

## **INQUIRY INTO SOCIAL, PUBLIC AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**Organisation:** Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

**Date received:** 28/02/2014

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Australian Government

Australian Institute of  
Health and Welfare

*Authoritative information and statistics  
to promote better health and wellbeing*

The Director  
Select Committee on Social, Public and Affordable Housing  
NSW Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St  
Sydney NSW 2000

### **Inquiry into social, public and affordable housing**

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the NSW Legislative Council's select committee inquiry into social, public and affordable housing.

The AIHW is a major national agency set up by the Australian Government under the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987* (AIHW Act) to provide reliable, regular and relevant information and statistics on Australia's health and welfare. We are an independent statutory authority established in 1987, governed by a Management Board, and accountable to the Australian Parliament through the Health portfolio.

Our aim is to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians through better health and welfare information and statistics. We collect and report 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 operates under a strict privacy regime which has its basis in section 29 of the AIHW Act. Our record of protecting the security of the data we hold on the health and welfare of Australians is exemplary. The AIHW Board closely monitors the Institute's performance regarding maintenance of the privacy of its data, and has commissioned and endorsed a range of policies and practices relating to data privacy. This includes an independent AIHW Ethics Committee which must approve all new data collections and all data linkage projects. Under principles for the integration (linkage) of Commonwealth data for statistical or research purposes, such work can only be carried out by approved 'integrating authorities' that meet stringent criteria covering project governance, capability, data management, and the protection of privacy and confidentiality. The AIHW is an accredited Commonwealth Integrating Authority.

Housing data are provided to the AIHW by state and territory housing authorities under the National Housing and Homelessness Information Infrastructure Agreement. The AIHW receives, compiles, edits and verifies data in collaboration with jurisdictions, which retain ownership of the data and must approve any jurisdiction-level output before it is released. The finalised data sets are used by the AIHW for collation, reporting (annual performance reporting for the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision's *Report on Government Services* and National Affordability Housing Agreement – NAHA) and our annual *Housing Assistance in Australia* publication.

I wish to draw to the attention of the committee to data available from AIHW that may be of relevance to this inquiry. The AIHW has a number of data collections directly related to social housing. Descriptions of these collections and some of their findings relating to New South Wales are set out below. I have provided links to relevant information on the AIHW website and contact details should the committee have any queries. Some overview data on housing assistance in Australia is provided in [Attachment 1](#). Additional data can be requested from the AIHW should you require it. There may be a cost associated with the provision of additional data.

## Relevant data collections managed by the AIHW

The AIHW manages and is the national repository and data custodian of the following national housing and homelessness collections: public rental housing, community housing, state owned and managed Indigenous housing, Indigenous community housing, private rent assistance, home purchase assistance, specialist homelessness services and the Australian Government housing dataset. Ownership of those collections remains with the relevant jurisdictions. (See [Table A](#) for scope information and relevant data examples from the above-mentioned collections).

