G Housing and homelessness sector overview

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| Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this Indigenous Compendium by an ‘A’ prefix (for example, in this sector overview, table GA.1). As the data are directly sourced from the 2013 Report, the Compendium also notes where the original table, figure or text in the 2013 Report can be found. For example, where the Compendium refers to ‘2013 Report, p. G.1’, this is page 1 of the Housing and homelessness services sector overview of the 2013 Report, and ‘2013 Report,  table GA.1’ is table 1 of attachment GA of the 2013 Report. A list of attachment tables referred to in the Compendium is provided at the end of this chapter, and the full attachment tables are available from the Review website at www.pc.gov.au/gsp. |
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The Housing and homelessness services sector overview (chapter G) in the *Report on Government Services 2013* (2013 Report) reports on the Housing and homelessness services in each Australian state and territory. Data are reported for Indigenous Australians for a subset of the performance indicators reported in that chapter — those data are compiled and presented here.

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

This sector overview also includes descriptive information on Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA).

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

### Indigenous data in the Housing and homelessness sector overview

The Housing and homelessness sector overview in the 2013 Report contains the following information on Indigenous Australians:

1. housing and homelessness services sector, descriptive statistics, 2010-11
2. households living in overcrowded conditions, 2011
3. households living in houses of an acceptable standard, 2012
4. income units receiving CRA, by payment type, special needs and geographic location, 2012
5. proportion of Indigenous income units receiving CRA, paying more than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, by geographic location, 2007 to 2012
6. proportion of Indigenous income units receiving CRA, paying more than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, 2003 to 2012
7. 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, 2012.

### Sector scope

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

Homelessness services in this Report encompass government funded specialist homelessness services, and are reported in chapter 17 (box G.2).

This report focuses on social housing and homelessness services funded under the National Affordable Housing Specific Purpose Payment (NAH SPP) and related National Partnership Agreements (NPAs), and provided through the policy framework of the NAHA and the related NPAs which support it.

Governments provide other forms of support for housing and homelessness, including home purchase assistance and private rental assistance, but these are not considered in detail in this Report.

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

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| Box G.1 Scope of social housing |
| Social housing is rental housing provided by government or non‑government organisations (including not-for-profit) to assist people who are unable to access suitable accommodation in the private rental market (AIHW 2010). The forms of social housing included in this Report are:   * *Public housing* (PH): dwellings owned (or leased) and managed by State and Territory housing authorities to provide affordable rental accommodation. * *State owned and managed Indigenous housing* (SOMIH): dwellings owned and managed by State housing authorities that are allocated only to Indigenous households. * *Community housing* (CH): rental housing provided to low to moderate income or special needs households, managed by community based organisations that have received capital or recurrent subsidy from government. Community housing models vary across jurisdictions, and the housing stock may be owned by a variety of groups, including local government. * *Indigenous community housing* (ICH): dwellings owned or leased and managed by ICH organisations and community councils in major cities, regional areas and remote areas. Indigenous community housing models vary across jurisdictions and can also include dwellings funded or registered by government.   *Crisis and transitional housing* is an additional form of social housing, but it is not separately identified in this Report. Crisis and transitional housing might be indirectly reported through the other forms of social housing described above. Development work is underway to enable better reporting on this form of housing assistance. |
| *Source*: 2012 Report, Chapter 16. |
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| Box G.2 Scope of homelessness services |
| 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.  *Government funded specialist homelessness services* provide assistance to individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.  Data reported in Chapter 17 of this Report are for government funded specialist homelessness services delivered under the NAHA and NPAH. Data for 2010-11 are sourced from the SAAP Client Collection and Demand for Accommodation Collection. Data for 2011-12 are sourced from the Specialist Homelessness Services collection (SHSC), which measures the number of clients and the number and types of services provided to clients.  Definition of homelessness  Definitions of homelessness range from objective measures in which homelessness means having ‘no roof’, to broader, more subjective definitions founded on culturally and historically determined ideas of 'home'.  The ABS definition of homelessness is informed by a broader understanding of homelessness as 'home'lessness, not ‘roof’lessness. Data on homelessness from the 2011, 2006 and 2001 censuses are based on the ABS methodology (ABS 2012a) and a statistical definition of homelessness (ABS 2012b), which were both developed following consultation with the homelessness sector.  Data on homeless people are categorised by the ABS (2012b) according to their living situation. When a person does not have suitable accommodation alternatives they are considered homeless if their current living arrangement either:   * is in a dwelling that is inadequate * has no tenure, or if their initial tenure is short and not extendable * does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations.   The definition has been constructed from a conceptual framework centred around the following elements:   * Adequacy of the dwelling or security of tenure in the dwelling * Control of, and access to space for social relations. |
| *Source*: ABS (2012a); Chapter 17. |
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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 16 and 17, and cover:

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

### Government funding and expenditure

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

In 2011‑12, the Australian Government provided $2.2 billion to State and Territory governments for housing and homelessness services through the NAH SPP and related NPAs covering social housing; homelessness; and Remote Indigenous Housing (table GA.1). In addition, the Australian Government provided a further $3.4 billion for CRA in 2011-12 (2013 Report, table GA.12). The Australian Government provided a further $162 million in 2011-12 for the social housing initiative component of the National Building Economic Stimulus Package to aid the construction of new social housing dwellings, and repairs and maintenance of existing dwellings (table GA.1).

Australian, State and Territory governments’ total expenditure on social housing and homelessness services was $3.1 billion in 2010-11 (table G.1). Other descriptive data for social housing and homelessness services for 2010-11 are presented in table G.1, and data for each jurisdiction are reported in table GA.3 and 2013 Report, table GA.4. Further information, including 2010‑11 and 2011-12 financial data for public housing, SOMIH and homelessness services, is presented in chapters 16 and 17.

Table G.1 Housing and homelessness services sector, selected descriptive statistics, Australia, 2010-11**a**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Net recurrent expenditure | No. units | No. households |
|  |  | *$m* | *Dwellings (‘000)*b | *‘000* |
| *Social housing* | |  |  |  |
|  | Public housing | 2 394.7 | 331 371 | 324 908 |
|  | SOMIH | 92.4 | 9 820 | 9 564 |
|  | Community housing | 501.9 | 59 777 | 54 911 |
|  | Indigenous community housingc | 80.9 | 17 543 | .. |
|  | **Total** | **3069.9** | **418 511** | **389 383** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | *$m* | *Clients (‘000)* |  |
| *Homelessness services*d | | 491.1 | 142.5 | .. |
| **Total** | | **3 561.0** | **..** | **..** |

a Data may not be comparable across jurisdictions or service areas and comparisons could be misleading. Chapters 16 and 17 provide further information. b The total number of dwellings at 30 June. c Data for ICH are likely to be underestimated because complete data were not available for all jurisdictions. The number of ICH dwellings are ‘funded, permanent dwellings’.. d Data for homelessness services are based on the   
2010-11 SAAP data collection. Not applicable.

*Source*: Chapters 16 and 17; table GA.2; 2013 Report, table G.1, p. G.6.

### Commonwealth Rent Assistance

CRA is an Australian Government payment to people on low and moderate incomes who are renting in the private housing market, to assist with the cost of housing. It is a non‑taxable income supplement, paid to income support recipients or people who receive more than the base rate of the Family Tax Benefit Part A, and who rent in the private market. CRA may be payable to people living in SOMIH (in NSW only), community housing or Indigenous community housing but it is not payable to people renting housing from State or Territory housing authorities [that is, people living in public housing, or SOMIH (other than NSW)], as housing authorities separately subsidise rent for eligible tenants.

Tables 2013 Report, GA.12–34 present a range of detailed data on CRA, including Australian Government expenditure; CRA recipients, including Indigenous recipients andthose with special needs; and the amount of rent paid and the proportion of income spent on rent by CRA recipients.

### Social and economic factors affecting demand for services

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

### Service-sector objectives

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

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| Box G.3 Objectives for housing and homelessness services |
| The overarching objective of housing and homelessness services is that all Australians have access to affordable, safe and sustainable housing that contributes to social and economic participation. Further, government services are to be provided in a collaborative, equitable and efficient manner.  The specific objectives of the services that comprise the housing and homelessness services sector are summarised below:   * *Social housing* aims to assist people unable to access alternative suitable housing options, through the delivery of affordable, appropriate, flexible and diverse social housing. Some forms of social housing specifically aim to contribute to Indigenous community wellbeing, by improving housing outcomes for Indigenous people, especially those living in remote communities (chapter 16). * *Government funded specialist homelessness services* aim to provide transitional supported accommodation and a range of related support services, to help people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness to achieve self-reliance and independence (chapter 17). |
| *Source*: COAG (2008), Chapters 16 and 17. |
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### Sector performance indicator framework

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

* Sector objectives — three sector objectives are a précis of the key objectives of housing and homelessness services and reflect the outcomes in the NAHA. (box G.3).
* Sector-wide indicators — three sector-wide indicators relate to the overarching service sector objectives.

