
17 Homelessness services

CONTENTS

17.1 Profile of homelessness services	17.3
17.2 Framework of performance indicators for the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program	17.8
17.3 Key Supported Accommodation Assistance Program performance indicator results	17.10
17.4 Future directions in homelessness services performance reporting	17.37
17.5 Jurisdictions' comments	17.38
17.6 Definitions of key terms and indicators	17.48
17.7 List of attachment tables	17.52
17.8 References	17.54

Attachment tables

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by a '17A' suffix (for example, table 17A.3). A full list of attachment tables is provided at the end of this chapter, and the attachment tables are available from the Review website at www.pc.gov.au/gsp.

Homelessness has multiple causes. Some of the social factors associated with homelessness include a shortage of affordable housing, family and relationship breakdown, unemployment and financial hardship, mental health problems, and drug and alcohol abuse (Australian Government 2008a; COAG Reform Council 2010).

Since 1985, the Australian Government and State and Territory governments have funded the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) as a significant part of Australia's response to the problem of homelessness. SAAP assists

individuals and families who are in crisis or experiencing difficulties that hinder personal or family functioning. SAAP services aim to alleviate difficulties faced by people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and reduce the potential for their recurrence.

In January 2008, the Australian Government announced its intention to develop a long-term national plan to reduce homelessness. As part of this process, the Australian Government released a Green Paper in May 2008 entitled *Which way home? A new approach to homelessness*. The Green Paper sought community input on possible strategies and initiatives to address homelessness in Australia (Commonwealth of Australia 2008a).

After extensive consultation, the Australian Government released a White Paper in December 2008 entitled *The road home: A national approach to reducing homelessness* (Australian Government 2008b). The White Paper set out two main goals: (1) to halve overall homelessness by 2020; and (2) to offer supported accommodation to all ‘rough sleepers’ who need assistance by 2020. The White Paper is supported by a new funding package under the *National Affordable Housing Agreement* (NAHA) and the *National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness* (NPAH) (COAG 2008a; 2008b). As a result of these reforms, the SAAP V Multilateral Agreement (2005-2010) ended on 31 December 2008, with the NAHA and associated agreements and partnerships commencing 1 January 2009.

The NAHA and the NPAH provide a framework for the Australian Government and State and Territory governments to work together to improve housing affordability and homelessness outcomes for Australians. The overarching objective of the NAHA is that all Australians have access to affordable, safe and sustainable housing that contributes to social and economic participation. The parties to the NAHA and the NPAH agreed to a range of objectives and outcomes, including:

- providing social housing, assistance to people in the private rental market, support and accommodation for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and home purchase assistance
- improving coordination across housing related programs to make better use of existing stock and under-utilised government assets and achieve better integration between housing and human services, including health and disability services
- reducing the rate of homelessness
- prevention and early intervention to break the cycle of homelessness
- improving and expanding the service response to homelessness (COAG 2008a; 2008b).

Data agencies, the Australian Government and State and Territory governments are currently developing a new homelessness data collection to report on performance indicators contained in the NAHA and associated partnership agreements. The new homelessness data collection is anticipated to be operational by 1 July 2011, with data for the 2011-12 period expected to be available for reporting in the 2013 Report. In the interim, the SAAP data collection will continue and will be used to inform proxy measures for a number of NAHA performance indicators. Due to a 12-month lag in SAAP reporting, this report includes SAAP service data for the 2008-09 period, with some financial data reported for the 2009-10 period.

Improvements to the reporting of SAAP services this year include:

- the creation of a new homelessness-specific chapter in the revised Housing and homelessness section of the Report, which includes a new Housing and homelessness sector summary
- reporting five year time series in attachment tables for all measures with available data
- the inclusion of expanded expenditure information for 2008-09 and 2009-10 to more accurately report the full cost to government of funding and/or providing homelessness services, including funding for service delivery and administrative expenditure
- the inclusion of additional data to align this Report with the NAHA: (a) the proportion of Australians who are homeless and (b) the proportion of SAAP clients who required SAAP housing or accommodation support more than once.

17.1 Profile of homelessness services

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program

SAAP 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 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 most recent program (SAAP V 2005-10, but replaced on 1 January 2009) was governed by the *Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994*. The Act specified that the overall aim of SAAP was to provide transitional supported accommodation and related support services to assist people who are homeless to achieve self-reliance and independence. Within this broad aim,

the goals of the SAAP were to resolve crises, to re-establish family links where appropriate, and to re-establish a capacity to live independently of SAAP services.

As part of the SAAP, non-government, community and local government agencies delivered a variety of services to clients, including supported accommodation, counselling, advocacy, links to housing, health, education and employment services, outreach support, brokerage and meals services, and financial and employment assistance.

SAAP and the link with other services

In 2008-09, 79 100 children accompanied a parent or guardian who received substantial SAAP support (AIHW 2010).¹ Research using 2004-05 data indicates that in 40.5 per cent of support periods involving adults with accompanying children, domestic violence was the main reason SAAP support was sought (AIHW 2006b). 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.

Close links also exist between SAAP and other forms of housing assistance reported in the Housing chapter of the Report (chapter 16). Some individuals and families used both SAAP services and services described in the Housing chapter, as people can move from homelessness to social housing, or might be in receipt of SAAP services and accommodated in social housing.² For example, in 2008-09, approximately 15.0 per cent of former SAAP clients, who had requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining independent housing, had moved to public housing (table 17A.21). The new Housing and homelessness sector summary examines the interconnections across these sectors in greater detail.

Size and scope

On Census night in 2006, there were approximately 105 000 homeless people (that is, approximately one in every 190 Australians) (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2008). This figure includes people who were without conventional accommodation (for example, sleeping rough), who were living in temporary shelter (for example,

¹ The term ‘substantial’ in ‘substantial SAAP support’ is a term used in the SAAP data collection to denote SAAP support for a person defined as a SAAP client during a support period (see section 17.6 for definitions of SAAP ‘client’ and ‘support period’). It does not convey a measure of the number of distinct support services or duration of support.

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).

youth refuges or ‘couch surfing’), and who were staying in accommodation that is below minimum community standards (for example, boarding houses and caravan parks). According to the Counting the Homeless 2006 report, SAAP provided accommodation to approximately 19 per cent of the homeless population on Census night in 2006 (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2008).

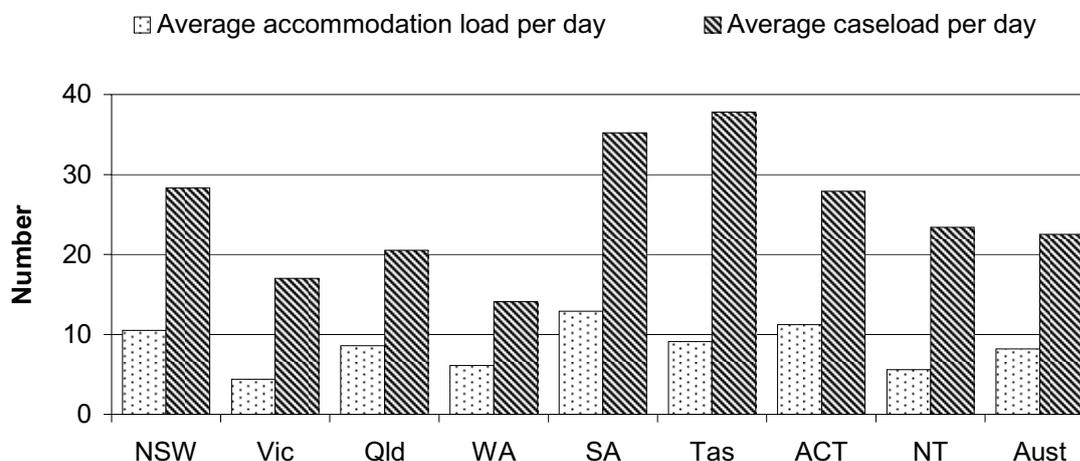
SAAP agencies provided a range of support services to various client groups throughout the year, including families, single men and women, and unaccompanied children and young people. Nationally, in 2008-09, SAAP agencies provided support to 204 900 people. Of the 204 900 people who received SAAP support, 125 800 were clients and 79 100 were accompanying children (AIHW 2010).

In 2008-09, 1532 agencies were funded under the SAAP/NAHA, including non-government, community and local government agencies (AIHW 2010) (table 17A.2). Services were delivered in 2008-09 by SAAP agencies targeting:

- young people (34.3 per cent of agencies)
- women escaping domestic violence (22.9 per cent)
- families (8.6 per cent)
- single men (6.2 per cent)
- single women (2.8 per cent)
- multiple client groups (25.2 per cent) (table 17A.2).

Nationally, the daily average accommodation load and caseload per agency was 8.2 and 22.5 respectively, although this varied across jurisdictions in 2008-09 (figure 17.1).

Figure 17.1 Average accommodation load and caseload per day, 2008-09^a



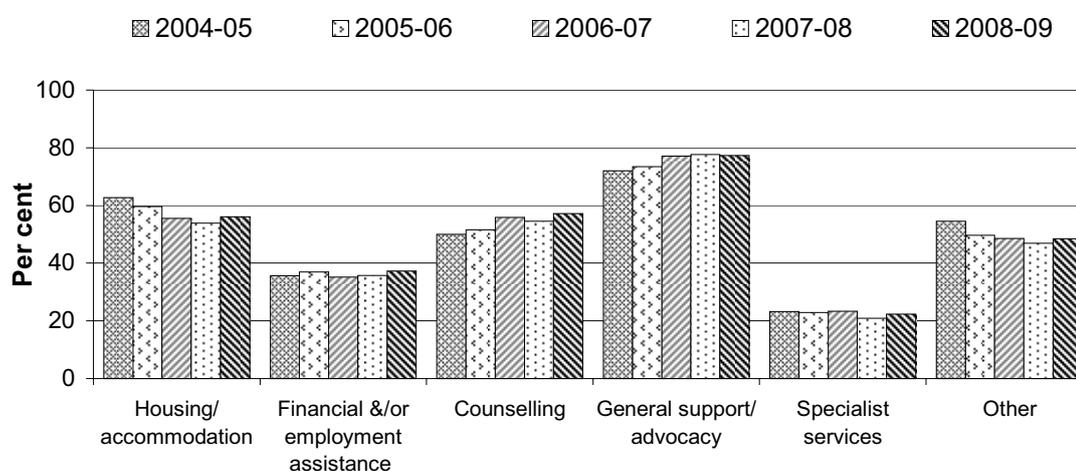
^a See notes to table 17A.20 for descriptions of how accommodation load and caseload are estimated.

Source: SAAP NDCA Administrative Data and Client Collections (unpublished); table 17A.20.

SAAP agencies varied in the types of services they delivered. In 2008-09, SAAP agencies were most commonly designed to provide medium term to long term supported accommodation (40.6 per cent of agencies) and crisis or short term supported accommodation (32.2 per cent of agencies). SAAP agencies also provided services other than accommodation, such as outreach support, day support, and telephone information and referral. The proportions of SAAP agencies designed to deliver particular types of services remained relatively stable from 2004-05 to 2008-09 (table 17A.3).

Housing and accommodation services were provided in 56.1 per cent of support periods. General support and advocacy (77.3 per cent), counselling (57.2 per cent), financial and employment assistance (37.3 per cent), and specialist services (22.3 per cent) were also commonly provided. There has been some change in the proportions of types of services provided by SAAP agencies over time (figure 17.2). For example, in 2004-05, housing and accommodation constituted 62.7 per cent of support periods and counselling (formerly 'personal support') constituted 50.0 per cent.

Figure 17.2 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: AIHW (2010) *Government-funded specialist homelessness services: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2008-09*. Cat no. HOU 219; table 17A.1.

Roles and responsibilities

SAAP was jointly funded by the Australian, State and Territory governments until December 2008. State and Territory governments were responsible for the day-to-day management of the program, including the distribution of funding to SAAP funded agencies. Non-government agencies delivered most SAAP services with some local government participation.