**Table A: Collections – scope and examples of relevant data**

Collection name	Scope	Examples of relevant data
Public rental Housing (PH)	<p>Data sets are provided annually by jurisdictions. The data contains information about public rental housing dwellings, households assisted by the PH and households on the waitlists, during the previous financial year and at 30 June. Data are drawn from administrative data held by the jurisdictions.</p> <p>The data collected are an administrative by-product of the management of public rental housing programs run by the jurisdictions.</p>	At 30 June 2012, there were 323,423 households occupying 330,906 public housing dwellings.
State Owned and Managed Indigenous Housing (SOMIH)	<p>Data sets are provided annually by jurisdictions. The data contain information about SOMIH dwellings, households assisted by SOMIH and households on the waitlists, during the previous financial year and at 30 June. Data are drawn from administrative data held by the jurisdictions.</p> <p>The data collected are an administrative by-product of the management of SOMIH programs run by the jurisdictions.</p>	Nationally at 30 June 2012, there were 9,692 households occupying 10,047 dwellings.
Community Housing (CH)	<p>Data are provided annually to the AIHW by jurisdictions and are sourced from community housing organisations using a survey collection tool and from the jurisdictions' administrative systems. The annual data collection captures information about community housing organisations, the dwellings they manage and the tenants assisted. Limited financial information from the previous financial year is also collected.</p> <p>Community housing, for the purpose of this collection, includes all tenancy (rental) units under management of community housing organisations (excluding Indigenous community housing organisations). Additional jurisdiction-specific exclusions and inclusions also apply.</p> <p>The data collected by the jurisdictions conform well in terms of reference period. However, due to the jurisdiction-specific inclusions and exclusions, the data does not conform well in scope and coverage.</p>	At 30 June 2012, 61,033 households were assisted with community housing and there were 61,563 community housing tenancy rental units in Australia.
Indigenous Community Housing (ICH)	<p>Data are provided annually to the AIHW by jurisdictions and are sourced from administrative data and dwelling audits (held by jurisdictions) and survey data from Indigenous Community Housing Organisations (ICHOs). The annual data collection captures information about ICHOs, the dwellings they manage and the households assisted at 30 June. Financial information is for the year ending at 30 June.</p> <p>ICH, for the purpose of this collection, includes all dwellings provided for Indigenous people that are managed by an ICHO. Community organisations such as resource agencies and land councils, which may have a range of functions but are included in the definition of ICHOs, provided that they manage housing for Indigenous people.</p>	

Home Purchase Assistance (HPA)	<p>The data collected are an administrative by-product of the management of HPA programs administered by the jurisdictions and conform well in terms of scope, coverage and reference period.</p> <p>HPA for the purpose of this collection relates to the provision of financial assistance to enable households to improve their access to home ownership.</p>
Private Rental Assistance (PRA)	<p>The data collected are an administrative by-product of the management of PRA programs administered by the jurisdictions and conform well in terms of scope, coverage and reference period.</p> <p>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.</p>
National Social Housing Survey (NSHS)	<p>The data in the NSHS are collected on a biannual basis from tenants housed in three social housing programs—PH, CH and SOMIH.</p> <p>The NSHS provides information on characteristics of tenants, information about their housing, their satisfaction with their housing and information about their household's use of other health and community services.</p> <p>Data were collected for the 2012 survey via postal and online (self-completion) questionnaire from a randomly selected sample of SOMIH, Public Housing (PH) and Community Housing (CH) tenants.</p>
Specialist Homelessness Services national Minimum Dataset (SHS)	<p>The Specialist Homelessness Services National Minimum Data Set (SHS NMDS) aims to provide quality information about people who are either homeless or at risk of homelessness and who are seeking services from specialist homelessness agencies.</p> <p>This collection is intended to obtain information about clients receiving ongoing or short term support as well as people who are seeking assistance but did not receive any services. Data collection includes basic socio-demographic information and the services required by and provided to each client. Details about accompanying children are also recorded. Additionally, information is obtained about the client circumstances before, during and after receiving support.</p>

In collaboration with key government and non-government stakeholders, the AIHW collects and analyses national housing and homelessness assistance data. Not only do we undertake an extensive national reporting program, we also undertake data development and improvement activities and produce various reports on housing assistance and related topics of interest to stakeholders (see [Attachment 2](#)).

## Current reporting from our housing collections

Information and analysis of the housing assistance sector is available from our collections and in yearly publications and includes data for the *Report on Government Services* and NAHA performance indicators as well as other data on housing assistance programs, organisations and recipients in Australia (for example, affordability data such as greatest need data, special need data, stock data, rent and income data, overcrowding and underutilisation data, usually available per program and using demographic variables such as location, age, Indigenous status, disability status, household composition, etc.). For most data items, data is available under the current NAHA agreement but also the previous one (CHSA), which means that analysis of data over time is available and the AIHW can produce time series.

Homelessness information includes data that describes the clients who received specialist homelessness support, the assistance they sought and were provided, and the outcomes achieved for those clients.

