

1 An overview of homelessness and SAAP

It is important to point out that the estimates provided on people accessing and turned away from SAAP do not represent the total homeless population and that other methods of defining homelessness exist. This chapter provides a context for how the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) fits into the bigger picture of homelessness, and outlines the difference between the 'service delivery' definition of homelessness, as used by SAAP, and the 'cultural' definition of homelessness.

1.1 The SAAP National Data Collection

The overall aim of SAAP is to provide transitional supported accommodation and related support services to help people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness achieve the maximum possible degree of self-reliance and independence. SAAP is an important part of Australia's overall response to homelessness and represents a broader social safety net designed to assist people in crisis in the community. While various national programs and state and territory initiatives exist, SAAP is the major government response to homelessness in Australia and is often the last resort for people who find themselves without, or at risk of being without, safe, secure or adequate housing.

In 2004–05, 1,294 non-government, community and local government organisations were funded nationally under SAAP (AIHW 2006c:1). These organisations range from small stand-alone agencies with single outlets to larger auspice bodies with multiple outlets. Each agency primarily targets a particular client group, such as young people, single men, single women, women escaping domestic violence, families, or a combination of client groups.

This report contains 2004–05 data from the SAAP National Data Collection. The SAAP National Data Collection is the main source of data about how SAAP is meeting its objectives. It consists of a number of distinct components, and each can be regarded as a separate collection. There were four components in 2004–05: the Client Collection, the Demand for Accommodation Collection, the Casual Client Collection, and the Administrative Data Collection (Box 1). This report is based on the analysis of the first three of these collections. Further details about each collection are provided at Appendix 2 and the forms used for collecting the data can be found at Appendix 3.

Box 1: The SAAP National Data Collection

The Client Collection

The Client Collection consists of information about clients receiving SAAP accommodation or support that generally lasts for more than 1 hour or is of an ongoing nature. The information is collected throughout the year and includes data on services required by and provided to each client, information concerning clients' situations before and after receiving SAAP support, and some basic socio-demographic data. Details about accompanying children are also obtained through the Client Collection.

The main findings from the Client Collection are published in the national and state and territory SAAP NDC annual reports (see, for example, AIHW 2005a). Chapter 3 of this report also contains summary information on the distinct types of services provided to clients and accompanying children.

The Casual Client Collection

The Casual Client Collection covers 2 weeks each year. In 2004–05 the Casual Client Collection was conducted during the fortnight of 2–15 March 2005. For each casual contact by an individual or group, the different types of one-off assistance lasting less than 1 hour (see Glossary) provided are recorded.

The Casual Client Collection gathers information on all cases where one-off assistance is provided, regardless of whether the person receiving assistance requested more substantial support or accommodation. Consequently, one-off assistance provided to those who sought more substantial assistance is recorded in the Casual Client Collection and also through a question on the Demand for Accommodation form. However, the reference period for the Casual Client Collection is different from that for the Demand for Accommodation Collection.

A Casual Client Collection form may be filled out for an existing client if that client also receives one-off assistance from another agency – for example, a soup kitchen.

As there can be seasonal influences and people can have several casual contacts in a year, the daily and 2-week figures for casual contacts by individuals and groups cannot be used as a basis for deriving annual figures.

The Demand for Accommodation Collection

The Demand for Accommodation Collection covers 2 weeks each year. In 2004–05 it was conducted on 1–7 December 2004 and on 11–17 May 2005.

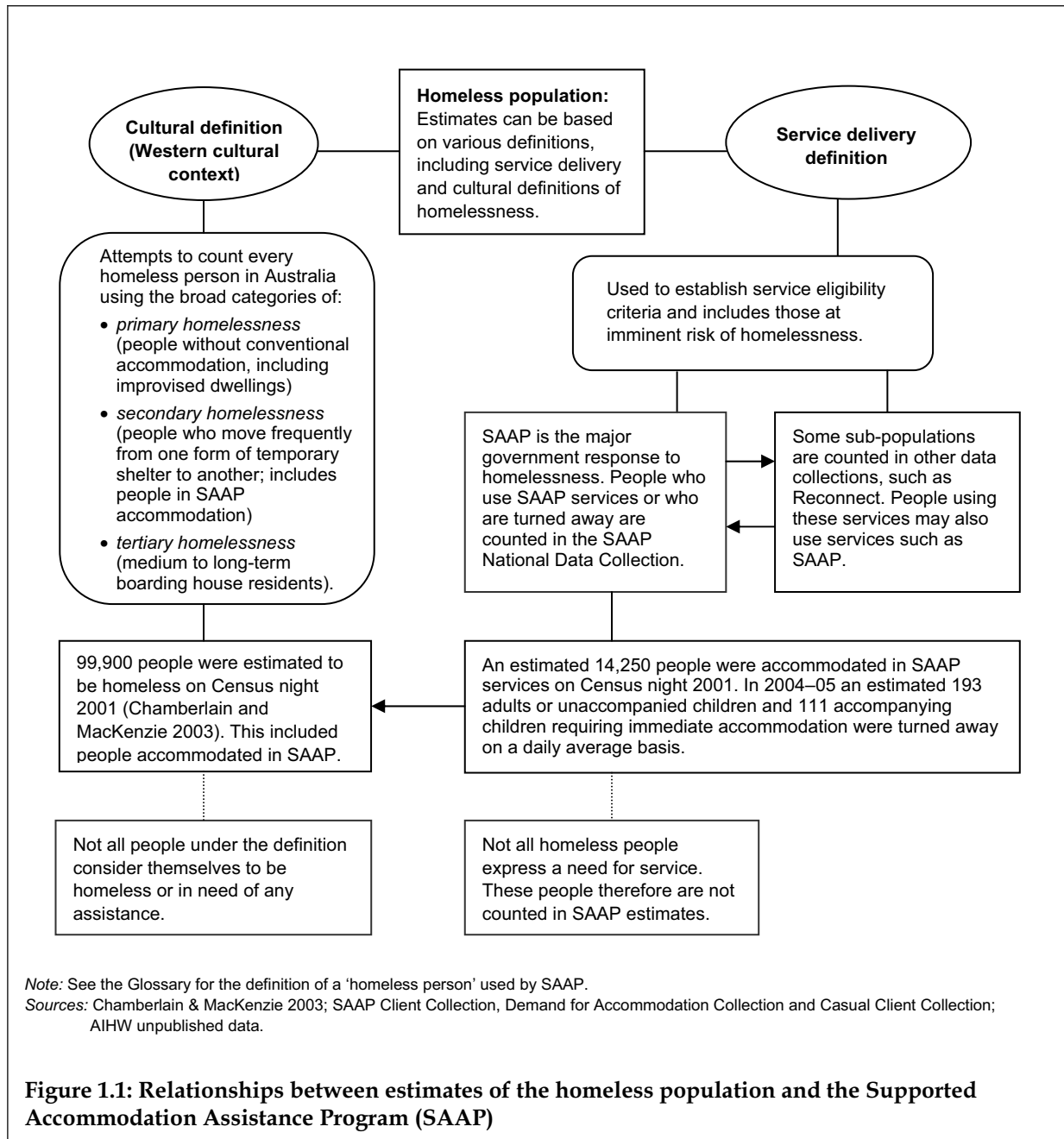
The Collection measures the levels of met and unmet demand for SAAP accommodation by collecting information about requests for accommodation by individuals or groups. SAAP agencies were required to fill out a form every time a person or group sought accommodation. This included when a request for accommodation was met and also when the potential client(s) was turned away. These data are used in conjunction with Client Collection data to calculate the proportion of people turned away from SAAP accommodation.

Often when a request for accommodation is not met, agencies are still able to provide one-off assistance to the person or group, for example, when an agency is unable to provide accommodation but able to provide a referral for accommodation. This information is also collected on the Demand for Accommodation form.

As there can be seasonal influences and people can have several unmet requests in a year, the daily and 2-week figures cannot be used as a basis for deriving annual figures. It should also be noted that the numbers of unmet requests, people who made those requests, and people turned away presented in this report are underestimates. This is because only data from agencies that participated in the Client Collection and the Demand for Accommodation Collection were used to calculate a turn-away rate and provide an indication of the overall ability of SAAP to cope with the demand for accommodation (see Chapter 9).

1.2 Estimating the number of homeless people

A key issue for estimating the extent of homelessness lies in defining it. Different definitions of homelessness have been proposed to accommodate the extensive range of circumstances that could be considered to be a homeless experience – from a person having no shelter at all, to a person occupying shelter that compromises their health or safety (AIHW 2005b: Chapter 7). Figure 1.1 illustrates where SAAP fits into the bigger picture of homelessness, and how different definitions of homelessness produce different estimates of the homeless population.



The definition of a 'homeless person' underpinning the SAAP National Data Collection (see Glossary) is a 'service delivery' definition that establishes criteria for the provision of assistance. It includes people who have no shelter at all, as well as people who are at risk of homelessness because their living situation and/or housing places them in circumstances that adversely affect the adequacy, safety, security or affordability of that housing. The estimates of the number of homeless people or people at imminent risk of homelessness accessing SAAP services are an important indicator of the performance of SAAP as the major program assisting those people.

In contrast, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) applied the 'cultural definition' of homelessness devised by Chamberlain and MacKenzie in the 2001 Census of Population and Housing homeless enumeration strategy (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2003). Cultural definitions of homelessness suggest that homelessness should be defined by reference to the community standards for housing of the place and time where the definition is to be used. The Census used a household-based collection methodology, which would under-count highly mobile people with no permanent residence, but include in its count people who were inadequately housed but had not sought assistance from a homelessness program. The ABS count of homeless people includes a total of 14,250 people (adults or unaccompanied children) in SAAP accommodation on Census night 2001. Using this method, the 2001 Census results showed that there were 99,900 homeless people in Australia on Census night 2001.

There are difficulties with directly comparing the number of people in SAAP accommodation with the 2001 Census because of the different definitions. The major service delivery count (that is, SAAP clients) will be smaller than the cultural definition because there are people who need services but do not seek them. Also, there are people who are defined as homeless under the cultural definition, but do not consider themselves as homeless (for example, people living in boarding houses). Further, the cultural definition proposed by Chamberlain and MacKenzie does not include the 22,868 people marginally housed in caravan parks who are acknowledged to be at least as badly off as the tertiary homeless in boarding houses, and worse off than the secondary homeless. It is clear that marginal residents of caravan parks do not meet the stated culturally acceptable minimum community standards of housing. For this reason the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare proposed another estimate of the number of people experiencing homelessness, 122,770, which included marginal residents of caravan parks (AIHW 2005b:325). The use of the cultural definition to estimate the total homeless population is examined in more detail in *Australia's welfare 2005* (AIHW 2005b:Chapter 7).

Given the above difficulties in determining which of these people experiencing homelessness need the type of support that SAAP offers, the daily counts of people turned-away from immediate SAAP accommodation are important in providing policy makers, program developers and advocates evidence of the minimum response required to support people needing accommodation from SAAP or similar homelessness programs.

2 Total demand for SAAP assistance

This chapter presents an overview of the total demand for SAAP assistance in 2004–05 by drawing together data from the Client, Casual Client, and Demand for Accommodation Collections. There is a particular emphasis on the demand for accommodation, as the provision of accommodation is one of the core activities of SAAP.

