# G Housing and homelessness services sector overview

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| Attachment tables |
| Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this sector overview by a ‘GA’ prefix (for example, table GA.1). A full list of attachment tables is provided at the end of this sector overview, and the attachment tables are available on the website at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2016. |
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## G.1 Introduction

This sector overview provides an introduction to the Housing (chapter 17) and Homelessness services (chapter 18) chapters of this Report and provides contextual information along with high level performance information.

This sector overview also includes descriptive data on Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA), which is financial assistance for people who pay rent and receive a Centrelink payment, including for the first time, unpublished CRA data disaggregated by remoteness areas.

### Policy context

Housing and homelessness assistance is an important element of governments’ social policy and welfare frameworks, and plays an important role in enabling social and economic participation. Housing assistance and services to people who are homeless or 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 NSW 2015).

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 homelessness services.)

The National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) provides the framework for the Australian, State and Territory governments to work together to improve housing and homelessness outcomes (box G.1).

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| Box G.1 National Affordable Housing Agreement and related National Partnerships |
| The NAHA commenced on 1 January 2009 as part of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations and was updated in 2012 to include performance benchmarks.  Under the NAHA, governments have committed to undertake reforms in the housing sector to improve integration between homelessness services and mainstream services, and reduce the rate of homelessness. The NAHA outcomes include:   * people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness achieve sustainable housing and social inclusion (supported by the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, due to expire on 30 June 2017) * people are able to rent housing that meets their needs * people can purchase affordable housing * people have access to housing through an efficient and responsive housing market * Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the same housing opportunities (in relation to homelessness services, housing rental, housing purchase and access to housing through an efficient and responsive housing market) as other Australians * Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have improved housing amenity and reduced overcrowding, particularly in remote areas and discrete communities (supported by the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing, due to expire on  30 June 2018). |
| *Source*: COAG Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations (2015). |
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The NAHA is associated with the National Affordable Housing Specific Purpose Payment (NAH SPP), which is an indexed payment to the states and territories to be spent in the housing and homelessness sector.

Governments provide other forms of support for housing and homelessness including: home purchase assistance and private rental assistance. Housing outcomes are influenced by many factors apart from government assistance, and contextual information is available on some of these factors, including housing affordability and private rental markets (Appendix G.7).

### Sector scope

This Report includes detailed information on two specific services: social housing and homelessness services. Social housing is rental housing provided by not‑for‑profit, non‑government or government organisations to assist people who are unable to access suitable accommodation in the private rental market. Social housing broadly encompasses public housing, State owned and managed Indigenous housing (SOMIH), community housing and Indigenous community housing (ICH), and is reported in chapter 17 (box G.2). Homelessness services in this Report encompass government funded specialist homelessness services, and are reported in chapter 18 (box G.3).

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| Box G.2 Scope of social housing |
| Social housing assistance data covers:   * *Public housing*: dwellings owned (or leased) and managed by State and Territory housing authorities, and is generally accessed by people on low incomes and/or those with special needs. * *State owned and managed Indigenous housing (SOMIH)*: dwellings owned and managed by State housing authorities that are allocated only to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households. * *Community housing*: rental housing provided to low‑to‑moderate income and/or special needs households, managed by community‑based organisations that lease properties from government or have received a capital or recurrent subsidy from government (box 17.3 explains the different models of community housing) * *Indigenous community housing (ICH):* dwellings owned or leased and managed by ICH organisations and community councils in all areas. ICH models vary across jurisdictions and can also include dwellings funded or registered by government. ICH organisations include community organisations such as resource agencies and land councils.   Crisis and transitional housing is an additional form of social housing, and might be indirectly reported through the other forms of social housing described above. |
| *Source*: Chapter 17. |
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| Box G.3 Scope of homelessness services |
| Data in this Report are for government funded specialist homelessness services. All clients of specialist homelessness services are either homeless or at risk of homelessness. ‘Homeless’ status is derived for a client based on the client’s housing circumstances at the beginning of their first support period or at the beginning of the reference year. Clients are considered to be homeless if they report having no shelter or are living in an improvised dwelling, short–term accommodation, or a house, townhouse or flat where tenure type is couch surfing or with no tenure. All other clients not meeting these criteria are considered to be at risk of homelessness (excluding clients who did not provide sufficient information to make this assessment). These criteria are aligned with the ABS statistical definition of homelessness where possible. |
| *Source*: Chapter 18. |
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### Profile of the housing and homelessness sector

Detailed profiles for the services within the housing and homelessness services sector are reported in chapters 17 and 18, and cover size and scope of the individual service types, roles and responsibilities of each level of government and for non‑government organisations, along with funding and expenditure.

#### Funding

Most Australian Government funding for housing and homelessness services is provided through the NAH SPP. This funding is outcomes based rather than tied to programs, so it is not possible to identify NAH SPP funding used for specific programs.

