
15 Protection and support services

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Attachment tables

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by a '15A' suffix (for example, table 15A.3). A full list of attachment tables is provided at the end of this chapter, and the attachment tables themselves are available on the CD-ROM enclosed with the Report or from the Review website at www.pc.gov.au/gsp.

Protection and support services aim to assist individuals and families who are in crisis or experiencing difficulties that hinder personal or family functioning. These services assist by alleviating the difficulties and reducing the potential for their recurrence.

This chapter reports on:

- *child protection services*: the functions of government that receive and assess allegations of child abuse and neglect, and/or harm to children and young people, provide and refer clients to family support and other relevant services, and intervene to protect children
- *out-of-home care services*: care for children placed away from their parents for protective or other family welfare reasons
- *juvenile justice services*: services that aim to promote community safety and reduce youth offending by assisting young people to address their offending behaviour
- *supported accommodation and assistance services*: services to assist young people, adults and families who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

Several improvements to the chapter have been made this year including:

- two new 'response time' indicators of the effectiveness of child protection services are now reported
- seven jurisdictions are now reporting indicative unit costs (program dollars per placement day) for out-of-home care services
- a national performance indicator framework for juvenile justice services is reported for the first time and the juvenile justice section has been redeveloped.

A number of government agencies are responsible for the provision of protection and support services. A matrix listing the State or Territory department responsible for funding and/or administering child protection and out-of-home care services, juvenile justice and supported accommodation and assistance services is provided (table 15.1).

Table 15.1 Department responsible for funding and/or administering protection and support services, 2007-08

<i>State</i>	<i>Child protection and out-of-home care services</i>	<i>Juvenile justice services</i>	<i>Supported Accommodation and Assistance Services</i>
Aust			Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)
NSW	Department of Community Services (DOCS)	Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)	Department of Community Services (DOCS)
Vic	Department of Human Services (DHS)	Department of Human Services (DHS)	Department of Human Services (DHS)
Qld	Department of Child Safety (DCS)	Department of Communities (DOC)	Department of Communities (DOC)
WA	Department for Child Protection (DCP)	Department of Corrective Services (DCS)	Department for Child Protection (DCP)
SA	Department for Families and Communities (DFC)	Department for Families and Communities (DFC)	Department for Families and Communities (DFC)
Tas	Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)	Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)	Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
ACT	Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DDHCS)	Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DDHCS)	Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DDHCS)
NT	Department of Health and Community Services (DHCS)	Department of Justice (DOJ)	Department of Health and Community Services (DHCS)

15.1 Profile of child protection and out-of-home care services

Service overview

Child protection services

Child protection services are provided to protect children and/or young people aged 0–17 years who are at risk of harm within their families, or whose families do not have the capacity to protect them. These services include:

- receiving and responding to reports of concern about children or young people, including investigation and assessment where appropriate
- providing support services (directly or through referral), where harm or a risk of significant harm is identified, to strengthen the capacity of families to care safely for children
- initiating intervention where necessary, including applying for a care and protection order through a court and, in some situations, placing children or young people in out-of-home care to secure their safety
- ensuring the ongoing safety of children and young people by working with families to resolve protective concerns
- working with families to reunite children (who were removed for safety reasons) with their parents as soon as possible (in some jurisdictions, restoration may occur in voluntary placements as well)
- securing permanent out-of-home/alternative care when it is determined that a child is unable to be returned to the care of his or her parents, and working with young people to identify alternative supported living arrangements where family reunification is not possible.

Research suggests that children and families who come into contact with the protection and support services system often share common social and demographic characteristics. Families with low incomes or that are reliant on pensions and benefits, those that experience alcohol and substance abuse, or a psychiatric disability, and those that have a family history of domestic violence are over-represented in the families that came into contact with the protection and support services system (Department of Human Services 2002).

Child protection concerns and Indigenous communities

Studies have highlighted the high incidence of child abuse and neglect within some Indigenous communities, compared with non-Indigenous communities. Indigenous families across Australia have been found to experience high levels of violence, compared with non-Indigenous families (AIHW 2006a). ‘Little Children are Sacred’, the final report of the Northern Territory Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse (2007), identified child sexual abuse as a significant issue for many of the remote NT Aboriginal communities consulted as part of the Inquiry. The final report of the WA Inquiry into Response by Government Agencies to Complaints of Family Violence and Child Abuse in Aboriginal Communities (Gordon Report 2002), also found high levels of violence and child abuse within Aboriginal communities in WA.

Out-of-home care services

Out-of-home care services provide care for children and young people aged 0–17 years who are placed away from their parents or family home for reasons of safety or family crisis. These reasons include abuse, neglect or harm, illness of a parent and the inability of parents to provide adequate care. The placements may be voluntary or made in conjunction with care and protection orders.

Out-of-home care services are either home-based care (for example, foster care, care with the child’s extended family or other home-based arrangements), facility-based care (for example, community residential care) or independent living (which is often intensively supported) as a transition to full independence or supported placements. Across jurisdictions, there has been a shift away from the use of facility-based (or residential) care towards foster care and other forms of home-based care, including relative/kinship care.

Intensive family support services are increasingly perceived as an alternative to the removal of the child from his or her home for child protection reasons (box 15.1).

Box 15.1 Intensive family support services

Intensive family support services are specialist services, established in each jurisdiction, that aim to:

- prevent the imminent separation of children from their primary caregivers as a result of child protection concerns
- reunify families where separation has already occurred.

Intensive family support services differ from other types of child protection and family support services referred to in this chapter, in that they:

- are funded or established explicitly to prevent the separation of, or to reunify, families
- provide a range of services as part of an integrated strategy focusing on improving family functioning and skills, rather than providing a single type of service
- are intensive in nature, averaging at least four hours of service provision per week for a specified short term period (usually less than six months)
- generally receive referrals from a child protection service.

Intensive family support services may use some or all of the following strategies: assessment and case planning; parent education and skill development; individual and family counselling; anger management; respite and emergency care; practical and financial support; mediation, brokerage and referral services; and training in problem solving.

Expenditure on intensive family support services

Recurrent expenditure on intensive family support services across all jurisdictions was \$179.2 million in 2007-08. This expenditure has increased in real terms each year from \$95.9 million in 2003-04 (table 15A.26). This represents an average annual increase in expenditure of 16.9 per cent over this four year period. Tables 15A.26–29 provide additional information about families and children who were involved with intensive family support services, including the cost of providing these services per child commencing intensive family support services.

Child protection treatment and support services

A complementary suite of services not currently included in this Report, but intended for inclusion in future Reports, are known as child protection treatment and support services. These are targeted to at-risk families where there are concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children. They may be less intensive in nature and include services that strengthen family relationships in response to concerns about the welfare of a child and may focus on either early intervention or reunification support.

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Box 15.1 (Continued)

Child protection treatment and support services provide educational services, clinical services including counselling, group work and other therapeutic interventions, and domestic violence services, where the child is the direct recipient of the service and s/he is, has, or is likely to become, a client of child protection.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), with the support of the States and Territories, is studying the feasibility of a national data collection for child protection treatment and support services.

Source: AIHW (unpublished).

Roles and responsibilities

State and Territory governments fund child protection, out-of-home care, family support (including intensive family support) and other relevant services (see box 15.2 for responsible State/Territory departments during 2007-08). These services may be delivered by the government or the non-government sector. State and Territory departments responsible for child protection are responsible for investigating and assessing reports to the department, providing, or referring families to, support services, and intervening where necessary (including making court applications when an order is required to protect a child, and placing children in out-of-home care).

Box 15.2 Child protection and out-of-home care services

<i>NSW</i>	Department of Community Services (DOCS)
<i>VIC</i>	Department of Human Services (DHS)
<i>QLD</i>	Department of Child Safety (DCS)
<i>WA</i>	Department for Child Protection (DCP)
<i>SA</i>	Department for Families and Communities (DFC)
<i>TAS</i>	Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
<i>ACT</i>	Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DDHCS)
<i>NT</i>	Department of Health and Community Services (DHCS)

Other areas of government also have roles in child protection and provide services for children who have come into contact with relevant departments for protective reasons. These include:

- police services, which investigate serious allegations of child abuse and neglect, particularly criminal matters, and may also work on child protection assessments with State and Territory departments responsible for child protection
- courts, which decide whether a child will be placed on an order
- education and child care services, which provide services for these children and also conduct mandatory reporting and protective behaviours education in some jurisdictions
- health services, which support the assessment of child protection matters and deliver therapeutic, counselling and other services.

A range of appointments, schemes and charters have been introduced by jurisdictions in recent years, to enable additional protection for clients of the child protection system. Examples of these are listed in box 15.3.

Box 15.3 Initiatives to enable additional protection for clients

- | | |
|------------|--|
| <i>NSW</i> | The Commission for Children and Young People initiates and influences broad and positive change for children and young people. The Office of the Children's Guardian promotes the best interests and rights of all children in out-of-home care, through accreditation and monitoring of out-of-home care agencies to ensure services are of the highest standard. |
| <i>VIC</i> | The Child Safety Commissioner promotes child safe practices and environments across the community. Part of the Commissioner's role is to monitor the quality of out-of-home care services. A charter of rights for children in care was launched on 28 November 2007. |
| <i>QLD</i> | The Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian has a range of legislated functions designed to oversee children's wellbeing in the child protection system. One of these enables Community Visitors to regularly visit children in out-of-home care to independently assess their safety and wellbeing. The DCS has a complaints management system so that clients, family members, advocates and members of the Queensland public can raise enquiries, concerns, or complaints about their contact and interactions with the Department. |

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Box 15.3 (Continued)

WA The Advocate for Children in Care provides advocacy and complaints management services for children and young people in care. The Department's general Consumer Advocacy Service has been redesignated as a Complaints Management Unit from January 2008 and is available to all customers.

Formal monitoring of protection and care service standards by a Standards Monitoring Unit began on 1 July 2007. Seventeen Districts are monitored on a two-year cycle and the monitoring regime will be extended across all care providers in due course.

SA The Office of the Guardian monitors and assesses care, advocates for, and advises on, the circumstances and needs of children and systemic issues affecting the quality of out-of-home care.

TAS The Commissioner for Children's functions include promoting the rights and wellbeing of children, examining the policies, practices and services provided for children and any laws affecting the health, welfare, care, protection and development of children.

ACT The ACT Public Advocate's functions include monitoring the provision of services, and protecting and advocating for the rights of children and young people. Systemic issues are referred by the Public Advocate to the Commissioner for Children and Young People, appointed in 2007. The Commissioner consults and listens to the views of children and young people and promotes their participation in decision making. In addition, the Commissioner investigates and seeks to resolve complaints involving children and young people. The Official Visitor's role is to visit and inspect places of care, of detention or therapeutic protection, and receive and inquire about complaints made concerning the care provided to children and young people at these locations.

NT A review of the *NT Community Welfare Act* has resulted in the development of a new *Care and Protection of Children Act* — which was introduced in late 2007. The Act includes provisions for a Children's Commissioner and a child death review committee.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished).

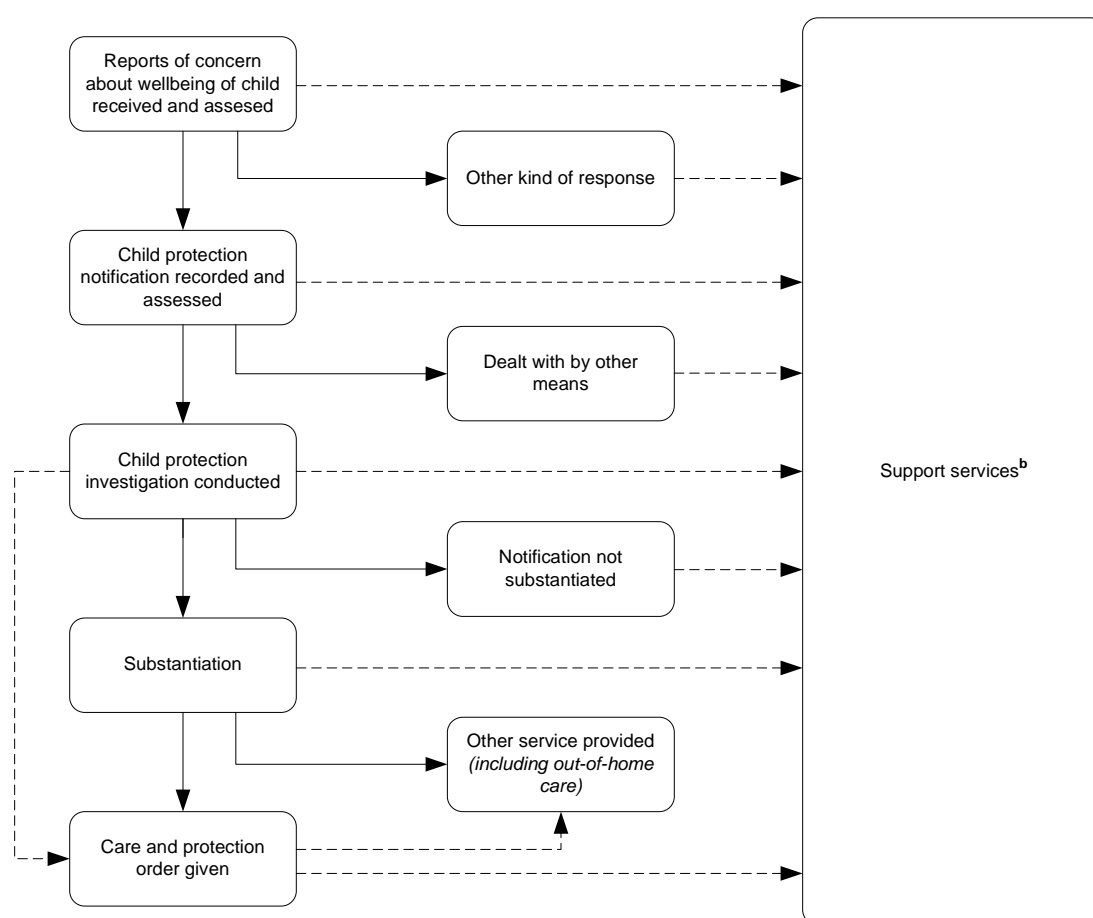
Size and scope

The child protection system

Child protection legislation, policies and practices vary across jurisdictions, but the broad processes in child protection systems are similar (figure 15.1).

State and Territory departments with responsibility for child protection are advised of concerns about the wellbeing of children through reports to these departments. Reports may be made by people mandated to report or by other members of the community. Individuals and organisations mandated to report vary across the states and territories, and may include medical practitioners, police services, school teachers and principals. These reports are assessed and classified as child protection notifications, child concern reports, or matters requiring some other kind of response. The most common sources of notification for finalised investigations in 2007-08 were police, school personnel, hospitals and other sources (AIHW 2009).

Figure 15.1 The child protection system^a



^a Dashed lines indicate that clients may or may not receive these services, depending on need. ^b Support services include family support or family preservation services provided by departments responsible for child protection and referrals to other agencies.

Notification

Jurisdictions count notifications at different points in the response to a report, ranging from the point of initial contact with the source of the report to the end of a

screening and decision making process. This means the number of notifications is not strictly comparable across jurisdictions.¹

All jurisdictions except Tasmania and the ACT screen incoming reports before deciding whether they will be counted as a notification, thus reducing the proportion of reports that become notifications.

In all jurisdictions, notifications are investigated, based on the policies and practices in that jurisdiction. Once it has been decided that an investigation is required, the investigation process is similar across jurisdictions. The department responsible for child protection may obtain further information about the child and his or her family by checking information systems for any previous history, undertaking discussion/case planning with agencies and individuals, interviewing/sighting the child and/or interviewing the caregivers/parents. At a minimum, the child is sighted whenever practicable, and the child's circumstances and needs are assessed. This investigation process determines whether the notification is substantiated or not substantiated (figure 15.1).

Nationally, 192 804 children aged 0–16 years were the subject of child protection notifications in 2007-08. The rate of notifications per 1000 children in the population aged 0–16 years was 41.3 in 2007-08 (table 15A.8). The total number of notifications for each jurisdiction for 2007-08 (including cases where a child is the subject of more than one child protection notification) by Indigenous status of the child is reported in table 15A.5.

Data on the number of notifications are collected early in the child protection process and often before the agency has full knowledge of the child's family circumstances. This lack of information and the inherent difficulties in identifying Indigenous status mean that data on the number of notifications by Indigenous status need to be interpreted with care.

Substantiation

The criteria for substantiation vary across jurisdictions. In the past, child protection legislation and policy focused on the identification and investigation of narrowly defined incidents that were broadly grouped as types of abuse or neglect. Across all jurisdictions, the focus is now shifting away from the actions of parents and

¹ Child protection services, care and protection orders and out-of-home care relate to children aged 0–17 years. However, rates of children subject to notifications, investigations and substantiations, are calculated for children aged 0–16 years, given differences in jurisdictions' legislation, policies and practices regarding children aged 17 years. Rates of children on care and protection orders and in out-of-home care are calculated for children aged 0–17 years.

guardians, toward the desired outcomes for the child, the identification and investigation of actual and/or likely harm to the child, and the child's needs.

If an investigation results in substantiation, intervention by the relevant department may be needed to protect the child. This intervention can take a number of forms, including one or more of: referral to other services; supervision and support; an application to court; and a placement in out-of-home care.

Nationally, 31 915 children aged 0–16 years were the subject of a substantiation in 2007-08. The rate of children who were the subject of a substantiation per 1000 children in the population aged 0–16 years was 6.8 (table 15A.8). The number and rate of children aged 0–16 years who were the subject of a substantiation has increased since 2003-04. Nationally, 23 862 children were the subject of a substantiation in 2003-04. This represented a rate of 5.3 per 1000 children in the population aged 0–16 years (SCRGSP 2005, based on revised population data for children aged 0–16 years).

Nationally, 7313 Indigenous and 24 602 non-Indigenous children were the subject of a substantiation in 2007-08. The rate of children who were the subject of a substantiation per 1000 children in the target population aged 0–16 years was 35.3 for Indigenous children and 5.5 for non-Indigenous children (table 15A.8).

Care and protection orders

Although child protection substantiations are often resolved without the need for a court order (which is usually a last resort), recourse to the court may take place at any point in the child protection investigation process. The types of order available vary across jurisdictions and may include guardianship or custody orders, supervisory orders, and interim and temporary orders.

Nationally, 34 279 children aged 0–17 years were on care and protection orders at 30 June 2008. The rate of children on care and protection orders per 1000 children in the population aged 0–17 years was 6.9 (table 15A.8). The number and rate of children aged 0–17 years who were the subject of a care and protection order has increased since 2003-04. At 30 June 2004, 14 627 children were the subject of a care and protection order, which represented a rate of 4.6 per 1000 children in the population aged 0–17 years (SCRGSP 2005).

Nationally, 9011 Indigenous and 25 268 non-Indigenous children were on care and protection orders at 30 June 2008. The rate of children on care and protection orders per 1000 children in the target population aged 0–17 years was 41.0 for Indigenous children and 5.3 for non-Indigenous children (table 15A.8).

Further information on children on care and protection orders is included in the attachment tables to this Report. Table 15A.6 identifies the number of children admitted to, and discharged from, care and protection orders by Indigenous status, 2007-08. Table 15A.7 identifies the number of children on care and protection orders by type of order and Indigenous status at 30 June 2008.

Out-of-home care

Out-of-home care is one of a range of services provided to families and children where there is a need to provide safe care for a child. The services are intended to place a child in out-of-home care only if this will improve the outcome for the child and only when it is not possible to maintain the child within their family. If it is necessary to remove the child from his or her home, then placement with the wider family or community is sought where possible, particularly in the case of Indigenous children (AIHW 2006b). Continued emphasis is placed on improving case planning and case management processes to facilitate the safe return home of children in out-of-home care and to maximise case workers' contact time with children and families.

Nationally, 31 166 children were in out-of-home care at 30 June 2008. The rate of children in out-of-home care per 1000 children in the population aged 0–17 years was 6.3 (table 15A.16). The number and rate of children aged 0–17 years in out-of-home care has increased since 2003-04. At 30 June 2004, 21 795 children were in out-of-home care. This represented a rate of 4.5 per 1000 children in the population aged 0–17 years (SCRGSP 2005).

Nationally, 9070 Indigenous children and 22 096 non-Indigenous children were in out-of-home care at 30 June 2008. The rate of children in out-of-home care per 1000 children in the target population aged 0–17 years was 41.3 for Indigenous children and 4.6 for non-Indigenous children (table 15A.16).

Further information on children in out-of-home care is included in the attachment tables to this Report. Table 15A.17 identifies the number of children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status and placement type at 30 June 2008. Table 15A.18 identifies the number of children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status and whether they were on a care and protection order at 30 June 2008. Table 15A.19 identifies the number of children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status and length of time in continuous out-of-home care as at 30 June 2008. Table 15A.20 identifies the number of children who exited care during 2007-08, by Indigenous status and length of time spent in care.

Funding

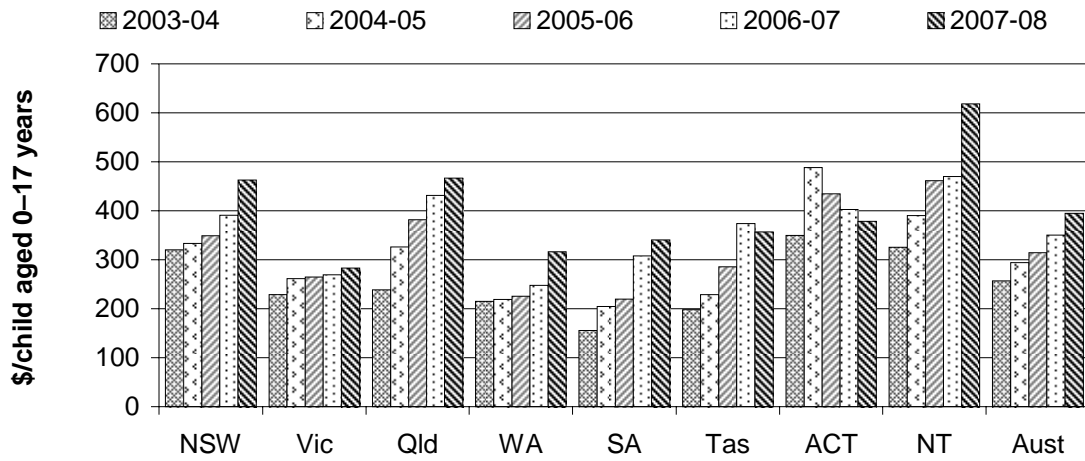
Recurrent expenditure on child protection and out-of-home care services was approximately \$2.0 billion across Australia in 2007-08 — a real increase of \$235.3 million (13.6 per cent) from 2006-07. Of this expenditure, out-of-home care services accounted for the majority (64.0 per cent, or \$1.3 billion). Nationally, annual real expenditure on child protection and out-of-home care services has increased by \$730.3 million from \$1.2 billion since 2003-04, an average annual increase over the four year period of 12.3 per cent (table 15A.1).

In 2007-08, real recurrent expenditure per child aged 0–17 years in child protection and out-of-home care services was \$395 nationally (figure 15.2). Real recurrent expenditure per child aged 0–17 years increased in all jurisdictions between 2003-04 and 2007-08 and has increased nationally each year since 2003-04. In 2003-04 the real recurrent expenditure per child aged 0–17 years was \$257 (table 15A.1). This represents an average annual increase over the four year period of 11.3 per cent.

It is an objective of the Review to report comparable estimates of costs. Ideally, the full range of costs to government would be determined on a comparable basis across jurisdictions. Where full costs cannot be counted, costs should be estimated on a consistent basis across jurisdictions. However, in the area of child protection, there are differences across jurisdictions in the calculation of expenditure.

Table 15A.4 identifies the level of consistency across jurisdictions for a number of expenditure items. The scope of child protection systems also varies across jurisdictions, and expenditure on some services may be included for some jurisdictions, but not for others.

Figure 15.2 Real recurrent expenditure on child protection and out-of-home care services per child (2007-08 dollars)^a



^a Refer to table 15A.1 for detailed jurisdiction-specific footnotes on expenditure data and table 15.A4 for information on the comparability of expenditure data.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.1.

15.2 Framework of performance indicators for child protection and out-of-home care services

The framework of performance indicators for child protection and out-of-home care services is based on shared government objectives (box 15.4).

Box 15.4 Objectives for child protection and out-of-home care services

The aims of child protection services are to:

- protect children and young people at risk of harm within their family or in circumstances in which the family of the child or young person does not have the capacity to protect them
- assist families to protect children and young people.

The aim of out-of-home care services is to provide quality care for children and young people aged 0–17 years who cannot live with their parents for reasons of safety or family crisis.

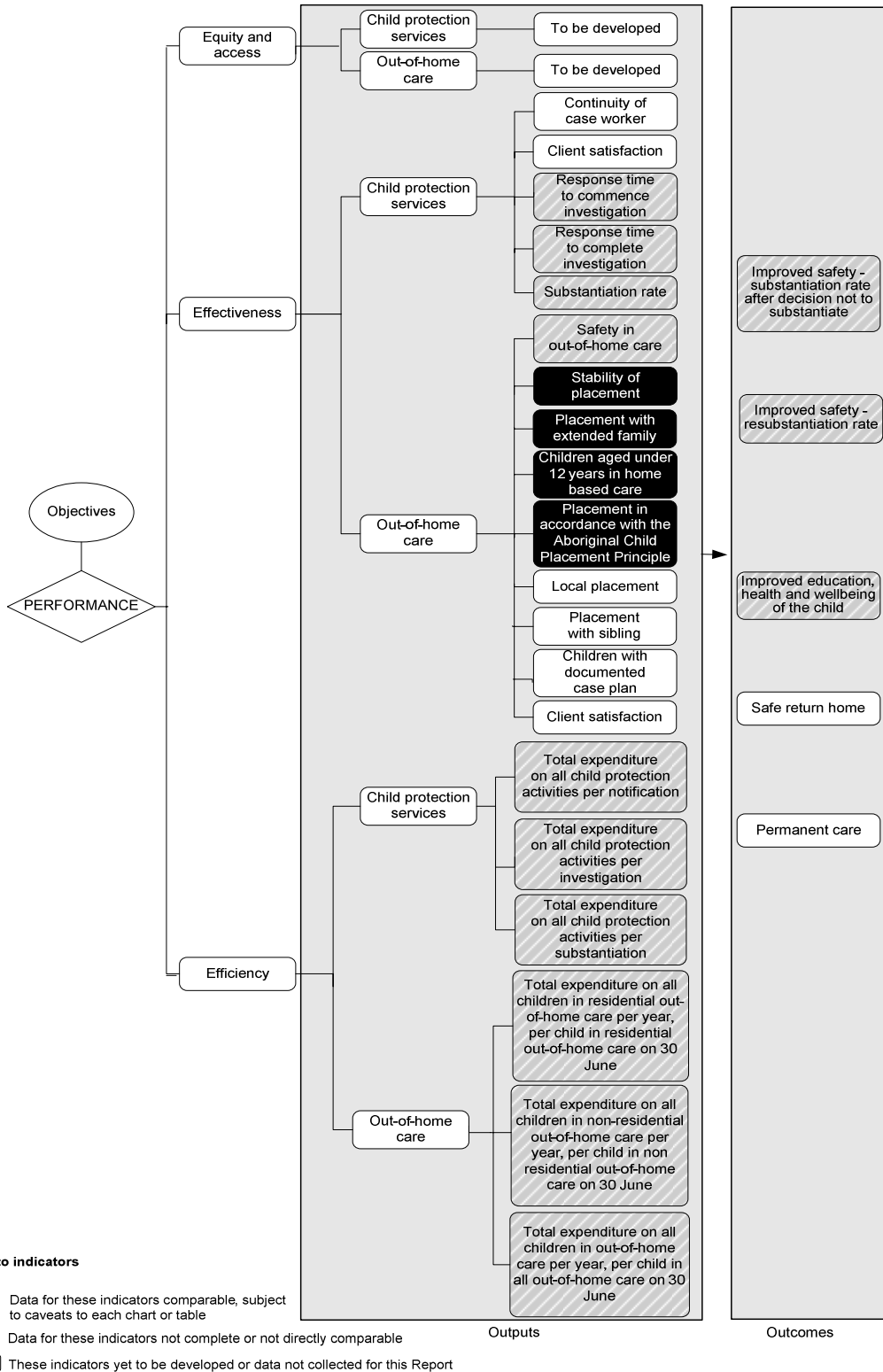
Child protection and out-of-home care services should be provided in an efficient and effective manner.

The performance indicator framework shows which data are comparable in the 2009 Report (figure 15.3). 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).

15.3 Key child protection and out-of-home care services performance indicator results

Different delivery contexts, locations and types of client may affect the equity/access, effectiveness and efficiency of child protection services. Appendix A contains detailed statistics that may assist in interpreting the performance indicators.

Figure 15.3 Performance indicators for child protection and out-of-home care services



Outputs

Outputs are the actual services delivered (while outcomes are the impact of these services on the status of an individual or group) (see chapter 1, section 1.5).

Equity and access

Equity and access indicators are indicators of governments' objective to ensure that all clients have fair and equitable access to services on the basis of relative need and available resources (box 15.5).

Box 15.5 Access to child protection and out-of-home care services by equity groups

'Access to child protection and out-of-home care services by equity groups' are yet to be defined.

These indicators have been identified for development in future reports.

Effectiveness

Child protection services — continuity of case worker

'Continuity of case worker' is an indicator of governments' objective to ensure child protection services are delivered in an effective manner (box 15.6).

Box 15.6 Continuity of case worker

'Continuity of case worker' is yet to be defined.

The turnover of workers is a frequent criticism of the quality of child protection services. Effective intervention requires a productive working relationship between the worker and the child and family.

This indicator has been identified for development and reporting in future.