The demand for SAAP assistance refers to both the service requirements of people who are already receiving support from SAAP (clients, accompanying children and casual clients – see Glossary) and the requests of people who wish to receive services but who are turned away (potential clients – see Glossary). Both groups are essential when considering the demand for SAAP assistance because, although SAAP agencies support many individuals on a daily basis, there are still instances when an agency cannot provide the support or accommodation requested by people in crisis. This includes requests for services from both people who are already clients of a SAAP agency and people who approach a SAAP agency but are turned away. Unfortunately, the level of ‘hidden’ demand by people who do not approach SAAP services but require SAAP support cannot be measured.

2.1 How is the total demand for SAAP estimated?

To obtain an overview of the total demand for SAAP assistance it is first necessary to understand the relationship between the different Collections. As described in Chapter 1, SAAP data are collected via a number of different components. Figure 2.1 displays the relationships between assistance provided by SAAP agencies and the data collected related to this assistance. It is important to note that there are overlaps between the Client, Casual Client and Demand for Accommodation Collections but the extent to which this happens is unknown. For example, a person can be a client of one agency, request casual one-off assistance from another agency and have an unmet request for accommodation at the same time.

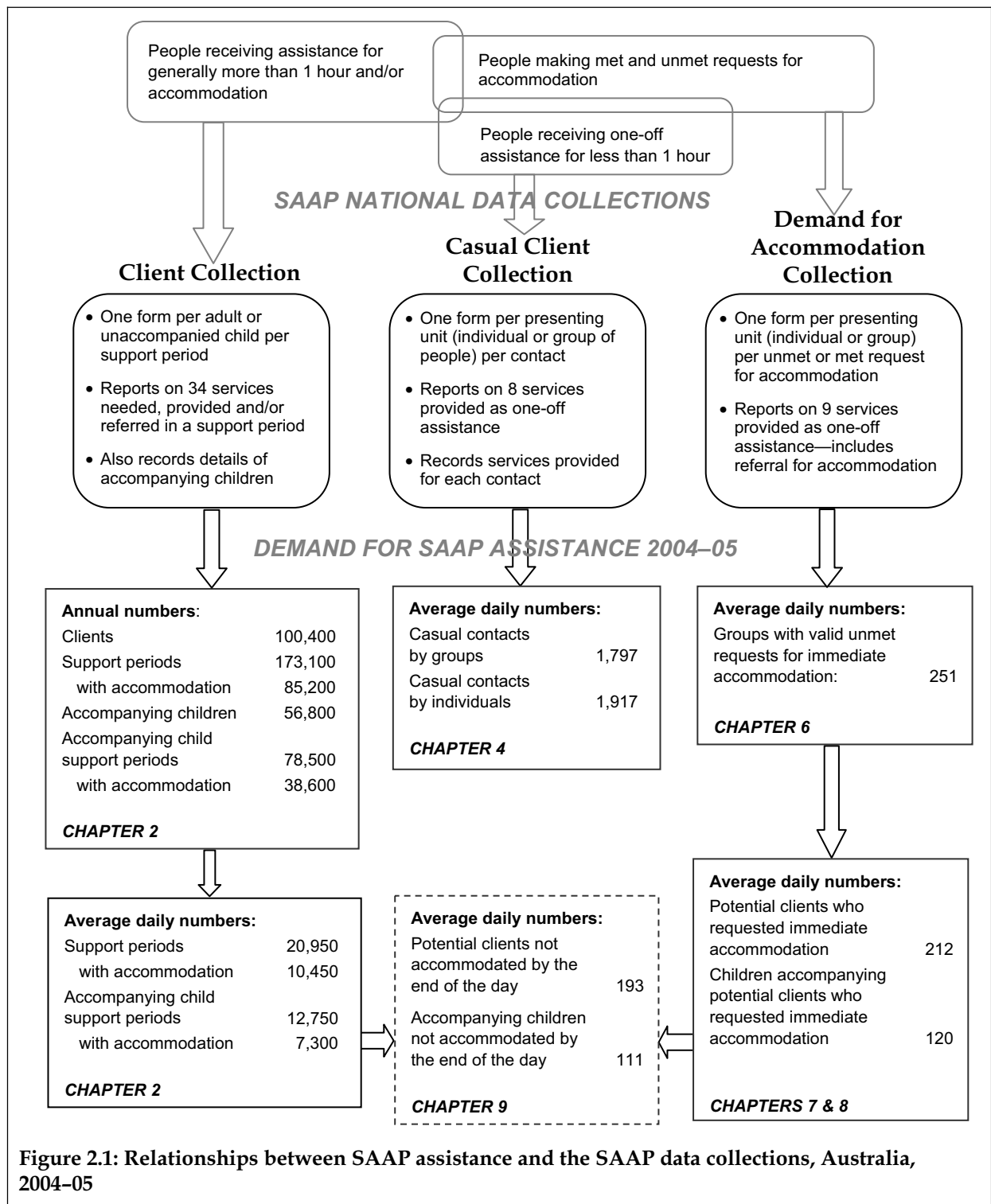


Figure 2.1: Relationships between SAAP assistance and the SAAP data collections, Australia, 2004-05

2.2 Daily and annual estimates of the demand for SAAP services and accommodation

As mentioned, the demand for SAAP services combines the provision of services to clients and casual clients as well as the services that could not be provided to both clients and potential clients.

There are two collections that gather data on the provision of services to people who are able to receive services from SAAP agencies – the Client Collection and the Casual Client Collection. According to data from the Client Collection and the Casual Client Collection, it was estimated that, on a daily basis, there were between 17 and 18 people using SAAP services for every 10,000 people in the general population.¹

The remainder of this section presents the demand for SAAP assistance as gathered by the various collections. First, the number of clients and accompanying children and their associated support periods on a daily average and annual basis are discussed. Next, the number of casual client contacts made during the 2-week Casual Client Collection is outlined. Finally, the requests for accommodation and number of people making those requests during the 2-week Demand for Accommodation Collection are presented.

Demand for SAAP services and accommodation by clients and accompanying children

Clients

An estimate of the types of services that are unmet for clients and accompanying children on a daily basis cannot be provided as dates are not collected for service types in the Client Collection. Annual figures on the types of services that clients are provided with, referred on for, or that remain unmet by the end of their support are discussed in Chapter 3.

Data from the 2004–05 Client Collection show that nationally, on a daily basis, SAAP agencies provided an average of 20,950 support periods to adults or unaccompanied children, with 10,450 (50%) of these being support periods with accommodation. In the remaining 10,500 support periods, clients received other types of substantial support (Table 2.1).

When examining the number of support periods for adults and unaccompanied children by state and territory, some variations in the proportions with accommodation and without accommodation emerge. These differences generally reflect the different agency and client profiles of the states and territories. For example, in Victoria many homeless people are accommodated in Transitional Housing Management properties (THMs) while receiving other support services from SAAP. This accommodation is not always recorded in the SAAP

¹ The population as at 30 June 2004 was 20,091,500 (ABS 2005). The lower limit of use per 10,000 is derived as $10,000 \times (20,950 \text{ support periods} + 12,750 \text{ accompanying child support periods}) / 20,091,500 = 16.8$. (This figure should, in fact, be slightly lower because an individual may have multiple support periods on any day. The number of support periods and accompanying child support periods are used as a rough indicator only.) The upper limit of use per 10,000 is derived as $10,000 \times (20,950 + 12,750 + 1,917 \text{ casual client contacts by individuals}) / 20,091,500 = 17.7$. (It should be noted that the number of people utilising services as casual clients refers to adults and unaccompanied children only, that is, it does not include the number of accompanying children (Note 2, Table 4.1).)

National Data Collection. This meant that, although Victoria had the highest daily average number of support periods (7,250), only around 41% of these support periods involved accommodation (derived from Table 2.1). On the other hand, in Queensland and the Northern Territory, 63% of support periods involved accommodation. This is attributable to the shorter average length of accommodation provided to clients in those jurisdictions.

On an annual basis, approximately 100,400 clients received 173,100 periods of support, with 85,200 (49%) of these being support periods with accommodation (Table 2.2). As with daily average numbers, it is also the case with annual numbers that THMs and varying patterns in length of accommodation influence the proportions of support periods with accommodation in each state and territory. The reasons for variations in length of accommodation are complex and relate to the different client and agency profiles in each state and territory. More information can be found in the SAAP NDCA 2004-05 annual report (AIHW 2006c) and associated supplementary reports.

Accompanying children

In general, the proportions of support periods with accommodation on a daily average and an annual basis for accompanying children follow the same pattern as for clients across the states and territories. The daily average number of accompanying child support periods was 12,750. In 7,300 (57%) of these support periods, accompanying children were accommodated. It should be noted that support period and accommodation period start and end dates are not collected for accompanying children, and a child may not be supported for the entire duration of the parent's or guardian's support period. However, it can be reasonably assumed that accompanying children have the same support period and accommodation period start and end dates as their parent or guardian in the majority of cases. On an annual basis, there were 56,800 accompanying children. These children received 78,500 periods of support.

Demand for SAAP services by casual clients

There were 25,160 casual contacts by groups who required one-off assistance during the 2 weeks of the Casual Client Collection (2-15 March 2005). These casual contacts corresponded to approximately 26,840 contacts by individuals (Table 2.2).

On a daily average basis there were 1,797 casual contacts made by an estimated 1,917 individuals (Table 2.1). On an average day, Queensland had a significantly larger number of casual client contacts by groups (680 or 38% of the average daily contacts by groups) and individuals (723 or 38% of average daily contacts by individuals) than the other states and territories.

Demand for SAAP accommodation by potential clients and accompanying children

Although people may request support, accommodation or a combination of both, only the number of requests for accommodation and the number of people associated with those requests are collected during the Demand for Accommodation Collection. For this reason, the figures presented cannot be used to estimate the total number of people turned away from SAAP services. Only the number of people who requested accommodation from SAAP agencies but did not receive that accommodation during the 2-week collection period (1-7 December 2004 and 11-17 May 2005) are presented.

The number of valid requests from the Demand for Accommodation Collection is discussed in Chapter 6 and the number of people making these requests is discussed in Chapters 7 and 8. Tables 2.1 and 2.2 provide a summary of the information in those chapters. Annual estimates of the demand for SAAP accommodation cannot be provided (Appendix A2.2.1). Therefore, the figures for Demand for Accommodation shown in Table 2.2 refer to the 2-week collection period only.

During the 2 weeks of the Demand for Accommodation Collection, there was a daily average of 251 valid requests for immediate accommodation that could not be provided (valid unmet requests for accommodation – see Glossary) (Table 2.1). These requests were made by 332 people (212 potential clients and 120 accompanying children). After adjusting for people who made a valid unmet request for accommodation but were subsequently accommodated later in the day, around 304 people (193 potential clients and 111 accompanying children) could not be accommodated.

Chapter 9 provides the turn-away rate for daily requests for accommodation. The turn-away rate is an estimate of the proportion of people who were turned away from SAAP accommodation on an average day during the collection period. Chapter 9 also provides an unmet demand to total demand for accommodation ratio as a measure of the overall ability of SAAP to meet the demand for accommodation by people turned away from agencies from which they requested accommodation on an average day during the Demand for Accommodation Collection period.

