

# **Homeless Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in SAAP 2006–07**

**A report from the SAAP National Data Collection**

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare is Australia's national health and welfare statistics and information agency. The Institute's mission is *better information and statistics for better health and wellbeing*.

Please note that as with all statistical reports there is the potential for minor revisions of data in this report over its life. Please refer to the online version at <[www.aihw.gov.au](http://www.aihw.gov.au)>.

# **Homeless Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in SAAP 2006–07**

**A report from the SAAP National Data Collection**

**January 2009**

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare  
Canberra

Cat. no. HOU 190

© Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2009

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced without prior written permission from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Requests and enquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be directed to the Head, Media and Communications Unit, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, GPO Box 570, Canberra ACT 2601.

This is a companion report to *Homeless people in SAAP: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2006–07* (AIHW 2008b). A complete list of the Institute's publications is available from the Institute's website <[www.aihw.gov.au](http://www.aihw.gov.au)>.

ISBN 978 1 74024 879 2

### **Suggested citation**

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2009. Homeless Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in SAAP 2006–07: a report from the SAAP National Data Collection. Cat. no. HOU 190. Canberra: AIHW.

### **Australian Institute of Health and Welfare**

Board Chair

Hon. Peter Collins, AM, QC

Director

Penny Allbon

Any enquiries about or comments on this publication should be directed to:

Manager

SAAP National Data Collection Agency

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

GPO Box 570

Canberra ACT 2601

Phone: (02) 6244 1206

Email: [ndca@aihw.gov.au](mailto:ndca@aihw.gov.au)

Cover image: Joylene Hayes, *Four Springs*, 900 x 1000mm, acrylic on canvas, Irrkerlantye Arts, © artist. Contact: [info@irrkerlantyearts.com](mailto:info@irrkerlantyearts.com).

Published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Printed by Union Offset Printers

# Contents

- Acknowledgements..... vi
- Abbreviations and symbols..... vii
- Summary ..... viii
- 1 Introduction.....1
- 2 Profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in SAAP.....4
- 3 Client groups and main reason for seeking assistance .....14
- 4 Location of SAAP agency attended.....22
- 5 Length of support and accommodation .....29
- 6 Meeting the needs of clients and accompanying children.....37
- 7 Circumstances before and after support.....51
- 8 Case management.....61
- Appendix 1 State and territory supplementary tables .....63
- Appendix 2 Counting rules and glossary .....107
- Appendix 3 SAAP NDC Client Collection form .....117
- References .....125
- List of tables .....126
- List of figures .....130

# Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by staff of the SAAP National Data Collection Agency (NDCA) at the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). The Information Services and Publishing Unit of the AIHW provided assistance in preparing the report for publication.

The SAAP Information Subcommittee provided helpful comments on the draft report.

This report draws together a large amount of statistical material and could not have been produced without the efforts and cooperation of SAAP service providers and clients, who provided service and client information, and of the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) and state and territory funding departments, which provided administrative data.

# Abbreviations and symbols

## Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
CAP	Crisis Accommodation Program
DV	Domestic violence
NDC	National Data Collection
NDCA	National Data Collection Agency
No.	Number
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
Qld	Queensland
SA	South Australia
SAAP	Supported Accommodation Assistance Program
Tas	Tasmania
Vic	Victoria
WA	Western Australia

## Symbols in tables

..	not applicable
—	nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)
n.e.s.	not elsewhere specified

# Summary

This report provides an overview of assistance given to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and their accompanying children by the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) during 2006–07.

## **Demographic profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and accompanying children (Chapter 2)**

During 2006–07, 37,800 Indigenous Australians attended a SAAP agency. Of these, 20,100 (18%) were clients and 17,700 (27%) were accompanying children. A greater proportion of Indigenous clients were female (72%) than for non-Indigenous clients (59%) and Indigenous clients were generally younger than non-Indigenous clients, with a median age of 28 years compared with 30 years.

