

9 Support from 1996–97 to 2005–06

This chapter presents the number of support periods, clients, accompanying children and accompanying child support periods as well as the participation and valid consent rates over the 10 years of the National Data Collection. However, it is important to note when examining trends over the 10 years of the collection that refined definitions and a new statistical linkage key were introduced in 2005–06. These changes constitute a break in the data series and thus Client Collection data for 2005–06 are not strictly comparable to previous years.

Funding

Total recurrent funding for SAAP in Australia has risen by 59% over the 10 years of the collection, from \$219.8m in 1996–97 to \$348.8m in 2005–06 (Table 9.1). When these figures are adjusted for inflation, in real terms total funding increased by 20%. Looking at year-by-year changes, funding levels in real terms (adjusted for inflation) remained similar between 1996–97 and 1997–98. Funding increased by 4% in 1998–99 and remained relatively level in 1999–2000 before increasing by 7% in real terms in 2000–01, 4% in 2001–02 and 5% in 2002–03. Real funding decreased slightly by 1% in 2003–04, fell again by 1% in 2004–05 before increasing by 2% in 2005–06.

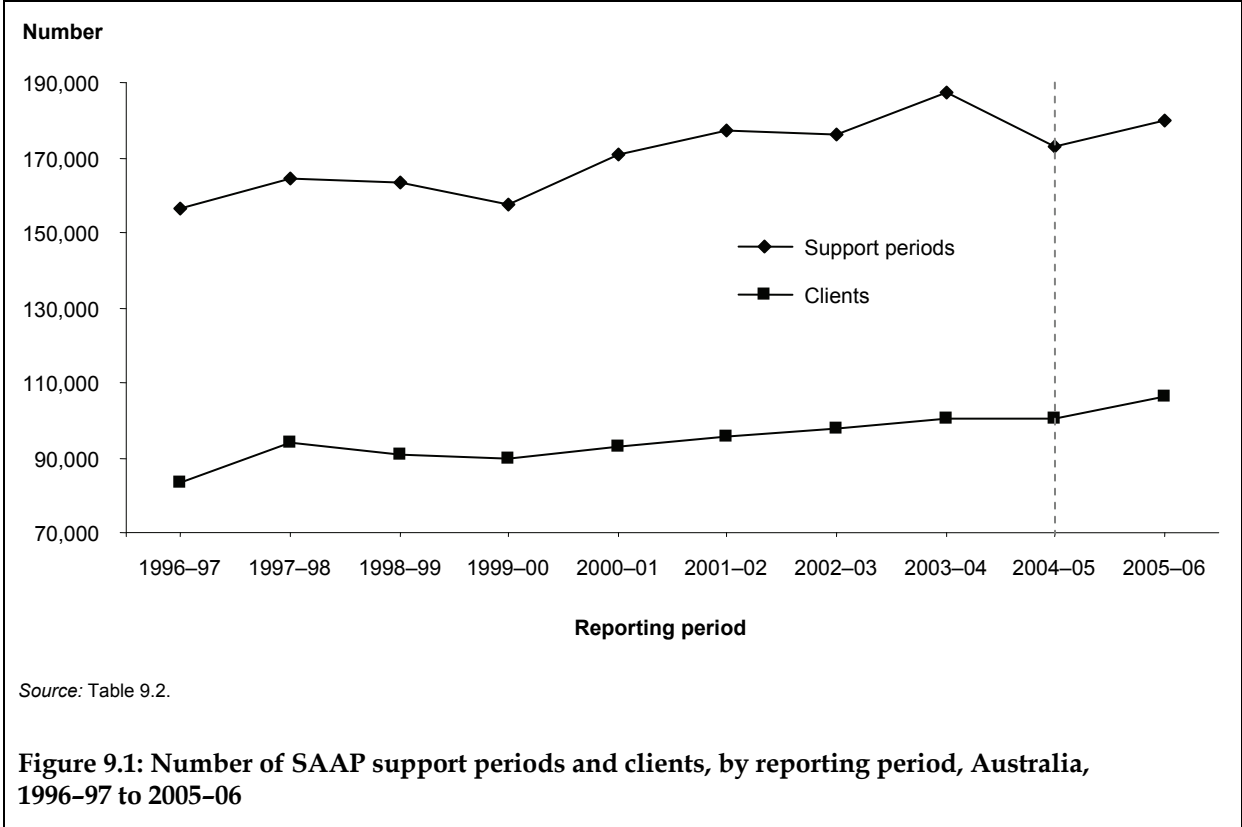
Actual recurrent funding to agencies increased by 66%, from \$200.5m in 1996–97 to \$333.4m in 2005–06. In real terms, this represented an increase of 26% over the 10 years. On a year-by-year basis, funding in real terms increased by 4% in 1997–98, increased again in 1998–99 by 5% before falling by 1% in 1999–2000. Funding increased by 6% in 2000–01, 5% in 2001–02, and 6% in 2002–03 then remained relatively steady in 2003–04 before falling by 1% in 2004–05. In 2005–06, in real terms, funding to agencies increased 1% from that reported in 2004–05.