The Australian Government provided $1.9 billion in 2014‑15 to State and Territory governments for housing assistance and homelessness services through the NAH SPP and related National Partnership agreements (table GA.1). In addition, the Australian Government provided a further $4.2 billion for CRA in 2014‑15 (table GA.13).

Net recurrent expenditure by housing and homelessness services for the most recent reporting year is outlined in table G.1. Summary data for each jurisdiction are reported in tables GA.3 and GA.4, with further information presented in chapters 17 and 18.

##### This page has changed since an earlier version of the Report. See errata at www.pc.gov.au/research/recurring/report-on‑government-services/2016/housing-and-homelessness#errata.

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| Table G.1 Housing and homelessness services sector, selected descriptive statistics, Australia, 2014‑15**a** |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  |  | Net recurrent expenditureb | Dwellingsc | Households | Clients | |  |  | *$m* | *no.* | *no.* | *no.* | | *Social housing* | |  |  |  |  | |  | Public housing | 2 729.4 | 321 627 | 314 963 | .. | |  | SOMIH | 110.4 | 10 035 | 9 732 | .. | |  | Community housing | 616.1 | 72 105 | 69 171 | .. | |  | ICH (2013‑14) | 109.4 | 15 545 | 12 775 | .. | |  |  |  |  |  |  | | *Homelessness services* | | 707.2 | .. | .. | 255 657 | |
| a See table GA.2 for detailed caveats. b Net recurrent expenditure is for 2013-14 for Community housing and ICH. c For Community housing dwelling is total tenancy rental units at 30 June 2015. For ICH, dwelling is number of permanent dwellings as at 30 June 2014. .. Not applicable. |
| *Source*: Chapters 17 and 18; table GA.2. |
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#### Commonwealth Rent Assistance

CRA helps eligible people meet the cost of rental housing in the private market. It is an Australian Government 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[[1]](#footnote-1).

Australian Government expenditure on CRA was $4.2 billion in 2014‑15, increasing from $3.3 billion in 2010‑11 (in real terms) (table GA.13). The average government expenditure per income unit[[2]](#footnote-2) receiving CRA was $3127 in 2014‑15 (table GA.14).

Nationally in June 2015, there were 1 343 431 income units receiving CRA (table GA.16), with 77.8 per cent of all CRA recipients paying enough rent to be eligible to receive the maximum rate of CRA (an increase from 74.5 per cent in 2011) (table GA.27).

* The median CRA payment in 2015 was $128 per fortnight, with median rent being $415 per fortnight (table GA.26).

##### CRA and rental stress

The CRA program aims to reduce the incidence of rental stress for people on low incomes. Rental stress is defined as more than 30 per cent of household income being spent on rent, and is a separate sector‑wide indicator reported in section G.2. Although CRA is indexed to the Consumer Price Index, ‘rental costs have been increasing faster than the [Consumer Price Index], which means that payments are losing real value for individuals over time’ (Commonwealth of Australia 2014).

Nationally in June 2015, 68.5 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, even with CRA, 41.2 per cent of recipients still spent more than 30 per cent of their income on rent (figure G.1 and table GA.28). (Social housing households in rental stress are reported separately in Chapter 17.)

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| Figure G.1 Proportion of income units receiving CRA with more than 30 per cent of income spent on rent, by special needs group, 2015a |
| |  | | --- | | Figure G.1 Proportion of income units receiving CRA with more than 30 per cent of income spent on rent, by special needs group, 2015  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a See tables GA.24–33 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: Department of Social Services and FaHCSIA (unpublished); table GA.28. |
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Nationally in 2015, the proportion of income units receiving CRA and classified as being in rental stress:

* 57.5 per cent had a member aged 24 years or under
* 32.8 per cent had a member who was an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person
* 31.2 per cent had a member who received the disability support pension
* 25.5 per cent had a member aged 75 years or older (figure G.1).

Tables GA.13–35 present a range of detailed data on CRA, including Australian Government expenditure; additional information on CRA recipients, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recipients andthose with special needs; and previously unpublished CRA data disaggregated by remoteness areas (which shows the proportion of CRA income units in rental stress was higher in capital cities (45.5 per cent) compared to other areas (35.1 per cent)) (table GA.29).

### Social and economic factors affecting demand for services

According to the 2014 General Social Survey, approximately 2.5 million people aged 15 years or over have experienced homelessness at some time in their lives, of whom around 1.4 million had experienced at least one episode in the last 10 years. Amongst this 2.5 million people, in their most recent episode of homelessness 15.0 per cent sought assistance from housing service providers, 7.9 per cent sought crisis accommodation/supported accommodation for the homeless, 7.0 per cent sought a church or community organisation and 6.7 per cent contacted a counselling service (ABS 2015).

