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## 2 The Compendium of Indigenous data

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The primary aim of this Compendium is to provide an easily accessible collation of Indigenous data from the *Report on Government Services 2013* (2013 Report).

The data contained in this Compendium — focusing on the efficiency and effectiveness of specific areas of service delivery — can provide information that complements the material in the separate *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators report* (SCRGSP 2011). The *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage* report summarises outcomes for Indigenous Australians, rather than assessing the performance of specific services.

### **Improvements in reporting of Indigenous data**

Improvements to the Indigenous data to specific areas of the RoGS are summarised in each chapter.

### **Timeliness and data availability**

As noted in chapter 1 of the 2013 Report, recent data are more useful for policy decision making but there can be a trade-off between the accuracy of data and their timeliness. The Steering Committee’s approach is, where data are fit for purpose, to publish imperfect data with caveats. This approach allows increased scrutiny of the data and reveals the gaps in critical information, providing the foundation for developing better data over time. Table 2.1 summarises the time periods for data

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reported for performance indicators included in this RoGS. There have been improvements in timeliness of some Indigenous data collections for this edition, including amenity/location and customer satisfaction data for State owned and managed Indigenous housing are for 2012, where the most recent previously available data were for 2007.

**Table 2.1 Time period of reported performance results, 2013 RoGS**

<i>Indicator framework</i>	<i>At or earlier than 2009 or 2009-10<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Previous year (2010 or 2010-11)</i>	<i>Current year (2011 or 2011-12)</i>	
<b>Child care education and training</b>	Child care, education and training	School readiness — transition to primary school; Participation in employment, education and training by Indigenous people; Attainment of qualifications by Indigenous people	..	All others
	Early childhood education and care	..	Participation of special needs groups in child care; Staff quality, qualifications and training for child care; Hospital separations of children with injuries requiring hospitalisation	All others
	School education	Learning outcomes — national science literacy for years 6 and 10, international learning outcomes data for 15 year olds in reading literacy, mathematical literacy and scientific literacy; Completion — year 10	School expenditure; Participation — achievement of VET competencies; Learning outcomes — civics and citizenship literacy for years 6 and 10	All others
	VET	..	Student achievement — improved education/training status after training qualifications completed; Skill profile — qualifications completed	All others
<b>Justice</b>	Justice	..	Crime victimisation; Re-offending rates — offenders who were proceeded against more than once by police; Higher court defendants resulting in a guilty plea or finding	All others
	Police services	Victims of homicide	Crime victimisation; Reporting rates; Land transport hospitalisations; Magistrates court defendants resulting in a guilty plea or finding	All others
	Courts	..	..	All
	Corrective services	..	..	All
<b>Emergency management</b>	Emergency management	..	Deaths from emergency events	All others
	Fire services	Level of safe fire practices in the community; Residential structures with smoke alarms (most jurisdictions)	Fire deaths — all causes combined only; Fire injuries	Residential structures with smoke alarms (two jurisdictions); All others
	Ambulance services	..	..	All

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Table 2.1 (continued)

<i>Indicator framework</i>	<i>At or earlier than 2009 or 2009-10<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Previous year (2010 or 2010-11)</i>	<i>Current year (2011 or 2011-12)</i>
Health	Potentially preventable diseases — cancers; Access to services compared to need by type of service	All others	Health risk factors; Mortality rates; Life expectancy; Median age at death; Health workforce
Public hospitals	..	All others	Emergency department waiting times; Total elective surgery waiting times; Adverse events in public hospitals healthcare associated infections; Health workforce; Patient satisfaction
<b>Health</b> Maternity services	Recurrent cost per maternity separation; Average length of stay in public hospitals	All others	Caesareans and inductions for selected primiparae; Apgar scores
Primary and community health	Chronic disease management — asthma; Influenza vaccination coverage for older people	Indigenous primary healthcare that provided early detection services; Selected potentially preventable hospitalisations for — vaccine preventable, acute and chronic conditions, for diabetes, and of older people for falls	All others
Mental health management	Prevalence of severe mental disorders	All others	Primary mental health care for children and young people; Social and economic inclusion of people with a mental illness

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Table 2.1 (continued)

<i>Indicator framework</i>	<i>At or earlier than 2009 or 2009-10<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Previous year (2010 or 2010-11)</i>	<i>Current year (2011 or 2011-12)</i>
Community services	Independence of older people and their carers; Participation of people with disability and their carers in the community; Improving child development	Wellbeing of older people; Quality of life for people with disability and their carers	Jobless families with children
Aged care services	Unmet need for services to support older people requiring assistance with daily activities <sup>a</sup>	Assessed longer term care arrangements; Hospital patient days used by aged care type patients; Cost per output unit	All others
Services for people with disability	Client and carer satisfaction (three jurisdictions); Labour force participation and employment of people with disability and of carers	All others	Quality assurance processes (five jurisdictions); Client and carer satisfaction (three jurisdictions); Administrative efficiency
Child protection and out-of-home care	Client satisfaction (four jurisdictions)	Improved safety	All others
Youth justice	..	..	All others