Funding

Recurrent government expenditure on specialist homelessness services for the period 2009-10 was approximately \$461.1 million (table 17A.5): 97.3 per cent of this funding supported agencies to provide services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, while 2.7 per cent of this funding was directed to State and Territory governments' administrative costs (table 17A.4). Nationally, real recurrent funding per head of population increased modestly from 2005-06 to 2009-10 (table 17A.6). These figures varied across jurisdictions.

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

viability). Where possible, the Steering Committee has included these funds for the 2008-09 and 2009-10 reporting periods.

17.2 Framework of performance indicators for the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program

The performance indicator framework for the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program is based on shared government objectives for SAAP services (box 17.1).

COAG has agreed six National Agreements to enhance accountability to the public for the outcomes achieved or outputs delivered by a range of government services (see chapter 1 for more detail on reforms to federal financial relations). The NAHA covers the area of housing and homelessness and includes a set of performance indicators for which the Steering Committee collates annual performance information for analysis by the COAG Reform Council (CRC). Revisions have been made to the performance indicators reported in this chapter to align with the homelessness specific performance indicators in the NAHA.

Box 17.1 Objectives for SAAP services

The overall aim of SAAP was 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 were to:

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

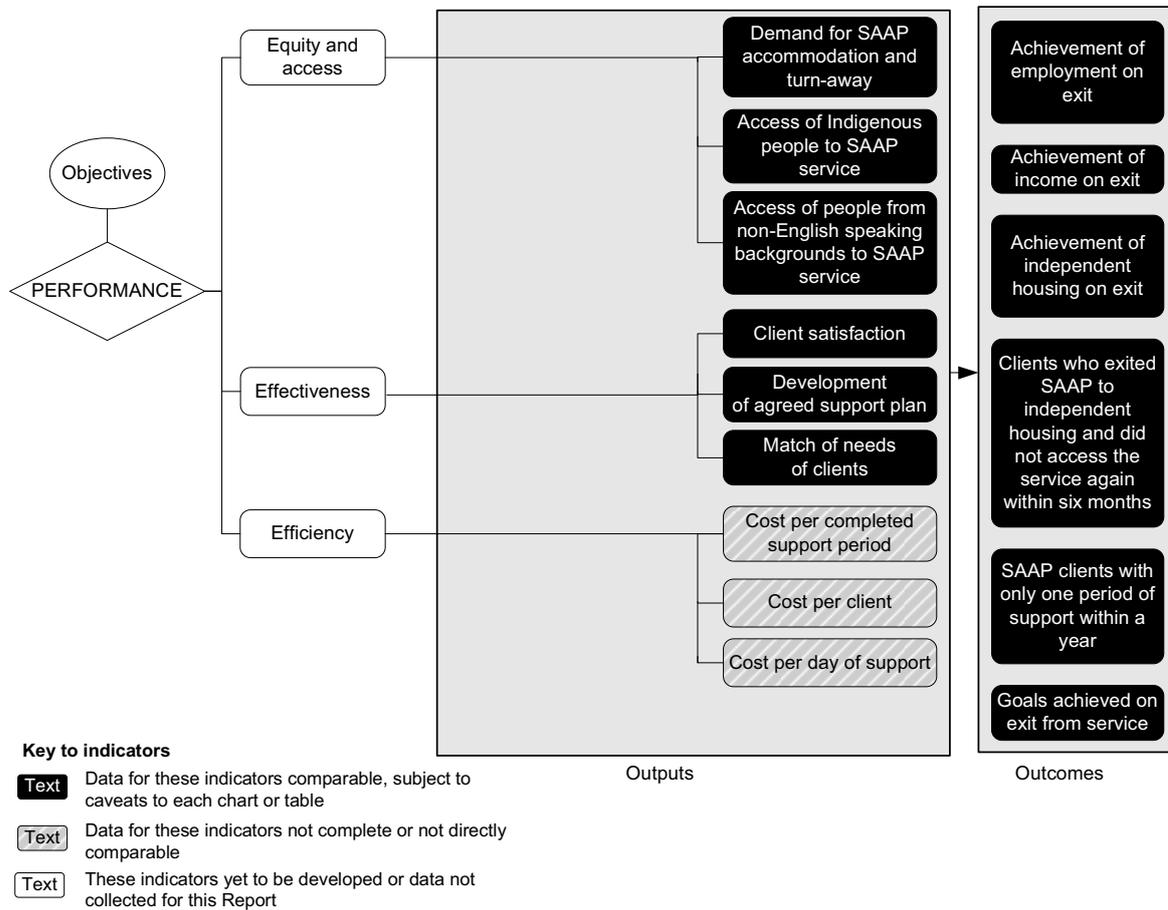
SAAP services should be provided in an equitable and efficient manner.

The performance indicator framework provides information on equity, efficiency and effectiveness, and distinguishes the outputs and outcomes of SAAP services (figure 17.3). The performance indicator framework shows which data are comparable in the 2011 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).

The Report's statistical appendix 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) (appendix A).

Figure 17.3 Performance indicators for SAAP services



17.3 Key Supported Accommodation Assistance Program performance indicator results

The SAAP data collection measures the number of clients and the number and types of services provided to clients, but is subject to limitations (box 17.2).

Box 17.2 Information 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.
- Nationally, in 2008-09, clients consented to provide personal details for the SAAP client collection in 85.0 per cent of support periods, while 94.0 per cent of agencies participated in the client collection. A weighting system has been developed to adjust for client non-consent and agency non-participation (AIHW 2010).

Outputs

Outputs are the 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 17.3).

Box 17.3 Demand for SAAP accommodation and turn-away

‘Demand for SAAP accommodation and turn-away’ is defined as the extent to which 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 might 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 decreasing proportion of people turned away from SAAP services 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 quality information for this indicator is under development.

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 making the request does not fall within an agency’s target client group, where there is no fee-free accommodation available at that time,³ or where assistance offered by an agency is refused. For the Client

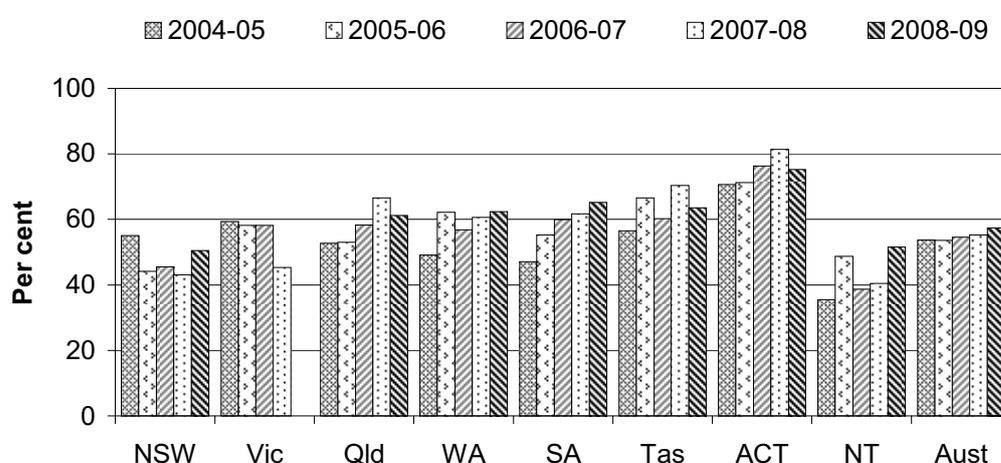
³ ‘No fee-free accommodation available’ refers to situations where the person/group is not given accommodation because they cannot meet the financial requirements (for example, fees) for that accommodation.

Collection, the accommodation status of a client on a particular day is based on the reported periods of accommodation within a support period.

Demand data may understate the activities of SAAP agencies as only data from agencies that participated in both the Client Collection and the Demand for Accommodation Collection are used in the calculations. Additionally, the two one-week sample periods over which data are collected might not be representative of the eventual success of clients accessing SAAP services over the full year (see notes to tables 17A.7-8).

Data on the proportion of people with valid requests for SAAP accommodation who were turned away are reported for the years 2004-05 to 2008-09. Nationally, 57.4 per cent of adults and unaccompanied children requesting immediate new SAAP accommodation on a given day were turned away in 2008-09. This proportion varied across jurisdictions (figure 17.4).

Figure 17.4 Turn-away of adults and unaccompanied children as a proportion of people requiring new SAAP accommodation^{a, b, c, d, e}



^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 Data for Victoria for 2008-09 were not available. As a result, turn-away data for 2008-09 cannot be compared directly with those of previous years. ^e See notes to table 17A.7 for more detailed data caveats.

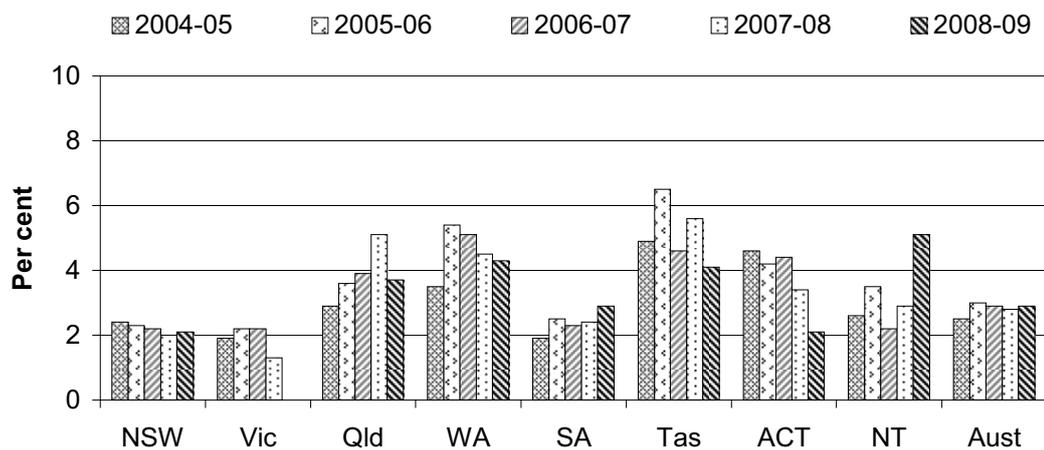
Source: AIHW (2010) *Demand for government-funded specialist homelessness accommodation 2008-09: A report from the SAAP national data collection*. Cat. No. HOU 230; table 17A.7.

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 2008-09 (total demand includes all accommodated adults and unaccompanied children) (figure 17.5). This proportion varied across jurisdictions.

The difference between (a) the percentage of people turned away on a given day as a proportion of total requests for new immediate SAAP accommodation on a given day (57.4 per cent) and (b) the percentage of people turned away on a given day as a proportion of total demand for SAAP accommodation (2.9 per cent) suggests that SAAP agencies provide a significant number of clients with continuing accommodation.

Figure 17.5 Turn-away of adults and unaccompanied children as the proportion of total demand for SAAP accommodation^{a, b, c, d, e}



^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 Data for Victoria for 2008-09 were not available. As a result, turn-away data for 2008-09 cannot be compared directly with those of previous years. ^e See notes to table 17A.8 for more detailed data caveats.

Source: AIHW (2010) *Demand for government-funded specialist homelessness accommodation 2008-09: A report from the SAAP national data collection*. Cat. No. HOU 230; table 17A.8.

Nationally, requests for SAAP accommodation were not met for a number of reasons in 2008-09, including lack of available accommodation (59.9 per cent), no vacancies at the referral agency (24.5 per cent), type of accommodation requested is not provided (6.8 per cent) and insufficient staff (0.9 per cent) (table 17A.16).

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 17.4).

Box 17.4 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 proportion of Indigenous people whose valid requests for accommodation are met is desirable. Where the proportion of Indigenous people with unmet SAAP accommodation needs is higher than the proportion of people who received SAAP accommodation who were Indigenous, services might not be achieving equality of service access for Indigenous people.

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 might be provided).