Child protection services — client satisfaction

'Client satisfaction' is an indicator of governments' objective to provide high quality services that meet the needs of recipients (box 15.7).

Box 15.7 Client satisfaction

'Client satisfaction' is yet to be defined.

This indicator has been identified for development and reporting in future.

Box 15.8 provides examples of steps taken in seven jurisdictions to monitor, assess and promote client satisfaction in relation to child protection and out-of-home care.

Box 15.8 Developments in client satisfaction

NSW A large scale evaluation is being undertaken of the Brighter Futures early intervention program, which targets vulnerable families with children under 9 years of age. As part of the evaluation, a sample of 168 families participated in a survey assessing satisfaction with the services provided. In summary, 92 per cent stated that they were satisfied or completely satisfied with case management; nearly all (97 per cent) stated that they were satisfied or completely satisfied with home visits. More than half (59 per cent) stated that they were satisfied with the child care service (with 35 per cent stating that it was not applicable); and nearly half (48 per cent) stated that they were satisfied with parenting programs (with 46 per cent stating that it was not applicable).

VIC A survey of child protection clients and families was undertaken in 2001 on their experience of child protection. The survey findings identified areas for practice improvement and a range of strengths in child protection practice, including that in the majority of cases, child protection intervention improved the safety and life circumstances of young people. A further survey of clients is anticipated in 2009 based on the Victorian Outcomes Framework. Client feedback is also routinely sought by Community Services Organisations as part of meeting Victorian out-of-home care service registration standards.

Qld The views of children in care are regularly sought through surveys undertaken by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian. The surveys inform systems monitoring indicators and contribute to policy and practice development. In addition the Department continues to support the 'Be Heard' programs, delivered through the CREATE Foundation. These programs gather information from children and young people in care at a local level and provide feedback and training to the relevant child safety service centre. This includes recommendations to staff about how they can overcome barriers and address issues that have been raised by children and young people.

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Box 15.8 (Continued)

- WA** The Department for Child Protection undertook an on-line survey of foster carers in early 2008 and is responding to the feedback obtained from this important stakeholder group. The Department introduced new complaints policy and procedures in March 2008. Formal monitoring of service standards has continued and all districts will have been assessed by June 2009. A pilot standards monitoring regime for residential and non-government placement services will be completed by June 2009. Western Australia's first Commissioner for Children and Young People was appointed in December 2007. The Commissioner has legislative powers to consult, investigate, research, advise and report independently to the Parliament about issues that concern children and young people and those supporting them.
- TAS** Tasmania has engaged the CREATE Foundation to consult with between 160 and 200 children and young people as part of the Be Heard project. The consultations will explore the circumstances of children and young people in care and their views on key matters including the degree of satisfaction with contact with family members, reactions to changes in placement, satisfaction with current placement, and involvement in case and care planning. Tasmania has also established a system of investigating and responding to complaints relating to child protection services and out-of-home care as well as developing structured processes to address identified issues.
- ACT** CREATE released a report in July 2004 based on qualitative interviews of children and young people in out-of-home care in the ACT. This report recommended the development of a charter of rights for children and young people in care in the ACT. The Government will develop a charter in consultation with children and young people.
- NT** A participation survey of children and young people in care was funded in 2005 and an evaluation of case work attitudes was also undertaken. As a result, out-of-home care core training for staff has been restructured to incorporate the participation of young people in care planning.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished).

Child protection services — response time to commence investigation

'Response time to commence investigation' is an indicator of governments' objective to minimise the risk of harm to the child by responding to notifications of possible child protection incidents and commencing investigations in a timely manner (box 15.9).

Box 15.9 Response time to commence investigation

'Response time to commence investigation' is defined as the length of time (measured in days) between a child protection notification being received by a statutory department and the department commencing an investigation.

The length of time between notification and the commencement of an investigation by the department indicates the promptness of the department in effectively responding to child protection concerns.

It should be noted that an assessment of a notification takes place at the time that the notification has been received.

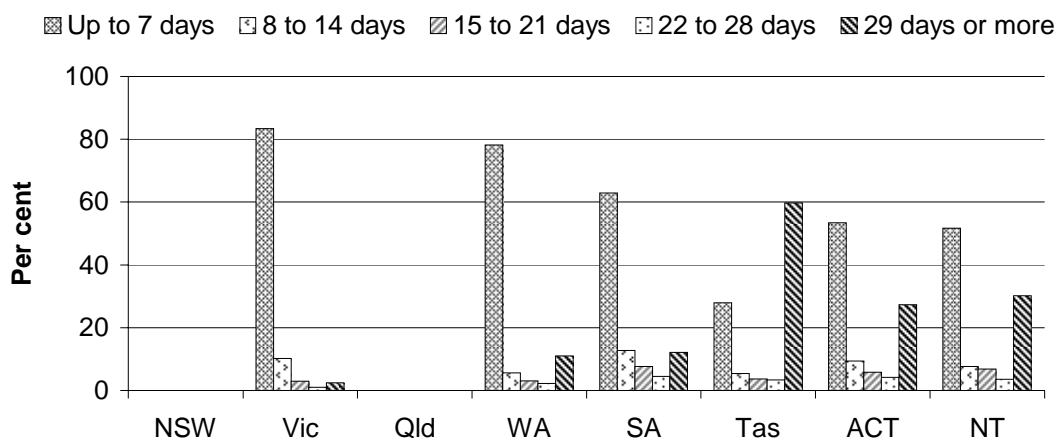
This indicator needs to be interpreted with care as jurisdictions count notifications at different stages in response to a report, and most states and territories have policy or legislation outlining the time recommended for investigations to be commenced, based on the seriousness of the child protection concern.

A shorter response time to commence an investigation is desirable.

Data reported for this indicator are not complete.

For most jurisdictions, the majority of investigations were commenced within seven days of notification in 2007-08 (figure 15.4).

Figure 15.4 Proportion of investigations commenced, by time taken to commence investigation (2007-08)^{a, b}



^a Caution should be used when interpreting results as jurisdictions count notifications at different points in response to a report, and have different policies and protocols governing the type of response to a notification.

^b Data for NSW and Queensland were not available.

Source: AIHW data collection (unpublished); table 15A.14.

Child protection services — response time to complete investigation

‘Response time to complete investigation’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to minimise the risk of harm to the child by responding to notifications of possible child protection incidents and completing investigations in a timely manner (box 15.10).

Box 15.10 Response time to complete investigation

‘Response time to complete investigation’ is defined as the length of time (measured in days) between the date a child protection notification is received by a statutory department and the date when an investigation outcome is recorded by the department (a determination is made regarding whether to substantiate the notification or not).

The length of time between the point of notification and the completion of an investigation indicates the effectiveness of the department in conducting investigations in a timely manner.

It should be noted that an assessment of a notification takes place at the time that the notification has been received.

This indicator needs to be interpreted with care as jurisdictions count notifications at different points in response to a report, and most states and territories have policy or legislation outlining the time recommended for investigations to be commenced, based on the seriousness of the child protection concern. Furthermore, while investigations should be conducted in a timely manner, it is important that expediency does not undermine a thorough and accurate assessment of the case. In addition, a number of factors outside the control of a department may affect the timeliness of investigations, including involvement by external parties (for example, police, schools), and the inability to locate the child and/or family.

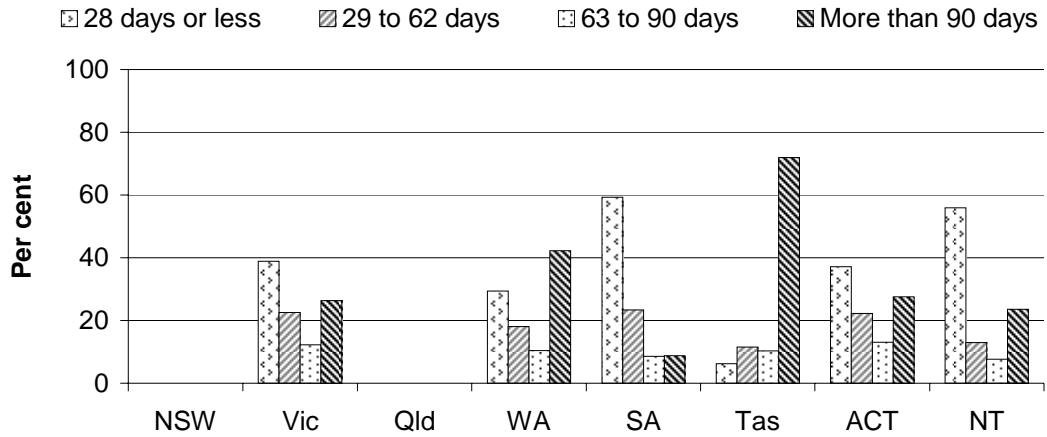
A shorter response time to complete an investigation is desirable.

Data reported for this indicator are not complete.

Investigation is the process whereby the relevant department obtains more detailed information about a child who is the subject of a notification received (for the 2009 Report this is between 1 July 2007 and 30 June 2008), and makes an assessment about the harm or degree of harm to the child, and his or her protective needs. An investigation includes the sighting or interviewing of the subject child where it is practical to do so.

The response time to complete investigation varied across jurisdictions in 2007-08, with the majority of investigations completed in either less than 28 days or more than 90 days (figure 15.5).

Figure 15.5 Proportion of investigations finalised, by time taken to complete investigation (2007-08)^{a, b}



^a Caution should be used when interpreting results as jurisdictions count notifications at different points in response to a report, and have different policies and protocols governing the type of response to a notification.

^b Data for NSW and Queensland were not available.

Source: AIHW data collection (unpublished); table 15A.15.

Child protection services — substantiation rate

‘Substantiation rate’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to target investigations to those notifications where a substantive child abuse/neglect incident has occurred (box 15.11).

Box 15.11 Substantiation rate

The 'substantiation rate' is defined as the proportion of finalised investigations where harm or risk of harm was substantiated.

The 'substantiation rate' provides an indication of the extent to which government has avoided the human and financial costs of an investigation where no harm has occurred.

The substantiation rate should be neither 'very high' nor 'very low'. A very low substantiation rate may suggest that notifications and investigations are not accurately targeted at appropriate cases, with the undesirable consequence of distress to families and undermining the chances that families will voluntarily seek support. Very low substantiation rates may also indicate that the scarce resources of the child protection system are being overwhelmed and that screening should be tightened. A very high substantiation rate may indicate that either some appropriate cases are being overlooked at notification and investigation, or that the criteria for substantiation are bringing 'lower risk' families into the statutory system.

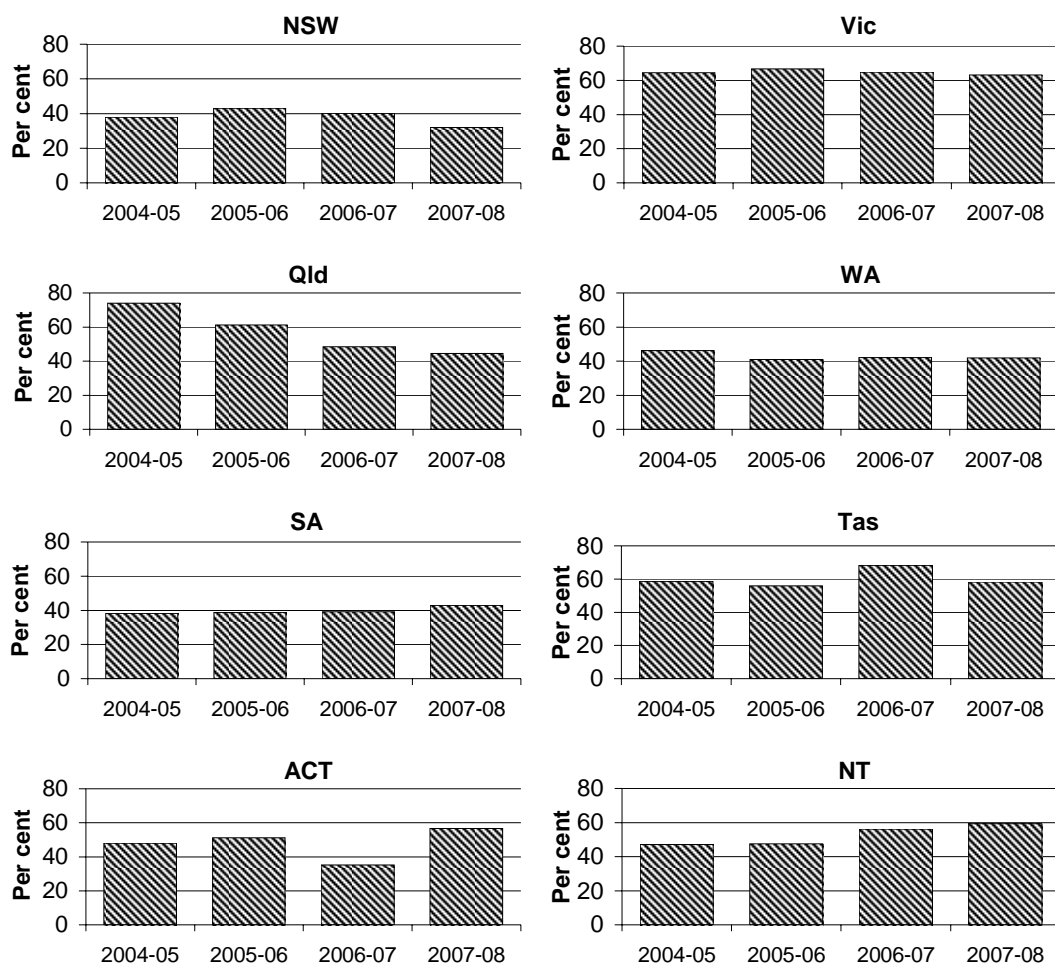
Finalised investigations that were substantiated may fluctuate because of policy, funding and practice change, such as better targeting of investigative resources, the impact of mandatory reporting or other factors such as increased community awareness and willingness to notify suspected instances of child abuse, neglect or harm.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Data that are comparable across jurisdictions are not available for this indicator because definitions of substantiation vary across jurisdictions, but data are comparable within each jurisdiction over time unless otherwise stated (figure 15.6).

Due to the difficulties in identifying the source of annual fluctuations in substantiation rates, changes over time within jurisdictions are more appropriately used to prompt further analysis, rather than used as definitive performance information.

Figure 15.6 Proportion of finalised child protection investigations that were substantiated^{a, b}



^a Data are not comparable across jurisdictions because definitions of substantiation vary significantly. Consequently, rates should not be compared across jurisdictions. ^b Refer to footnotes in the source tables for information about what each jurisdiction's data include.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia* data collection; tables 15A.39, 15A.56, 15A.73, 15A.90, 15A.107, 15A.124, 15A.141 and 15A.158.

Out-of-home care — safety in out-of-home care

‘Safety in out-of-home care’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide children who are under the care of the State with a safe home environment (box 15.12).

Box 15.12 Safety in out-of-home care

‘Safety in out-of-home care’ is defined as the proportion of substantiations where those responsible for harm or risk were carers or other people living in households providing out-of-home care.

The indicator reflects the safety of clients in care situations.

A low proportion of substantiations is desirable.

Data reported for this indicator are not complete.

Two jurisdictions (WA and ACT) provided 2007-08 data on the incidence of child protection substantiations where the person believed responsible for harm or risk to the child was either the carer or another person living in the household providing out-of-home care. These data are reported in table 15A.25.

Out-of-home care — stability of placement

‘Stability of placement’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide high quality services that meet the needs of recipients on the basis of relative need and available resources (box 15.13).

Box 15.13 Stability of placement

‘Stability of placement’ is defined as the proportion of children who had 1 or 2 placements during a period of continuous out-of-home care.

A low number of child placements (one or two) per period of care is desirable, but must be balanced against other placement quality indicators, such as placements in compliance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle, local placements and placements with siblings.

Children may have multiple placements for good reasons, (for example, an initial placement followed by a longer term placement) or it may be desirable to change placements to achieve better child–family compatibility. It is not desirable for a child to stay in an unsatisfactory or unsupportive placement. Also, older children are more likely to have multiple placements as they move towards independence and voluntarily seek alternate placements.

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Box 15.13 (Continued)

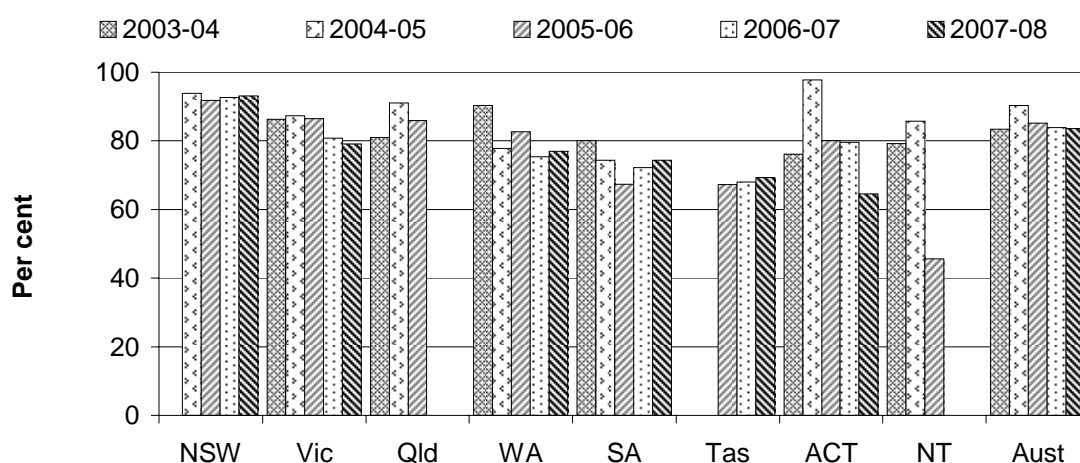
Data are collected only for children who are on orders and who exit care during the reporting period. There are limitations to counting placement stability using an exit cohort rather than entry cohort longitudinal data, because the sample is biased to children from recent entry cohorts with relatively short stays in care, and these children are likely to have experienced fewer placements.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

For children placed away from their family for protective reasons, stability of placement is an important indicator of service quality, particularly for those children who require long term placements. Data are collected on the number of different placements for children on a care and protection order who exited out-of-home care in 2007-08. Data are grouped according to the length of time in care (less than 12 months and 12 months or more).

Nationally, 83.6 per cent of the children on a care and protection order who exited care after less than 12 months in 2007-08 experienced only one or two placements. This proportion varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.7).

Figure 15.7 Proportion of children on a care and protection order exiting care after less than 12 months, who had 1 or 2 placements^{a, b, c, d, e, f, g}

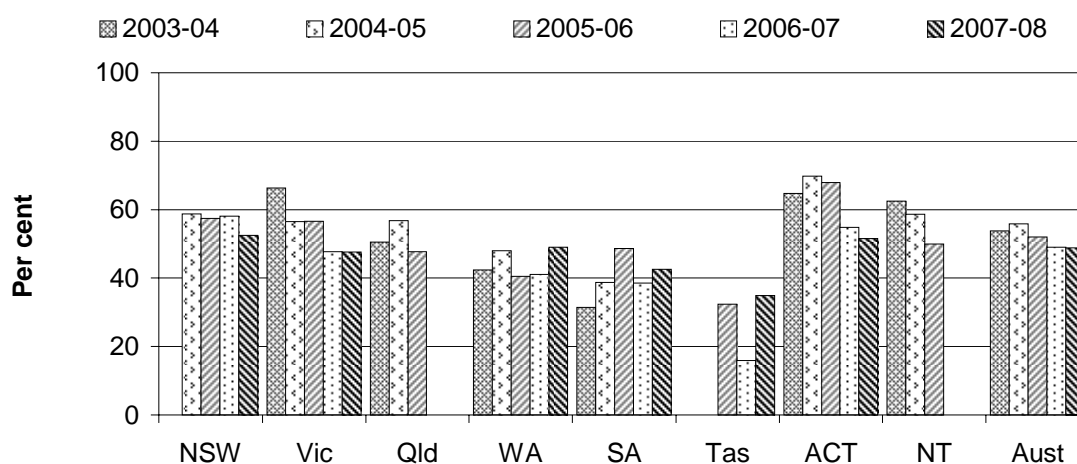


^a Data refer to children exiting care during the relevant financial year. ^b Refer to footnotes in the source tables for information about what each jurisdiction's data include. ^c NSW was unable to provide data for 2003-04 due to the introduction of a new client information system. ^d During 2006-07 Victoria introduced new service and data reporting arrangements. Therefore data for 2006-07 onwards may not be fully comparable to previous years' data. ^e Queensland and NT data for 2006-07 and 2007-08 are not available. ^f Data for Tasmania were not available prior to 2005-06. ^g The apparent decline in the proportion for the ACT is impacted by the small number of children involved and the placement of large sibling groups.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Children in out-of-home care, Australia* collection; table 15A.24.

Across jurisdictions, children who had been in out-of-home care longer tended to have had more placements. The proportion of children exiting care in 2007-08 after 12 months or more who had experienced one or two placements was 48.8 per cent nationally but varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.8).

Figure 15.8 Proportion of children on a care and protection order exiting care after 12 months or more, who had 1 or 2 placements^{a, b, c, d, e, f, g}



^a Data refer to children exiting care during the relevant financial year. ^b Refer to footnotes in the source table for information about what each jurisdiction's data include. ^c NSW was unable to provide data for 2003-04 due to the introduction of a new client information system. ^d During 2006-07 Victoria introduced new service and data reporting arrangements. Therefore data for 2006-07 onwards may not be fully comparable to previous years' data. ^e Queensland data for 2006-07 and 2007-08 are not available. ^f Data for Tasmania were not available prior to 2005-06. ^g NT data for 2006-07 and 2007-08 were not available.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Children in out-of-home care, Australia* data collection; table 15A.24.

Out-of-home care — placement with extended family

'Placement with extended family' is an indicator of governments' objective to provide services that meet the needs of the recipients on the basis of relative need and available resources (box 15.14).

Box 15.14 Placement with extended family

'Placement with extended family' is defined as the proportion of all children in out-of-home care who are placed with relatives or kin who receive government financial assistance to care for that child.

A reasonably high rate for this indicator is considered desirable.

'Placement with extended family' needs to be considered with other factors in the placement decision.

Placing children with their relatives or kin is generally the preferred out-of-home care placement option. This option is generally associated with better long term outcomes due to increased continuity, familiarity and stability for the child. Relatives are more likely to have or form long term emotional bonds with the child. Placement with familiar people can help to overcome the loss of attachment and belonging that can occur when children are placed in out-of-home care.

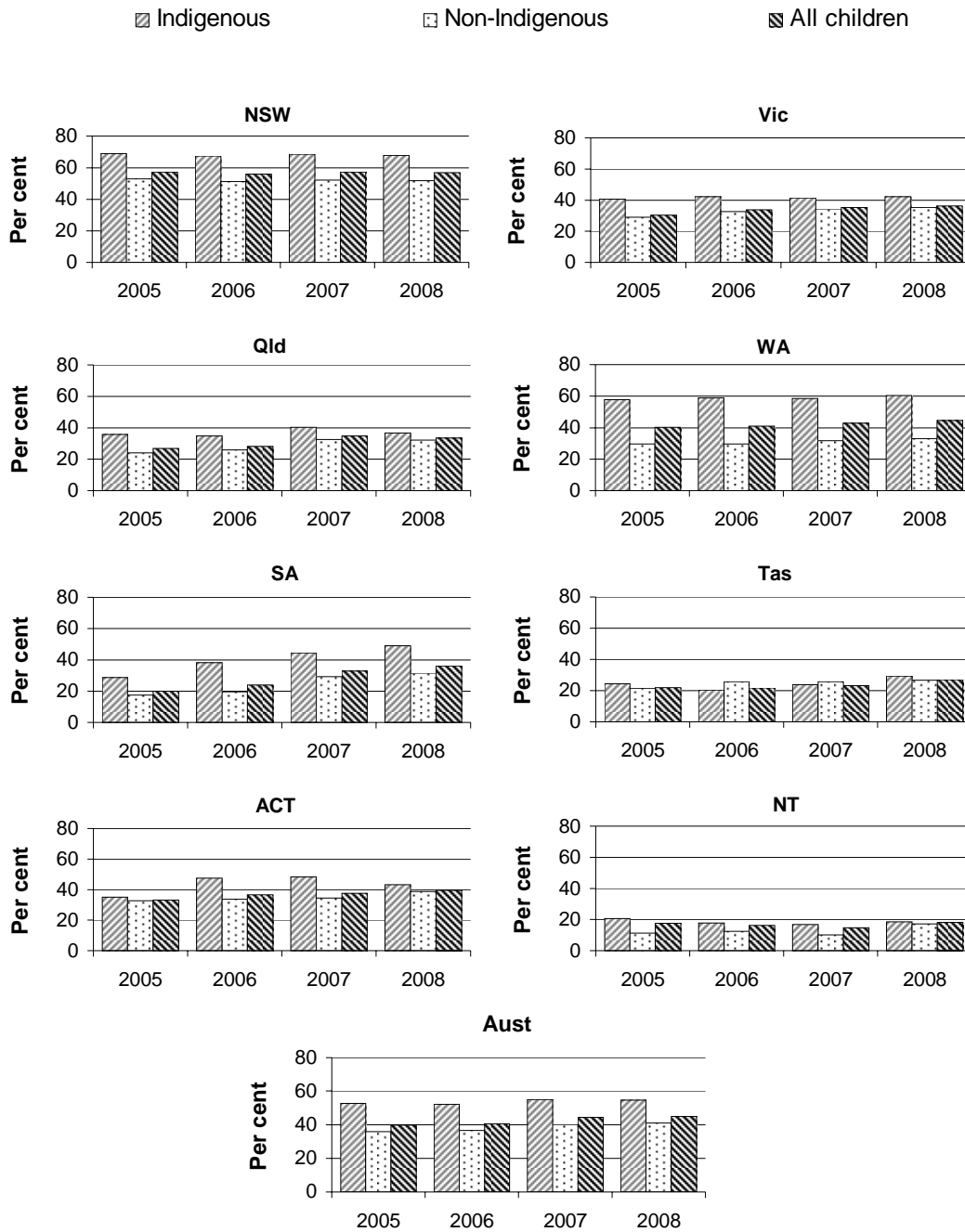
Placements with extended family may not always be the best option. Long standing family dynamics may undermine the pursuit of case goals such as reunification, and the possibility of intergenerational abuse needs to be considered. In addition, depending on the individual circumstances of children, it may be more important to have a local placement that enables continuity at school, for example, rather than a distant placement with relatives.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Figure 15.9 shows the proportion of children placed with relatives or kin by Indigenous status for the past four years. Although these data are comparable, each jurisdiction is shown separately for simpler presentation. The proportion of children placed with relatives or kin at 30 June 2008 was greater for Indigenous children than for non-Indigenous children in all jurisdictions and nationally (figure 15.9).

In addition, the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle places additional emphasis on the placement of Indigenous children with extended family. This principle is discussed in box 15.16.

Figure 15.9 Proportion of children in out-of-home care placed with relatives/kin, by Indigenous status, 30 June^a



^a Non-Indigenous status includes children whose Indigenous status is unknown or not stated.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Children in out-of-home care, Australia* data collection; table 15A.21.

Out-of-home care — children aged under 12 years in home-based care

‘Children aged under 12 years in home-based care’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide services which meet the needs of the recipients (box 15.15).

Box 15.15 Children aged under 12 years in home-based care

‘Children aged under 12 years in home-based care’ is defined as the number of children under 12 years of age placed in home-based care divided by the total number of children under 12 years in out-of-home care.

A high rate for this indicator is considered desirable.

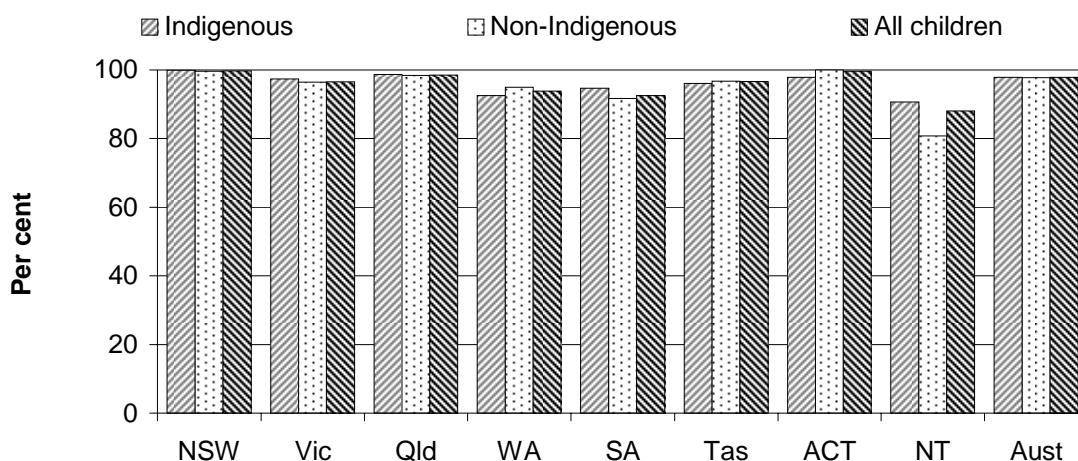
Placing children in home-based care is generally considered to be in their best interests, particularly for younger children. Children will generally make better developmental progress (and have more ready access to normal childhood experiences) in family settings rather than in residential care.

This indicator should be interpreted in conjunction with other placement indicators.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

The proportion of all children aged under 12 years in care who were placed in home-based care (excluding family group homes) at 30 June 2008 was 97.8 per cent nationally. In most jurisdictions the proportion of Indigenous children aged under 12 years who were placed in home-based care was similar to that of non-Indigenous children (figure 15.10).

