

Community Housing Data Collection, 2014-15; Quality Statement

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Identifying and definitional attributes

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Data quality

Data quality statement summary:

Description

Data are provided annually to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) by jurisdictions and are sourced from Community Housing Organisations (CHOs) via a survey and from the jurisdiction's administrative systems. The annual data collection captures information about CHOs, the dwellings and tenancy rental units they manage, households on the waiting list, and the tenants and households assisted. Limited financial information from the previous financial year is also collected.

Summary

- All states and territories provide the AIHW with community housing data from their administrative systems. The AIHW compiles their data for national reporting in the *Report on Government Services* (RoGS). The data are also published in AIHW reports.
- Additionally, unit record community housing data are collected from CHOs via a survey tool managed by the AIHW. Two jurisdictions (QLD and NT) do not use the AIHW-managed survey.
- National outputs and indicators are calculated using data from only those jurisdictions where complete information was available and valid.

Institutional environment: The AIHW is a major national agency set up by the Australian Government under the [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987](#) to provide reliable, regular and relevant information and statistics on Australia's health and welfare. It is an independent corporate Commonwealth entity established in 1987, governed by a [management Board](#), and accountable to the Australian Parliament through the Health portfolio.

The AIHW aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians through better health and welfare information and statistics. It collects and reports information on a wide range of topics and issues, ranging from health and welfare expenditure, hospitals, disease and injury, and mental health, to ageing, homelessness, disability and child protection.

The Institute also plays a role in developing and maintaining national metadata standards. This work contributes to improving the quality and consistency of national health and welfare statistics. The Institute works closely with governments and non-government organisations to achieve greater adherence to these standards in administrative data collections to promote national consistency and comparability of data and reporting.

One of the main functions of the AIHW is to work with the states and territories to improve the quality of administrative data and, where possible, to compile national data sets based on data sets from each jurisdiction, to analyse these data sets and disseminate information and statistics.

The [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987](#), in conjunction with compliance to the [Privacy Act 1988](#) (Commonwealth of Australia), ensures that the data collections managed by the AIHW are kept securely and under the strictest conditions with respect to privacy and confidentiality.

For further information see the AIHW website www.aihw.gov.au

Timeliness: The AIHW receives, compiles, edits and verifies the data in collaboration with jurisdictions. The finalised data sets are signed off by the jurisdictions and used by the AIHW for reporting and analysis. Data are collected annually. The reference period for this collection is the 2014–15 financial year. The collection is mostly a 30 June 2015 snapshot, but also captures 2014–15 household activity. Limited financial information from the 2013–14 financial year is also collected.

Accessibility: Annual data are reported in [Housing Assistance in Australia 2016](#), which is available publicly on the AIHW website and the [Report on Government Services 2016](#).

Users can request additional disaggregations of data which are not available online or in reports (subject to jurisdiction approval) via the AIHW's online data request system at https://datarequest.aihw.gov.au/_layouts/AdHocDataRequest/LodgeRequest.aspx. Requests that take longer than half an hour to compile are charged on a cost-recovery basis. General enquiries about AIHW publications can be made to the Digital and Media Communications Unit on (02) 6244 1026 or via email to info@aihw.gov.au.

Interpretability: Metadata and definitions relating to this data source can be found in the National Housing and Homelessness Data Dictionary (AIHW Cat no. HOU269) <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail?id=60129543695>.

Supplementary information can be found in the housing collection data manuals available at [/content/index.phtml/itemId/487037](#).

Relevance:

Community housing, for the purpose of this collection, includes all tenancy (rental) units under the management of a community housing organisation (excluding Indigenous community housing organisations). Dwellings are excluded where the tenancy is managed by the State Housing Authority or by a specialist homelessness services agency. Additional jurisdiction-specific inclusions and exclusions also apply. These jurisdiction-specific inclusions and exclusions reflect a number of factors including differences in the definition of community housing across jurisdictional legislation, difficulties in identifying some organisations among those that are not registered or funded by the state/territory housing authority, and some inconsistencies in reporting, such as the inclusion of transitional housing and National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) dwellings owned or managed by CHOs.

The data collected by the jurisdictions conform well in terms of reference period. However, due to the jurisdiction-specific inclusions and exclusions, the data do not conform well in terms of organisation coverage and reporting at a national level.