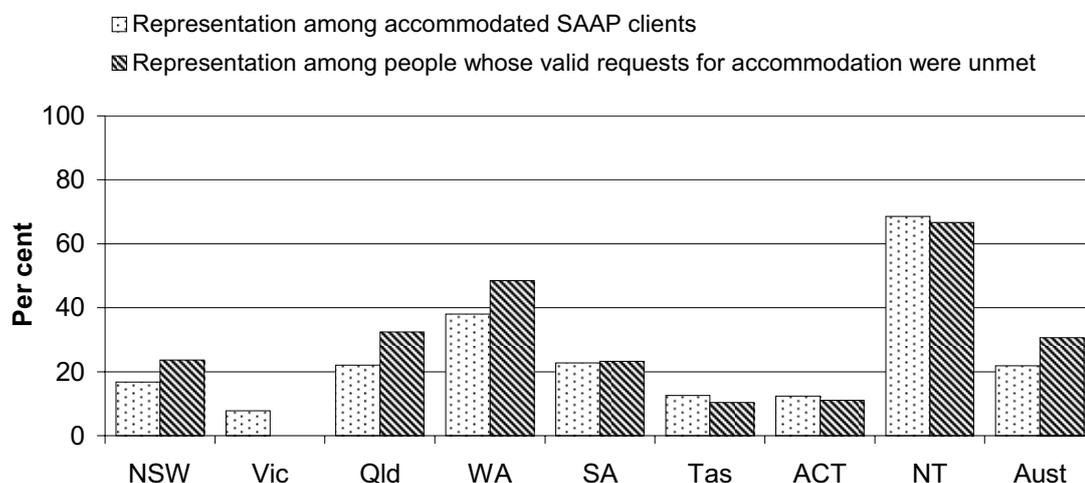
Supported accommodation and assistance services target homeless people in general, but access by special needs groups (such as Indigenous people) is particularly important.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, Indigenous people made up 30.6 per cent of all people whose valid requests for accommodation did not result in accommodation assistance in 2008-09 — a proportion greater than Indigenous clients among all accommodated SAAP clients (21.9 per cent). This result varied across jurisdictions (figure 17.6).

Figure 17.6 Proportion of Indigenous people among all accommodated SAAP clients and among people whose valid requests for accommodation were unmet, 2008-09^{a, b}



^a Turn away data for Victoria in 2008-09 were not available. ^b See notes to table 17A.9 for details of data definitions.

Source: SAAP NDCA Client and Demand for Accommodation Collections (unpublished); Source: AIHW (2010) Demand for government-funded specialist homelessness accommodation 2008-09: A report from the SAAP national data collection. Cat. No. HOU 230; table 17A.9.

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 17.5).

Box 17.5 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 proportion of people from non-English speaking backgrounds whose valid requests for accommodation are met is desirable. Where the proportion of people from non-English speaking backgrounds with unmet SAAP accommodation needs is higher than the proportion of people who received SAAP accommodation who were from non-English speaking backgrounds, services might not be achieving equality of service access for people of non-English speaking backgrounds.

(Continued on next page)

Box 17.5 (Continued)

This 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 might be provided).

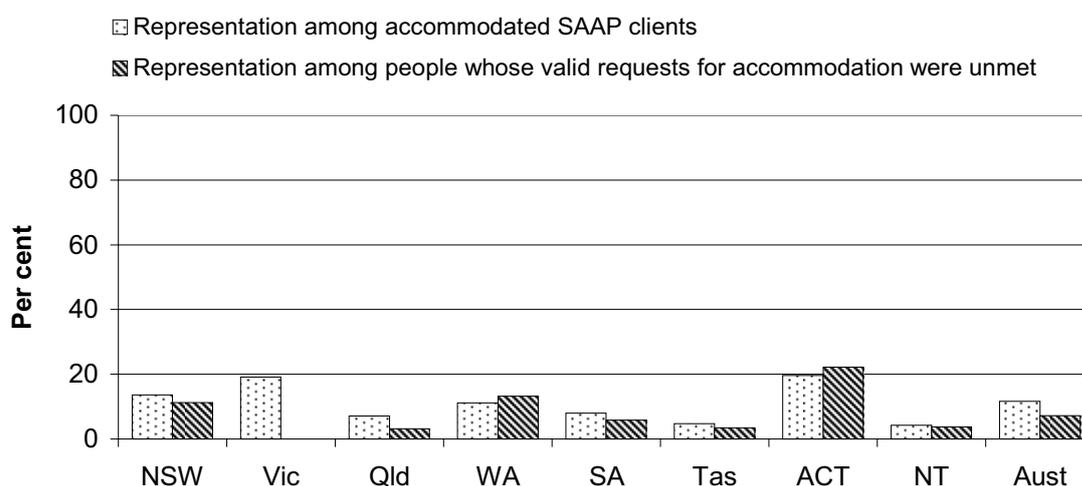
Supported accommodation and assistance services target homeless people in general, but access by special needs groups (such as people from non-English speaking backgrounds) is particularly important.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

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 7.2 per cent in 2008-09 — lower than that of people from non-English speaking backgrounds among all accommodated SAAP clients (11.6 per cent). This result varied across jurisdictions (figure 17.7).

Figure 17.7 Proportion of people from non-English speaking backgrounds among all accommodated SAAP clients and among people whose valid requests for accommodation were unmet, 2008-09^{a, b}



^a Turn away data for Victoria in 2008-09 were not available. ^b See notes to table 17A.10 for details of data definitions.

Source: SAAP NDCA Client and Demand for Accommodation Collections (unpublished); Source: AIHW (2010) Demand for government-funded specialist homelessness accommodation 2008-09: A report from the SAAP national data collection. Cat. No. HOU 230; table 17A.10.

Effectiveness

Client satisfaction

‘Client satisfaction’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide high quality services that meet the needs of SAAP recipients (box 17.6).

Box 17.6 Client satisfaction

‘Client satisfaction’ is defined as the extent to which clients find SAAP services and programs to be helpful and of a high standard (CBSR 2004). Client satisfaction is measured as the proportion of clients who reported that their overall satisfaction with the assistance they received from SAAP services was either ‘good’ or ‘really good’.

A high proportion of clients reporting the assistance they received as ‘good’ or ‘really good’ suggests greater client satisfaction with the overall SAAP service.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Data for the client satisfaction indicator are sourced from the national SAAP client satisfaction survey, which was conducted in 2003. New data for this indicator were 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 17.7).

Box 17.7 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. A closed support period is a support period that had finished on or before 30 June. Data are reported for all SAAP clients, and separately for Indigenous clients.

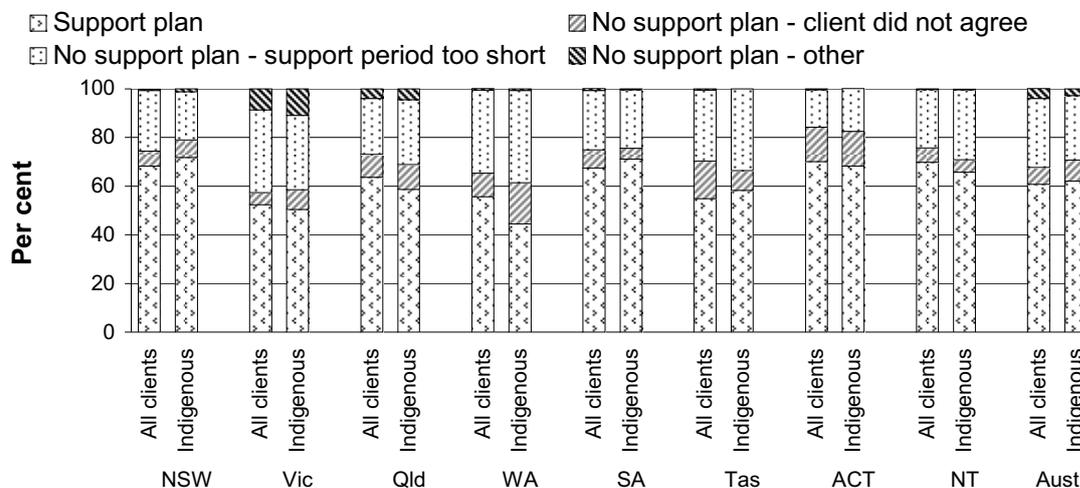
A high proportion of support periods with agreed support plans is desirable. However, in some instances, a support plan may be judged to be inappropriate (such as when a support period is short term).

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, there was an agreed support plan for 60.7 per cent of closed support periods for all clients in 2008-09 (compared to 62.1 per cent for Indigenous clients). These proportions varied across jurisdictions (figure 17.8).

Figure 17.8 Closed support periods, by the existence of a support plan, 2008-09^a



^a See notes to tables 17A.11-12 for more details of data definitions.

Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); AIHW (2010) *Government-funded specialist homelessness services: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2008-09*. Cat no. HOU 219; tables 17A.11-12.

Match of needs of clients

'Match of needs of clients' is an indicator of governments' objective to ensure that SAAP services meet client's individual needs (box 17.8).

Box 17.8 Match of needs of clients

'Match of needs of clients' is defined as the number of distinct services required by 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 high proportion of clients who received services they needed, or who were referred to another agency, is desirable.

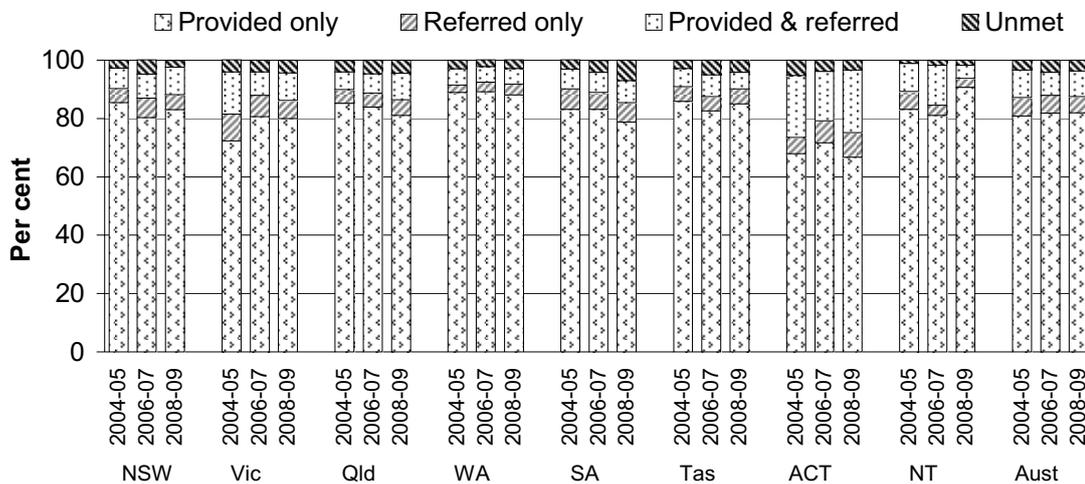
The range of services needed by SAAP clients is broad (ranging from meals to laundry facilities to long term accommodation), so the effect of not providing these services varies. Data are reported for all SAAP clients, and separately for Indigenous people and people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, the proportion of clients who received services they needed (including services provided by the initially approached agencies and/or referrals to another agency) was 96.3 per cent in 2008-09 (figure 17.9).

