

Private Rent Assistance Collection, 2017-18; 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 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 2017–18 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.
- The data are published in AIHW reports.
- 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 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) is an independent corporate Commonwealth entity under the [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987 \(AIHW Act\)](#), governed by a [management Board](#), and accountable to the Australian Parliament through the Health portfolio.

The AIHW is a nationally recognised management agency. Its purpose is to create authoritative and accessible information and statistics that inform decisions and improve the health and welfare of all Australians.

The AIHW enables other organisations to improve their policies and services and achieve their goals by making better use of evidence—a fundamental requirement for good decision making. It collects and reports on a wide range of topics and issues, including health and welfare expenditure, hospitals, disease and injury, mental health, 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 datasets based on data from each jurisdiction, to analyse these data sets and disseminate information and statistics.

Compliance with confidentiality requirements in the AIHW Act, Privacy Principles in the [Privacy Act 1988](#) (Cth) and its data governance arrangements ensures that the AIHW is well positioned to release information for public benefit while protecting the identity of individuals and organisations. It also ensures that data providers can be confident that the AIHW will adhere to data supply terms and conditions.

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, analysis and approved ad hoc data requests.

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 2017–18.

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 <http://www.aihw.gov.au/our-services/data-on-request>. 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 directed to info@aihw.gov.au.

Interpretability:

Metadata and definitions relating to this data source can be found in the [Private rent assistance data set specification 2013-](#)

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.

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.
- Information about the Indigenous status of the household is not collected for some programs within the PRA collection. Approximately 6% of households recorded in the 2017–18 collection had an unknown Indigenous status.
- Caution is also advised when reviewing the Indigenous status of the household. Households receiving more than one type of assistance may report different Indigenous statuses.

State- and territory-specific issues:

Western Australia

- Weekly rent charged is not available in Western Australia's reporting system.

South Australia

- All instances of 'other assistance' relate to clients who were assisted with hotel/motel type accommodation. Weekly rent is not available for this type of assistance. A number of gross weekly income details and income types are also not available for this type of assistance. South Australia introduced an online system, where a small number of bond loan and rental grant applications were able to be approved without income details.

Northern Territory

- Weekly rent charged is not available in the Northern Territory's reporting system.

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. Therefore, reported income may be different to the income received at the time of assistance.

Care should be taken when comparing gross weekly household income across states and territories. New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory include CRA in gross weekly income, while Western Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory do not. Therefore, gross weekly household income in some states and territories may be artificially lower than others because of the non-reporting of CRA.

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.
- Western Australia and the Northern Territory do not provide weekly rent.

State- and territory-specific issues:

New South Wales

- 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 are not comparable with the data from 2010–11 and earlier reference periods.
- 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.
- 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

- 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.
- As a result of a system change in 2012–13, caution is advised when comparing gross weekly household income. Although a household may appear to have little or no income, they are most likely receiving appropriate levels of income and these changes may not be reflected accurately in the system.

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.
- The change to the reporting system in 2014–15 also resulted in the discontinuation of data relating to weekly rent charged from 2015–16 onwards.
- 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.

South Australia

- 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.
- 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.

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.
- In 2016–17, there was improved data quality in the identification of Indigenous data.

Data products

Implementation start date: 25/03/2019

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Relational attributes

Related metadata references:

Supersedes [Private Rent Assistance Collection, 2016–17; Quality Statement AIHW Data Quality Statements](#), Superseded 28/03/2019

Has been superseded by [Private Rent Assistance Collection, 2018–19; Quality Statement AIHW Data Quality Statements](#), Superseded 24/02/2021