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Table 2.1 (continued)

<i>Indicator framework</i>		<i>At or earlier than 2009 or 2009-10<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Previous year (2010 or 2010-11)</i>	<i>Current year (2011 or 2011-12)</i>
<b>Housing and homelessness services</b>	Housing and homelessness	Low income households in rental stress	..	All others
	Social housing	Dwelling condition for ICH	Rent collection rate for community housing; All other indicators for ICH	All for public housing and SOMIH; All other indicators for community housing
	Homelessness services	..	..	All

ICH = Indigenous community housing. SHSC = Specialist Homelessness Services collection. SOMIH = State-owned and managed Indigenous housing. <sup>a</sup> Some data are collected infrequently. The following data, for example, affect the timeliness of reporting in this edition: asthma management data are from a survey conducted approximately triennially; influenza vaccination coverage for older people data are from a survey conducted approximately biennially or triennially; national years 6 and 10 learning outcomes data for each of three learning domains are collected in a rolling triennial cycle; international learning outcomes data for students aged 15 years in reading literacy, mathematical literacy and scientific literacy were last collected in 2012 but were not available for this edition; independence of older people and their carers, unmet need of older people, and participation of people with disability and their carers in the community, data are from a survey conducted triennially; improving child development data are from an administrative collection undertaken triennially; wellbeing of older people, and quality of life for people with disability and their carers, data are from a survey conducted quadrennially; low income households in rental stress are from a survey conducted biennially; and dwelling condition for Indigenous community housing are from a survey last conducted in 2006. .. Not applicable.

Source: Sector overviews B–G and chapters 3–17; 2013 Report, table 2.1, pp. 2.6–9.

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## **Comparability of data**

Data are generally considered to be directly comparable when definitions, counting rules and the scope of measurement are consistent (and if applicable, the sample size is large enough to be statistically reliable — explained in the statistical appendix). Performance indicator framework (PIF) diagrams in each chapter are shaded to reflect indicator comparability. Table 2.2 in the 2013 Report summarises the proportions of performance indicators in each service area (1) with comparable data and (2) with data reported, both comparable and not directly comparable. Of the 19 service area PIFs, 12 have over 50 per cent of indicators reported on a comparable basis.

## **Changes to administrative data collections**

Major data developments currently underway will improve the quality of RoGS reporting in the future. For school education, nationally consistent definitions of most student background characteristics have been adopted for national reporting on students' educational achievement and outcomes. Ministers have endorsed standard definitions of sex, Indigenous status, socioeconomic background, language background and geographic location. A definition of students with disability for nationally comparable reporting on students' outcomes is under development. Student background information collected from parents through the enrolment process using the agreed data collection specifications and method is linked to student assessment results.

## **Indigenous data in the 2013 Report**

Some chapters of RoGS focus on the performance of agencies in providing services to specific groups in society — for example, the chapters on aged care services, services to people with disability and children's services. Across RoGS, the Steering Committee also seeks to report on the performance of agencies providing services for three identified special needs groups: Indigenous Australians; people living in communities outside the capital cities (that is, people living in other metropolitan areas, or rural and remote communities); and people from a non-English speaking background. However, for many services, there is a paucity of data on outcomes for these groups.

## Indigenous Australians

In May 1997, the (then) Prime Minister asked the Review to give particular attention to the performance of mainstream services in meeting the needs of Indigenous Australians. Table 2.2 provides an indication of which service areas report at least one data item on Indigenous Australians.

**Table 2.2 Reporting of at least one data item on Indigenous Australians, 2013 RoGS**

Service area/indicator framework	Descriptive	Outcomes	Outputs		
			Equity	Effectiveness	Efficiency
<i>Child care, education and training</i>					
Early childhood, education and care	x	x	✓	x	x
School education	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
VET	x	✓	✓	✓	x
<i>Justice</i>					
Police services	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
Courts	x	x	x	x	x
Corrective services	✓	x	x	✓	x
<i>Emergency management</i>					
Fire services	x	x	x	x	x
Ambulance services	x	x	x	x	x
<i>Health</i>					
Public hospitals	✓	x	x	✓	x
Maternity services	x	✓	x	x	x
Primary and community health	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
Mental health management	✓	✓	✓	x	x
<i>Community services</i>					
Aged care services	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
Services for people with disability	✓	x	✓	✓	x
Child protection and out-of-home care	✓	x	x	✓	x
Youth justice services	✓	x	x	✓	x
<i>Housing and homelessness</i>					
Social housing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Homelessness services	✓	✓	✓	✓	x

Source: Chapters 3–17; 2013 Report, table 2.4, pp. 2.16.