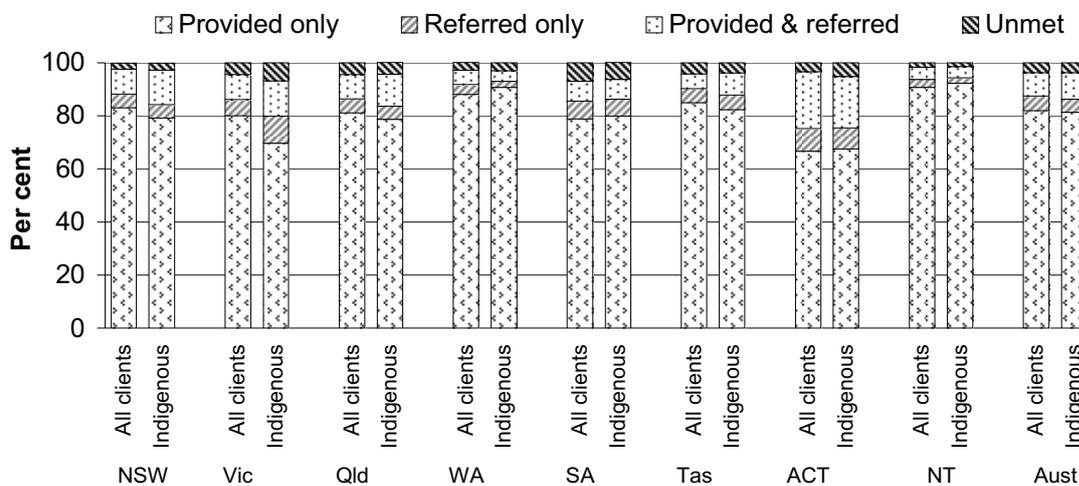
Figure 17.9 SAAP clients, by met and unmet support needs



Source: AIHW (2010) *Government-funded specialist homelessness services: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2008-09*. Cat no. HOU 219. AIHW (2010) *Government-funded specialist homelessness services: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2008-09 State/territory supplementary tables*. Cat no. HOU 222; table 17A.13.

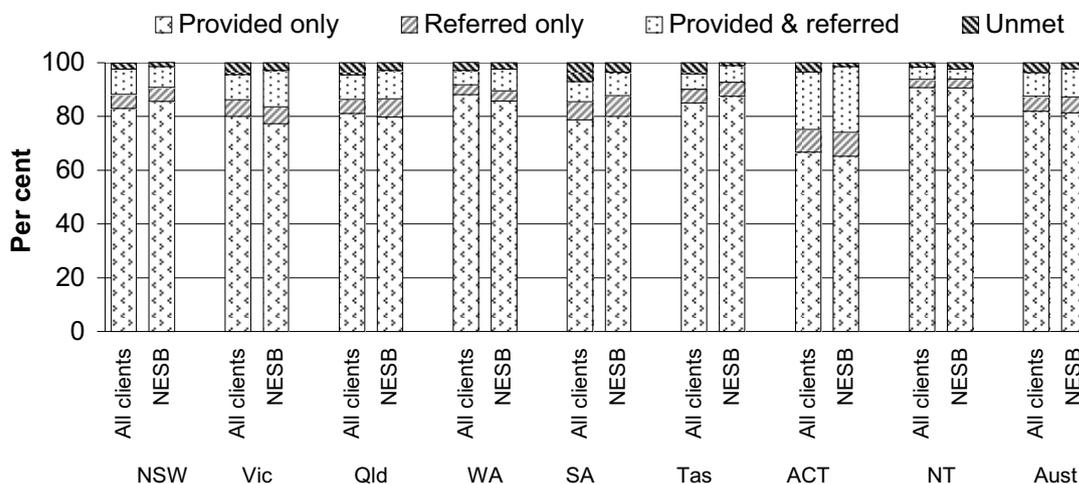
The proportions for Indigenous clients (96.3 per cent) and clients from a non-English speaking background (97.7 per cent) who received services in 2008-09 were the same or similar to that for all clients (96.3 per cent). These proportions varied across jurisdictions (figures 17.10-11).

Figure 17.10 Indigenous clients, by met and unmet support needs, 2008-09



Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); AIHW (2010) *Government-funded specialist homelessness services: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2008-09*. Cat no. HOU 219; tables 17A.13-14.

Figure 17.11 Clients from non-English speaking backgrounds, by met and unmet support needs, 2008-09



NESB = Non-English speaking background.

Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); AIHW (2010) *Government-funded specialist homelessness services: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2008-09*. Cat no. HOU 219; tables 17A.13 and 17A.15.

Efficiency

Across jurisdictions, there are varying treatments of expenditure items (for example, superannuation) and different counting and reporting rules for generating financial data. Differences in expenditure data across jurisdictions might to some extent reflect differences in the way in which these data are compiled rather than true variations in expenditure.

Cost per completed support period

‘Cost per completed support period’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to maximise the availability and quality of services through the efficient use of public resources (box 17.9).

Box 17.9 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 low or decreasing cost per completed support period is desirable, but can also indicate lower service quality.

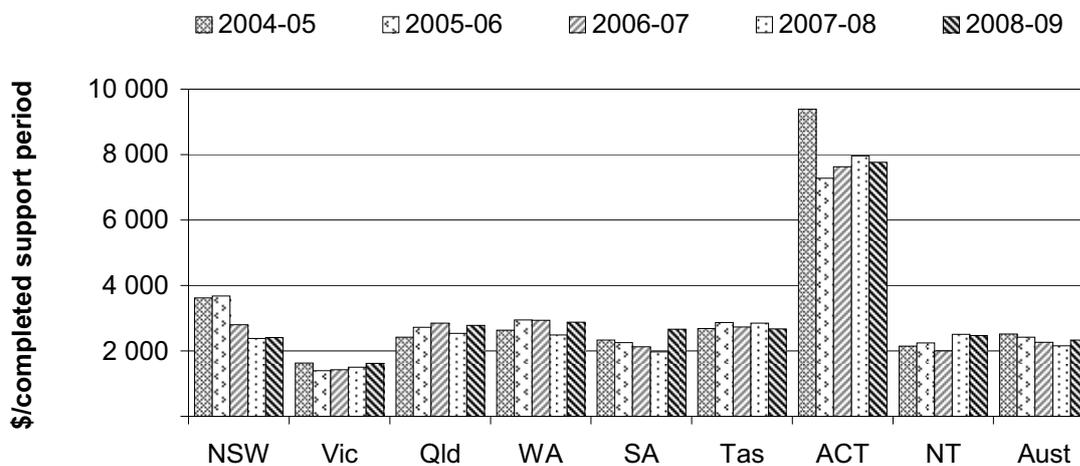
This is a proxy indicator of efficiency, measuring government inputs per unit of output (unit cost), including only expenditure by service delivery providers. Unit cost indicators ideally include administration costs borne by State and Territory governments in administering services, but this is not yet possible. In addition, capital costs are excluded because capital funding for SAAP was provided under the CSHA through a special purpose program (the CAP) until end-December 2008, when all funding was rolled into the NAHA.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

The recurrent cost per completed support period (excluding potential clients and accompanying children) averaged \$2330 nationally and varied across jurisdictions in 2008-09 (figure 17.12).

Figure 17.12 Real recurrent cost per completed support period (2008-09 dollars)^a



^a See notes to table 17A.17 for detailed data caveats.

Source: SAAP NDCA Administrative Data and Client Collections (unpublished); table 17A.17.

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 public resources (box 17.10).

Box 17.10 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 low or decreasing cost per client is desirable, but can also indicate lower service quality.

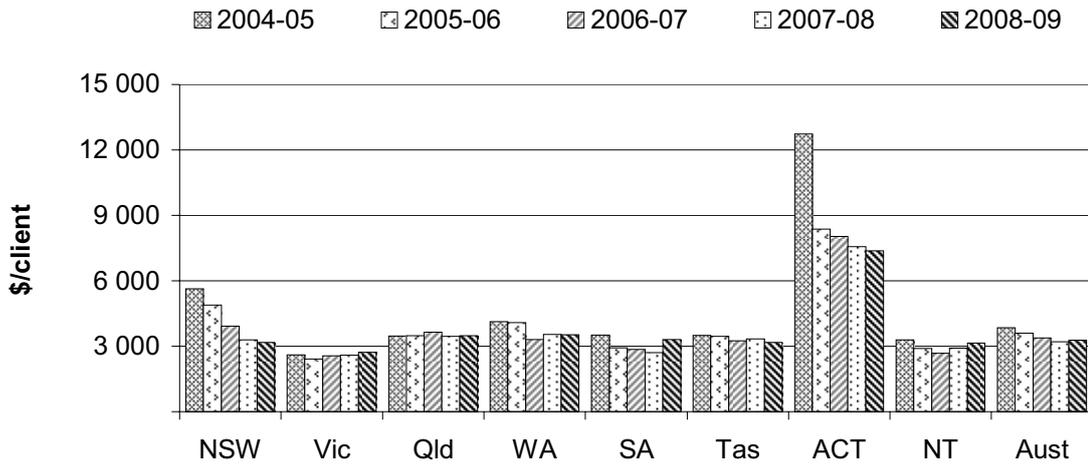
This is a proxy indicator of efficiency, measuring government inputs per unit of output (unit cost), including only expenditure by service delivery providers. Unit cost indicators ideally include administration costs borne by State and Territory governments in administering services, but this is not yet possible. In addition, capital costs are excluded because capital funding for SAAP was provided under the CSHA through a special purpose program (the CAP) until end-December 2008, when all funding was rolled into the NAHA.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, the recurrent cost per client accessing SAAP services was \$3270 and varied across jurisdictions in 2008-09 (figure 17.13).

Figure 17.13 Real recurrent cost per client accessing SAAP services (2008-09 dollars)^a



^a See notes to table 17A.18 for detailed data caveats.

Source: SAAP NDCA Administrative Data and Client Collections (unpublished); table 17A.18.

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 public resources (box 17.11).

Box 17.11 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 low or decreasing cost per day of support is desirable, but can also indicate lower service quality.

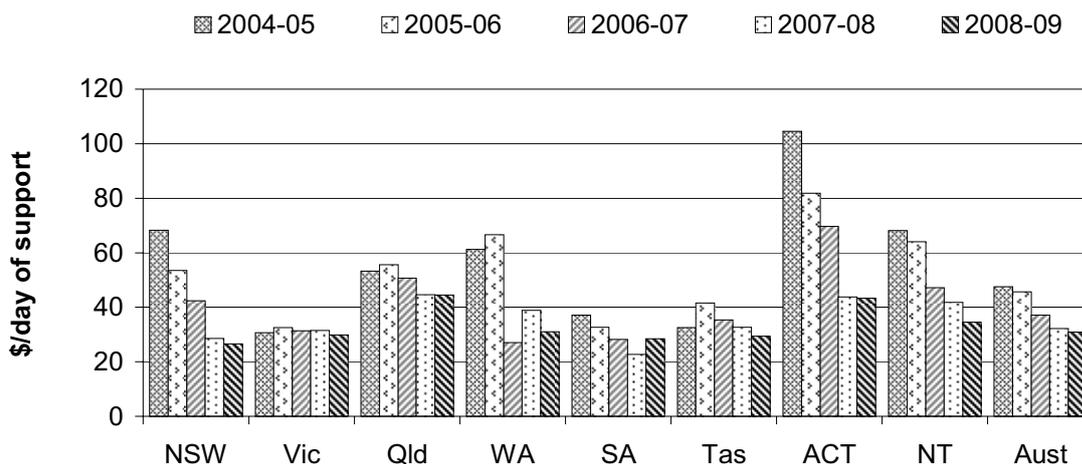
This is a proxy indicator of efficiency, measuring government inputs per unit of output (unit cost), including only expenditure by service delivery providers. Unit cost indicators ideally include administration costs borne by State and Territory governments in administering services, but this is not yet possible. In addition, capital costs are excluded because capital funding for SAAP was provided under the CSHA through a special purpose program (the CAP) until end-December 2008, when all funding was rolled into the NAHA.

Data reported for this indicator are not directly comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

The recurrent cost per day of support for SAAP clients averaged \$31 nationally and varied across jurisdictions in 2008-09 (figure 17.14).

Figure 17.14 Real recurrent cost per day of support for clients (2008-09 dollars)^a



^a See notes to table 17A.19 for detailed data caveats.

Source: SAAP NDCA Administrative Data and Client Collections (unpublished); table 17A.19.

Outcomes

Outcomes are the impact of services on the status of an individual or group (while outputs are the 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, Australian governments commissioned a research project to examine the impact of SAAP services on client self-reliance. The report based on this project, *Measuring the Impact of SAAP-funded Homelessness Services on Client Self-reliance* (FaHCSIA 2008a), found that many of the problems and barriers that led clients into homelessness were not easily fixed and could 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 17.12).