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

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| Figure G.1 Housing and homelessness services sector performance indicator framework   More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. |

*Source*: 2013 Report, figure G.1, p. G.10.

### Sector-wide indicators

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

#### Appropriateness of Indigenous housing

‘Appropriateness of Indigenous housing’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to ensure all Australians have access to affordable, safe, appropriate and sustainable housing (box G.4). Governments have a specific interest in improving amenity and reducing overcrowding for Indigenous people, particularly those living in remote and discrete communities (COAG 2008).

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| Box G.4 Appropriateness of Indigenous housing |
| ‘Appropriateness of Indigenous housing’ is an indicator of the effectiveness and quality of Indigenous housing. Two measures are reported:   * proportion of Indigenous households living in overcrowded conditions * proportion of Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard.   Overcrowding is defined and measured using the Canadian National Occupancy Standard (CNOS) under which overcrowding is deemed to have occurred if one or more additional bedrooms are required to meet the standard.  For all housing tenures, acceptable standard is defined as a household 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 low proportion of households living in overcrowded conditions is desirable. A high proportion of Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard is desirable.  Data comparability and completeness vary for this indicator:   * data for overcrowding are neither comparable nor complete * data for housing of acceptable standard are comparable but not complete.   Related information on the appropriateness of social housing is presented for the outcome indicators ‘match of dwelling to household size’ ‘and amenity/location’ in chapter 16.  Data quality information for this indicator is at www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2013. |
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*Indigenous households living in overcrowded conditions*

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

The proportion of Indigenous households living in overcrowded conditions varied across jurisdictions in 2012 (figure G.2).

Figure G.2 Proportion of Indigenous households living in overcrowded conditions, 2012**a, b, c**

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| **Figure G.2 Proportion of Indigenous households living in overcrowded conditions, 2012  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image.** |

a There are no SOMIH data reported for Victoria, WA, the ACT or the NT as the SOMIH program does not exist in these jurisdictions. b Community housing data are not available for NSW, Qld and the NT. c Community housing data for the ACT is nil or rounded to zero.

*Source*: AIHW (unpublished) Public Rental Housing data; AIHW (unpublished) The National Housing Assistance Data Repository 2011-12; AIHW (2011) *Housing Assistance in Australia* 2011, Cat. No. HOU 236, AIHW, Canberra; table GA.6; 2013 Report, figure G.3, p. G.14.

##### Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard

Data for this indicator are sourced from the National Social Housing Survey. Data from the 2012 survey are reported for public housing, SOMIH and community housing. Nationally in 2012, the NSHS found that:

* for public housing, 61.3 per cent of Indigenous households were living in houses of an acceptable standard
* for SOMIH, 61.4 per cent of Indigenous households were living in houses of an acceptable standard
* for community housing, 71.5 per cent of Indigenous households were living in houses of an acceptable standard (figure G.3).

Figure G.3 Proportion of Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard, 2012**a, b, c, d, e**

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| Figure G.3 Proportion of Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard, 2012  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. |

a Error bars represent the 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with each point estimate. b There are no SOMIH data reported for Victoria, WA, the ACT or the NT as the SOMIH program does not exist in these jurisdictions. c Public housing and community housing data are not published for Victoria, WA, SA and the ACT. d Community housing data are not published for Tasmania. e Community housing data are not available for the NT.

*Source*: AIHW (unpublished) *National Social Housing Survey* 2012; table GA.7; 2013 Report, figure G.4, p. G.15.

### Service-specific performance indicator frameworks

Indigenous reporting on service-specific performance indicator frameworks for social housing (chapter 16) and government funded specialist homelessness services ─ SAAP (chapter 17) are in the subsequent chapters of this Compendium.

#### Homelessness services

The performance indicator framework for government funded specialist homelessness services is presented in 2013 Report, figure G.7. This framework provides information on equity, efficiency, and outcomes of homelessness services.

The introduction of the new specialist homelessness services collection (SHSC) from 1 July 2011 has presented an opportunity to review and re-develop the framework of performance indicators and supporting measures for government funded specialist homelessness services.

