
Chapter 16: Housing

Government plays a significant role in the Australian housing market, directly through housing assistance and indirectly through policies associated with land planning and taxation. The Australian, State and Territory governments share responsibility for housing assistance. Direct assistance includes public and community housing, home purchase and home ownership assistance, Indigenous housing, State and Territory rental assistance (such as State and Territory provided bond loans, assistance with rent payments and advance rent payments, relocation expenses and other one-off grants) and Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA).

This chapter focuses on the performance of governments in providing public, Indigenous and community housing under the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) (box 16.1) and CRA. Close links exist between public and community housing services and other government programs and support services discussed elsewhere in the Report, such as:

- the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP), which provides accommodation and other services for homeless people or those at imminent risk of becoming homeless (chapter 15)
- services delivered by the Australian, State and Territory governments and community organisations to promote independent living, including disability services (chapter 13), mental health services (chapter 11) and aged care services, such as, the Home and Community Care Program (chapter 12).

Some of the performance indicators in the following chapter were also reported as key indicators of Indigenous disadvantage in the *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2003* Report. The Indigenous disadvantage framework included the following indicators relating to housing:

- Home ownership
- Overcrowding in housing.

Box 16.1 **Commonwealth State Housing Agreement**

The CSHA is an agreement made between the Australian, State and Territory governments under the *Housing Assistance Act 1996* (Cwlth) to provide strategic direction and funding certainty for the provision of housing assistance. The aim of this agreement is to provide appropriate, affordable and secure housing assistance for those who most need it, for the duration of their need.

The 1999 CSHA came into effect on 1 July 1999 and ran until 30 June 2003 and included, for the first time, bilateral agreements between the Australian Government and each State and Territory government, as well as an overarching multilateral agreement. Bilateral agreements are intended to provide greater flexibility for States and Territories to respond to their particular housing needs. The 2003 CSHA took effect on 1 July 2003 and will run until 30 June 2008.

Funding arrangements

The majority of funding under the 1999 CSHA was provided by the Australian Government and took the form of general assistance funding (public housing, home purchase assistance and private rental assistance) and specified funding for identified programs: the Aboriginal Rental Housing Program (ARHP), the Crisis Accommodation Program and the Community Housing Program. The majority of CSHA funding was distributed to State and Territory governments on a modified per capita basis, with the State and Territory governments contributing additional funding from their own resources to partly 'match' Australian Government funding allocations.

Roles and responsibilities

Under the CSHA, the Australian Government has responsibility for:

- ensuring the outcomes pursued through the agreement are consistent with broader national objectives, particularly in relation to support for individuals and communities
- advising State and Territory governments of Australian Government objectives to be achieved under the agreement
- reporting to the Commonwealth Parliament on performance against agreed outcomes and targets of housing assistance provided under the agreement.

State and Territory governments have responsibility for:

- developing housing assistance strategies that are consistent with Australian, State and Territory government objectives and that best meet the circumstances of the State or Territory
- developing, implementing and managing services and programs to deliver agreed outcomes
- reporting on a basis that enables performance assessment by the Australian, State or Territory governments, based on agreed performance indicators.

Source: CSHA (1999, 2003).

A four year CSHA came into effect on 1 July 1999 and ran until 30 June 2003. A performance framework for reporting under this CSHA was developed to reflect the national objectives of the agreement, to improve the quality of national performance information and to recognise the need for balanced reporting at the national and bilateral

levels. Performance reporting in this chapter for public, community and State owned and managed Indigenous housing is based on this framework. The chapter includes data on the final year of the 1999 CSHA.

A new CSHA took effect on 1 July 2003 and will run until 30 June 2008. Many aspects of the new agreement, such as funding arrangements and housing assistance roles and responsibilities, are similar to those of the previous agreement. The 2003 CSHA has a focus on reducing workforce disincentives and increasing private sector involvement in affordable housing. It also places greater emphasis on Australian, State and Territory governments improving housing outcomes for Indigenous people. Governments will work towards improving access to mainstream housing options for Indigenous people living in urban and rural areas (CSHA 2003). Work will be undertaken on the performance indicator framework to reflect the objectives of the new agreement and to further improve the quality and scope of reporting national performance indicators.

Public, community and State owned and managed Indigenous housing information has been obtained from the Australian, State and Territory governments except where otherwise indicated. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) collects and collates these data and produces annual data collection manuals. The data manuals and data reports are available from the AIHW web site at www.aihw.gov.au (AIHW 2003a, 2003b and 2003j). This year data for public rental housing and for State owned and managed Indigenous housing were compiled for all jurisdictions from unit record data under the National Housing Data Repository at the AIHW. CRA data have been obtained from the Department of Family and Community Services (DFaCS).

Housing services not covered

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

- the Crisis Accommodation Program under the CSHA, which provides capital funding for accommodation for homeless people
- home purchase assistance and private rental assistance provided under the CSHA
- the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC)/Army Community Assistance Program, which provides new housing and improved infrastructure for Indigenous communities
- non-CSHA programs, including those provided by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) and ATSIC
- CRA paid by the DVA or the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST)
- the First Home Owners Grant, provided by the Australian Government and delivered through State and Territory governments

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- some Indigenous housing and infrastructure assistance provided by ATSIC, State and Territory governments, land councils and Indigenous community organisations
 - non-Indigenous community housing not funded under the CSHA.

Indigenous data in the housing chapter

The housing chapter in the *Report on Government Services 2004* contains the following data items on Indigenous people:

- Real gross recurrent expenditure per dwelling State owned and managed Indigenous housing, 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2002-03.
- Proportion of State owned and managed Indigenous housing stock occupied at 30 June 2003.
- Average turnaround times for State owned and managed Indigenous housing, 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2002-03.
- Total rent collected for State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings as a proportion of total rent charged (per cent), 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2002-03.
- Low income and special needs households as a proportion of all new State owned and managed Indigenous housing households (per cent), 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2002-03.
- Proportion of new State owned and managed Indigenous housing tenancies allocated to households with special needs, 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2002-03.
- Households that pay less than market rent or that are special needs households paying market rent as a proportion of all State owned and managed Indigenous housing households, 2001, 2002 and 2003.
- Greatest need allocations as a proportion of all new State owned and managed Indigenous housing allocations (per cent), year ending 30 June 2003.
- Rent charged for State owned and managed Indigenous housing as a proportion of market rent, adjusted for CRA, 2001, 2002 and 2003.
- Proportion of State owned and managed Indigenous housing with overcrowding 2001, 2002 and 2003.
- Income units receiving CRA by income unit type, 30 June 2003.
- Income units receiving CRA by Indigenous status and geographic location, 30 June 2003.
- Income units receiving CRA by benefit type, 30 June 2003.

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- Indigenous income units receiving CRA, by benefit type, 30 June 2003.
 - Indigenous CRA recipients paying less than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, at 29 November 2002.

Supporting tables

Supporting tables for data within the housing chapter of the compendium are contained in the attachment to the compendium. These tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by an 'A' suffix (for example, table 16A.3 is table 3 in the housing attachment to the compendium). As the data are directly sourced from the Report on Government Services 2004, the compendium also notes where the original table, figure or text in the Report on Government Services 2004 can be found. For example, where the compendium refers to 'ROGS 2004, p. 16.15' this is page 15 of chapter 16 and 'ROGS 2004, 16A.2' is attachment table 2 of attachment 16 of the Report on Government Services 2004.

