
G Housing and homelessness services sector summary

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Attachment tables

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this sector summary by a 'GA' prefix (for example, table GA.1). A full list of attachment tables is provided at the end of this sector summary, and the attachment tables are available on the Review website at www.pc.gov.au/gsp.

G.1 Introduction

This sector summary provides an introduction to the 'Housing' (chapter 16) and 'Homelessness services' (chapter 17) chapters of this Report. It provides an overview of the 'housing and homelessness' sector, presenting both contextual information and high level performance information.

Major improvements in reporting on housing and homelessness this year are identified in each of the service-specific housing and homelessness chapters.

Policy context

Shelter is a fundamental human need, and housing and homelessness assistance plays an important role in enabling social and economic participation. This assistance is an important element of governments' social policy and welfare frameworks.

Housing assistance and services to people who are homeless and at risk of homelessness are closely interconnected:

The concepts of 'homelessness' and 'housing' are culturally bound, and ... in order to define homelessness it is necessary to identify shared community standards about minimum housing (Homelessness Australia 2010).

Australian, State and Territory governments assist people to meet their housing needs through direct services, funding support and other initiatives, including assistance for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Many non-government organisations also provide housing assistance and services to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) provides the current framework for Australian, State and Territory governments' housing policy, and funds many housing and homelessness services. The NAHA is focused on achieving improved housing outcomes for all Australians and acknowledges the contribution of these outcomes to economic and social participation (COAG 2008). Commencing on 1 January 2009, the NAHA replaced the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) and Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) V Agreement.

Sector scope

This Report includes detailed information on two specific services: social housing and homelessness services. Social housing broadly encompasses public housing, State owned and managed Indigenous housing (SOMIH), community housing and Indigenous community housing, and is reported in chapter 16 (box G.1). Homelessness services in this Report encompass government funded specialist homelessness services, and is reported in chapter 17 (box G.2).

This Report focuses on social housing and homelessness services funded under the National Affordable Housing Specific Purpose Payment (NAH SPP) and related National Partnership Agreements, and provided through these related National Partnership Agreements in support of the NAHA (formerly, the CSHA and the SAAP V Agreement). Governments provide other forms of support for housing and

homelessness, including home purchase assistance and private rental assistance, but these are not considered in detail in this Report.

Housing and homelessness outcomes are influenced by many factors apart from government assistance. Section G.6 (Appendix) presents contextual information on some of these factors, including housing affordability and home ownership.

Box G.1 Scope of social housing

Social housing is rental housing provided by government or non-government organisations (including not-for-profit) to assist people who are unable to access suitable accommodation in the private rental market (AIHW 2010). The forms of social housing included in this Report are:

- *Public housing* (PH): dwellings owned (or leased) and managed by State and Territory housing authorities to provide affordable rental accommodation.
- *State owned and managed Indigenous housing* (SOMIH): dwellings owned and managed by State housing authorities that are allocated only to Indigenous households.
- *Community housing* (CH): rental housing provided to low to moderate income or special needs households, managed by community based organisations that have received capital or recurrent subsidy from government. Community housing models vary across jurisdictions, and the housing stock may be owned by a variety of groups, including local government.
- *Indigenous community housing* (ICH): dwellings owned or leased and managed by ICH organisations and community councils in major cities, regional areas and remote areas. Indigenous community housing models vary across jurisdictions and can also include dwellings funded or registered by government.

Crisis and transitional housing is an additional form of social housing, but it is not separately identified in this Report. Crisis and transitional housing may be indirectly reported for some jurisdictions through the other forms of social housing described above.

Source: Chapter 16.

Box G.2 **Scope of homelessness**

Government funded specialist homelessness services provide assistance to individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. This Report presents information on homelessness services provided under the NAHA and the SAAP V Agreement. Although the SAAP V Agreement ended on 31 December 2008, data have continued to be reported from the SAAP collection, as data from the new specialist homelessness services (SHS) collection are not yet available for reporting. The SHS data collection became operational on 1 July 2011 and data for 2011-12 are expected to be available for the 2013 Report.

Definition of homelessness

The term 'homelessness' can be used to describe the extent to which housing needs are unmet, including people without conventional accommodation and those staying in accommodation that is below minimum community standards. The most widely accepted, broad definition of homelessness describes three categories of homelessness:

- Primary homelessness is experienced by people without conventional accommodation (for example, sleeping rough or in improvised dwellings).
- Secondary homelessness is experienced by people who frequently move from one temporary shelter to another (for example, emergency accommodation, youth refuges, 'couch surfing').
- Tertiary homelessness is experienced by people staying in accommodation that is below minimum community standards (for example, boarding houses and caravan parks).

The Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Homelessness has adopted tertiary homelessness (incorporating primary and secondary homelessness) as the general definition of homelessness. This definition differs from the SAAP definition of homelessness used for reporting in chapter 17, where a 'homeless person' is:

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:

- has damaged, or is likely to damage, the person's health
- threatens the person's safety
- marginalises the person by failing to provide access to adequate personal amenities or the economic and social supports that a home normally affords
- places the person in circumstances that threaten or adversely affect the adequacy, safety, security and affordability of that housing
- is of unsecured tenure.

A person is also considered homeless if living in accommodation provided by a SAAP agency or some other form of emergency accommodation.

Source: Chamberlain & MacKenzie (2008); Homelessness Australia (2010); Chapter 17.

Profile of the housing and homelessness sector

Detailed profiles for the services within the housing and homelessness services sector are reported in chapters 16 and 17, and cover:

- size and scope of the individual service types
- roles and responsibilities of each level of government
- funding and expenditure.

Roles and responsibilities

The Australian, State and Territory governments share responsibility for housing and homelessness assistance provided under the NAHA.

- The Australian, State and Territory governments jointly fund specialist homelessness services.
- The Australian Government provides funding for housing and homelessness services to State and Territory governments through the NAH SPP and related National Partnership Agreements. The Australian Government influences the housing market through direct and indirect means, including providing CRA, home purchase assistance, financial sector regulations and taxation.
- State and Territory governments fund, administer and deliver social housing and homelessness services, and provide financial support to renters through private rental assistance. State and Territory governments are also responsible for land use and supply policy, urban planning and development policy, housing related taxes and charges (such as land taxes and stamp duties) and residential tenancy legislation and regulation.
- Local governments are responsible for building approval, urban planning and development processes, and may be involved in providing community housing.
- Non-government agencies deliver most homelessness services with some local government participation.

Government funding and expenditure

Most government funding for housing and homelessness services is provided through the NAH SPP. This funding is based on outcomes rather than tied to programs, so it is not possible to identify NAH SPP funding used for specific programs. In 2010-11, the Australian Government provided \$2.0 billion to State and Territory governments for housing and homelessness services through the NAH

SPP and related National Partnership agreements covering social housing; homelessness; and Remote Indigenous Housing (table GA.1). In addition, the Australian Government provided a further \$3.1 billion for CRA (table 16A.54). The Australian Government provided a further \$1.3 billion for the social housing initiative component of the National Building Economic Stimulus Package to aid the construction of new social housing dwellings, and repairs and maintenance of existing dwellings (table GA.1).

Australian, State and Territory governments' total expenditure on social housing and homelessness services was \$3.3 billion in 2009-10 (table G.1). Other descriptive data for social housing and homelessness services for 2009-10 are presented in table G.1, and data for each jurisdiction are reported in tables GA.3 and GA.4. Further information, including 2010-11 financial data for public housing, SOMIH and homelessness services, is presented in chapters 16 and 17.

Table G.1 Housing and homelessness services sector, selected descriptive statistics, Australia, 2009-10^a

	<i>Net recurrent expenditure</i>	<i>No. units</i>	<i>No. households</i>
	<i>\$m</i>	<i>Dwellings ('000)^b</i>	<i>'000</i>
<i>Social housing</i>			
Public housing	2 230.7	333.4	325.7
SOMIH	113.6	12.0	11.5
Community housing	443.9	44.3	42.6
Indigenous community housing ^c	85.2	18.7	na
Total	2 873.5	408.4	379.7
<i>Homelessness services</i>			
	<i>\$m</i>	<i>Clients ('000)</i>	
	461.1	135.7	..
Total	3 334.6	..	..

^a Data may not be comparable across jurisdictions or service areas and comparisons could be misleading. Chapters 16 and 17 provide further information. ^b The total number of dwellings at 30 June. ^c Data for ICH are likely to be underestimated because complete data were not available for all jurisdictions. The number of ICH dwellings are 'funded, permanent dwellings'. **na** Not available. **..** Not applicable.

Source: Chapters 16 and 17; table GA.2.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance

CRA is an Australian Government payment to people on low and moderate incomes who are renting in the private housing market, to assist with the cost of housing. It is a non-taxable income supplement, paid to income support recipients or people who receive more than the base rate of the Family Tax Benefit Part A, and who rent in the private market. CRA may be payable to people living in community housing

or Indigenous community housing but it is not payable to people renting housing from State or Territory housing authorities (that is, people living in public housing and SOMIH), as housing authorities separately subsidise rent for eligible tenants.

CRA is paid at 75 cents for every dollar above a minimum rental threshold until a maximum rate is reached. The minimum threshold and maximum rates vary according to an income unit's family situation and number of children (table 16.3). Information on the eligibility and payment scales for CRA are presented in table 16A.56.

Australian Government expenditure on CRA was \$3.1 billion in 2010-11, increasing from \$2.6 billion in 2006-07 (in real terms) (table 16A.54). The average government expenditure per income unit receiving CRA was \$2778 in 2010-11 (table 16A.55).

At 3 June 2011:

- there were 1 138 000 income units receiving CRA (table 16A.57)
- the median CRA payment was \$113 per fortnight (table 16A.64)
- 74.5 per cent of all CRA recipients were paying enough rent to be eligible to receive the maximum rate of CRA (table 16A.65).

Though funded separately to the NAH SPP, CRA contributes to NAHA outcomes relating to housing affordability. CRA assists with reducing the cost of housing and the incidence of rental stress (defined as more than 30 per cent of household income is being spent on rent) for people on low incomes. Nationally in 2011, 68.3 per cent of CRA recipients would have paid more than 30 per cent of their gross income on rent if CRA were not provided. However, with CRA, 40.1 per cent of CRA recipients spent more than 30 per cent of their income on rent (table 16A.66).

Further information on CRA can be found in chapter 16 and attachment 16A (tables 16A.54–16A.76).

Social and economic factors affecting demand for services

Demand for housing and homelessness services is influenced by a shortage of affordable housing, long term unemployment and financial hardship, mental health issues, substance abuse, and family and relationship breakdown. Among women, domestic and family violence is the main reason for seeking help from specialist homelessness services (Homelessness Taskforce 2008, p.viii).