## **AIHW's data capability**

### **Data linkage**

In order to gain greater insight from existing data, the AIHW is currently undertaking a pilot data linkage project to link data from selected social housing programs with specialist homelessness services data. The purpose is to describe patterns of service use by people who have been clients of both types of services, and to obtain a greater understanding of the aspects of service provision/client characteristics that lead to successful outcomes for clients. New South Wales and Western Australia are both participating in this project, and have provided additional data about their social housing clients to enable linkage to the homelessness dataset. The project has been approved by the AIHW Ethics Committee, and findings will be available in the second half of 2014.

In 2012 the AIHW completed a project to link child protection, juvenile justice and Supported Accommodation Assistance Program data. The linkage process used the established statistical linkage key variables (letters of family name, date of birth and sex) in addition to other information that was recorded in the datasets (for example, Indigenous status, postcode of last known address). Analysis of the linked data found that: people with involvement in one of the three sectors are more likely to be involved in another of the sectors than the general population; young people with a child protection history enter juvenile justice supervision at a younger age; and, young people (particularly young women), completing a detention sentence are at greater risk of homelessness.

### **Data development and improvement**

There have been many challenges to improving the data for reporting under the NAHA and more broadly on housing assistance and housing affordability. In recent years, the AIHW has worked closely with all state and territory governments and the Commonwealth government, to improve the evidence-base for the housing and homelessness sector through, for example, improvements to agreed national data definitions and the collection of additional data items.

Housing officials have agreed that further work is required to assess the current data and evidence base for housing and homelessness to ensure that governments have the information they need to make policy and service design decisions about housing and homelessness. Better information about the housing and homelessness system will enable more strategic decisions around resource allocation, funding arrangements and government interventions to improve housing outcomes.

The AIHW is working with relevant stakeholders with specific action focusing on possible improvements to community housing scope and coverage, Indigenous community housing data quality and development of standard definitions and classification structures to improve comparisons with other data sources, such as the ABS Census.

### **Other related collections**

A number of other collections managed by the AIHW may be of interest to the committee. These include:

- The Mental Health Establishments National Minimum Data Set includes all specialised mental health services managed or funded by state or territory health authorities. The concept of a specialised mental health service is not dependent on the inclusion of the service within the state or territory mental health budget. Services funded by government from non-mental health specific budgets are considered in-scope for collection if they meet the definition of a specialised mental health service.

- The Disability Services Minimum Dataset facilitates the annual collation of nationally comparable data about National Disability Agreement (NDA)-funded disability services, and to obtain reliable, consistent data with minimal load on the disability services field. Under the NDA, the Disability Administrators in all Australian jurisdictions are responsible for ensuring 'that DS NMDS information will be comparable across all jurisdictions and years'.

A snapshot of data relevant to housing trends, supply and demand and vulnerable/disadvantaged groups who may require a more integrated approach to their housing and broader support needs is provided at Attachment 1.

Should the Committee have any queries about the information I have provided or wish to seek additional data from the AIHW please contact Geoff Neideck, Head of the Housing, Homelessness and Drugs Group, on

Yours sincerely

David Kalisch  
Director  
28<sup>th</sup> February 2014



## Attachment 1: Tables

Table 1 illustrates the trend in public housing and community housing dwellings in NSW. Public housing dwelling numbers are decreasing; community housing dwellings are increasing. This is due in part to the transfer of dwellings from the public housing sector for management by the community housing sector.

**Table 1: Social housing dwellings, NSW, 2003–2012**

Year	Public housing	State owned and managed Indigenous housing	Community housing	Indigenous community housing
2003	125,216	3,986	5,683	n.a
2004	124,735	4,088	6,113	n.a
2005	124,247	4,148	11,811	n.a
2006	123,289	4,147	12,673	4,989
2007	121,872	4,234	14,140	4,457
2008	120,046	4,169	15,119	4,461
2009	118,907	4,169	15,721	4,423
2010	115,686	4,201	18,005	4,460
2011	111,547	4,238	24,089	4,716
2012	112,310	4,478	25,311	4,736
2013	111,216	4,540	26,022	n.a

1. All data drawn from the AIHW data repository, reported via SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2014. *Report on Government Services 2014*. Canberra; Productivity Commission.
2. Caution should be exercised when comparing results over time. Further information about the data in this table can be found at [www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2014](http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2014).