Service overview

The composition of Australian households is changing. There is an increasing number of smaller households, including a rising number of single person households. The average Australian household size fell from 3.3 people to 2.6 people between 1971 and 2001, while the proportion of single person households increased from 18.1 per cent to 22.9 per cent over this period (ABS 2002a). The average Indigenous household is larger than the average non-Indigenous household — the average household with at least one Indigenous person was 3.5 people (ABS and AIHW 2003).

The Indigenous population is younger than the non-Indigenous population. The ABS 2001 Census showed that 39.0 per cent of the Indigenous population was aged under 15 years compared with 20.3 per cent of the non-Indigenous population. Only 2.8 per cent of the Indigenous population was aged over 65 years, compared with 12.7 per cent of the non-Indigenous population (tables A.1 and A.6).

Roles and responsibilities

Various levels of government have different roles and responsibilities in housing and housing assistance.

- The Australian Government provides CRA and shares responsibility with State and Territory governments for housing assistance provided under the CSHA (box 16.1). The Australian Government also influences the housing market through other direct and indirect means, including taxation and home purchase assistance.

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- State and Territory governments provide housing assistance under the CSHA, such as public housing, community housing, Indigenous rental housing (both State and community managed), private rental assistance and home purchase assistance. Some also contribute to the delivery of housing assistance through mechanisms such as home lending programs and joint ventures with the private sector. State and Territory governments are also responsible for land taxes, stamp duties and residential tenancy legislation.
 - Local governments implement planning regulations and are sometimes involved in providing community housing.

Size and scope

Housing assistance is provided in various forms, and models for delivering assistance can vary both within and across jurisdictions. The main forms of assistance are outlined in box 16.2. This chapter focuses on four forms of assistance: public housing, community housing, State owned and managed Indigenous housing, and CRA.

Box 16.2 Forms of housing assistance

There are several main forms of CSHA housing assistance.

- *Public housing*: dwellings owned (or leased) and managed by State and Territory housing authorities to provide affordable rental accommodation. The CSHA is the main source of funding for public housing.
- *Community housing*: rental housing provided for low to moderate income or special needs households managed by community-based organisations that are at least partly subsidised by government. Community housing models vary across jurisdictions.
- *Indigenous housing*: public rental housing targeted at Indigenous households and houses which are owned and managed by Indigenous community housing organisations and community councils in major cities, regional and remote areas.
- *Crisis accommodation*: accommodation services to help people who are homeless or in crisis. Services are generally provided by non-government organisations and many are linked to support services funded through SAAP. Sources of government funding include the Crisis Accommodation Program of the CSHA, which provides funding for accommodation, and SAAP funding for live-in staff, counselling and other support services.
- *Home purchase assistance*: assistance provided by State and Territory governments to low to moderate income households to help with first home purchases or mortgage repayments.
- *Private rental assistance*: assistance funded by State and Territory governments to low income households experiencing difficulty in securing or maintaining private rental accommodation. This assistance may include ongoing or one-off payments to help households meet rent payments, one-off payments for relocation costs, guarantees or loans to cover the cost of bonds, and housing assistance advice and information services. Assistance may be provided by community-based organisations funded by government.

The chapter also reports on:

- *Commonwealth Rent Assistance*: a non-taxable income support supplement paid by the Australian Government to income support recipients or people who receive more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A and who rent in the private rental market
- *Indigenous community housing*: in addition to housing funded under the CSHA, Indigenous housing and housing related infrastructure are funded through the Community Housing Infrastructure Program administered by ATSIC. State and Territory governments also provide funding from their own resources.

Source: CSHA (1999); DSS (1998).

Indigenous housing

Government funded Indigenous housing includes both State managed and community managed housing. The State managed component is generally funded by the ARHP and may be supplemented by untied CSHA funds and State matching funds. Community managed Indigenous housing may be funded from ARHP funds, supplementary State funds, untied CSHA funds, ATSIC funds and funds from other sources.

State owned and managed Indigenous housing

Reporting on State owned and managed Indigenous housing was included for the first time in the Report on Government Services 2002.¹ That Report referred to such housing as the ARHP, but the title for the Report on Government Services 2003 changed to reflect that the ARHP data collection refers to only State owned and managed Indigenous housing yet ARHP funds are also used to provide other forms of Indigenous housing, particularly Indigenous community housing. 'State owned and managed Indigenous housing' refers to rental housing owned and managed by the State government and allocated to Indigenous households only. It includes dwellings managed by government Indigenous housing agencies for allocation to Indigenous tenants. The framework for reporting on State owned and managed Indigenous housing is based on that used for public and community housing. There were 12 563 dwellings identified in the 2002-03 State owned and managed Indigenous housing collection (table 16A.1).

State owned and managed Indigenous housing is only one of a number of programs designed to provide housing assistance to Indigenous people. Indigenous Australians may also be eligible for assistance under Indigenous community managed housing (where community agencies carry out tenancy management functions), the mainstream public and community housing programs, CRA and other government housing programs (both Indigenous specific and mainstream). Some mainstream community housing providers target Indigenous Australians for the allocation of housing. In the 2002-03 CSHA community housing data collection, 20 mainstream community housing organisations nominated Indigenous Australians as their primary target group for the allocation of housing.

The ACT does not receive funding for or administer any Territory owned and managed Indigenous housing programs; in the NT, ARHP funding is directed to community managed Indigenous housing. The NT government cannot differentiate between the various funding sources due to its commitment under the CSHA Indigenous Agreement to 'pool' all funds earmarked for Indigenous housing and associated infrastructure in the NT.

¹ The Territories are not included in the data collection for this program, so are not included in the section heading.

The ACT and the NT are not included in the State owned and managed Indigenous housing data collection.

Indigenous community housing

For community managed Indigenous housing, it is not possible to report against a performance indicator framework. However, data from the ATSI/ABS Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey (CHINS) (ABS 2002b) provide a snapshot of the sector. The CHINS data provide information on housing managed by Indigenous community housing organisations, including discrete community councils. Readers should not compare CHINS data and State owned and managed Indigenous housing data. The former is a survey, while reporting for State owned and managed Indigenous housing is based on administrative data.

The CHINS was conducted between March and June 2001 to collect information on all discrete Indigenous communities and Indigenous organisations that provide housing to Indigenous people in urban, rural and remote locations in all States and Territories. The response rate was 98.1 per cent for discrete Indigenous communities and 98.6 per cent for Indigenous housing organisations. Trained ABS officers collected information via personal interviews with key community and Indigenous housing organisation representatives.

The 2001 CHINS identified 21 287 permanent Indigenous community housing dwellings (table 16A.12), of which 7.8 per cent were unoccupied (table 16A.13). Cultural factors may influence the time taken to re-occupy Indigenous dwellings. Following the death of a significant person, for example, a dwelling may need to be vacant for a longer period (Morel and Ross 1993). The higher proportion of dwellings in rural and remote areas may also contribute to delays in completing administrative tasks and maintenance before dwellings can be re-tenanted. Due to the diversity of funding arrangements across programs and jurisdictions, problems may occur with program boundaries (especially where the management of government owned stock has transferred to the Indigenous community sector) and, therefore, some government owned dwellings could be reported in the CHINS results. In addition to the number of permanent dwellings mentioned above, the CHINS also identified 5600 people living in temporary dwellings.