There seems to be an obvious relationship between funds available to agencies and the amount of support they can provide for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Nevertheless, as Table 9.1 shows, an increase or decrease in funding to agencies does not automatically translate into more or less resources being spent on each support period or client, into more or less clients being supported, or into how often they are supported. The actual funding outcome per client or support period depends on a number of factors, among them the demand for assistance, the types of services that clients need, the ability of agencies to meet those needs, the length of time a client is supported and the costs agencies incur in providing services. For example, while the number of agencies 'in scope' to participate in the Client Collection decreased from 1,225 in 2003–04 to 1,212 in 2004–05 and in real terms recurrent funding to agencies decreased by 1%, funding per support period increased in real terms by 7% (from \$1,780 in 2003–04 to \$1,910 in 2004–05) and funding per client remained relatively steady (at \$3,320 in 2003–04 and \$3,300 in 2004–05) (tables 9.4 and 9.1).

Numbers of support periods and clients

In 1996–97, there were an estimated 156,500 support periods (Table 9.2). This increased to 164,300 in 1997–98 but dropped back over the next 2 years, returning almost to 1996–97 levels in 1999–00 (Figure 9.1). In 2000–01 there was a sharp rise to 170,700 support periods.

The main cause of this increase was the participation of one agency that had not previously participated in the Client Collection – this agency returned a very large number of forms. Although the weighting system adjusts for non-participation (see Appendix 1, Section A1.2), it does not allow for non-participating agencies, such as this one, that are different from other agencies.



The number of support periods increased further in 2001-02 to 177,000. However, a change in reporting practice part way through the 2002-03 financial year by the previously mentioned high-volume agency decreased the number of support periods reported to 176,300. If this agency had reported consistently throughout the year, the total number of support periods in 2002-03 was estimated to be approximately 178,700. This agency reported a full year under its new guidelines in 2003-04, resulting in a substantial decrease from the previous year in the number of support periods reported by this agency.

However, in 2003-04, there was still a sharp increase to 187,200 support periods. This was due to the participation of another large agency in 2003-04 that had not participated in the Client Collection since 1997-98. The decrease in 2004-05 to 173,100 support periods was mainly due to an adjustment to the definition of an ongoing support relationship in 2004-05 in preparation for the introduction of the core data set in July 2005. This change mostly affected agencies that were previously classified as high-volume. These agencies mainly used the high-volume collection form which was discontinued in 2004-05. With the move of all high-volume agencies to the general collection form, agencies with large turnover of clients were instructed to apply an adjusted rule to the definition of an ongoing support relationship. This rule stated that if an ongoing support relationship was established with the client and there was not a gap of more than a month between contacts with that client, then a single support period should be recorded. Note that some manipulation of the

data submitted in 2004–05 by two large agencies using a collection tool that was not able to apply the new definitions was carried out to make them more consistent with the change in the ongoing support relationship definition. These variations highlight the effect on the Client Collection of inconsistencies in the application of the definition of a support period.

In 2005–06, the core data set, including refined definitions and a new statistical linkage key, was introduced. These changes constitute a break in the SAAP NDC data series and thus data for 2005–06 are not strictly comparable to previous years. In addition, the two large agencies that were adjusted for in 2004–05 used a new collection tool that enabled them to record data using the new definition of an ongoing support relationship. For this reason, a decision was made to not adjust the data provided by these agencies, despite them having large numbers of short support periods. This has meant that the number of support periods rose in 2005–06 to 180,000.

