

# Private Rent Assistance Collection, 2015-16; Quality Statement

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# Private Rent Assistance Collection, 2015-16; Quality Statement

## Identifying and definitional attributes

<b>Metadata item type:</b>	Data Quality Statement
<b>METEOR identifier:</b>	662639
<b>Registration status:</b>	<a href="#">AIHW Data Quality Statements</a> , Superseded 06/06/2018

## Data quality

### Data quality statement summary:

### Description

All states and territories provide private rental assistance through a number of 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).

The Private Rent Assistance (PRA) programs offered by the states and territories are:

- bond loans (all states and territories)
- rental grants (New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania)
- ongoing rental subsidies (New South Wales)
- relocation expenses (Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory)
- other assistance (South Australia and Tasmania).

Data are provided for PRA received during the 2015–16 financial year.

### Summary

- The data collected are an administrative by-product of the management of PRA programs run by the states and territories and conform well in terms of scope, coverage and reference period.
- Care should be taken when comparing data across states and territories, given differences in the types of PRA programs run and differences in broader state and territory housing systems.
- Care should also be taken when comparing data across time due to changes in the underlying PRA programs and how they are classified.

**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 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 state and territory, 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](http://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 PRA data collection is based on the financial year (ending 30 June). Data are collected and published annually. The specific reference period for these data is 2015–16.

**Accessibility:** Data are reported in the AIHW's annual [Housing assistance in Australia](#) reports.

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](mailto: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 PRA programs administered by the states and territories and conform well in terms of scope, coverage and reference period.

PRA, for the purpose of this collection, relates to the provision of financial assistance to enable households to access and maintain accommodation in the private rental market and includes:

- bond loans
- rental grants
- rental subsidies
- relocation expenses
- other assistance grants.

The collection excludes non-financial assistance, for example, tenancy support services and tenancy guarantees.

**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 and data coding or recording errors.
- Not all states and territories collect data items as per data specifications.
- Care should be taken in interpreting the number of households assisted. Some households received multiple types of private rent assistance. These households are counted for each type of assistance received.
- Information about Indigenous status of the household is not collected for some programs within the PRA collection. Approximately 4% of households recorded in the 2015–16 collection had an unknown Indigenous status.
- Caution is also advised when reviewing Indigenous status of the household. Households receiving more than one type of assistance may report different Indigenous statuses.

*State- and territory-specific issues:*

**New South Wales**

- From 2015–16, Indigenous status of the household is required to be collected from all PRA recipients. This has led to better identification of Indigenous clients.

**Victoria**

- There is one instance of assistance that was provided to an interstate applicant.

**Western Australia**

- A change of database system in 2014–15 to address identification of Indigenous households led to a decrease in counts for Indigenous people. Western Australia commenced correction of this issue in 2015–16.
- This database change also resulted in the discontinuation of data relating to current rent.

**South Australia**

- Weekly rent paid is unavailable for 'other' assistance.
- Prior to 2015–16, the Indigenous status of the main applicant was reported rather than the Indigenous status of the household. Therefore, any comparisons of Indigenous data with previous years for South Australia and other states and territories should be undertaken with caution.

**Australian Capital Territory**

- Households that receive bond loan assistance also receive relocation expenses to assist with relocation, utility costs and other start up housing costs. Currently, the amount for relocation expenses is set at \$100 per household. Bond loan assistance and relocation expenses are recorded separately.

**Coherence:**

Differences in the data collected and which records are included or excluded from a calculation in different states and territories affect the coherence of the output comparisons across states and territories.

Coherence over time has been affected by changes in the methodology. For example, numbers of households assisted by rental grants, subsidies and relief cannot be directly compared with figures produced prior to 2011–12 due to a change in methodology.

Income details (gross weekly household income and principal source of income) are at the time of application with the following exceptions:

- New South Wales—income details are recorded at the time of PRA application and updated in March and September of each year. The most recent record is used for reporting
- Victoria and Queensland—at 30 June.

The weekly rent is at time of application with the following exceptions:

- New South Wales—weekly rent is recorded at the time of PRA application and updated as and when the rent increases. The most recent record is used for reporting
- Queensland—at 30 June.

*State- and territory-specific issues:*

### **New South Wales**

- From 2011–12, hotel/motel assistance is not included in the collection. Prior to 2011–12, hotel/motel assistance was included under rental grants, subsidies and relief. Thus, the number of households assisted through rental grants, subsidies and relief from 2011–12 are not comparable with earlier collections.
- For the years up to and including 2010–11, temporary accommodation was included under 'rental grants, subsidies and relief'. Temporary accommodation was no longer included from 2011–12. Thus, data on the number of households assisted by rental grants, subsidies and relief is not comparable with the data from 2010–11 and earlier reference periods.

### **Victoria**

- For the years up to and including 2012–13, unit record data could not be provided for households assisted under the housing establishment fund. As such, estimates were provided for these households, which were based on funding levels and historical data. From 2013–14, estimates were no longer provided. Thus, care is advised when reviewing data from 2013–14 onwards with that of previous years.

### **Queensland**

- The increase in the number of instances of assistance provided to households with a principal household income source of other allowances for students and the unemployed may be the result of more accurate recording of income types.
- The reduction in the number of households with income source as 'other' is likely to be due to improved recording of income types.

### **Western Australia**

- During the 2014–15 reporting period, systems were changed to allow better data validation to improve data quality of Indigenous status. Prior to 2014–15, there was greater variation in missing data for Indigenous status.
- In 2014–15, Western Australia made improvements to the process through which income-related data was entered and validated. The new process provided an increased selection of income types. This enhanced the accuracy of mapping to national codes.
- The number of households that did not experience rental stress increased in 2014–15 due to changes in market rent. Increased property vacancies resulted in a reduction of market rents. This continued in 2015–16 as Western Australia still has high vacancy rates and resulting lower market rents than in 2013–14.

### **South Australia**

- Prior to 2015–16, Indigenous status of the main applicant was reported rather than the Indigenous status of the household. Therefore, any comparisons with previous years for South Australia and other states and territories should be undertaken with caution.
- From 2011–12, hotel/motel assistance is reported under 'other' assistance. Prior to 2011–12, hotel/motel assistance was included in rental grants, subsidies and relief. Thus, the number of households assisted through 'other' assistance from 2011–12 are not comparable with earlier collections.

### **Australian Capital Territory**

- For the 2014–15 reporting period, gross income details are not known for all households. Household income is assessable income only. Caution should

be exercised when interpreting data for households experiencing housing stress.

- Historically, households with an income of 'wages' were recorded as 'not stated/inadequately described' for income type. In order to improve data quality (and reduce the number of households falling into the 'not stated/inadequately described' category), these particular households were recorded as 'employee cash income' for income type for the 2014–15 reporting period. Therefore, data for income type for 2014–15 and 2013–14 reference periods are not comparable with the data from previous years.

### Northern Territory

- In December 2014, the Northern Territory changed their rental grant program. Instead of providing a 2 week rental grant for approved clients only, an additional 2 week rental subsidy, as part of bond assistance, was provided. Thus, care is advised when reviewing data for 2014–15 with that of previous years.

## Source and reference attributes

**Submitting organisation:** Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

## Relational attributes

**Related metadata references:**

Supersedes [Private Rent Assistance Collection, 2014-15: Quality Statement](#)  
[AIHW Data Quality Statements](#), Superseded 24/05/2017

Has been superseded by [Private Rent Assistance Collection, 2016–17: Quality Statement](#)  
[AIHW Data Quality Statements](#), Superseded 28/03/2019