Indigenous Australians were more likely to have attended a SAAP agency than non-Indigenous Australians. On average 1 in 19 Indigenous Australians became a SAAP client, compared with 1 in 200 non-Indigenous Australians. Indigenous children were also more likely to have accompanied their parent or guardian to a SAAP agency; on average 1 in 13 Indigenous children aged 0–17 years, compared with 1 in 98 non-Indigenous children.

## **Type and location of SAAP agency attended (Chapters 3 and 4)**

In 2006–07, 38% of support periods for Indigenous clients were provided by SAAP agencies primarily targeting women escaping domestic violence, compared with 21% for non-Indigenous clients. Compared with non-Indigenous clients, smaller proportions of support periods for Indigenous clients were provided by agencies primarily targeting single men and those agencies with a general focus.

Indigenous clients generally attended SAAP agencies in more remote locations than non-Indigenous clients. Sixty-four per cent of support periods for Indigenous clients were provided by agencies located outside of Major Cities, compared with just 28% of support periods for non-Indigenous clients.

## **Main reason for seeking assistance (Chapter 3)**

Domestic or family violence was the single main reason for seeking SAAP assistance given in the greatest proportion of support periods (in 29% for Indigenous and 22% for non-Indigenous clients). Note that the higher figure seen here for Indigenous clients was influenced by the greater proportion of support periods provided to Indigenous females.

## **Length of support and accommodation (Chapter 5)**

On average, Indigenous clients had shorter support periods than non-Indigenous clients, with a mean length of 47 days compared with 54 days, and a median length of 7 days compared with 9 days. Indigenous males tended to have longer support periods than Indigenous females.

Just over half (53%) of the closed support periods for Indigenous clients included at least one period of accommodation; higher than the 38% of closed support periods for non-Indigenous clients. Indigenous clients generally had shorter stays in accommodation, with a mean length of accommodation of 32 days compared with 56 days and a median length of 6 days compared with 13 days.

## **Services required and their provision (Chapter 6)**

Housing or accommodation support was the broad type of service most often required for Indigenous clients; recorded in 73% of closed support periods, higher than the 64% recorded for non-Indigenous clients. Basic support and other services were also required in a greater proportion of closed support periods for Indigenous than non-Indigenous clients. Like Indigenous clients, Indigenous accompanying children required accommodation and the basic support types in a greater proportion of their closed accompanying child support periods than non-Indigenous accompanying children.

SAAP agencies were able to provide the majority of services required for both clients and accompanying children, regardless of Indigenous status. Just 4% of the services required for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients remained unmet (neither provided nor referred) at the end of SAAP support, and the corresponding figures were 2% for Indigenous accompanying children and 3% for non-Indigenous accompanying children.

## **Circumstances before and after support (Chapter 7)**

Indigenous clients were most often living in a house or flat before and after support, and reported this type of accommodation a greater proportion of the time when compared with non-Indigenous clients. Indigenous clients were also more likely to have been renting their accommodation from a public or community housing authority than non-Indigenous clients.

Indigenous clients most often reported that they were not in the labour force (before and after roughly three quarters of their closed support periods) and that their main source of income was a government payment. The Parenting Payment was the government payment most often received by Indigenous clients, followed by Newstart Allowance.

Indigenous clients reported living with relatives or friends short term before and after support more often than non-Indigenous clients. Indigenous clients reported living alone before and after a smaller proportion of their support periods than non-Indigenous clients.

The sex of the client influenced what they reported before and after support, and as a greater proportion of Indigenous clients were female, often the overall Indigenous numbers and percentages more closely resembled what was reported by Indigenous females.

## **Case management (Chapter 8)**

Over half (57%) of closed support periods provided to Indigenous clients had a case management plan in place by the end of support, slightly lower than the 61% recorded for non-Indigenous clients. Where a case management plan was put in place for an Indigenous client, at least some of the goals set out in the plan were achieved in 93% of their closed support periods.