Of the 616 Indigenous housing organisations included in the 2001 CHINS, 47.2 per cent managed 1–19 dwellings, 33.6 per cent managed 20–49 dwellings and 18.8 per cent managed 50 or more dwellings. The majority (56.7 per cent) of Indigenous housing organisations were in discrete Indigenous communities, and the remainder were in urban areas. Most (93.7 per cent) discrete Indigenous communities were in remote and very remote parts of Australia. The total population of discrete Indigenous communities was reported as 108 000, of whom 85.9 per cent lived in remote and very remote communities.

Housing grants were received by 58.0 per cent of Indigenous housing organisations during the financial year before the 2001 CHINS. Indigenous housing organisations in discrete communities were more likely (68.8 per cent) than urban Indigenous housing organisations (43.8 per cent) to receive grants. The main providers of grants were ATSIC (28.4 per cent of organisations) and the State and Territory governments (19.6 per cent of organisations), with joint State or Territory and Australian Government funding reported for 16.6 per cent of organisations. No grants were received by 41.9 per cent of organisations.

In the 2001 CHINS, 70.4 per cent of permanent Indigenous community housing dwellings were classified as needing minor or no repair, 18.9 per cent were in need of major repair and 8.4 per cent were classified as needing replacement (table 16A.14). Average annual maintenance expenditure per permanent Indigenous community housing dwelling in 2001 was \$1870 a year, while the average weekly rent paid by Indigenous community households was \$38 (table 16A.15) (ABS 2002b).

State and Territory Indigenous housing operations

State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings are defined as those rental housing dwellings owned and managed by government and allocated to only Indigenous Australians (AIHW 2003a). In the ACT, Indigenous people are housed predominantly in mainstream public and community housing.

In the NT, funding under the ARHP is directed at community managed Indigenous housing. All Indigenous housing programs in the NT are community managed and administered, and specific management issues (such as eligibility and waiting lists) are the responsibility of Indigenous housing organisations that manage permanent dwellings for people in discrete Indigenous communities. The approaches of these organisations may differ significantly, depending on the size of the organisations, the socioeconomic circumstances of particular communities, and cultural considerations. The Indigenous Housing Authority of the NT (IHANT) allocates funds to the seven ATSIC regional councils in the NT, which in turn allocate funds to those communities most in need.

In NSW, a separate statutory organisation — the Aboriginal Housing Office — is responsible for planning, administering and expanding policies, programs and the asset base for Aboriginal housing in that State. Funding for the office comes from the CSHA, ATSIC and the State Government (in addition to its CSHA commitments).

Some other jurisdictions are increasingly pooling funding but currently report State owned and managed Indigenous housing data separately. Queensland administers a separate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program, which includes ARHP funds, untied CSHA funds and State funds, and does not report separately against the ARHP component of the program funds (which forms more than one third of total expenditure).

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- *Eligibility criteria for access to State owned and managed Indigenous housing.* In NSW, Victoria, WA, SA and Tasmania, once an applicant is confirmed as being Indigenous, eligibility for State owned and managed Indigenous housing is consistent with eligibility requirements for public housing (although in Tasmania, applications outside the guidelines may be considered where there are extenuating circumstances in relation to income, asset and age criteria). In Queensland, there are no income or age eligibility limits on State owned and managed Indigenous housing because the program is aimed at addressing discrimination and a history of social disadvantage, and discrimination can occur regardless of income or age.
 - *Management of the waiting list.* Management of waiting lists varies across jurisdictions for State owned and managed Indigenous housing. NSW, Victoria and WA each have one waiting list for both State owned and managed Indigenous housing and public housing. Indigenous applicants are placed on the waiting list and provided housing under the first available program. In Queensland, State owned and managed Indigenous housing is provided on a 'wait turn' basis, with provision for a small number of applicants to be housed ahead of turn in urgent circumstances. No more than 10 per cent of annual allocations are to be based on priority. SA has divided the State owned and managed Indigenous housing waiting list into four categories, with category 1 reflecting those in most urgent need of housing and category 4 reflecting the least urgent housing need. In Tasmania, although the Housing Assessment System developed for public rental housing may be used as a guide, applications for State owned and managed Indigenous housing are not subject to the allocation of points to determine overall housing need or relative priority. Aboriginal customer service officers undertake assessments considering an applicant's claim against criteria such as ill health, medical requirements, and the affordability and adequacy of current housing. Priority may be given to applicants with children and applicants for whom the provision of housing may enhance their educational or employment opportunities. Regional Aboriginal housing committees determine priority and allocate properties.
 - *Term of tenure.* In NSW, Victoria, WA and SA, security of tenure is the same as that for public housing. In Queensland, security of tenure depends on State owned and managed Indigenous housing tenants meeting their responsibilities under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1994* (Qld) (which involves paying their rent, maintaining the property and keeping the peace of the neighbourhood). In Tasmania, tenants are signed to either a fixed term lease or a lease of no fixed term, depending on their previous housing history. Tenure arrangements may be reviewed if, following family breakdown or death, a non-Indigenous person is the remaining tenant in a State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwelling.
 - *Regional and remote area concentrations.* The proportion of State owned and managed Indigenous housing located in regional and remote areas using the RA classification is shown in table 16.1.

Table 16.1 Regional and remote area concentrations, 2003 (per cent)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas^b</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Regional ^c	51.5	62.6	59.6	30.2	26.3	100.0	47.9
Remote ^d	7.4	0.4	27.8	40.8	13.0	–	18.1

^a At 30 June. ^b Under the RA classification, Tasmania consists of mainly regional areas with some remote areas. ^c Comprises inner and outer regional areas. ^d Comprises remote and very remote areas. – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: AIHW (2003d); ROGS 2004, p. 16.20; Table 16A.1.

Framework of performance indicators

The framework of performance indicators for public, community and State owned and managed Indigenous housing in this chapter is based on the performance indicator framework developed for the 1999 CSHA (figures 16.2, 16.3 and 16.4, pp. 16.23-16.25, Report on Government Services 2004).

The public, community and State owned and managed Indigenous housing indicator frameworks have been modified this year in line with the new general framework for performance indicators implemented across all chapters for the first time in this Report. The new approach reflects the adoption by governments of accrual accounting and clearly depicts the Review's focus on outcomes, consistent with demand by governments for outcome oriented performance information. The new framework also accentuates the importance of equity and draws out the distinction between equity and access. More detail on the new framework, along with the differences between outputs and outcomes, can be found in the Report on Government Services 2004 (p. 1.11, chapter 1).

Performance reporting for State owned and managed Indigenous housing

Different delivery contexts, locations and types of client may affect the performance reported in this section. Care needs to be taken in interpreting performance indicator results, and the qualifications presented with the data need to be considered. Further, there may have been some difficulties in separating Indigenous housing data from public housing data. Variations in the funding and administration of State owned and managed Indigenous housing across jurisdictions may also influence the comparability of data. Some descriptive data on State owned and managed Indigenous housing are included in table 16A.1. (As outlined earlier, the ACT and the NT are not included in the State owned and managed Indigenous housing data collection.) State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings are more likely than public or community housing dwellings to be located in rural or remote areas.