Figure 15.10 Proportion of children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care and in a home-based placement, by Indigenous status, 30 June 2008^{a, b}



^a Family group homes are not classified as being home-based care. ^b Non-Indigenous status includes children whose Indigenous status is unknown or not stated.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Children in out-of-home care, Australia* data collection; table 15A.23.

Out-of-home care — placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

‘Placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to protect the safety and welfare of Indigenous children while maintaining the cultural ties and identity of Indigenous children in out-of-home care (box 15.16). Subject to an over-riding concern for the safety and wellbeing of Indigenous children, the principle supports the maintenance of the Indigenous child’s cultural ties and identity while in out-of-home care.

According to the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (NSW Law Reform Commission 1997), the following hierarchy or placement preference should be pursued in protecting the safety and welfare of Indigenous children:

- placement with the child’s extended family (which includes Indigenous and non-Indigenous relatives/kin)
- placement within the child’s Indigenous community
- placement with other Indigenous people.

All jurisdictions have now adopted this principle in both legislation and policy.

Box 15.16 Placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle

'Placement in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle' is defined as the number of Indigenous children placed with the child's extended family, Indigenous community or other Indigenous people, divided by the total number of Indigenous children in out-of-home care. Data are reported separately for children placed (i) with relative/kin, (ii) with other Indigenous carer or Indigenous residential care, and (iii) not placed with relative/kin, other Indigenous carer or Indigenous residential care.

Placing Indigenous children in circumstances consistent with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle is considered to be in their best interests. However, it is one factor among many considerations for the child's safety and wellbeing that must be carefully considered in the placement decision. In the application of this principle, consultation with and involvement of appropriate Indigenous individuals or organisations occurs in the placement decision.

If the preferred options are not available, the child may be placed (after appropriate consultation) with a non-Indigenous family or residential setting. The principle does not preclude the possibility that in some instances, placement in a non-Indigenous setting, where arrangements are in place for the child's cultural identity to be preserved, may be the most appropriate placement for the child.

A high proportion of children placed in accordance with the principle is desirable.

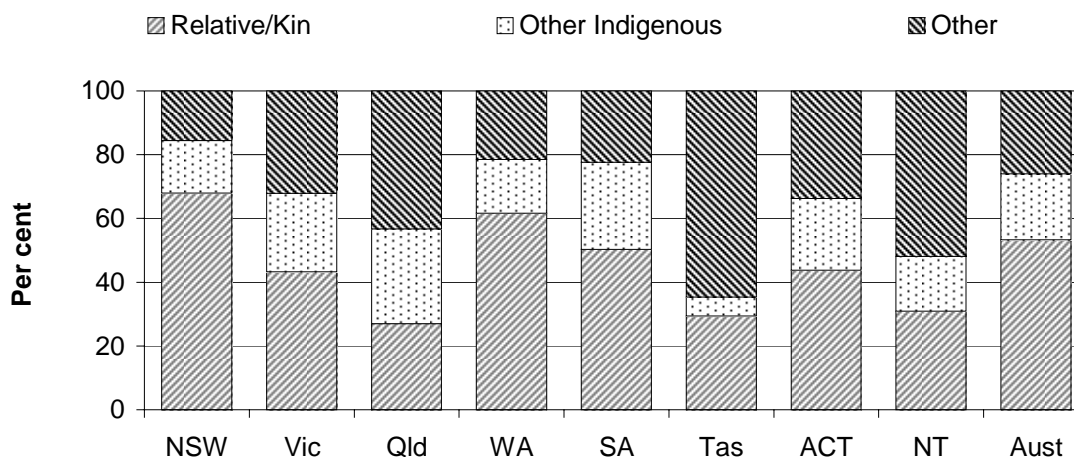
This indicator needs to be interpreted with care as the current measure is a proxy measure for compliance with the principle, as it reports the placement outcome of the Indigenous child rather than compliance with the principle. The indicator does not report whether the hierarchy was followed in the consideration of the best placement for the child, nor whether consultation was held with appropriate Indigenous individuals or organisations.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, at 30 June 2008, 53.3 per cent of Indigenous children in out-of-home care were placed with a relative/kin, 20.6 per cent placed with other Indigenous carer or Indigenous residential care, and 26.0 per cent were not placed with relative/kin, other Indigenous carer or other Indigenous residential care (figure 15.11).

The proportion of Indigenous children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2008 who were placed with Indigenous or non-Indigenous relatives or kin or with another Indigenous carer or in Indigenous residential care varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.11).

Figure 15.11 Placement of Indigenous children in out-of-home care, 30 June 2008^{a, b}



Relative/Kin = Placed with relative/kin. Other Indigenous = Placed with other Indigenous carer or Indigenous residential care. Other = Not placed with relative/kin, other Indigenous carer or Indigenous residential care. ^a Excludes Indigenous children living independently and those whose living arrangements were unknown. ^b Data for Tasmania and the ACT relate to a small number of Indigenous children (102 and 81 respectively) in care at 30 June 2008.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Children in out-of-home care, Australia* data collection; table 15A.22.

Out-of-home care — local placement

‘Local placement’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide services which meet the needs of the recipients (box 15.17).

Box 15.17 Local placement

Local placement is defined as the proportion of children attending the same school after entering out-of-home care.

A high rate of ‘local placement’ is desirable.

A placement close to where a child lived prior to entering out-of-home care is considered to enhance the stability, familiarity and security of the child. It enables some elements of the child’s life to remain unchanged (for example, they can continue attending the same school and retain their friendship network). It may also facilitate family contact if the child’s parents continue to live nearby.

(Continued on next page)

Box 15.17 (Continued)

This indicator should be balanced against other quality indicators. This is one factor among many that must be considered in the placement decision. For example, placement with a sibling or relative might preclude a local placement. Also, a child might move from a primary school to a secondary school.

Data will be provided for 3 and 12 months after entering care. Data collection for this indicator is under development. Data were not available for the 2009 Report.

Out-of-home care — placement with sibling

‘Placement with sibling’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide services which meet the needs of the recipients (box 15.18).

Box 15.18 Placement with sibling

‘Placement with sibling’ is defined as the proportion of children who are on orders and in out-of-home care at 30 June who have siblings also on orders and in out-of-home care, who are placed with at least one of their siblings.

A high rate of placement with siblings is desirable.

Placement of siblings together promotes stability and continuity. It is a long standing placement principle that siblings should be placed together, where possible, in the interests of their emotional wellbeing. Children are likely to be more secure and have a sense of belonging within their family when placed with siblings.

This is one factor among many that must be considered in the placement decision. In circumstances of sibling abuse, or when a particular child in a family has been singled out as the target for abuse or neglect, keeping siblings together may not be appropriate.

Data collection for this indicator is under development. Data were not available for the 2009 Report.

Out-of-home care — children with documented case plan

‘Children with documented case plan’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide services that meet the needs of the recipients (box 15.19).

Box 15.19 Children with documented case plan

‘Children with documented case plan’ is defined as the proportion of children on an order and in out-of-home care who have a documented case plan.

A high rate is desirable because all children should have a case plan.

The quality of the case plan must also be considered and the mere existence of a case plan does not guarantee that appropriate case work is occurring that meets the child’s needs.

Case planning is essential to structured and purposeful work to support children’s optimal development. Case plans outline intervention goals such as improved parent–child attachments, reunification or other forms of permanency, and set out the means to achieve these goals, such as frequency of family contact and any remedial or special services considered appropriate for the individual child. Case plans also allow for the monitoring of a child’s time in care.

Data collection for this indicator is under development. Data were not available for the 2009 Report.

Out-of-home care — client satisfaction

‘Client satisfaction’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide high quality services that meet the needs of recipients (box 15.20).

Box 15.20 Client satisfaction

‘Client satisfaction’ is yet to be defined.

This indicator has been identified for development and reporting in future.

Some information on jurisdictions’ development of initiatives which may assist to measure client satisfaction in the future is included in box 15.8.

Efficiency

Understanding the efficiency of the child protection systems that they administer helps State and Territory governments to identify the key cost drivers of their systems and to weigh the efficacy of options for addressing child protection issues.

Challenges in reporting efficiency for child protection systems

Current efficiency data for child protection services has several limitations, including:

- *different systems and priorities across jurisdictions* — child protection systems in Australia have evolved independently under the auspices of State and Territory governments. This has resulted in variations in the processes and emphases placed on different service delivery paradigms, such as different approaches to diversionary options
- *limitations of current information systems* — in most jurisdictions, it is difficult to identify explicit resources expended on child protection services, out-of-home care services and other support services for families. This is due in part to the historic structure of information systems and the embedding of the government agencies responsible for child protection issues within larger community services departments. Table 15A.4 identifies the level of consistency in expenditure data across jurisdictions.

As a result of these limitations, cost allocations reflect the historic nature of information systems and do not necessarily provide an accurate reflection of the costs involved in provision of various child protection and out-of-home care services.

In April 2002, the Review initiated a project to improve efficiency data for a national framework of protection and support pathways (box 15.21). Until this can be fully implemented, reporting on efficiency has been limited to relatively poor proxy indicators (box 15.22 and box 15.23).

Box 15.21 The pathways project

The pathways project developed and tested a model that will ultimately allow jurisdictions to calculate more meaningful, comparable and robust efficiency measures (the 'pathways method'). The model is based on a top-down application of the activity-based costing method. A set of eight national pathways has been developed as a high level representation of the services that a protection and support client could receive in any jurisdiction. Each pathway consists of common activity groups which act as the 'building blocks' for each of the pathways. The aggregate cost of each activity group within the pathway will allow for the unit cost of an individual pathway to be determined.

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Box 15.21 (Continued)

These activity groups and pathways will provide additional utility for jurisdictions in managing the business of child protection services. Implementation of the model has the potential to improve the quality of national reporting of protection and support services efficiency measures. Activity-based data can also result, over time, in measures of the cost savings associated with early intervention strategies.

The activity groups are:

- Activity Group 1 Receipt and assessment of initial information about a potential protection and support issue
- Activity Group 2 Provision of generic/non-intensive family support services
- Activity Group 3 Provision of intensive family support services
- Activity Group 4 Secondary information gathering and assessment
- Activity Group 5 Provision of short term protective intervention and coordination services for children not on an order
- Activity Group 6 Seeking an order
- Activity Group 7 Provision of protective intervention, support and coordination services for children on an order
- Activity Group 8 Provision of out-of-home care services.

Detailed definitions of activity groups are included in section 15.13.

Before jurisdictional reporting against the activity groups can be undertaken with confidence, further refinement of activity group definitions and counting rules is required. Development work, including further data testing in these areas will continue.

Source: SCRCCSP (2003) and SCRGSP (unpublished).

Experimental results from the Pathways model, provided by four jurisdictions, are included in table 15.2. These data are preliminary and are subject to further analysis and refinement for future Reports. The data do not represent unit costs and should be interpreted with caution. Due to differing internal management systems across jurisdictions, there may be significant variation between jurisdictions in relation to specific activities or expenditures that are included in each activity group.

The data reflect a combination of allocation of direct costs (those costs which can be clearly identified by a jurisdiction to a particular activity group) and indirect costs (which form part of the overall expenditure base, but which cannot be identified in a specific activity group and hence have been allocated amongst the activity groups). These indirect allocations have been approximated by each jurisdiction amongst the eight activity groups.

Table 15.2 provides an approximation of the proportionate allocation of expenditure amongst the eight activity groups for each participating jurisdiction. The expenditure base used for the pathways project differs from the expenditure base used to calculate the existing proxy efficiency indicators for child protection and out-of-home care services (box 15.22 and box 15.23).

The proportion of expenditure allocated to Activity group 8 (Out-of-home care) is the most significant and varies from 39 per cent to 46 per cent across reporting jurisdictions. The proportions allocated to Activity groups 1 (Receipt and assessment of initial information about a potential protection and support issue), 6 (Seeking an order) and 7 (Provision of protective intervention, support and coordination services for children on an order) each accounted for less than 10 per cent across all reporting jurisdictions.

Table 15.2 Proportion of expenditure by activity group – experimental estimates (per cent)^{a, b, c, d}

	AG1	AG2 ^e	AG3	AG4	AG5	AG6	AG7	AG8	Total
NSW (2005-06)	7	17	18	6	2	3	2	46	100
Vic (2005-06)	3	24	4	5	4	7	8	44	100
SA (2005-06)	4	8	4	13	10	8	7	45	100
Tas (2004-05)	5	9	3	11	15	8	9	39	100

AG = Activity Group (see box 15.21 for information). ^a Includes direct and indirect expenditure. ^b These experimental data have been derived from expenditure allocations in different years by the various participating jurisdictions. ^c These experimental percentage allocations are derived from total expenditure allocations which vary from totals used to derive costs presented elsewhere in the chapter. ^d Totals may not add to 100 as a result of rounding. ^e Expenditure items included in calculating proportional expenditure for Activity Group 2 may vary across jurisdictions, for example the inclusion/exclusion of expenditure on services outsourced to non-government organisations.

Source: NSW, Victorian, SA and Tasmanian governments (unpublished).

Out-of-home care services unit costs – program expenditure per placement day

Indicative unit costs for out-of-home care services are provided in table 15.3. Out-of-home care program expenditure per placement day varied across jurisdictions (table 15.3).

Table 15.3 Indicative unit costs of out-of-home care services, 2007-08^{a, b}

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas^c</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>
Real expenditure on out-of-home care services (\$m)	463.9	221.6	291.0	121.9	85.4	25.9	19.3	27.1
Placement days in out-of-home care (no. '000) ^d	4625.4	2013.8	na	903.6	664.7	248.7	150.1	141.7
Out-of-home care program expenditure per placement day (\$)	100.3	110.0	na	134.9	128.5	104.3	128.9	190.9

^a These data should not be interpreted as unit costs for Activity Group 8 as they are derived using reported program expenditure and not activity group expenditure. ^b Caution should be used when interpreting results due to the variability of activities that are included in out-of-home care services. ^c Children in facility-based care placements contribute to a significant proportion of out-of-home care expenditure and may inflate the average unit cost. ^d A placement day in out-of-home care only counts children who stay overnight in an out-of-home care placement. **na** Not available.

Source: State and Territory Governments (unpublished); table 15A.32.

These indicative costs are derived using total real recurrent program expenditure on out-of-home care services (table 15A.1) and not expenditure allocated to an activity group. It is anticipated that unit costs on out-of-home care services derived from Activity group 8 expenditure will be available in future Reports, as development work continues on definitions, counting rules and a pilot data collection for the pathways project.

Child protection services proxy efficiency indicators

Three child protection efficiency measures are reported as proxy indicators of governments' objective to maximise the benefit to the community through the efficient use of taxpayer resources: 'total expenditure on all child protection activities, per notification', 'total expenditure on all child protection activities, per investigation', and 'total expenditure on all child protection activities, per substantiation' (box 15.22).

Box 15.22 Child protection services proxy efficiency indicators

There are three 'Child protection services proxy efficiency indicators', defined as:

- total expenditure on all child protection activities divided by the number of notifications
- total expenditure on all child protection activities divided by the number of investigations
- total expenditure on all child protection activities divided by the number of substantiations.

These indicators are imperfect proxy indicators and need to be interpreted with care.

Because each of these proxy indicators is based on total expenditure on child protection activities, they do not represent, and cannot be interpreted as, unit costs for notifications, investigations or substantiations.

These proxy indicators cannot be added together to determine overall cost of child protection services.

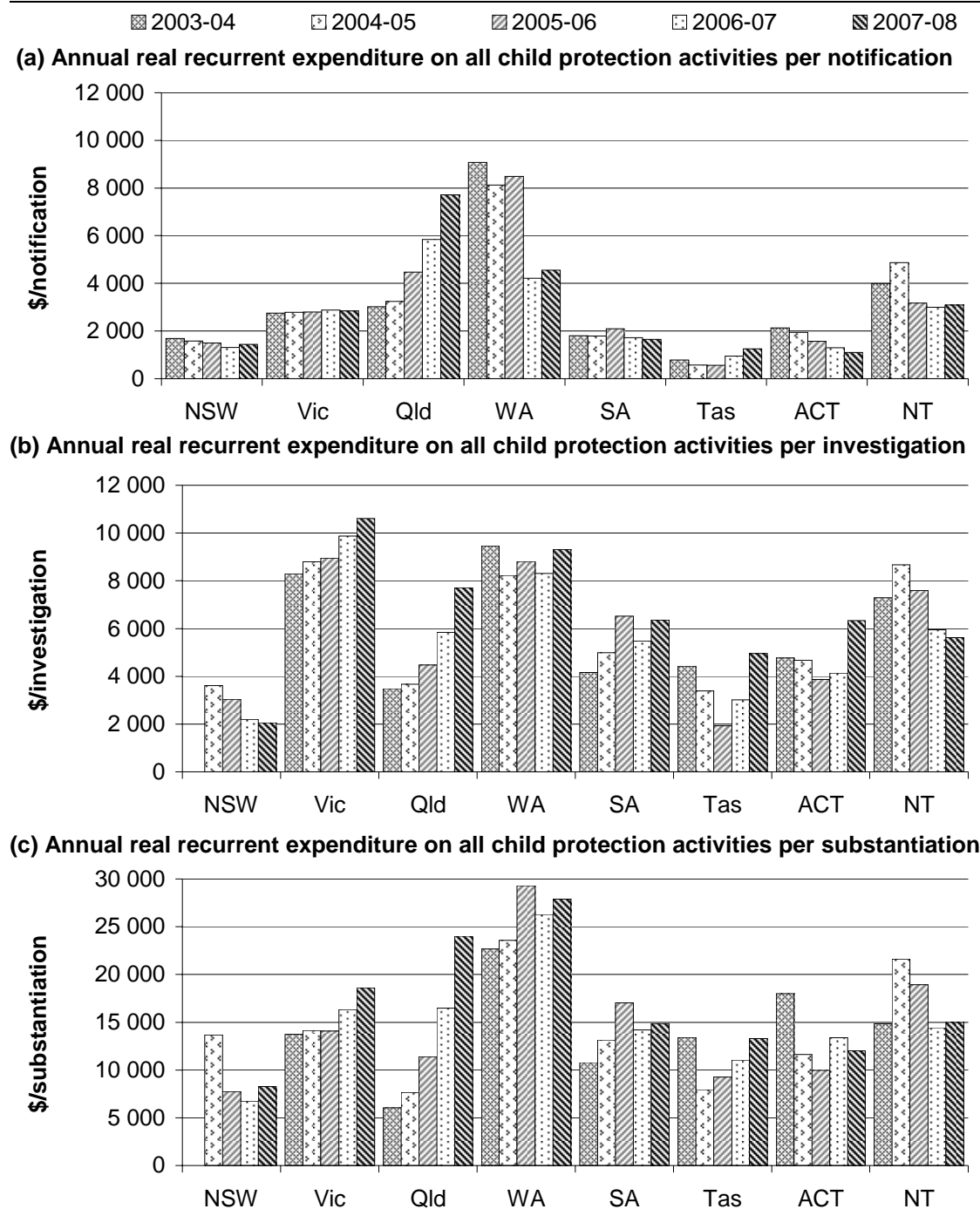
Lower expenditure per notification/investigation/substantiation may suggest more efficient services but may indicate lower quality or different service delivery models.

Better efficiency indicators would relate expenditure on particular child protection activities to a measure of output of those activities. Work is in progress to develop an activity-based costing method that will allow this type of reporting from existing information systems (box 15.21).

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Total expenditure on all child protection activities per notification, per investigation and per substantiation from 2003-04 to 2007-08 varied between jurisdictions (figure 15.12).

Figure 15.12 **Child protection efficiency indicators (2007-08 dollars)^{a, b, c, d}**



^a Real expenditure based on ABS gross domestic product price deflator (2007-08 = 100) (table AA.26).

^b These data are derived from proxy indicators and cannot be interpreted as the unit costs for 'expenditure per notification', 'expenditure per investigation' or 'expenditure per substantiation' because each is based on the total expenditure of all child protection activities. They cannot be added together to derive a total cost for child protection activities. Differences across jurisdictions reflect the quantity of the three activities rather than a difference in unit costs. ^c 2007-08 data for some jurisdictions for 'annual real expenditure per notification' and 'annual real expenditure per investigation' may not be strictly comparable with previous years, due to the introduction of a new investigation category 'Investigation closed—no outcome possible'. ^d See table 15A.2 for detailed jurisdiction-specific footnotes.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.2.

Out-of-home care proxy efficiency indicators

Three out-of-home care efficiency measures are reported as proxy indicators of governments' objective to maximise the benefit to the community through the efficient use of taxpayer resources: 'total expenditure on all children in residential out-of-home care per year, per child in residential out-of-home care on 30 June', 'total expenditure on all children in non-residential out-of-home care per year, per child in non-residential out-of-home care on 30 June', and 'total expenditure on all children in out-of-home care per year, per child in all out-of-home care on 30 June' (box 15.23).

Box 15.23 Out-of-home care proxy efficiency indicators

There are three 'Out-of-home care proxy efficiency' indicators, defined as:

- total annual expenditure on residential out-of-home care divided by the number of children in residential out-of-home care at 30 June
- total annual expenditure on non-residential out-of-home care divided by the number of children in non-residential out-of-home care at 30 June
- total annual expenditure on all out-of-home care divided by the number of children in all out-of-home care at 30 June.

These indicators are imperfect proxy indicators and need to be interpreted with care. Low expenditure per child in care may suggest more efficient services but may also indicate lower service quality.

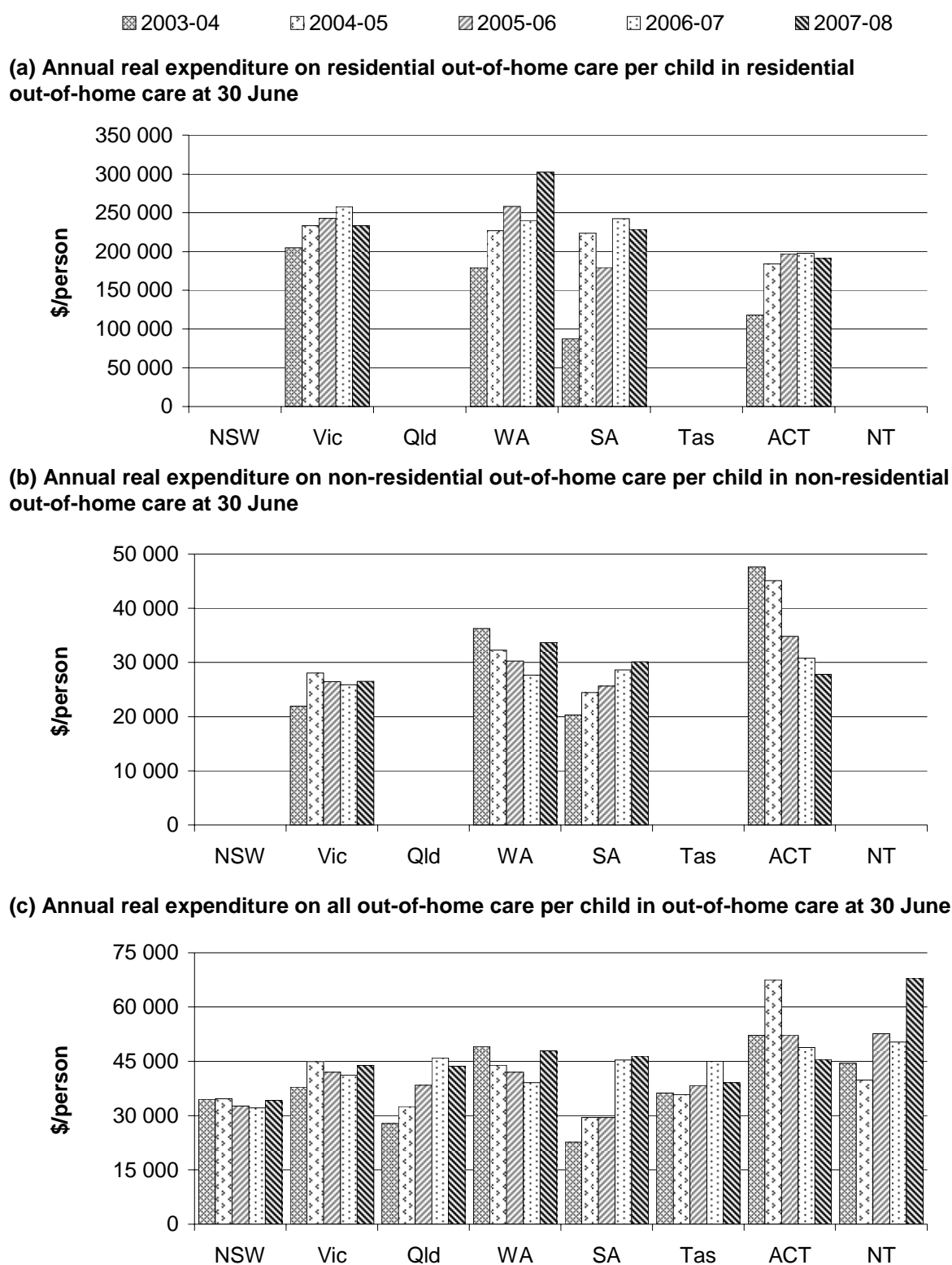
These indicators should be interpreted with care because they do not represent unit cost measures. Expenditure per child in care at 30 June overstates the cost per child because significantly more children are in care during a year than at a point in time. In addition, the indicator does not reflect the length of time that a child spends in care.

Better efficiency indicators would relate expenditure on particular out-of-home care activities to a measure of output of those activities. Work is currently in progress to develop an activity-based costing method which will allow this type of reporting from existing information systems (box 15.21).

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Victoria, WA, SA and the ACT were able to separate expenditure on out-of-home care into residential care and non-residential care. This annual expenditure to 30 June for 2003-04 to 2007-08, per child in residential care and non-residential care at 30 June, varied across these jurisdictions (figures 15.13(a) and figure 15.13(b)). All jurisdictions provided data on total expenditure on out-of-home care per child in care at 30 June for 2003-04 to 2007-08, which varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.13(c)).

Figure 15.13 **Out-of-home care efficiency indicators (2007-08 dollars)^{a, b, c}**



^a Real expenditure based on ABS gross domestic product price deflator (2007-08 = 100) (table AA.26).

^b These data do not represent unit costs of providing out-of-home care services. ^c NSW, Qld, Tasmania and the NT could not disaggregate expenditure on out-of-home care into residential care and non-residential care.

Source: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 15A.3.

Outcomes

Outcomes are the impact of services on the status of an individual or group (while outputs are the actual services delivered) (see chapter 1, section 1.5).

Improved safety — substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate

‘Substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to reduce the risk of harm to children by appropriately assessing notifications of possible child protection incidents (box 15.24).

Box 15.24 Improved safety — substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate

‘Improved safety — substantiation rate after decision not to substantiate’ is defined as the proportion of children who were the subject of an investigation in the previous financial year that led to a decision not to substantiate, and who were later the subject of a substantiation within three or 12 months of the initial decision not to substantiate. The year reported relates to the year of the initial decision not to substantiate.

This indicator partly reveals the extent to which an investigation has not succeeded in identifying the risk of harm to a child who is subsequently the subject of substantiated harm. It also provides a measure of the adequacy of intervention offered to children in terms of protecting them from further harm.

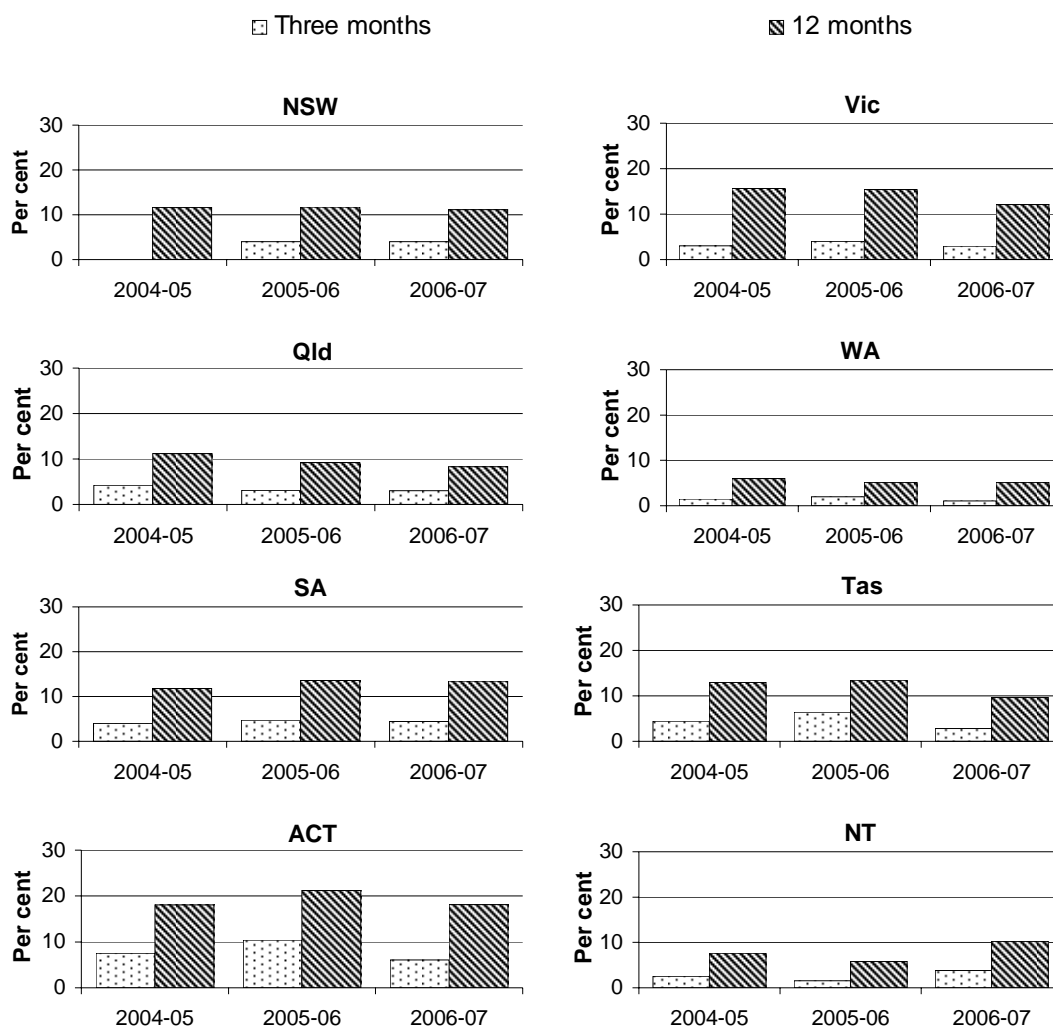
A low rate for this indicator is generally desirable. However, reported results may be affected by the finalisation of investigations, factors beyond the control of child protection services, or a change in circumstances after the initial decision not to substantiate was made. A demonstrable risk of harm might not have existed in the first instance. In addition, this indicator does not distinguish between subsequent substantiations which are related to the initial notification (that is, the same source of risk of harm), and those which are unrelated to the initial notification (that is, a different source of risk of harm).