Research shows the pathways to homelessness are varied and complex. For Indigenous people, longitudinal factors (for example, influences from early childhood) can compound with situational factors, leading to homelessness. For young people, factors such as family conflict or abuse, drug use, unstable employment, participating in education and training, combining work and study, and financial pressure (for example, tension between paying rent, food and utility costs) can potentially lead to unstable housing and increase the risk of homelessness (Memmott and Chambers 2010; CHP 2005).

Demand for housing assistance may continue even after recipients have gained stable employment and financial circumstances are improved. A study of workforce participation of women living in public housing in Australia found that job insecurity and low wages are the main incentives for tenants to continue to live in public housing (Saugeres and Hulse 2010).

Service-sector objectives

The overarching service sector objectives in box G.3 draw together the objectives from each of the specific services (described in chapters 16 and 17), as well as reflecting the objectives set out in the NAHA.

Box G.3 Objectives for housing and homelessness services

The overarching objective of housing and homelessness services is that all Australians have access to affordable, safe and sustainable housing that contributes to social and economic participation. Further, government services are to be provided in a collaborative, equitable and efficient manner.

The specific objectives of the services that comprise the housing and homelessness services sector are summarised below:

- *Social housing* aims to assist people unable to access alternative suitable housing options, through the delivery of affordable, appropriate, flexible and diverse social housing. Some forms of social housing specifically aim to contribute to Indigenous community wellbeing, by improving housing outcomes for Indigenous people, especially those living in remote communities (chapter 16).
- *Government funded specialist homelessness services* aim 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 self-reliance and independence (chapter 17).

Source: COAG (2008), Chapters 16 and 17.

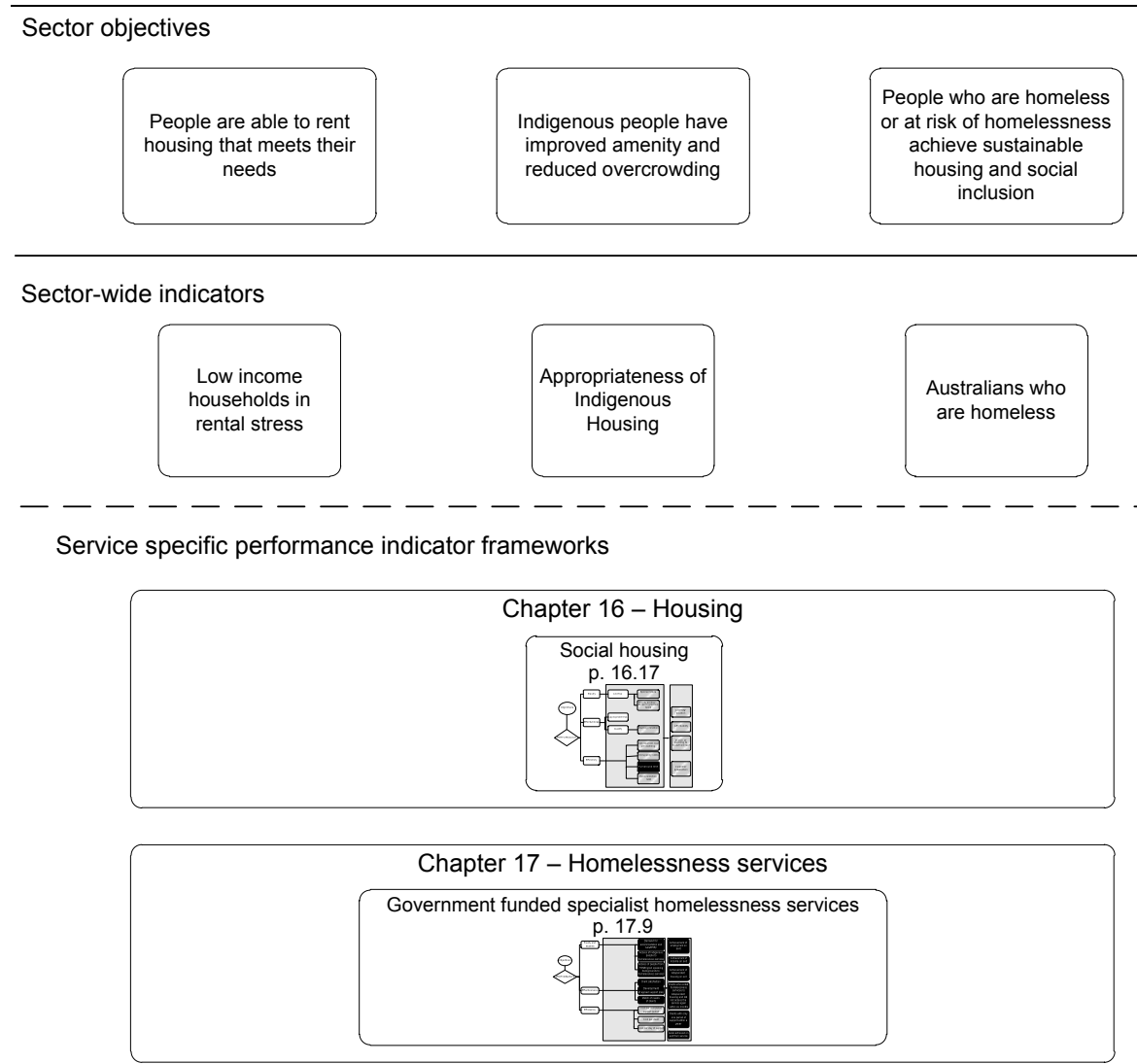
G.2 Sector performance indicator framework

This sector summary is based on a sector performance indicator framework (figure G.1). This framework is made up of the following elements:

- Sector objectives — three sector objectives are a précis of the key objectives of housing and homelessness services and reflect the outcomes in the NAHA (box G.3).
- Sector-wide indicators — three sector-wide indicators relate to the overarching service sector objectives.
- Information from the service-specific performance indicator frameworks that relate to housing and homelessness services. Discussed in more detail in chapters 16 and 17, the service-specific frameworks provide comprehensive information on the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of these services.

This sector summary provides an overview of relevant performance information. Chapters 16 and 17 and their associated attachment tables provide more detailed information.

Figure G.1 Housing and homelessness services sector performance indicator framework



Sector-wide indicators

This section includes high level indicators of housing and homelessness outcomes. Many factors are likely to influence these outcomes — not solely the performance of government services. However, these outcomes inform the development of appropriate policies and the delivery of government services.

Low income households in rental stress

‘Low income households in rental stress’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide affordable housing to assist people who are unable to access suitable housing (box G.4).

Box G.4 Low income households in rental stress

'Low income households in rental stress' is defined as the proportion of low income households spending more than 30 per cent of their gross household income on rent.

Low income households are defined as those in the bottom 40 per cent of equivalised disposable household incomes (that is, the bottom two income quintiles). Equivalised disposable income is an indicator of disposable household income after taking into account household size and composition (ABS 2010a). Household income and rent expenditure exclude CRA.

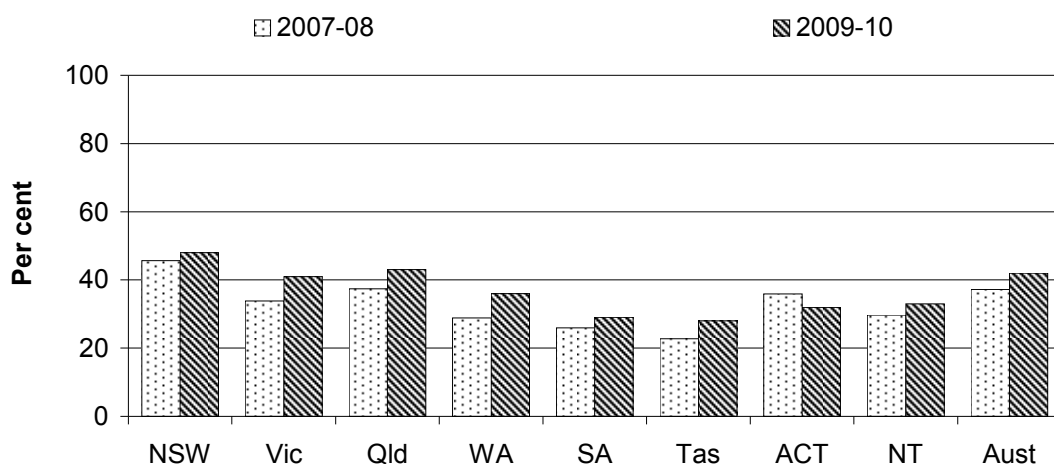
A low or decreasing proportion of households in rental stress implies greater housing affordability.

The social housing outcome indicator 'affordability' provides additional information on rental stress (chapter 16).

Data reported for this indicator are comparable and complete. Data quality information for this indicator are at www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2012.

Nationally, the proportion of low income households in rental stress increased from 37.2 per cent in 2007-08 to 41.7 per cent in 2009-10, though this varied across jurisdictions (figure G.2).

Figure G.2 Proportion of low income households in rental stress



Source: ABS (unpublished) *Survey of Income and Housing 2007-08 and 2009-10*; table GA.5.

Appropriateness of Indigenous housing

'Appropriateness of Indigenous housing' is an indicator of governments' objective to ensure all Australians have access to affordable, safe, appropriate and sustainable

housing (box G.5). Governments have a specific interest in improving amenity and reducing overcrowding for Indigenous people, particularly those living in remote and discrete communities (COAG 2008).

Box G.5 Appropriateness of Indigenous housing

‘Appropriateness of Indigenous housing’ is an indicator of the effectiveness and quality of Indigenous housing. Two measures are reported:

- proportion of Indigenous households living in overcrowded conditions
- proportion of Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard.

A low or decreasing proportion of households living in overcrowded conditions is desirable. A high or increasing proportion of Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard is desirable.

Data comparability and completeness vary for this indicator:

- data for overcrowding are neither comparable nor complete
- data for housing of acceptable standard are comparable but not complete.

Related information on the appropriateness of social housing is presented for the outcome indicators ‘match of dwelling to household size’ ‘and amenity/location’ in chapter 16.