Outputs: Efficiency — gross cost per unit

The costs incurred by jurisdictions in providing housing include:

- administration costs (the cost of the administration offices of the property manager and tenancy manager)
- operating costs (the costs of maintaining the operation of the dwelling, including repairs and maintenance, rates, the costs of disposals, market rent paid and interest expenses)
- depreciation costs
- the user cost of capital (the cost of the funds tied up in the capital used to provide public housing).

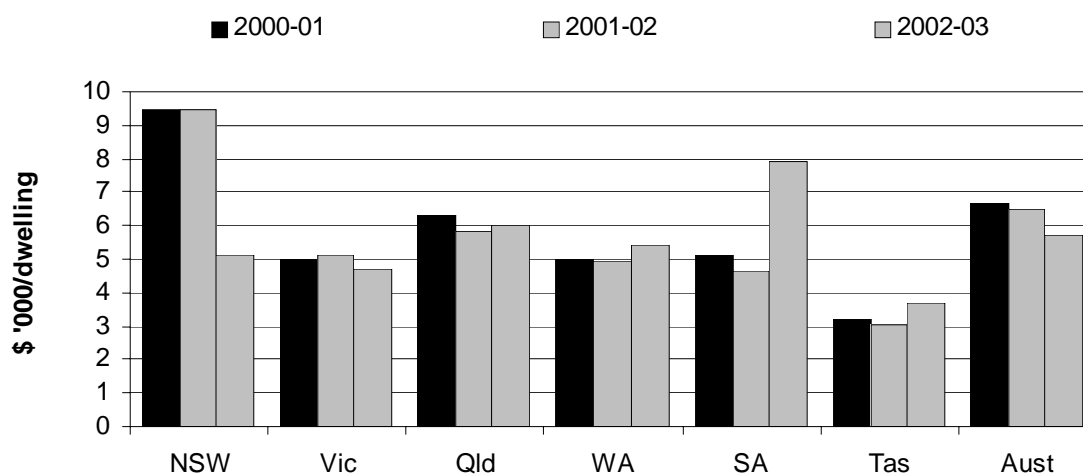
Depreciation costs and the user cost of capital (capital costs) are not available for reporting on State owned and managed Indigenous housing. The cost per dwelling shown in figure 16.1 represents gross recurrent expenditure (that is, administration and operating costs) per dwelling. Rent received from tenants has not been deducted. For those jurisdictions able to provide data, the gross cost per dwelling (excluding capital costs) ranged from \$7917 in SA to \$3686 in Tasmania (figure 16.1). On average, gross cost per dwelling was \$5703.

It is not appropriate to compare the gross cost per State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwelling with the recurrent cost per dwelling for public housing (which would be the public housing equivalent of this indicator) because there is greater scope for economies of scale in administration costs with public housing, which is a much larger program overall.

State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings are also more highly concentrated in rural and remote areas where the cost of providing housing assistance is potentially greater. The need to construct culturally appropriate housing (possibly requiring a higher standard of amenities, such as communal cooking, laundry and toilet facilities) may also affect the cost per dwelling. Finally, different cost structures may apply to the programs. Construction of dwellings, for example, under State owned and managed Indigenous housing may involve a skills development element to allow for training of apprentices in rural areas.

Care needs to be taken in interpreting the total cost of delivering housing. Administration costs and operating costs, for example, may not capture all costs incurred by government, so the total costs of housing provision could be understated.

Figure 16.1 **Real gross cost per dwelling, excluding capital costs (2002-03 dollars)^{a, b}**



^a NSW data for 2000-01 and 2001-02 include one-off capital expenditure resulting from maintenance liabilities incurred before the Aboriginal Housing Office took possession of the stock, so data are not comparable over the three years. ^b For a more detailed explanation of WA data, see SCRCSSP (2003).

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); ROGS 2004, p. 16.50; Table 16A.2.

Outputs: Efficiency — occupancy rates

There was little variation across jurisdictions in the proportion of State owned and managed Indigenous housing stock (including untenable dwellings) occupied at 30 June 2003, with an average of 95.2 per cent nationally (table 16.2).

Table 16.2 **Occupancy rates^a**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	Aust
2001	98.0	95.4	94.0	96.0	94.3	93.1	95.8
2002	97.9	96.6	94.6	95.2	91.2	92.7	95.4
2003	97.6	96.1	94.2	94.4	91.8	95.8	95.2

^a At 30 June.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); ROGS 2004, p. 16.51; Table 16A.3.

Outputs: Efficiency — turnaround time

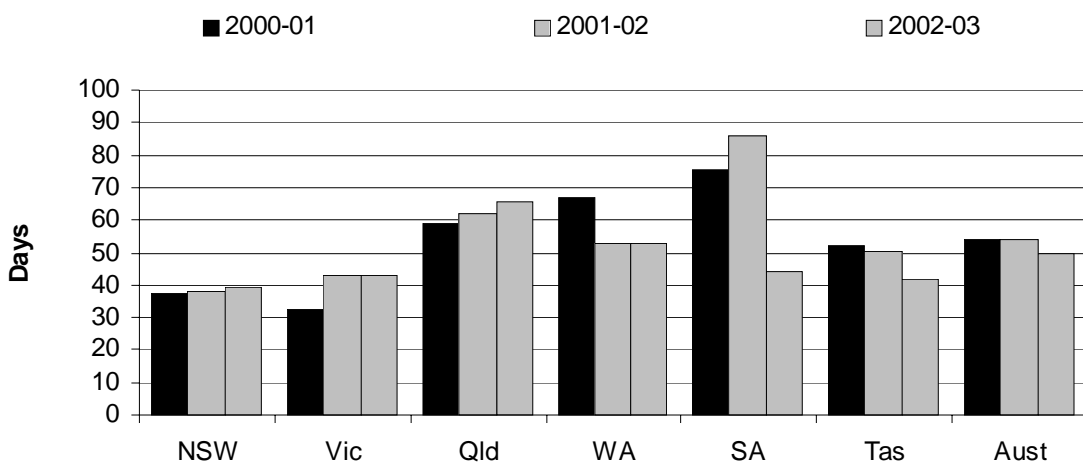
Turnaround time indicates the speed with which housing stock is re-occupied after it has been vacated or acquired. The length of time taken to rent untenanted stock affects allocations of State owned and managed Indigenous housing, waiting times, the length of waiting lists and rent forgone. All jurisdictions aim to minimise turnaround times.

The average number of days for vacant stock to be allocated in 2002-03 varied from 66 days in Queensland to 39 days in NSW (figure 16.2). This indicator may be affected by changes in maintenance programs, and some jurisdictions may have difficulty excluding stock upgrades. Cultural factors may also influence the turnaround time for State owned and managed Indigenous housing dwellings relative to public housing dwellings. Following the death of a significant person, for example, a dwelling may need to be vacant for a longer period of time (Morel and Ross 1993). The higher proportion of dwellings in rural and remote areas may also contribute to delays in completing administrative tasks and maintenance before dwellings can be re-tenanted.