As mentioned, in 2005–06 a new statistical linkage key and data definitions were introduced. The new statistical linkage key was aimed at improving both the quality of the data and the ability to anonymously link with other community services data collections. The statistical linkage key is fundamental in estimating the number of clients and for this reason estimates of the number of clients in 2005–06 are not strictly comparable with data from the first 9 years of the Collection. In general, the new statistical linkage key reduces the rate of duplication, meaning that two clients with similar names and the same year of birth are now more likely to be counted as separate clients. For this reason, some increase in the numbers of clients in 2005–06 was expected.

Trends in the number of clients provided with SAAP services showed a pattern similar to that for support periods over the first 9 years of the Collection, although the changes were less pronounced in the last 5 years (Figure 9.1). In 1996–97 an estimated 83,200 clients were provided with support; the figure rose to 94,100 in 1997–98 and then fell to 90,000 in 1999–00. In 2000–01 the number of clients increased again to 93,000 and has continued to increase each year since then. The highest number of clients of any of the 9 years was recorded in 2004–05, with 100,400 clients provided with SAAP services. In 2005–06, the number of clients was 106,500.

State and territory

The pattern of support over the first 9 years of the Collection varied across jurisdictions and did not necessarily replicate the national pattern for either support periods or clients (Table 9.2). For example, although it accounted for the greatest number of support periods for the first 2 years of the collection, New South Wales showed a decrease in the number of support periods provided between 1996–97 and 1997–98. Note, however, that the relatively high number of support periods recorded in New South Wales for 1996–97 was largely the result of the collection’s reporting practices for people placed by police for 8 hours with SAAP agencies because of intoxication. Between 1998–99 and 2001–02, New South Wales showed continuing decreases in the number of support periods, which stayed the same in 2001–02 and 2002–03 (47,900). The number then increased to 48,600 in 2003–04 and decreased to 41,300 in 2004–05. New South Wales had 40,900 support periods in 2005–06.

Victoria has shown continued increases in the number of support periods provided each year since 1999–00. In 2002–03, the number of support periods in Victoria exceeded the number in New South Wales for the first time. In 2003–04, Victoria reported a substantial increase in the number of support periods, from 48,800 in 2002–03 to 67,200. This jump was due mainly to the previously mentioned participation of an agency with a very high turnover of clients that had not participated in the collection since 1997–98. This agency

submitted around 16,000 forms, all of same-day duration, and had a relatively high level of repeat usage by clients. In 2004–05, two large agencies submitted in excess of 26,100 forms, again all of same-day duration. These forms were combined to be more consistent with the definition of an ongoing support relationship applied to agencies with a high turn-over of clients in 2004–05. That is, separate support periods for the same client that occurred less than one month apart were combined to form a single support period. This reduced the total number of forms for these two agencies to around 12,000. In 2005–06, these two agencies again submitted large numbers of forms with same day duration and a relatively high level of repeat usage, however, because these agencies were now using a tool that enabled them to record data according to the new definitions, no adjustment was made. This meant that the number of support periods in Victoria increased sharply to 71,800.

Queensland showed increases over the period 1998–99 to 2001–02, with a very large increase in 2000–01 – from 26,100 support periods in 1999–00 to 38,700 the next year. This jump was due mainly to the participation of a very high-volume agency for the first time in that year. However, the number of support periods decreased from 41,400 in 2001–02 to 36,900 in 2002–03, then to 28,400 in 2003–04 and then further to 26,300 in 2004–05. This decrease is partly attributable to the same agency which, as already mentioned, changed its reporting practices during 2002–03 and submitted a full year of data with these amended reporting practices for the first time in 2003–04. The decrease in 2004–05 is likely again due to the change in reporting practices for previously high-volume agencies. Queensland had 25,400 support periods in 2005–06.