Table 2 illustrates that the excess demand for social housing in NSW remains strong and has overall, grown between 2008 and 2013.

**Table 2: Total applicants on waiting lists, NSW, 2008–2013**

Year	Public housing	State owned and managed Indigenous housing
2008	43,157	1,211
2009	39,502	1,200
2010	52,348	1,613
2011	46,246	1,697
2012	52,986	2,200
2013	57,684	2,404

1. All data drawn from the AIHW data repository, reported via SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2014. *Report on Government Services 2014*. Canberra; Productivity Commission.
2. Caution should be exercised when comparing results over time. Further information about the data in this table can be found at [www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2014](http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2014).

Table 3 illustrates the trend in government expenditure within the public housing sector.

**Table 3: Real government expenditure on public housing 2003-04 to 2012-13 (in 2012-13 dollars)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Net recurrent cost of providing assistance (excluding the cost of capital) per dwelling (including payroll tax)</b>	<b>Cost of providing assistance (including the cost of capital) per dwelling (excluding payroll tax)</b>
2003-04	6,587	31,969
2004-05	6,183	28,889
2005-06	6,394	28,366
2006-07	6,937	28,207
2007-08	6,916	27,547
2008-09	7,261	27,331
2009-10	7,816	29,776
2010-11	7,223	28,888
2011-12	7,550	29,009
2012-13	7,751	30,572

1. All data drawn from the AIHW data repository, reported via SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2014. *Report on Government Services 2014*. Canberra; Productivity Commission.
2. Time series financial data are adjusted to 2012-13 dollars using the General Government Final Consumption Expenditure (GGFCE) chain price deflator
3. Total net recurrent costs in 2009-10 include additional expenditure for repairs and maintenance as part of the Nation Building package and accelerated State funding. Land and buildings data for 2010-11 reflect additional properties through the Nation Building package, offset by transfer of properties to the Aboriginal Housing Office and community housing providers. Plant and equipment data in 2010-11 reflect software and system development. Interest payments for 2010-11 reflect an increase in payments for the Bonnyrigg Public Private Partnership project.



## Attachment 2: List of publications

### AIHW Publications

#### *Main*

- AIHW 2013, Housing assistance in Australia 2013, Cat. No. HOU 271. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2013. Australia's welfare 2013. Australia's welfare no. 11. Cat. no. AUS 174. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2013. National Social Housing Survey: detailed results 2012. Cat. no. HOU 272. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2013. National Social Housing Survey: a summary of national results, 2012. Bulletin no. 117. Cat. no. AUS 172. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW forthcoming. National Social Housing Survey: state and territory results, 2012.
- AIHW 2013. The desire to age in place among older Australians. Bulletin no. 114. Cat. no. AUS 169. Canberra: AIHW.

#### *Other*

- AIHW 2013. Specialist homelessness services: 2012–2013. Cat. no. HOU 27. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2013. Specialist Homelessness Services Collection manual. Cat. no. HOU 268. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2011. People turned away from government-funded specialist homelessness accommodation 2010–11. Cat. no. HOU 260. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2011. Housing and homelessness services: access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Cat. no. HOU 237. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2011. A profile of homelessness for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Cat. no. IHW 43. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2010. Young people and children in social housing. Bulletin series no. 85. Cat. no. AUS 134. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2009. Indigenous housing needs 2009: a multi-measure needs model. Cat. no. HOU 214. Canberra: AIHW.
- AIHW 2008. Labour force participation and employment in public rental housing in Australia. Cat. No. AUS 109. Canberra: AIHW.

#### **Other publications**

- 2013, *National Affordable Housing Agreement: performance report for 2011–12*, <<http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/national-agreements/affordable-housing>> (accessed 17/01/2014).
- SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) 2013, *Report on Government Services 2013*, Productivity Commission, Canberra (accessed 17/01/2014).