

8 INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS

In Queensland, 94 per cent of people answered the census question: 'Is the person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait islander origin?' and 3.5 per cent identified as Indigenous. However, there was no information on the Indigenous status of the homeless young people staying temporarily with friends or relatives, who were not counted in the census. We use census data on homeless people staying with other households (the 'usual address' question) to estimate how many Indigenous young people were missed by the census.

There is a risk of underestimation, because many Indigenous people make sense of the 'usual address' question within a different cultural frame of reference. When Indigenous people leave home to escape domestic violence or other family problems, they often move in with members of their extended family. In these circumstances, it is not culturally appropriate to record 'no usual address' on census night, because 'home' is understood in a different way. This creates underreporting in this category.

8.1 NUMBER OF INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATES PER 10 000, 2001 AND 2006

	2001			2006		
	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Total*	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Total**
Number	22 487	1918	24 569	24 529	2148	26 782
Rate	66	164	70	65	159	69

Source: Census of Population and Housing 2001, 2006; SAAP Client Collection 2001, 2006; National Census of Homeless School Students 2001, 2006.

* Figures were adjusted for missing data on Indigenous status except in 164 cases, where there was inadequate information to make the adjustment..

** Figures were adjusted for missing data on Indigenous status except in 105 cases, where there was inadequate information to make the adjustment.

The research found that there were 2148 homeless Indigenous people in Queensland on census night 2006 (Table 8.1). The rate was 159 per 10 000 of the population compared with a rate of 164 in 2001. The rate of homelessness for non-Indigenous people was 65 per 10 000 in 2006, compared with 66 per 10 000 in 2001. Indigenous people were overrepresented in the homeless population in all states and territories in 2006.

In Brisbane, there were 670 homeless Indigenous people (Table 8.2), including 270 in SAAP, 150 in boarding houses, 145 with other households, and 105 in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough. Thirty-two per cent of homeless Indigenous people (213 persons) were in Inner Brisbane, including 83 people sleeping rough.

8.2 GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS HOMELESS PEOPLE, 2006

	Non-Indigenous		Indigenous	
	N	%	N	%
Brisbane	7284	30	670	31
Far North	2649	11	455	21
Northern	1720	7	218	10
Fitzroy	1753	7	182	9
Mackay	2347	9	152	7
North West	512	2	128	6
Other (7 divisions)	8264	34	343	16
	24 529	100	2148	100

Source: Census of Population and Housing 2006; SAAP Client Collection 2006; National Census of Homeless School Students 2006.

There were five other statistical divisions with over 100 homeless Indigenous people. In Far North, there were 455 homeless Indigenous people including 246 in Cairns and 209 in Far North SD Balance. Northern had 218, including 146 in Townsville. Fitzroy had 182, mainly in Fitzroy SD Balance (101). There were 152 homeless Indigenous people in Mackay and 128 in North West.