The number of support periods reported in Western Australia increased from 12,400 in 1998–99 to 15,200 in 2000–01, falling to 14,700 in 2001–02, before rising slightly to 14,900 in 2002–03. However, the number of support periods then dropped to 13,800 in 2003–04. The reasons for this decrease are unclear. A possible contributing factor is that although the number of Western Australian agencies that submitted data increased in 2003–04, the participation rate in this state decreased by around four percentage points from the previous year (see Table 9.8 in the Western Australian supplementary report). The number of support periods in Western Australia rose in 2004–05 to 14,500. Western Australia reported 12,700 support periods in 2005–06.

In general terms, the number of clients receiving support over time reflected the pattern observed for support periods within each jurisdiction. However, there were some variations. For example, although agencies in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory reported an increase in the number of support periods from 2002–03 to 2003–04, there was a decrease in the number of clients. The number of clients in New South Wales decreased from 25,400 in 2002–03 to 25,000 in 2003–04. Likewise, the number of clients in the Australian Capital Territory decreased from 1,800 in 2002–03 to 1,700 in 2003–04. Similarly, although South Australia reported an increase in the number of support periods from 14,700 in 2003–04 to 15,600 in 2004–05, this state reported a slight decrease in the number of clients from 9,700 to 9,600. Conversely, although the number of support periods in Tasmania remained constant at 6,600 in 2002–03 and 2003–04 and then decreased in 2004–05 to 6,400, the number of clients increased from 4,300 in 2002–03 to 4,500 in 2003–04 and again to 4,600 in 2004–05. Furthermore, support periods in Queensland increased by 48% between 1999–00 and 2000–01, but client numbers increased by only 12%, reflecting that clients of the newly reporting high-volume agency tended to access the service repeatedly during the year. The same can be said for Victoria in 2003–04, where support periods increased from the numbers reported in 2002–03 by 38% and clients by only 14%.

Daily support and nightly accommodation

Table 9.2 also shows the daily average number of support periods and nightly average support periods with accommodation. The average number of support periods active on any day of a reporting year gradually increased from 15,500 in 1997–98 to 21,900 in 2002–03 despite the actual daily number of support periods fluctuating during that period. Likewise, although there was an increase in the number of support periods in 2003–04, the number of support periods active each day decreased slightly. These variations can be partly explained by variations in the length of support periods between the years – in addition to the total number of support periods active in a reporting year, the length of support periods may also influence the daily average number of support periods. For example, the larger increase in the average daily number of support periods between 2000–01 and 2001–02 may be explained by the significant increase in support periods between the years (6,300) as well as the increase in the mean length of support (from 40 to 44 days) (see AIHW 2006a:Table 9.7). The higher mean length of support in 2001–02 indicates that it is likely there were more long support periods in that year than in 2000–01. Conversely, the decrease in the daily average number of support periods in 2003–04 is likely to be due to the high number of single-day support periods reported in 2003–04, with the mean length of support dropping from 46 days in 2002–03 to 44 days in 2003–04. The average daily number of support periods increased to 23,700 in 2004–05 along with an increase in the average length of support to 53 days. The decrease in 2005–06 to 23,000, despite the increase in the total number of support periods overall, is partly due to the decrease in the average length of support to 48 days. This decrease is largely a result of the non-adjustment of support periods for the two previously mentioned large agencies.

The nightly average number of support periods with accommodation fluctuated between 1996–97 and 1998–99 before increasing from 7,000 in 1999–2000 to 8,700 in 2004–05. The nightly average number of support periods with accommodation decreased to 8,200 in 2005–06 (note, though, that due to the previously mentioned changes this is not strictly comparable to previous years). Note that there can be more than one accommodation period within a support period. Therefore, the length of an accommodation period can be the same as, or shorter than, the associated support period. This contributes to the smaller nightly average number of support periods with accommodation compared with the daily average number of support periods, along with the fact that many SAAP clients require non-accommodation support services only or request accommodation but are provided with support only.

Numbers of accompanying child support periods and accompanying children

Before 2000–01 only limited data were collected on accompanying children. In 2001–02, the Client Collection was changed so that more information could be reported. Until that time, reliable estimates of the number of children accompanying clients to SAAP agencies were not available. However, an updated version of the computer-based collection tool, SMART, was not released until December 2000, resulting in agencies who used this tool not being able to report information until January 2001. For this reason, the first full year of collection reported in this section is 2001–02.