Demand for housing and homelessness services is influenced by family and relationship breakdown, a shortage of affordable housing, long‑term unemployment and financial hardship, mental health issues and substance abuse. In 2014‑15, an estimated 36 per cent of specialist homelessness services clients received assistance as a result of experiencing family or domestic violence (AIHW 2015b).

Research shows the pathways to homelessness are varied and complex. 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 pressures can potentially lead to unstable housing and increase the risk of homelessness (Memmott and Chambers 2010; CHP 2005).

Factors affecting the ability to remain in housing or obtain housing are also significant. AIHW analysis of homelessness services data over the 2.5 years to 31 December 2013 found that those clients who were unemployed, had no income or were only receiving income support payments, had a past history of homelessness and/or more complex presenting issues were least likely to remain in their housing or be able to obtain housing. The poorest housing outcomes were seen among those who had problematic drug and alcohol use. This cohort had the highest rates of homelessness at both the start and finish of support compared to other cohorts (AIHW 2014).

Demand for housing assistance and service support 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).

Productivity Commission research on the links between housing assistance and employment, using administrative datasets from the Australian, WA and SA governments (2003 to 2013), found that receiving public housing assistance is unlikely to impact tenants participation in employment, and that it is ‘the characteristics of individuals, and not the characteristics of the housing assistance that they receive that matter to participation’ (PC 2015).

### Service‑sector objectives

The overarching service‑sector objectives in box G.4 draw together the objectives from each of the specific services (described in chapters 17 and 18), as well as reflecting the objectives set out in the NAHA (box G.1).

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| Box G.4 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* *assistance* aims to help people unable to access alternative suitable housing options, through the delivery of affordable, appropriate, flexible and diverse social housing that meets their needs; and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to have improved amenity and reduced overcrowding (chapter 17).  *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 the maximum possible degree of self‑reliance and independence (chapter 18). |
| *Sources*: COAG (2012); Chapters 17 and 18. |
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## G.2 Sector performance indicator framework

This sector overview is based on a sector performance indicator framework (figure G.2). 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.
* 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 17 and 18, the service‑specific frameworks provide comprehensive information on the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of these services.

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| Figure G.2 Housing and homelessness services sector performance indicator framework |
| Figure G.2 Housing and homelessness services sector performance indicator framework  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. |
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This sector overview provides an overview of relevant performance information. Chapters 17 and 18 and their associated attachment tables provide more detailed information.

### Sector‑wide indicators

This section includes high level indicators of housing and homelessness outcomes. While many factors affect outcomes — not solely the performance of government services — outcomes inform the development of appropriate policies and delivery of government services.

Data Quality Information (DQI) is included where available for performance indicators in this Report. The purpose of DQI is to provide structured and consistent information about the quality of data used to report on performance indicators, in addition to material in the chapter or sector overview and attachment tables. All DQI for the 2016 Report can be found at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2016.

#### 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.5).

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| Box G.5 Low income households in rental stress |
| ‘Low income households in rental stress’ is defined as the proportion of low income renter households spending more than 30 per cent of their gross household income on rent.  Low income renter households are defined as those with equivalised disposable household incomes in the bottom 40 per cent. 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 housing outcome indicator ‘affordability’ provides additional information on rental stress (chapter 17). Data include 95 per cent confidence intervals (in the form of error bars in figures). Data reported for these measures are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time * complete for the current reporting period. All required 2013‑14 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2016. |
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Nationally, the proportion of low income renter households in rental stress increased from 35.4 per cent in 2007‑08 to 42.5 per cent in 2013‑14, though this varied across jurisdictions (figure G.3).

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| Figure G.3 Proportion of low income households in rental stressa |
| |  | | --- | | Figure G.3 Proportion of low income households in rental stress  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a See box G.5 and table GA.5 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: ABS (unpublished) Survey of Income and Housing (various years); table GA.5. |
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#### Appropriateness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing

‘Appropriateness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure all Australians have access to affordable, safe, appropriate and sustainable housing (box G.6).