Outputs: Efficiency — rent arrears

Total rent collected as a proportion of the rent charged measures whether unpaid rent represents a financial burden to housing authorities. Differences in recognition policies, write-off practices, the treatment of disputed amounts and the treatment of payment arrangements may affect the comparability of this indicator's reported results. Rent collected as a proportion of the rent charged in 2002-03 varied from 107.9 per cent in SA to 97.2 per cent in Queensland (table 16.3). Payment arrangements for rent in some jurisdictions mean that the rent collected over a 12 month period may be higher than rent charged over that period.

Figure 16.2 Average turnaround times^{a, b, c}



^a For NSW the previous years data have been adjusted to ensure comparability. ^b Data for Victoria are based on a different method from that used for the other data presented and need to be interpreted with caution. For further details of these variations, see table 16A.4. ^c WA and SA data for 2002-03 are based on a different method from that used for previous years, and a direct comparison with previous years cannot be made. For details of these changes, see SCRCSSP (2003).

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); ROGS 2004, p. 16.52; Table 16A.4.

Table 16.3 Total rent collected as a proportion of total rent charged (per cent)^a

	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>WA^b</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>Aust</i>
2000-01	99.3	99.5	99.1	101.1	95.0	94.8	98.8
2001-02	99.9	98.8	97.3	103.0	92.6	99.1	98.5
2002-03	102.3	98.1	97.2	101.9	107.9	98.8	101.4

^a Payment arrangements for rent in some jurisdictions mean that rent collected over a 12 month period may be higher than rent charged over that period. ^b Data for WA are based on a different method from that used for the other data presented and need to be interpreted with caution. For details of these variations, see SCRCSSP (2003).

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); ROGS 2004, p. 16.52; Table 16A.5.

Outcomes: Low income and special needs

Three performance indicators relate to low income and special needs. The first measures the low income and special needs (but not low income) status of households receiving State owned and managed Indigenous housing assistance (table 16.4). As with public housing, there are two household income measures for the purpose of this indicator:

- low income A households — those in State owned and managed Indigenous housing in which all members of the household have incomes at or below the maximum pension rate. (Pension rates have been selected for calculating this indicator because they are higher than allowance rates).
- low income B households — those in State owned and managed Indigenous housing that have incomes that would enable them to receive government income support benefits below the maximum pension.

Households with incomes below these levels are included in the measure, although they may not necessarily receive income support benefits. The proportion of new tenancies allocated to low income A households varied in 2002-03 from 91.5 per cent in NSW to 86.5 per cent in SA. The proportion of new tenancies allocated to low income A or special needs (not low income) households were fairly similar across jurisdictions (table 16.4). Table 16A.6 contains information on both low income A households and low income B households.

Table 16.4 Low income and special needs households as a proportion of all new households (per cent)

	NSW ^a	Vic ^b	Qld ^c	WA ^{a, d}	SA ^{a, d}	Tas ^a	Aust
<i>New low income A households as proportion of all new households</i>							
2000-01	91.3	80.0	81.4	89.3	88.9	76.8	86.5
2001-02	89.6	88.1	83.1	81.3	87.3	95.5	85.8
2002-03	91.5	87.8	89.7	89.1	86.5	87.2	89.2
<i>New low income A households or special needs (not low income) households as proportion of all new households</i>							
2000-01	96.9	83.3	87.0	92.0	97.9	81.7	91.4
2001-02	92.6	91.7	89.5	84.4	90.1	97.0	89.6
2002-03	92.9	92.9	94.6	92.1	93.2	92.3	93.0

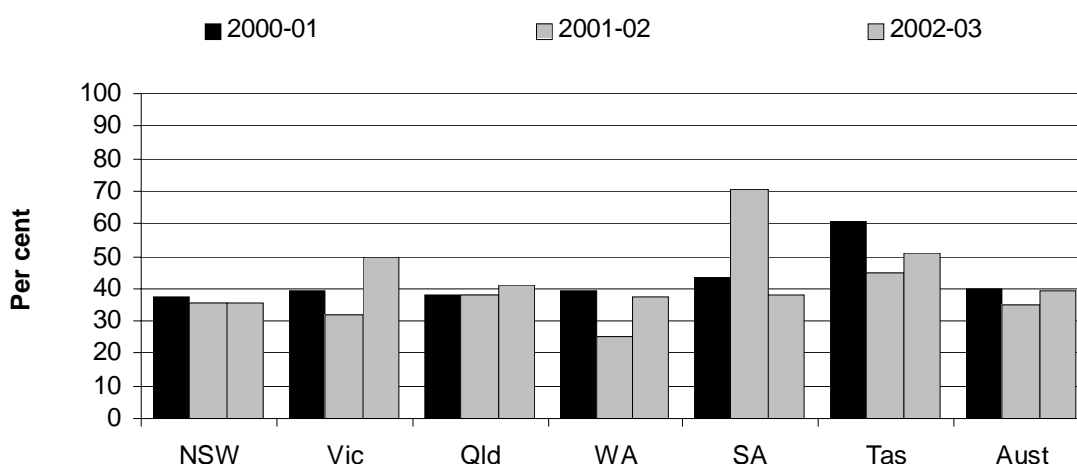
^a Excludes some multiple family and non-rebated households (see table 16A.25 for further details). ^b Data for Victoria for 2002-03 are based on a different method from that used for their previous years and a direct comparison of 2002-03 data with previous years cannot be made. For details of these changes, see table 16A.6. ^c For a more detailed explanation of Queensland data, see table 16A.6. ^d Data for WA and SA are based on a different method from that used for the other data presented and need to be interpreted with caution. For details of these variations, see table 16A.6.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c; 2003d); ROGS 2004, p. 16.53; Table 16A.6.

The second indicator measures the proportion of new tenancies allocated to households with special needs. Special needs households are those that have a household member with a disability or a principal tenant aged 24 years or under, or 50 years or over. The proportion of new tenancies allocated to special needs households in 2002-03 varied from 50.6 per cent in Tasmania to 35.8 per cent in NSW (figure 16.3).

It is not appropriate to use this indicator to compare the performance of public housing and State owned and managed Indigenous housing. The special needs indicator for public housing includes Indigenous households in the definition of special needs households, so using this definition for State owned and managed Indigenous housing would result in 100 per cent of State owned and managed Indigenous housing households being regarded as having special needs. State owned and managed Indigenous housing uses a definition of special needs more appropriate to the program. The definition also differs for 'aged' households: households with a principal tenant aged 50 years or over are considered special needs households for State owned and managed Indigenous housing, while households with a principal tenant aged 75 years or over are considered special needs households for mainstream public and community housing. This difference reflects the lower life expectancy and the higher burden of illness among Indigenous Australians.

Figure 16.3 **New tenancies allocated to households with special needs^{a, b}**



^a Data for 2002-03 for Victoria and SA are based on a different method from that used for previous years and a direct comparison of 2002-03 with previous years cannot be made. For details of these changes, see table 16A.7. ^b For more detailed explanation of Queensland and WA data see table 16A.7.