This indicator should be considered with other outcome indicators.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Data that are comparable across jurisdictions are not available for this indicator, because definitions of substantiations vary across jurisdictions. Data are comparable within each jurisdiction over time unless otherwise stated (figure 15.14).

Figure 15.14 Improved safety — substantiation rate within 3 and/or 12 months after a decision not to substantiate^{a, b, c, d}



^a Data are not comparable across jurisdictions because definitions of substantiation vary significantly. Consequently, rates cannot be compared across jurisdictions. ^b Jurisdictions have provided the denominator for this indicator for this Report. In previous Reports the denominator was derived by the AIHW. Data in this Report may therefore differ from previous Reports. ^c During 2006-07 Victoria introduced new service and data reporting arrangements. Therefore data for 2006-07 may not be fully comparable to previous years' data. See source table 15A.54 for more details on these arrangements. ^d Data relating to substantiations after a decision not to substantiate in Tasmania for 2006-07 should be interpreted carefully due to the high proportion of investigations in process at 31 August 2007.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia* data collection; tables 15A.9, 15A.37, 15A.54, 15A.71, 15A.88, 15A.105, 15A.122, 15A.139 and 15A.156.

Improved safety — resubstantiation rate

The ‘resubstantiation rate’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to reduce the risk of harm and to prevent the recurrence of abuse and neglect or harm to children. This indicator also partly reveals the extent to which intervention by child protection services has succeeded in preventing further harm (box 15.25).

Box 15.25 Improved safety — resubstantiation rate

‘Resubstantiation rate’ is defined as the proportion of children who were the subject of a substantiation in the previous financial year, who were subsequently the subject of a further substantiation within the following three or 12 months. The year reported relates to the year of the original substantiation.

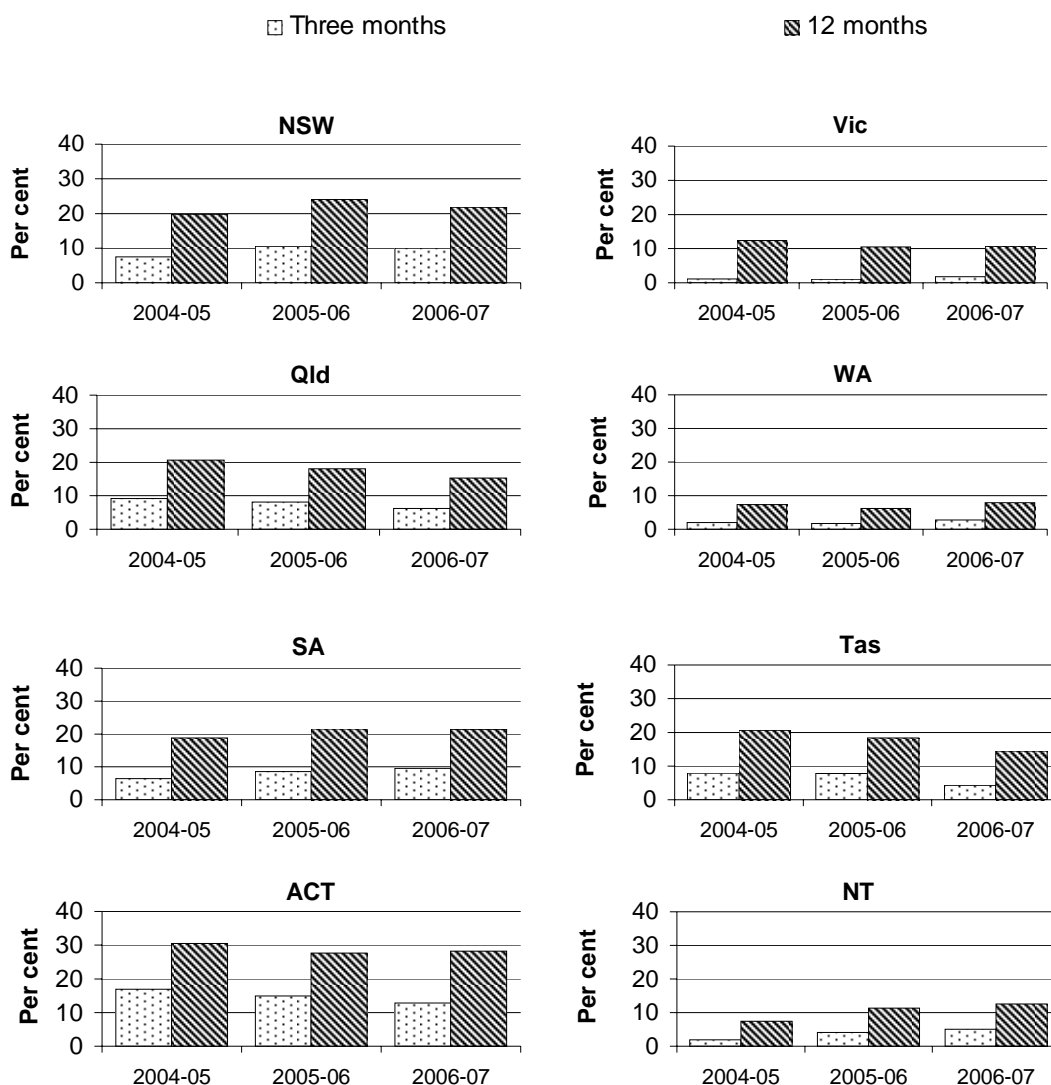
A low rate for this indicator is generally desirable. However, reported results may be affected by the finalisation of investigations or factors beyond the control of child protection services, such as changes in the family situation (for example, illness, unemployment or a new partner). In addition, this indicator does not distinguish between subsequent substantiations that are related to the initial notification (that is, the same source of risk of harm) and those that are unrelated to the initial notification (that is, a different source of risk of harm).

This indicator should be considered with other outcome indicators.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Data that are comparable across jurisdictions are not available for this indicator, because definitions of substantiations vary across jurisdictions. Data are comparable within each jurisdiction over time unless otherwise stated (figure 15.15).

Figure 15.15 Improved safety — resubstantiation rate within 3 and/or 12 months after a substantiation^{a, b, c, d}



^a Data are not comparable across jurisdictions because definitions of substantiation vary significantly. Consequently, rates cannot be compared across jurisdictions. ^b Jurisdictions have provided the denominator for this indicator for this Report. In previous Reports the denominator was derived by the AIHW. Data in this Report may therefore differ from previous Reports. ^c During 2006-07 Victoria introduced new service and data reporting arrangements. Therefore data for 2006-07 may not be fully comparable to previous years' data. See source table 15A.55 for more details on these arrangements. ^d Data relating to resubstantiations in Tasmania for 2006-07 should be interpreted carefully due to the high proportion of investigations in process at 31 August 2007.

Source: AIHW (unpublished), derived from *Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations, Australia* data collection; tables 15A.10, 15A.38, 15A.55, 15A.72, 15A.89, 15A.106, 15A.123, 15A.140 and 15A.157.

Improved education, health and wellbeing of the child

‘Improved education, health and wellbeing of the child’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to maximise children’s life chances by ensuring children in care have their educational, health and wellbeing needs met (box 15.26).

Box 15.26 Improved education, health and wellbeing of the child

‘Improved education, health and wellbeing of the child’ is defined as the change over time in learning outcomes for children on guardianship or custody orders. This is a partial measure of this outcome indicator.

An increase in learning outcomes over time for children on guardianship or custody orders indicates that their educational outcomes are improving.

However, factors outside the control of protection and support services may also influence the educational outcomes of children on guardianship or custody orders, and care needs to be exercised when interpreting results.

Data reported for this indicator are not complete.

For the 2009 Report, data were reported on the proportion of children in years 3, 5 and 7 on guardianship or custody orders (attending government schools) achieving the national reading and numeracy benchmarks in 2003, relative to all children (attending government and non-government schools) achieving these benchmarks over the same period (see tables 15A.11–15A.13). Until information on the learning outcomes for these children is available at a later point in time, changes over time are not able to be presented.

Additional data on educational outcomes will be collected for children on guardianship or custody orders in 2004, 2005 and 2006. The longitudinal component of this study will assess any change in academic performance over time for children who were continuously on guardianship or custody orders for a two-year period (between 2003–2005 and 2004–2006). These data are anticipated to be available for the 2011 Report.

Safe return home

‘Safe return home’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to remove the risk of harm to the child while maintaining family cohesion (box 15.27).

Box 15.27 Safe return home

'Safe return home' is yet to be defined.

For children who cannot be protected within their family and are removed from home, often the best outcome is when effective intervention to improve their parents' skills or capacity to care for them enables them to return home.

This indicator has been identified as a key area for development in future reports.

Permanent care

'Permanent care' is an indicator of governments' objective to provide appropriate care for children who cannot be safely reunified with their families (box 15.28).

Box 15.28 Permanent care

'Permanent care' is yet to be defined.

Appropriate services are those that minimise the length of time before stable, permanent placement is achieved.

This indicator has been identified for development and reporting in future.

15.4 Future directions in child protection and out-of-home care services performance reporting

Improving national child protection data

The National Child Protection and Support Services (NCPASS) working group has identified a number of gaps in national data reporting for child protection. NCPASS also has responsibility for monitoring the comparability of child protection data. A series of projects, approved by the National Community Services Information Management Group (NCSIMG) and funded by the Community and Disability Services Ministerial Council (CDSMC), have been initiated to address these issues. These projects are: *Educational Outcomes for Children on Orders*; *Treatment and Support Services*; *National Foster Carers Data Collection*; and, *National Data Comparability*. The project work for these initiatives has in most cases been undertaken by the AIHW working closely with states and territories. It is expected that these projects will enable improved reporting on child protection.

Further development of the pathways activity-based costing project will reduce the reliance on proxy efficiency indicators for child protection and out-of-home care and enable more detailed and comparative analysis of efficiency indicators. Developments planned for the 2010 Report include the implementation of a common survey tool (developed in 2008 and due to be piloted in 2009) to facilitate greater consistency across jurisdictions in reporting on the 'Pathways' project, and the inclusion of reporting unit costs for some activity groups.

The development of the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children* during 2008 is intended to improve child protection outcomes, through the inclusion of actions designed to:

- improve connection and coordination across various parts of the system and across jurisdictional boundaries
- where a national approach would ensure better use of resources
- where the Australian Government could make use of its policies and programs to ensure children are better protected (FaHCSIA 2008c).

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has noted the work underway (COAG 2008a), and it is anticipated that the Framework will be released in early 2009.

15.5 Profile of juvenile justice services

Service overview

Juvenile justice services aim to promote community safety and reduce youth offending by assisting young people to address their offending behaviour and take responsibility for the effect their behaviour has on victims and the wider community. In doing this, juvenile justice services recognise the importance of the families and communities of young offenders, particularly Indigenous communities, in the provision of services. Consequently, services are designed to maximise opportunities to maintain offending free lifestyles by rehabilitating young people who commit offences and reintegrating them into their community.

The juvenile justice system is responsible for dealing with young people (predominantly aged 10–17 years) who have committed or allegedly committed an offence while considered by law to be a juvenile. Key elements of juvenile justice systems in all jurisdictions include:

- the diversion of young people from the more formal criminal justice system (courts) where appropriate
- detention as a last resort
- victims' rights
- ensuring a young person fulfils their sentencing obligations
- responsibility appropriate to the developmental stage of the young person
- community safety.

The juvenile justice information in the Report is sourced from the Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set (JJ NMDS) managed by the AIHW on behalf of the States and Territories, the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) and the AIHW.

Roles and responsibilities

The responsibility for juvenile justice in Australia resides with State and Territory governments. The relevant department within each state and territory in 2007-08 responsible for funding and/or providing juvenile justice services is listed in box 15.29. Each jurisdiction has its own legislation that determines the policies and practices of its juvenile justice system. While this legislation varies in detail, its intent is similar across jurisdictions. National coordination takes place through the Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators (AJJA). AJJA is a Standing Committee of the Community and Disability Services Ministerial Advisory Council.

Box 15.29 Juvenile justice services

<i>NSW</i>	Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)
<i>VIC</i>	Department of Human Services (DHS)
<i>QLD</i>	Department of Communities (DOC)
<i>WA</i>	Department of Corrective Services (DCS)
<i>SA</i>	Department for Families and Communities (DFC)
<i>TAS</i>	Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
<i>ACT</i>	Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DDHCS)
<i>NT</i>	Department of Justice (DOJ)

The juvenile justice system in each jurisdiction comprises several organisations, each with a different primary role and responsibility in dealing with young people. These include:

- police, who are usually the young person's first point of contact with the system
- courts (usually a special children's or youth court), where matters relating to the charges against the young person are heard. The courts are largely responsible for decisions regarding bail (and remand) and sentencing options
- juvenile justice agencies, which are responsible for the supervision and case management of young people on a range of community-based legal arrangements and in detention, and for the provision of a wide range of services aimed at crime prevention and reduction. Many of the services provided by juvenile justice agencies are aimed at: rehabilitating young people; minimising the level and future involvement of young people in the juvenile justice system; reducing the over representation of Indigenous young people in the justice system; maintaining the young person's connection with family, culture and community; providing young people with an appropriate level of care and safety (duty of care); increasing young people's accountability to victims; improving community safety; and providing pre-sentence reports for young people to the courts as required.

Diversion of young offenders

In most jurisdictions, the majority of young people who come into contact with the juvenile justice system are diverted through a range of mechanisms such as police cautions, conferences and unsupervised orders, and do not generally become clients of juvenile justice agencies. These mechanisms are now part of the spectrum of legislated responses to juvenile crime.

Responsibility for administering the options available for more minor offences — warnings (informal cautions), formal cautions, and infringement notices — rests mainly with police in all jurisdictions. Responsibility for administering the diversionary processes available for more serious offences lies with juvenile justice authorities and courts in each jurisdiction. Comparable national data are not yet available to illustrate the nature or level of diversion undertaken by different jurisdictions.

Funding

Data on Australian, State and Territory government expenditure on juvenile justice services are not currently available. This information is anticipated to be available for future reports.

Size and scope

Clients of juvenile justice agencies

The fourth report of the JJ NMDS covers the period 2006-07 and was released in August 2008 (AIHW 2008a). The JJ NMDS provides information about young people who are supervised by juvenile justice agencies. Pre-sentenced and sentenced supervision both within the community and in detention are included in the JJ NMDS. Elements of the juvenile justice system which do not require juvenile justice agency supervision (such as police and court actions) are not within the scope of the JJ NMDS.

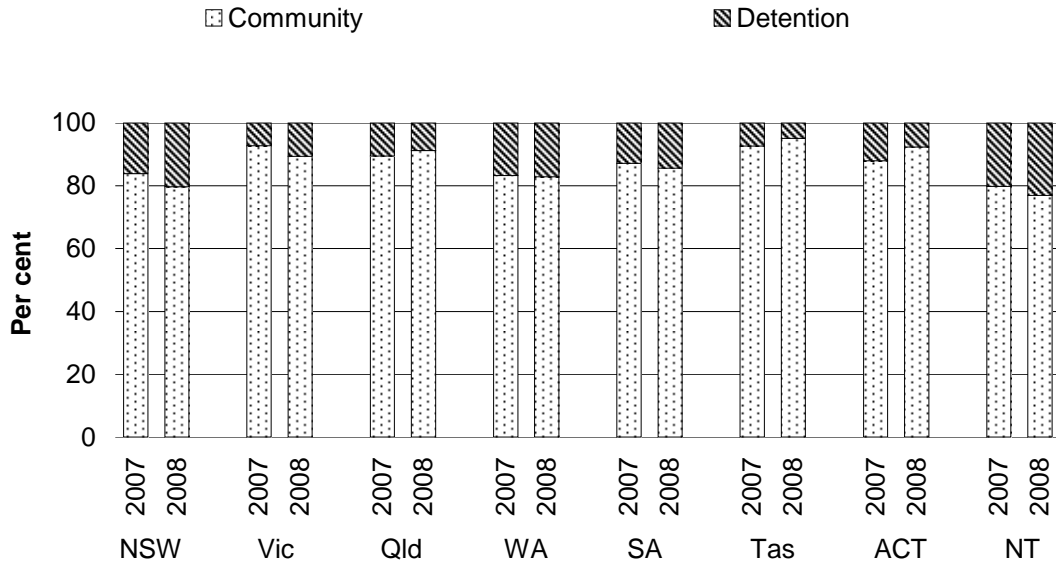
Of those young people who become clients of juvenile justice agencies, most are supervised on community-based orders, including parole. The JJ NMDS shows that, during 2006-07, 12 765 young people experienced juvenile justice supervision in Australia. Of these young people, 10 697 had community-based supervision, 5487 had detention-based supervision, with some young people experiencing both (AIHW 2008a).

Across jurisdictions, the majority of young people aged 10–17 years supervised by juvenile justice jurisdictions (between 76.9 per cent and 95.1 per cent) were in the community, rather than in detention (figure 15.16). These figures do not include any juveniles aged 10–17 years who were supervised in the adult correctional system.

These data were collected at a point in time, so they need to be interpreted with care, particularly for jurisdictions with smaller populations where a small change to

the number of young people in detention can make a significant difference to their relative proportion.

Figure 15.16 Proportion of juvenile justice clients aged 10–17 years who were supervised in the community and in detention centres, at 30 June^{a, b, c, d}



^a Includes only those young people who were under the supervision or case management of juvenile justice agencies on a pre- or post-sentence legal arrangement or order (for example, supervised bail, remand, a community services order, parole and detention). ^b Juvenile justice agencies also have additional clients in detention and community supervision who are over 17 years of age. The figure does not include juvenile justice clients over 17 years of age at 30 June. ^c Clients may be on multiple orders at any one time. The distribution in the figure, therefore, is based not on order type but on where the client was located at 30 June. ^d Refer to source table 15A.169 for detailed footnotes.

Source: AIHW unpublished (data supplied by State and Territory governments); table 15A.169.

Juvenile detention

As outlined above, the majority of juvenile offenders are supervised in community-based services. The following data from the AIC relate to juvenile detention only (both on remand or sentenced). As jurisdictions have different definitions of a juvenile, this may affect the number and rates reported for young people aged 10–17 years.

Nationally, the daily average number of people aged 10–17 years detained in juvenile detention centres increased from 616 to 696 between 2002-03 and 2006-07 (table 15.3).

Table 15.3 Daily average population of people aged 10–17 years in juvenile detention (number)^{a, b}

	<i>NSW^c</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>
2002-03	220	64	96	106	65	25	17	24	616
2003-04	209	62	91	122	50	26	18	13	590
2004-05	218	53	89	110	58	33	15	22	596
2005-06	244	53	127	115	39	27	13	17	634
2006-07	277	48	138	132	42	19	14	26	696

^a Average based on population of juvenile detention centres on the last day of each quarter of the financial year. ^b Due to rounding, the Australian total may differ from the combined total of all jurisdictions. ^c NSW data from 31 March 2005 include Kariiong Juvenile Correction Centre detainees, sourced from the NSW Department of Corrective Services. Numbers for NSW in the quarters commencing from 31 March 2005 include young people in the care of both the NSW Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Corrective Services.

Source: AIC (unpublished); table 15A.170.

The average rate of detention of young people aged 10–17 years per 100 000 in the population aged 10–17 years increased from 28.1 per 100 000 in 2002-03 to 30.8 per 100 000 in 2006-07, although rates varied across jurisdictions (table 15A.171).

Nationally, females made up 9.3 per cent of the total population of juvenile detention centres at 30 June 2007. Males made up 90.7 per cent of the national population of juvenile detention centres at 30 June 2007 (table 15A.172).

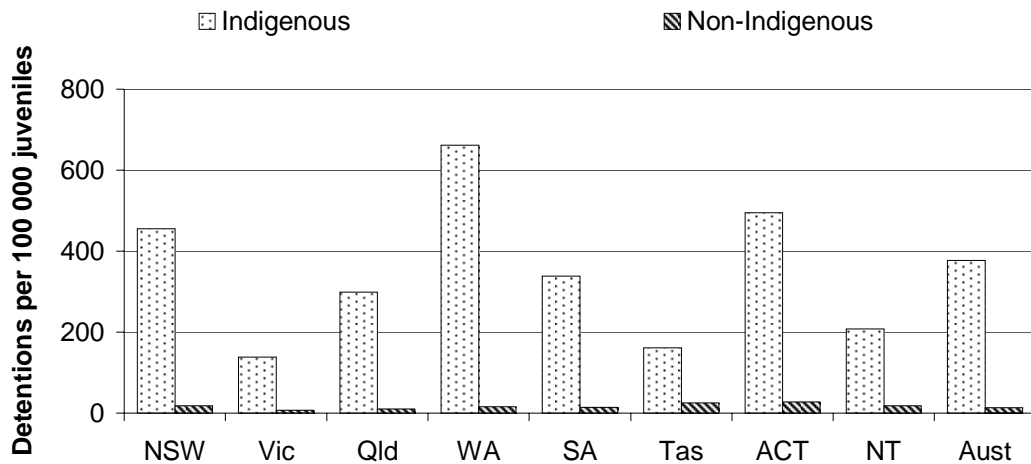
Numbers and rates of Indigenous young people placed in detention

The daily average number of Indigenous young people aged 10–17 years detained in juvenile detention centres was 400 in 2006-07 (table 15A.173). Nationally, the daily average detention rate for Indigenous people aged 10–17 years in 2006-07 was 376.9 per 100 000 Indigenous people aged 10–17 years. The rate for the non-Indigenous population aged 10–17 years in 2006-07 was 13.7 per 100 000 non-Indigenous people aged 10-17 years (table 15A.174).

Jurisdictional comparisons need to be treated with caution, especially for those states and territories with low Indigenous populations, where small number effects can introduce statistical variations that do not accurately represent trends over time or consistent differences from other jurisdictions. The AIC uses ABS experimental projections for its estimates of the Indigenous population (ABS 2004). These data include a range of estimates (low and high). The AIC data are based on high level estimates, unlike other sections of this Report, which use the low level estimates.

The over-representation of Indigenous young people in detention across jurisdictions in 2006-07 is shown in figure 15.17.

Figure 15.17 **Average rate of detention of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people aged 10–17 years in juvenile detention, per 100 000 people, 2006-07^{a, b}**



^a Rates of detention for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in NSW in each quarter in 2006-07 include young people in the care of both the NSW Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Corrective Services. ^b The rate for Indigenous young people should be treated with caution due to the small Indigenous population in the ACT. The rate ratio at table 15A.174 should also be taken into account.

Source: AIC (unpublished); table 15A.174.

15.6 Framework of performance indicators for juvenile justice services

The framework of performance indicators for juvenile justice is based on a set of shared government objectives (box 15.30). However, juvenile justice services in each state and territory operate under their own legislation. Consequently there are different emphases with respect to aims and objectives.

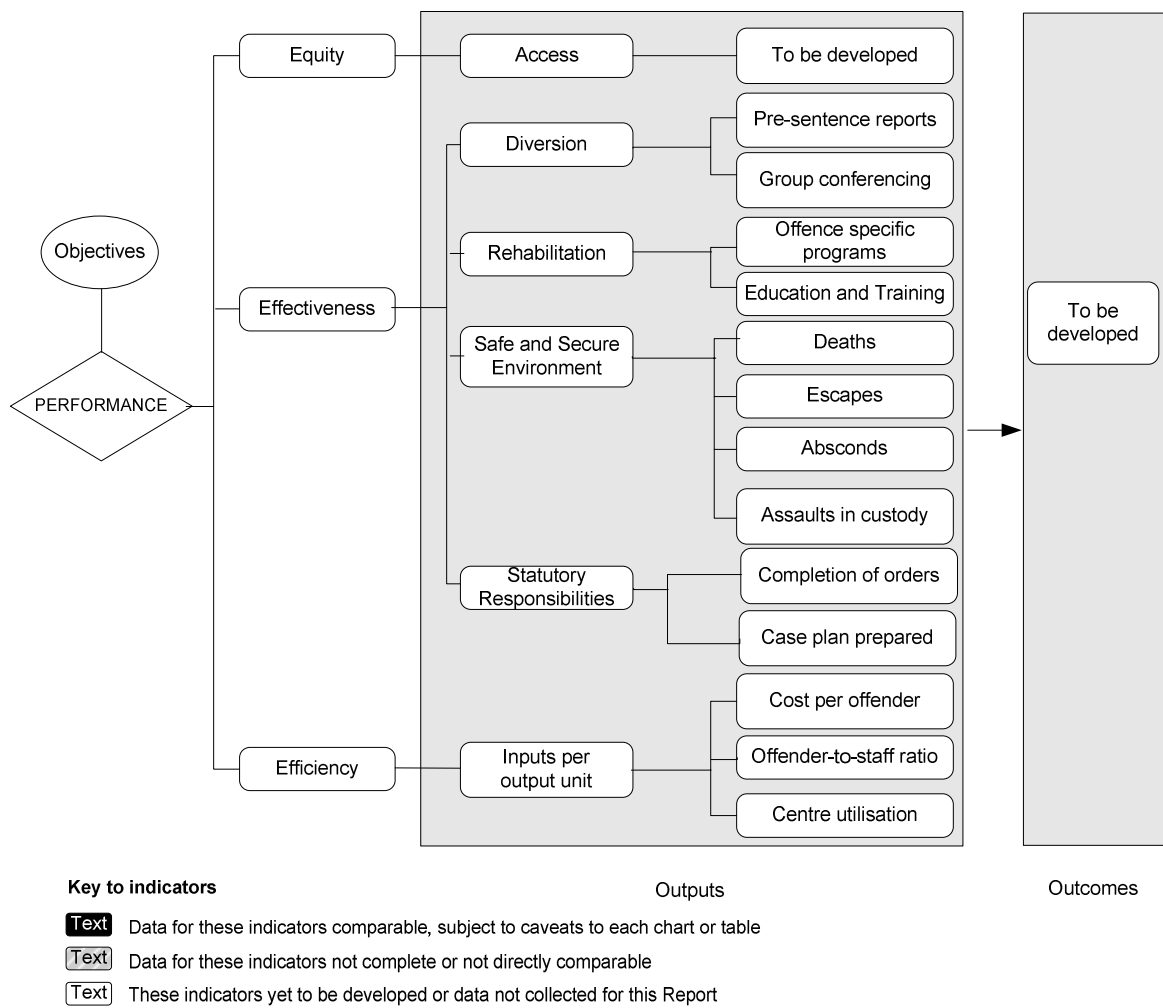
Box 15.30 Objectives for juvenile justice services

Juvenile justice services aim to contribute to the reduction in frequency or severity of youth offending, recognise the rights of victims and promote community safety. Juvenile justice services seek to achieve these aims by:

- assisting young people to address their offending behaviour and take responsibility for the effect their behaviour has on victims and the wider community
- enabling the interests and views of victims to be heard
- contributing to the diversion of young offenders to alternative services
- recognising the importance of the families and communities of young offenders, particularly Indigenous communities, in the provision of services and programmes
- providing services that are designed to rehabilitate young offenders and reintegrate them into their community.

The performance indicator framework for juvenile justice services is included for the first time in the 2009 Report (figure 15.18).

Figure 15.18 Performance indicators for juvenile justice services



Outputs

Outputs are the actual services delivered (while outcomes are the impact of these services on the status of an individual or group) (see chapter 1, section 1.5).

Equity and access

Equity and access indicators are a key area for further development in future reports. These will be indicators of governments' objective to ensure that all clients have fair and equitable access to services on the basis of relative need and available resources. These indicators are under development.

Effectiveness

Diversion — pre-sentence reports

Box 15.31 Pre-sentence reports

'Pre-sentence reports' (Pre-sentence reports completion rate) is an indicator of governments' objective to ensure that accurate and timely advice is provided to the court to inform decision-making.

The pre-sentence reports completion rate is defined as the number of written reports provided by juvenile justice agencies to a court in response to a request for pre-sentence reports, as a proportion of all court requests to juvenile justice agencies for written pre-sentence reports.

A pre-sentence report provides a court with relevant information about the assessed factors that contributed to a young person's offence and explores programs and services that could be provided to address the offending behaviour. A pre-sentence report is prepared when ordered by a court after a young person has pleaded, or has been found, guilty of an offence

A high rate for this indicator is desirable.

Diversion — group conferencing

Box 15.32 Group conferencing

This indicator and associated measures are currently under development.

Rehabilitation — offence specific programs

Box 15.33 Offence specific programs

This indicator and associated measures are currently under development.

Box 15.34 Education and training

‘Education and training’ (education and training rate) is an indicator of governments’ objectives of providing program interventions in education or training to increase the chances of successful re-integration into the community.

