

Public Rental Housing Data Collection, 2015–16; Quality Statement

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Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Data Quality Statement
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Data quality

Data quality statement summary:

Description

All states and territories provide a range of public housing programs and maintain administrative data sets about these programs. Extracts of these data sets are provided annually to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). This collection contains information about public rental housing (PH) dwellings, households assisted and households on the waiting list. Data are provided for the following two reference periods: 2015–16 financial year and point in time at 30 June 2016.

Summary

- The data collected are an administrative by-product of the management of PH programs run by the states and territories and conform well in terms of scope, coverage and reference period.
- The administrative data sets from which this collection is drawn have inaccuracies to varying degrees, including missing data, out-of-date data and data coding or recording errors.
- Care is required when comparing outputs across states and territories. Differences in the data collected and which records are included or excluded from a calculation can affect the coherence of the outputs. Coherence over time has also been affected by changes in methodology (see 'coherence' section for details).

Institutional environment: The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (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 AIHW 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 AIHW 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 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.

The AIHW receives, compiles, edits and verifies the data in collaboration with states and territories. The finalised data sets are signed off by the states and territories and used by the AIHW for reporting and analysis.

Timeliness: The reference period for the Public Housing (PH) collection is based on the financial year (ending 30 June). The specific reference period for these data is 2015–16.

Accessibility: Data are reported in the AIHW's annual [Housing assistance in Australia](#) reports and the Productivity Commission's annual [Report on government services](#).

Users can request additional disaggregation of data which are not available online or in reports (subject to the AIHW's confidentiality policy and state and territory approval) via the AIHW's online data request system at <https://datarequest.aihw.gov.au>. Depending on the nature of the request, requests for access to unpublished data may also incur costs or require approval from the AIHW Ethics Committee.

General enquiries about AIHW publications can be made to the Digital & 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).

Supplementary information can be found in the housing collection data manuals which are available upon request.

Relevance: The data collected are an administrative by-product of the management of public rental housing programs run by the states and territories and conform well in terms of scope, coverage and reference period.

Classifications used for *income*, *greatest need* and *vacancy reason* are not consistent across the states and territories, however, the states and territories map these data to an AIHW standard.

Accuracy:

There are known accuracy issues with the data collected:

- The administrative data sets from which this collection is drawn have inaccuracies to varying degrees including missing data, out-of-date data and data coding or recording errors.
- Not all states and territories capture all data items. For those outputs that are calculated using *gross income*, New South Wales and South Australia use *assessable income* instead. In addition, *disability status* is derived using the receipt of a disability pension as a proxy in some states and territories.
- Information about disability is not reported under eligibility requirements for some programs.
- Indigenous status is self-identified and not reported under eligibility requirements for some programs.
- Most states and territories do not update income information for non-rebated households. Outputs produced that require income information do not include households with missing income and therefore may not be complete.
- Estimates for Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) regions and those produced for the total of the regions may differ due to rounding.
- Waitlist data are reported separately for each social housing program. Where jurisdictions have an integrated waitlist (New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory), applicants may be counted once irrespective of the number of programs for which they are applying.

State- and territory-specific issues:**New South Wales**

- Since a system change in 2010, New South Wales continues to report problems encountered when linking files containing date variables within their system. This may occur when linking 'Dwelling history', 'Household' and 'Waitlist' files. Where date variables contradict between files, they are recorded as missing.
- Data on 'number of Indigenous households at 30 June' are incomplete and unreliable. These data are substituted with estimates from the 2011 census.

Western Australia

- The Housing Authority WA changed core systems during 2014–15 resulting in a number of differences in recording practices and an amalgamation of data from the old and new systems. The 2015–16 reporting period is the first full year in which the new system is the principal data source. Therefore, any comparisons with previous years for Western Australia data should be undertaken with caution.

South Australia

- For the current reporting period, Housing SA did not supply the 'Dwelling history' file which includes the variables necessary for the calculation of turnaround time
- During the 2015–16 reporting period, 1,087 public housing dwellings were transferred to the community sector. This resulted in a 5% decrease in the number of public housing households at 30 June 2016.

Tasmania

- The introduction of the new Housing Assessment Prioritisation System (HAPS) in June 2015 has meant that 'reasons for greatest need' are unavailable.

Northern Territory

- A total of 5,046 remote dwellings are not currently reported in either the Indigenous community housing data collection or the public housing data collection, as at 30 June 2016. The Northern Territory government has advised that they are aiming to report on these dwellings from 2016–17.

Coherence:

Data for individual states and territories may not be comparable to previous years due to changes in systems and processes which have led to differences in the accuracy and completeness of the data over time. Differences between states and territories concerning incomplete or missing information, out-of-date information and coding errors can affect the coherence of the outputs.

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

- Measurements using low income cannot be directly compared with low income figures produced prior to 2009–10 due to a change in methodology. Low income cut-offs were again revised for 2014–15 data based on ABS 2013–14 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 also required when comparing data from 2014–15 onwards with previous years.
- Measurements of overcrowding cannot be directly compared with figures produced prior to 2009–10 due to a change in methodology. Prior to 2009–10, overcrowding was measured using a proxy standard of '2 or more bedrooms are required'. From 2009–10 onwards, overcrowding was measured using the Canadian National Occupancy Standard (CNOS) of '1 or more bedrooms are required'.
- Measurements of underutilisation cannot be directly compared with figures produced prior to 2011–12 due to changes in methodology. Prior to 2009–10, underutilisation was measured using a proxy standard of '2 or more spare bedrooms'. From 2009–10 to 2010–11, underutilisation was measured using the CNOS of '1 or more spare bedrooms'. From 2011–12 onwards, underutilisation was measured using the revised CNOS of '2 or more spare bedrooms'.

State and Territory Government housing authorities' bedroom entitlement policies may differ from the CNOS which is used in dwelling utilisation calculations.

State- and territory-specific issues:

South Australia

- Since 2012–13, Housing SA has been unable to provide the 'Dwelling history' file which includes the variables necessary for the calculation of turnaround time.

Tasmania

- Reasons for 'greatest need' data are unavailable due to the introduction of new systems.

Northern Territory

- Around 5,000 social housing dwellings in the Northern Territory have been excluded from administrative data collections since being transferred from the Indigenous community housing collection to remote public housing between 2008 and 2010. A total of 5,046 remote dwellings are not currently reported as at 30 June 2016. The Northern Territory government has advised that they are aiming to report on these dwellings from 2016–17.

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Relational attributes

Related metadata references:

Supersedes [Public Rental Housing Data Collection, 2014-15; Quality Statement AIHW Data Quality Statements](#), Superseded 06/01/2017

Has been superseded by [Public Rental Housing Data Collection, 2016-17; Quality Statement AIHW Data Quality Statements](#), Superseded 02/01/2019