Box 17.12 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 and training. Support periods reported relate to these clients only.

A high or increasing proportion of clients achieving employment after SAAP support is 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.

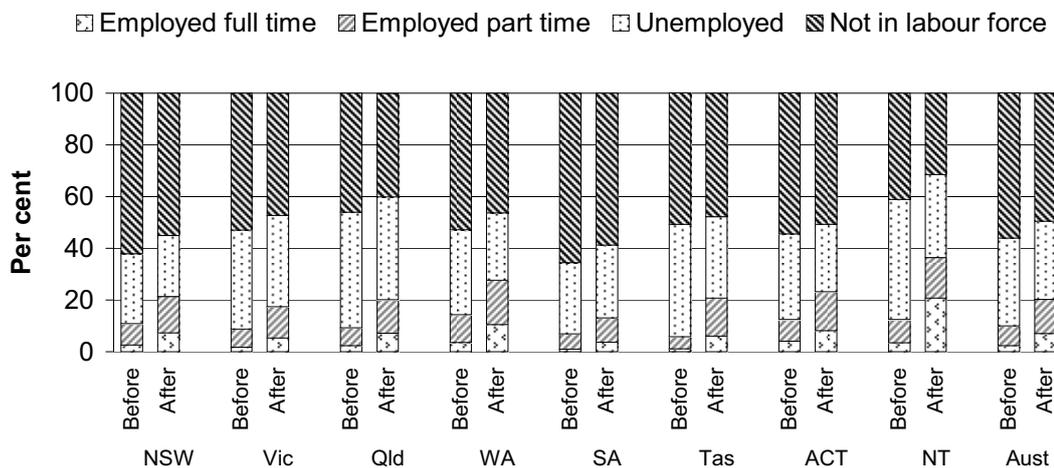
Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, of those clients who sought assistance to obtain or maintain employment and training when entering SAAP in 2008-09, the proportion of clients who were employed either full time or part time increased from 10.0 per cent before support to 20.3 per cent after support (7.0 per cent full time and 13.3 per cent part time). The proportion of clients who were unemployed decreased from 34.0 per cent before support to 30.2 per cent after support. The proportion of clients who were not in the labour force decreased from 56.1 per cent before support to 49.5 per cent after support. Proportions varied across jurisdictions (figure 17.15(a), table 17A.23).

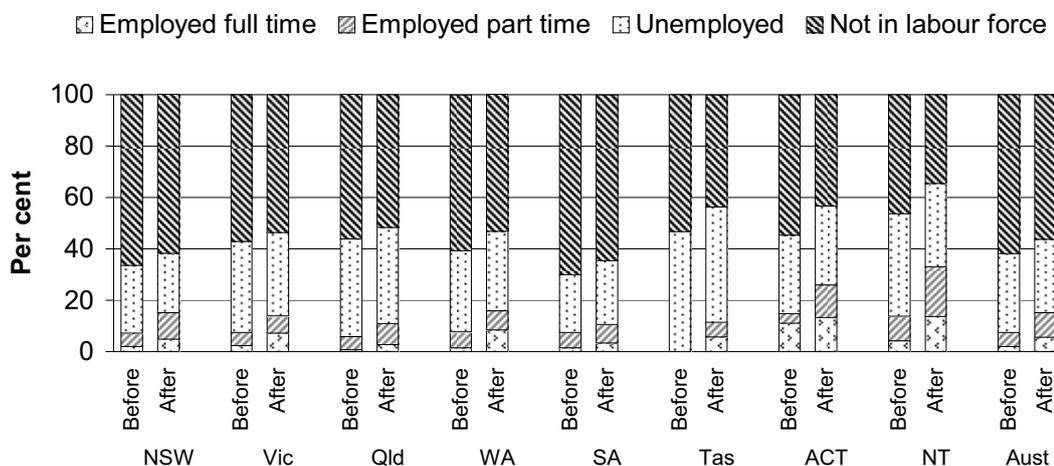
Nationally, of those Indigenous clients who sought assistance to obtain or maintain employment and training when entering SAAP in 2008-09, the proportion of clients who were employed either full time or part time increased from 7.4 per cent before support to 15.1 per cent after support (5.6 per cent full time and 9.5 per cent part time). The proportion of clients who were unemployed decreased from 30.7 per cent before support to 28.6 per cent after support. The proportion of clients who were not in the labour force decreased from 61.9 per cent before support to 56.3 per cent after support. These proportions varied across jurisdictions (figure 17.15(b) and table 17A.24).

Figure 17.15 Changes in labour force status of clients who needed assistance to obtain/maintain employment and training before/after SAAP support, 2008-09^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 17A.23-24.

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 17.13).

Box 17.13 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 or increasing proportion of clients who requested income assistance and exited SAAP with an income source is desirable.

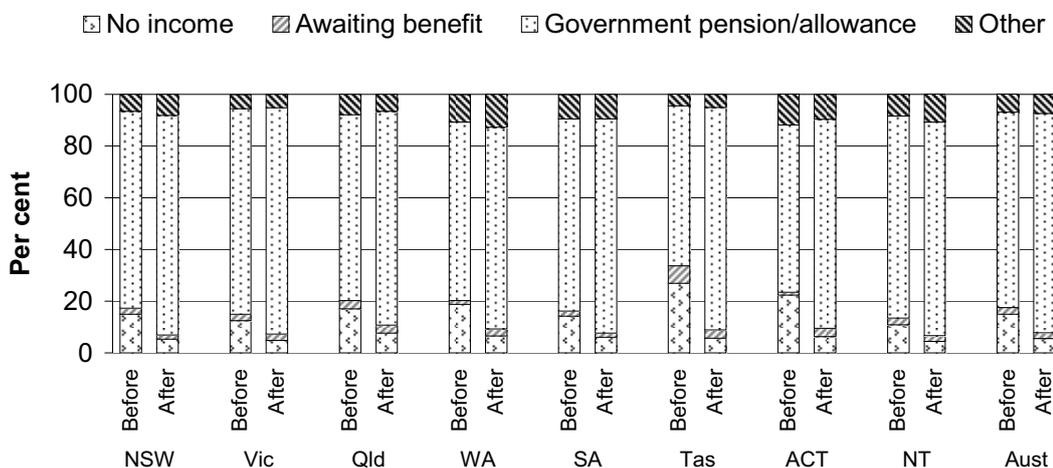
This indicator compares these clients' income status before and after they received SAAP support. A client's independence and self-reliance is enhanced when the client experiences a positive change in income source (for example, from having no income support to obtaining some income, including wages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

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

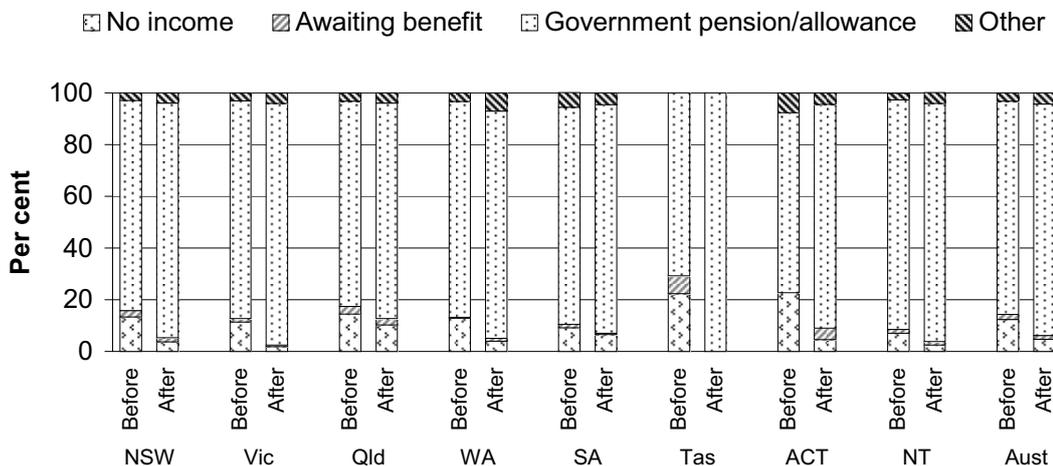
Nationally, in 2008-09, 14.9 per cent of SAAP support periods in which clients who requested income assistance did not have income prior to SAAP assistance. After SAAP assistance, the proportion of SAAP support periods in which clients who had requested income assistance and had no income was 5.6 per cent (figure 17.16). The proportion of Indigenous clients who did not have income and requested income assistance also decreased after SAAP assistance (from 12.3 per cent to 4.7 per cent nationally) (figure 17.17). Both before and after SAAP assistance, the income source for the majority of SAAP clients was a government pension/benefit (figures 17.16 and 17.17).

Figure 17.16 Source of income immediately before/after SAAP support of clients who needed assistance to obtain/maintain a pension or benefit, 2008-09



Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); table 17A.29.

Figure 17.17 Source of income immediately before/after SAAP support of Indigenous clients who needed assistance to obtain/maintain a pension or benefit, 2008-09



Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); table 17A.30.

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 17.14).

Box 17.14 Achievement of independent housing on exit

'Achievement of independent housing on exit' is defined as the number of closed support periods in which clients who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining independent housing achieved independent housing, divided by the total number of closed support periods in which clients requested assistance obtaining or maintaining independent housing.

A high or increasing proportion of SAAP closed support periods in which clients achieve independent housing is 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 reported for this indicator are comparable.

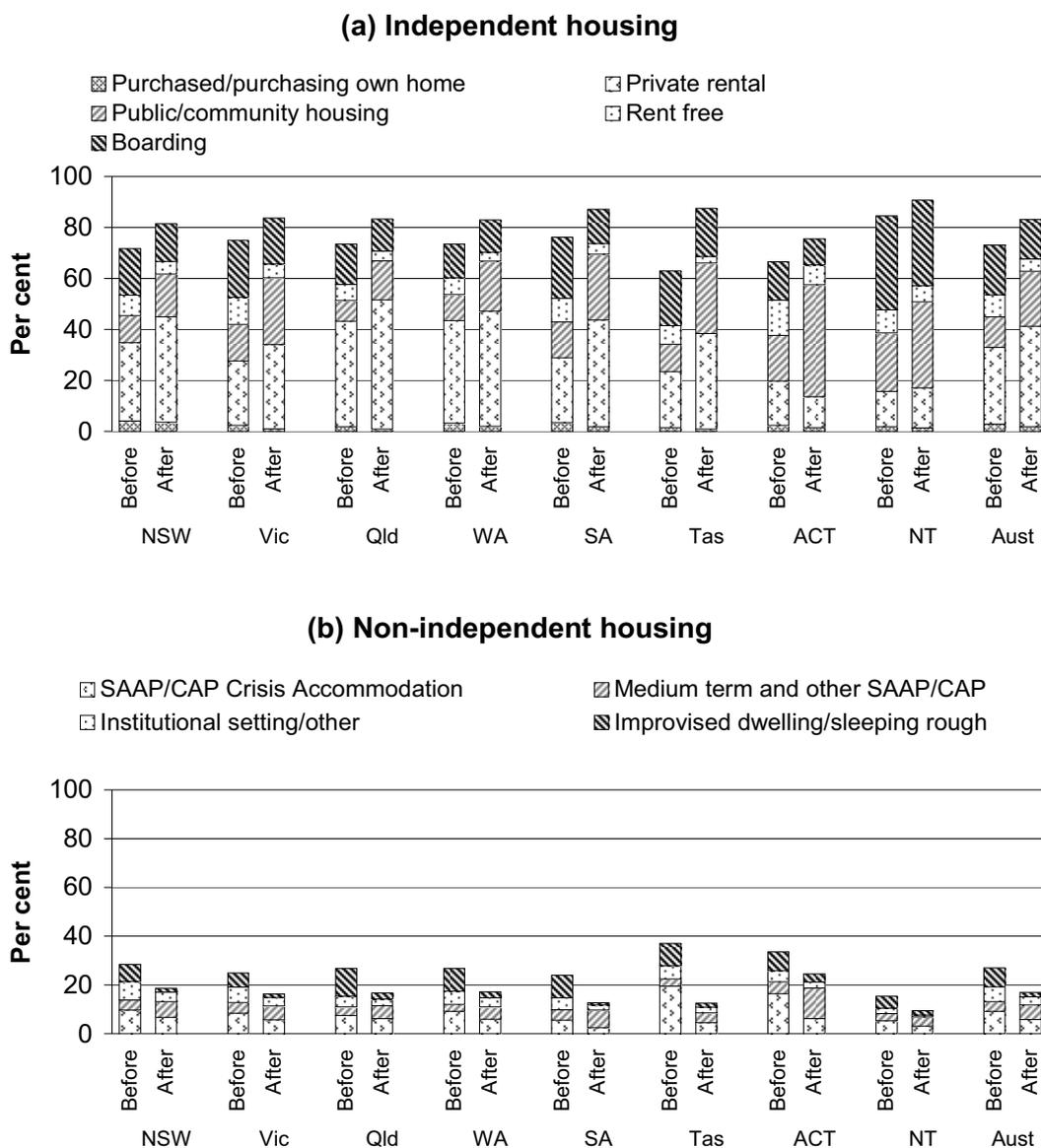
Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, 83.2 per cent of closed support periods in which clients requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining independent housing achieved independent housing in 2008-09. This included clients who moved or returned to private rental housing (39.3 per cent), to public or community rental housing (21.7 per cent), and those who were boarding (15.5 per cent) (figure 17.18a).