The education and training indicator has two measures:

- the number of young people of compulsory school age in custody participating in education and/or training, as a percentage of all young people of compulsory school age in custody
- the number of young people not of compulsory school age in custody participating in education and/or training, as a percentage of all young people not of compulsory school age in custody.

Compulsory school age refers to individual state/territory requirements for a young person to participate in school which are based primarily on age (see chapter 4 of the Report for further information).

Education and/or training refers to school education or an accredited education or training course under the Australian Qualifications Framework.

Exclusions include young people not under juvenile justice supervision (for example, in police custody) and young people whose situation may exclude their participation in education programs (including those on temporary leave or work release; who are medically unable to participate; in isolation; and, on remand or sentence for less than 7 days).

A high ‘education and training’ participation rate is desirable.

Box 15.35 Deaths

‘Deaths (detainees)’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that juvenile justice agencies provide a safe and secure environment for young people in custody.

‘Deaths (detainees)’ is defined as the number of young people who died while in custody, as a proportion of all young people in custody.

The scope of this indicator is restricted to those young people who died while in the legal and/or physical custody of a juvenile justice agency, but does include those who died in, or en route to, an external medical facility as a result of becoming ill or being injured in custody (even if not escorted by juvenile justice agency workers).

A zero rate for this indicator is desirable.

Box 15.36 Escapes

‘Escapes’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure that juvenile justice agencies provide a safe and secure environment for young people in custody, and the community.

‘Escapes’ has two measures, defined as:

- the number of escapes from a juvenile justice detention centre, as a proportion of all young people in custody
- the number of escapes during periods of escorted movements, as a proportion of all periods of escorted movements.

An escape from a juvenile justice detention centre is defined as the breach of a secure perimeter or defined boundary of a juvenile justice detention centre by a young person under the supervision of the centre.

A period of escorted movement is defined as a period of time in which a young person is in the custody of the juvenile justice agency while outside a detention centre. The period of escorted movement ends when the young person is returned to the detention centre, or is no longer in the legal or physical custody of the juvenile justice agency. An escape from an escorted movement is defined as the failure of a young person to remain in the custody of a supervising juvenile justice worker or approved service provider during a period of escorted movement.

An escape is counted each time a young person escapes. For example, if a young person escapes three times in the counting period, three escapes are recorded; if three young people escape at the same time, this is counted as three escapes.

A zero rate for this indicator is desirable.

Safe and secure environment — absconds

Box 15.37 Absconds

'Absconds' (absconds from unescorted leave) is an indicator of governments' objectives to appropriately manage young people while they are in the legal custody of a juvenile justice detention centre. This includes the provision of appropriate assessment, planning and supervision to enable young people to undertake unescorted temporary leave from detention centres. Unescorted leave may be undertaken for the purposes of providing opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration through activities such as education, training, employment, accommodation as well as counselling/treatment.

This indicator is defined as the number of young people who have unescorted temporary leave and fail to return to custody, as a proportion of all young people who have unescorted temporary leave .

A zero or low rate is desirable and indicates that appropriate assessment, planning and supervision are in place during the temporary leave.

Safe and secure environment — assaults in custody

Box 15.38 Assaults in custody

This indicator and associated measures are currently under development.

Statutory responsibilities — completion of orders

Box 15.39 Completion of orders

This indicator and associated measures are currently under development.

Statutory responsibilities — case plan prepared

Box 15.40 Case plan prepared

'Case plan prepared' is an indicator of governments' objective to ensure that juvenile justice agencies support young people to minimise the likelihood of re-offending by addressing their offending-related needs.

'Case plan prepared' is defined as the number of eligible young people who had a documented case plan prepared within six weeks of commencing a sentenced order, as a proportion of all eligible young people.

An eligible young person is one who:

- is serving a sentenced order that requires case management
- does not have a current and valid case plan already in place when the sentenced order commences.

A high rate for this indicator is desirable.

Efficiency

Cost per offender

Box 15.41 Cost per offender

This indicator and associated measures are currently under development.

Offender-to-staff ratio

Box 15.42 Offender-to-staff ratio

This indicator and associated measures are currently under development.

Centre utilisation

Box 15.43 Centre utilisation

This indicator and associated measures are currently under development.

Outcomes

Outcomes are the impact of services on the status of an individual or group (while outputs are the actual services delivered) (see chapter 1, section 1.5).

Outcome indicators for juvenile justice services are yet to be developed. The Steering Committee has identified outcome indicators as an important element of the performance indicator framework to develop for future reports.

15.7 Future directions in juvenile justice reporting

The AJJA has formed a working group to develop national performance indicators for juvenile justice. The indicators are being developed in three stages:

- Stage 1 indicators are included in detail in the performance indicator boxes within section 15.6
- Stage 2 indicators (all remaining indicators of equity and effectiveness) are currently under development
- Stage 3 involves the development of the efficiency and outcome indicators. Development of these indicators will follow the completion of stages 1 and 2.

15.8 Profile of supported accommodation and assistance services

Service overview

Supported accommodation and assistance services aim to assist people who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless as a result of a crisis, including women and children escaping domestic violence.

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) was established in 1985 to bring homelessness programs funded by individual State and Territory governments and the Australian Government under one nationally coordinated program. The current program (SAAP V) is governed by the *Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994*. This specifies that the overall aim of SAAP is to provide transitional supported accommodation and related support services to assist homeless people achieve the maximum degree of self-reliance and independence (AIHW 2008b).

Clients are offered a range of services through SAAP. These include:

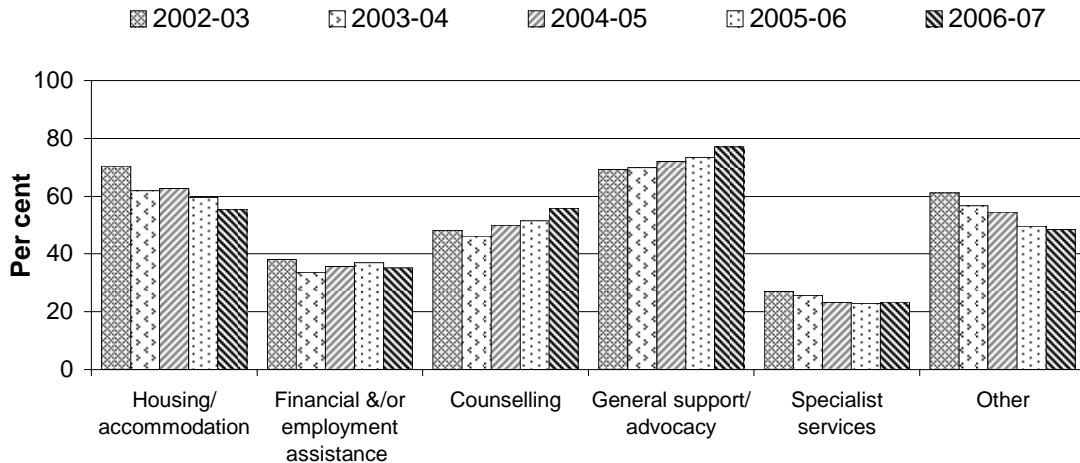
- supported accommodation
- counselling
- advocacy
- links to housing
- health, education and employment services
- outreach support
- brokerage and meals services
- financial and employment assistance.

The main source of SAAP information in this report is the SAAP National Data Collection (NDC). SAAP data for 2006-07 are available for this report, with selected financial data available for 2007-08.

Nationally, in 2006-07, housing and accommodation services were provided in 55.5 per cent of support periods. Financial and employment assistance (35.2 per cent), personal support (55.9 per cent), general support and advocacy (77.1 per cent), and specialist services (23.3 per cent) were also commonly provided. There has been some change in the proportions of types of service provided by SAAP agencies over time (figure 15.19). For example, in 2002-03,

housing and accommodation constituted 70.5 per cent of support periods and counselling constituted 48.2 per cent.

Figure 15.19 **Services received during a SAAP support period^a**



^a Totals do not add to 100 per cent because agencies may provide more than one type of service during a single support period.

Source: SAAP National Data Collection Agency (NDCA), *Administrative Data and Client Collections* (unpublished); table 15A.175.

Size and scope

Support services funded by SAAP are provided by agencies to a range of groups. These include homeless families, single men and women, young people and adults and children escaping domestic violence.

At least 1539 agencies were funded under the SAAP program in 2006-07 and included non-government, community or local government agencies (AIHW 2008b) (table 15A.176). Services were delivered in 2006-07 by agencies targeting:

- young people (35.4 per cent of agencies)
- women escaping domestic violence (24.0 per cent)
- families (8.4 per cent)
- single men (6.4 per cent)
- single women (3.0 per cent)
- multiple client groups (22.7 per cent) (table 15A.176).

SAAP agencies also vary in their service delivery model. The most common models in 2006-07 were the provision of medium term to long term supported

accommodation (40.0 per cent) and the provision of crisis or short term supported accommodation (31.1 per cent). Agencies also provide services other than accommodation, such as outreach support, day support, and telephone information and referral. Agencies might also provide multiple types of services and agency support. The proportions of agencies delivering particular service models have remained relatively stable since 2002-03 (table 15A.177).

SAAP and the link with other services

Families and children in crisis (such as those escaping domestic violence or experiencing homelessness) are often subject to considerable stress, violence and transience, all of which have a negative impact on children. As a result, some children assisted by SAAP may have also had contact with child protection and out-of-home care services, or may have been subject to a current or past care and protection order. In 2006-07, 69 100 children were accompanying a parent or guardian who received substantial SAAP support (AIHW 2008b). Research using 2004-05 data indicates that 49.5 per cent of these children were accompanying a female parent or guardian escaping domestic violence (AIHW 2006b).

Close links also exist with other forms of housing assistance reported in the Housing chapter of the Report (chapter 16), which focuses on the performance of government in providing public, Indigenous and community housing under the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) and financial assistance under the Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) program. The Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) is a special purpose program funded under the CSHA which provides funding to State and Territory housing authorities to support SAAP agencies, by providing infrastructure funding for SAAP accommodation.

Some individuals and families utilise both SAAP services and services described in the Housing chapter, as people tend to move from homelessness to social housing, or may be in receipt of SAAP services and accommodated in social housing.² In 2006-07, approximately 17.4 per cent of former SAAP clients, who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining independent housing, had moved to public housing (table 15A.195).

Roles and responsibilities

SAAP is jointly funded by the Australian, State and Territory governments. The Coordination and Development Committee (CAD) of senior Australian, State and

² Social housing is generally understood to include public and community housing. For further information on these forms of housing assistance, see chapter 16 (box 16.2).

Territory government officials oversees the development and implementation of the program at the national level, including coordination at the national level of research, strategy, and other planning and development activities. The State and Territory governments are responsible for the day-to-day management of the program including the distribution of funding to SAAP funded agencies (see box 15.44 for list of relevant departments in 2007-08). Non-government agencies, with some local government participation, deliver most SAAP services.

Box 15.44 Supported Accommodation and Assistance Services

<i>NSW</i>	Department of Community Services (DOCS)
<i>VIC</i>	Department of Human Services (DHS)
<i>QLD</i>	Department of Communities (DOC)
<i>WA</i>	Department for Child Protection (DCP)
<i>SA</i>	Department for Families and Communities (DFC)
<i>TAS</i>	Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
<i>ACT</i>	Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DDHCS)
<i>NT</i>	Department of Health and Community Services (DHCS)
<i>Aust</i>	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

Funding

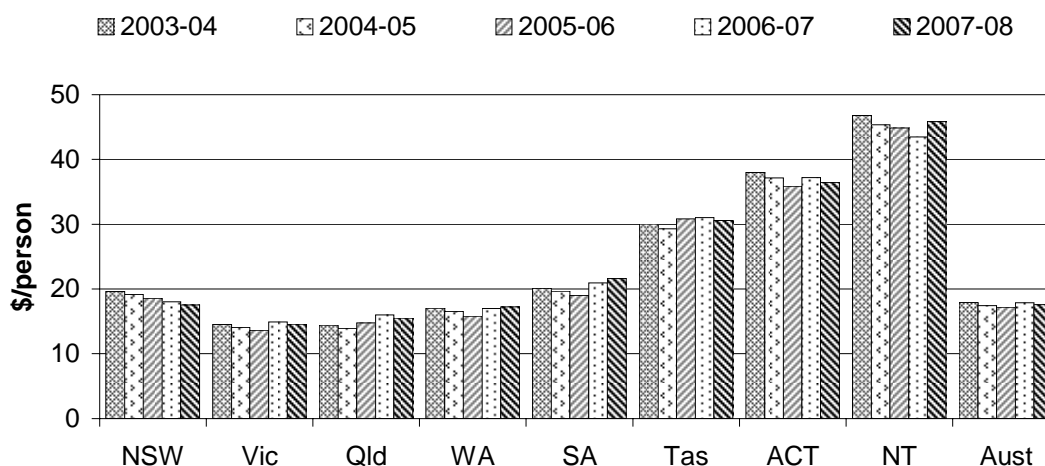
Recurrent funding of SAAP services was approximately \$372.9 million in 2007-08 (table 15A.179), of which the Australian Government contributed 49.8 per cent and the State and Territory governments contributed 50.1 per cent (table 15A.178). The Australian Government expenditure includes funding for Innovation and Investment pilot projects and \$500 000 allocated to national priorities funding. Since 2005-06, the State and Territory governments contribution has been increasing as a proportion of the overall recurrent SAAP funding (table 15A.178).

Nationally, real recurrent SAAP funding per head of population has remained relatively stable from 2003-04 to 2007-08 (table 15A.180). These figures varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.20).

In 2007-08, in addition to the amounts determined in agreements between jurisdictions and the Australian Government, some jurisdictions made recurrent allocations to SAAP services or SAAP-like activities (for example, to assist service

viability). These additional funds are not included in the above figures, but may be included in future Reports.

Figure 15.20 Real recurrent SAAP funding per person in the residential population (2007-08 dollars)^{a, b, c}



^a Includes total recurrent allocations (including State and Territory level allocations for program administration). ^b Historical population rates used in this figure may differ from those in previous Reports, as historical population data have been revised using Final Rebased Estimated Resident Population (ERP) data following the 2006 Census of Population and Housing (for 31 December 2003 to 2005). The total population figure is not indicative of the demand for SAAP services. ^c Real recurrent funding is calculated using ABS gross domestic product expenditure implicit price deflator (2007-08=100) (table AA.26).

Source: FaHCSIA (unpublished); table 15A.180; table AA2.

15.9 Framework of performance indicators for supported accommodation and assistance services

The framework of performance indicators for supported accommodation and assistance services is based on the shared government objectives for SAAP services (box 15.45).

Box 15.45 Objectives for SAAP services

The overall aim of SAAP is to provide transitional supported accommodation and a range of related support services, to help people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness to achieve the maximum possible degree of self-reliance and independence. Within this aim, the goals are to:

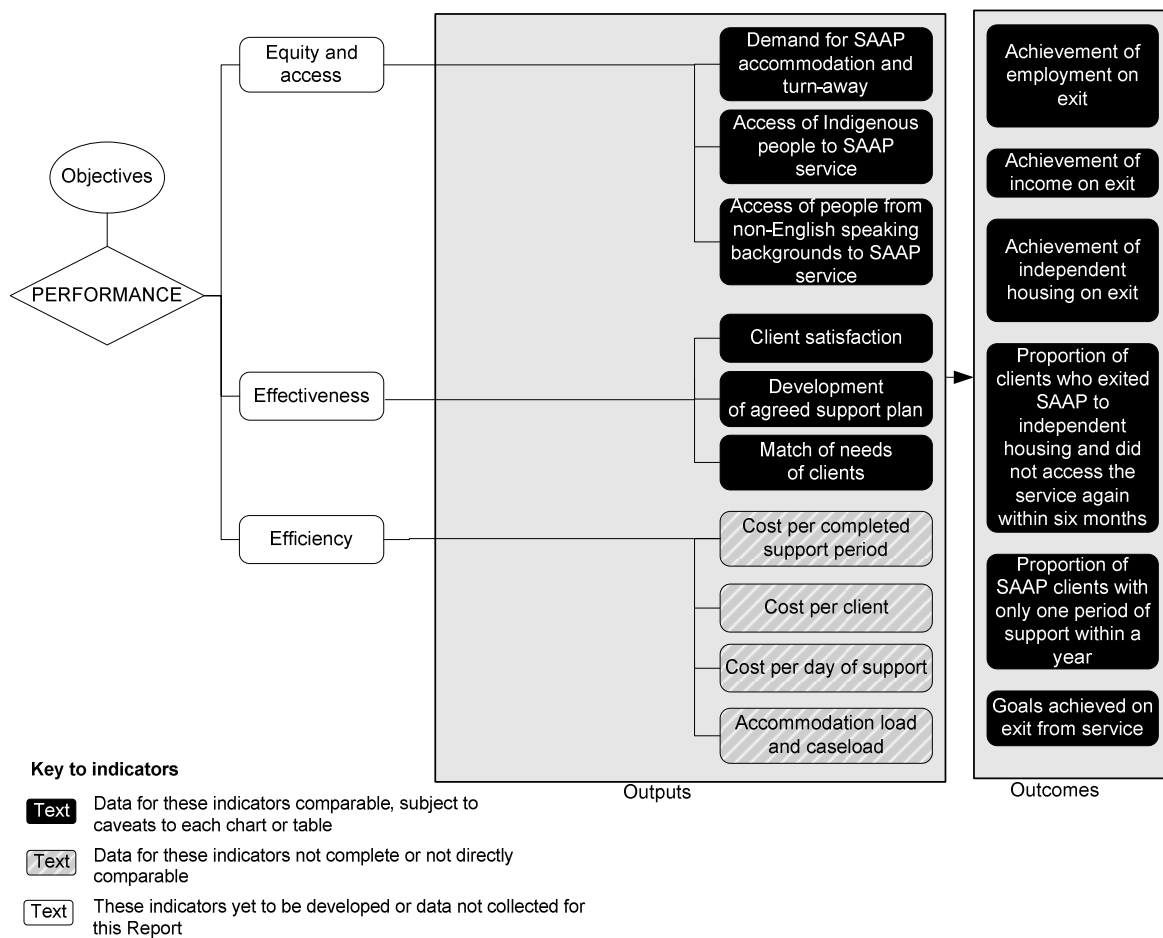
- resolve crises
- re-establish family links where appropriate
- re-establish the capacity of clients to live independently of SAAP.

SAAP services should be provided in an equitable and efficient manner.

The performance indicator framework provides information on equity, efficiency and effectiveness, and distinguishes the outputs and outcomes of SAAP services (figure 15.21).

The performance indicator framework shows which data are comparable in the 2009 Report. 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).

Figure 15.21 Performance indicators for SAAP services



15.10 Key supported accommodation and assistance performance indicator results

The data collection for SAAP allows for the measurement of the number of clients and of the number and types of services provided to clients, but is subject to some limitations (box 15.46).

Box 15.46 Information to be considered when analysing SAAP data

The following information needs to be considered when analysing SAAP data.

- Informed consent is an essential component of the integrity of the data. The principle of client/consumer rights (which underpins informed consent) recognises that clients do not receive services under a mandatory order. They have the right to accept or reject the services offered and they have the right to provide or not provide information while receiving SAAP services.
- Clients consented to provide personal details for the SAAP client collection for 81.1 per cent of support periods in 2006-07. A weighting system has been developed to adjust for agency non-participation (87.2 per cent of agencies participated in the client collection) and non-consent (AIHW 2008b).
- Agency participation is essential to ensure accurate reflection of the work done under the SAAP program. While the majority of jurisdictions had participation rates of 90 per cent or more in 2006-07, the ACT and Victoria had participation rates of 76 per cent and 78 per cent respectively. These lower participation rates were the result of restructuring and consolidation of services in the ACT and creation of new agencies in Victoria. A number of services affected by these changes did not submit data. Weighting for participation assumes that agencies operated a full year. Partial year participation will result in a variation in the number of support periods and clients. This assumption has a more significant impact on smaller jurisdictions.

Outputs

Outputs are the actual services delivered (while outcomes are the impact of these services on the status of an individual or group) (see chapter 1, section 1.5).

Equity and access

Demand for SAAP accommodation and turn-away

‘Demand for SAAP accommodation and turn-away’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure all Australians have equitable access to SAAP services on the basis of relative need (box 15.47).

Box 15.47 Demand for SAAP accommodation and turn-away

‘Demand for SAAP accommodation and turn-away’ is defined as the extent to which the demand for accommodation is met or unmet. Unmet demand occurs when a homeless person expressly asking for supported accommodation cannot be provided with that assistance (although one-off assistance may be provided). Two measures of the proportion of people whose valid request for immediate SAAP accommodation cannot be met are reported:

- turn-away as the proportion of people requiring new SAAP accommodation, defined as the average daily percentage of people who could not be accommodated relative to all people making valid requests for immediate SAAP accommodation. This provides an indication of a person’s likelihood of obtaining SAAP accommodation.
- turn-away as the proportion of total demand for SAAP accommodation, defined as the average daily percentage of people who could not be accommodated relative to all people who required new and immediate SAAP accommodation or who were continuing their accommodation from the previous day. This provides a measure of the overall ability of SAAP to meet the demand for accommodation on an average day during the Demand for Accommodation Collection period.

A higher or increasing proportion of valid requests receiving accommodation is desirable.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable across jurisdictions. However, these data are not necessarily comparable over time due to different collection periods in different years.

Data for assessing access to SAAP services are sourced from the Demand for Accommodation Collection and the Client Collection. The Demand for Accommodation Collection measures the levels of met and unmet demand for SAAP accommodation by collecting information about requests for accommodation by individuals or groups over two weeks each year. These data are used in conjunction with Client Collection data to calculate the ‘turn-away’ rate for demand for SAAP accommodation.

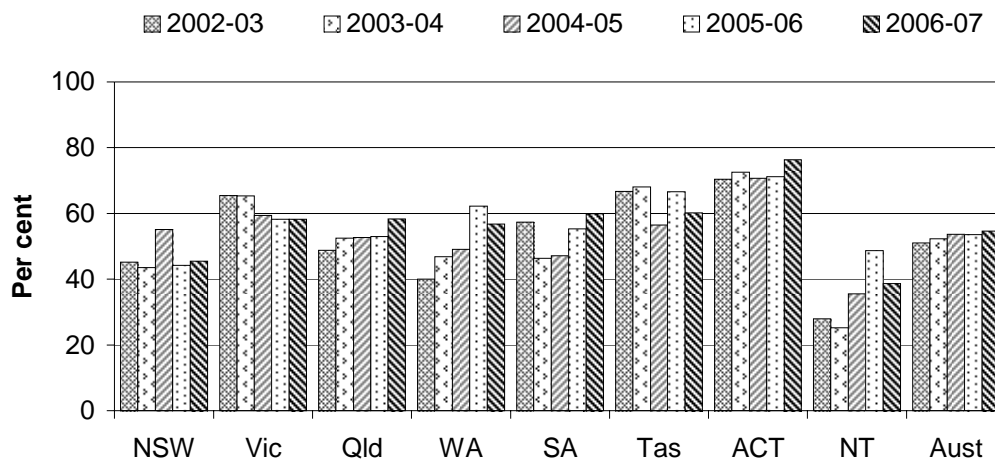
The Demand for Accommodation Collection collects data on ‘valid unmet requests’ for immediate accommodation. ‘Valid unmet requests’ excludes requests made at an agency, where the person or group is determined to be inappropriate for the targeting of the agency, where there is no fee-free accommodation available at that time³, or where offered assistance is refused. For the Client Collection, the accommodation status of a client on a particular day is based on the reported periods of accommodation within a support period.

³ ‘No fee-free accommodation available’ refers to situations where the person/group is not given accommodation because they cannot meet the financial requirements (for example, fees) for that accommodation.

As only data from agencies that participated in both the Client Collection and the Demand for Accommodation Collection are used for the calculations, data included in this report may understate activities of SAAP agencies. Additionally, the two one-week sample periods over which data are collected may not be representative of the eventual success of clients accessing SAAP services over the full year (see notes to tables 15A.181-182).

Data on the proportion of people with valid requests for SAAP accommodation who were turned away are reported for the years 2002-03 to 2006-07. Nationally, 54.6 per cent of adults and unaccompanied children requesting immediate new SAAP accommodation on a given day were turned away in 2006-07. This proportion varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.22).

Figure 15.22 Turn-away of adults and unaccompanied children as a proportion of people requiring new SAAP accommodation^{a, b, c, d}



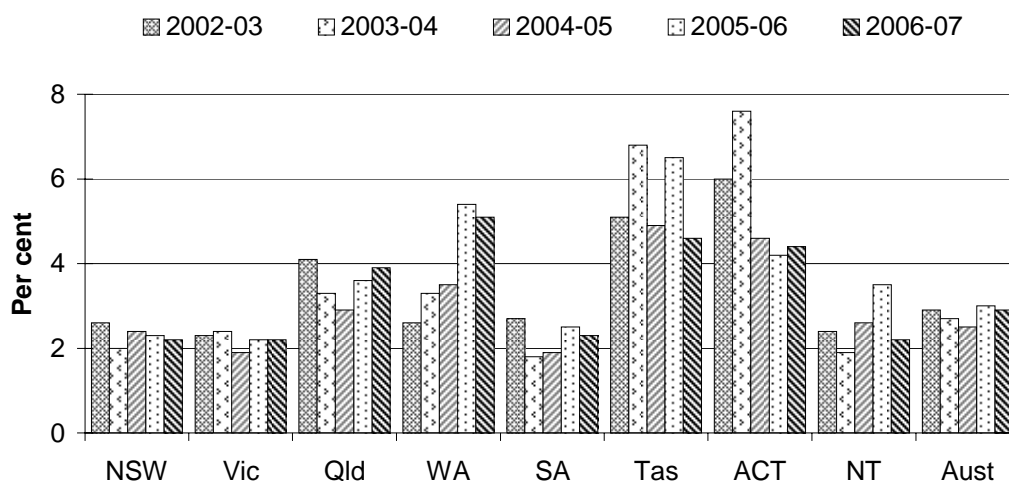
^a A two-week Demand for Accommodation Collection is conducted annually to gather information about homeless people whose requests for accommodation were unable to be met by SAAP agencies. The collections were held in December and May, or August and May, of each financial year. ^b Comparisons between years should be treated with caution, due to variation in participation rates, differing imputation methods and because the collections were held on different dates each year. ^c The denominator for this indicator refers to adults and unaccompanied children. ^d See notes to table 15A.181 for more detailed data caveats.

Source: AIHW (2008) *Demand for SAAP accommodation by Homeless People 2006-07: A report from the SAAP national data collection*. SAAP NDCA report series 12. Cat. No. HOU 186; table 15A.181.

Nationally, the number of adults and unaccompanied children who made valid requests for SAAP accommodation but could not be accommodated accounted for 2.9 per cent of the total demand for SAAP accommodation in 2006-07 (total demand includes adults and unaccompanied children). This proportion varied across jurisdictions. Total demand for SAAP accommodation is measured by the total

number of people who made requests for immediate SAAP accommodation and those who were continuing their accommodation from the previous day (figure 15.23).

Figure 15.23 Turn-away of adults and unaccompanied children as the proportion of total demand for SAAP accommodation^{a, b, c, d}



^a A two-week Demand for Accommodation Collection is conducted annually to gather information about homeless people whose requests for accommodation were unable to be met by SAAP agencies. The collections were held in December and May, or August and May, of each financial year. ^b Comparisons between years should be treated with caution, due to variation in participation rates, differing imputation methods and because the collections were held on different dates each year. ^c The denominator for this indicator refers to adults and unaccompanied children. ^d See notes to table 15A.182 for more detailed data caveats.

Source: AIHW (2008) *Demand for SAAP accommodation by Homeless People 2006-07: A report from the SAAP national data collection*. SAAP NDCA report series 12. Cat. No. HOU 186; table 15A.182.

Requests for SAAP accommodation were not met for a number of reasons in 2006-07, including lack of available accommodation (59.7 per cent), no vacancies at the referral agency (21.8 per cent), type of accommodation requested is not provided (6.8 per cent) and insufficient staff (2.0 per cent) (table 15A.190).

Access of Indigenous people to SAAP service

‘Access of Indigenous people to SAAP service’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure all Australians have equitable access to SAAP services on the basis of relative need (box 15.48).

Box 15.48 Access of Indigenous people to SAAP service

'Access of Indigenous people to SAAP service' is defined as the comparison between the representation of Indigenous people among all people whose valid requests for SAAP accommodation were unmet and their representation among SAAP clients who were accommodated during the year.

A high and equivalent proportion of valid requests receiving assistance is desirable.

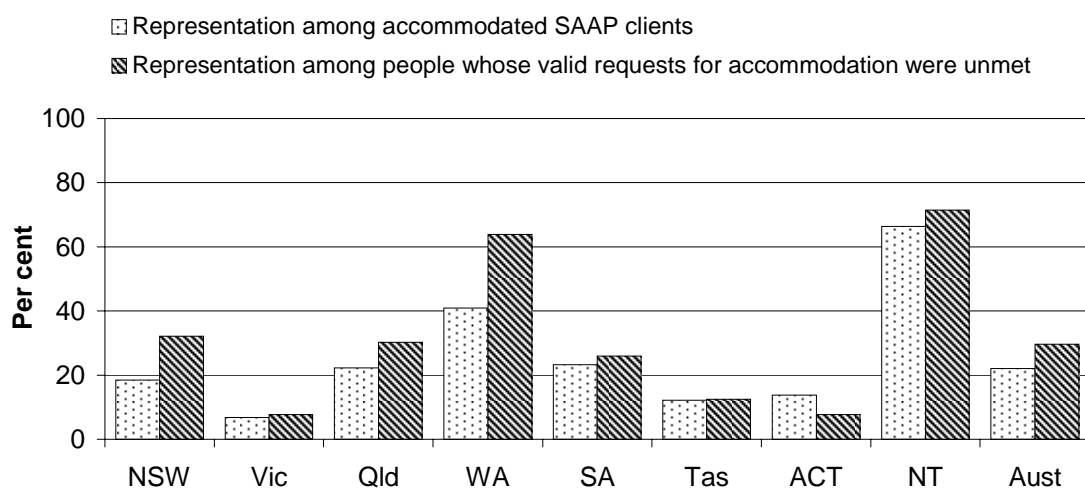
The indicator measures the extent to which the demand for assistance from Indigenous people is met or unmet. Unmet demand occurs when a homeless person expressly asking for supported accommodation, or support, cannot be provided with that assistance (although one-off assistance may be provided).