New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory supply unit record level data. These data include details on individuals, organisations, dwellings and associated tenancies of the organisations that responded to the survey. Queensland and the Northern Territory submit finalised aggregate data, which includes dwelling and organisational level data, but not information on individual tenancies or persons. Queensland provides aggregated household data for most indicators, while the Northern Territory does not provide any household data.

The data are highly relevant for monitoring trends in the number of households assisted in community housing. The data are used for many purposes, including by policy-makers to evaluate both the living conditions of tenants in community housing dwellings, the amount of rent paid by tenants relative to their income, and to assess the efficiency of community housing organisations in providing dwellings.

Accuracy:

The information was sourced via a survey of community housing organisations conducted by state/territory housing authorities and/or from administrative records held by them. Data are incomplete for some jurisdictions due to non-reporting or under-reporting by CHOs. The response rate differs between jurisdictions—as outlined below:

State/Territory	Coverage
New South Wales	Of the 113 community housing organisations, 31 completed the survey tool accounting for 91 per cent of the total dwelling portfolio. This represents a decline from the 98 per cent coverage rate in 2013-14.
Victoria	Of the 99 community housing organisations, 81 completed the survey tool accounting for 99 per cent of the total dwelling portfolio. A 99 per cent coverage rate was also observed in 2013-14.
Queensland	Of the 258 community housing organisations, 96 provided administrative data accounting for 69 per cent of the total dwelling portfolio. This is a slight decline from the coverage rate of 70 per cent in 2013-14.
Western Australia	Of the 32 registered community housing organisations, 25 completed the survey tool accounting for 94 per cent of the total dwelling portfolio, and representing a decline in the coverage rate (97 per cent) from 2013-14.
South Australia	Of the 53 community housing organisations, 53 completed the survey tool accounting for 100 per cent of the total dwelling portfolio. The same coverage rate was observed in 2013-14.
Tasmania	Of the 66 community housing organisations, 50 completed the survey tool accounting for 98 per cent of the total dwelling portfolio. This represents a slight increase in the coverage rate of 97 per cent from 2013-14.

Australian Capital Territory	All of the 5 community housing organisations completed the survey tool accounting for 100 per cent of the total dwelling portfolio. The same coverage rate was observed in 2013-14.
Northern Territory	Only administrative data was provided for all 32 community housing organisations. This is a decline from the 37 community housing organisations that provided administrative data in 2013-14.

There are some accuracy issues with the data collected:

- The community housing organisation and state/territory housing authority administrative systems from which this collection are drawn have inaccuracies to varying degrees including missing data, inconsistent data, out-of-date data and data coding or recording errors.
- Not all organisations capture and report all data items—data may not be collected and reported in a manner consistent with national data definitions.
- For some organisations, some information may be self-identified and not mandatory to report under program eligibility requirements (e.g., Indigenous status and disability information).
- Data for 'tenancy rental units by remoteness' may differ to data for 'total tenancy rental units' due to missing postcode information, inclusion of postcodes belonging to GPO boxes, mismatches between postcode and remoteness concordance files and proportioning of postcodes across remoteness areas (as many postcodes belong to more than one remoteness area).
- There are inconsistencies across jurisdictions in the reporting of National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) properties managed by community housing organisations. Data for these properties was unavailable for New South Wales, Queensland, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory.
- Waitlist data are reported separately for each social housing program. Where jurisdictions have an integrated waitlist (ACT, NSW, NT, QLD, WA), applicants may be counted for each program for which they are applying. In some jurisdictions, CHOs may additionally maintain and allocate housing to households on their own waiting list.

Specific State/Territory issues:

New South Wales

- From 2013-14, NSW have provided unit record data. Data prior to this is therefore not comparable.
- Data quality submissions vary across data providers. Data mismatches between files relating to the same concept are as significant a data quality issue as missing or incomplete data. The jurisdiction is proposing to address this latter issue more stringently from the first quarter of the 2015-16 reporting period onwards.

Queensland

- Non-administrative data is based on the response rate of approximately 70 per cent of tenantable rental units. Where possible, QLD uses administrative data (e.g., new allocations) to reduce reliance on incomplete NGO data.