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| Box G.6 Appropriateness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing |
| ‘Appropriateness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing’ is an indicator of the effectiveness and quality of Indigenous housing. Two measures are reported for this indicator.  *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households in social housing living in overcrowded conditions*  Overcrowding is defined and measured using the Canadian National Occupancy Standard under which overcrowding is deemed to have occurred if one or more additional bedrooms are required to meet the standard. The agreed method for determining overcrowding requires the age, sex and relationship status of all tenants within a household to be known, as well as the number of bedrooms within the dwelling. Only households with complete information available are included in the calculation of the indicator.  A low proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households in social housing living in overcrowded conditions is desirable.  (continued next page) |
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| Box G.6 (continued) |
| Data for this indicator are reported for public housing, SOMIH, community housing and ICH.  Data reported for this measure are:   * not comparable across public housing, SOMIH, community housing and ICH * comparable across jurisdiction (subject to caveats) and complete for public housing and SOMIH for the current reporting period (subject to caveats). All required 2014‑15 data are available for all jurisdictions providing the service * not comparable across jurisdictions and are incomplete for: * community housing (all required 2014‑15 data not available for Queensland and the NT) * ICH (all required 2014 data not available for NSW, SA, Tasmania and the NT).   *Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households in social housing living in dwellings of an acceptable standard*  For all housing tenures, acceptable standard is defined as a dwelling with four working facilities (for washing people, for washing clothes/bedding, for storing/preparing food, and sewerage) and not more than two major structural problems.  A high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households in social housing living in dwellings of an acceptable standard is desirable.  Data for this measure include 95 per cent confidence intervals (in the form of error bars in figures). Data reported for this measure are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and complete for the most recent reporting period for public housing, SOMIH, and community housing from the National Social Housing Survey. All required 2014 data available for all jurisdictions * incomplete for community housing for the current reporting period. All required 2014 data are not available for the NT * comparable (subject to caveats) and complete and for ICH for the most current reporting period (2012‑13). These ICH data are not comparable with data for other social housing types.   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 17.  Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2016. |
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##### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households in social housing living in overcrowded conditions

Overcrowding is a significant issue for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households living in overcrowded conditions varied across jurisdictions, and across social housing programs in 2015 (figure G.4).

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| Figure G.4 Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households living in overcrowded conditions, by social housing type, at 30 June 2015**a, b** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure G.4 Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households living in overcrowded conditions, by social housing type, at 30 June 2015  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a See box G.6 and table GA.6 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. b SOMIH is not applicable in Victoria, WA, the ACT, and the NT. Community housing data are not available for Queensland and the NT. |
| *Source*: AIHW (unpublished) National Housing Assistance Data Repository; table GA.6. |
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Data for Indigenous community housing for 2012­13 are presented in table GA.8.

##### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households in social housing living in dwellings of an acceptable standard

Nationally in 2014, the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents lived in dwellings of an acceptable standard (65.9 per cent for public housing; 70.1 per cent for SOMIH and 83.0 per cent for community housing) (figure G.5).

Nationally in 2012‑13, for ICH tenants, 69.2 per cent of all dwellings were reported to be of an acceptable standard (GA.8).

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| Figure G.5 Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households living in dwellings of an acceptable standard**a, b** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure G.5 Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households living in dwellings of an acceptable standard  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a See box G.5 and tables GA.7‑8 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. b There were no ICH respondents in the survey sample for the ACT and community housing data were not available for the NT. SOMIH is not applicable in Victoria, WA, the ACT and the NT. |
| *Source*: ABS (unpublished) National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey 2012‑13, AIHW (unpublished) National Social Housing Survey 2014; tables GA.7‑8. |
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#### 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.7).

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| Box G.7 Australians who are homeless |
| ‘Australians who are homeless’ is defined as the proportion of Australians who are homeless, and is presented as a rate per 10 000 population.  For this indicator, people are defined as homeless when a person does not have suitable accommodation alternatives and their current living arrangement: is in a dwelling that is inadequate; or has no tenure, or if their initial tenure is short and not extendable; or does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations.  Data are reported for six homeless operational groups:   * people who are in improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping out * people in supported accommodation for the homeless * people staying temporarily with other households * people staying in boarding houses * people in other temporary lodging, and * people in ‘severely’ crowded dwellings.   Data for this indicator are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions over time * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2011 data are available for all jurisdictions.   Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2016. |
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Nationally in 2011, approximately 48.9 Australians per 10 000 people in the population were homeless on Census night (figure G.6). Data for the six homeless operational groups are included in table GA.9.

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| Figure G.6 Rate of homelessness, 2011 (per 10 000 population)**a** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure G.6 Rate of homelessness, 2011 (per 10 000 population)  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a See box G.7 and table GA.9 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: ABS (2012) *Census of Population and Housing: Estimating Homelessness*, Cat. no. 2049.0; table GA.9. |
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### Service‑specific performance indicator frameworks

This section summarises information from the performance indicator frameworks for Housing (chapter 17) and Homelessness services (chapter 18).

Each performance indicator framework provides comprehensive information on the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of specific government services.

Additional information is available in each chapter and associated attachment tables to assist the interpretation of these results.

#### Housing

The performance indicator framework for social housing is presented in figure G.7. An overview of the housing performance indicator results are presented in table G.2.