Supported accommodation and assistance services target homeless people in general, but access by special needs groups (such as Indigenous people) is particularly important.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, Indigenous people made up 29.7 per cent of all people whose valid requests for accommodation did not result in accommodation assistance in 2006-07 — a proportion greater than Indigenous clients among all accommodated SAAP clients (22.1 per cent). This result varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.24).

Figure 15.24 **Proportion of Indigenous people among all accommodated SAAP clients and among people whose valid requests for accommodation were unmet, 2006-07^a**



^a See notes to table 15A.183 for details of data definitions.

Source: SAAP NDCA *Client and Demand for Accommodation Collections* (unpublished); AIHW (2008) *Demand for SAAP accommodation by Homeless People 2006-07: A report from the SAAP national data collection*. SAAP NDCA report series 12. Cat. No. HOU 186; table 15A.183.

Access of people from non-English speaking backgrounds to SAAP service

‘Access of people from non-English speaking backgrounds to SAAP service’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure all Australians have equitable access to SAAP services on the basis of relative need (box 15.49).

Box 15.49 Access of people from non-English speaking backgrounds to SAAP service

‘Access of people from non-English speaking backgrounds to SAAP service’ is defined as the comparison between the representation of people from non-English speaking backgrounds among all people whose valid requests for SAAP accommodation were unmet, and their representation among SAAP clients who were accommodated during the year.

A high and equivalent proportion of valid requests receiving assistance is desirable.

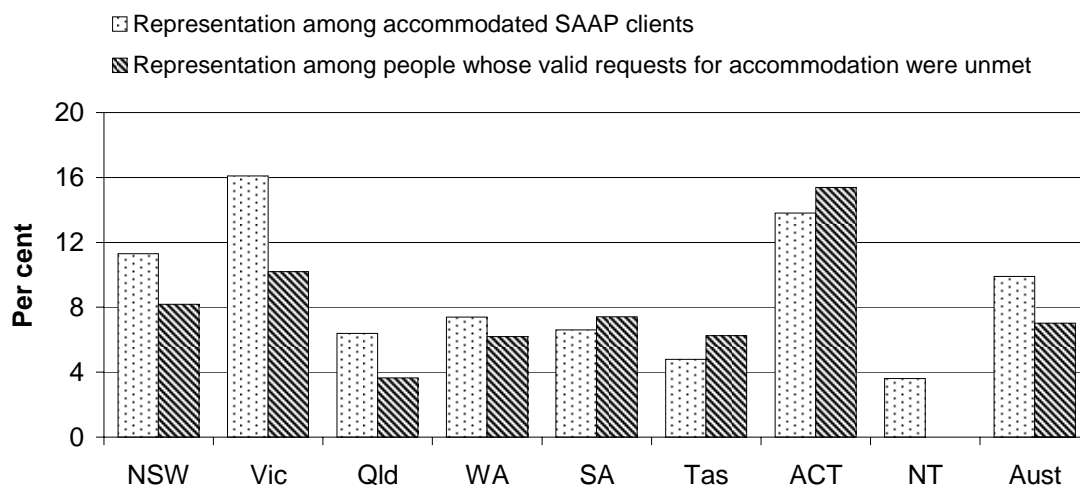
The indicator measures the extent to which the demand for assistance from people from non-English speaking backgrounds is met or unmet. Unmet demand occurs when a homeless person expressly asking for supported accommodation, or support, cannot be provided with that assistance (although one-off assistance may be provided).

Supported accommodation and assistance services target homeless people in general, but access by special needs groups (such as people from non-English speaking backgrounds) is particularly important.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, the proportion of people from non-English speaking backgrounds among all people whose valid requests for accommodation did not result in accommodation assistance was 7.0 per cent in 2006-07 — lower than that of people from non-English speaking backgrounds among all accommodated SAAP clients (9.9 per cent). This result varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.25).

Figure 15.25 Proportion of people from non-English speaking backgrounds among all accommodated SAAP clients and among people whose valid requests for accommodation were unmet, 2006-07^a



^a See notes to table 15A.184 for details of data definitions.

Source: SAAP NDCA *Client and Demand for Accommodation Collections* (unpublished); AIHW (2008) *Demand for SAAP accommodation by Homeless People 2006-07: A report from the SAAP national data collection*. SAAP NDCA report series 12. Cat. No. HOU 186; table 15A.184.

Effectiveness

Client satisfaction

'Client satisfaction' is an indicator of governments' objective to provide high quality services that meet the needs of SAAP recipients (box 15.50).

Box 15.50 Client satisfaction

'Client satisfaction' is defined as the proportion of clients whose overall satisfaction with the assistance they had received from the SAAP service was either 'good' or 'really good'.

A higher proportion suggests greater client satisfaction with the overall SAAP service.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data for the client satisfaction indicator are sourced from the national SAAP client satisfaction survey, which was conducted in 2003. As a result, new data for this indicator are not available for this Report. Data on client satisfaction relating to a

four week period beginning 11 November 2003 were included in the 2005 Report (SCRGSP 2005, pp. 15.47-48; CBSR 2004).

Development of agreed support plan

‘Development of agreed support plan’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide high quality services that are appropriately targeted to meet the needs of SAAP clients (box 15.51).

Box 15.51 Development of agreed support plan

‘Development of agreed support plan’ is defined as the number of closed support periods with an agreed support plan divided by the total number of closed support periods. Data are reported for all SAAP clients, and separately for Indigenous clients.

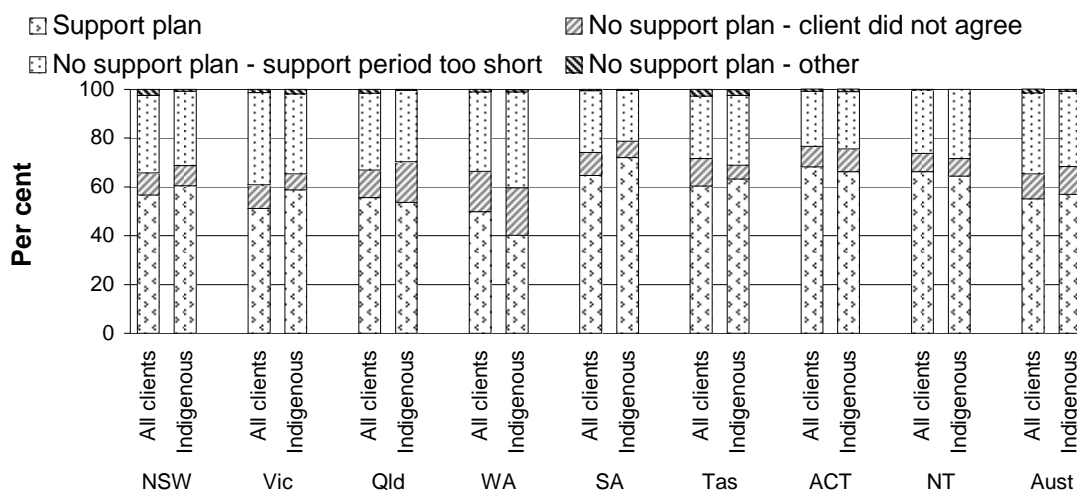
A higher proportion of support periods with agreed support plans is desirable.

However, in some instances, a support plan may be judged to be inappropriate (such as when a support period is short term).

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, there was an agreed support plan for 55.1 per cent of closed support periods for all clients in 2006-07 (compared to 57.0 per cent for Indigenous clients). These proportions varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.26).

Figure 15.26 Support periods, by the existence of a support plan, 2006-07^a



^a See notes to tables 15A.185-186 for more details of data definitions.

Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); tables 15A.185-186.

Match of needs of clients

'Match of needs of clients' is an indicator of governments' objective to ensure that SAAP services meet their client's individual needs (box 15.52).

Box 15.52 Match of needs of clients

'Match of needs of clients' is defined as the number of distinct services required by the clients that are provided as well as those referred to another agency, divided by the total number of distinct services required by SAAP clients.

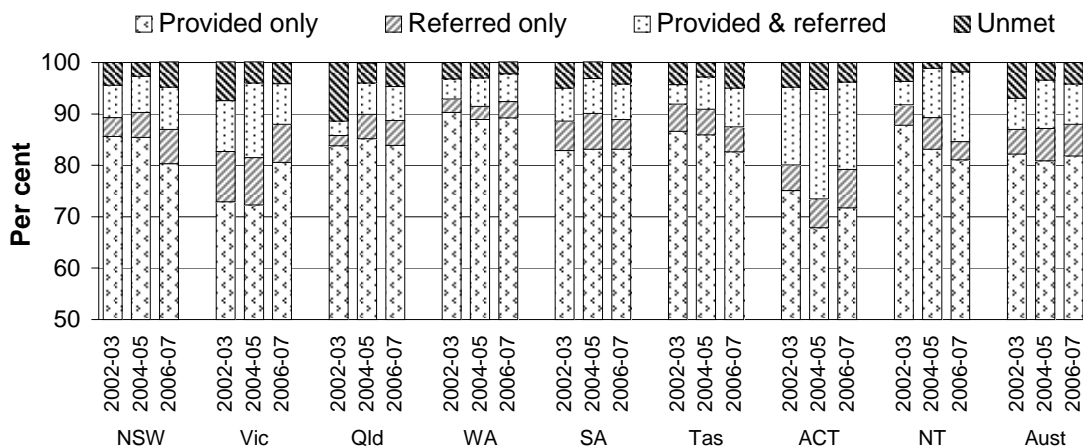
A higher proportion of clients who received services they needed, or who were referred to another agency, is desirable.

The range of services needed is broad (ranging from meals to laundry facilities to long term accommodation), so the effect of not providing these services varies. Data are reported for all SAAP clients, and separately for Indigenous people and people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, the proportion of clients who received needed services (including services provided by the initially approached agencies and/or referrals to another agency) was 95.8 per cent in 2006-07 (figure 15.27).

Figure 15.27 SAAP clients, by met and unmet support needs

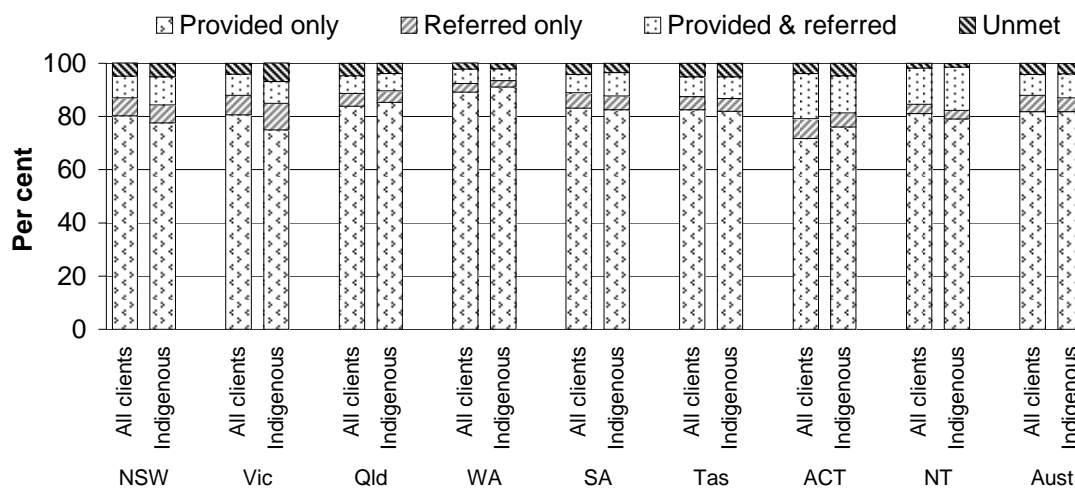


Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); table 15A.187.

The proportions for Indigenous clients (96.0 per cent) and clients from a non-English speaking background (96.4 per cent) who received services in 2006-07

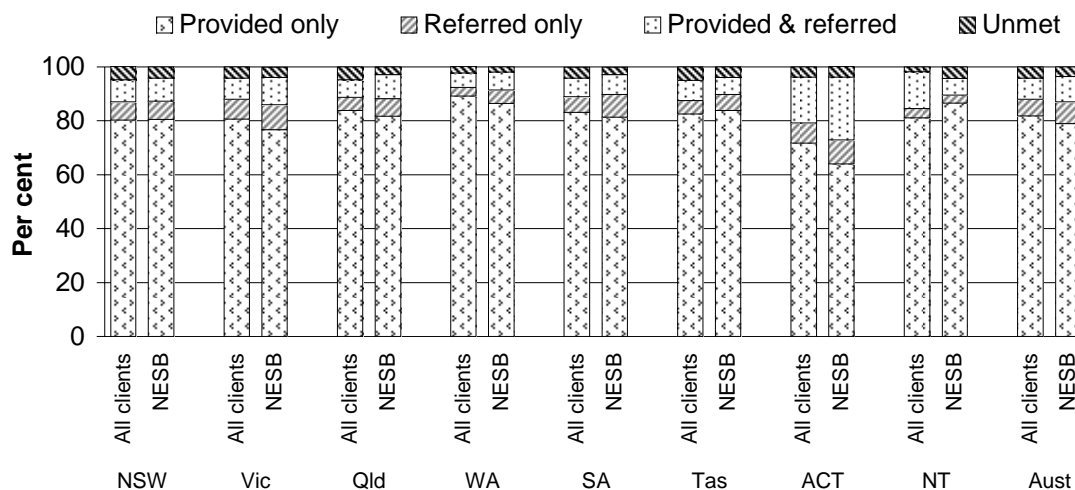
were similar to that for all clients. These proportions varied across jurisdictions (figures 15.28-29).

Figure 15.28 Indigenous clients, by met and unmet support needs, 2006-07



Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); tables 15A.187-188.

Figure 15.29 Clients from non-English speaking backgrounds, by met and unmet support needs, 2006-07



NESB = Non-English speaking background.

Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); tables 15A.187 and 15A.189.

Efficiency

Across jurisdictions, there are varying treatments of expenditure items (for example, superannuation) and different counting and reporting rules for generating financial data. Results reported for efficiency indicators may reflect these differences.

The funding figures used to calculate the following efficiency indicators include recurrent allocations to agencies provided by some jurisdictions in addition to the amounts determined in the agreements between these jurisdictions and the Australian Government.

Cost per completed support period

‘Cost per completed support period’ is an indicator of the governments’ objective to maximise the availability and quality of services through the efficient use of taxpayer resources (box 15.53).

Box 15.53 Cost per completed support period

‘Cost per completed support period’ is defined as total expenditure on SAAP services divided by the number of completed support periods (excluding casual clients, and adults and accompanying children with a valid unmet request for accommodation).

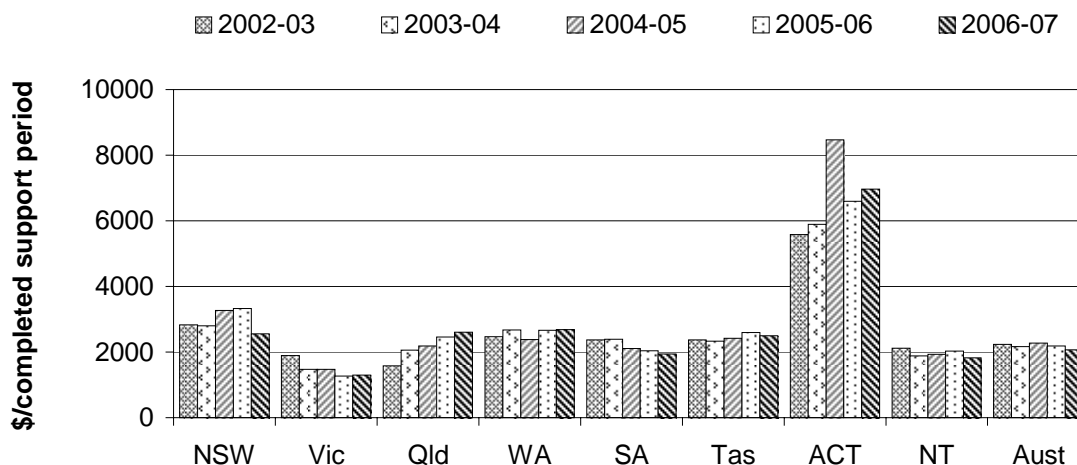
A lower cost per completed support period is desirable, but may also indicate lesser service quality.

This is a proxy indicator of efficiency, measuring government inputs per unit of output (unit cost), including only expenditure by service delivery providers. Unit cost indicators ideally include administration costs borne by State and Territory departments in administering services, but this is not yet possible. In addition, capital costs are excluded because capital funding for SAAP is provided under the CSHA through a special purpose program (the CAP).

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

The recurrent cost per completed support period (excluding potential clients and accompanying children) averaged \$2060 nationally and varied across jurisdictions in 2006-07 (figure 15.30).

Figure 15.30 **Real recurrent cost per completed support period (2006-07 dollars)^a**



^a See notes to table 15A.191 for detailed data caveats.

Source: SAAP NDCA Administrative Data and Client Collections (unpublished); table 15A.191.

Cost per client

‘Cost per client’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to maximise the availability and quality of services through the efficient use of taxpayer resources (box 15.54).

Box 15.54 **Cost per client**

‘Cost per client’ is defined as total expenditure on SAAP services divided by the number of clients accessing a bed or place over the year.

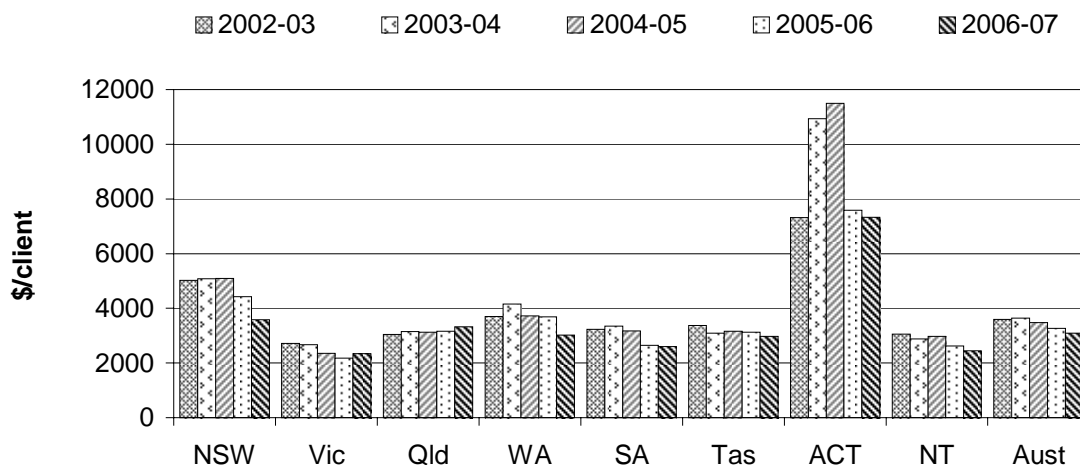
A lower cost per client is desirable, but may also indicate lesser service quality.

This is a proxy indicator of efficiency, measuring government inputs per unit of output (unit cost), including only expenditure by service delivery providers. Unit cost indicators ideally include administration costs borne by State and Territory departments in administering services, but this is not yet possible. In addition, capital costs are excluded because capital funding for SAAP is provided under the CSHA through a special purpose program (the CAP).

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Nationally, the recurrent cost per client accessing SAAP services was \$3090 and varied across jurisdictions in 2006-07 (figure 15.31).

Figure 15.31 Real recurrent cost per client accessing SAAP services (2006-07 dollars)^a



^a See notes to table 15A.192 for detailed data caveats.

Source: SAAP NDCA *Administrative Data and Client Collections* (unpublished); table 15A.192.

Cost per day of support

‘Cost per day of support’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to maximise the availability and quality of services through the efficient use of taxpayer resources (box 15.55).

Box 15.55 Cost per day of support

‘Cost per day of support’ is defined as total expenditure on SAAP services divided by the number of days of support for SAAP clients receiving support and/or supported accommodation (excluding casual clients, and adults and accompanying children with a valid unmet request for accommodation).

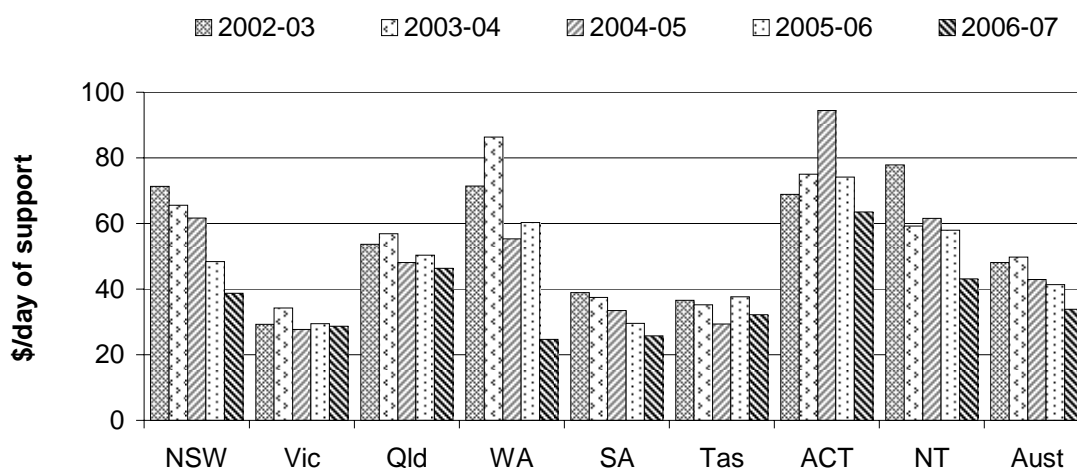
A lower cost per day of support is desirable, but may also indicate lesser service quality.

This is a proxy indicator of efficiency, measuring government inputs per unit of output (unit cost), including only expenditure by service delivery providers. Unit cost indicators ideally include administration costs borne by State and Territory departments in administering services, but this is not yet possible. In addition, capital costs are excluded because capital funding for SAAP is provided under the CSHA through a special purpose program (the CAP).

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

The recurrent cost per day of support for SAAP clients averaged \$34 nationally and varied across jurisdictions in 2006-07 (figure 15.32).

Figure 15.32 **Real recurrent cost per day of support for clients (2006-07 dollars)^a**



^a See notes to table 15A.193 for detailed data caveats.

Source: SAAP NDCA Administrative Data and Client Collections (unpublished); table 15A.193.

Accommodation load and caseload

‘Accommodation load’ and ‘caseload’ are indicators of governments’ objective to maximise the availability and quality of services through the efficient use of taxpayer resources (box 15.56).

Box 15.56 Accommodation load and caseload

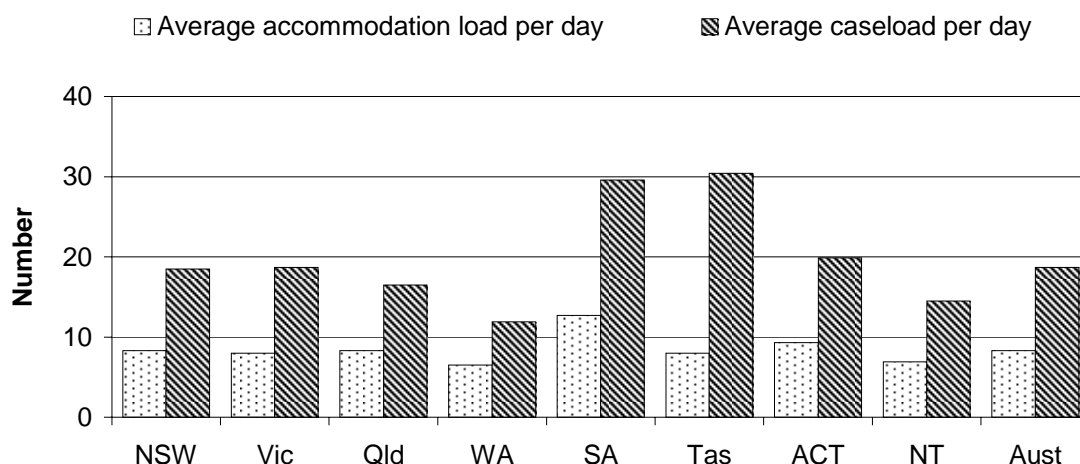
The average accommodation load is defined as the average number of people accommodated per day per agency. The average caseload is defined as the average number of people being supported per day per agency.

Average accommodation load and caseload are indicators of efficiency as they indicate levels of output by agencies. Accommodation load and caseload are likely to be affected by the size of the agencies funded under the SAAP Program.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

The national average daily accommodation load and caseload per agency were 8.3 and 18.7 respectively, and this varied across jurisdictions in 2006-07 (figure 15.33).

Figure 15.33 Average accommodation load and caseload per day, 2006-07^a



^a See notes to table 15A.194 for descriptions of how accommodation load and caseload were estimated.
 Source: SAAP NDCA Administrative Data and Client Collections (unpublished); table 15A.194.

Outcomes

Outcomes are the impact of services on the status of an individual or group (while outputs are the actual services delivered) (see chapter 1, section 1.5).

An important outcome of SAAP services is clients' achievement of self-reliance and independence. Characteristics that may indicate whether clients can live independently include their income, housing status and workforce status. These characteristics are recorded at the end of a client's support period.

In 2006, the SAAP CAD commissioned a research project on SAAP Impact on Client Self-reliance. The research was undertaken by the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) of the University of New South Wales. The study involved a survey of 630 SAAP clients who had received support for at least four weeks and had a case plan in place. These 630 clients came from 75 agencies that were broadly representative of all SAAP agencies.

In its report *Measuring the Impact of SAAP-funded Homelessness Services on Client Self-reliance* (FaHCSIA 2008a) the SPRC found that, on a ten-point scale representing the concept of 'getting back on my feet', two-thirds of respondents perceived they were at point eight or beyond. Only five per cent of respondents perceived they had made no progress at all. The factor that most influenced how respondents perceived their self-reliance was the length of time they had been accessing the service. There were no significant differences in outcomes at the

average level between Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients, or between clients from culturally or linguistically diverse background (CALD) and non-CALD clients. The report showed that SAAP clients perceive that SAAP is effective in helping them move towards self-reliance but also that many of the problems and barriers that led clients into homelessness are not susceptible to quick and easy solutions and may take considerable time, effort and resources to overcome.

Achievement of employment on exit

‘Achievement of employment on exit’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to enable clients to participate as productive and self-reliant members of society at the end of their support period (box 15.57).

Box 15.57 Achievement of employment on exit

‘Achievement of employment on exit’ is defined as the number of closed support periods for SAAP clients who sought assistance to obtain or maintain employment and training, and achieved employment after SAAP support, divided by the total number of closed support periods for clients who sought assistance to obtain or maintain employment. Support periods reported relate to these clients only.

Higher proportions of achievement of employment are desirable.

This indicator compares these clients’ employment status before and after they requested SAAP support. Data are reported for all SAAP clients, and separately for Indigenous clients.

This indicator relates to relatively short term outcomes — that is, outcomes for clients immediately after their support period. Longer term outcomes are important, but more difficult to measure.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

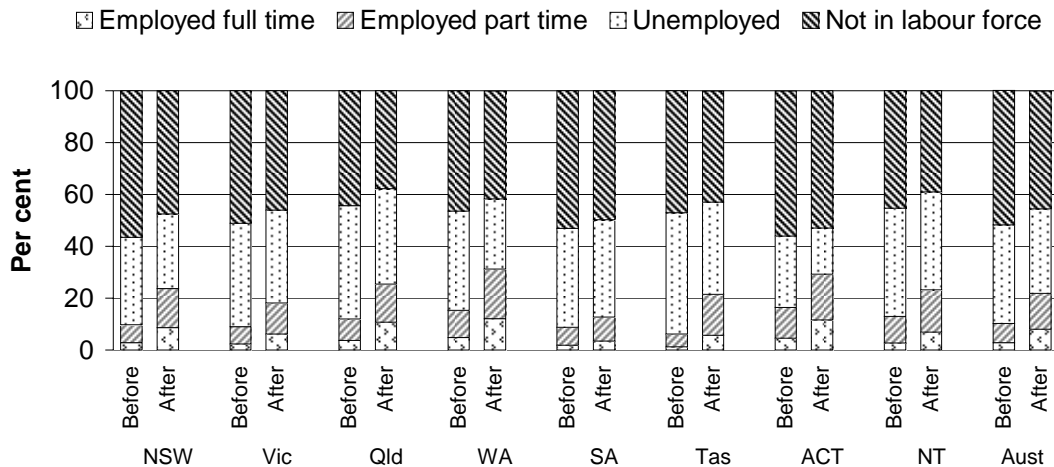
Nationally, of those clients who sought assistance to obtain or maintain employment and training when entering SAAP in 2006-07, the proportion of clients who were employed either full time or part time increased from 10.3 per cent before support to 21.9 per cent after support (8.0 per cent full time and 13.9 per cent part time). The proportions of clients who were unemployed decreased from 38.0 per cent before support to 32.5 per cent after support. The proportions of clients who were not in the labour force decreased from 51.8 per cent before support to 45.5 per cent after support. These proportions varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.34(a), table 15A.197).