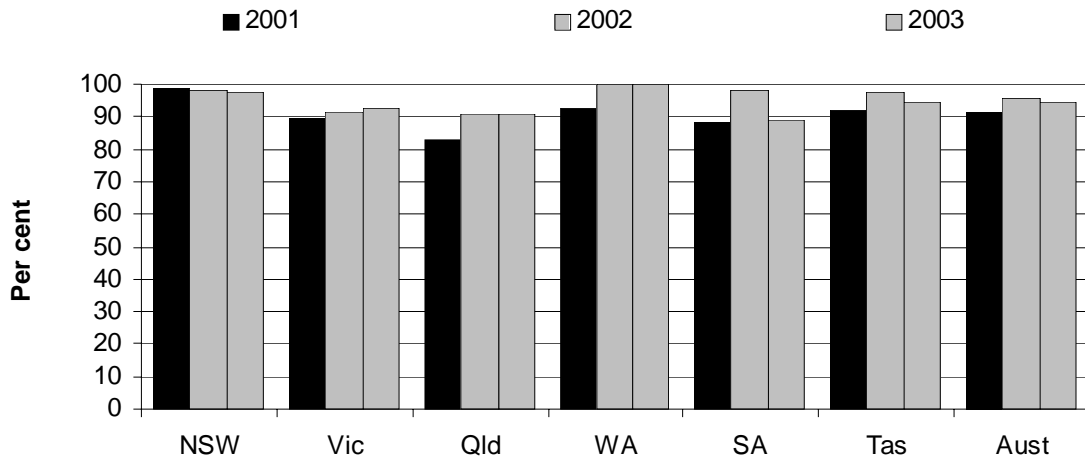
Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); ROGS 2004, p. 16.54; Table 16A.7.

The third indicator is the proportion of all households that pay less than market rent or that are special needs households paying market rent. At 30 June 2003, this proportion ranged from 100.0 per cent in WA to 89.0 per cent in SA (figure 16.4).

Outcomes: Priority access to those in greatest need

This indicator measures the priority of access given to those in greatest need. Greatest need households are defined as low income households that at the time of allocation are homeless, in housing inappropriate to their needs or, in housing that is adversely affecting their health or placing their life and safety at risk, or that have very high rental housing costs.

Figure 16.4 **Households paying less than market rent, or special needs households paying market rent, as a proportion of all State owned and managed Indigenous households^{a, b, c, d}**



^a At 30 June. ^b Data for NSW on special need are available only for households that were housed after November 1999, and direct comparison of 2002-03 with previous years data cannot be made. ^c For a more detailed explanation of Queensland data, see table 16A.8 footnotes and SCRCSSP (2003). ^d SA data for 2003 are based on a different method from that used in previous years, and a direct comparison with previous years cannot be made. For details of these changes see table 16A.8.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); ROGS 2004, p. 16.55; Table 16A.8.

The proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need varied for 2002-03, ranging from 70.7 per cent in SA to 3.5 per cent in Queensland (table 16.5). The relatively low level of priority allocations in Victoria was partly because Indigenous tenants in greatest need are likely to be housed under the State's general public housing program. Table 16.5 shows the proportion of new allocations to applicants with greatest need by time on the waiting list. Data are provided for tenants waiting for under three months to more than two years. These numbers are not cumulative.

It may not be appropriate to compare the performance of public housing and State owned and managed Indigenous housing in relation to priority access to those in greatest need. In some jurisdictions, different priority allocation guidelines may be used to allocate targeted housing. Further, where allocation is made at the community level, reasons for allocation may not be recorded in information management systems.

Table 16.5 **Greatest need allocations as a proportion of all new allocations (per cent)**

	<i>NSW^a</i>	<i>Vic</i>	<i>Qld^b</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas</i>	<i>Aust</i>
Total for year ending 30 June 2003	14.4	21.9	3.5	22.4	70.7	na	23.3
Proportion of greatest need allocations to new allocations, by time to allocation							
< 3 months	33.8	31.5	3.3	35.9	61.4	na	36.7
3 — < 6 months	15.0	35.3	6.5	41.1	94.9	na	35.7
6 months — < 1 year	1.4	18.4	5.7	7.7	95.0	na	19.9
1 — < 2 years	8.9	3.8	2.7	—	65.0	na	8.3
2+ years	0.9	—	—	—	8.3	na	0.8

^a In NSW, annual changes tend to reflect the small sample, rather than changes in performance. ^b Data for Queensland are not comparable with other data presented because those in greatest need are priority A on a waitlist. This is an underestimation of the true greatest need figure because a priority A flag is rarely used in low wait time areas. **na** Not available. — Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); ROGS 2004, p. 16.56; Table 16A.9.

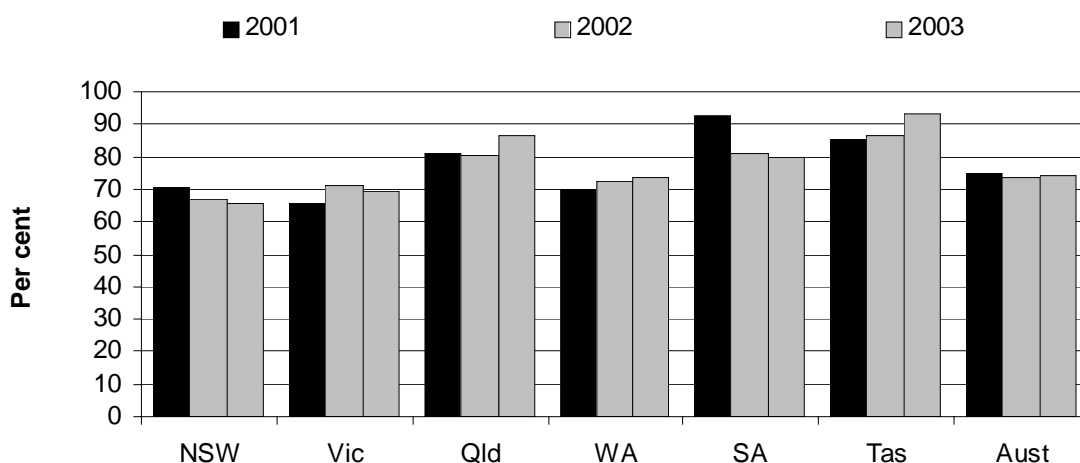
Outcomes: Affordability

Affordability measures the rent charged to tenants as a proportion of the market rent for each dwelling, adjusted for CRA. Variations in the definition of market rent will influence the results for this indicator. For those jurisdictions able to provide data, the rent charged at 30 June 2003 as a proportion of the market rent for each dwelling (adjusted for CRA), ranged from 93.2 per cent in Tasmania to 65.7 per cent in NSW (figure 16.5). More information on the proportion of income paid in rent by State owned and managed Indigenous housing tenants can be found in table 16A.23.

Outcomes: Match of dwelling to household size

The match of rental dwellings to household size is reported for State owned and managed Indigenous housing. Queensland had the highest proportion of overcrowded dwellings at 30 June 2003 (6.7 per cent), while Tasmania had the lowest (0.3 per cent) (figure 16.6).