Among Indigenous clients, on a national basis, 84.2 per cent of clients who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining independent housing achieved independent housing at the end of a support period in 2008-09, including those who moved or returned to private rental housing (27.4 per cent), to public or community rental housing (31.4 per cent), and who were boarding (19.7 per cent) (figure 17.19a).

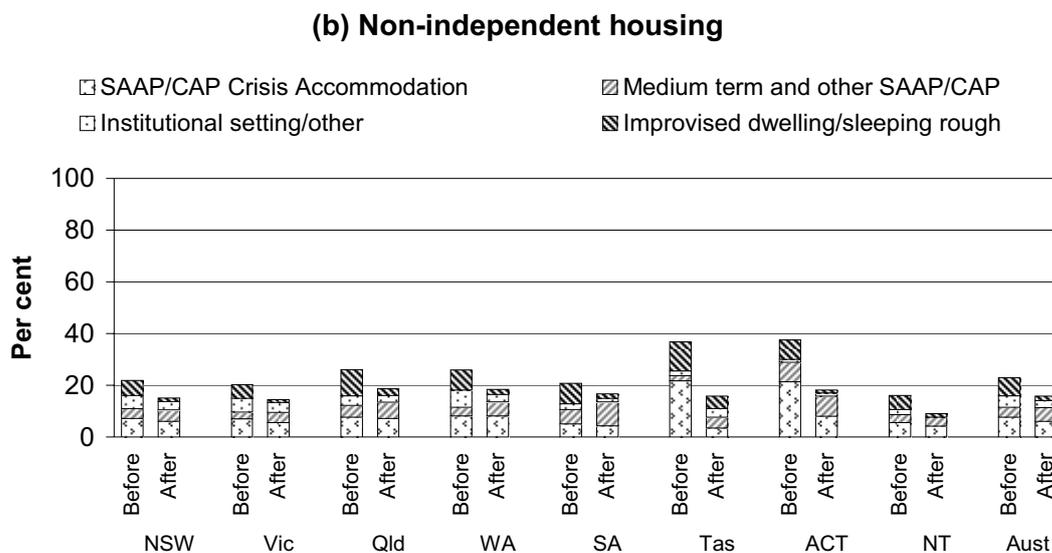
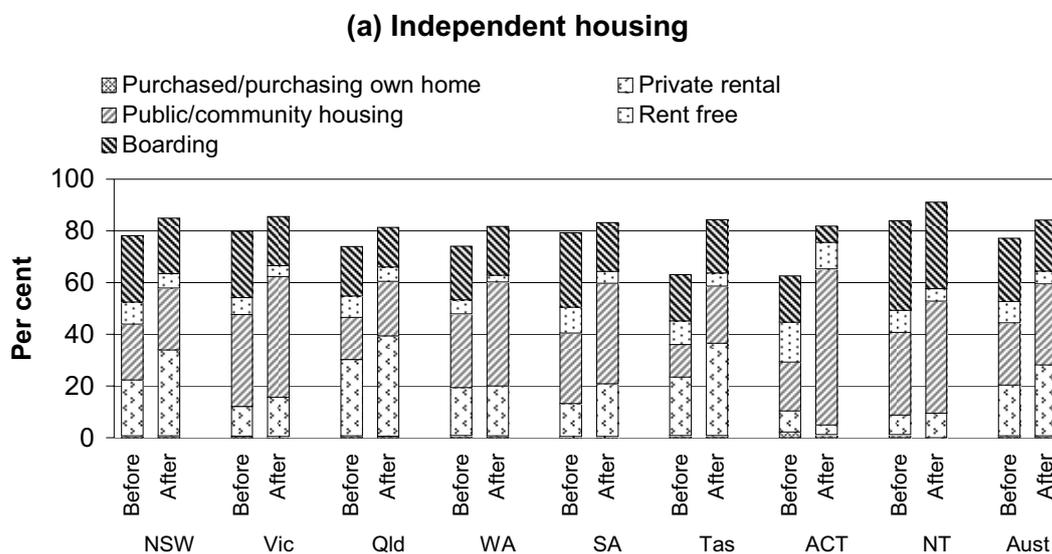
Closed support periods in which clients did not achieve independent housing included those who moved to, or continued to live in, short to medium term SAAP accommodation and other forms of non-independent accommodation (figure 17.18b and 17.19b).

Figure 17.18 Accommodation type before and after SAAP support, for clients who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining housing, all SAAP clients, 2008-09



Source: SAAP NDCA Administrative Data and Client Collections (unpublished); tables 17A.21.

Figure 17.19 Accommodation type before and after SAAP support, for clients who requested assistance with obtaining or maintaining housing, Indigenous SAAP clients, 2008-09



Source: SAAP NDCA Administrative Data and Client Collections (unpublished); tables 17A.22.

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 17.15).

Box 17.15 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 high or increasing proportion of clients not returning to the program within six months is desirable.

Many of the problems and barriers that lead people into homelessness are not easily fixed (FaHCSIA 2008a). Therefore, a number of SAAP clients might access SAAP services several times before their needs are met on a permanent basis (for example, moving from crisis accommodation to medium term accommodation).

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

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 17.2. The most recent data available are for the period 2004-05, during which 45.4 per cent of clients who exited a SAAP service to independent housing did not access the service again within six months. These data might not be representative of all clients (table 17A.27). 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 17.16).

Box 17.16 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' comprises two measures.

1. 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.
2. The number of clients who more than once required SAAP housing or accommodation support (as distinct from other types of SAAP support such as employment assistance and counselling), divided by the number of SAAP clients who required SAAP housing or accommodation support. Data are reported for all SAAP clients, and separately for Indigenous clients. This measure was introduced in the 2011 Report for consistency with the proxy measure used to enumerate the NAHA indicator 'proportion of people experiencing repeat periods of homelessness'.

A high or increasing proportion of clients with only one support period during the year is desirable. Consistent with this objective, a low or decreasing number of SAAP clients who more than once required SAAP housing or accommodation support specifically is desirable.

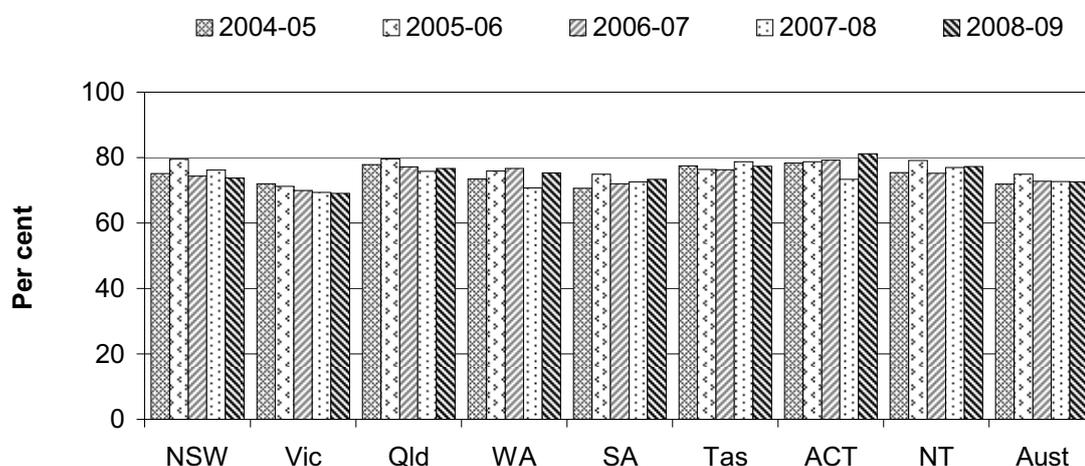
Many of the problems and barriers that lead people into homelessness are not easily fixed (FaHCSIA 2008a). Therefore, a number of SAAP clients might access SAAP services several times before their needs are met on a permanent basis (for example, moving from crisis accommodation to medium term accommodation).

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, 72.6 per cent of SAAP clients had only one support period in 2008-09 (figure 17.20). The proportion for Indigenous clients was similar (72.4 per cent) (table 17A.26).

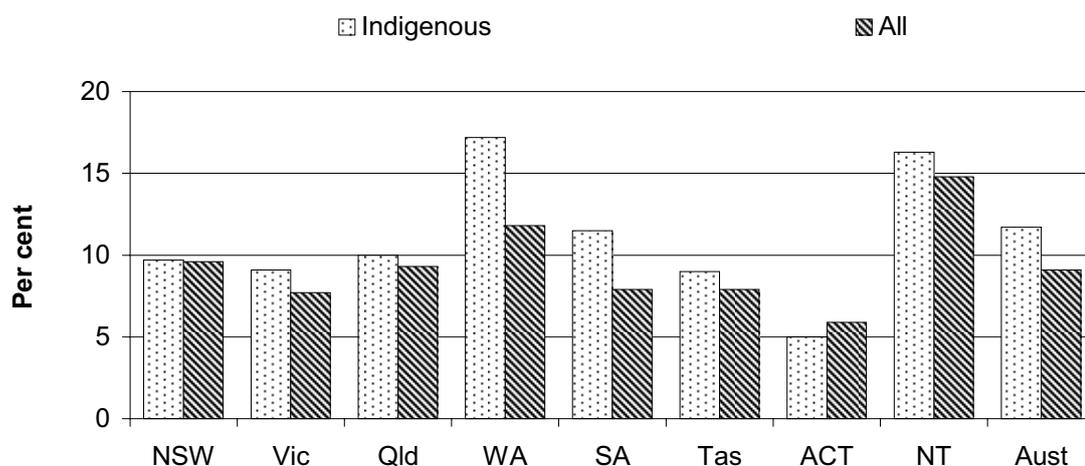
Figure 17.20 Proportion of SAAP clients with only one period of support within a year



Source: AIHW (2010) *Government-funded specialist homelessness services: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2008-09*. Cat no. HOU 219; table 17A.25.

Nationally, 9.1 per cent of all SAAP clients more than once required SAAP housing or accommodation support in 2008-09 (as distinct from other types of SAAP support such as employment assistance and counselling). The proportion for Indigenous clients was higher (11.7 per cent). Proportions varied across jurisdictions (table 17A.28).

Figure 17.21 Proportion of SAAP clients who more than once in 2008-09 required SAAP housing or accommodation support



Source: SAAP NDCA *Client Collection* (unpublished); Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision (forthcoming); table 17A.28.

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 17.17).