In 2000–01, 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04, the data items that enabled the number of accompanying children associated with accompanying child support periods to be estimated were not collected on the high-volume form (see the relevant report for an example of this form e.g. AIHW 2005a). For these years, estimates of accompanying children are reported only for the children accompanying a parent(s) or guardian(s) to a SAAP agency that used

the general client form. The high-volume form was phased out in 2004–05 and that was the first year for which complete data were available for accompanying children. Note also that in 2005–06, the definitions of an accompanying child and an accompanying child support period were adjusted as well as a new statistical linkage key introduced, so these data are not strictly comparable to previous years.

Nationally, the number of accompanying child support periods increased from 73,300 in 2001–02 to 75,800 in 2002–03 before falling back to 73,200 in 2003–04 and then increasing to 78,500 in 2004–05 (Table 9.3). In 2005–06, there were 81,700 accompanying child support periods.

Although not directly comparable because estimates of the number of accompanying children exclude high-volume records for the first 3 reportable years and in 2005–06 adjusted definitions and a new statistical linkage key were introduced, the number of accompanying children followed a similar pattern, rising from 50,800 in 2001–02 to 53,800 in 2002–03 before falling back to 52,700 in 2003–04. In 2004–05 there were 56,800 accompanying children and in 2005–06 there were 54,700. The reasons for this decrease are likely to be partly related to the changes in the definitions and statistical linkage key.

Note that, although responses to the accompanying children section of the client form have generally improved since 2001–02, they are still not completed on all forms where the presenting unit indicated that the client presented with an accompanying child(ren).

State and territory

There are large variations between the states and territories in terms of the number of accompanying child support periods and accompanying children. The variations between the states and territories most likely reflect differences in the service structures and demographic profile of the various jurisdictions. On a state and territory level, Victoria reported the highest number of accompanying child support periods across all 5 years. The number increased from 23,900 in 2001–02 to 29,700 in 2004–05 and in 2005–06, Victoria reported 29,400 accompanying child support periods (Table 9.3).

Victoria also reported the highest number of accompanying children across the 5 years, increasing from 18,300 in 2001–02 to 19,900 in 2002–03 before falling slightly to 19,700 in 2003–04 and rising to 20,400 in 2004–05. In 2005–06, Victoria reported 18,500 accompanying children.