Figure 16.5 Rent charged as a proportion of market rent, adjusted for CRA^{a, b, c, d}



^a At 30 June. ^b Data for NSW are not comparable over the three years due to changes in the way that households are excluded from the computation. Further 2001 and 2002 figures are based on 2000 rent valuations, while 2003 data are based on 2002 valuations. The data are also affected by a 1 per cent rent increase in each of the three years. ^c For more detailed explanation of WA data, see SCRCSSP (2003). ^d Excludes some multiple family and non-rebated households (see table 16A.25 for further details).

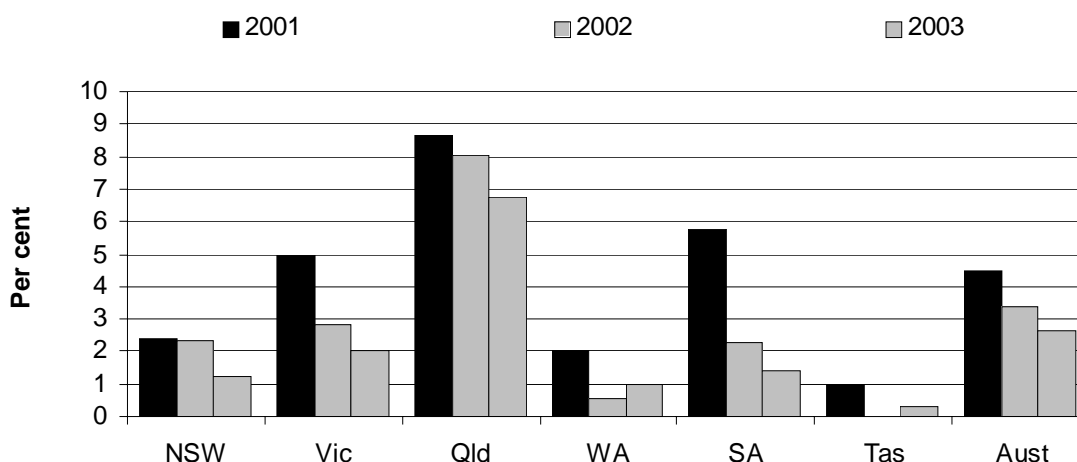
Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); ROGS 2004, p. 16.57; Table 16A.10.

Care needs to be taken in comparing the performance of public housing and State owned and managed Indigenous housing in relation to overcrowding. Two major factors potentially result in a higher incidence of overcrowding in the latter relative to public housing dwellings:

- differences in Indigenous housing arrangements (for example, several generations living in one house, or visitors having 'right of access' in some circumstances) (Pholeros, Rainow and Torzillo 1993)
- the influence of climate and culture (for example, people in rural areas may live outside houses rather than inside, while the proxy occupancy standard does not allow for verandahs or larger shared living spaces) (Pholeros, Rainow and Torzillo 1993).

More information on overcrowding and underuse for State owned and managed Indigenous housing can be found in table 16A.24.

Figure 16.6 Overcrowded dwellings^{a, b, c, d, e, f, g}



^a At 30 June. ^b Data for NSW not comparable over the three years due to changes in the way that households are excluded from the computation. ^c Data for Victoria for 2002-03 and 2001-02 are not comparable to data for 2000-01. ^d For a more detailed explanation of Queensland data, see table 16A.11. ^e For a more detailed explanation of WA data, see SCRCSSP (2003). ^f SA data for 2003 are based on a different method from that used in previous years, and a direct comparison with previous years cannot be made. For details of these variations, see SCRCSSP (2003). ^g Excludes some multiple family and non-rebated households. For further details, see table 16A.25.

Source: AIHW (2002a, 2003c, 2003d); ROGS 2004, p. 16.58; Table 16A.11.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance

Access — income unit type

One measure of access to Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) is the number and proportion of eligible income support recipients receiving the payment. Data are available both by type of income unit and type of payment received. This indicator also provides information on Indigenous recipients.

Important eligibility requirements for CRA (which is paid automatically once eligibility has been established) are the receipt of an income support payment or more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A, and liability to pay rent. There were 940 708 income units (where income units are analogous to family units, except that non-dependent children and other adults living in the same household are treated as separate income units) receiving CRA at 30 June 2003. Of these, 23 546 (approximately 2.5 per cent) self-identified as Indigenous. Single people with no children represented approximately 54.2 per cent of CRA recipients and 42.4 per cent of Indigenous CRA recipients (table 16.6).

For all jurisdictions except the NT, the proportion of income units receiving CRA at 30 June 2003 who identified as Indigenous was virtually identical to Indigenous representation in the overall community. The NT had the highest proportion of self-identified Indigenous people receiving the payment (18.1 per cent), which compared with the Indigenous proportion of the NT population of 29.1 per cent. Victoria had the lowest proportion of self-identifying Indigenous people receiving CRA (0.7 per cent) and the lowest Indigenous population as a proportion of the State population (table 16.7).

Table 16.6 Income units receiving CRA by income unit type, 2003^{a, b}

<i>Income unit type^c</i>	<i>Income units</i>	<i>Proportion of</i>	<i>Indigenous</i>	<i>Proportion of</i>
		<i>CRA recipients</i>	<i>income units</i>	<i>Indigenous CRA recipients</i>
	no.	%	no.	%
Single, no dependent children	362 637	38.5	7 430	31.6
Single, no children, sharer ^d	147 272	15.7	2 555	10.9
Single, 1 or 2 dependent children	184 464	19.6	6 359	27.0
Single, 3 or more dependent children	34 798	3.7	2 055	8.7
Partnered, no dependent children	77 135	8.2	1 023	4.3
Partnered, 1 or 2 dependent children	91 819	9.8	2 328	9.9
Partnered, 3 or more dependent children	37 806	4.0	1 577	6.7
Partnered, illness separated, no dependent children	2 195	0.2	37	0.2
Partnered, temporarily separated, no dependent children	182	–	7	–
Unknown income unit	2 400	0.3	175	0.7
Total	940 708	100.0	23 546	100.0

^a At 30 June. Data are for CRA recipients who were clients of DFACS only. Data exclude those paid rent assistance by, or on behalf of, the DVA or DEST. Components may not sum to 100 per cent as a result of rounding. ^b Income units are analogous to family units except that non-dependent children and other adults are treated as separate income units (see ROGS 2004, p. 16.86, table 16.24 for more detail). ^c A child is regarded as dependent on an adult only if the adult receives Family Tax Benefit for the care of the child. ^d The maximum rate of assistance is lower for some single persons without dependent children who share accommodation (see the definition of sharer in ROGS 2004, p. 16.86, table 16.24). – Nil or rounded to zero.

Source: DFACS (unpublished); ROGS 2004, p. 16.60; Table 16A.16.