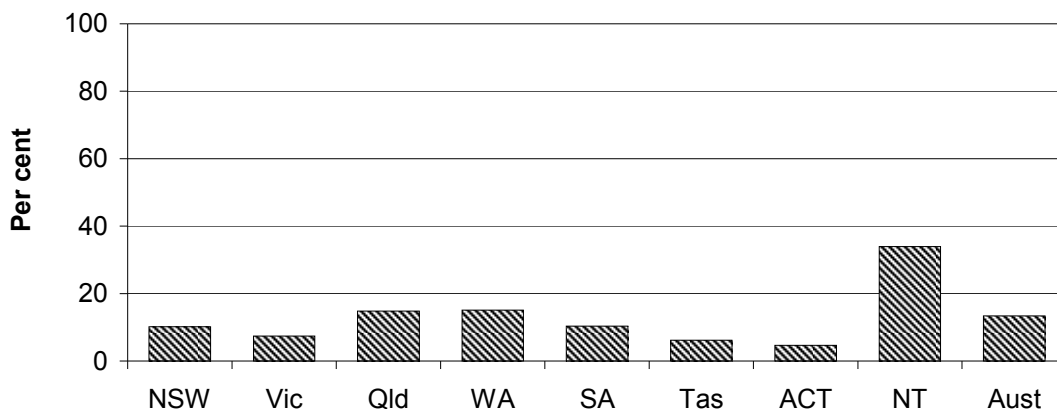
Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2012.

Indigenous households living in overcrowded conditions

Overcrowding is deemed to occur if one or more bedrooms are required to meet the Canadian National Occupancy Standard (explained in chapter 16). Overcrowding is a significant issue for many Indigenous people. Nationally in 2008:

- the proportion of Indigenous people living in overcrowded conditions (27.5 per cent) exceeded that for non-Indigenous people (5.7 per cent) (SCRGSP 2011)
- 13.4 per cent of Indigenous households were overcrowded (figure G.3).

Figure G.3 **Proportion of overcrowded Indigenous households, 2008**

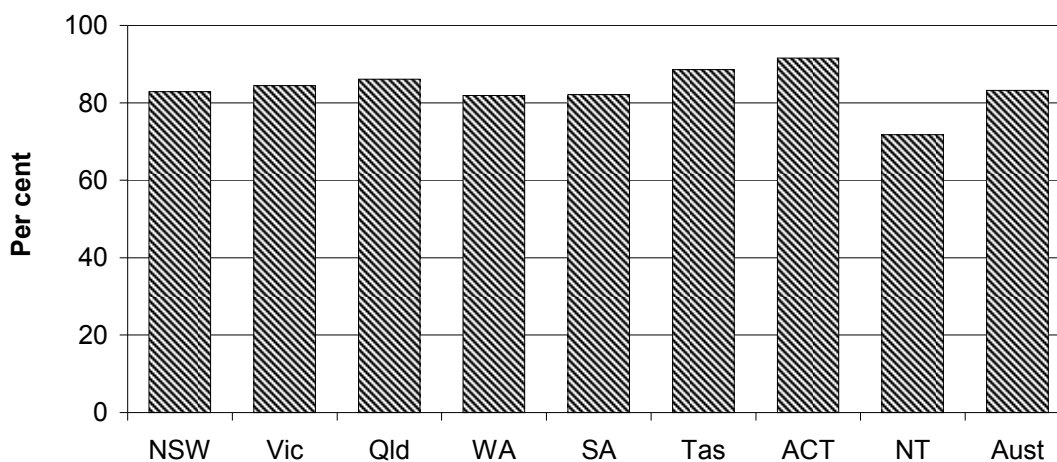


Source: ABS (unpublished) *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey 2008*; table GA.6.

Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard

A house is assessed as being of an acceptable standard if it has all four basic facilities working: for washing people; for washing clothes/bedding; for storing/preparing food; and sewerage; and not more than two major structural problems. In 2008, 83.2 per cent of Indigenous households were living in houses of an acceptable standard (figure G.4).

Figure G.4 **Proportion of Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard, 2008**



Source: ABS (unpublished) *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey 2008*; table GA.7.

Australians who are homeless

‘Australians who are homeless’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure all Australians have access to affordable, safe and sustainable housing (box G.6).

Box G.6 Australians who are homeless

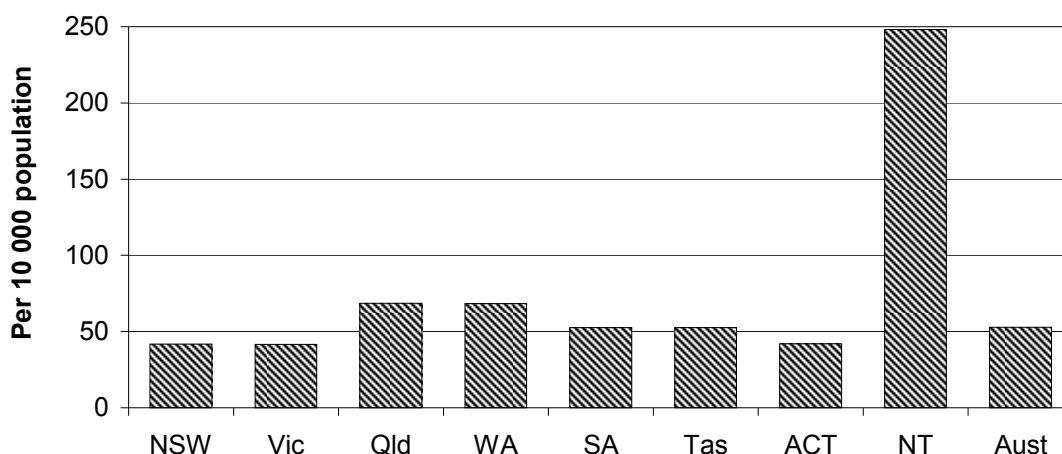
‘Australians who are homeless’ is defined as the proportion of Australians who are homeless. For this indicator, homeless people are defined as those who experience primary, secondary or tertiary homelessness (see box G.2).

A low or decreasing proportion of Australians who are homeless is desirable.

Data for this indicator are comparable but not complete. The calculation of homelessness used for these data are currently under review. Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2012.

Nationally in 2006, approximately 53 Australians per 10 000 people in the population were homeless on Census night (figure G.5). Of people experiencing homelessness, an estimated 16 per cent, or 16 375 people, were identified as sleeping rough (Chamberlain & MacKenzie 2008). There are some difficulties associated with identifying and counting homeless people in the population and these data should be interpreted with care. The method for counting homeless people in the Census is under review and estimates are expected to be revised in future Reports.

Figure G.5 Rate of homelessness, 2006 (per 10 000 population)



Source: AIHW (unpublished) SAAP Client Collection 2006; Chamberlain, C. and MacKenzie, D. 2008, *Counting the homeless*, 2006, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Cat. No. 2050.0; table GA.8.

Service-specific performance indicator frameworks

This section summarises information from the performance indicator frameworks for social housing (chapter 16) and government funded specialist homelessness services — SAAP (chapter 17). Additional information is available to assist the interpretation of these results:

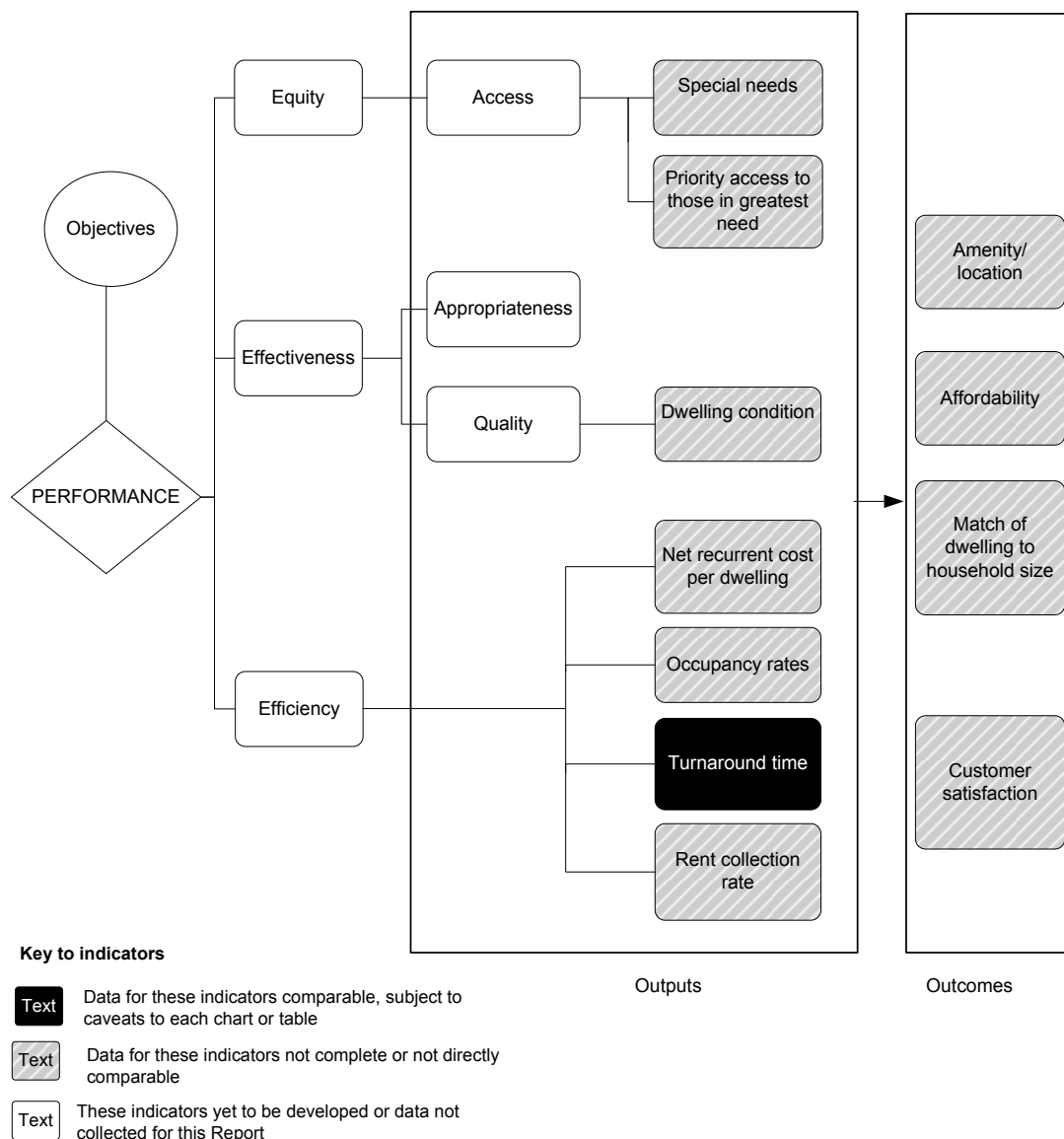
- indicator interpretation boxes, which define the measures used and indicate any significant conceptual or methodological issues with the reported information (chapters 16 and 17)
- caveats and footnotes to the reported data (chapter 16 and attachment 16A; chapter 17 and attachment 17A)
- additional measures and further disaggregation of reported measures (for example, by Indigenous status, remoteness, disability and age data (chapter 16 and attachment 16A; chapter 17 and attachment 17A)
- data quality information for many indicators, based on the ABS Data Quality Framework.