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| Figure G.7 Social housing performance indicator framework |
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| Table G.2 Performance indicator results for housinga, b, c |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | NSW | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | ACT | NT | Aust | | Equity — Access indicators | | | | | | | | | | | Priority access to those in greatest need | | | | | | | | | | | Proportion of new allocations of housing to those in greatest need, 2014‑15 (%) | | | | | | | | | | | Data comparability and completeness vary for this indicator (chapter 17) | | | | | | | | | | | PH | 48.0 | 82.1 | 95.9 | 74.9 | 82.4 | 80.5 | 96.7 | 61.6 | 73.7 | | SOMIH | 12.9 | .. | 96.5 | .. | 91.1 | na | .. | .. | 51.8 | | CH | 72.5 | 84.9 | 85.9 | 79.4 | 83.1 | 51.7 | 97.9 | na | 73.4 | | *Source*: Attachment table 17A.9–11. | | | | | | | | | | | Special needs | | | | | | | | | | | Proportion of new tenancies allocated to households with special needs, 2014‑15 (%) | | | | | | | | | | | Data comparability and completeness vary for this indicator (chapter 17) | | | | | | | | | | | PH | 68.0 | 57.7 | 67.2 | 54.1 | 67.2 | 60.6 | 66.5 | 69.8 | 63.7 | | SOMIH | 55.6 | .. | 51.9 | .. | 50.0 | 63.0 | .. | .. | 53.8 | | CH | 57.7 | 46.7 | 62.6 | 49.4 | 60.5 | 67.5 | 61.5 | na | 55.5 | | *Source*: Attachment table 17A.12–14. | | | | | | | | | | | Equity — Effectiveness indicators | | | | | | | | | | | Dwelling condition | | | | | | | | | | | Proportion of households with at least four working facilities and not more than two major structural problems, 2014 (%) | | | | | | | | | | | Data comparability and completeness vary for this indicator (chapter 17) | | | | | | | | | | | PH | 75.9 | 83.1 | 88.3 | 81.9 | 84.0 | 80.6 | 75.7 | 81.7 | 81.0 | |  | ± 1.3 | ± 3.2 | ± 2.8 | ± 2.9 | ± 3.0 | ± 3.6 | ± 3.8 | ± 3.6 | ± 1.0 | | SOMIH | 65.5 | .. | 80.3 | .. | 61.4 | 75.6 | .. | .. | 70.1 | |  | ± 4.2 |  | ± 3.5 |  | ± 5.7 | ± 9.1 |  |  | ± 2.5 | | CH | 87.9 | 87.7 | 93.8 | 94.4 | 86.4 | 80.5 | 87.6 | na | 89.3 | |  | ± 2.1 | ± 3.5 | ± 2.5 | ± 2.5 | ± 3.7 | ± 4.7 | ± 5.9 |  | ± 1.2 | | *Source*:Attachment tables 17A.15–17. | | | | | | | | | | | Efficiency indicators | | | | | | | | | | | Net recurrent cost per dwelling | | | | | | | | | | | Net recurrent cost per dwelling, 2014‑15 (CH and ICH = 2013‑14) ($) | | | | | | | | | | | Data comparability and completeness vary for this indicator (chapter 17) | | | | | | | | | | | PH | 8 133 | 7 055 | 7 880 | 11 061 | 9 284 | 8 379 | 9 630 | 14 741 | 8 486 | | SOMIH | 9 186 | .. | 13 102 | .. | 12 288 | 7 766 | .. | .. | 10 999 | | CH | 10 380 | 8 788 | 7 261 | 10 046 | 9 600 | na | 6 638 | na | 9 264 | | ICH | 4 052 | 7 792 | 9 544 | 10 353 | na | 3 792 | .. | na | 8 615 | | *Source*:Attachment table 17A.19–23. | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Table G.2 (continued) |
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| Table G.2 (continued) |
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| **PH =** Public Housing. **CH =** Community Housing.  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. c Some percentages reported in this table include 95 per cent confidence intervals.  **na** Not available. .. Not applicable. – Nil or rounded to zero. |
| *Source*: Chapter 17 and Attachment 17A. |
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#### Homelessness services

The performance indicator framework for government funded specialist homelessness services is presented in figure G.8. An overview of the homelessness service performance indicator results are presented in table G.3.