Table 16.7 Income units receiving CRA by Indigenous status and geographic location, 2003

	Unit	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust ^a
<i>Non-Indigenous</i>										
Individual recipients	no.	306 227	199 558	227 318	83 841	64 299	22 384	8 128	4 631	916 386
In capital city	no.	168 277	142 687	100 574	65 114	50 719	9 549	8 114	3 646	548 680
In rest of State	no.	137 950	56 871	126 744	18 727	13 580	12 835	14	985	367 706
Share of all recipients	%	97.3	99.2	96.3	97.2	98.3	97.0	98.6	80.7	97.4
Non-Indigenous population, as a proportion of total population ^b	%	98.0	99.4	96.6	96.6	98.3	96.3	98.8	70.9	97.7
<i>Indigenous</i>										
Individual recipients	no.	8 141	1 412	8 709	2 311	1 075	679	112	1 037	23 476
In capital city	no.	2 196	684	2 462	1 315	643	233	112	553	8 198
In rest of State	no.	5 945	728	6 247	996	432	446	–	484	15 278
Share of all recipients	%	2.6	0.7	3.7	2.7	1.6	2.9	1.4	18.1	2.5
Indigenous population, as a proportion of total population ^b	%	2.0	0.6	3.4	3.4	1.7	3.7	1.2	29.1	2.3
Total individual recipients	no.	314 565	201 078	236 120	86 244	65 392	23 087	8 240	5 742	940 708

^a At 30 June. National total includes postcodes that could not be classified. ^b Based on ABS 2001 estimated residential populations. – Nil or rounded to zero. Source: DFACS (unpublished); ROGS 2004, p. 16.61; Table 16A.17.

Access — payment type

Data are also available based on the type of primary payment received by CRA recipients. The highest proportion of CRA recipients (20.6 per cent) at 30 June 2003 were recipients of the Parenting Payment (Single), followed by recipients of the Newstart Allowance (20.5 per cent of CRA recipients). These proportions were higher for Indigenous Australians (32.5 per cent and 32.0 per cent respectively). Only 3.0 per cent of Indigenous CRA recipients received the Age Pension, compared with 16.7 per cent for all Australians (table 16.8).

Table 16.8 Income units receiving CRA, by benefit type, 2003^a

<i>Benefit type</i>	<i>Income units^b</i>	<i>Proportion of CRA recipients</i>	<i>Indigenous income units</i>	<i>Proportion of Indigenous CRA recipients</i>
	no.	%	no.	%
Newstart	192 819	20.5	7 533	32.0
Parenting Payment, Single	193 583	20.6	7 657	32.5
Disability Support Pension	166 163	17.7	3 744	15.9
Age Pension	157 518	16.7	703	3.0
Youth Allowance	88 653	9.4	1 358	5.8
Family Tax Benefit	79 551	8.5	1 435	6.1
Parenting Payment, Partnered	25 347	2.7	601	2.6
Other qualifying payments	37 074	3.9	515	2.2
Total	940 708	100.0	23 546	100.0

^a At 30 June. Data are for CRA recipients who were clients of DFACS only. Data exclude those paid rental assistance by, or on behalf of, the DVA or DEST. Components may not sum to 100 per cent as a result of rounding. ^b Income units are classified as Family Tax Benefit only if neither the person nor partner receives an income support payment. Income units are classified as Parenting Payment Partnered only if a partner does not receive an income support payment.

Source: DFACS (unpublished); ROGS 2004, p. 16.62; Table 16A.18.

Access — special needs

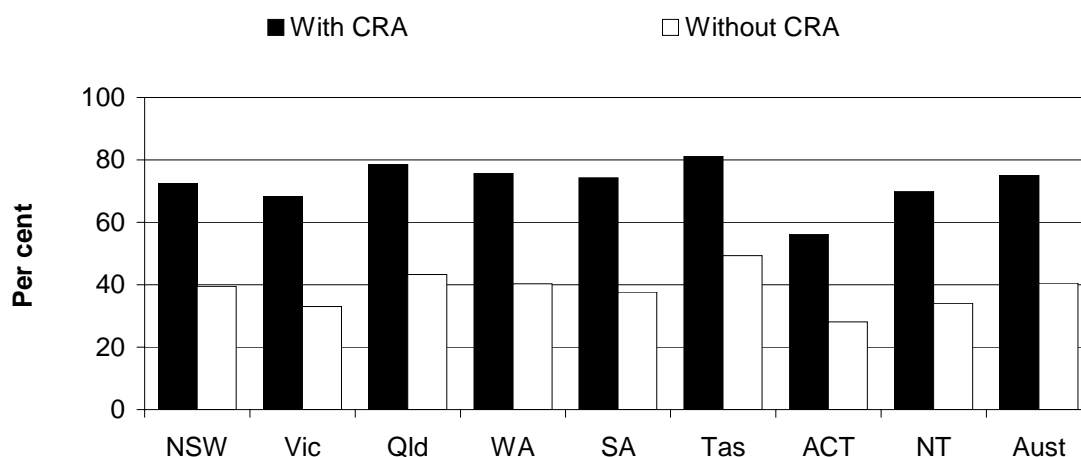
This indicator measures both the access of special needs groups to CRA and the extent to which CRA assists with housing affordability. Overall, approximately 64.4 per cent of CRA recipients were located in major cities, 34.2 per cent were in regional areas (as distinct from remote areas) and 1.3 per cent were in remote areas at June 2003 (table 16A.19). Of Indigenous CRA recipients, approximately 35.7 per cent were located in major cities, 54.9 per cent were in regional areas (as distinct from remote areas) and 9.2 per cent were in remote areas (table 16A.20).

Outcomes — Affordability

This indicator relates to the proportions of recipients spending more than 30 per cent and 50 per cent of their income on rent with and without CRA, by Indigenous and rural and remote status. Nationally, if CRA was not payable, then 31.4 per cent of those income units receiving CRA would have spent less than 30 per cent of income on rent at 29 November 2002. Across jurisdictions, this proportion ranged from 39.8 per cent in Tasmania to 28.4 per cent in the NSW. Accounting for CRA (thereby reducing the rent paid by the amount of the assistance), the national proportion of income units who spent less than 30 per cent of income on rent at 29 November 2002 increases to 66.1 per cent. Across jurisdictions, this proportion ranged from 79.4 per cent in Tasmania to 55.5 per cent in the ACT. Similarly, if CRA was not payable, then 72.6 per cent of income units across Australia would have spent less than 50 per cent of income on rent at 29 November 2002. Accounting for CRA payments, this proportion increases to 91.1 per cent (table 16A.21).

Data are also available on the proportion of income spent on rent with and without CRA by Indigenous Australians, Australians living in rural and remote areas, and Disability Support Pension recipients. Nationally, if CRA was not payable, only 40.5 per cent of those Indigenous income units receiving CRA would have spent less than 30 per cent of income on rent at 29 November 2002. Across jurisdictions, this proportion ranged from 49.3 per cent in Tasmania to 28.1 per cent in the ACT. Accounting for CRA payments (thereby reducing the rent paid by the amount of the assistance), the national proportion of Indigenous income units who spent less than 30 per cent of income on rent at 29 November 2002 increases to 75.1 per cent. Across jurisdictions, this proportion ranged from 81.1 per cent in Tasmania to 56.2 per cent in the ACT (figure 16.7). Similarly, if CRA was not payable, then 79.6 per cent of Indigenous income units across Australia would have spent less than 50 per cent of income on rent at 29 November 2002. Accounting for CRA payments, this proportion increases to 94.6 per cent (table 16A.22).

Figure 16.7 Indigenous CRA recipients paying less than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, 2002^a



^a At 29 November.

Source: DFACS (unpublished); ROGS 2004, p. 16.69; Table 16A.22.

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