In this Report, the term ‘Indigenous’ is used to describe Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people in Australia. While the Steering Committee acknowledges the diversity of Australia’s Indigenous peoples, most of the available data on



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Indigenous Australians are for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people combined.

*Data collection issues relating to Indigenous Australians*

Many administrative data collections do not have accurate or complete identification of the Indigenous status of their clients. In some instances, the method and level of identification of Indigenous Australians appear to vary across jurisdictions. Further, while many surveys now include an Indigenous identifier, many do not include a sufficiently large sample to provide reliable results for the Indigenous population. The AIHW (2012) has examined the identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in a number of its community services data collections, by analysing where Indigenous status is missing/not stated and makes a number of recommendations for jurisdictions to improve Indigenous data collection.

National work on improving Indigenous identification is ongoing. Under Schedule F of the *National Indigenous Reform Agreement* (NIRA), the ABS and AIHW are undertaking work on improving Indigenous identification across a range of data collections (COAG 2012). Activities by the ABS and AIHW (both under the NIRA and independently) include:

- an ongoing program to improve the identification of Indigenous status of clients in Australian, State and Territory governments' administrative systems. Priority is being given to the improvement of births and deaths statistics in all states and territories, as well as data for hospital separations, community services, education, housing and crime and justice
- work with other agencies to develop and support national Indigenous information plans, Indigenous performance indicators and Indigenous taskforces on a number of topics
- improving Indigenous enumeration in the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing, including data for small geographic areas
- an established cycle of Indigenous-specific surveys as part of the ABS Household Survey Program to provide Indigenous statistics on a three-yearly basis and an annual series of Indigenous labour force estimates
- producing publications related to improving methods for Indigenous statistics (for example, AIHW 2012).

The (then) Ministerial Council on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (MCATSIA) commissioned work to identify methodological issues in Indigenous data collections, outline how these are being addressed and identify any remaining

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gaps. The findings are presented in *Population and Diversity: Policy Implications of Emerging Indigenous Demographic Trends*, released in mid-2006 by the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR) (Taylor 2006). In mid-2007, MCATSIA commissioned further work on Indigenous population statistics from CAEPR, constructed around four projects:

- detailed regional analysis of change in Indigenous social indicators
- assessment of social and spatial mobility among Indigenous Australians in metropolitan areas
- development of conceptual and methodological approaches to the measurement of short term mobility
- case-study analyses of multiple disadvantage in select city neighbourhoods and regional centres.

Working Papers related to these projects are released as part of the CAEPR Working Paper Series (CAEPR 2011) and the Indigenous Population Project Series: 2011 Census Papers (for example, CAEPR 2012).

In December 2007 and March 2008, COAG agreed to explicit targets for improving the lives of Indigenous people, and in November 2008 established the NIRA, which incorporates the COAG Closing the Gap targets and was last revised in November 2012 (COAG 2012). The NIRA provides an integrated framework for the task of Closing the Gap, setting out the policy principles, objectives and performance indicators underpinning Closing the Gap and the specific steps governments are taking to meet the targets. The Steering Committee is committed to aligning relevant indicators in this RoGS with the Working Group on Indigenous Reform (WGIR) framework.

The Coordinator-General for Remote Indigenous Services (CGRIS) provides a six monthly report to the Minister for Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. The first report was noted at COAG on 7 December 2009. COAG decided that the WGIR will provide a progress report to COAG on recommendations in the CGRS report. The first WGIR progress report was noted by COAG at its April 2010 meeting. COAG also committed to continuing its monitoring of progress of the National Partnership on Remote Service Delivery (COAG 2010). The sixth (and most recent) CGRIS report was released in December 2012 (CGRIS 2012).

The Review will draw on these initiatives in future RoGS.

The first four volumes of the new ASGS have been released: Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas (ABS 2011a); Indigenous Structure

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(ABS 2011b); Non ABS Structures (ABS 2011c); and Significant Urban Areas, Urban Centres and Localities, Section of State (ABS 2012).

### **‘Cross-cutting’ issues**

There is growing emphasis on the management of policy issues that cover more than one service-sector, service area or ministerial portfolio — for example, government policies aimed at specific client groups such as older people, females, children, Indigenous Australians, people in rural and remote areas and people from non-English speaking backgrounds. Improving the management of these issues can contribute to more effective and efficient service provision. Greater efficiency can come from more clearly defined priorities and from the elimination of duplicated or inconsistent programs. Improved outcomes can also result from a more holistic and client centred approach to service delivery.

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