The key changes from the SAAP-based framework (see Chapter 17) are the consolidation of indicators for special needs groups (Indigenous and NESB) as performance measures under a single indicator ‘access of special needs groups to homelessness services’.

### List of attachment tables

Attachment tables for data within this sector overview are contained in the attachment to the Compendium. These tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by a ‘GA’ prefix (for example, table GA.1 is table 1 in the Housing and homelessness overview attachment). Attachment tables are on the Review website (www.pc.gov.au/gsp).

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| **Table GA.1** | Australian Government nominal expenditure relating to the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) and Nation Building Economic Stimulus Package ($million) |
| **Table GA.2** | Housing and homelessness services sector, descriptive statistics, Australia, 2010-11 |
| **Table GA.3** | Social housing descriptive statistics, 2010-11 |
| **Table GA.6** | Proportion of Indigenous households living in overcrowded conditions |
| **Table GA.7** | Proportion of Indigenous households living in houses of an acceptable standard, 2012 |
| **CRA** | |
| **Table GA.17** | Indigenous income units receiving CRA, 2012 |
| **Table GA.19** | Indigenous CRA recipients, by payment type, 2012 |
| **Table GA.21** | Income units receiving CRA, by special needs and geographic location, 2012 |
| **Table GA.26** | Proportion of Indigenous income units receiving CRA, paying more than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, by geographic location, 2007 to 2012 (per cent) |
| **Table GA.27** | Proportion of Indigenous income units receiving CRA, paying more than 30 per cent of income on rent, with and without CRA, 2003 to 2012 (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, 2012 (per cent) |

**Definitions of key terms and indicators**

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| **Commonwealth Rent Assistance** | |
| **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. |
| **Dependent child** | 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 Part A (FTB (A)) at more than the base rate. Prior to 1 January 2012, children aged 16 or older attracted the base rate of FTB (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 (A). Figures for June 2012 do not include 16 to 19 years olds who receive more than the base rate of FTB (A). Some children aged under 16 years may also attract only the base rate of FTB (A) because of the maintenance income test, the maintenance action test, or because they are overseas. |
| **Income support recipient** | Recipients in receipt of a payment made under social security law. The main income support payments administered by FaHCSIA are Age Pension, Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment, while the main income support payments administered by Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations are Newstart Allowance, Youth Allowance, Austudy, Parenting Payment (Single) and Parenting Payment (Partnered).  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 defacto) with no dependent children * a couple (married, registered or defacto) 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 (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. |
| **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. |
| **Special needs** | Individuals and families with at least one member who either self‑identifies as Indigenous; receives a Disability Support Pension; is aged 24 years or under; or is aged 75 years or over. |
| **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. |

## 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 in 2009, there was an estimated cumulative gap between underlying demand for housing and housing supply, as a proportion of growth in underlying demand, of 14.7 per cent. An estimated 178 400 dwellings were required in Australia to meet growth in demand (NHSC 2012: tables 7.2 and 7.3).

*Housing affordability*

A shortage of affordable housing is likely to affect demand for housing and homelessness services. Governments provide support to ensure people can access affordable rental housing, either in the private market or in social housing, and many governments provide support to those purchasing houses, particularly first home buyers (box G.5).

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| Box G.5 Government assistance for affordable housing |
| A range of government initiatives and programs are designed to help households to pay for housing, and to increase the supply of affordable housing. These initiatives include:   * direct assistance to first home buyers through schemes such as the First Home Owners Grant and the First Home Owners Boost. These schemes are funded by the Australian Government and administered by State and Territory governments * funding for Indigenous home ownership programs (the Home Ownership Program funded and administered by Indigenous Business Australia and the Home Ownership on Indigenous Land Program jointly funded by FaHCSIA and IBA) * stamp duty concessions or exemptions for first home buyers * incentives to save for first home ownership through First Home Saver Accounts * State and Territory Government funding to assist low income households with home purchases or mortgage repayments * Commonwealth Rent Assistance paid on an ongoing basis to income support and family tax benefit recipients in the private rental market and community housing * funding for provision and management of social (public and community) housing and related reforms through the National Affordable Housing Agreement * incentives for institutional investors and community housing providers to build new affordable rental properties * Commonwealth, State and Territory land and planning measures to increase the supply of affordable housing * Housing Affordability Fund grants to improve planning and infrastructure provision. |
| *Source*: Australian, State and Territory Governments (unpublished). |
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