A full list of attachment tables and available data quality information is provided at the end of chapters 16 and 17.

Social housing

The performance indicator framework for social housing is presented in figure G.6. This framework provides information on equity, efficiency, effectiveness, and outcomes of social housing.

Figure G.6 Social housing performance indicator framework



An overview of the performance indicator results for the most recent reporting period is presented in table G.2. Results are reported separately for public housing, SOMIH, community housing and Indigenous community housing. Data for Indigenous community housing are not reported for a number of performance indicators due to issues with data quality and availability. Information to assist the interpretation of these data can be found in the indicator interpretation boxes in chapter 16 and in the footnotes in attachment 16A.

This page has changed since the Report was released in January 2012. See errata at www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2012/errata

Table G.2 Performance indicators for social housing^{a, b}

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Equity (access) indicators									
<i>Special needs</i> – proportion of new tenancies allocated to households with special needs (%)									
Data comparability and completeness vary for this indicator.									
PH 2010-11	65.4	67.5	71.5	62.3	71.1	66.8	55.7	64.8	66.9
SOMIH 2010-11	56.1	..	57.0	..	48.7	82.4	..	..	56.4
CH 2010-11	64.3	50.7	42.5	50.5	84.9	55.9	47.9	na	56.1
Source: tables 16A.9–16A.11.									
<i>Priority access to those in greatest need</i> – proportion of new allocations of housing to those in greatest need (%)									
Data comparability and completeness vary for this indicator.									
PH 2010-11	66.2	73.1	92.1	61.2	80.1	96.2	92.5	45.2	74.7
SOMIH 2010-11	31.2	..	93.6	..	84.6	na	..	..	58.6
CH 2010-11	70.2	87.3	73.0	62.3	42.8	91.1	75.1	na	71.6
Source: tables 16A.12–16A.14.									
Effectiveness indicators									
<i>Dwelling condition</i>									
Data for this indicator not complete or not directly comparable.									
Dwellings in need of repair (%) ^c									
ICH 2006	18.8	24.7	26.3	27.9	22.4	30.6	..	21.0	23.4
Dwellings in need of replacement (%) ^c									
ICH 2006	2.7	4.5	5.9	10.1	5.8	–	..	10.2	7.2
Source: table 16A.15.									
Efficiency indicators									
<i>Net recurrent cost per dwelling</i> (\$)									
Data comparability and completeness vary for this indicator.									
PH 2010-11	6 977	5 658	6 043	8 191	6 929	8 777	8 167	12 769	6 880
SOMIH 2010-11	7 630	..	10 581	..	11 670	7 780	..	..	9 410
CH 2009-10	10 175	8 445	7 263	8 062	7 459	21 312	10 268	na	9 120
ICH 2009-10	14 226	8 991	4 479	6 800	3 967	10 812	na	na	7 491
Source: tables 16A.17–16A.20.									
<i>Occupancy rates</i> (%)									
Data comparability and completeness vary for this indicator.									
PH 2010-11	99.9	96.9	98.6	96.1	95.8	98.4	97.9	96.1	98.0
SOMIH 2010-11	99.9	..	95.7	..	94.6	98.0	..	..	97.4
CH 2010-11	97.6	93.6	94.6	93.8	98.1	95.6	91.4	100.0	95.9
ICH 2009-10	97.0	95.7	96.4	73.7	87.8	90.2	na	na	90.8
Source: tables 16A.21–16A.24.									

(Continued)

Table G.2 (continued)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust	
<i>Turnaround time (days)</i>										
Data for this indicator are comparable and complete, subject to caveats.										
PH 2010-11	31.3	29.2	27.8	26.9	27.5	29.3	38.2	58.8	30.6	
SOMIH 2010-11	20.4	..	40.9	..	26.4	39.5	..	..	27.7

Source: tables 16A.25 and 16A.26.

Rent collection rate (%)

Data comparability and completeness vary for this indicator.

PH 2010-11	99.2	98.7	100.9	100.7	100.0	99.0	99.5	96.7	99.6
SOMIH 2010-11	104.0	..	99.3	..	99.9	99.0	..	..	101.7
CH 2009-10	96.1	98.1	99.3	99.6	99.7	100.2	101.6	na	97.7
ICH 2009-10	90.3	92.3	83.5	84.7	na	97.0	na	93.6	88.1

Source: tables 16A.27–16A.30.

Amenity/location (%)

Data comparability and completeness vary for this indicator.

Amenity important and meeting needs (%)

PH 2010	79.7	78.6	84.7	84.8	84.7	79.8	78.4	82.6	81.6
CH 2010	83.1	85.2	83.1	84.9	86.9	91.0	88.9	na	84.3

Location important and meeting needs (%)

PH 2010	86.5	87.4	89.9	87.9	87.8	85.2	83.8	86.4	87.5
CH 2010	87.6	89.7	87.2	87.6	88.5	94.5	94.5	na	88.3

Source: tables 16A.31–16A.35.

Affordability – proportion of low income households spending more than 30 per cent of their gross income on rent (%)

Data comparability and completeness vary for this indicator.

PH 2010-11	0.2	np	0.1	1.4	–	np	0.8	1.8	0.3
SOMIH 2010-11	0.3	..	0.2	..	–	–	..	..	0.2
CH 2010-11	10.8	12.2	na	32.2	1.2	35.5	2.0	na	12.5

Source: table 16A.39.

Match of dwelling to household size – proportion of overcrowded households (%)

Data comparability and completeness vary for this indicator.

PH 2010-11	4.3	4.1	5.0	4.5	2.4	4.7	7.2	8.2	4.3
SOMIH 2010-11	7.0	..	14.7	..	11.1	4.7	..	..	10.3
CH 2010-11	1.5	2.6	na	1.2	2.6	1.4	0.3	na	1.8
ICH 2009-10	na	6.3	43.8	28.4	48.4	na	na	na	na

Source: tables 16A.44–16A.47.

(Continued)

Table G.2 (continued)

		<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Customer satisfaction (%)										
Data for this indicator are comparable and complete, subject to caveats.										
PH	2010	64.2	74.5	84.4	73.9	81.6	68.0	75.0	74.3	73.1
SOMIH	2007	58.6	64.8	74.8	60.2	57.9	72.8	..	..	63.5
CH	2010	76.7	79.2	81.4	78.7	84.3	90.4	78.0	na	79.1

Source: tables 16A.33, 16A.52 and 16A.53.

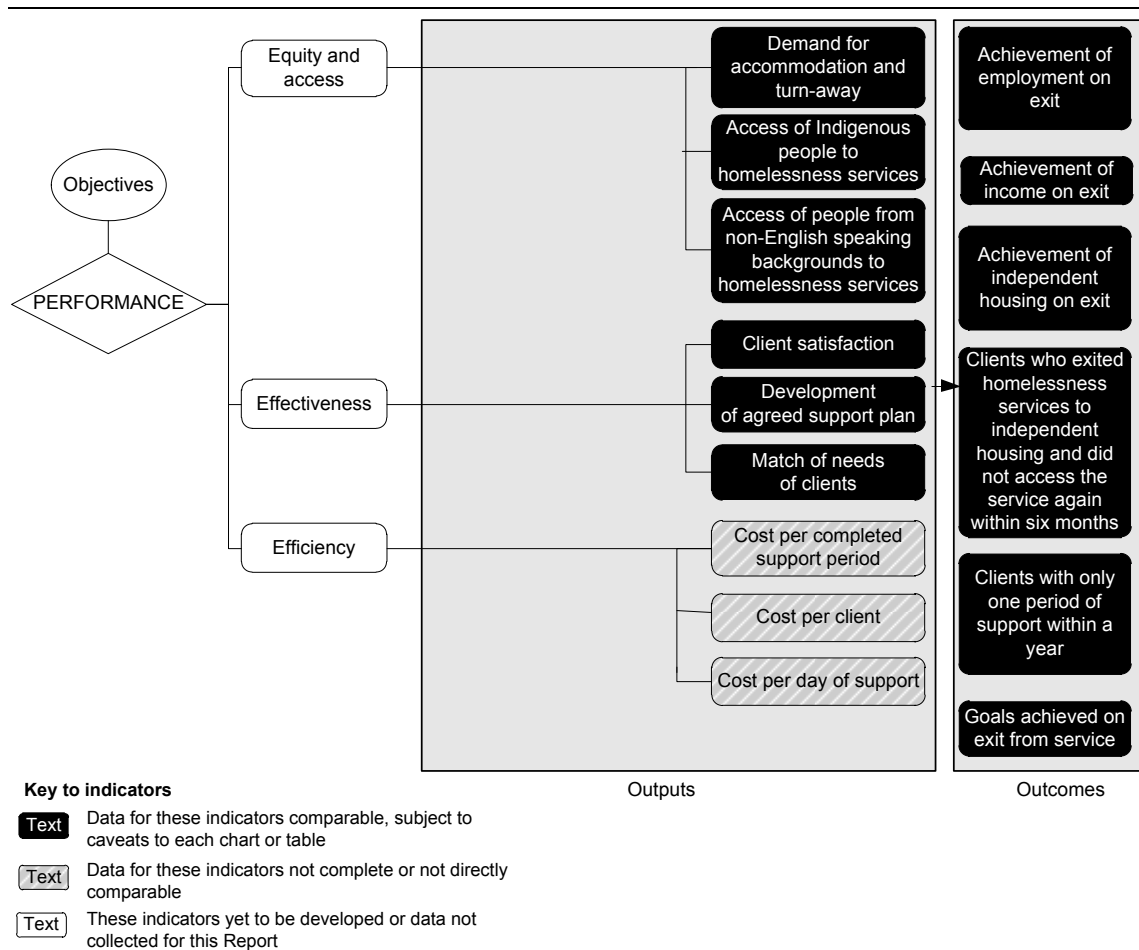
^a Caveats for these data are available in Chapter 16 and Attachment 16A. Refer to the indicator interpretation boxes in chapter 16 for information to assist with the interpretation of data presented in this table. ^b Some data are derived from detailed data in Chapter 16 and Attachment 16A. ^c NSW data includes ACT. **na** Not available. .. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: Chapter 16 and Attachment 16A.