Western Australia

- Care is advised when reviewing data for overcrowding due to inconsistencies in the data reported.
- Errors have occurred when Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) has been considered as income and used in the calculation of rent. This issue has been compounded when CRA has not been able to be separated from either income or rent charged. Therefore caution should be taken when interpreting data pertaining to rent charged and gross weekly income.

South Australia

- Compared to the previous reporting period, the amount of missing data increased slightly.

Tasmania

- Survey data received from CHOs contained a large number of errors. While substantial data cleaning was undertaken, it is likely that data quality issues still exist and therefore data should be interpreted with caution.
- The dataset also contained a high proportion of 'unknown' data. Any conclusions should thus be drawn with caution.

Australian Capital Territory

- Care is advised when reviewing data for overcrowding due to inconsistencies in the data reported between CHOs.
- Integrated waitlist data are unable to differentiate between new applicants and applicants requesting a transfer.

Coherence:

Data for individual jurisdictions may not be comparable across reporting periods, nor with other social housing sectors due to variability in the state and territory government programs reported in the community housing data collection; coverage and completeness rates; and other data quality issues. Differences between jurisdictions concerning incomplete or missing information, out-of-date information and coding errors can affect the coherence of the outputs

There were changes in the methodology used from 2010–11 for collecting data on community housing waiting lists in all jurisdictions. In May 2009, Housing Ministers agreed to integrate public and community housing waiting lists in all jurisdictions by July 2011. New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, the Australian Capital Territory, and the Northern Territory each have integrated waiting lists. South Australia has a register that integrates multiple community housing waiting lists into a single housing register and Tasmania uses a manual integrated system. In Victoria, community housing organisations may fill some vacancies using the public housing waiting list. Comparisons of waitlist data from years prior to 2010–11 should not be made with data from subsequent years due to the implementation of integrated waitlists with the potential for applicants to be counted in waitlist data across more than one social housing collection.

Coherence over time has also been affected by the following additional changes in methodology:

- Measurements using low income cannot be directly compared with low income figures produced prior to 2013–14 due to a change in methodology.
- Low income cut-offs were again revised for 2014–15 data based on the ABS Survey of Income and Housing results. This led to substantial increases in the number of households considered to be receiving a low income. Care is therefore required when comparing 2014–15 data with previous years.

Specific State/Territory issues:

New South Wales

- The tenancy management of 666 public rental housing dwellings was transferred to the community housing sector with a corresponding impact on the number of households assisted.

Victoria

- The reduction in the number of CH providers was due to two organisations no longer providing CH services and one provider merging with another provider.

Queensland

- From 2013–14, Affordable Housing Program data has been provided. These data were not available in prior collection periods.
- Improvements have been made to the identification of households containing a member identifying as Indigenous, as having a disability and/or from a non-English speaking background.

Western Australia

- Methodological changes have resulted in a better identification of households with Indigenous individuals.

South Australia

- Methodological improvements have resulted in a better identification of households with Indigenous individuals.
- In previous collection periods, the waitlist data reported were based solely on the Community Housing Customer Register. Applicants for National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) properties were registered on a separate waitlist. Since 2012-13, waitlist data have been reported together for applicants for community housing and applicants for affordable housing.
- As affordable housing rent setting policies are based on a discount to the market and not as a proportion of income (the norm for community housing), the inclusion of these data would tend to increase the proportion of income allocated to rent.

Tasmania

- The number of in-scope CH dwellings increased significantly for the second reporting period in a row. This is mainly due to the transition of about 3,500 public rental housing dwellings to the community sector under the Better Housing Futures program during the past two years. Whereas the majority were transferred in the previous reporting period, the third and final tranche of 1,196 dwellings were transferred in July 2014.

Northern Territory

- Changes to stock holdings have altered breakdowns of the total number of tenancy rental units by remoteness.
- A review of portfolios has resulted in better identification of community housing dwellings.

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Relational attributes

Related metadata references:

Supersedes [Community housing data collection 2013-14 Data Quality Statement](#)
[AIHW Data Quality Statements](#), Superseded 31/05/2016

Has been superseded by [Community Housing Data Collection, 2015–16; Quality Statement](#)
[AIHW Data Quality Statements](#), Superseded 22/12/2017