Nationally, of those Indigenous clients who sought assistance to obtain or maintain employment and training when entering SAAP in 2006-07, the proportion of clients

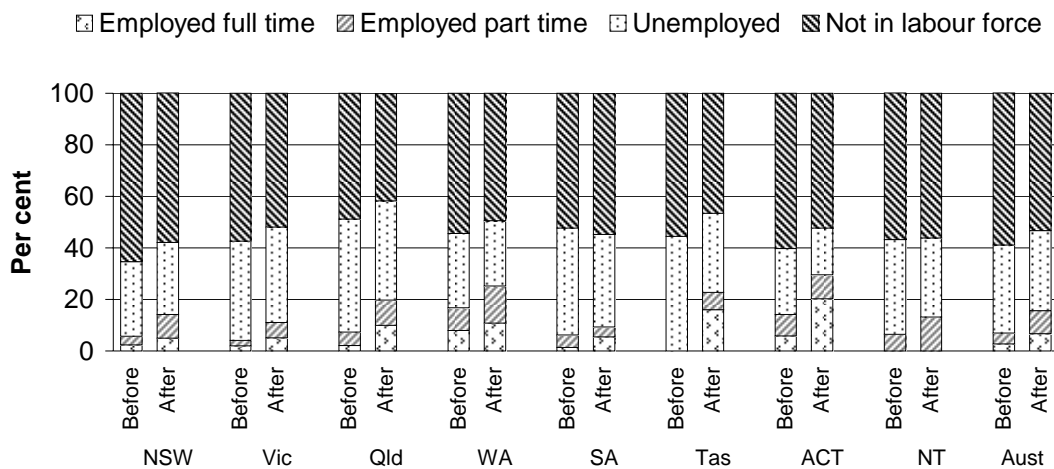
who were employed either full time or part time increased from 7.0 per cent before support to 15.7 per cent after support (6.7 per cent full time and 9.0 per cent part time). The proportion of clients who were unemployed decreased from 34.1 per cent before support to 31.0 per cent after support. The proportion of clients who were not in the labour force decreased from 59.0 per cent before support to 53.3 per cent after support. These proportions varied across jurisdictions (figure 15.34(b) and table 15A.198).

Figure 15.34 Changes in labour force status of clients who needed assistance to obtain/maintain employment and training before/after SAAP support, 2006-07^a

(a) All SAAP clients



(b) Indigenous SAAP clients



^a Data are for people who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining employment when entering SAAP services.

Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); tables 15A.197-198.

Achievement of income on exit

‘Achievement of income on exit’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to enable clients to participate independently in society at the end of their support period (box 15.58).

Box 15.58 Achievement of income on exit

‘Achievement of income on exit’ is defined as the number of closed support periods for SAAP clients who requested assistance to obtain or maintain a pension or benefit and exited SAAP with an income source, divided by the total number of closed support periods for clients who sought assistance to obtain or maintain a pension or benefit. Data are reported for all SAAP clients, and separately for Indigenous clients.

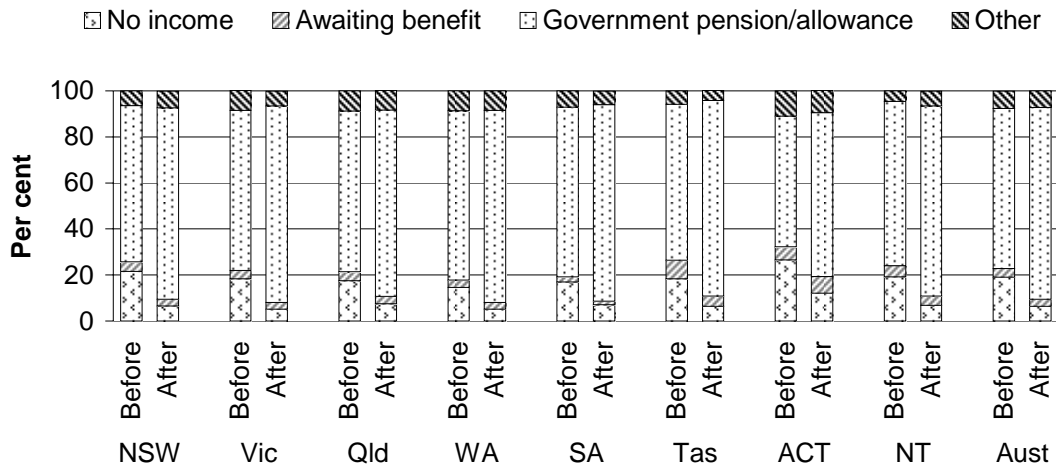
A high proportion of clients who requested income assistance and exited SAAP with an income source is desirable.

This indicator compares these clients’ income status before and after they received SAAP support. A client’s independence and self-reliance is enhanced when the client experiences a positive change in income source (for example, from having no income support to obtaining some income, including wages and/or benefits) on exit from SAAP services.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

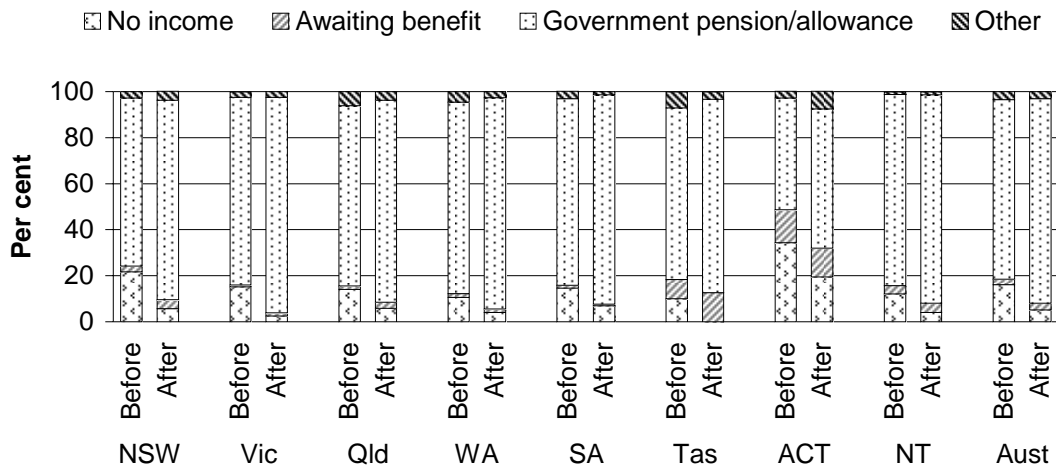
Nationally, in 2006-07 19.0 per cent of SAAP clients who requested income assistance did not have income prior to SAAP assistance. After SAAP assistance, the proportion of clients who had requested income assistance and had no income fell to 6.4 per cent (figure 15.35). The proportion of Indigenous clients who did not have income and requested income assistance also decreased after SAAP assistance (from 16.2 per cent to 5.1 per cent nationally) (figure 15.36). Both before and after the SAAP assistance, the income source for the majority of SAAP clients is a government pension/allowance (figures 15.35 and 15.36).

Figure 15.35 **Source of income immediately before/after SAAP support of clients who needed assistance to obtain/maintain a pension or benefit, 2006-07**



Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); table 15A.202.

Figure 15.36 **Source of income immediately before/after SAAP support of Indigenous clients who needed assistance to obtain/maintain a pension or benefit, 2006-07**



Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); table 15A.203.

Achievement of independent housing on exit

‘Achievement of independent housing on exit’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to enable clients to participate as productive and self-reliant members of society at the end of their support period (box 15.59).

Box 15.59 Achievement of independent housing on exit

'Achievement of independent housing on exit' is defined as the number of support periods of clients who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining independent housing achieving independent housing at the end of a support period, divided by the total number of completed support periods of clients who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining independent housing.

Higher proportions of clients who are in independent housing are desirable.

This indicator compares the proportion of clients who were in independent housing before and after they received SAAP support. It relates to relatively short term outcomes — that is, outcomes for clients immediately after their support period. Longer term outcomes are important, but more difficult to measure. Data are reported for all SAAP clients, and separately for Indigenous clients.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

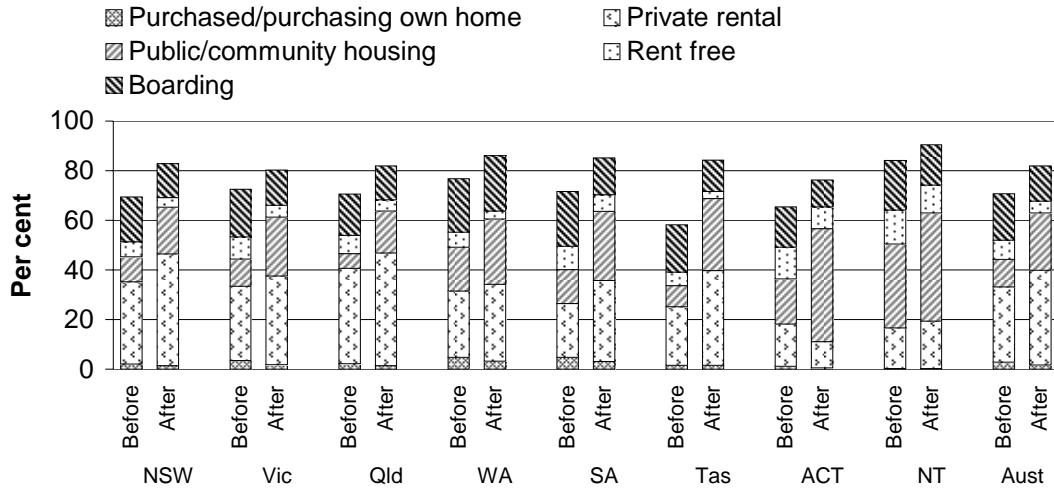
Nationally, 81.9 per cent of clients who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining independent housing achieved independent housing at the end of a support period in 2006-07. This included clients who moved or returned to private rental housing (38.2 per cent), to public rental housing (17.4 per cent), and those who were boarding (14.2 per cent) (figure 15.37(a)).

Among Indigenous clients, on a national basis, 83.9 per cent of clients who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining independent housing achieved independent housing at the end of a support period in 2006-07, including those who moved or returned to private rental housing (29.4 per cent), to public rental housing (25.5 per cent), and who were boarding (16.9 per cent) (figure 15.37(c)).

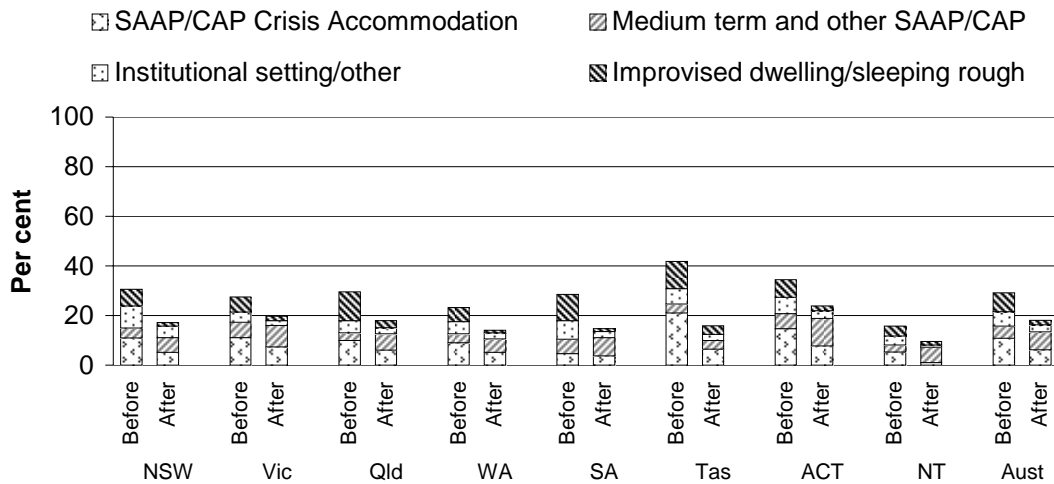
Clients who did not achieve independent housing at the end of a support period in 2006-07 included those who moved to, or continued to live in, short to medium term SAAP accommodation and other forms of non-independent accommodation (figure 15.37(b) and 15.37(d)).

Figure 15.37 Accommodation type before and after SAAP support, for clients who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining housing, 2006-07

(a) All SAAP clients, Independent housing

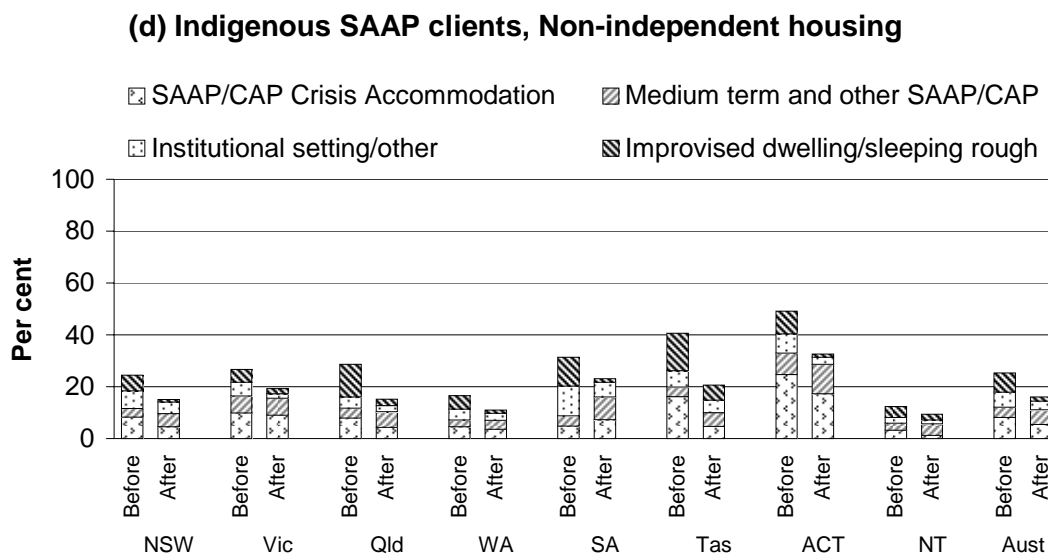
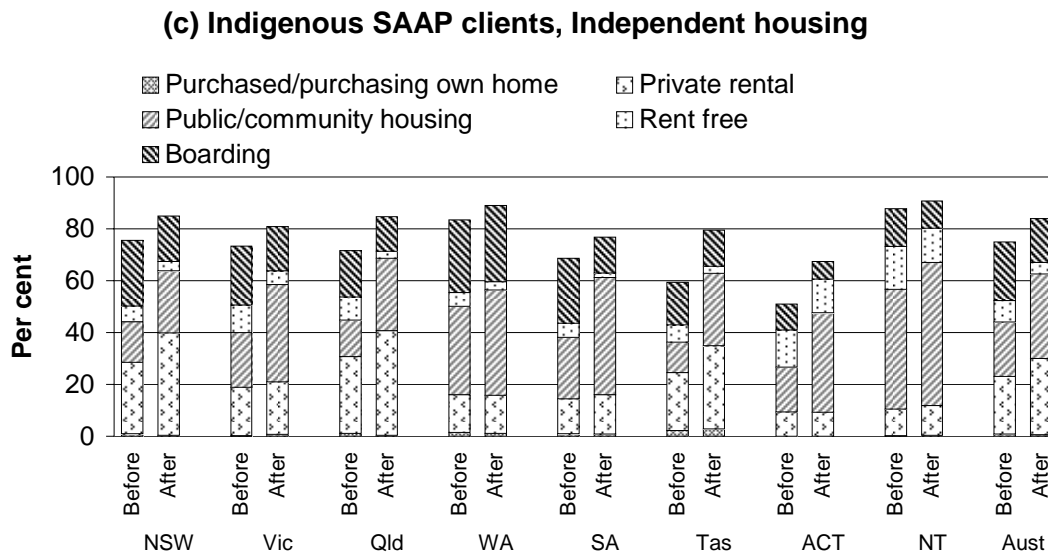


(b) All SAAP clients, Non-independent housing



(Continued on next page)

Figure 15.37 (Continued)



Source: SAAP NDCA Administrative Data and Client Collections (unpublished); tables 15A.195-196.

Proportion of SAAP clients who exited SAAP to independent housing and did not access the service again within six months

‘Proportion of SAAP clients who exited SAAP to independent housing and did not access the service again within six months’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to enable clients to participate independently in society at the end of their support period (box 15.60).

Box 15.60 Proportion of SAAP clients who exited SAAP to independent housing and did not access the service again within six months

‘Proportion of SAAP clients who exited SAAP to independent housing and did not access the service again within six months’ is defined as the number of clients who exit to independent housing and do not return to SAAP within six months, divided by the total number of SAAP clients.

A higher proportion of clients not returning to the program within six months is desirable.

A number of SAAP clients who need long term assistance may access SAAP services a number of times before their needs are met on a permanent basis. Ongoing contact with SAAP agencies may also lead to an improvement in living skills and self-reliance.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Estimates of clients exiting SAAP support to independent housing and not returning to SAAP within six months are affected by the data issues discussed in box 15.46. The most recent data available are from 2004-05 and may not represent all clients (table 15A.201). Given the potential for data bias, these estimates should be interpreted with care.

Proportion of SAAP clients with only one period of support within a year

‘Proportion of SAAP clients with only one period of support within a year’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to enable clients to participate independently in society at the end of their support period (box 15.61).

Box 15.61 Proportion of SAAP clients with only one period of support within a year

‘Proportion of SAAP clients with only one period of support within a year’ is defined as the number of clients with only one support period during the year, divided by the total number of SAAP clients. Data are reported for all SAAP clients, and separately for Indigenous clients.

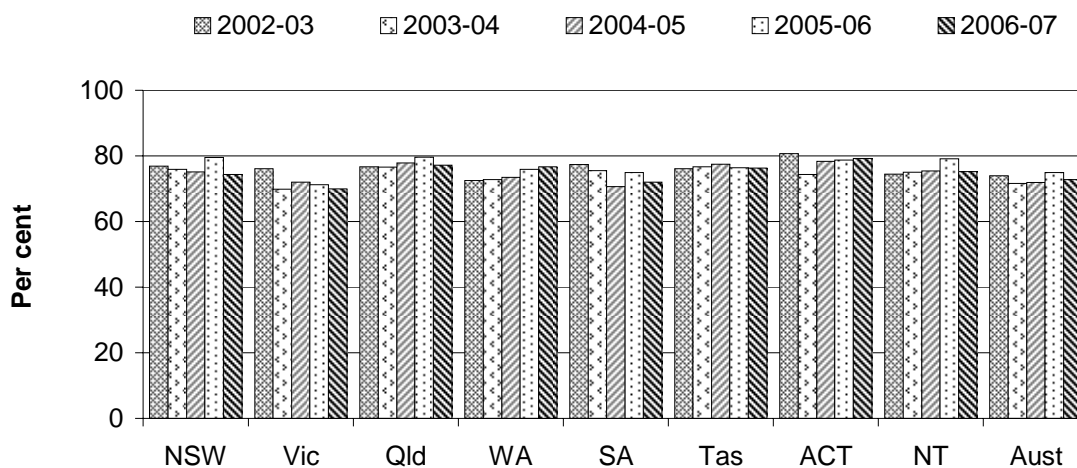
A higher proportion of clients with only one support period during the year is desirable.

It may be appropriate for some clients to receive more than one support period in a given period of time (for example, moving from crisis accommodation to medium term accommodation). One group that makes multiple use of SAAP is single adults, especially older single men. A number of SAAP clients who need long term assistance may access SAAP services a number of times before their needs are met on a permanent basis. Ongoing contact with SAAP agencies may also lead to an improvement in living skills and self-reliance.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, 72.8 per cent of SAAP clients had only one support period in 2006-07 (figure 15.38). The proportion for Indigenous clients was similar (72.1 per cent) (table 15A.200).

Figure 15.38 Proportion of SAAP clients with only one period of support within a year



Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); table 15A.199.

Goals achieved on exit from service

‘Goals achieved on exit from service’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure SAAP services meet the needs and expectations of clients (box 15.62).

Box 15.62 Goals achieved on exit from service

‘Goals achieved on exit from service’ is defined as the number of clients whose case management goals are fully or mostly achieved by the end of the support period, divided by the total number of clients with case management goals in a given period.

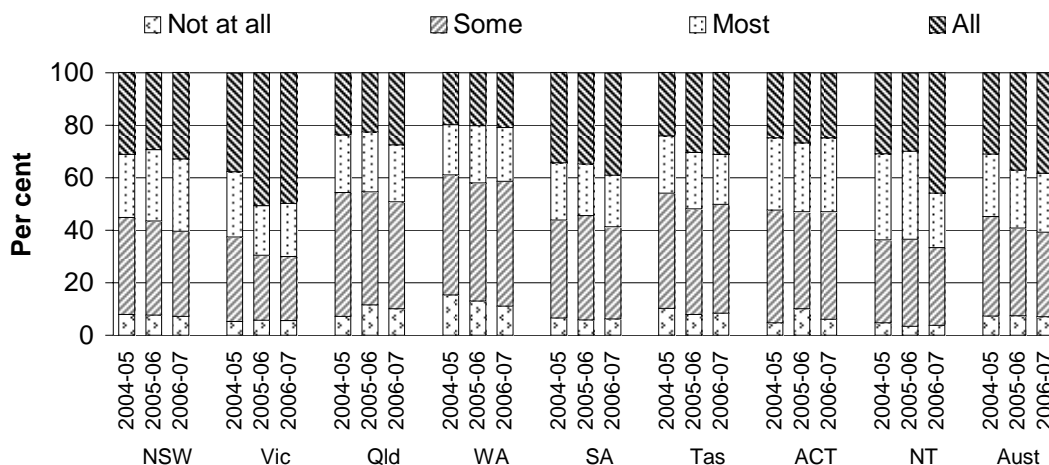
A high proportion of achieved goals is desirable.

The data are identified from a questionnaire completed by clients.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Nationally, case management goals were fully or mostly achieved by the end of the support period for 60.7 per cent of clients in 2006-07 (figure 15.39).

Figure 15.39 Goals achieved on exit from SAAP service



Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); table 15A.204.

15.11 Future directions in supported accommodation and assistance performance reporting

Reforms to Specific Purpose Payments

In December 2007, COAG agreed to reform Specific Purpose Payments (SPPs). SPPs are financial agreements between the Australian Government and State and Territory governments involving a contribution by the Australian Government to the funding of services which are considered a joint Australian and State and Territory government responsibility. *SAAP V (2005–2010)* was such an SPP.

At its 29 November 2008 meeting, COAG agreed to six new National Agreements, five of which are associated with a National SPP. In the area of supported accommodation and assistance services, there is a National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) associated with the National Affordable Housing SPP (COAG 2008b). Under the reforms, the NAHA contains the objectives, outcomes, outputs and performance indicators for supported accommodation and assistance services. The performance of governments in achieving these mutually agreed outcomes will be assessed by the COAG Reform Council (CRC). The Steering Committee has been requested by COAG to provide the SPP performance information to the CRC (COAG 2008a).

The National Agreements/SPPs will be supplemented by a range of National Partnerships (NPs): project, facilitation and reward agreements. Funding for NPs may be conditional on states and territories meeting agreed milestones and performance benchmarks.

The Steering Committee and the Protection and Support Services Working Group will ensure that reporting in this chapter reflects the COAG priorities identified in the NAHA, National Affordable Housing SPP and relevant NPs.

SAAP V

Under *SAAP V (2005–2010)*, a new performance framework was developed and incorporated into the multilateral agreement. The new performance framework contains some of the same performance indicators as SAAP IV but new emphases were placed on client outcome information. Four levels of client outcomes are identified in the SAAP V Program Logic developed by a working group of the CAD.

Information on some client outcome indicators can be obtained from the SAAP National Data Collection and reported on a regular basis, but information on some higher level client outcome indicators can only be obtained from targeted research. Two specific research projects will be carried out under SAAP V to obtain this information. These projects are: SAAP Impact on client self-reliance (report published in January 2008, with descriptive material included under the outcomes section of this chapter); and, measuring the number of clients with high and complex needs (data from this project are anticipated to be published in late 2008).

SAAP V is anticipated to end on 31 December 2008, as a result of the new SPP reporting arrangements discussed above.

Homelessness reforms

In May 2008, the Australian Government released a green paper, dealing with the issue of homelessness. The Green Paper proposed three reform options, each of which would have an impact on future SAAP reporting:

- transform SAAP to build a national homelessness response focused on distinct streams
- improve the current SAAP response
- improve the mainstream service response to homelessness and restrict SAAP to responding to crisis interventions (FaHCSIA 2008b).

A White Paper and National Action Plan were anticipated to be released in late 2008.

15.12 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

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Child protection and supported placements

The Government currently invests around \$78 million in programs and projects that assist in the prevention of child abuse and neglect through ensuring better outcomes for vulnerable children and families. This includes programs such as Invest to Grow and Communities for Children that provide parenting education and a range of early intervention services. Other projects funded that specifically address child protection include the National Child Protection Clearinghouse and National Child Protection Week.

The Australian Government contributes to the wellbeing of children and young people in foster and grandparent/relative care, mainly through the provision of Commonwealth payments for eligible carers and a Health Care concession card.

The Australian Government committed \$2.64 million over three years (2008–2011) to lead the development and implementation of a *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children*. The development of the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children* is being progressed by the Commonwealth in close consultation with the Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conference and will be released in early 2009.

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)

In 2007-2008 the Australian Government spent approximately \$277 million on programs for homeless persons and people at risk of homelessness. In addition to SAAP, these programs include the Household Organisational Management Expenses (HOME) Advice Program, the National Homelessness Strategy, Reconnect, and other related programs.

The HOME Advice Program provides support to families experiencing difficulties maintaining their tenancies or home ownership to prevent homelessness. The National Homelessness Strategy includes demonstration projects which trial innovative models to prevent or respond to homelessness and communication activities to disseminate best practices to prevent homelessness. Reconnect is an Australian Government program which assists young people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless to stop homelessness and improve participation.

The Australian Government is reforming homelessness and housing assistance through the development of a National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) with State and Territory governments and the development of a White Paper on Homelessness. The NAHA will bring together funding for affordable housing, the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, the SAAP and Commonwealth Rent Assistance and other housing measures into a single, overarching agreement. Funding for homelessness programs will continue under the NAHA supplemented by specific National Partnership Agreements with state and territory governments including one on Homelessness.

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New South Wales Government comments

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Child protection and supported placements

NSW Brighter Futures program is a voluntary, targeted program that supports vulnerable children and families to prevent them from escalating in the child protection system. This program will deliver \$150 million over five years for early intervention services in addition to employing 350 new dedicated early intervention caseworkers. Families in the Brighter Futures Program can access funded services, which include parenting programs and quality childcare.

Of the reviewable child deaths in NSW in 2006, 59 per cent were children aged less than 12 months. Research suggests that many of these children were affected by their mothers' drug and/or alcohol dependence while pregnant. In response, the NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS) has developed the *Responding to Prenatal Reports Policy* in conjunction with NSW Health. This provides guidance for caseworkers at DoCS Helpline and at Community Services Centres (CSCs) in responding to prenatal reports. Prenatal reports may arise from concerns that include mental illness, homelessness, domestic violence and drug and/or alcohol abuse during pregnancy.

DoCS is collaborating with NSW Health to reinforce the primary role of the Health sector in providing support and antenatal care to pregnant women. Close collaboration maximises preventative and early intervention strategies to reduce the risk of harm to unborn children. A six month trial of the policy began in June 2008 at three CSCs. Early indicators from the trial, are that substance abuse and transience are the biggest risk factors for mothers in the trial, followed by mental health and domestic violence.

Juvenile justice

The NSW Government is committed to providing restorative justice services to young offenders, victims and the community through administering youth justice conferences. The Department of Juvenile Justice supervises juvenile offenders on community-based or custodial orders or young people remanded into custody pending finalisation of their court matters. The Government's commitment to reducing re-offending is reflected in programs including Community Interventions such as the Intensive Supervision Program and Intensive Bail Supervision Program.

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)

During the second year of the SAAP V Agreement in NSW each of the seven DoCS regions developed a regional plan in line with the SAAP V strategic priorities to improve early intervention and post crisis strategies. These plans also identified priorities for funding under the national Innovation and Investment Fund. DoCS began the implementation of funding reforms with increased accountability. This involves service agreements that reflect Program priorities; results-based service specifications, and implementation of a performance monitoring framework.

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Victorian Government comments

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Child protection and supported placements

The *every child every chance* reform process supported by the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*, has continued during 2008. The reforms promote prevention and support services for at-risk families, strengthen child protection and out-of-home care services and assist the delivery of culturally appropriate services to Aboriginal children and families. There has been further expansion across the state of Child FIRST with statewide provision planned for early 2009. A Best Interests Case Practice Model has been developed and is being implemented across Child Protection, Placement Services and Family Services to further promote and support good practice. A comprehensive review of out-of-home care services was commenced with the aim of developing a strategy to further improve the placement system and improve the outcomes for children.

Juvenile Justice

During 2007-08 the Department of Human Services Youth Services and Youth Justice program has been developing a Vulnerable Youth Framework for those aged between 10 and 25 years. The purpose of the Framework is to guide and strengthen action across State and local government and communities, including schools, to better respond to the needs of vulnerable young people who, through a combination of their circumstances and adolescent risk taking behaviour, are at risk of not realising their potential.

The Youth Justice Service Delivery Model (YJSDM) has been developed as an integrated approach to the provision of intensive support to Youth Justice clients. Through the YJSDM, Community Service Organisations have formed partnerships/consortia to collaboratively provide intensive support and a referral pathway to the broader youth service system to enhance outcomes for clients.

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)

In 2007-08, Victoria made significant progress in assisting people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to transition to more stable living arrangements and active participation in the community.

A framework for a coordinated entry point system designed to provide the basis for a more responsive and less stressful process for people in crisis was successfully piloted in five sites across the state.