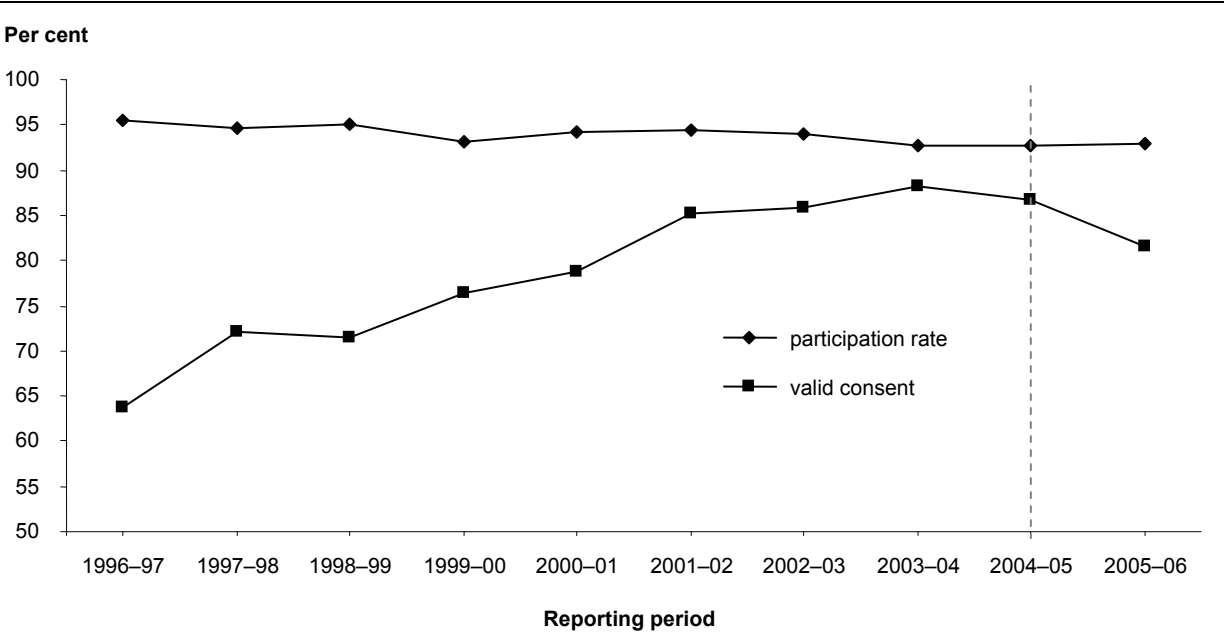
Daily support and nightly accommodation

The dates of support and accommodation are not recorded for accompanying children. However, it has been assumed that accompanying children will have the same periods of support and accommodation as their parent(s) or guardian(s). The average number of accompanying child support periods active on any day increased from 12,300 in 2001–02 to 13,600 in 2002–03 before falling to 12,600 in 2003–04, and rising to 13,900 in 2004–05. In 2005–06 there was an average of 14,600 accompanying child support periods active on any day. The nightly average number of accompanying child support periods with accommodation periods rose from 4,800 in 2001–02 to 5,100 in 2002–03, remained steady in 2003–04 and increased to 5,700 in 2004–05. In 2005–06, there were 5,600 nightly average accompanying child support periods with accommodation.

Agency participation rates and consent

The number of agencies required to participate in the Client Collection generally increased between 1996-97 and 2001-02 (Table 9.4). The number of agencies fell to 1,202 in 2002-03 from 1,211 the previous year as a result of agencies being merged in some jurisdictions. The number of agencies rose again in 2003-04 to 1,225 before falling back to 1,212 in 2004-05 and then increasing to 1,219 in 2005-05.

The agency participation rate remained fairly constant over the 10 reporting years, ranging from 93% to 95% (Figure 9.2). The number of forms returned with valid consent has increased significantly since the inception of the National Data Collection, from 64% in 1996-97 to peak at 88% in 2003-04 before falling slightly to 87% in 2004-05. In 2005-06, a new statistical linkage key was introduced and the definition of 'valid consent' adjusted to reflect this. The decrease to 82% in 2005-06 can be partly explained by this, which includes the requirement to have a valid date of birth rather than just a valid year of birth (see Glossary and AIHW 2006a:Glossary).



Source: Table 9.4.

Figure 9.2: Agency participation rate and valid consent, by reporting period, Australia, 1996-97 to 2005-06

9.1 Tables

Table 9.1: SAAP funding to agencies and mean funding per support period and client: current and constant 2005–06 dollars, by reporting period, Australia, 1996–97 to 2005–06

Reporting period	Total recurrent funding ^(a)	Funding to agencies ^(a)	Funding per support period ^(b)	Funding per client ^(b)
Current \$				
1996–97	219,771,000	200,539,000	1,280	2,410
1997–98	223,661,000	212,768,000	1,300	2,260
1998–99	229,889,000	220,328,000	1,350	2,430
1999–00	245,511,000	231,717,000	1,470	2,570
2000–01	268,537,000	251,367,000	1,470	2,700
2001–02	285,039,000	268,960,000	1,520	2,810
2002–03	310,359,000	296,635,000	1,680	3,040
2003–04	321,413,000	308,749,000	1,650	3,080
2004–05	331,802,000	319,778,000	1,850	3,190
2005–06	348,836,000	333,432,000	1,850	3,130
Constant 2005–06 \$				
1996–97	289,987,000	264,611,000	1,690	3,180
1997–98	288,232,000	274,193,000	1,670	2,910
1998–99	299,569,000	287,110,000	1,760	3,170
1999–00	299,815,000	282,970,000	1,800	3,140
2000–01	321,570,000	301,009,000	1,760	3,240
2001–02	333,712,000	314,887,000	1,780	3,290
2002–03	349,696,000	334,232,000	1,900	3,430
2003–04	346,875,000	333,207,000	1,780	3,320
2004–05	343,594,000	331,142,000	1,910	3,300
2005–06	348,836,000	333,432,000	1,850	3,130

(a) 'Total recurrent funding' and 'Funding to agencies' for 1999–00, 2000–01 and 2001–02 includes relatively small amounts provided through the Partnerships Against Domestic Violence Program (AIHW 2000b:Table 2.1; AIHW 2002a:Table 2.1; AIHW 2002b:Table 2.1). Total recurrent funding' and 'Funding to agencies' for 2003–04, 2004–05 and 2005–06 includes state-only recurrent allocations which are in addition to the SAAP agreement between each of those jurisdictions and the Australian Government (see Table 2.1; AIHW 2005a:Table 2.1; AIHW 2006a:Table 2.1).