2.3 Tables

Table 2.1: Total demand for SAAP assistance: summary table, by state and territory, Australia, 2004–05 (daily average number)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Client Collection (ongoing)									
Clients	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Support periods	5,400	7,250	3,000	1,400	2,250	850	400	400	20,950
With accommodation	3,050	2,950	1,900	800	1,000	300	200	250	10,450
Without accommodation	2,350	4,300	1,100	600	1,250	550	150	150	10,500
Accompanying children	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Accompanying child support periods	2,450	4,650	2,100	850	1,600	450	300	300	12,750
With accommodation	1,450	2,200	1,600	600	800	200	200	200	7,300
Without accommodation	950	2,450	500	250	800	250	100	100	5,400
Casual Client Collection (2–15 March 2005)									
Casual contacts by groups	316	391	680	194	128	24	42	23	1,797
Casual contacts by individuals ^(a)	331	420	723	205	142	25	44	26	1,917
Demand for Accommodation Collection (1–7 December 2004 and 11–17 May 2005)									
Valid unmet requests for immediate accommodation	71	57	54	25	15	12	12	5	251
Potential clients who requested immediate accommodation	62	42	46	23	15	11	8	5	212
Accommodated later in the day	4	6	3	1	2	1	1	1	19
Not accommodated	58	36	43	22	14	9	7	5	193
Children accompanying potential clients who requested immediate accommodation	34	12	33	18	9	7	2	4	120
Accommodated later in the day	1	4	1	<1	1	1	<1	1	9
Not accommodated	33	8	32	18	8	6	2	4	111

(a) In the Casual Client Collection, casual contacts are reported for the group receiving assistance. Casual contacts by individuals have been derived from data on 'person(s) receiving assistance' in a contact (see questionnaire in Appendix 3). 'Person alone' and 'person with children' are counted as a contact by one individual, and couples (with or without children) are counted as contacts by two individuals. Presenting units classified as 'other' are also counted as contacts by two individuals. Cases where there is no information on the type of presenting unit are counted as a contact by one individual. Although this approach will lead to an understatement of the number of individuals, this understatement will be less than if contacts of unknown composition were counted as missing.

Notes

- Support periods excluded due to missing data: 1.
- Accompanying child support periods excluded due to missing data: 0.
- Adjustments have been made for missing data from the Demand for Accommodation Collection (see Appendix 2).
- Figures are unweighted.
- Client Collection and Demand for Accommodation Collection figures include only data from agencies that participated in both the Client Collection and the Demand for Accommodation Collection. Consequently, the figures understate the level of activity in SAAP agencies.

Sources: SAAP Client Collection, Demand for Accommodation Collection and Casual Client Collection.

Table 2.2: Total demand for SAAP assistance: summary table, by state and territory, Australia, 2004–05 (annual number)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Client collection (ongoing)									
Clients	24,100	36,100	17,500	8,900	9,600	4,600	1,600	3,100	100,400
Support periods	41,300	62,000	26,300	14,500	15,600	6,400	2,300	4,600	173,100
With accommodation	26,500	16,600	17,700	9,900	6,900	2,600	1,500	3,400	85,200
Without accommodation	14,800	45,400	8,500	4,700	8,700	3,800	900	1,200	88,000
Accompanying children	10,800	20,400	8,600	6,100	7,100	2,600	800	2,000	56,800
Accompanying child support periods	13,500	29,700	10,700	8,600	9,300	3,200	900	2,600	78,500
With accommodation	8,200	9,400	7,700	6,700	3,100	1,300	500	1,700	38,600
Without accommodation	5,300	20,300	3,000	1,900	6,300	1,900	400	900	40,000
Casual Client Collection (2–15 March 2005)									
Casual contacts by groups	4,420	5,470	9,510	2,710	1,800	340	590	320	25,160
Casual contacts by individuals ^(a)	4,630	5,880	10,120	2,880	1,990	350	620	370	26,840
Demand for Accommodation Collection (1–7 December 2004 and 11–17 May 2005)									
Valid unmet requests for immediate accommodation	990	800	750	350	210	170	160	70	3,510
Potential clients who requested immediate accommodation	860	580	640	320	210	150	120	70	2,960
Accommodated later in the day	50	80	40	20	20	20	10	10	260
Not accommodated	810	510	600	300	190	130	100	70	2,710
Children accompanying potential clients who requested immediate accommodation	480	170	470	250	120	100	30	60	1,680
Accommodated later in the day	20	50	20	<5	10	10	<5	10	120
Not accommodated	460	120	450	250	110	80	30	50	1,560

(a) In the Casual Client Collection, casual contacts are reported for the group receiving assistance. Casual contacts by individuals have been derived from data on 'person(s) receiving assistance' in a contact (see questionnaire in Appendix 3). 'Person alone' and 'person with children' are counted as a contact by one individual, and couples (with or without children) are counted as contacts by two individuals. Presenting units classified as 'other' are also counted as contacts by two individuals. Cases where there is no information on the type of presenting unit are counted as a contact by one individual. Although this approach will lead to an understatement of the number of individuals, this understatement will be less than if contacts of unknown composition were counted as missing.

Notes

1. Cases excluded due to missing data: 0.
2. Adjustments have been made for missing data from the Demand for Accommodation Collection (see Appendix 2).
3. 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.
4. Support periods and accompanying child support periods have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.
5. Client and accompanying children figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.
6. Figures from the Demand for Accommodation and Casual Client Collections are unweighted.
7. Demand for Accommodation figures include only data from agencies that participated in both the Client Collection and the Demand for Accommodation Collection. Consequently, the figures understate the level of activity in SAAP agencies.

Sources: SAAP Client Collection, Demand for Accommodation and Casual Client Collection.

3 Meeting the needs of clients and accompanying children

This chapter provides a summary of the types of services that clients and accompanying children requested during their support and whether these services were provided, referred, or neither provided nor referred (unmet). A detailed discussion on the support given to SAAP clients and accompanying children is contained in the 2004–05 national annual report (AIHW 2006c).

The diverse nature of the needs of clients and accompanying children is reflected in the considerable range of services SAAP agencies provide to people who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless. Support may involve the provision of supported accommodation and/or a range of support services generally lasting more than 1 hour or of an ongoing nature.

While SAAP agencies endeavour to meet all the needs of clients and accompanying children, people who are clients of a SAAP agency and their accompanying children may express a need for a particular service that is unable to be provided or referred on by the agency. These are termed unmet needs.

Both existing clients and their accompanying children as well as potential clients and their accompanying children (see Glossary) can have requests for services that agencies are not able to meet, however, unmet needs for existing clients and their accompanying children cannot be considered alongside unmet requests for potential clients and their accompanying children. This is because the number of occasions on which unmet requests are made by existing clients and their accompanying children are not reported. For example, a client may request financial assistance three times in a support period, but the Client Collection shows only that financial assistance was needed, not that it was requested three times. In addition, only demand for accommodation is collected for potential clients and their accompanying children, not the demand for all SAAP services. As a result, the unmet need of existing clients and their accompanying children for both support and accommodation is discussed here and unmet demand for accommodation by potential clients and their accompanying children is discussed in Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. It should also be noted that during the Demand for Accommodation Collection period, a person can be both a client and a potential client if they are receiving support from a SAAP agency but have a request for accommodation unmet.

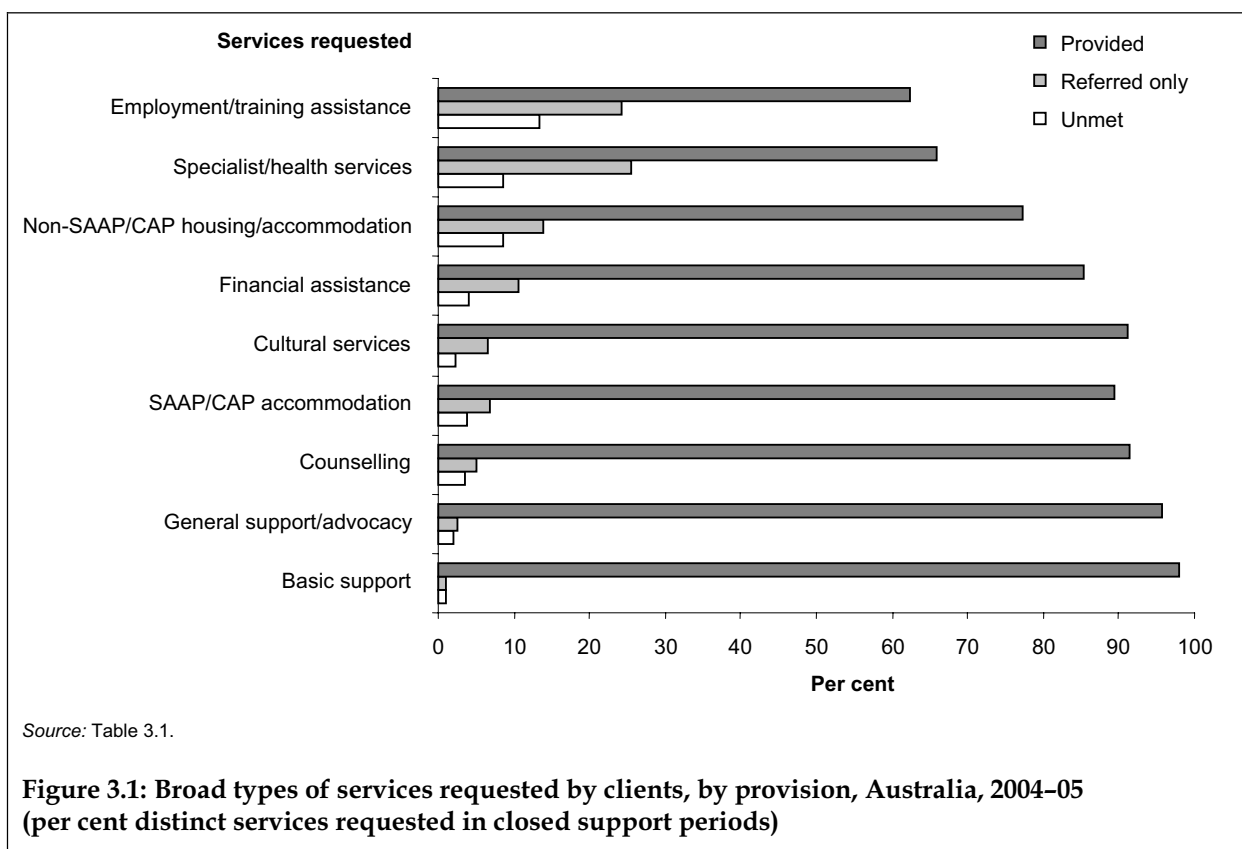
During 2004–05, SAAP agencies provided an estimated 100,400 clients and 56,800 accompanying children with accommodation and/or support. Twenty-eight per cent of clients and 19% of children accompanying clients received more than one period of support during the year, resulting in 173,100 support periods and 78,500 accompanying child support periods (AIHW 2006c).

However, the ability of SAAP agencies to meet the needs of their clients and accompanying children can be measured only after a client has finished receiving support. For this reason, it is necessary to look at closed support periods when examining the provision of the services

requested by clients and accompanying children. In 2004–05, there were 153,900² support periods and 67,600³ accompanying child support periods that finished on or before 30 June 2005 (Tables 3.1 and 3.6).

3.1 Meeting the needs of clients

During 2004–05, there were 855,800 distinct services requested by clients in a total of 149,300 closed support periods in which information was available about service requirements and provision. This equated to approximately 5.7 service types requested by clients in these support periods (derived from Table 3.1). Of the services requested, 90% (773,200) were directly provided by SAAP agencies and 6% (53,600) were referred to other organisations, leaving 3% (29,000) of requested services not met by the end of support (Table 3.1).



² Number consists of 149,300 closed support periods where a service was requested, 1,600 closed support periods where information on service provision or referral was provided but no need was expressed for those services, and 2,998 closed support periods where no information on service requirements or provision was provided.