Implementation of the Integrated Response to Family Violence has continued in Victoria with significant reform and strengthening of the service system.

The Intensive Case Management Model has seen excellent outcomes in people re-establishing their lives and maintaining accommodation. The model provides a longer period of more intensive support for people with complex needs including young people, people with mental health issues, single adults and women experiencing family violence. All of these initiatives delivered through SAAP are helping to break the cycle of economic and social disadvantage by helping homeless people to develop skills and community connections.

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Queensland Government comments

Child protection and supported placements

Key achievements in 2007-08 included: employing 23 staff as part of the *One Chance at Childhood* initiative to provide specialist services to high-risk families with babies and toddlers; launching the Foster and Kinship Carer Recruitment Campaign, a five-year campaign to recruit, train and increase support for foster carers; establishing placement support units across the state to improve the quality, diversity and cost effectiveness of out-of-home placements; funding the establishment of four therapeutic residential facilities; and improving services to remote communities at Thursday Island, Weipa, Cooktown and Palm Island and establishing outreach services in Doomadgee, Normanton and Mornington Island.

Juvenile justice

The Queensland Government is continuing to implement and explore initiatives to reduce the rates of young people on remand and reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the criminal justice system. In 2007-08, recurrent funding was allocated for a Young Offender Community Response Service and Bail Support Service in Far North Queensland. A not-for-profit organisation — ACT for Kids — has been funded \$1.175 million per annum to deliver what is called the Youth Opportunity Program which will commence receiving clients in July 2008. Further work will be undertaken to reduce crime and recidivist behaviour among Indigenous young people through the implementation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Youth Justice Strategy over the next year. Other key initiatives delivered to young people in Queensland over the course of the year include the introduction of two new evidence-based therapeutic programs to address some key factors contributing to offending behaviour—Aggression Replacement Therapy and Changing Habits And Reaching Targets. These two programs are being rolled out in youth justice service centres and detention centres across Queensland with extensive training and supervision being provided to staff involved in the programs' delivery.

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)

In 2007-08, the Queensland Government continued to address homelessness through the implementation of the 'Responding to Homelessness 2005–2009' initiative – under which the Queensland Government has committed \$235.52 million over four years to provide a continuum of integrated responses to the needs of homeless people. This includes \$56.5 million committed to SAAP. In August 2008, the Premier of Queensland announced that the Department of Communities would take lead responsibility for homelessness policy as of 1 January 2009. In addition, a number of elements of the Crisis Accommodation Program will transition from the Department of Housing to the Department of Communities. The new arrangements aim to improve client pathways to long-term housing through improved linkages between homelessness responses and the social housing system.

Western Australian Government comments

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Child protection and supported placements

2007-08 is the first year of operation of the Department for Child Protection, which was created in May 2007 following the outcomes of the *Ford Review*. The Department has completed a number of recommendations from the Review and is implementing 36 reform projects. During 2007-08 the Department adopted *Signs of Safety* as its child protection practice framework and established the Aboriginal Reference Group. Legislation for the mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse by doctors, nurses and midwives, teachers and police was passed in State Parliament and is expected to be operational from 1 January 2009. Key initiatives to improve services for children in the CEO's care include: introducing health and education plans; increasing the number and range of accommodation and care options; providing improved leaving care services and providing more support to foster carers, including additional respite.

Juvenile justice

Significant achievements during the year saw the continued expansion of the Intensive Supervision Program, the further development of the Regional Youth Justice Strategy, the trialling of the Pilot Youth Justice Initiative, a multi-agency initiative based on collaborative co-case management, and sustained participation in interagency discussions to address the increasing number of young people held in custody on remand and an ongoing focus on staff development to ensure a better delivery of services to young people. A range of group and individual development and therapeutic programs was delivered to young people in detention and in the community throughout the year. Work has also continued on the development of an integrated juvenile justice service delivery model to ensure the system is able to meet future demand.

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)

SAAP continues to operate under the SAAP V Multilateral Agreement, signed on 30 September 2005 and the Western Australian Bilateral Agreement, signed on 25 January 2006. It is anticipated the SAAP V Agreement will be shortened in preparation for the commencement of the new National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA). In the 2008-09 State Budget an allocation of \$3.2 million over four years was provided to 20 youth accommodation services facing the greatest cost pressures. In addition new recurrent funding was allocated to establish a safe house for teenage mothers aged 14–18 years escaping domestic violence. The SAAP V Innovation and Investment Fund pilots' evaluation indicates extremely positive outcomes for clients. Service viability, housing affordability and lack of exit point housing continue to challenge the sector. ”

South Australian Government comments

Child protection and supported placements

The *Keeping Them Safe* reform program emphasises shared responsibility across Government and the whole community to ensure that all children are safe from harm. Partnerships with government agencies and key non-government agencies have been a foundation for implementing the reform program. An across Government information sharing guideline will allow all agencies who work with vulnerable families and children to share information and coordinate service provision. The *Keeping them Safe – In Our Care* reforms place emphasis on specialist family support services; improving assessment processes; implementing ‘wrap around’ care packages tailored to each child; expanding therapeutic foster care placements to children with complex needs; and changing the Children’s Payment system to support efficiency and equity.

Juvenile justice

The *To Break the Cycle* reform program lead by the South Australian Attorney-General’s Department is taking an all-of-government approach to tackling serious offending and preventing early entry of children and young people into the justice system. Emphasis has been placed on strengthening delivery of case management, including intensive case management services for serious repeat offenders and an expansion of home detention services. The SA Government has engaged Professor David Kennedy, Director Crime Prevention and Control at John Jay College, New York to work a cross-government community engagement and problem solving approach with a group of serious and persistent offenders.

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)

While the 2007-08 SAAP data was not available for this Report, the available 2006-07 data indicates that South Australian SAAP services are achieving positive results for people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness on a number of effectiveness and efficiency indicators.

South Australian SAAP services compared well nationally on measures of efficiency, with a higher than average recurrent SAAP program funding per person/population, a much lower than average recurrent cost per client accessing services, the second lowest real recurrent cost per day of support, the second highest of an existence of a support plan for all clients at 64.7 per cent, the highest average accommodation load per day of 12.7, and the second highest average caseload per day of 29.6 (compared with the national average of 18.7). South Australia also ranks the highest nationally for the existence of a support plan for Indigenous clients; at 72 per cent compared with 57 per cent. This signifies a positive direction for improved planning and assessment responses to meet Indigenous client needs. South Australia in 2006-07 recorded a higher than average turn away rate for new accommodation at 59.9 per cent. It is prioritising this issue for improvement in 2008-09.

Tasmanian Government comments

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Child protection and supported placements

The Tasmanian Government continues to be engaged in the implementation of a wide range of reforms of the child protection service system as outlined in the report *New Directions for Child Protection in Tasmania: An Integrated Strategic Framework, January 2008*. Key aspects of the reform agenda involve the establishment of a new family services system and the development of a more responsive out-of-home care program. These reforms are designed to occur over a period of five years and during 2007-08 detailed implementation plans were completed. To date, area teams have been established, new child protection systems have been implemented and a new practice framework introduced. In addition, a new structure incorporating Children and Family Services, Disability and Youth Justice Services has been formed to provide for improved collaboration and better integration of services for children, young people and their families.

Juvenile justice

As part of the continuing reform of Human Services in Tasmania, Youth Justice Services now forms part of the larger 'Disability, Child, Youth and Family Services'. Whilst Youth Justice Services continues to operate as a separate business unit, the joining together of Human Services allows for coordinated and integrated case management practices to meet assessed client needs as early in the service pathway as possible. The intention is to provide sustainable service support for children, young people, families and service providers within the community. Where appropriate, funding will be pooled to ensure care and client-service provider relationships are not disrupted by gate keeping barriers at service entry points. The system improvements are consistent with current diversion, evidence based practice and social inclusion policy. The *Youth Justice Act 1997* will be reviewed in 2008-09.

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)

Tasmania has been implementing a culture of continuous improvement within the SAAP service sector through the Quality Development Project. All funded services have undertaken self assessment and participated in peer reviews, and a significant number have completed their external assessments. The project is fostering an organisational context within each service for ongoing review cycles. Tasmania also examined *Exclusionary Practices in SAAP* and found that the recent reforms have maximised equitable provision of services for clients. Some barriers still persist, however, notably across service system boundaries in relation to mental health, drug and alcohol and other drug issues, and people with co-morbidities and disabilities, requiring greater levels of collaboration. In 2007-08, Tasmania also commenced a transitional support service for ex-prisoners. Support commences whilst the client is in prison and streamlines the release and reintegration process through intensive support.

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Australian Capital Territory Government comments

Child protection and supported placements

During 2007-08 the ACT continued to have an increased focus on earlier intervention with children and families at risk and working with vulnerable children and young people.

In 2007, Care and Protection Services introduced a new Risk Assessment Framework which has broadened the focus of a family assessment from an episodic analysis (which looks only at immediate risk and safety), towards an assessment of cumulative risk, focussing on the developmental wellbeing of children and families over time.

Also in 2007, Care and Protection Services introduced a differential response at Intake which has allowed workers to actively engage with families through assessment and referral, before children meet the statutory threshold for a response (i.e., before they are in need of care and protection).

Juvenile justice

A realignment of operational and business units which provide Youth service provision came into effect in November 2007. The new Youth Directorate brings together all the key youth service and policy areas, including youth justice, building stronger links and improving services to vulnerable young people.

Construction of Bimberi Youth Justice Centre continued throughout 2007-08 and improvements to the data system used by ACT Youth Justice were introduced which have improved electronic data entry. Substantial youth justice policy development continues to occur with the introduction of the *Children and Young People Act 2008*.

Community Youth Justice have also commenced a program of work to introduce a new service delivery and policy framework which includes the development of alternative ways to manage offending behaviours.

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)

The ACT has undertaken a significant reform process, guided by *Breaking the Cycle- the ACT Homelessness Strategy (2004–2008)*. The evaluation of the Strategy was finalised during 2007-08.

Key achievements of the Strategy have been: more equal availability of services to a range of client groups experiencing homelessness; more targeted responses; support from the moment of contact; and better support for children and young people.

There are significant moves towards a system where clients are not required to change services or accommodation sites as their needs change along the continuum of need from crisis to long term housing.

Reforms to refocus the role of Housing ACT as a post crisis service have assisted in creating an integrated service system.

Northern Territory Government comments

Child protection and supported placements

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The Northern Territory Government continued its significant child protection reform agenda in 2008, establishing a new Families and Children Division within the Department of Health and Families, and beginning the implementation of the new *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* (the Act). The Act provided the legislative base for the appointment of the Northern Territory Children's Commissioner in June 2008, and encompassed provisions for other reforms in the areas of Care Plans, support for young people leaving care until the age of 25 years, and development of mediation conferences.

A particular focus of reform activities in 2008 has been the strengthening of place-based service responses in regional and remote areas of the Northern Territory. A mobile child protection team was established, and remote Aboriginal Family and Children Workers employed. Cross-government Community Action Planning has broadened responses available in locations such as Katherine, and significant progress made on major reforms to boost family support services as an early intervention response to vulnerable families notified to the Department.

The *Out of Home Care Capacity Report* was completed, providing a blueprint for development of the Northern Territory's Out of Home Care system. A new training package for foster carers – *Our Carers Our Kids* – provides appropriate cultural training for carers of Indigenous children.

Juvenile justice services

The *Youth Justice Amendment (Family Responsibility) Act 2008* commenced on 1 July 2008 and legislated for a Youth Justice Strategy (the Strategy) in the Northern Territory to tackle youth antisocial behaviour. The three key elements of the Strategy are the Family Responsibility Program, Youth Camps and the Youth Justice Advisory Committee. Initiatives flowing from the Strategy include two family support centres to provide assistance and referrals for families; a system of Family Responsibility Agreements and/or Orders; and three Youth Camps to provide safe places for young Territorians to undertake cultural healing and personal development.

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)

Services in the Northern Territory have continued to experience cost pressures, an increase in clients with complex needs, increased length of accommodation and support periods and few affordable exit options from homelessness.

Nevertheless agencies have remained optimistic and provided a high level of quality service to clients. The innovation occurring in services is demonstrated by projects such as the 'Chefs of Hard Knocks' program operated by St Vincent de Paul's Vincentcare, where Work for the Dole and Department of Education and Training funding has been used to train people in catering and also to provide the 200 meals per day that the agency requires.

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15.13 Definitions of key terms and indicators

Child protection and out-of-home care services

Activity Group 1 (pathways)

Receipt and assessment of initial information about a potential protection or support issue

Activities that are typically associated with receipt and assessment of initial information including receipt and recording of information, review of department databases, initial assessment of information and decisions about the appropriate response. This activity can also include consultation, with possible provision of advice. Activities by non-government organisations (NGO) may be included if appropriate.

Activity Group 2 (pathways)

Provision of generic/non-intensive family support services

Activities that are typically associated with provision of lower level family support services at various stages including identification of family needs, provision of support services and diversionary services, some counselling and active linking of the family to support networks. Services are funded by government but can be delivered by either the relevant agency or a NGO. This bundle of services does not involve planned follow-up by the relevant agency after initial service delivery. The services will be delivered under voluntary arrangements between the relevant agency and family. Clients may receive these services more than once.

Activity Group 3 (pathways)

Provision of intensive family support services

Activities that are typically associated with provision of complex or intensive family support services including provision of therapeutic and in-home supports such as counselling and mediation, modelling of positive parenting strategies, referrals to intensive support services that may be provided by NGOs, advocacy on behalf of clients and intensive support for a family in a residential setting. This includes protection and treatment support services. These activities services may be provided if diversionary services are inappropriate to the case and may lead to statutory services being provided to the client.

Activity Group 4 (pathways)

Secondary information gathering and assessment

Activities that are typically associated with secondary information gathering and assessment are currently counted as 'investigations' in the Report on Government Services. As part of this activity group a decision may be made to substantiate or not substantiate. Information gathering activities include:

- sighting the child
- contacting people with relevant information about the child or family (for example, teachers, police, support services)
- interviewing the child, sibling(s) and parents
- observing family interactions
- obtaining assessments of the child and/or family
- conducting family group conferences
- liaising with agencies providing services to the child and family
- recording a substantiation or non-substantiation decision
- case conferences with partners and contributors in the investigation and assessment process.

Activity Group 5 (pathways)

Provision of short-term protective intervention and coordination services for children

Activities that are typically associated with provision of short-term protective intervention and coordination services including:

- working with the family to address protective issues
- developing networks of support for the child
- monitoring and reviewing the safety of the child
- monitoring and reviewing family progress against case planning

not on an order

goals

- case conferences with agencies providing services to the child and/or family, internal discussions and reviews
- specialist child-focused therapeutic support.

Activity Group 6 (pathways)

Seeking an order

Activities that are typically associated with seeking orders (court orders or voluntary/administrative orders) including:

- preparing applications for the order
- preparing reports for the court
- obtaining assessment reports to submit to the court
- informing parties to the court proceedings, including parents, the child, and lawyers
- informing and briefing legal counsel or internal court groups
- going through internal pre-court review processes
- attending court
- conducting family group conferences.

Activity Group 7 (pathways)

Provision of protective intervention, support and coordination services for children on an order

Activities that are typically associated with provision of longer-term protective intervention and coordination services including:

- monitoring the child or young person's progress and development (for example, social development and education progress) and undertaking activities that facilitate progress and development
- meeting any specific requirements of any court order
- reviewing appropriateness of the order for the circumstances of the child or young person. This usually occurs at intervals established by the court or in legislation
- reporting back to court
- long term cases involving out-of-home care.

Activity Group 8 (pathways)

Provision of out-of-home care services

Activities that are typically associated with provision of out-of-home care services including:

- finding suitable placement(s) for the child
- assisting the child or young person to maintain contact with his/her family
- in some cases, staff payments for recruiting and training carers
- assessing suitability of potential kinship carers
- assisting the child or young person to maintain contact with their family
- working to return the child home
- assisting the child or young person as they prepare to leave care as the end of the order approaches.

Care and protection orders

Legal orders or administrative/voluntary arrangements involving the community services department, issued in respect of an individual child who is deemed to be in need of care and/or protection.

Community services department involvement may include:

- total responsibility for the welfare of the child (for example, guardianship)
- responsibility for overseeing the actions of the person or authority caring for the child
- responsibility for providing or arranging accommodation, or reporting or considering the child's welfare.

The order may have been from a court, children's panel, minister of the Crown, authorised community services department officer or similar tribunal or officer.

Care and protection orders are categorised as:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • finalised guardianship and finalised custody orders sought through a court • third party parental responsibility orders • finalised supervision and other finalised court orders that give the department some responsibility for the child's welfare (excluding interim orders) • interim and temporary orders (including orders that are not finalised) • administrative or voluntary arrangements with the community services department, for the purpose of child protection. <p>Children are counted only once, even if they are on more than one care and protection order.</p>
Child	A person aged 0–17 years.
Child at risk	A child for whom no abuse or neglect can be substantiated but where there are reasonable grounds to suspect the possibility of prior or future abuse or neglect, and for whom continued departmental involvement is considered warranted.
Child concern reports	Reports to departments responsible for child protection regarding concerns about a child, as distinct from notifications of child abuse and neglect. The distinction between the two differs across and within jurisdictions.
Children in out-of-home care during the year	The total number of children who are in at least one out-of-home care placement at any time during the year. A child who is in more than one placement is counted only once.
Dealt with by other means	A notification that is responded to by means other than an investigation, such as the provision of advice or referral to services.
Exited out-of-home care	Where a child does not return to care within two months.
Family based care	Home-based care (see 'placement types').
Family group homes	Residential child care single dwelling establishments that have as their main purpose the provision of substitute care to children. They are typically run like family homes, with a limited number of children who eat together as a family group and are cared for around the clock by resident substitute parents.
Foster care	Care of a child who is living apart from his or her natural or adoptive parents in a private household, by one or more adults who act as 'foster parents' and are paid a regular allowance by a government authority or non-government organisation for the child's support. The authorised department or non-government organisation provides continuing supervision or support while the child remains in the care of foster parents.
Foster parent	Any person (or such a person's spouse) who is being paid a foster allowance by a government or non-government organisation for the care of a child (excluding children in family group homes).
Guardian	Any person who has the legal and ongoing care and responsibility for the protection of a child.
Indigenous person	Person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as being an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community with which he or she is associated. If Indigenous status is unknown, then a person is considered to be non-Indigenous.

Investigation	An investigation of child abuse and neglect that involves identifying harm or risk of harm to the child, determining an outcome and assessing protective needs. It includes the interviewing or sighting of the subject child where practicable.
Investigation finalised	Where an investigation is completed and an outcome of 'substantiated' or 'not substantiated' is recorded by 31 August.
Investigation in process	Where an investigation is commenced but an outcome is not recorded by 31 August.
Investigation closed – no outcome possible	Where an investigation is commenced but is not able to be finalised in order to reach the outcome of 'substantiated' or 'not substantiated'. These files would be closed for administrative purposes. This may happen in instances where the family have relocated.
Length of time in continuous out-of-home care	The length of time for which a child is in out-of-home care on a continuous basis. A return home of less than seven days is not considered to break the continuity of placement.
Non-respite care	Out-of-home care for children for child protection reasons.
Notification	Contact with an authorised department by persons or other bodies making allegations of child abuse or neglect, or harm to a child. Notifications can be counted at different points in the response to a report, ranging from the point of initial contact with the source of the report to the end of a screening and decision making process.
Other relative	A grandparent, aunt, uncle or cousin, whether the relationship is half, full, step or through adoption, and can be traced through or to a person whose parents were not married to each other at the time of the child's birth. This category includes members of Aboriginal communities who are accepted by that community as being related to the child.
Out-of-home care	Overnight care, including placement with relatives (other than parents) where the government makes a financial payment. Includes care of children in legal and voluntary placements (that is, children on and not on a legal order) but excludes placements made in disability services, psychiatric services, juvenile justice facilities and overnight child care services.
Placement types	Four main categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • residential care (placement in a residential building where the purpose is to provide placement for children and where there are paid staff, including placements in family group homes) • non-residential care (placement in the home of a carer who is reimbursed for expenses for the care of the child). The three subcategories of non-residential care are foster care/community care, relative/kinship care and other • independent living (including private board) • other (including unknown).
Relatives/kin	Family members other than parents, or a person well known to the child and/or family (based on an existing relationship).
Respite care	Out-of-home care on a temporary basis for reasons other than child protection — for example, when parents are ill. Excludes emergency care provided to children who are removed from their homes for protective reasons.
Safety in	The proportion of children in out-of-home care who are the subject

out-of-home care	of a child protection substantiation, where the person believed responsible for the child abuse, neglect or harm is living in the household (or was a worker in a residential care facility).
Stability of placement	<p>Number of placements for children who have exited out-of-home care and do not return within two months. Placements exclude respite or temporary placements lasting less than seven days. Placements are counted separately where there is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a change in the placement type — for example, from a home-based to a facility-based placement • within placement type, a change in venue or a change from one home-based placement to a different home-based placement. <p>A particular placement is counted only once, so a return to a previous placement is another placement.</p>
Substantiation	Notification for which an investigation concludes there is reasonable cause to believe that the child has been, is being or is likely to be abused, neglected or otherwise harmed. It does not necessarily require sufficient evidence for a successful prosecution and does not imply that treatment or case management is, or is to be, provided.

Juvenile justice services

Juvenile justice centre	A place administered and operated by a juvenile justice department, where young people are detained whilst under the supervision of the relevant juvenile justice department on a remand or sentenced detention episode.
Juvenile justice department	Refers to those departments in each State and Territory that are responsible for juvenile justice matters.
Supervision period	A period of time during which a young person is continuously under juvenile justice supervision of one type or another. A supervision period is made up of one or more contiguous episodes.
Police caution	Refers to when a police officer administers a caution to the child instead of bringing the child before a court for the offence.
Pre-sentence community	Pre-sentence arrangements where the juvenile justice department is responsible for the case management or supervision of a young person (such as supervised or conditional bail where the juvenile justice department is involved with monitoring or supervising a young person).
Pre-sentence detention	Remanded or held in a juvenile justice centre or police watch house prior to appearing in court or to being sentenced.
Sentenced community-based supervision	Includes probation, recognisance and community service orders which are supervised or case managed by the juvenile justice department. May be supervision with or without additional mandated requirements, requiring some form of obligation or additional element that a young person is required to meet. This obligation could be community work such as in a community service order, a developmental activity or program attendance. The juvenile justice department may or may not directly supervise any additional mandated requirements, but remains responsible for the overall case management of a young person.
Youth justice conference	A youth justice conference is a facilitated meeting resulting in a formal agreement to repair the harm caused by the offence.

Participants can include the victim, offender, convenor, police and other key stakeholders. Referrals may be initiated by the police or the courts.

Supported accommodation and assistance services

Accommodation	Crisis or short term accommodation, medium term to long term accommodation, and other SAAP funded accommodation (which comprises accommodation at hostels, motels and hotels, accommodation in caravans, community placements and other SAAP funded arrangements).
Accommodation load (of agencies)	The number of accommodation days divided by the number of days for which the agency is operational during the reporting period, where the number of accommodation days equals the sum of accommodation days for all clients of an agency who are supported during the reporting period. The average accommodation load is the mean value of all agencies' accommodation loads. Support periods without valid accommodation dates are assigned the interquartile modal duration of accommodation for agencies of the same service delivery model in the same jurisdiction.
Agency	The body or establishment with which the State or Territory government or its representative agrees to provide a SAAP service. The legal entity has to be incorporated. Funding from the State or Territory government could be allocated directly (that is, from the government department) or indirectly (that is, from the auspice of the agency). The SAAP service could be provided at the agency's location or through an outlet at a different location.
Caseload (of agencies)	The number of support days (the sum of support days for all clients of the agency who are supported during the reporting period) divided by the number of days for which the agency is operational during the reporting period. The average caseload is the mean value of all agencies' caseloads. Support periods without valid support dates are assigned the interquartile modal duration of support for agencies of the same service delivery model in the same jurisdiction.
Casual client	A person who is in contact with a SAAP agency and receives one-off assistance for generally not more than one hour, and who does not establish an ongoing relationship with an agency.
Client	A person who receives supported accommodation or support.
Crisis or short term supported accommodation	Supported accommodation for periods of generally not more than three months (short term), and for persons needing immediate short term accommodation (crisis).
Cross target/multiple/general services	SAAP services targeted at more than one primary client group category — for example, SAAP services for single persons regardless of their gender.
Day support	Support provided only on a walk-in basis — for example, an agency that provides a drop-in centre, showering facilities and a meals service at the location of the SAAP agency.
Homeless person	A person who does not have access to safe, secure and adequate housing. A person is considered to not have such access if the only housing to which he or she has access:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is damaged, or is likely to damage, the person's health • threatens the person's safety • marginalises the person by failing to provide access to adequate personal amenities or the economic and social supports that a home normally affords • places the person in circumstances that threaten or adversely affect the adequacy, safety, security and affordability of that housing • is of unsecured tenure. <p>A person is also considered homeless if living in accommodation provided by a SAAP agency or some other form of emergency accommodation.</p>
Indigenous person	A person who is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island descent, who identifies as being an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, and who is accepted as such by the community with which they are associated.
Medium term to long term supported accommodation	Supported accommodation for periods over three months. Medium term is around three to six months and long term is longer than six months.
Multiple service delivery model	SAAP agencies that use more than one service delivery model to provide SAAP services — for example, crisis or short term accommodation and support, as well as day support (that is, the provision of meals).
Non-English speaking background services	Services that are targeted at persons whose first language is not English.
One-off assistance	Assistance provided to a person who is not a client, such as the provision of a meal, a shower, transport, money, clothing, telephone advice, information or a referral.
Ongoing support period	A support period for which, at the end of the reporting period, no support end date and no after-support information are provided.
Outlet	A premise owned/managed/leased by an agency at which SAAP services are delivered. Excludes accommodation purchased using SAAP funds (for example, at a motel).
Outreach support services	Services that exist to provide support and other related assistance specifically to homeless people. These clients may be isolated and able to receive services and support from a range of options that enhance their flexibility (for example, advocacy, life skills and counselling). Generalist support and accommodation services may also provide outreach support in the form of follow-up to clients where they are housed. In this context, support is provided 'off site'.
Providers	Agencies that supply support and accommodation services.
Real expenditure	Actual expenditure adjusted for changes in prices. Adjustments are made using the GDP(E) price deflator and expressed in terms of final year prices.
Recurrent funding	Funding provided by the Australian, State and Territory governments to cover operating costs, salaries and rent.
Referral	When a SAAP agency contacts another agency and that agency accepts the person concerned for an appointment or interview. A referral is not provided if the person is not accepted for an appointment or interview.

SAAP service	Supported accommodation, support or one-off assistance that is provided by a SAAP agency and intended to be used by homeless persons.
Service delivery model	The mode or manner in which a service is provided through an agency. The modes of service delivery could be described as crisis or short term accommodation and support; medium term to long term accommodation and support; day support; outreach support; telephone information; and referral or agency support. An agency may deliver its services through one or more of these means of delivery.
Service provider	A worker or volunteer employed and/or engaged by a SAAP agency, who either directly provides a SAAP service or in some way contributes to the provision of a SAAP service. Includes administrative staff of an agency, whether paid or not paid.
Single men services	Services provided for males who present to the SAAP agency without a partner or children.
Single women services	Services provided for females who present to the SAAP agency without a partner or children.
Support	SAAP services, other than supported accommodation, that are provided to assist homeless people or persons at imminent risk of becoming homeless to achieve the maximum possible degree of self-reliance and independence. Support is ongoing and provided as part of a client relationship between the SAAP agency and the homeless person.
Support period	<p>The period that commences when a SAAP client establishes or re-establishes (after the cessation of a previous support period) an ongoing relationship with a SAAP agency. The support period ends when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support ceases because the SAAP client terminates the relationship with the SAAP agency • support ceases because the SAAP agency terminates the relationship with the SAAP client • no support is provided to the SAAP client for a period of three months. <p>A support period is relevant to the provision of supported accommodation or support, not the provision of one-off assistance.</p>
Supported accommodation	Accommodation provided by a SAAP agency in conjunction with support. The accommodation component of supported accommodation is provided in the form of beds in particular locations or accommodation purchased using SAAP funds (for example, at a motel). Agencies that provide accommodation without providing support are considered to provide supported accommodation.
Telephone information and referral	Support delivered via telephone without face-to-face contact. Support provided may include information and/or referral.
Total funding	Funding for allocation to agencies (not available at the individual client group level) for training, equipment and other administration costs.
Unmet demand	A homeless person who seeks supported accommodation or support, but is not provided with that supported accommodation or

**Women escaping
domestic violence
services**

support. The person may receive one-off assistance.

Services specifically designed to assist women and women accompanied by their children, who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless as a result of violence and/or abuse.

**Youth/young people
services**

Services provided for people who are independent and above the school leaving age for the State or Territory concerned, and who present to the SAAP agency unaccompanied by a parent/guardian.

15.14 Attachment tables

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an '15A' suffix (for example, table 15A.3 is table 3). Attachment tables are provided on the CD-ROM enclosed with the Report and on the Review website (www.pc.gov.au/gsp). Users without access to the CD-ROM or the website can contact the Secretariat to obtain the attachment tables (see contact details on the inside front cover of the Report).

All jurisdiction data

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- Table 15A.8** Children in notifications, investigations and substantiations and children on care and protection orders: number and rate per 1000 children in the target populations by Indigenous status, 2007-08
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- Table 15A.17** Children in out-of-home care by Indigenous status and placement type, 30 June 2008 (number)

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- Table 15A.23** Children aged under 12 years in out-of-home care and in a home-based placement by Indigenous status, 30 June 2008
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- Single jurisdiction data NSW**
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15.15 References

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