Homelessness services

The performance indicator framework for government funded specialist homelessness services is presented in figure G.7. This framework provides information on equity, efficiency, and outcomes of homelessness services. The 2013 Report is expected to include data from the specialist homelessness services data collection, and incorporate any performance indicator framework developments to reflect the NAHA.

Figure G.7 Government funded specialist homelessness services performance indicator framework



An overview of the performance indicator results for 2009–10 are presented in table G.3. Data reported are for homelessness services provided under the NAHA and are sourced from the SAAP data collection. Information to the interpretation of these data can be found in the indicator interpretation boxes in chapter 17 and in the footnotes in attachment 17A.

Table G.3 Performance indicators for government funded specialist homelessness services^{a, b}

		NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Equity (access) indicators										
<i>Demand for accommodation and turn-away</i>										
Data for this indicator comparable, subject to caveats.										
Turn-away as proportion of people requiring new, immediate accommodation										
2009-10	%	45.5	na	55.2	55.2	66.0	71.2	73.1	47.3	53.4
Turn-away as % of total demand for homelessness services accommodation										
2009-10	%	1.9	na	3.4	3.3	2.2	5.6	2.1	3.4	2.6
Source: tables 17A.7 and 17A.8.										
<i>Access of Indigenous people to homelessness services</i>										
Data for this indicator comparable, subject to caveats.										
Representation among all accommodated clients										
2009-10	%	16.9	7.5	23.7	37.2	20.7	12.0	15.3	69.2	22.4
Representation among people whose valid requests for accommodation were unmet										
2009-10	%	28.4	na	29.1	45.7	20.7	7.7	16.7	55.6	29.1
Source: table 17A.9.										
<i>Access of people from non-English speaking backgrounds to homelessness services</i>										
Data for this indicator comparable, subject to caveats.										
Representation among all accommodated clients										
2009-10	%	13.9	20.3	7.8	11.1	8.7	3.4	19.9	4.4	11.8
Representation among people whose valid requests for accommodation were unmet										
2009-10	%	7.8	na	4.1	6.2	6.9	5.1	16.7	–	5.9
Source: table 17A.10.										
Effectiveness indicators										
<i>Development of agreed support plan</i>										
Data for this indicator comparable, subject to caveats.										
2009-10	%	69.4	53.5	60.7	52.8	66.6	61.6	75.6	66.5	60.6
<i>Match of needs of clients (provided and referred)</i>										
Data for this indicator comparable, subject to caveats.										
2009-10	%	98.2	95.8	96.6	97.4	89.8	96.8	98.4	99.0	96.5
Source: tables 17A.11 and 17A.13.										
Efficiency indicators										
<i>Cost per completed support period</i>										
Data for this indicator not complete or not directly comparable.										
2009-10	\$	2 490	1 620	3 190	2 530	2 050	3 050	7 770	3 600	2 350
<i>Cost per client</i>										
Data for this indicator not complete or not directly comparable.										
2009-10	\$	3 020	2 710	3 770	3 530	2 800	3 450	7 770	4 520	3 260

(Continued)

Table G.3 (continued)

		NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
<i>Cost per day of support</i>										
Data for this indicator not complete or not directly comparable.										
2009-10	\$	23	30	44	39	22	35	52	47	30

Source: Tables 17A.17, 17A.18 and 17A.19.

Outcome indicators

Achievement of employment on exit (change in employed)

Data for this indicator comparable, subject to caveats.

2009-10	%	9.7	9.1	11.0	12.5	7.2	8.4	9.1	14.2	9.8
---------	---	-----	-----	------	------	-----	-----	-----	------	-----

Source: table 17A.23.

Achievement of income on exit (change in 'has an income')

Data for this indicator comparable, subject to caveats.

2009-10	%	7.3	11.5	9.5	10.9	8.6	16.8	13.5	5.8	9.1
---------	---	-----	------	-----	------	-----	------	------	-----	-----

Source: table 17A.28.

Achievement of independent housing on exit (change in independent housing)

Data for this indicator comparable, subject to caveats.

2009-10	%	7.6	9.4	9.1	9.6	9.0	20.6	15.3	4.4	9.0
---------	---	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	------	------	-----	-----

Source: table 17A.21.

Clients with only one period of support within a year

Data for this indicator comparable, subject to caveats.

2009-10	%	76.6	68.4	76.1	73.6	70.5	77.2	80.1	75.2	72.8
---------	---	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------

Source: table 17A.25.

Goals achieved on exit on service (all or most goals achieved)

Data for this indicator comparable, subject to caveats.

2009-10	%	72.0	69.5	60.2	50.9	59.8	44.7	61.1	60.2	65.7
---------	---	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	------

Source: table 17A.30.

^a Caveats for these data are available in Chapter 17 and Attachment 17A. Refer to the indicator interpretation boxes in chapter 17 for information to assist with the interpretation of data presented in this table. ^b Some data are derived from detailed data in Chapter 17 and Attachment 17A. **na** Not available. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: Chapter 17 and Attachment 17A.

G.3 Cross-cutting and interface issues

Australian and international research identifies a strong association between housing, health status, living standards and well-being (Morris 2010; Bridge et al 2003; Quine et al 2004; Waters 2001). A lack of adequate and affordable housing contributes to housing stress and homelessness, and is detrimental to people's physical and mental health. People who are homeless have a much higher prevalence of mental illness than the general population (Mental Health Council of

Australia 2009). Homelessness affects life expectancy, with homeless people estimated to live 15–20 years less than the mainstream population (Quine et al 2004).

The provision of housing assistance and homelessness services can improve people’s education, health and employment outcomes, community cohesion and reduce crime (King 2002; Bridge et al 2003; AHURI 2008; Morris 2010).

Studies have found that housing assistance affects education outcomes by reducing housing costs and increasing financial resources available for education and training, and providing security of tenure to create stable learning environment (Bridge et al 2003). Conversely, housing assistance may reduce the incentives to participate in the labour market, with security of tenure reducing willingness to relocate for employment purposes (Bridge et al 2003).

There is evidence to suggest that effective housing assistance programs reduce the burden on health and justice services, leading to reduced expenditure for hospital, ambulance, police and court services (AHURI 2008).

National research developments

The National Homelessness Research Agenda 2009–2013 was released on 20 November 2009. The Agenda provides a framework for building an evidence base to prevent and respond to homelessness. It reflects the Australian Government’s strategic research priorities and lists key research questions for the development of an evidence base to drive reform (FaHCSIA 2010).

The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute’s (AHURI) national research agenda reflects the integrated, ‘whole of housing system’ approach of the housing and homelessness policy environment and emphasises the importance of establishing the links between housing and the broader social context (AHURI 2011). Eight strategic research issues are identified, and research responding to these strategic issues will assist national housing policy development.

G.4 Future directions in performance reporting

This housing and homelessness sector summary will continue to be developed in future reports.

Review of National Agreements and National Partnership Agreements

COAG has agreed to progress the recommendations of the Heads of Treasuries (HoTs) Review of National Agreements, National Partnerships and Implementation Plans and reports of the COAG Reform Council (CRC). A working group, led by Senior Officials from First Ministers' and Treasury agencies, will review the performance frameworks of a limited number of agreements, including the NAHA. The reviews will be concluded by June 2012. The recommendations of the review of the NAHA will be considered by the Steering Committee and may be reflected in future reports.

The Housing and Homelessness services chapters contain a service specific section on future directions in performance reporting.

G.5 List of attachment tables

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this service sector summary by a 'GA' prefix (for example, table GA.1). 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).

Table GA.1	Australian Government nominal expenditure relating to the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) and Nation Building Economic Stimulus Package (\$million)
Table GA.2	Housing and homelessness services sector, descriptive statistics, Australia, 2009-10
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G.6 Appendix – Private housing market contextual information

Housing market demand, supply and affordability

The private housing market encompasses rented accommodation, home ownership and housing investment. A range of factors influence demand and supply in the private housing market:

- Factors affecting the demand for housing include population growth, household income and employment, investor demand, household preferences for size, quality and location of housing, the price and availability of housing, government taxes, concessions and transfers, and the cost and availability of finance (NHSC 2010).
- Factors affecting the supply of housing include land tenure arrangements, land release and development processes, construction and infrastructure costs, government taxes, concessions and transfers, and the availability and price of land (NHSC 2010). The availability of credit to finance the development of new housing can also affect the supply of housing (RBA 2009).

An efficient housing market refers to achieving a balance between housing supply and demand (CRC 2010, p. 75). Nationally in 2009, there was an estimated cumulative gap between underlying demand for housing and housing supply, as a proportion of growth in underlying demand, of 14.7 per cent. A estimated 178 400 dwellings were required in Australia to meet growth in demand (NHSC 2010: tables 7.2 and 7.3).

Housing affordability

A shortage of affordable housing is likely to affect demand for housing and homelessness services. Governments provide support to ensure people can access affordable rental housing, either in the private market or in social housing, and many governments provide support to those purchasing houses, particularly first home buyers (box G.7).

Box G.7 **Government assistance for affordable housing**

A range of government initiatives and programs are designed to help households to pay for housing, and to increase the supply of affordable housing. These initiatives include:

- direct assistance to first home buyers through schemes such as the First Home Owners Grant and the First Home Owners Boost. These schemes are funded by the Australian Government and administered by State and Territory governments
- funding for Indigenous home ownership programs (the Home Ownership Program funded and administered by Indigenous Business Australia and the Home Ownership on Indigenous Land Program jointly funded by FaHCSIA and IBA)
- stamp duty concessions or exemptions for first home buyers
- incentives to save for first home ownership through First Home Saver Accounts
- State and Territory Government funding to assist low income households with home purchases or mortgage repayments
- Commonwealth Rent Assistance paid on an ongoing basis to income support and family tax benefit recipients in the private rental market
- funding for provision and management of social (public and community) housing and related reforms through the National Affordable Housing Agreement
- incentives for institutional investors and community housing providers to build new affordable rental properties
- Commonwealth, State and Territory land and planning measures to increase the supply of affordable housing
- Housing Affordability Fund grants to improve planning and infrastructure provision.

Source: Australian, State and Territory Governments (unpublished).

The Housing chapter (chapter 16) reports on government assistance for social housing, but does not report on government assistance for purchasing housing or other forms of housing assistance. Information on housing affordability by region in Australia is available in the State of the Regions Report 2011–12: the housing shortage and housing affordability (ALGA 2011). The Steering Committee’s annual report to the COAG Reform Council on NAHA performance information includes a range of housing data, some of which are reported below.

Affordable housing for low and moderate income households

Low income households are more likely to be adversely affected by relatively high housing costs than households with higher disposable incomes (Yates and Gabriel 2006; Yates and Milligan 2007).

