the financial year.
Occupancy rate	The proportion of dwellings occupied.
Occupied dwelling	Dwellings occupied by tenants who have a tenancy agreement with the relevant housing authority.
Overcrowding	Where two or more additional bedrooms are required to meet the proxy occupancy standard.
Priority access to those in greatest need	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.
Principal tenant	The person whose name appears on the tenancy agreement. Where this is not clear, it should be the person who is responsible for rental

	payments.														
Proxy occupancy standard	<p>A measure of the appropriateness of housing related to the household size and tenancy composition. The measure specifies the bedroom requirements of a household.</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>Household structure</i></th> <th style="text-align: right;"><i>Bedrooms required</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Single adult only</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Single adult (group)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1 (per adult)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Couple with no children</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sole parent or couple with one child</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sole parent or couple with two or three children</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sole parent or couple with four children</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>For sole parent or couple households with four or more children the dwelling size in terms of bedrooms should be the same value as the number of children in the household.</p>	<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 one child	2	Sole parent or couple with two or three children	3	Sole parent or couple with four children	4
<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 one child	2														
Sole parent or couple with two or three children	3														
Sole parent or couple with four children	4														
Public rental dwelling	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).														
Relocated household	A household, either rebated or market renting, that relocates (transfers) from one public or community rental dwelling to another.														
Rent charged	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.														
Rent collection rate	The total rent actually collected as a proportion of the total rent charged.														
Special needs household	A household with a member(s) who has a disability or is aged 24 years or under, or 75 years or over (50 years or over for SOMIH), or (except for SOMIH) is Indigenous.														
Tenancy	For the purpose of the public, community and SOMIH collections, counting the number of tenancy agreements is the proxy for counting the number of households. A tenancy (rental) unit is defined as the unit of accommodation on which a tenancy agreement can be made. It is a way of counting the maximum number of distinct rentable units that a dwelling structure can contain.														
Tenant or tenant household	The usual members of a household occupying a public, community or SOMIH 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.														
Tenantable dwelling	A dwelling where maintenance has been completed, whether occupied or unoccupied at 30 June. All occupied dwellings are tenantable.														
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 average time taken in days for normally vacant dwellings to be occupied.														

Underutilisation	Where there are two or more bedrooms additional to the number required in the dwelling to satisfy the proxy occupancy standard.
Untenatable dwelling	A dwelling not currently occupied by a tenant, where maintenance has been either deferred or not completed at 30 June.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance

Affordability The proportions of recipients spending more than 30 per cent and 50 per cent of their income on rent with and without CRA.

Dependent child A person under 18 years who is 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, if the child is not a dependent child of another person, and if the child is wholly or substantially in the adult's care.

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. 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.

Operationally, a child is regarded as a dependant of another person (the parent) if the parent receives the Family Tax Benefit for the care of the child. A dependent child is regarded as a member of the parental income unit.

The maximum rate of CRA depends on the number of children for whom the recipient or partner receives more than the base rate of the Family Tax Benefit Part A. Although the 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.

Duration of payments Broadly presents dependence on CRA by showing the percentage of people who are in receipt of CRA payments at a given point in time and who are still dependent on the CRA payments a year later.

Eligible income support customers Customers in receipt of an income support payment or more than the base rate of the Family Tax Benefit Part A. CRA is automatically paid once eligibility is established. The only eligible customers who are not paid are those affected by Centrelink errors in recording information or by program errors.

Geographic spread of CRA customers Two measures are presented:

- 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 the Family Tax Benefit
- the average CRA entitlement across locations.

Income unit 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 consist of:

- a single person with no dependent child
- a sole parent with a dependent child
- a couple (registered or defacto) with no dependent child

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a couple (registered or defacto) and any dependent children. <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>
Income unit type	The number and proportion of eligible income support recipients receiving CRA, by income unit type.
Low income	Income of CRA recipients, by quintiles of family income received per week.
Maximum rate	Proportion of CRA recipients receiving the maximum rate of CRA.
Number and outcome of appeals	The outcomes of all CRA appeals finalised: (1) the number of customers who appealed to an authorised review officer, and (2) the proportions of appeals where the decision was affirmed, set aside or varied, or the appeal was 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.
Payment type	The number and proportion of income support recipients receiving CRA, by the primary payment type received.
Primary payment type	Each income unit receiving CRA is assigned a primary payment type, based on the payment(s) received by each member. This is used to monitor the extent to which assistance is provided to families and individuals that primarily depend on different forms of assistance. The primary payment is determined using a hierarchy of payment types, precedence being given to pensions, then other social security payments that attract CRA, and then the Family Tax Benefit. Within this overall structure a lower precedence is given to payments that are made only to the partners of a social security payment. If both members of a couple receive a payment of the same rating, the male is regarded as the primary member of the couple. No extra weight is given to the payment type with which CRA is paid.
Proportion of income spent on rent with and without CRA	<p>A point-in-time indicator, measuring the proportion of income units spending more 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • with CRA: rent (minus CRA) divided by total income from all sources, excluding CRA • without CRA: rent divided by total income from all sources, excluding CRA.

Ratio of running costs to total outlay for CRA	Total running costs for the CRA program as a proportion of total outlay.
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.
Satisfaction with location of housing	Satisfaction with the location of housing rather than with the CRA payment, as measured by the FaCSIA General Customer Survey. The indicator measures the proportion of respondents satisfied with the quality of their housing, broken down into categories of 'poor', 'just okay', 'good' and 'great'.
Satisfaction with quality of housing	Satisfaction with the quality of housing rather than with the CRA payment, as measured by the FaCSIA General Customer Survey. The indicator measures the proportion of respondents satisfied with the quality of their housing, broken down into categories of 'poor', 'just okay', 'good' and 'great'.
Special needs	The proportions of special needs income units receiving CRA, such as regional and remote Australians and Indigenous recipients, by benefit type.
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"> • one-time payments • arrears payments • advances • Employment or Education Entry Payments • the Mobility Allowance • the Maternity Allowance • the Child Care Assistance Rebate. <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 the Family Tax Benefit but no other income support payment.</p>

16.7 Supporting tables

Supporting tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 16A.3 is table 3 in the electronic data tables). Section 16.7 contains a complete list of the supporting tables. Supporting tables can be found on the Review web page (www.pc.gov.au/gsp). The files containing the supporting tables are provided in Microsoft Excel format as \Publications\Reports\2007\Attach_stat_app.xls and in Adobe PDF format as \Publications\Reports\2007\Attach_stat_app.pdf. Users without access to the CD-ROM or Internet can contact the Secretariat to obtain the supporting tables (see contact details on the inside front cover of the Report).

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