³ Number consists of 38,100 closed accompanying child support periods where a service was requested for accompanying children, 1,400 closed accompanying child support periods where information on service provision or referral was provided but no need was expressed for those services, and 28,145 closed accompanying child support periods where no information on service requirements or provision was provided.

Upon request, the three broad service types that were most commonly provided by agencies (rather than remaining unmet or being referred) were basic support, such as meals and showers (98%), general support or advocacy (96%), and counselling (91%) (Figure 3.1). SAAP or CAP accommodation was also provided directly in 90% of those occasions where it was requested.

A client might request many services in a single support period, but in some cases SAAP agencies might not be able to meet all the client's requests directly. In these instances referrals to appropriate organisations might be arranged. For some requested services however, it might not be possible to either provide the service or refer the client on, resulting in unmet needs.

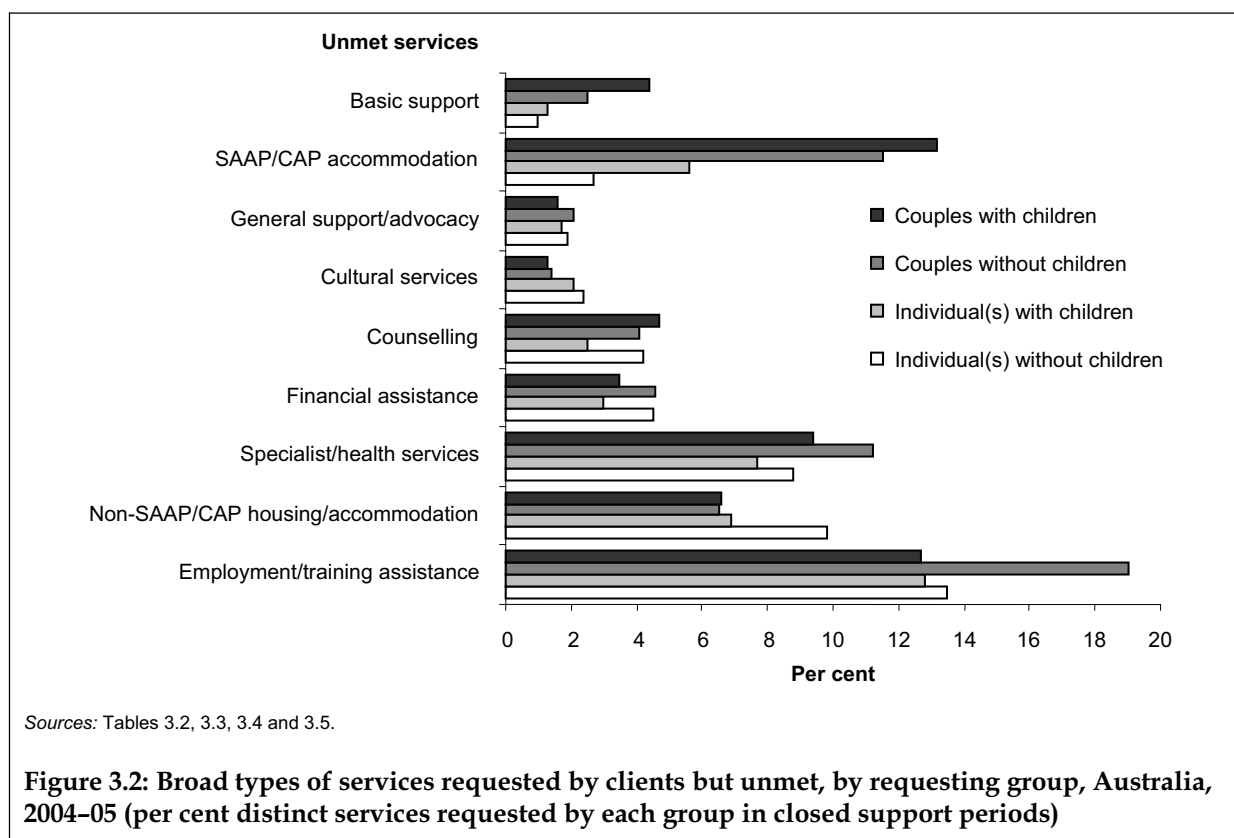
There were 53,600 referrals made where a request for a service was not met directly by the agency (Table 3.1). However, these figures are likely to be underestimates because, as with service provision, a referral may have been arranged for a particular service more than once. It should be noted that there is no information about client outcomes from referrals. In the context of the NDC, a referral means that an agency (SAAP or non-SAAP) has accepted the client for an appointment or interview. However, providing a client with a referral does not guarantee that their needs will then be met.

Referrals were more frequently made for the services with higher levels of unmet needs. For example, for employment and training assistance remained unmet following 14% of requests for this type of service. However, employment and training assistance also had a high proportion of referrals (24%). Similarly, requests for specialist or health services were unmet in 9% of cases and were referred in 26% of cases, and requests for assistance to obtain or maintain non-SAAP housing were also unmet in 9% of cases and were referred in 14% of cases.

Requesting group

When examining the provision of requested services by client group it becomes apparent that some groups have higher proportions of unmet needs overall and that the types of services remaining unmet vary between the groups. For example, while couples with and couples without children accounted for a smaller number of closed support periods than individuals with and without children, they had 5% of requested services remaining unmet at the end of support, compared with 3% for individuals both with and without children (Tables 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5). In particular, couples both with and without children had relatively high levels of unmet need for SAAP or CAP accommodation. Couples with children had requests for SAAP or CAP accommodation remaining unmet following 13% of requests and couples without children in 12%, compared with 3% for individual(s) without children and 6% for individual(s) with children (Figure 3.2). Nineteen per cent of requests made by couples without children for employment and training assistance were unmet, compared with between 13% and 14% for the other three groups.

It also becomes apparent that requests for services were referred on more often for some client groups. Overall, couples with children had the highest proportion of requested services referred on (9%), followed by couples without children (8%), individual(s) with children (8%) and individual(s) without children (6%). In particular, couples with children had the highest level of referrals made for specialist and health services (37% compared with between 24% and 31% for the other client groups) and also for employment and training assistance (30% compared with between 22% and 27%).

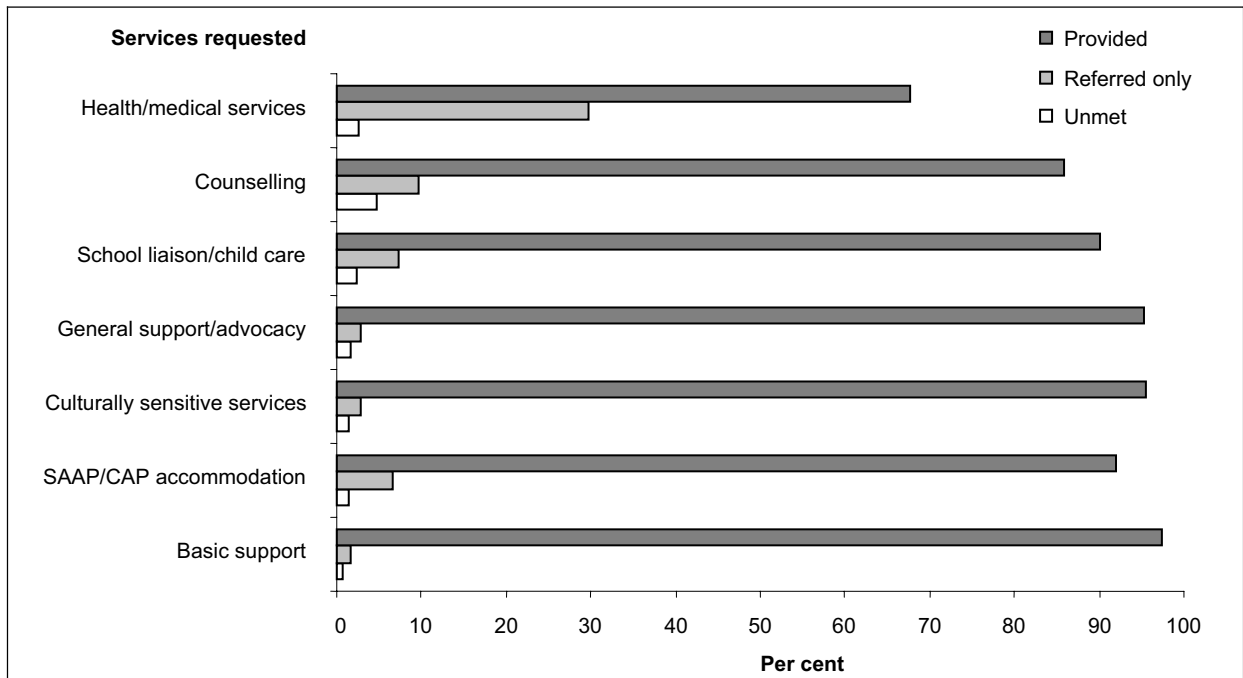


3.2 Meeting the needs of accompanying children

During 2004-05, agencies reported that children who accompanied clients had 153,300 distinct service types requested for them within 38,100 associated closed accompanying child support periods. Of these requested services, 94% were provided directly by agencies and around 5% were referred on. This left under 2% of requested services unmet (neither provided nor referred) (Table 3.6).

Figure 3.3 illustrates the provision of services requested for accompanying children. Basic support services, such as meals, showers, recreation and transport, were the types of services that were requested most often (67,400 in 25,300 associated closed accompanying child support periods) and these requests were provided directly by agencies in the vast majority of cases (98%) (Figure 3.3 and Table 3.6). There were 27,500 requests for SAAP accommodation and it was provided in 92% of cases.

Counselling was the broad type of service that most often remained unmet (in 5% of cases) and also had a relatively high level of referrals made (10%). However, because of the high proportion of referrals made (30%), the broad type of service that was least likely to be provided directly to accompanying children when requested was health or medical services (provided in 68% of cases). Requests for health or medical services were neither provided nor referred on in 3% of cases.



Source: Table 3.6.

Figure 3.3: Broad types of services requested for accompanying children, by provision, Australia, 2004-05 (per cent distinct services requested in closed accompanying child support periods)

3.3 Tables

Table 3.1: SAAP services requested by clients in closed support periods: broad type of service by provision, Australia, 2004–05 (per cent distinct services requested)

Broad type of service	Unmet	Referred	Provided	Total	Distinct services requested	Assoc. closed support periods
					Number	Number
	% distinct services requested					
SAAP/CAP accommodation	3.8	6.7	89.5	100.0	84,000	84,000
Assistance to obtain/maintain non-SAAP/CAP housing or accommodation	8.7	14.0	77.3	100.0	67,400	54,600
Employment and training assistance	13.5	24.2	62.4	100.0	8,200	8,200
Financial assistance	4.0	10.5	85.4	100.0	77,500	58,700
Counselling	3.5	5.1	91.3	100.0	122,900	78,200
General support/advocacy	1.9	2.5	95.7	100.0	221,600	110,300
Specialist/health services	8.6	25.5	65.9	100.0	53,700	36,700
Cultural services	2.2	6.6	91.2	100.0	13,900	11,700
Basic support and other services n.e.s.	1.1	1.0	97.9	100.0	206,600	84,900
Total (%)	3.4	6.3	90.4	100.0	..	..
Total (number)	29,000	53,600	773,200	..	855,800	149,300

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 2,998 closed support periods (cases with no information on service requirements or provision).
2. There were approximately 1,600 closed support periods where information on service provision or referral was provided but no need was expressed by the client for those services (AIHW 2005b:54).