Housing stress is considered to occur when households spend more than 30 per cent of their income on rent or mortgage payments. Nationally in 2009-10, 41.7 per cent of low income households were experiencing rental stress and 37.4 per cent of low income households were experiencing mortgage stress (tables GA.5 and GA.9). These data should be interpreted with care, because Australian household real incomes have increased strongly over time, allowing households to devote a larger proportion of their income to housing while still maintaining living standards (RBA 2008).

The proportion of homes sold that are affordable by low and moderate income households indicates whether people can purchase affordable housing. Nationally in 2010-11, 28.6 per cent of homes sold were affordable by low and moderate income households (table GA.9).

Home ownership and government assistance to home buyers

In 2009-10, 68.8 per cent of Australian households owned or were purchasing a home (table GA.9). Home ownership is not necessarily an aspiration for all Australian households, but is often considered desirable because of the benefits associated with home ownership, including wealth accumulation and security of tenure (CRC 2010, p. 60). The rate of home ownership in Australia is similar to many developed countries, but is comparatively higher than some European countries, which may reflect different cultural and economic incentives, such as income security for retirement (ABS 2010b; Frick and Headey 2009).

Governments provide financial assistance to people purchasing homes, particularly first home owners and low income home owners. Nationally in 2010-11, 103 598 people received the First Home Owner Scheme grant, compared to 168 562 people in 2009-10 (table GA.9).

G.7 References

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GA Housing and homelessness services sector summary — attachment

Data in this Report are examined by the Housing and Homelessness Working Group, but have not been formally audited by the Secretariat.

Data reported in the attachment tables are the most accurate available at the time of data collection. Historical data may have been updated since the last edition of RoGS.

This file is available in Adobe PDF format on the Review web page (www.pc.gov.au/gsp).

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Table GA.1	Australian Government nominal expenditure relating to the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) and Nation Building Economic Stimulus Package (\$million)
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Table GA.1

Table GA.1 Australian Government nominal expenditure relating to the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) and Nation Building Economic Stimulus Package (\$million)

	2008-09 (a)	2009-10	2010-11
NAHA Specific Purpose Payment	586.1	1 202.6	1 221.8
National Partnership agreements (in support of the NAHA)			
on Social Housing	200.0	200.0	–
on Homelessness	4.2	113.4	130.5
on Remote Indigenous Housing	148.8	610.6	675.0
Total expenditure on National Partnership agreements	353.0	924.0	805.5
Total Australian Government expenditure related to the NAHA	939.1	2 126.6	2 027.3
Social Housing initiative for the Nation Building Economic Stimulus Package	260.0	3 922.0	1 294.0

(a) The NAHA came into effect on 1 January 2009. Data for 2008-09 reflect expenditure between 1 January 2009 and 30 June 2009.

– Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: FaHCSIA (unpublished).

Table GA.2

Table GA.2 Housing and homelessness services sector, descriptive statistics, Australia, 2009-10 (a)

	Unit	Public housing	SOMIH	Community housing	Indigenous community housing (b), (c)	Homelessness services	Total
Total net recurrent expenditure	\$m	2 230.7	113.6	443.9	85.2	461.1	3 334.6
Social housing							
Number of dwellings	no.	333 383	11 952	44 328	18 695	..	408 358
Number of households	no.	325 726	11 451	42 559	na	..	379 736
Homelessness services							
Number of clients	'000	..	..	..	..	135.7	..

(a) Data for 2010-11 are available for public housing and SOMIH and these are presented in chapter 16.

(b) Data for Indigenous community housing are likely to be underestimated because complete data were not available for all jurisdictions.

(c) The number of Indigenous community housing dwellings presented are funded, permanent dwellings.

.. Not applicable.

Source: Chapters 16 and 17.

Table GA.3

Table GA.3 Social housing descriptive statistics, 2009-10 (a)

	Unit	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust (b)
Public housing (c)										
Total net recurrent cost	\$million	837.3	327.2	314.2	223.8	286.3	92.5	88.0	61.5	2 230.7
Number of dwellings	no.	115 686	65 064	51 705	31 501	42 010	11 460	10 858	5 099	333 383
Number of households	no.	114 421	62 593	51 041	30 558	40 206	11 266	10 737	4 904	325 726
SOMIH (c)										
Total net recurrent cost	\$million	38.4	..	30.6	19.6	22.5	2.5	..	..	113.6
Number of dwellings	no.	4 201	..	3 318	2 187	1 897	349	..	..	11 952
Number of households	no.	4 122	..	3 147	2 088	1 753	341	..	..	11 451
Community housing										
Total net recurrent cost	\$million	187.9	86.9	52.3	50.2	35.9	26.0	4.8	na	443.9
Number of dwellings	no.	18 466	8 841	7 197	3 859	4 732	618	470	145	44 328
Number of households	no.	18 233	8 262	6 855	3 561	4 464	589	450	145	42 559
Indigenous community housing (d)										
Total net recurrent cost	\$million	31.3	14.2	18.4	17.1	3.7	0.6	na	na	85.2
Number of dwellings (e)	no.	4 460	1 792	5 951	3 258	1 032	135	24	2 043	18 695
Number of households	no.	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na

(a) See notes to source tables for more detailed caveats about the data. Further information about the data in this table can be found at www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2012.

(b) Australian totals may not add to the sum of the jurisdictions because of rounding. Australian totals may not represent national totals because complete data were not available for all jurisdictions.

(c) Data for 2010-11 are available for public housing and SOMIH and these are presented in chapter 16.

(d) Data for Indigenous community housing are likely to be underestimated because complete data were not available for all jurisdictions.

Table GA.3

Table GA.3 Social housing descriptive statistics, 2009-10 (a)

	Unit	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust (b)
--	------	-----	-----	-----	----	----	-----	-----	----	----------

(e) The number of Indigenous community housing dwellings presented are permanent dwellings.

.. Not applicable. **na** Not available.

Source: AIHW (2011) *Housing Assistance in Australia 2011*; tables 16A.5–16A.8, 16A.16–16A.20 and AA.2.

Table GA.4

Table GA.4 Homelessness services descriptive statistics, 2009-10 (a)

	Unit	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Total net recurrent cost	\$million	133.1	107.1	79.2	56.2	43.5	15.9	15.6	10.4	461.1
Total number of clients	no.	41 700	39 100	23 100	11 400	13 100	4 500	2 000	3 500	135 700

(a) See notes to source tables for more detailed caveats about the data.

Source: tables 17A.5 and 17A.25.

Table GA.5

Table GA.5 Proportion of low income households in rental stress (a), (b)

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT (c)</i>	<i>Aust</i>
2007-08	%	45.7	33.8	37.4	28.9	25.9	22.7	35.9	29.7	37.2
2009-10	%	47.6	41.4	43.3	35.8	28.6	28.1	32.2	33.2	41.7

(a) Low income households are defined as those in the 40 per cent of equivalised disposable household incomes (that is, the bottom two income quintiles).

(b) Rental stress is deemed to occur when households spend more than 30 per cent of their income on rent.

(c) Excludes households in collection districts defined as very remote, accounting for about 23 per cent of the population in the NT.

Source: ABS (unpublished) *Survey of Income and Housing 2007-08 and 2009-10*.

Table GA.6 Proportion of Indigenous households living in overcrowded conditions (a)

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
2008	%	10.2	7.4	14.8	15.1	10.4	6.2	4.7	34.0	13.4

(a) Overcrowding is deemed to occur when 1 or more bedrooms are needed to meet the Canadian National Occupancy Standard.

Source: ABS (unpublished) *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey 2008*.

Table GA.7

Table GA.7 **Proportion of Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard**

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
2008	%	82.9	84.4	86.1	81.9	82.1	88.6	91.6	71.8	83.2

Source: ABS (unpublished) *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey 2008*.

Table GA.8 **Australians who are homeless, 2006**

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Rate of homelessness (per 10 000 population)	41.8	41.6	68.6	68.4	52.6	52.6	42.1	248.1	52.7

Source: ABS (2006) *Census of Population and Housing*, Cat. No. 2068.0; AIHW (unpublished) *SAAP Client Collection 2006*; McKenzie and Chamberlain (2006) *National Census of Homeless School Students*, FaHCSIA, Canberra.

Table GA.9

Table GA.9 **Supplementary contextual data (a)**

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Housing affordability										
Proportion of low income households in mortgage stress (b), (c), (d)										
2007-08	%	41.0	31.5	42.1	29.3	34.9	<i>14.4</i>	40.2	22.6*	36.0
2009-10	%	44.9	34.1	33.0	41.2	34.7	30.8	18.6	33.4	37.4
Proportion of homes sold that are affordable by low and moderate income households (e)										
2009-10	%	46.5	47.2	21.7	34.8	36.7	40.7	48.1	77.9	39.6
2010-11	%	34.0	31.2	16.5	27.3	26.7	29.7	29.8	66.8	28.6
Home ownership										
Proportion of households owning or purchasing a home (d)										
2007-08	%	67.6	71.0	65.4	67.8	70.3	71.6	70.8	57.1	68.3
2009-10	%	68.1	71.7	65.6	68.5	70.6	73.0	70.0	57.2	68.8
Home purchase assistance										
First Home Owner Scheme Recipients (f)										
2009-10	no.	51 912	49 108	27 609	21 556	10 944	3 106	3 304	1 023	168 562
2010-11 (h)	no.	32 512	30 683	15 870	12 584	6 567	2 016	2 623	743	103 598
First Home Owner Boost Recipients (f), (g)										
2009-10	no.	41 660	42 040	22 256	18 294	8 884	2 494	2 606	789	139 023
2010-11 (h)	no.	2 506	7 365	1 110	1 450	708	221	690	47	14 097

(a) Data in italics have relative standard errors between 25 per cent and 50 per cent and need to be used with caution. Data in italics and denoted by an asterisk have relative standard errors greater than 50 per cent are considered too unreliable for general use.

(b) Low income households are defined as those in the 40 per cent of equivalised disposable household incomes (that is, the bottom two income quintiles).

(c) Mortgage stress is deemed to occur when households spend more than 30 per cent of their income on mortgage repayments.

(d) Data exclude households in collection districts defined as very remote, accounting for about 23 per cent of the population in the NT.

(e) Low and moderate incomes are those in the bottom 3 quintiles of equivalised disposable income (up to the 59-61st percentile).

(f) Data exclude other grants provided to first home owners by States and Territories.

(g) First Home Owner Boost (FHOB) assistance is a subset of First Home Owner Scheme (FHOS). While the FHOB ceased on 31 December 2009, the continuation of FHOB payments in 2010-11 reflects the 12 month application period and the timeframes allowed for the construction of new homes.