Box 17.17 Goals achieved on exit from service

'Goals achieved on exit from service' is defined as the proportion of clients who reported that their case management goals were fully or mostly achieved by the end of their support period, divided by the total number of clients with case management goals in a given period.

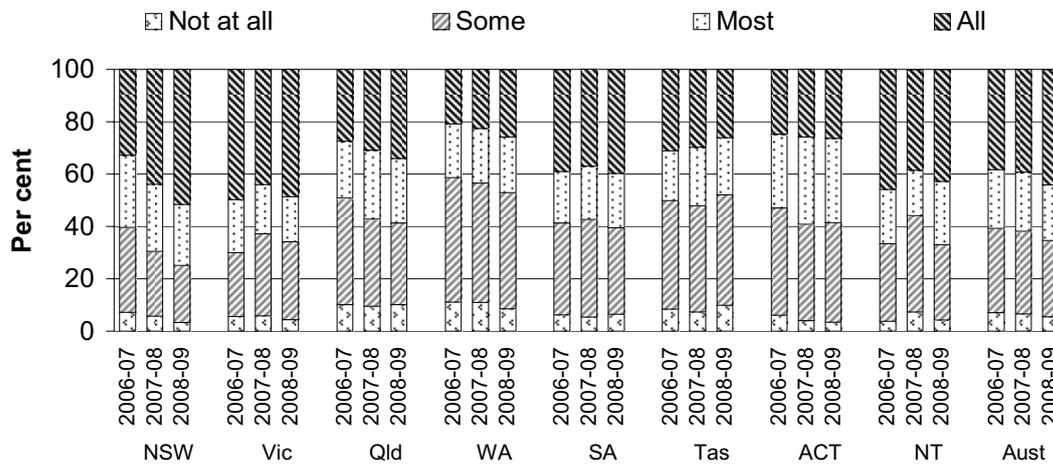
A high or increasing proportion of achieved goals is desirable.

Data reported for this indicator are comparable.

Data quality information for this indicator is under development.

Nationally, case management goals were fully or mostly achieved by the end of the support period for 65.3 per cent of clients in 2008-09 (figure 17.22).

Figure 17.22 Goals achieved on exit from SAAP service



Source: SAAP NDCA Client Collection (unpublished); table 17A.31.

17.4 Future directions in homelessness services performance reporting

Homelessness data developments

Data agencies, the Australian Government and State and Territory governments are currently developing a new homelessness data collection to report on performance indicators contained in the NAHA and associated partnership agreements. It is expected that the new homelessness data collection will be operational by 1 July 2011. While the new data collection is being developed, an interim SAAP collection will continue until end-June 2011.

The measurement of service delivery in the new homelessness data collection will be based on clients rather than support periods. Therefore, once the new homelessness data collection is operational, data in this Report will be measured on the basis of clients rather than support periods, necessitating a break in ROGS SAAP/homelessness time series data.

COAG developments

Report on Government Services alignment with National Agreement reporting

Further alignment between the Report and NA indicators might occur in future reports as a result of developments in NA reporting.

Outcomes from review of Report on Government Services

COAG endorsed recommendations of a review of the RoGS in December 2009. Those recommendations implemented during 2010 are reflected in this Report.

Further recommendations will be reflected in future Reports, including implementation of Independent Reference Group and Steering Committee recommendations arising from the 'Review of the general performance indicator framework' and the 'Review of the performance indicators and their associated measures'. The 2012 Report and later editions will continue:

- lengthening time series data in attachment tables
- developing data quality information documents for performance indicators
- developing mini-case studies.

17.5 Jurisdictions' comments

This section provides comments from each jurisdiction on the services covered in this chapter.

Australian Government comments

“

The Australian Government has progressed a series of programs, initiatives and reforms in pursuit of objectives and targets in ‘The Road Home: A national approach to reducing homelessness’.

For example, 105 ‘Reconnect’ services (including 11 Indigenous services and 13 services targeting newly arrived young people) are in operation. ‘Reconnect’ is a \$23.5 million community-based early intervention program supporting young people aged 12 to 18 years who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness.

FaHCSIA, in partnership with Centrelink and community agencies, delivers ‘HOME Advice’ in 8 locations throughout Australia. This \$1.4 million program assists families facing difficulty to maintain tenancies or home ownership.

‘A Place to Call Home’ is a \$300 million commitment to build over 600 dwellings, many of which will follow innovative housing models including common ground and foyer facilities with wrap-around support services. ‘A Place to Call Home’ is funded by \$150 million of state and territory funds and \$150 million of matched funding from the Commonwealth.

Under the \$11.4 million National Homelessness Research Agenda, Research Partnership Agreements worth \$4 million are shared equally across the University of Queensland, Swinburne University of Technology and Flinders University in South Australia. Projects funded under the agenda will focus on rough sleeping, improving the service delivery system for the most vulnerable groups (including service integration), improving understanding of homelessness and the effectiveness of interventions, and longitudinal data development.

The Prime Minister’s Council on Homelessness (established 2009) has met seven times. In June 2010, the Council led ‘The Road Home—Progress and Lessons’ exhibition which brought together over 200 policy and program managers from government and non-government organisations, practitioners, research experts and policy advocates.

Progress will be measured in part by the development of a new data collection system for Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS), new national minimum data sets, the ABS review of the ‘Counting the Homeless’ methodology and Centrelink’s introduction of a homelessness indicator. These initiatives will compliment the count of the homeless population derived from the 2011 Census.

The Australian Government has committed a further \$78.83 million over four years to double the capacity (30 up to 60 sites) of ‘headspace’, a youth friendly mental health service. In addition, specialist ‘Job Services Australia’ providers will deliver specialist services from 39 locations to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Other initiatives such as the introduction of weekly payments via Centrelink, targeted residential care capital grants, ‘Access to Allied Psychological Services’ program and the Social Housing Initiative are further examples of the Australian Government’s efforts to reduce homelessness.

”

New South Wales Government comments

“

- The NSW Homelessness Action Plan 2009–2014 sets the direction for state-wide reform of the homelessness service system to achieve better outcomes for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Through the Action Plan, the NSW Government is re-aligning existing service delivery to increase the focus of the service system on prevention and long-term accommodation and support, rather than crisis intervention.
- The NSW and Australian Governments are jointly investing an additional \$284 million to tackle homelessness under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness. In addition, the NSW Government has committed a further \$108.7 million, bringing the total commitment to \$392.2 million. The NSW Homelessness Action Plan is aligned with the National Partnership Agreement, and incorporates all of the activities funded under the Agreement.
- A key component of the NSW Homelessness Action Plan is the development of 10 Regional Homelessness Action Plans, which were released in August 2010. Regional Action Plans will deliver the broad policy directions of the NSW Homelessness Action Plan in the context of local needs, priorities and opportunities. These plans were developed in consultation with representatives from across the homelessness service system including the government and non-government sector.
- In NSW, there are 356 Specialist Homelessness Services funded under the National Affordable Housing Agreement, which has replaced the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program. These services include crisis accommodation and support to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness targeting women and children escaping domestic violence, young people, single adults and families.
- The NSW Government has established a Premier’s Council on Homelessness, as a peak advisory body to Government in relation to homelessness. The Council provides high-level policy advice to the Premier and relevant Ministers on responses to homelessness. Members include people who have a wealth of experience dealing with the issues that lead to homelessness and the experiences of people living on the streets. The NSW Premier formally announced membership of the Council in February 2010.
- NSW is also implementing an extensive evaluation and research strategy to build on its understanding of homelessness and the impact of its activities. This project is linked to the Australian Government’s evaluation and research agenda, with a particular focus on assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of NSW initiatives undertaken as part of the National Partnership on Homelessness. Several activities designed to build this evidence base are incorporated in the NSW Homelessness Action Plan.

”

Victorian Government comments

“

Victoria works with more than 140 not-for-profit organisations to assist approximately 50 000 people each year who are facing homelessness to find housing, reconnect with the community and rebuild their lives.

From 1 July 2009, the Australian Government and all states and territories entered into a four-year National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness. This contributes \$156.8 million to Victoria's homelessness services over five years to address and prevent homelessness.

As a result, there are 20 new initiatives underway, including the reform, restructure and expansion of youth homelessness services, increased housing with specialised support for people experiencing recurring homelessness, and family violence programs that support women and children to remain safely in the family home.

During 2009–10 the rollout of the 'Opening Doors' service model continued across Victoria. 'Opening Doors' aims to ensure people are able to access services they need in their area without having to knock on more than one door. Local services are working together to support vulnerable people experiencing homelessness or who are in danger of becoming homeless. A 24-hour state-wide telephone service has been established to connect people to local services wherever they are.

'A right to safety and justice: Strategic framework' was developed in 2009–10 to guide continuing family violence reform in Victoria. The framework will guide improvements to Victoria's response to violence against women over the next 10 years.

”

Queensland Government comments

“ The Queensland Department of Communities continues to work in partnership with and fund non-government organisations under the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) and National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH) to deliver services to people experiencing homelessness, and those at risk of homelessness.

In 2009-10, \$77.4 million in grants were provided to 237 services under the NAHA for the provision of specialist homelessness support and accommodation services. These services are provided for a wide range of identified target groups including young people, families, single adults and women and children escaping domestic and family violence.

Under the NPAH, \$202.4 million has been committed over five years, in partnership with the Australian Government, to reduce homelessness. In 2009-10, \$34.6 million dollars was invested across Queensland in new and expanded services and reform activities to help people who are homeless transition to stable accommodation.

The Queensland Government's Implementation Plan identifies 31 initiatives funded under the NPAH, designed to make a substantial contribution towards reducing homelessness. Fifteen of these 31 initiatives commenced service delivery in 2009-10.

The Implementation Plan combines an increased focus on prevention and early intervention, and delivery of housing solutions with appropriate support. Under 'A Place To Call Home', 143 new homes are being acquired in Queensland for individuals and families experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness over the life of the agreement. In 2009-10, the Department added 30 dwellings to the portfolio and housed and supported 75 individuals and/or families, helping them to stop cycling in and out of homelessness services.

New 'housing first' service models, including the Brisbane Common Ground and Street to Home initiatives, have been established to provide responses to people who are sleeping rough and/or experiencing chronic homelessness. Funding for 15 HomeStay Services also builds on Queensland's existing investment in Early Intervention Services.

”

Western Australian Government comments

“

In Western Australia, homelessness accommodation and support services continue to provide a critical safety net for people experiencing homelessness. There are 122 services recurrently funded through the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) to provide accommodation and/or a range of supports for people at risk of, or experiencing homelessness.

In 2009–10, the Department for Child Protection, as the lead agency with responsibility for homelessness, arranged for a smooth transition of contract arrangements for non-government services from the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) to the NAHA. Specialist homelessness services have been encouraged to reform in line with the NAHA. In addition, as contracts with service providers are renewed, reference to NAHA and the importance of providing better integrated services is being incorporated.

In Western Australia, the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH) provides \$135 million over four years in new and expanded support services, capital and land. The WA Implementation Plan is well under way and approximately 110 new full time equivalent workers are in place throughout the state.

The new NPAH programs have been developed in consultation with relevant government agencies and specialist homelessness services to ensure service models are relevant to the needs of people at risk of, or experiencing homelessness. The quality of service provision will be monitored through contracting processes and supported through regular forums for sharing best practice.

The Western Australian Council on Homelessness was established in 2010. The Council promotes integrated responses with non-government, government and mainstream services to ensure a more connected and responsive service system. The Council is made up of community and academic representatives with ex-officio members from key government departments.

The Western Australian Homelessness State Plan *Opening Doors to Address Homelessness* was developed by the Western Australian Council on Homelessness and key agencies working with people experiencing homelessness. The State plan will inform the development of regional action plans which will provide a focus on the response to homelessness and work to build a more integrated service system.

Contracts for all metropolitan services and the majority of rural and remote services have now been finalised.