Table 3.2: SAAP services requested by individual(s) without children in closed support periods: broad type of service by provision, Australia, 2003–04 (per cent distinct services requested)

Broad type of service	Unmet	Referred	Provided	Total	Distinct services requested	Assoc. closed support periods
					Number	Number
	% distinct services requested					
SAAP/CAP accommodation	2.7	4.7	92.5	100.0	60,800	60,800
Assistance to obtain/maintain non-SAAP/CAP housing or accommodation	9.8	13.2	77.0	100.0	41,900	33,800
Employment and training assistance	13.5	23.4	63.1	100.0	6,500	6,500
Financial assistance	4.5	9.4	86.1	100.0	47,800	36,700
Counselling	4.2	4.9	90.9	100.0	70,300	49,000
General support/advocacy	1.9	2.1	96.0	100.0	145,900	73,600
Specialist/health services	8.8	23.6	67.6	100.0	41,300	28,100
Cultural services	2.4	6.5	91.0	100.0	6,900	5,900
Basic support and other services n.e.s.	1.0	0.8	98.2	100.0	158,300	63,100
Total (%)	3.4	5.6	91.0	100.0	..	..
Total (number)	19,900	32,300	527,500	..	579,700	102,000

Note: Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 2,158 closed support periods (cases with no information on service requirements or provision).

Table 3.3: SAAP services requested by individual(s) with children in closed support periods: broad type of service by provision, Australia, 2004–05 (per cent distinct services requested)

Broad type of service	Unmet	Referred	Provided	Total	Distinct services requested	Assoc. closed support periods
					Number	Number
	% distinct services requested					
SAAP/CAP accommodation	5.6	11.8	82.6	100.0	19,200	19,200
Assistance to obtain/maintain non-SAAP/CAP housing or accommodation	6.9	15.9	77.2	100.0	19,200	15,700
Employment and training assistance	12.8	27.3	59.9	100.0	1,300	1,300
Financial assistance	3.0	12.1	84.9	100.0	23,400	17,200
Counselling	2.5	5.3	92.2	100.0	47,100	25,400
General support/advocacy	1.7	3.5	94.8	100.0	62,000	29,500
Specialist/health services	7.7	31.3	61.0	100.0	10,200	7,200
Cultural services	2.1	6.2	91.7	100.0	6,100	5,000
Basic support and other services n.e.s.	1.3	1.6	97.2	100.0	42,400	18,300
Total (%)	3.0	7.5	89.5	100.0	..	..
Total (number)	6,900	17,400	206,500	..	230,900	37,700

Note: Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 631 closed support periods (cases with no information on service requirements or provision).

Table 3.4: SAAP services requested by couples without children in closed support periods: broad type of service by provision, Australia, 2004–05 (per cent distinct services requested)

Broad type of service	Unmet	Referred	Provided	Total	Distinct services requested	Assoc. closed support periods
					Number	Number
	% distinct services requested					
SAAP/CAP accommodation	11.5	10.6	78.0	100.0	1,400	1,400
Assistance to obtain/maintain non-SAAP/CAP housing or accommodation	6.5	11.5	82.0	100.0	2,600	2,000
Employment and training assistance	19.0	22.1	58.9	100.0	200	200
Financial assistance	4.6	11.5	83.8	100.0	2,400	2,000
Counselling	4.1	6.5	89.4	100.0	1,800	1,300
General support/advocacy	2.1	2.2	95.8	100.0	5,400	2,900
Specialist/health services	11.2	27.6	61.1	100.0	1,000	600
Cultural services	1.4	6.8	91.9	100.0	200	200
Basic support and other services n.e.s.	2.5	1.7	95.8	100.0	2,700	1,500
Total (%)	4.8	7.5	87.7	100.0	..	..
Total (number)	800	1,300	15,600	..	17,800	4,100

Note: Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 108 closed support periods (cases with no information on service requirements or provision).

Table 3.5: SAAP services requested by couples with children in closed support periods: broad type of service by provision, Australia, 2004–05 (per cent distinct services requested)

Broad type of service	Unmet	Referred	Provided	Total	Distinct services requested	Assoc. closed support periods
					Number	Number
	% distinct services requested					
SAAP/CAP accommodation	13.2	12.3	74.5	100.0	2,600	2,600
Assistance to obtain/maintain non-SAAP/CAP housing or accommodation	6.6	14.9	78.6	100.0	3,800	3,000
Employment and training assistance	12.7	30.0	57.2	100.0	300	300
Financial assistance	3.5	13.9	82.6	100.0	3,800	2,800
Counselling	4.7	7.3	88.1	100.0	3,700	2,600
General support/advocacy	1.6	2.5	95.9	100.0	8,300	4,300
Specialist/health services	9.4	37.3	53.3	100.0	1,200	800
Cultural services	1.3	10.5	88.1	100.0	600	600
Basic support and other services n.e.s.	4.4	2.2	93.4	100.0	3,100	1,900
Total (%)	4.8	9.3	85.8	100.0	..	..
Total (number)	1,300	2,600	23,600	..	27,400	5,600

Note: Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 101 closed support periods (cases with no information on service requirements or provision).

Notes for Tables 3.1 to 3.5

- In groups of service types, a client may require more than one type of service within the group. Percentages for broad groups relate to all needs and not to support periods. For individual types of services, a need can be recorded only once within a support period, so percentages relate to support periods.
- The 34 individual service types have been grouped into nine major classifications as follows:
 - SAAP or CAP accommodation;
 - assistance to obtain/maintain non-SAAP/CAP housing or accommodation—assistance to obtain/maintain short-term accommodation and assistance to obtain/maintain independent housing;
 - employment and training assistance;
 - financial assistance—assistance to obtain/maintain a benefit or pension or other government allowance, financial assistance or material aid, and financial counselling and support;
 - counselling—incest or sexual assault counselling and support, domestic violence counselling and support, family or relationship counselling and support, emotional support and other counselling, and assistance with problem gambling;
 - general support or advocacy—living skills or personal development assistance, assistance with legal issues or court support, advice or information, retrieval, storage or removal of personal belongings, advocacy or liaison on behalf of clients, and brokerage services;
 - specialist/health services—psychological services, psychiatric services, pregnancy support, family planning support, drug or alcohol support or intervention, physical disability services, intellectual disability services, and health or medical services;
 - cultural services—culturally appropriate support, interpreter services, and assistance with immigration issues; and
 - basic support and services n.e.s.—meals, laundry or shower facilities, recreation, transport, and other support not elsewhere specified.
- Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 3.6: SAAP services requested for accompanying children in closed support periods: broad service type by provision, Australia, 2004–05

Broad type of service	Unmet	Referred	Provided	Total	Distinct services requested	Assoc. closed accompanying child support periods
					Number	Number
	% distinct services requested					
SAAP/CAP accommodation	1.4	6.7	92.0	100.0	27,500	27,500
School liaison/child care	2.3	7.4	90.2	100.0	13,900	11,600
Counselling	4.6	9.6	85.8	100.0	13,400	9,500
General support/advocacy	1.7	2.9	95.3	100.0	22,600	15,400
Health/medical services	2.6	29.8	67.7	100.0	4,400	4,400
Culturally sensitive services	1.5	2.9	95.6	100.0	4,100	4,100
Basic support and other services n.e.s.	0.8	1.7	97.5	100.0	67,400	25,300
Total (%)	1.6	4.8	93.6	100.0	..	..
Total (number)	2,400	7,400	143,500	..	153,300	38,100

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 28,145 closed accompanying child support periods (including cases with no information on service requirements or provision).
2. There were approximately 1,400 closed accompanying child support periods where information was recorded on the provision and referral of services for children but no need was expressed for those services by either the client or the accompanying child (AIHW 2006c:55).
3. In groups of service types, an accompanying child may require more than one type of service within the group. Percentages for broad groups relate to all needs and not to support periods. For individual types of services, a need can be recorded only once within a support period, so percentages relate to accompanying child support periods.
4. The 18 individual service types have been grouped into seven major classifications as follows:
 - SAAP or CAP accommodation;
 - school liaison and child care;
 - counselling—including help with behavioural problems, sexual or physical abuse counselling or support, skills education, and general counselling or support;
 - general support or advocacy—including access arrangements, advice or information, brokerage services and advocacy;
 - health or medical services;
 - culturally sensitive services; and
 - basic support and services not elsewhere specified—including meals, showers or hygiene services, recreation, transport and other support not elsewhere specified.
5. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

4 One-off assistance to casual clients

This chapter examines the casual contacts made during the fortnight of the Casual Client Collection (2–15 March 2005), the different types of one-off assistance that were provided and the number of people receiving one-off-assistance.

One-off assistance includes being given a meal, a shower, transport, money, clothing, telephone advice, information, or a referral. People who receive one-off assistance may be potential clients, clients of another SAAP agency, or people who only want one-off assistance (see Figure 2.1). For example, a person might be accommodated at one SAAP agency, but seek meals from another agency.

During the 2 weeks of the Casual Client Collection, there were 25,160 casual contacts made by an estimated 26,840 individuals (Table 2.2).⁴ This corresponded to an estimated daily average of 1,797 casual contacts by 1,917 individuals (Table 2.1).

4.1 Requesting group

On average, 1.8 types of one-off assistance were provided during a casual client contact (Table 4.1). The average number of types of assistance provided during a casual contact varied between the different presenting groups, ranging from 2.2 for people who presented with children to 1.4 for people in the 'other' or unknown group.

People presenting alone accounted for 69% of casual client contacts by individuals. The next largest proportion of casual contacts by individuals was by individuals presenting with children (16%). A relatively small number of casual contacts were made by the three remaining presenting groups: couples with or without children, and those in the other or unknown group (5% each).

The most common types of one-off assistance provided to groups of casual clients were information (in 57% of contacts), meals (29%) and other services (25%). However, the level of provision of the eight types of assistance varied between the different presenting groups. Information, referrals, and emotional support were provided in larger proportions of casual contacts to an individual who presented with children than any other client group. In particular, information was provided to individuals with children in 83% of casual contacts by groups, compared with 51% of contacts when an individual presented alone or with an unrelated person.

Meals and laundry and/or shower facilities were provided more often to people in the other or unknown client group and to people who presented alone or with an unrelated person. People with children were more likely than the other client groups to receive emotional

⁴ The figures for casual client contacts are likely to be an underestimation because not all in-scope agencies participated in the Casual Client Collection. Between 2–15 March 2005, 70% of in-scope SAAP agencies participated in the Casual Client Collection (Table A2.3). Further, the method used to estimate the number of individuals may also lead to an underestimate (see note 2, Table 4.1).

support (in 42% of contacts by groups compared with between 13% and 31% for the other presenting groups).

4.2 State and territory

During the 2004–05 Casual Client Collection period, the average number of types of one-off assistance provided per contact did not vary greatly between the states and territories, ranging from 1.5 in Queensland to 2.2 in the Northern Territory (Table 4.2).

However, the amount of one-off assistance provided did vary between the states and territories. Queensland accounted for 38% (9,260) of contacts, followed by Victoria (22% or 5,410 contacts) and New South Wales (18% or 4,330 contacts). Not surprisingly, the smaller jurisdictions had much lower proportions of casual contacts: Tasmania and the Northern Territory each accounted for 1% and the Australian Capital Territory 2%. This pattern was repeated when looking at the number of individuals who made up those contacts.