(b) 'Funding per support period' and 'Funding per client' are based on recurrent allocations to agencies.

Notes

1. In 2005–06 the definition of a support period, the definition of a client and the statistical linkage key were changed. Data using these are therefore not comparable to previous years.
2. Support period figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.
3. Client figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Sources: SAAP Administrative Data and Client Collections; AIHW 1997, 1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2002a, 2002b, 2003, 2005a, 2006a; ABS 2006b; FaCSIA unpublished data.

Table 9.2: SAAP support periods and clients: state and territory by reporting period, Australia, 1996–97 to 2005–06 (number)

	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
State/territory	Support periods									
NSW	57,900	55,000	55,400	51,200	49,300	47,900	47,900	48,600	41,300	40,900
Vic	36,800	41,800	44,200	42,700	43,400	45,200	48,800	67,200	62,000	71,800
Qld	25,100	26,800	25,800	26,100	38,700	41,400	36,900	28,400	26,300	25,400
WA	12,000	12,500	12,400	13,100	15,200	14,700	14,900	13,800	14,500	12,700
SA	11,400	12,900	11,100	10,900	11,000	14,400	14,100	14,700	15,600	15,900
Tas	5,200	6,400	5,600	5,800	5,100	5,800	6,600	6,600	6,400	6,200
ACT	3,200	3,300	3,000	3,200	2,900	2,700	2,500	3,000	2,300	2,800
NT	4,800	5,500	5,600	4,700	5,200	4,800	4,500	4,800	4,600	4,300
Australia	156,500	164,300	163,200	157,600	170,700	177,000	176,300	187,200	173,100	180,000
<i>Errors and omissions</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nightly average support periods with accommodation	5,200	7,600	7,200	7,000	7,200	8,100	8,200	8,300	8,700	8,200
<i>Errors and omissions</i>	3,498	4,053	6,047	4,167	2,361	2,505	2,177	7,579	2,689	2,885
Daily average support periods	13,600	15,500	16,500	18,000	18,100	20,400	21,900	21,800	23,700	23,000
<i>Errors and omissions</i>	6,302	4,265	319	212	1,437	1,347	254	75	1	—
State/territory	Clients									
NSW	26,600	29,100	27,300	25,800	25,900	26,400	25,400	25,000	24,100	26,000
Vic	23,700	28,000	29,100	28,500	28,200	29,200	30,500	34,900	36,100	37,700
Qld	14,900	16,500	15,300	16,100	18,000	18,400	18,900	17,900	17,500	17,400
WA	7,700	8,200	7,900	8,500	9,700	9,000	9,300	8,400	8,900	8,300
SA	7,000	8,600	7,500	7,600	7,700	8,800	9,400	9,700	9,600	10,400
Tas	3,200	3,800	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,700	4,300	4,500	4,600	4,400
ACT	2,200	2,300	2,100	2,200	2,100	1,900	1,800	1,700	1,600	2,000
NT	2,500	3,100	3,300	3,100	3,100	3,100	3,100	3,200	3,100	3,100
Australia	83,200	94,100	90,700	90,000	93,000	95,600	97,600	100,200	100,400	106,500
<i>Errors and omissions</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Notes

1. In 2005–06 the definition of a support period, the definition of a client and the statistical linkage key were changed. Data using these are therefore not comparable to previous years.
2. Number of clients within a state or territory relates to clients who ever received assistance from a SAAP agency in that state or territory. Since a client may have support periods in more than one state or territory, state and territory figures do not sum to the national figure.
3. Support period figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.
4. Client figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 9.3: SAAP accompanying child support periods and accompanying children: state and territory by reporting period, Australia, 2001–02 to 2005–06 (number)