”

South Australian Government comments

“

The National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH) Implementation Plan for South Australia commits to a reformed homelessness sector. The Department for Families and Communities (DFC) has systematically incorporated all effort, including the NPAH, National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA), A Place to Call Home (APTCH) Initiative, and Nation Building-Economic Stimulus Plan (NBESP) into the formation of an integrated and streamlined service sector. The planned strategic reforms are making the most of additional funding so that provision of specialist homelessness services, mainstream services and housing are targeted, integrated, coordinated, sustainable and measurable.

Services are being consolidated into regional responses and have been tendered as part of the new service system, ensuring that new programs are not an 'add on' to existing services, but rather become an integrated part of South Australia's response to homelessness. The major elements of the reforms are being undertaken in two stages with Stage 1 completed by 1 July 2010 and Stage 2 completed by 1 December 2010.

Under the NBESP, approximately 630 dwellings are being built in South Australia to assist homeless people. Of these, 515 are provided with individualised support packages, and 121 are allocated to specific program responses. The new Supportive Housing Program aims to provide a 'housing first' response to people in greatest need who are experiencing homelessness. The dwellings have been specifically built to target youth, domestic violence, families, adults, and older people and will assist tenants to maintain their tenancy and to source long-term sustainable housing options.

DFC has also partnered with the Attorney General's Department to establish a separate domestic violence service system (linked with the specialist homelessness service system), in order to appropriately respond to legislative and policy changes in the area of violence against women and children. When finalised, the restructured specialist Domestic and Aboriginal Family Violence service sector will have 20 programs with targeted regional responses across South Australia.

South Australia has initiated a number of reforms to work towards its commitment to reduce Aboriginal Homelessness by 33 per cent by 2013, including:

- at least 20 per cent of homelessness services' clients are to be Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people
- addressing issues of Aboriginal mobility, homelessness and family violence through a specific APY Lands response and a 'Safe Tracks' strategic framework to enable the linking of the contributions of all government departments and community sectors.

”

Tasmanian Government comments

“

In 2009-10, the Tasmanian Government made significant progress towards the implementation of initiatives under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, Tasmanian Implementation Plan. Extensive effort went into the development of new initiatives with an emphasis on best practice, research evidence and financial modelling. This will ensure that new initiatives address service gaps and achieve desired client outcomes.

The major initiatives developed in the 2009-10 period focus on assisting people exiting statutory or institutional care with multiple and complex needs. These targeted programs, 'Same House Different Landlord' (tenancy and property management) and 'Specialist Intervention Tenancy Services' (specialist support services), will enhance the way services are provided and increase residential stability for clients, which will provide client with a more sustainable future.

The Tasmanian Government is committed to addressing homelessness and is on track to achieve the target of halving primary homelessness by providing 193 additional units of accommodation by December 2010.

This commitment has included significant capital development of specialist homelessness services accommodation and supported residential facilities throughout the State. These investments were funded from a range of sources, including the *Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan* and the State Government \$60 million Housing Fund. Works have been completed or are nearing completion on at least five facilities within the state.

Through the Tasmanian Homelessness Plan, government is working towards further integrated facilities and targeted services under a number of service models, while making fundamental improvement to service coordination.

The 2009-10 year laid the groundwork for the delivery of a significant amount of targeted accommodation and homelessness support services in 2010-11. This work included the development of the finalised Tasmanian Homeless Plan 2010–2013: *Coming in from the cold*.

”

Australian Capital Territory Government comments

“

The ACT provides high quality homelessness services through an integrated and comprehensive system of support that meets the needs of clients, sustains tenancies and provides access to affordable housing, including public and community housing.

In 2009, the ACT committed to specific targets under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH) as part of a national effort to halve homelessness by 2020. The ACT Government has implemented a range of comprehensive reforms in partnership with specialist homelessness and mainstream services to reduce homelessness, including a common waiting list for social and affordable housing and a centralised intake service to ensure that applicants for housing assistance and homelessness services can access the services through a single entry point without the need to approach multiple service providers.

The Joint Pathways Group comprising senior non-government and government representatives continues to work in partnership to address systemic service reform and practice issues in responding to homelessness. The Group also seeks to build connections between homelessness services and the wider mainstream services system, such as mental health, employment services and education.

In November 2009, Housing and Community Services published *The Road Map: A discussion paper on the way forward for ACT homelessness services and related services*, to promote discussion on reform directions and the implementation of new initiatives. The feedback from the discussion paper was used to identify the changes that are required across the service delivery system as well as assisting in the development of new initiatives under the NPAH.

New initiatives established in 2009–10 include, a men’s managed accommodation and outreach support program for men exiting detention, the ‘Street to Home’ initiative which coordinates services to people living on the streets, including support to up to 20 rough sleepers, and the Building Housing Partnerships Supportive Sustaining Tenancy Service.

The Building Housing Partnerships Supportive Sustaining Tenancy Service will provide intensive case management for 700 clients across a range of tenures including social housing, private rental and home ownership. The service will have a strong focus on early intervention and prevention, targeting those at risk of losing their housing and becoming homeless.

In 2009–10, seven *A Place to Call Home* dwellings were provided. The ACT accelerated the provision of housing under the *A Place to Call Home* initiative, funding the acquisition of land for the first ten dwellings over 2008-09 and 2009-10. Of the seven dwellings completed last year, three dwellings were allocated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

”

Northern Territory Government comments

“ During 2009–10, 22 non-government organisations were funded \$10.2 million to deliver 50 specialist homelessness services across the Northern Territory under the National Affordable Housing Agreement.

Under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH), the NT has established a number of new initiatives including the ‘A Place to Call Home’ program, ‘Street to Home’ projects for chronic rough sleepers, youth homelessness programs and assistance for people leaving corrections services.

A review has been conducted of the Territory’s approach under the NPAH to improve the targeting and spread of initiatives. Subject to final agreement, this will see additional programs and services delivered from 2010–11 onwards, such as:

- short and medium term accommodation and support options
- accommodation and support for people travelling into regional centres to access services
- youth homelessness programs and programs designed for people exiting correctional centres.

The NT Government has also commenced a homelessness profile study that will provide an evidence-base for strategic, place-based responses to homelessness in the Darwin, Alice Springs and Katherine regions.

Data from the 2008–09 SAAP National Data Collection indicate that children in the NT are more likely to accompany an adult accessing specialist homelessness support than children in any other jurisdiction. The focus on children is particularly relevant due to significant reforms to the NT’s service system following the release of the Board of Inquiry’s Report into the NT’s Care and Protection System, ‘Growing them strong, together’ released in October 2010.

Through Australian Government stimulus funding and NT Government investment, additional facilities from which to deliver homelessness services are being constructed and include:

- increased managed and supported accommodation in Darwin for single women, single men, and women and children escaping domestic violence
 - a short term managed accommodation facility in Alice Springs providing a mix of units, cabins, tents and open camping areas for up to 150 people
 - two new managed and supported accommodation facilities, one each in Alice Springs and Darwin, with accompanying support services to enhance people’s ability to access, maintain and secure tenancies in either the private or public rental market.
- ”

17.6 Definitions of key terms and indicators

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.
Client (SAAP)	A person who is accommodated by a SAAP agency, or enters into an ongoing support relationship with a SAAP agency, or receives support or assistance from a SAAP agency which entails generally 1 hour or more of a worker's time.
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

	<p>personal amenities or the economic and social supports that a home normally affords</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 one month. <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 support. The person may receive one-off assistance.
Women escaping	Services specifically designed to assist women and women

domestic violence services

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.

17.7 List of attachment tables

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an '17A' suffix (for example, table 17A.3 is table 3). Attachment tables are provided on the Review website (www.pc.gov.au/gsp). Users without access to the website can contact the Secretariat to obtain the attachment tables (see contact details on the inside front cover of the Report).

SAAP data

Table 17A.1	Composition of support provided in SAAP support periods
Table 17A.2	SAAP agencies by primary target group
Table 17A.3	SAAP agencies by service delivery model
Table 17A.4	Nominal expenditure on SAAP/homelessness services
Table 17A.5	Total recurrent expenditure on SAAP/homelessness services
Table 17A.6	Real recurrent SAAP/homelessness expenditure per person in the residential population (2009-10 dollars)
Table 17A.7	Turn-away of adults and unaccompanied children as the proportion of people requiring new immediate SAAP accommodation
Table 17A.8	Turn-away of adults and unaccompanied children as the proportion of total demand for SAAP accommodation
Table 17A.9	Proportion of Indigenous people among all accommodated SAAP clients and among people whose valid requests for accommodation were unmet
Table 17A.10	Proportion of people from non-English speaking backgrounds among all accommodated SAAP clients and among people whose valid requests for accommodation were unmet
Table 17A.11	Closed support periods, by the existence of a support plan, all clients
Table 17A.12	Closed support periods, by the existence of a support plan, Indigenous clients
Table 17A.13	Support needs of all clients, met and unmet
Table 17A.14	Support needs of Indigenous clients, met and unmet
Table 17A.15	Support needs of clients from non-English speaking backgrounds, met and unmet
Table 17A.16	Valid unmet requests for SAAP accommodation, main reason for support not provided, Australia
Table 17A.17	Recurrent cost per completed support period (2008-09 dollars)
Table 17A.18	Recurrent cost per client accessing services (2008-09 dollars)
Table 17A.19	Real recurrent cost per day of support for clients (2008-09 dollars)
Table 17A.20	Average accommodation load and caseload per day
Table 17A.21	Closed support periods in which clients needed assistance to obtain/maintain independent housing, by type of tenure
Table 17A.22	Closed support periods in which Indigenous clients needed assistance to obtain/maintain independent housing, by type of tenure

Table 17A.23	Closed support periods: Labour force status of clients who needed employment and training assistance, before and after SAAP support
Table 17A.24	Closed support periods: Labour force status of Indigenous clients who needed employment and training assistance, before and after SAAP support
Table 17A.25	SAAP clients who exited from the service and who returned to SAAP agencies before the end of that year
Table 17A.26	Indigenous SAAP clients who exited from the service and who returned to SAAP agencies before the end of that year
Table 17A.27	Indicative estimates of clients exiting to independent housing and not returning within six months
Table 17A.28	Proportion of SAAP clients who more than once had a housing/accommodation need identified by a SAAP agency worker, by Indigenous status
Table 17A.29	Source of income immediately before and after SAAP support of all clients who needed assistance to obtain/maintain a pension or benefit
Table 17A.30	Source of income immediately before and after SAAP support of Indigenous clients who needed assistance to obtain/maintain a pension or benefit
Table 17A.31	The extent that clients case management goals have been achieved

17.8 References

AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) 2006, *Homeless children in SAAP, 2004-05*, Bulletin 48, Canberra.

— 2010, *Government-funded specialist homelessness services: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2008-09* Cat. No. HOU 219, Canberra.

CBSR (Colmar Brunton Social Research) 2004, *National SAAP Client Satisfaction Survey Report of Findings*, Consultant report prepared for the Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra.

Chamberlain, C., and MacKenzie, D., 2008, *Counting the homeless, 2006*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Cat. No. 2050.0, Canberra.

COAG (Council of Australian Governments) 2008a, *Council of Australian Governments' Meeting 3 July 2008* http://www.coag.gov.au/coag_meeting_outcomes/2008-07-03/docs/communique20080703.pdf (accessed 9 October 2008).

— 2008b, *Council of Australian Governments' Meeting 29 November 2008*, http://www.coag.gov.au/coag_meeting_outcomes/2008-11-29/docs/communique_20081129.pdf (accessed 1 December 2008).

COAG Reform Council 2010, *National Affordable Housing Agreement: Baseline performance report for 2008-09*, <http://www.coagreformcouncil.gov.au/reports/housing.cfm> (accessed 1 October 2010).

FaHCSIA (Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs) 2008a, *Measuring the Impact of SAAP-funded Homelessness Services on Client Self-reliance, Final Report*, Report prepared by the Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales.

— 2008b, *Which Way Home? A New Approach to Homelessness: Summary* http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/housing/which_way_home_summary.htm (accessed 9 October 2008).

Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision forthcoming, *National Agreement performance information: National Affordable Housing Agreement 2009-10*.