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| Figure G.8 Government funded specialist homelessness services performance indicator framework |
| |  | | --- | | Figure G.8 Government funded specialist homelessness services performance indicator framework  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
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| Table G.3 Performance indicator results for homelessness services**a, b** |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | NSW | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | ACT | NT | Aust | | Equity — Access indicators | | | | | | | | | | | Access of special needs groups — Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people | | | | | | | | | | | Data for this indicator are comparable subject to caveats (chapter 18) | | | | | | | | | | | Representation among clients whose accommodation needs were met, 2014‑15 | | | | | | | | | | | % | 26.6 | 11.9 | 34.1 | 48.5 | 31.3 | 15.2 | 21.0 | 76.2 | 28.1 | | Representation among clients whose need for services other than accommodation were met, 2014‑15 | | | | | | | | | | | % | 22.2 | 5.5 | 28.3 | 22.3 | 19.8 | 13.0 | 11.5 | 67.9 | 15.4 | | Representation in the population, June 2015 | | | | | | | | | | | % | 2.9 | 0.9 | 4.3 | 3.6 | 2.4 | 5.0 | 1.7 | 29.5 | 3.0 | | *Source*: Attachment table 18A.5 and table 18A.8. | | | | | | | | | | | Access of special needs groups — people born in non‑main English‑speaking countries | | | | | | | | | | | Data for this indicator are comparable subject to caveats (chapter 18) | | | | | | | | | | | Representation among clients whose accommodation needs were met, 2014‑15 | | | | | | | | | | | % | 10.5 | 15.2 | 7.6 | 8.8 | 5.9 | 4.2 | 17.2 | 3.3 | 10.5 | | Representation among clients whose need for services other than accommodation were met, 2014‑15 | | | | | | | | | | | % | 7.3 | 12.5 | 6.7 | 10.0 | 5.7 | 4.9 | 17.5 | 2.3 | 9.8 | | Representation in the population, 2011 | | | | | | | | | | | % | 17.9 | 18.9 | 9.2 | 13.7 | 12.3 | 4.9 | 16.3 | 9.5 | 15.1 | | *Source*: Attachment table 18A.6 and table 18A.8. | | | | | | | | | | | Access of special needs groups — people with disability | | | | | | | | | | | Data for this indicator are comparable subject to caveats (chapter 18) | | | | | | | | | | | Representation among clients whose accommodation needs were met, 2014‑15 | | | | | | | | | | | % | 4.1 | 5.8 | 3.0 | 3.9 | 2.7 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 2.8 | 4.1 | | Representation among clients whose need for services other than accommodation were met, 2014‑15 | | | | | | | | | | | % | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 7.0 | 1.8 | 4.2 | 2.7 | 3.3 | 3.0 | | Representation in the population, 2013 | | | | | | | | | | | % | 6.4 | 6.4 | 5.5 | 4.9 | 6.9 | 7.7 | 5.2 | 3.8 | 6.1 | | *Source*: Attachment table 18A.7 and table 18A.8. | | | | | | | | | | | Effectiveness — Access indicators | | | | | | | | | | | Unmet demand for homelessness services | | | | | | | | | | | Data for this indicator are not comparable but are complete (chapter 18) | | | | | | | | | | | Proportion of clients with unmet need for accommodation, 2014‑15 | | | | | | | | | | | % | 22.9 | 31.8 | 27.4 | 16.3 | 19.1 | 19.7 | 33.9 | 9.9 | 25.9 | | *Source*: Attachment table 18A.10. | | | | | | | | | | | Proportion of clients with unmet need for services other than accommodation, 2014‑15 | | | | | | | | | | | % | 1.6 | 2.9 | 0.9 | 0.1 | – | 1.7 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 1.8 | | *Source*: Attachment table 18A.10. | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Table G.3 (continued) |
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| Table G.3 (continued) |
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| a Caveats for these data are available in Chapter 18 and Attachment 18A. Refer to the indicator interpretation boxes in chapter 18 for information to assist with the interpretation of data presented in this table. b Some data are derived from detailed data in Chapter 18 and Attachment 18A. |
| *Source*: Chapter 18 and Attachment 18A. |
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## G.3 Cross‑cutting and interface issues

Australian and international research identifies a strong association between housing, health status, living standards and wellbeing (Thompson and Phibbs 2011; Morris 2010). A lack of adequate and affordable housing contributes to housing stress and homelessness, and is detrimental to people’s physical and mental health. 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). 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).

Pathways through the homelessness, child protection and youth justice sectors have been explored in an analysis of linked client data across the three sectors. The analysis suggests that children and young people who are involved with one of the three areas have an increased risk of being involved in the other two areas. This type of analysis assists government and non‑government agencies to provide more targeted prevention and support services (AIHW 2012). An update to this research using 2011‑12 to 2013‑14 Specialist homelessness services collection data, juvenile justice data, and state child protection data will be released in 2016 by the AIHW. An AIHW data linkage project, matching cohorts in the Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services National Minimum Data set and the Specialist homelessness services collection, will investigate transitions between these two sectors, focusing on comorbidities among the 40 000 clients of both services linked in the two data sets. Coordinating this intervention across a range of human services is important for achieving positive outcomes and in recent decades, governments have increasingly relied on integrated or ‘joined up’ approaches to service provision to address homelessness (Phillips, Head and Jones 2012).

Effective integration initiatives have been explored in an analysis of three case studies to identify the most effective approaches to collaboration and service integration between homelessness and other services. The analysis suggests that the most effective integration initiative will necessarily require a strategy that fits its purpose, goals, available resources and the geographical settings of the individual client. The research also suggests that integration strategies including a mix of policy and service delivery responses are more successful than those that operate solely on one of those levels (Phillips 2013).

### National research developments

The Australian Department of Social Services managed the survey project: Journeys Home: Longitudinal Study of Factors Affecting Housing Stability. The project aimed to improve the understanding of, and policy response to, the diverse social, economic and personal factors relating to homelessness and the risk of becoming homeless. The survey was of around 1600 income support recipients across Australia, in six waves, conducted six months apart, between September 2011 and concluding in May 2015.