	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
State/territory	Accompanying child support periods				
NSW	13,500	12,900	12,900	13,500	15,900
Vic	23,900	25,700	25,700	29,700	29,400
Qld	13,200	13,200	11,100	10,700	10,900
WA	7,700	8,000	7,900	8,600	8,300
SA	9,200	9,800	9,100	9,300	10,300
Tas	2,300	2,900	2,700	3,200	3,000
ACT	1,000	1,000	1,100	900	1,600
NT	2,500	2,200	2,600	2,600	2,300
Australia	73,300	75,800	73,200	78,500	81,700
<i>Errors and omissions</i>	—	—	—	—	—
Nightly average accompanying child support periods with accommodation	4,800	5,100	5,100	5,700	5,600
<i>Errors and omissions</i>	1,459	1,371	1,609	1,641	1,507
Daily average accompanying child support periods	12,300	13,600	12,600	13,900	14,600
<i>Errors and omissions</i>	760	145	48	—	—
State/territory	Accompanying children				
NSW	10,300	9,900	10,100	10,800	11,400
Vic	18,300	19,900	19,700	20,400	18,500
Qld	8,200	9,200	8,600	8,600	8,100
WA	5,900	6,000	5,900	6,100	5,400
SA	4,900	5,400	4,900	7,100	7,000
Tas	1,900	2,300	2,400	2,600	2,100
ACT	800	800	700	800	1,000
NT	1,900	1,900	2,100	2,000	1,700
Australia	50,800	53,800	52,700	56,800	54,700
<i>Errors and omissions</i>	—	—	—	—	—

Notes

1. In 2005–06 the definition of an accompanying child support period, the definition of an accompanying child and the statistical linkage key were changed. Data using these are therefore not comparable to previous years.
2. Dates of support and accommodation are not collected for accompanying children. For the purposes of calculating the number of days of support and the number of nights of accommodation, accompanying children are assumed to have the same periods of support and accommodation as their parent(s) or guardian(s).
3. The number of accompanying children within a state or territory relates to children who *ever* accompanied a client to a SAAP agency in that state or territory. Since a client with accompanying children may have support periods in more than one state or territory, state and territory figures do not sum to the national figure.
4. In 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04, data that enabled the number of accompanying children to be estimated was not collected by agencies using the high-volume collection form. The reporting year 2004–05 was the first year that the number of accompanying children could be reported for all participating agencies.
5. Accompanying child support period figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.
6. Accompanying children figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 9.4: SAAP Client Collection: agency participation rates and forms returned with informed consent and valid consent by reporting period, Australia, 1996–97 to 2005–06

	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Agencies ^(a) (number)	1,119	1,159	1,163	1,159	1,178	1,211	1,202	1,225	1,212	1,219
Agency participation rate (%)	95.4	94.6	95.0	93.2	94.1	94.5	94.0	92.7	92.6	92.9
Forms returned (number)	148,873	156,589	155,005	146,793	158,131	166,535	164,707	174,915	160,002	166,747
Forms returned with consent (%)	67.9	75.4	75.0	79.0	81.5	87.0	87.6	89.9	88.8	86.6
Forms returned with valid consent ^(b) (%)	63.7	72.0	71.5	76.5	78.7	85.1	85.9	88.3	86.8	81.5

(a) 'Agencies' refers to the number of agencies that were 'in scope'—that is, that should have been participating in the reference period.

(b) 'Valid consent' here refers to forms with a valid statistical linkage key (see 'statistical linkage key' in the Glossary and AIHW 2006a:Glossary). Note that in 2005–06 the statistical linkage key was changed and therefore data using this is not comparable to previous years.

Note: Table based on forms returned from agencies in scope for the Client Collection during the reference period. Not all agencies funded under SAAP are required to participate in the Client Collection. For example, agencies that provide only support to other agencies or casual assistance lasting less than 1 hour on a given day and which is not of an ongoing nature are not required to participate in the collection. Consequently, some agencies funded under SAAP (see Chapter 2) are not included in this table.

Sources: SAAP Administrative Data and Client Collections.