(h) Data for Victoria, WA and Tasmania exclude reclaimed FHOS or FHOB grants.

Source: ABS (unpublished) *Survey of Income and Housing 2007-08 and 2009-10*; Valuer General (unpublished); Australian Government Department of Treasury (unpublished) *State and Territory Revenue Office* data.

Data quality information — Housing and homelessness services, sector summary G

Data quality information

Data quality information (DQI) provides information against the seven ABS data quality framework dimensions, for performance indicators in the Housing and homelessness services sector summary.

Where Report on Government Services indicators align with National Agreement indicators, DQI has been sourced from the Steering Committee's reports on National Agreements to the COAG Reform Council.

Technical DQI has been supplied or agreed by relevant data providers. Additional Steering Committee commentary does not necessarily reflect the views of data providers.

DQI are available for the following performance indicators:

Performance indicators	2
Low income households in rental stress	2
Indigenous households living in overcrowded conditions	5
Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard	7
Australians who are homeless	9

Performance indicators

Low income households in rental stress

Data quality information for this indicator has been sourced from the Steering Committee's report to the COAG Reform Council on the National Affordable Housing Agreement (data supplied by ABS), with additional Steering Committee comments.

Indicator definition and description

Element	Outcome
Indicator	Proportion of low income households in rental stress
Measure (computation)	<p><u>Numerator</u>: Number of low income households in rental stress</p> <p>For low income households, computation for numerator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Household income is gross household income, excluding Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA)• Rental expenses is the amount paid in rent, plus any rates payments made by the tenant, less CRA or other ongoing rental assistance.• Household is included in the numerator if weekly rent payments exceed 30 per cent of household income. <p><u>Denominator</u>: Total number of low income rental households, defined as being those households in the bottom two quintiles of equivalised disposable household income (excluding CRA or other rent assistance) calculated separately on a state by state and capital city balance of state basis.</p> <p><u>Computation</u>: Number of low income rental households in rental stress x 100, divided by Total number of low income rental households.</p>
Data source/s	Survey of Income and Housing (SIH).

Data Quality Framework Dimensions

Institutional environment	For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment.
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The SIH collects data on the housing costs and income from usual residents of private dwellings in Australia. Rent payments, rates payments and CRA are separately identified.• While the SIH does collect information on CRA, it does not separately identify other forms of ongoing rent assistance.• The SIH excludes the 0.8 per cent of the Australian population living in very remote areas. This exclusion impacts on comparability of data for the Northern Territory, where these people are around 23 per cent of the population. As a consequence of this exclusion, comparisons between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in remote areas are not available.• Household disability status was available for the first time in the 2009–10 survey.• For 2007–08, the 16 000 renter households with nil or negative total income (0.5 per cent of all low income households) have been included in the denominator but excluded from the numerator. Analysis of the 17 000 renter households with nil or negative income in 2005–06 showed that average household net worth for these households was \$226 000, compared with

	<p>\$50 000 for all other low income renter households.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For 2009-10, the 8000 renter households with nil or negative total income (0.5 per cent of all low income renter households) have been included in the denominator but excluded from the numerator. Analysis of the 8000 renter households with nil or negative income showed that average household net worth for these households was \$261 000, compared with \$77 000 for all other low income renter households
Timeliness	The biennial SIH is enumerated over a twelve month period to account for seasonal variability in its measures. Results for 2009–10 were released in August 2011.
Accuracy	<p><u>2007-08 SIH</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The total sample take in 2007–08 was 9345 households, with a response rate was 84.0 per cent. Most of the non-response was due to householders that were not able to be contacted, and only one-sixth of the non-response was due to households refusing to participate in the survey. To account in part for non-response, SIH data are weighted by: state, part of state, age, sex, labour force status, number of households and household composition. • At the national level this performance indicator for 2007–08 has a relative standard error (RSE) of 5 per cent. RSEs are higher for state and territory measures, and for other disaggregations. <p><u>2009-10 SIH</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2009-10, the SIH sample size increased to 18 071 households. The increase sample includes an extra 4200 households located outside capital cities to better support COAG performance reporting. It also includes an additional pensioner sample of metropolitan households whose main source of income was a government pension benefit and / or allowance. • The final sample on which estimates are based is composed of persons for which all necessary information is available. Of the selected dwellings, there were 18 285 in the scope of the survey, of which 14 864 (81 per cent) were included as part of the final estimates. For the additional pensioner sample 4084 dwellings were identified as being in scope, of which 3027 dwellings (67 per cent) were included on the final file. • Most of the non-response was due to householders that were not able to be contacted, and only one-sixth of the non-response was due to households refusing to participate in the survey. To account in part for non-response, SIH data are weighted by: state, part of state, age, sex, labour force status, number of households and household composition. • At the national level this performance indicator for 2009-10 has a relative standard error (RSE) of 4 per cent. RSEs are higher for state and territory measures, and for other disaggregation's however the increased sample in 2009-10 has resulted in generally lower RSEs than in previous survey years.
Coherence	The data items used to construct the measures are consistent between cycles within each data source and support assessment of change over time.
Accessibility	The unit record data used to compile this measure are available to other users through the Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURFs) released by ABS.
Interpretability	Information is available for both collections to aid interpretation of the data. See the Survey of Income and Housing User Guide on the ABS web site.

Data Gaps/Issues Analysis

Key data gaps/ issues	<p>The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIH data are only available every two years. An assessment of the relative speed of change in results for this indicator is required to determine whether more regular data collection is necessary. • The size of the RSEs mean that the data may not be adequate for measuring
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change over time for some disaggregations. Small year to year movements may be difficult to detect if the size of the RSEs is large compared to the size of the difference between estimates.

- Low income households in State or Territory housing authority dwellings have access to rebated rents and generally pay no more than 25 per cent of their assessable income in rent.
- While the definition of assessable income varies across jurisdictions, social housing administrative data indicate that the survey estimates of rental stress, as reported by the SIH, are not a reliable indicator of sustained rental stress in this sector because they are a point in time estimate that may not include rent adjustments yet to be made by the State or Territory housing authority.

Indigenous households living in overcrowded conditions

Data quality information for this indicator has been sourced from the Steering Committee's report to the COAG Reform Council on the National Affordable Housing Agreement (data supplied by ABS), with additional Steering Committee comments.

Indicator definition and description

Element	Outcome
Indicator	Proportion of Indigenous households living in overcrowded conditions
Measure (computation)	<u>Numerator</u> : Number of overcrowded Indigenous households. Calculated using the Canadian National Occupancy Standard for requiring one or more additional bedrooms <u>Denominator</u> : Total number of Indigenous households <u>Computation</u> : Number of overcrowded Indigenous households x 100 divided by Total number of Indigenous households
Data source/s	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS) – for numerator and denominator. Note NATSISS and NATSIHS provide data on a triennial basis. Data from 2008 is sourced from NATSISS.

Data Quality Framework Dimensions

Institutional environment	For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment .
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An Indigenous household is a household where at least one usual resident of any age identifies as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin. In the NATSISS, an adult provides information about household composition and the number of bedrooms in each. Housing utilisation was unable to be derived for about 1 per cent of Indigenous households.• In the 2008 NATSISS, household income was either not stated or not known for 19 per cent of households. Therefore income quantiles are based on the 81 per cent of households for which this information was available.• The computation of this measure does not take into account visitors that were staying in the dwelling for less than six months. As such, it will underestimate overcrowding if there were a large number of temporary visitors on a regular basis.• The 2008 NATSISS did not collect information about dwelling type or main source of household income.
Timeliness	The NATSISS is conducted every six years. The 2008 NATSISS was conducted from August 2008 to April 2009. Results from survey were released in October 2009.
Accuracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The NATSISS is conducted in all states and territories and includes remote and non-remote areas. The 2008 sample was 13 300 persons / 6900 households, with a response rate of 82 per cent of households.• In the absence of a comprehensive sampling frame, the 2008 NATSISS adopted a screening approach for locating its target population (compared to the more common approach of using a dwelling frame for general population surveys). Potential bias due to undercoverage in this screening approach was addressed by the application of adjustments to the initial weights, including adjustment based on the density of the Indigenous population in different areas. As undercoverage can result in variances across population characteristics, as well as across data items, caution should be exercised

	when interpreting the survey results. For more information see the 2008 NATSISS Quality Declaration.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, this indicator has an RSE of 5 per cent at the national level. For the states the RSE was between 10 per cent and 20 per cent, while for the NT it was 6 per cent, 32 per cent for the ACT. Finer levels of disaggregation (e.g. by the inclusion of other cross classifying variables) may result in higher levels of sampling error.
Coherence	Data items used to construct the measures are consistent between cycles of the NATSISS and NATSIHS and support assessment of change over time.
Accessibility	See also National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2008. The unit record data used to compile this measure are available to other users through the Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURFs) released by ABS.
Interpretability	Information is available to aid interpretation of the data. See Explanatory Notes in National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey 2008. The 2008 NATSISS Users' Guide was released in 2010.

Data Gaps/Issues Analysis

Key data gaps/ issues	<p>The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NATSISS/NATSIHS data are only available on an alternating three-yearly cycle. • NATSISS data are of acceptable accuracy. However, a number of the RSEs for the disaggregations are greater than 25 per cent and should be used with caution. The size of the RSEs mean that the NATSISS data may not be adequate for measuring change over time for some disaggregations. Small year to year movements may be difficult to detect if the size of the RSEs are large compared to the size of the difference between estimates.
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Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard

Data quality information for this indicator has been sourced from the Steering Committee's report to the COAG Reform Council on the National Affordable Housing Agreement (data supplied by ABS), with additional Steering Committee comments.

Indicator definition and description

Element	Outcome
Indicator	Proportion of Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard
Measure (computation)	<p><u>Numerator:</u> Number of Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard. The dwelling is assessed as being of an acceptable standard if it has all four basic facilities working (for washing people, for washing clothes/bedding, for storing/preparing food and sewerage) and not more than two major structural problems.</p> <p><u>Denominator:</u> Total number of Indigenous households</p> <p>Computation: Number of Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard x 100 divided by Total number of Indigenous households</p>
Data source/s	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS) – for numerator and denominator. Note NATSISS and NATSIHS provide data on a triennial basis. Data from 2008 are sourced from NATSISS.