There were also differences between the states and territories in the types of one-off assistance provided (Table 4.2). For example, Tasmania had the highest proportion of contacts where information was provided (86% compared with between 41% and 74% in the other states and territories) and the lowest proportion of contacts in which meals were provided (5%), while Queensland reported the highest proportion of meals provided (44% compared with between 5% and 35%) and the lowest proportion of contacts in which a referral to another organisation was made (13% compared with between 18% and 32%). The provision of emotional support and financial assistance and material aid were highest in the Northern Territory, with 39% of contacts involving emotional support (compared with between 14% and 33%) and 18% involving financial assistance and material aid (compared with between 5% and 12%). South Australia had a higher proportion of casual contacts in which laundry and shower facilities were provided (14% compared with between 2% and 9% for the other states and territories).

4.3 Tables

Table 4.1: SAAP casual contacts: one-off assistance provided, by presenting group, Australia, 2-15 March 2005 (per cent contacts)

One-off assistance provided	Person alone	Person with children	Couple without children	Couple with children	Other/ unknown	Total	
						%	Number
Information	50.8	83.1	77.7	80.9	31.5	57.0	14,070
Referral arranged	17.7	36.9	32.1	34.8	11.5	21.5	5,320
Emotional support	17.8	42.2	23.6	31.1	12.6	22.3	5,510
Meals	33.5	6.4	16.7	14.2	58.5	29.0	7,150
Financial/material aid	10.0	12.9	17.3	16.6	8.7	10.8	2,680
Transport	5.4	5.2	5.1	4.9	2.1	5.2	1,290
Laundry/shower facilities	9.8	1.4	4.3	0.9	5.2	7.8	1,920
Other	24.8	28.9	26.3	25.3	10.7	25.0	6,160
Total (% contacts)	73.2	17.2	2.5	2.7	4.3	100.0	..
Total (number of contacts)	18,060	4,250	620	670	1,070	..	24,670
Mean number of types of one-off assistance provided	1.7	2.2	2.0	2.1	1.4	..	1.8
Contacts by individuals (%)	68.6	16.2	4.7	5.1	5.4	100.0	..
Contacts by individuals (number)	18,060	4,250	1,250	1,340	1,420	..	26,320

Notes

1. Cases excluded due to missing data: 494 contacts; 520 contacts by individuals.
2. In the Casual Client Collection, casual contacts are reported for the group receiving assistance. Casual contacts by individuals have been derived from data on 'person(s) receiving assistance' in a contact (see questionnaire in Appendix 3). 'Person alone' and 'person with children' are counted as a contact by one individual, and couples (with or without children) are counted as contacts by two individuals. Presenting units classified as 'other' are also counted as contacts by two individuals. Cases where there is no information on the type of presenting unit are counted as a contact by one individual. Although this approach will lead to an understatement of the number of individuals, this understatement will be less than if contacts of unknown composition were counted as missing.
3. Estimates of contacts by individuals exclude the number of children accompanying casual clients.
4. In any casual contact, the assisted group was able to receive more than one type of one-off assistance, so 'one-off assistance provided' percentages do not total 100.
5. 'Other/unknown' includes those cases where the assisted unit was reported as 'other' or where it was not reported at all.
6. Figures are unweighted.

Source: SAAP Casual Client Collection.

Table 4.2: SAAP casual contacts: one-off assistance provided, by state and territory, Australia, 2–15 March 2005 (per cent contacts)

One-off assistance provided	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia	
									%	Number
Information	69.8	73.4	40.7	49.2	61.5	86.1	66.4	74.2	57.0	14,070
Referral arranged	31.2	29.3	12.6	18.0	20.1	31.3	31.5	28.3	21.5	5,320
Emotional support	30.2	29.6	13.9	19.0	22.3	32.8	30.7	39.0	22.3	5,510
Meals	8.3	23.9	43.7	34.9	15.7	4.8	32.4	10.4	29.0	7,150
Financial/ material aid	9.3	10.7	11.9	9.7	11.7	5.1	10.2	17.6	10.8	2,680
Transport	11.0	3.4	3.6	7.0	2.0	3.3	4.4	10.1	5.2	1,290
Laundry/shower facilities	4.8	5.9	9.4	7.9	13.9	1.5	9.2	2.2	7.8	1,920
Other	34.7	29.7	18.2	20.8	28.1	21.7	22.1	36.8	25.0	6,160
Total (% contacts)	17.6	21.9	37.5	10.9	7.1	1.3	2.4	1.3	100.0	..
Total (number of contacts)	4,330	5,410	9,260	2,690	1,740	330	590	320	..	24,670
Mean number of types of one-off assistance provided	2.0	2.1	1.5	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.1	2.2	..	1.8
Contacts by individuals (%)	17.2	22.1	37.4	10.8	7.4	1.3	2.3	1.4	100.0	..
Contacts by individuals (number)	4,530	5,820	9,860	2,850	1,940	350	620	360	..	26,320

Notes

1. Cases excluded due to missing data: 494 contacts; 520 contacts by individuals.
2. In the Casual Client Collection, casual contacts are reported for the group receiving assistance. Casual contacts by individuals have been derived from data on 'person(s) receiving assistance' in a contact (see questionnaire in Appendix 3). 'Person alone' and 'person with children' are counted as a contact by one individual, and couples (with or without children) are counted as contacts by two individuals. Presenting units classified as 'other' are also counted as contacts by two individuals. Cases where there is no information on the type of presenting unit are counted as a contact by one individual. Although this approach will lead to an understatement of the number of individuals, this understatement will be less than if contacts of unknown composition were counted as missing.
3. Estimates of contacts by individuals exclude the number of children accompanying casual clients.
4. In any casual contact the assisted group was able to receive more than one type of one-off assistance, so 'one-off assistance provided' percentages do not total 100.
5. Figures are unweighted.

Source: SAAP Casual Client Collection.

5 One-off assistance to groups with unmet requests for SAAP accommodation

People who request SAAP accommodation may not always receive that accommodation (see Chapter 6 for the reasons that agencies may be unable to provide accommodation).

However, potential clients may still receive casual or one-off assistance despite the fact that the agency is unable to provide them with accommodation. For example, a potential client whose request for SAAP accommodation cannot be met may still receive one-off assistance such as information or a meal.

5.1 State and territory

Table 5.1 shows the types of one-off assistance provided to potential clients with unmet requests for accommodation in each state and territory during the 2 weeks of the Demand for Accommodation Collection. During this period there were 8,560 unmet requests for accommodation made by individuals or groups. At least one type of one-off assistance was provided following 85% (7,280) of these requests (derived from Table 5.1). On average 1.9 services were provided to individuals or groups who had an unmet request for accommodation.

Information was the most common type of one-off assistance, provided following 76% of unmet requests for SAAP accommodation. Referrals for accommodation were also frequently arranged, following 50% of unmet requests. Emotional support was provided following 25% of unmet requests, and referrals for non-accommodation services were provided following 19% of unmet requests. All other types of assistance, such as meals and transport, were each provided following 3% to 7% of unmet requests. No one-off assistance was provided to groups or individuals following 15% of unmet requests for accommodation.

There were noticeable differences between states and territories in terms of the types of one-off assistance received following an unmet request for accommodation. For example, information was provided following 84% of unmet requests for accommodation in Victoria compared with 60% in the Australian Capital Territory; emotional support ranged from 34% in South Australia to 15% in Western Australia; and transport ranged from 20% in the Northern Territory to 3% in Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory. Referrals for accommodation were highest in the Northern Territory at 61%, compared with between 44% and 55% in the other states and territory. The proportion of unmet requests where no casual assistance was provided ranged from 24% in the Australian Capital Territory to 9% in Victoria.

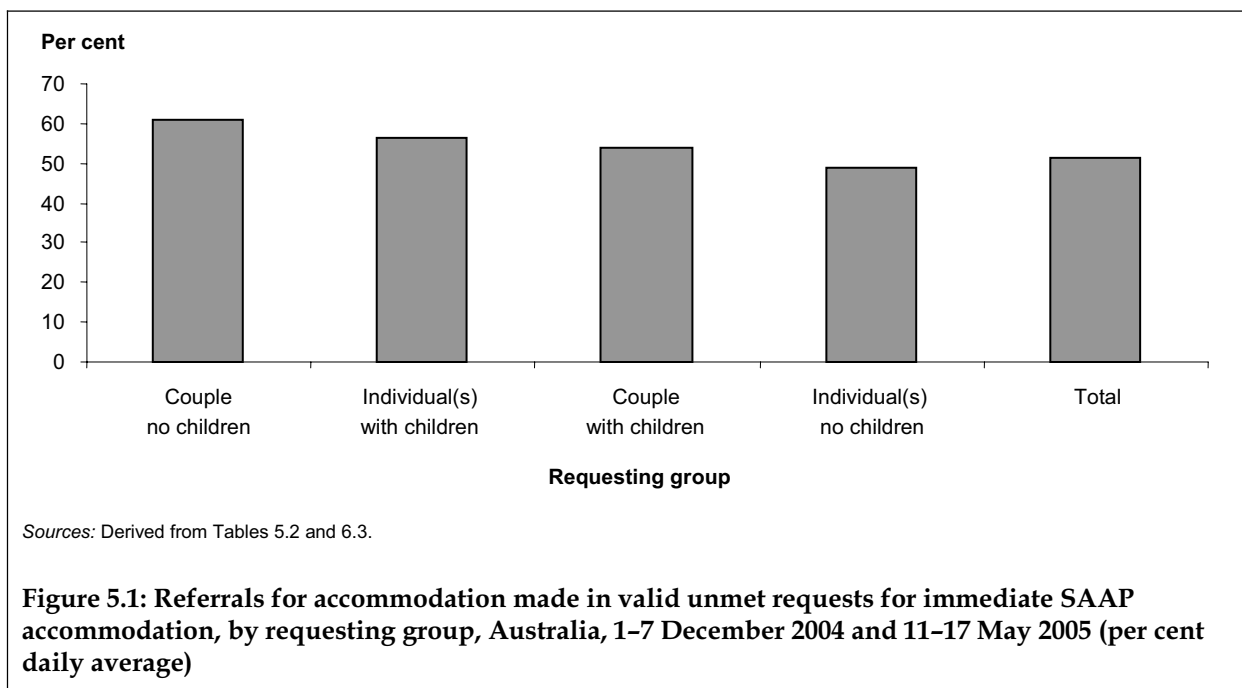
5.2 Referrals for accommodation

In order to inform the discussion in Chapter 9 regarding the capacity of SAAP to deal with the demand for SAAP accommodation, it is necessary to examine whether attempts were

made to secure accommodation at another source when people were turned away. As it is not possible to determine whether a referral for accommodation was made for all or part of a requesting group, and accommodation that was required within 24 hours is of particular concern in the context of homelessness, referrals are examined based on valid unmet requests for immediate SAAP accommodation. For definition of a valid unmet request refer to the Glossary and Chapter 6.

On an average day during the Demand for Accommodation Collection period, there were 128 referrals for accommodation made following 251 valid unmet requests for immediate SAAP accommodation (Tables 5.2 and 6.3). Individual(s) with no children who could not be accommodated had the most referrals for accommodation made (60% of valid unmet requests for immediate accommodation in which a referral for accommodation was made), followed by individual(s) with children (33%), couples with accompanying children (4%) and couples without accompanying children (3%) (Table 5.2).

However, when considered as a proportion of the valid unmet requests for immediate accommodation made on an average day by each group, referrals for accommodation were more often made for couples without children (Figure 5.1). Couples without children had a referral for accommodation arranged in 61% of their valid unmet requests for immediate accommodation, and individual(s) with children had a referral for accommodation arranged in 56% of their valid unmet requests for immediate accommodation. This was followed by couples with children (54%) and individual(s) without children (49%).