The final Journeys Home Research Report (No. 6) in addition to presenting findings for the six waves of the study, examined children’s outcomes, including school attendance, and respondents’ mobile phone and internet use (Bevitt et al 2015). The report identifies risk and protective factors associated with homelessness.

* The current circumstances of people which appear to be a significant factor in homelessness include: recent family breakdowns; health problems; general health and psychological distress; job loss and reliance on welfare payments; risky drinkers; and illicit substance abusers. Homelessness and recent experiences of physical and sexual violence are also closely related.
* Some of the other significant groups being more likely to be homeless are: males; older people (those over 45 years of age); Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; single people; and people who have been incarcerated, whether in juvenile detention, adult prison, or on remand.

## G.4 Future directions in performance reporting

This housing and homelessness sector overview will continue to be developed in future reports, with the Housing and Homelessness services chapters both containing separate sections on future directions in performance reporting.

## G.5 List of attachment tables

Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this service sector overview by a ‘GA’ prefix (for example, table GA.1). Attachment tables are available on the website (www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2016).

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| **Table GA.2** | Housing and homelessness services sector, descriptive statistics, Australia, 2014‑15 |
| **Table GA.3** | Social housing descriptive statistics |
| **Table GA.4** | Homelessness services descriptive statistics, 2014‑15 |
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| **Table GA.9** | Rate of homeless persons per 10 000 of the population, 2011 |
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| **Table GA.17** | Number of income units receiving CRA, by age, 2015 |
| **Table GA.18** | Number of income units with dependent children receiving CRA, 2015 |
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| **Table GA.29** | Number and proportion of income units receiving CRA paying more than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, by geographic location (per cent) |
| **Table GA.30** | Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander income units receiving CRA, paying more than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, by geographic location (per cent) |
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| **Table GA.32** | Proportion of income units receiving CRA aged 24 years or under paying more than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, by geographic location (per cent) |
| **Table GA.33** | Proportion of income units receiving CRA aged 75 years or over paying more than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, by geographic location (per cent) |
| **Table GA.34** | Number and proportion of income units receiving CRA with more than 50 per cent of income spent on rent, with and without CRA, by special needs and geographic location, 2015 (per cent) |
| **Table GA.35** | General Government Final Consumption Expenditure, Chain price Index (GGFCE) |