Data Quality Framework Dimensions

Institutional environment	For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment .
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An Indigenous household is a household where at least one usual resident of any age identifies as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin.• In the NATSISS, an adult provides detailed information on basic household facilities and the number and types of major structural problems.• In the 2008 NATSISS, household income was either not stated or not known for 19 per cent of households. Therefore income quintiles are based on the 81 per cent of households for which this information was available.• The 2008 NATSISS did not collect information on dwelling type or household income type.
Timeliness	The NATSISS is conducted every six years. The 2008 NATSISS was conducted from August 2008 to April 2009. Results from survey were released in October 2009.
Accuracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The NATSISS is conducted in all states and territories and includes remote and non-remote areas. The 2008 sample was 13 300 persons / 6900 households, with a response rate of 82 per cent of households.• In the absence of a comprehensive sampling frame, the 2008 NATSISS adopted a screening approach for locating its target population (compared to the more common approach of using a dwelling frame for general population surveys). Potential bias due to undercoverage in this screening approach was addressed by the application of adjustments to the initial weights, including adjustment based on the density of the Indigenous population in different areas. As undercoverage can result in variances across population characteristics, as well as across data items, caution should be exercised when interpreting the survey results. For more information see the 2008 NATSISS Quality Declaration.• Overall, this indicator has an RSE of 1 per cent at the national level, and 3 per

	cent or less for each state or territory. Finer levels of disaggregation (e.g. by the inclusion of other cross classifying variables) may result in higher levels of sampling error.
Coherence	Data items used to construct the measures are consistent between cycles of the NATSISS and NATSIHS and support assessment of change over time.
Accessibility	See also National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2008. The unit record data used to compile this measure are available to other users through the Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURFs) released by ABS.
Interpretability	Information is available to aid interpretation of the data. See Explanatory Notes in National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey 2008. The 2008 NATSISS Users' Guide was released in 2010.

Data Gaps/Issues Analysis

Key data gaps/ issues	<p>The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NATSISS/NATSIHS data are only available on an alternating three-yearly cycle. • NATSISS data are of acceptable accuracy. However, a number of the RSEs for the disaggregations are greater than 25 per cent and should be used with caution. The size of the RSEs mean that the NATSISS data may not be adequate for measuring change over time for some disaggregations. Small year to year movements may be difficult to detect if the size of the RSEs are large compared to the size of the difference between estimates.
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Australians who are homeless

Data quality information for this indicator has been sourced from the Steering Committee's report to the COAG Reform Council on the National Affordable Housing Agreement (data sourced from ABS), with additional Steering Committee comments.

Indicator definition and description

Element	Outcome
Indicator	Proportion of Australians who are homeless
Measure (computation)	<p>The proportion of Australians who are homeless (primary homeless + secondary homeless + tertiary homeless, as defined by Chamberlain and MacKenzie)</p> <p>The measure is defined as:</p> <p><u>Numerator:</u> Number of people who are homeless</p> <p><u>Denominator:</u> Number of Australians</p> <p>No data are currently available for the numerator for 2007-08 and 2008-09. The data currently available to inform the measure for this indicator are sourced from the Chamberlain and MacKenzie research report which uses data from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing, 2006-07 Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) client data and the 3rd National Census of Homeless School Students.</p>
Data source/s	<p><u>Numerator:</u> Sourced from the <i>Counting the Homeless 2006</i> national and state/territory reports. Population census data are collected every 5 years, SAAP data are published annually, and the National Census of Homeless School Students data are collected every five years.</p> <p><u>Denominator:</u> 2006 Census of Population and Housing (not adjusted by undercount estimates). Data are collected every 5 years.</p>

Data Quality Framework Dimensions

Institutional environment	<p>The <i>Counting the Homeless</i> project is undertaken by researchers Chris Chamberlain of the Institute for Social Research at Swinburne University of Technology and David MacKenzie of the Centre for Applied Social Research at the School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning, RMIT University, in collaboration with the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>ABS Census</i> - For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment.• SAAP Collection – For information on the institutional environment of the AIHW including the legislative obligations of the AIHW and its governance arrangements, please see http://www.aihw.gov.au/aboutus/index.cfm• National Census of Homeless School Students – This census is undertaken by the authors of the research report, <i>Counting the Homeless</i> with results published by FaHCSIA in the report <i>Youth Homelessness in Australia 2006</i>.
Relevance	<p>The research on which this measure is based was specifically commissioned for the purpose of counting the homeless. The use of the 'cultural definition' of homeless and associated concepts underpinning the Counting the Homeless research project are directly relevant to the numerator in this performance indicator.</p> <p>As noted above, the methodology is subject to review.</p>
Timeliness	<p>The <i>Counting the Homeless</i> report which provides the numerator for this performance indicator was released on the ABS website on 4 September 2008.</p>

**Accuracy,
Coherence,
Accessibility**

State and territory Counting the Homeless publications were released on the AIHW website on 9 July 2009.

First Release 2006 Census variables which provide the denominator were available on 27 June 2007; Second release variables were available on 25 October 2007.

There are a range of issues in the Counting the Homeless methodology relating to accuracy, coherence and interpretability. There is potential under and overcounting of homeless people in the data sources used by Chamberlain and MacKenzie and their methodology attempts to address these issues in bringing the data sources together to produce the best possible overall counts. However, these methods are not perfect and may result in some double counting and other inconsistencies when the data sources are brought together. The broad methodology of the research has been published but there is little published documentation around the quality of the estimates as they relate to these dimensions or for the purposes of reporting data for this PI.

The Counting the Homeless review steering committee has produced an issues paper that has sought comments from stakeholders on issues in the methodology. This paper is available on the Homelessness Clearing House hosted by FaHCSIA. See

http://www.homelessnessinfo.net.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1195:have-your-say-issues-paper-from-abs-on-countingthe-homeless&catid=151:research-and-data&Itemid=43

ABS has published a quality statement on the dwelling structure variable collected in the Census which is relevant to the primary homeless count. See <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/BD9A932986DD5C7ACA25729E0008A899?opendocument>

Some of the issues identified to date are reported below by the ABS. However, there is some contention about the extent of the issues raised – as noted in the AIHW comments that follow.

ABS assessment of the accuracy and coherence of the numerator for PI:

Primary homeless – Data reported for this PI equates this homeless category with the cross-classification of the Census dwelling structure ‘Improvise home, tent, sleepers out’ with either usual residence at that structure or no usual residence. It is ABS’s view that many of the Census counts (up to half) observed in this cross-classification, are unlikely to represent people that meet the cultural definition of primary homeless. The Census is also likely to have missed some people that should have been both enumerated in this category and who would likely represent people that meet the cultural definition of primary homeless. The scale of undercount in this category is not known, but it is implausible that the homeownership, income, occupation and geographic location characteristics of those people overcounted in this PI will be similar to potential undercounts.

Secondary homeless – It is highly likely that the use of multiple sources in compiling the data for this PI results in some double counting of people. For example, it appears that the SAAP ‘support period’ count was used to compile this PI, which counts people receiving support in a period that spans Census night but not necessarily being accommodated on Census night. This may overcount this population by between 40 per cent and 60 per cent in the PI, because those people overcounted in the SAAP count may be either no longer homeless on Census night, or counted in one of the other homelessness components of this PI sourced from the Census.

Tertiary homeless – Data reported for this PI has been compiled using Census

data to identify dwellings that may house homeless people in single rooms without their own bathroom or security of tenure. It is the ABS view that it is not clear whether the appropriate dwellings are identified, and no account is taken in the compiling the PI of the personal characteristics of people enumerated in these dwellings in the Census in estimating this component of homelessness. Many of the Census counts observed in this research classification are unlikely to represent people that meet the cultural definition of tertiary homeless.

Overall, it is the ABS view that the youth homeless component of this PI is much higher than can be reconcilable with Census information about this population.

AIHW Comment on ABS Views

The ABS view on primary homelessness is based on an assumption about which people should or should not be included in the cultural definition of primary homelessness. The additional information included in the Census data quality statement on dwelling structure (linked above) has shed light on the characteristics of people in living in improvised dwellings, showing among other things that some of these people have jobs, reasonable incomes and mortgages. This raises issues about the state of disadvantage of some in this group. However, it cannot be assumed that all of these people do not meet the cultural definition of homelessness. These people meet the definition of living in substandard accommodation which forms the basis of the primary homeless definition.

While there will be situations where people are living in improvised dwellings while in the process of building their home, there will be other circumstances where people are in these dwellings due to problems of mental health, substance abuse, family violence and lack of affordable housing. All of these are of direct policy interest in the reform initiatives on homelessness. Unfortunately, there is no information that differentiates those with personal and housing problems from those that do not have such problems but choose to live in improvised dwellings.

Discussions about the definition of cultural homelessness and its application will form an important part of the review. There will be a number of stakeholders (government agencies, NGOs, sector peak bodies and the authors of the report) that will dispute the assessments made by ABS on the primary count and the youth count, either due to definitional issues or the contention that the Census is not adequate in identifying these people effectively. The review will allow for objective discussions around these issues, which will enable views to be provided and assessed. It is particularly important that Chamberlain and MacKenzie have a chance to put their views.

The ABS views are selective and all relate to possible over-counts with the possible interpretation that the overall numbers that have been published overstate the problem. The review will provide a better assessment of the overall picture by considering both under and overcounting, an improved understanding of definitions and how they should be applied, and how best to measure these with hard data and where adjustments may need to be made to gain a better understanding of the dimensions of homelessness.

Interpretability

The national Counting the Homeless report is available on the ABS website at <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/2050.0Main+Features12006?OpenDocument>

The state and territory Counting the Homeless reports are available on the AIHW website at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10832>.

Data Gaps/Issues Analysis

Key data gaps/ issues The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:

- A review of the Counting the Homeless methodology is currently being undertaken by the ABS, and the outcomes of the review are expected to be released during May 2012. The review has provided input to improve field collection procedures for the 2011 Census, and makes recommendations on how to improve the methodology used to derive estimates of the homeless population. The review will also produce reworked estimates using the recommended improved methodology as far as possible for the 2001 and 2006 Censuses.
- The Steering Committee recommends that potential alternative data sources for reporting against this indicator continue to be investigated for years where Census data are not available.
- A new national Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) data collection commenced on 1 July 2011. The SHS data collection will expand the scope, type of information collected and provide more timely information of those people who are provided with specialist homelessness services, which may provide a proxy measure for this indicator.
- There are currently no adequate counts of people experiencing homelessness who access mainstream services. However, the inclusion of homelessness flags in mainstream data sets is being explored, and there is a commitment to develop a common definition and standards for adoption in agency specific mainstream services datasets.
- The ABS have created a Homelessness Statistics Reference Group (HSRG) in order to advise the ABS on the development, collection, compilation, production and dissemination of robust statistics for use in analysing, understanding and reporting on homelessness in Australia. The ABS is currently developing new homelessness estimation methodology for official ABS statistics and will bring key analysis and decisions to the HSRG for input.