5.3 Tables

Table 5.1: Groups with unmet requests for SAAP accommodation: one-off assistance provided, by state and territory, Australia, 1-7 December 2004 and 11-17 May 2005 (per cent contacts by groups)

One-off assistance provided	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia	
									%	Number
Information	69.6	84.4	76.0	73.6	82.5	74.3	59.9	77.7	76.3	6,530
Referral for accommodation	51.2	44.3	53.7	52.7	45.7	45.0	54.7	60.9	49.6	4,250
Referral for non-accommodation	20.4	20.6	14.7	21.3	19.7	20.5	17.2	25.0	19.3	1,650
Emotional support	23.6	30.1	23.9	15.1	33.9	21.6	17.6	25.0	25.2	2,160
Meals	6.4	4.9	5.2	3.2	7.3	9.4	2.6	9.2	5.6	480
Financial assistance/ material aid	5.4	8.9	6.0	5.8	9.8	5.8	1.9	8.2	6.8	580
Transport	4.9	4.7	2.7	4.3	4.1	5.8	3.0	19.6	4.6	390
Laundry/shower facilities	2.8	2.2	3.8	1.5	1.2	4.4	0.4	7.1	2.7	230
Other	4.3	5.5	2.3	5.4	7.0	0.9	3.4	5.4	4.4	370
None	20.2	9.2	14.6	18.1	10.7	17.8	23.6	10.9	15.0	1,280
Total (%)	26.8	26.5	20.9	8.7	7.7	4.0	3.1	2.2	100.0	..
Total (number)	2,290	2,270	1,790	750	660	340	270	180	..	8,560
Mean number of types of assistance provided	1.9	2.1	1.9	1.8	2.1	1.9	1.6	2.4	..	1.9

Notes

1. Cases excluded due to missing data: 0.
2. Table excludes accompanying children.
3. Groups seeking assistance were able to receive more than one type of one-off assistance, so percentages do not total 100.
4. Only data from agencies that participated in both the Client Collection and the Demand for Accommodation Collection are included. Consequently, the figures understate the level of activity in SAAP agencies.
5. Figures are unweighted.

Source: SAAP Demand for Accommodation Collection.

Table 5.2: Groups with *valid* unmet requests for *immediate* SAAP accommodation: referrals for accommodation, by requesting group and state and territory, Australia, 1-7 December 2004 and 11-17 May 2005 (daily average number)

Referral for accommodation	Individual(s) no children	Individual(s) with children	Couple no children	Couple with children	Total	
					%	Number
NSW	24.2	11.0	1.2	0.8	28.9	37.2
Vic	17.7	5.3	0.6	0.6	18.8	24.3
Qld	15.9	12.0	1.0	2.0	24.0	30.9
WA	8.1	5.3	0.1	0.8	11.1	14.4
SA	3.7	3.2	0.4	0.3	5.9	7.6
Tas	2.6	2.1	—	0.1	3.8	4.9
ACT	4.2	2.0	—	0.1	4.9	6.4
NT	1.3	2.0	—	—	2.6	3.3
Total (number)	77.9	42.9	3.4	4.7	..	128.9
Total (%)	60.4	33.3	2.7	3.7	100.0	..

Notes

1. Cases excluded due to missing data: 0.
2. Table excludes accompanying children.
3. For the definitions of 'valid unmet requests' and 'immediate accommodation', refer to the Glossary.
4. Only data from agencies that participated in both the Client Collection and the Demand for Accommodation Collection are included. Consequently, the figures understate the level of activity in SAAP agencies.
5. Figures are unweighted.

Source: SAAP Demand for Accommodation Collection.

Table 5.3: Groups with *valid* unmet requests for *immediate* SAAP accommodation: referrals for accommodation, by primary target group and state and territory, Australia, 1-7 December 2004 and 11-17 May 2005 (daily average number)

Referral for accommodation	Young people	Single men only	Single women only	Families	Women escaping DV	Cross-target/multiple/general	Total	
							%	Number
NSW	8.0	4.6	1.4	3.1	10.7	9.4	28.9	37.2
Vic	6.1	1.3	1.6	2.2	2.2	10.9	18.8	24.3
Qld	7.9	0.7	0.4	5.5	4.0	12.4	24.0	30.9
WA	3.6	2.5	—	1.8	4.6	1.9	11.1	14.4
SA	1.6	1.2	0.9	1.9	1.4	0.6	5.9	7.6
Tas	0.6	—	—	—	—	4.2	3.8	4.9
ACT	0.2	2.4	1.1	0.9	1.9	—	4.9	6.4
NT	0.7	0.3	—	0.1	0.6	1.5	2.6	3.3
Total (number)	28.8	12.9	5.4	15.5	25.4	40.9	..	128.9
Total (%)	22.3	10.0	4.2	12.0	19.7	31.8	100.0	..

Notes

1. Cases excluded due to missing data: 0.
2. Table excludes accompanying children.
3. For the definitions of 'valid unmet requests' and 'immediate accommodation', refer to the Glossary.
4. Only data from agencies that participated in both the Client Collection and the Demand for Accommodation Collection are included. Consequently, the figures understate the level of activity in SAAP agencies.
5. Figures are unweighted.

Source: SAAP Demand for Accommodation Collection.

6 Unmet requests for SAAP accommodation

This chapter focuses on the number of unmet requests for SAAP accommodation made by individuals and groups during the Demand for Accommodation Collection. Unmet requests are broken down into valid and invalid requests, and valid requests are discussed in relation to when the requested accommodation was needed. The separation between valid and invalid requests is made because many of the requests for accommodation were made at inappropriate agencies or the offered accommodation was refused by the person or group who requested it. Consequently, the number of valid unmet requests is a more useful measure of unmet demand than using all unmet requests.

6.1 Valid and invalid unmet requests

People may be turned away from a SAAP agency for a variety of reasons and these reasons are classified to determine whether a request for accommodation is valid or invalid. Invalid requests for accommodation include people requesting assistance from an agency with the wrong target group (for example, a married couple approaching a single men's agency); when a person or group was inappropriate for the agency (for example, an intoxicated person); when there was no fee-free accommodation available; or when the offer of accommodation was refused by the requesting person or group. All other requests for accommodation are said to be valid.

Invalid requests

Table 6.1 shows that 2,290 (27%) of the 8,560 unmet requests for accommodation made during the collection period were invalid requests. In particular, 44% of invalid requests for SAAP accommodation were not met because the requesting person or group was in the wrong target group for the agency they approached. This was most likely to be the case for couples without children (60%), and for persons or groups requesting accommodation in Queensland (51%) (Tables 6.1 and 6.2).

There were 700 invalid requests where the person or group refused an offer of accommodation, which was 31% of all invalid requests (Table 6.1). The proportion of individual(s) both with and without children who had unmet requests for this reason was higher than that reported for couples both with and without children (35% and 30%, respectively, compared with 21% and 14%, respectively). The proportion of invalid requests where a person or group refused an offer of accommodation ranged from 43% in South Australia to 22% in Queensland (Table 6.2).

Twenty-two per cent of invalid requests for accommodation were refused because the person or group was inappropriate for the agency that they approached. This includes situations where the agency has judged that the person was inappropriate because the person requesting accommodation was intoxicated, violent or unwilling to abide by agency rules. This was more likely to be the case for individual(s) who presented without children (23%) and for requests for accommodation made in the Australian Capital Territory (27%) (Tables 6.1 and 6.2).

Four per cent of invalid requests for accommodation were unmet because there was no fee-free accommodation available. This was higher for couples with and without children (11% and 8%, respectively), while individuals with and without children had fewer unmet requests for this reason (3% and 4%, respectively) (Table 6.1). On a state and territory basis, invalid unmet requests for accommodation for this reason ranged from no requests in the Australian Capital Territory to 11% in Tasmania (Table 6.2).

Valid requests

Valid unmet requests for accommodation accounted for 73% (6,270) of the total unmet requests for SAAP accommodation made during the collection period (Table 6.1). Individual(s) who presented without children accounted for the largest proportion of valid unmet requests for accommodation (58% or 3,650); they were followed by individual(s) who presented with children (35% or 2,200). Couples with and without children accounted for only a small proportion of valid unmet requests for accommodation (5% and 2%, respectively). On a state and territory basis, Victoria reported the largest number of valid requests for accommodation (1,820 or 29%), while the Northern Territory reported the smallest number (110 or 2%) (Table 6.2).

The most common reason for valid requests for accommodation not being met was that there was insufficient accommodation available (3,800 or 61%) (Table 6.1). Couples with children had the highest proportion of valid unmet requests for this reason (67%) and individual(s) without children the lowest (58%). Tasmania had the highest proportion of valid requests for accommodation unmet because there was insufficient accommodation available (78%), while South Australia and New South Wales had the lowest proportion (both 53%) (Table 6.2).

Referral agencies having no vacancy on the books accounted for 1,310 (21%) of valid unmet requests (Table 6.1). Couples without children had a lower proportion of unmet requests for this reason (13%) than the other requesting groups, which were between 20% and 22%. On a state and territory basis, South Australia reported the largest proportion (27%) and Tasmania reported the smallest proportion (7%) of valid unmet requests for this reason (Table 6.2).

The type of accommodation requested not being provided by an agency accounted for 7% of valid unmet requests overall (Table 6.1). This was more likely to be the case for couples who presented without children (13%). On a state and territory basis, 10% of valid requests for accommodation in the Northern Territory were unmet for this reason, compared with 1% in the Australian Capital Territory (Table 6.2).

Insufficient staff to provide support and the unavailability of facilities designed to meet disability, cultural and other special needs accounted for small proportions of valid unmet requests for accommodation (1% each).

Daily average number of valid unmet requests for accommodation

On any day during the Demand for Accommodation Collection period, an average of 448 valid unmet requests for accommodation were made (Table 6.3). The majority of these were made by people who presented without children, with 269 (60%) made by individual(s) or couples who presented without children and 179 (40%) made by individual(s) or couples with children (derived from Table 6.3).

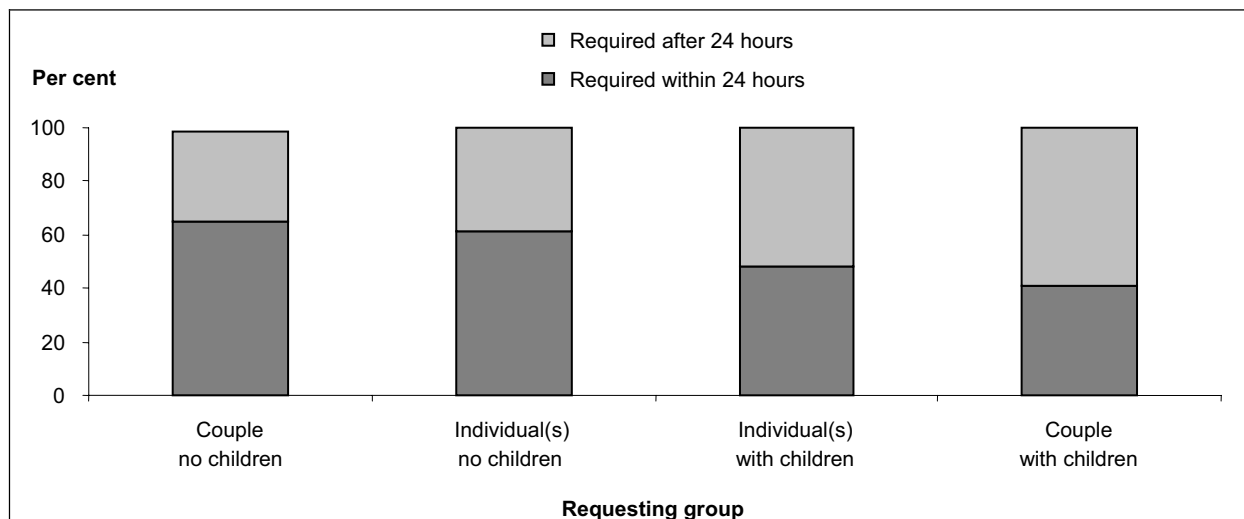
6.2 The immediacy of need for accommodation

In the context of homelessness, unmet requests for immediate accommodation (that is, accommodation required within 24 hours) is of particular importance. Fifty-six per cent of all valid unmet requests for accommodation were for immediate accommodation (Table 6.3). Valid unmet requests for accommodation required after 48 hours made up a significant proportion of the total (33%). Only 11% of valid unmet requests were for accommodation required within 24 to 48 hours.