## G.6 Definitions of key terms

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| **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander household** | A household with at least one resident who has been identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin. Other residents of the household may have been identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, non‑Indigenous, or have Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander status unknown. |
| **Affordability** | Affordability (without CRA) is calculated for all income units receiving CRA by dividing Rent by Total Income from all sources. The CRA entitlement for the reference fortnight in June is included in Total Income from all sources for the calculation of affordability with CRA. |
| **Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA)** | A fortnightly supplement paid to two types of renter in private and community housing: income support recipients (for example, people receiving the Disability Support Pension), and low– and moderate–income families with children receiving more than the base rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A. Payment of CRA continues as long as recipients are eligible for their primary payment and continue to pay rent above the applicable threshold. |
| **Canadian National Occupancy Standard** | A standardised measure of housing utilisation and overcrowding that assesses a household’s bedroom requirements by specifying that:   * there should be no more than two people per bedroom * a household of one unattached individual may reasonably occupy a bed–sit (i.e. have no bedroom) * couples and parents should have a separate bedroom * children less than 5 years of age of different sexes may reasonably share a bedroom * children 5 years or over of different sexes should not share a bedroom * children less than 18 years of age and of the same sex may reasonably share a bedroom * single household members aged 18 years or over should have a separate bedroom. |
| **Dependent child for CRA** | Dependent child has a wider meaning under Social Security and Family Assistance law than is used in this chapter in relation to CRA. In this chapter, a dependent child is one in respect of whom an adult member of the income unit receives Family Tax Benefit (FTB) Part A at more than the base rate. Prior to 1 January 2012, children aged 16 or older attracted the base rate of FTB Part A so are not included in the count of dependent children. From January 2012 children aged 16 to 19 years attending secondary school may now receive more than the base rate of FTB Part A. Figures from June 2013 include 16 to 19 years old who receive more than the base rate of FTB Part A. Some children under 20 years of age attract the base rate of FTB Part A only and may not be eligible to be counted for CRA entitlement. |
| **Income support recipient** | Recipients in receipt of a payment made under social security law. Under the Machinery of Government changes announced on the 18 September 2013 Income Support Payments administered under social security law are now the responsibility of the Department of Social Services. Family Tax Benefit is paid under family assistance law and is not an income support payment. |
| **Income unit** | An income unit may consist of:   * a single person with no dependent children * a sole parent with one or more dependent children * a couple (married, registered or de facto) with no dependent children * a couple (married, registered or de facto) with one or more dependent children.   A non–dependent child living at home, including one who is receiving an income support payment in their own right, is regarded as a separate income unit. Similarly, a group of non–related adults sharing accommodation are counted as separate income units. |
| **Low and moderate incomes** | Individuals and families receive CRA with either an income support payment or FTB Part A. While income support recipients are generally thought of as low income, those receiving FTB Part A can have higher incomes and still be eligible for a part rate of Rent Assistance. For this reason, CRA recipients are not defined as those on low incomes. |
| **Primary payment type** | Each income unit receiving CRA is assigned a primary payment type, based on the payment(s) received by each member. The primary payment is determined using a hierarchy of payment types, with precedence given to pensions, then other social security payments and then the Family Tax Benefit part A. No extra weight is given to the payment type with which CRA is paid. Specifically, the hierarchy for the main payments is:   * Disability Support Pension * Carer Payment * Age Pension * Parenting Payment (Single) * Newstart Allowance * Youth Allowance * Austudy * Parenting Payment (Partnered) * Family Tax Benefit Part A. |
| **Rent** | Amount payable as a condition of occupancy of a person’s home. Rent includes site fees for a caravan, mooring fees and payment for services provided in a retirement village. Rent encompasses not only a formal tenancy agreement, but also informal agreements between family members, including the payment of board or board and lodgings. Where a person pays board and lodgings and cannot separately identify the amount paid for lodgings, two thirds of the payment is deemed to be for rent. |
| **Sharer** | Some single people are subject to a lower maximum (sharer) rate of CRA. The lower rate may apply to a single person (with no dependent children) who shares a major area of accommodation. The lower rate does not apply to those receiving Disability Support Pension or Carer Payment, those in nursing homes or boarding house accommodation, or those paying for both board and lodgings. |
| **Total income from all sources** | Income received by the recipients or partner, excluding income received by a dependent. It includes regular social security payments and any maintenance and other private income taken into account for income testing purposes.  It does not include: one–time payments; arrears payments; advances; Employment or Education Entry Payments; Mobility Allowance; Baby Bonus; Child Care Tax Rebate.  In most cases, private income reflects the person’s current circumstances. Taxable income for a past financial year or an estimate of taxable income for the current financial year is used where the income unit receives more than the minimum rate of the Family Tax Benefit part A but no income support payment. Income received includes Energy Supplement amounts paid with income support payments and Family Tax Benefit from June 2014. |

## G.7 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 formation, 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). Nationally at June 2011, there was an estimated cumulative gap between underlying demand for housing and housing supply, as a proportion of growth in underlying demand, of 2.6 per cent. An estimated 228 000 dwellings were required in Australia to meet growth in demand (NHSC 2012: tables 4.1 and 4.4).

#### 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.8).

The Housing chapter (chapter 17) 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 2015‑16: the housing shortage and housing affordability (ALGA 2015).

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| Box G.8 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 former First Home Owners Boost programs * funding for Indigenous home ownership programs (the Home Ownership Program funded and administered by Indigenous Business Australia * 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 * CRA paid on an ongoing basis to income support and Family Tax Benefit Part A recipients in the private rental market and community housing * funding for provision and management of social (public and community) housing and related reforms through the NAH SPP * 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). |
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##### 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. The number of homes sold that are affordable by low and moderate income households per 1000 low or moderate income households indicates the level of home purchase affordability. Nationally in 2013‑14, 45.0 homes sold were affordable by low and moderate income households per 1000 low or moderate income households (table GA.10).

##### Private rental markets

Rental markets were tight in some capital cities in 2014‑15, with trend median vacancy rates in capital cities ranging between 1.9 per cent (Sydney) and 6.0 per cent (Darwin) (table GA.11).

Capital city median rents in the private market varied across jurisdictions. Data for median rents for three‑bedroom houses and two‑bedroom flats or units in capital cities in the June quarter of 2015 and earlier years are reported in table GA.12.

### Home ownership and government assistance to home buyers

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 2014‑15, 53 062 people received the First Home Owner Scheme grant (table GA.10).

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1. CRA may be payable to people living in SOMIH (in NSW only), community housing or ICH but it is not payable to people renting housing from State or Territory housing authorities (that is, people living in public housing, or SOMIH [other than NSW]), as housing authorities separately subsidise rent for eligible tenants. Further information on the eligibility and payment rates for CRA are presented in table GA.15. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. ‘Income unit’ may consist of: a single person with no dependent children, a sole parent with one or more dependent children, a couple (married, registered or de facto) with no dependent children, a couple (married, registered or de facto) with one or more dependent children. A non–dependent child living at home, including one who is receiving an income support payment in their own right, is regarded as a separate income unit. Similarly, a group of non–related adults sharing accommodation are counted as separate income units. Payment scales for these income units are available in table GA.14. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)