Requesting group

Individual(s) without children accounted for the majority of the daily average valid unmet requests for immediate SAAP accommodation (64%). They also accounted for the majority of valid unmet requests for accommodation required after 24 hours (51%) (derived from Table 6.3).

On examining when accommodation was needed by requesting group it becomes clear that groups who had children with them tended to make requests for accommodation in advance of immediate need, that is they more often requested accommodation after 24 hours time (Figure 6.1). This might indicate that they plan for expected periods of homelessness more than people without children who more often requested accommodation within 24 hours.



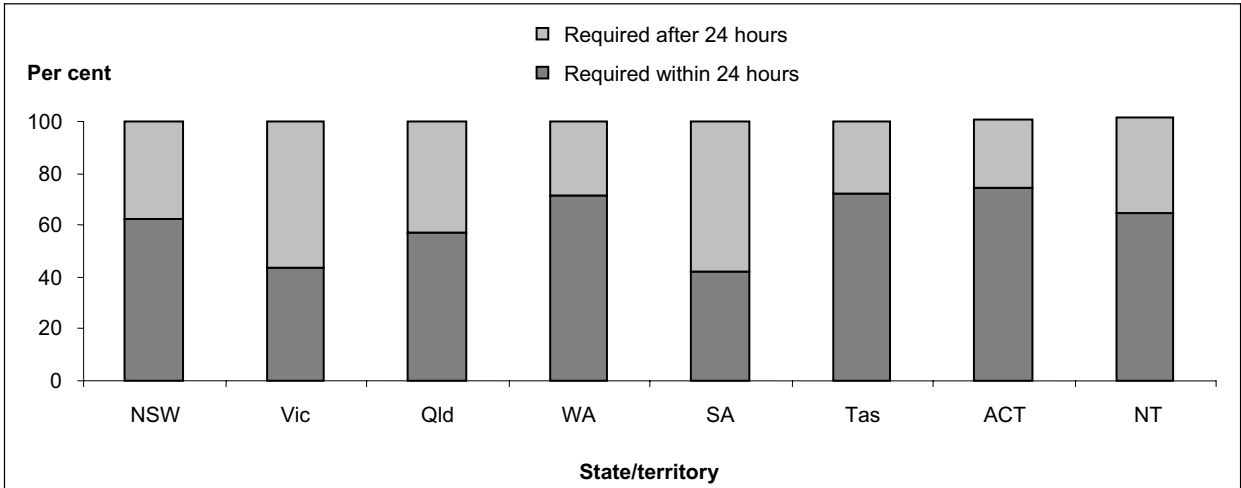
Source: Derived from Table 6.3.

Figure 6.1: Valid unmet requests for SAAP accommodation, requesting group by when accommodation was needed, Australia, 1-7 December 2004 and 11-17 May 2005 (per cent daily average)

State and territory

Victoria had the highest daily average of valid unmet requests for SAAP accommodation (130), followed by New South Wales (113) and Queensland (94) (Table 6.4).

Most states and territories had a larger proportion of valid unmet requests for accommodation required immediately, with the exception of Victoria and South Australia (Figure 6.2). Both of these states had a higher proportion of valid unmet requests for accommodation required after 24 hours.



Source: Derived from Table 6.4.

Figure 6.2: Valid unmet requests for SAAP accommodation, state and territory by when accommodation was needed, Australia, 1-7 December 2004 and 11-17 May 2005 (per cent daily average)

6.3 Tables

Table 6.1: Unmet requests for SAAP accommodation: main reason why request was not met, by requesting group, Australia, 1–7 December 2004 and 11–17 May 2005 (per cent requests by groups)

Main reason	Individual(s) no children	Individual(s) with children	Couple no children	Couple with children	Total	
					%	Number
Valid requests						
Insufficient accommodation available	57.9	64.2	59.2	67.4	60.6	3,800
Referral agency with no vacancies on books	20.8	21.6	12.5	20.1	20.9	1,310
Type of accommodation requested is not provided	7.8	6.0	13.3	7.0	7.2	450
Insufficient staff to provide support	1.4	0.7	3.3	0.3	1.1	70
Facilities for disability needs, cultural needs and other special needs not available	1.6	0.5	0.8	0.3	1.1	70
Other	10.5	7.0	10.8	4.7	9.0	570
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	58.2	35.1	1.9	4.8	100.0	..
Total (number)	3,650	2,200	120	300	..	6,270
Invalid requests						
Agency inappropriate—wrong target group	42.6	42.8	60.3	57.9	43.6	1,000
Person/group inappropriate for agency	23.3	19.1	17.9	10.5	21.8	500
No fee-free accommodation available	3.9	3.1	7.7	10.5	4.0	90
Person/group refused offer of accommodation	30.3	35.0	14.1	21.1	30.6	700
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	70.5	23.6	3.4	2.5	100.0	..
Total (number)	1,610	540	80	60	..	2,290
Total requests for accommodation	5,260	2,740	200	360	..	8,560

Notes

1. Cases excluded due to missing data: 0.
2. Adjustments have been made to allow for missing data (see Appendix 2).
3. Refer to Appendix 2 for notes on the composition of the requesting groups.
4. In a small number of cases, requests for SAAP accommodation were unmet because of the age of a male child (applicable to domestic violence agencies only). To ensure confidentiality, these cases are not presented separately but are included in the 'other' valid request category.
5. Only data from agencies that participated in both the Client Collection and the Demand for Accommodation Collection are included. Consequently, the figures understate the level of activity in SAAP agencies.
6. Figures are unweighted.

Source: SAAP Demand for Accommodation Collection.

Table 6.2: Unmet requests for SAAP accommodation: main reason why request was not met, by state and territory, Australia, 1–7 December 2004 and 11–17 May 2005 (per cent requests by groups)

Main reason	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total	
									%	Number
Valid requests										
Insufficient accommodation available	52.7	58.3	71.1	61.6	52.6	77.9	68.0	64.5	60.6	3,800
Referral agency with no vacancies on books	24.7	21.9	14.9	21.5	27.4	6.7	23.7	14.0	20.9	1,310
Type of accommodation requested is not provided	7.9	9.0	5.5	4.9	8.8	5.4	0.9	10.3	7.2	450
Insufficient staff to provide support	1.7	1.1	1.0	0.6	1.2	0.4	—	—	1.1	70
Facilities for disability needs, cultural needs and other special needs not available	1.8	0.9	0.6	1.6	0.8	2.1	—	2.8	1.1	70
Other	11.2	8.8	6.9	9.8	9.2	7.5	7.3	8.4	9.0	570
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	25.3	29.1	21.0	7.8	7.8	3.8	3.5	1.7	100.0	..
Total (number)	1,590	1,820	1,320	490	490	240	220	110	..	6,270
Invalid requests										
Agency inappropriate—wrong target group	49.6	33.5	51.1	39.9	32.6	35.3	47.9	46.8	43.6	1,000
Person/group inappropriate for agency	22.7	20.8	22.3	23.3	20.9	18.6	27.1	14.3	21.8	500
No fee-free accommodation available	0.7	9.2	4.4	1.6	3.5	10.8	—	5.2	4.0	90
Person/group refused offer of accommodation	27.1	36.6	22.3	35.3	43.0	35.3	25.0	33.8	30.6	700
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	30.9	19.6	20.8	11.3	7.5	4.5	2.1	3.4	100.0	..
Total (number)	710	450	480	260	170	100	50	80	..	2,290
Total requests for accommodation	2,290	2,270	1,790	750	660	340	270	180	..	8,560

Notes

1. Cases excluded due to missing data: 0.
2. Adjustments have been made for missing data (see Appendix 2).
3. In a small number of cases, requests for SAAP accommodation were unmet because of the age of a male child (applicable to domestic violence agencies only). To ensure confidentiality, these cases are not presented separately but are included in the 'other' valid request category.
4. Only data from agencies that participated in both the Client Collection and the Demand for Accommodation Collection are included. Consequently, the figures understate the level of activity in SAAP agencies.
5. Figures are unweighted.

Source: SAAP Demand for Accommodation Collection.

Table 6.3: Estimated valid unmet requests for SAAP accommodation, by requesting group and when accommodation was needed, Australia, 1–7 December 2004 and 11–17 May 2005 (daily average number)

Requesting group	Required within 24 hours	Required in 24–48 hours	Required after 48 hours	Total	
				%	Number
Individual(s) no children	160.1	22.1	78.6	58.2	260.8
Individual(s) with children	76.0	21.6	59.7	35.1	157.3
Couple no children	5.6	0.5	2.4	1.9	8.6
Couple with children	8.7	3.8	8.8	4.8	21.3
Total (number)	250.5	47.9	149.5	..	447.9
Total (%)	55.9	10.7	33.4	100.0	..

Notes

1. Cases excluded due to missing data: 0.
2. Adjustments have been made for missing data (see Appendix 2).
3. Refer to Appendix 2 for notes on the composition of the requesting groups.
4. People may make more than one request for accommodation in a day. Data in this table are based on all valid unmet requests made by the person/group (see Glossary).
5. Only data from agencies that participated in both the Client Collection and the Demand for Accommodation Collection are included. Consequently, the figures understate the level of activity in SAAP agencies.
6. Figures are unweighted.

Source: SAAP Demand for Accommodation Collection.

Table 6.4: Estimated valid unmet requests for SAAP accommodation, by state and territory and when accommodation was needed, 1–7 December 2004 and 11–17 May 2005 (daily average number)

State/territory	Required within 24 hours	Required in 24–48 hours	Required after 48 hours	Total	
				%	Number
NSW	70.9	9.4	33.1	25.3	113.4
Vic	57.3	13.4	59.6	29.1	130.3
Qld	53.9	14.4	25.6	21.0	93.9
WA	24.9	2.3	7.7	7.8	34.9
SA	14.6	5.1	15.2	7.8	34.9
Tas	12.4	1.2	3.5	3.8	17.1
ACT	11.6	1.3	2.8	3.5	15.6
NT	4.9	0.8	2.0	1.7	7.6
Total (number)	250.5	47.9	149.5	..	447.9
Total (%)	55.9	10.7	33.4	100.0	..

Notes

1. Cases excluded from table due to missing data: 0.
2. Adjustments have been made for missing data (see Appendix 2).
3. People may make more than one request for accommodation in a day. Data in this table are based on all valid unmet requests made by the person/group (see Glossary).
4. Only data from agencies that participated in both the Client Collection and the Demand for Accommodation Collection are included. Consequently, the figures understate the level of activity in SAAP agencies.
5. Figures are unweighted.

Source: SAAP Demand for Accommodation Collection.

