

1 Introduction

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program

This report provides an overview of assistance given to clients of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP). SAAP was established in 1985 to consolidate a number of Australian Government and state and territory government programs designed to assist people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless, including women and children escaping domestic violence.

The current program (SAAP IV) is governed by the *Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994*. This specifies that the overall aim of SAAP is to provide transitional supported accommodation and related support services to help homeless people achieve the maximum possible degree of self-reliance and independence.

In 2003–04, 1,300 non-government, community or local government agencies were funded nationally under the program (Table 2.3). Such agencies range from small stand-alone agencies with single outlets to larger auspice bodies with multiple outlets. They provide accommodation and support services to a range of groups: families, single men, single women, young people, and women and children escaping domestic violence.

The SAAP National Data Collection

The main source of data on the provision of services through SAAP is the SAAP National Data Collection, which consists of a number of distinct components, each of which can be thought of as a separate collection. Currently, four components exist: the Client Collection, the Administrative Data Collection, the Demand for Accommodation Collection (formerly the Unmet Demand Collection), and the Casual Client Collection.

This report mainly presents analysis of the Client Collection. Some analysis of funding using the Administrative Data Collection is also presented to provide context. The Client Collection consists of information about all clients receiving SAAP support lasting more than 1 hour, whereas the Administrative Data Collection consists of general information about the agencies providing the services used by these clients. Appendix 1 provides an overview of these collections; further details are available in the *Demand for SAAP Assistance by Homeless People 2002–03* report (AIHW 2004b).

Accurate interpretation of the analyses presented here requires an understanding of the particular concepts and terms used in the National Data Collection. A glossary of terms is therefore included at the beginning of this report. In addition, readers are encouraged to consult Appendix 1, which contains important information about estimation methods, measurement of concepts, examples for table interpretation, and counting rules used in the analyses in this report. Appendix 2 contains copies of the client form and the high-volume client form used to collect data in 2003–04. The National Data Collection Agency's (NDCA) collectors' manual (AIHW 2001) also contains information that can aid in the use and interpretation of the data presented here.

Structure and content of this report

Data in this report relate to the financial year ending 30 June 2004. Although most tables provide information about both completed and ongoing support periods, analyses of the

duration of support and accommodation and of data items relating to client circumstances after support are necessarily limited to completed support periods only. In addition, some tables contain data for the 8 years that the National Data Collection has been conducted, and others report for the past 5 years. Note that although most estimates are adjusted for client non-consent and/or agency non-participation (see Appendix 1), no allowance has been made for agencies that provide forms for some but not all of their support periods. Estimates of accompanying children have also been adjusted for client non-consent and agency non-participation.

The analyses in this report are divided into eight main areas. Chapter 2 provides details of resources allocated under SAAP; Chapter 3 presents a discussion of the number of support periods and accompanying child support periods provided by SAAP agencies; Chapter 4 outlines the demographic characteristics of clients and accompanying children; Chapter 5 analyses client groups and explores why clients sought assistance; and Chapter 6 provides analyses of the length of support periods and accommodation for clients, and the type of support provided to clients and accompanying children. Chapter 7 contains analyses of the services required by clients and for accompanying children and how agencies met these needs. The circumstances of clients before and after support periods in terms of income source, accommodation, living situation and employment are examined in Chapter 8. Finally, Chapter 9 presents comparisons of data from 1996-97 to 2003-04. Detailed tables follow the discussion in each chapter.

Estimates presented in this report are subject to revision. Revised tables, along with the reports themselves, are posted on the web site of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) (www.aihw.gov.au). Regional tables and counts for all data items collected are available in hard copy or electronic format on request from the NDCA (ndca@aihw.gov.au).

A further report that includes coverage of the Demand for Accommodation and Casual Client Collections for 2003-04, and a thematic report on a yet-to-be decided topic, will be released in 2005.

2 Funding

In 2003–04 funding for the SAAP agencies operating across Australia was provided jointly by the Australian Government (through the Department of Family and Community Services) and the state and territory governments. This chapter analyses information about the resources allocated to the 1,300 SAAP agencies funded during 2003–04. Not all of these agencies were operating throughout the year: at 30 June 2004, 1,291 were operating.

Total funding

Data provided by Australian Government and state and territory government departments responsible for administering SAAP show that the total recurrent allocation for SAAP nationally was \$303.8m in 2003–04 (Table 2.1). Current funding is based on a combination of funding levels that were agreed on and implemented at SAAP's inception in 1985 and growth funds for SAAP IV which are based on state and territory populations. However, in 2003–04, four jurisdictions reported recurrent allocations in addition to the amounts determined in the agreements between those jurisdictions and the Australian Government. Table 2.1 shows that an additional \$17.6m was provided by Victoria (78%), Queensland (3%), Western Australia (7%) and the Australian Capital Territory (13%). When this is taken into account, the total recurrent SAAP allocations nationally were 321.4m.

Of the total recurrent allocations, \$308.7m represented recurrent allocations to SAAP agencies (Table 2.3); the remaining \$12.7m was allocated for purposes such as administration, training, data collection, research and evaluation.¹

Table 2.2 shows the distribution of all recurrent SAAP funds by state and territory, and compares this with the distribution of the Australian population and of support periods and accompanying child support periods provided by agencies. As population numbers and characteristics vary across the states and territories, population figures allow more meaningful comparisons of the level of SAAP use across Australia. Note that the number of support periods and accompanying child support periods are not indicative of the per capita size of the homeless population. They are only indicative of the number of people accessing SAAP and are used only as a broad summary measure of the amount of support provided by agencies, recognising that the level of assistance provided varies considerably with each support period.

The distribution of funds varied from the proportions of the population in the various states and territories, with some jurisdictions getting relatively more funding than other states (Table 2.2). In particular, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory had 10% of the funding but only 5% of the population at 30 June 2003. On the other hand, 19% of the population lived in Queensland, but that state had only 15% of SAAP funding.

The level of support provided in a jurisdiction does not always reflect the level of funding. In particular, whereas New South Wales had 35% of the funding allocation, agencies in this state supplied 24% of the total support periods and accompanying child support periods.

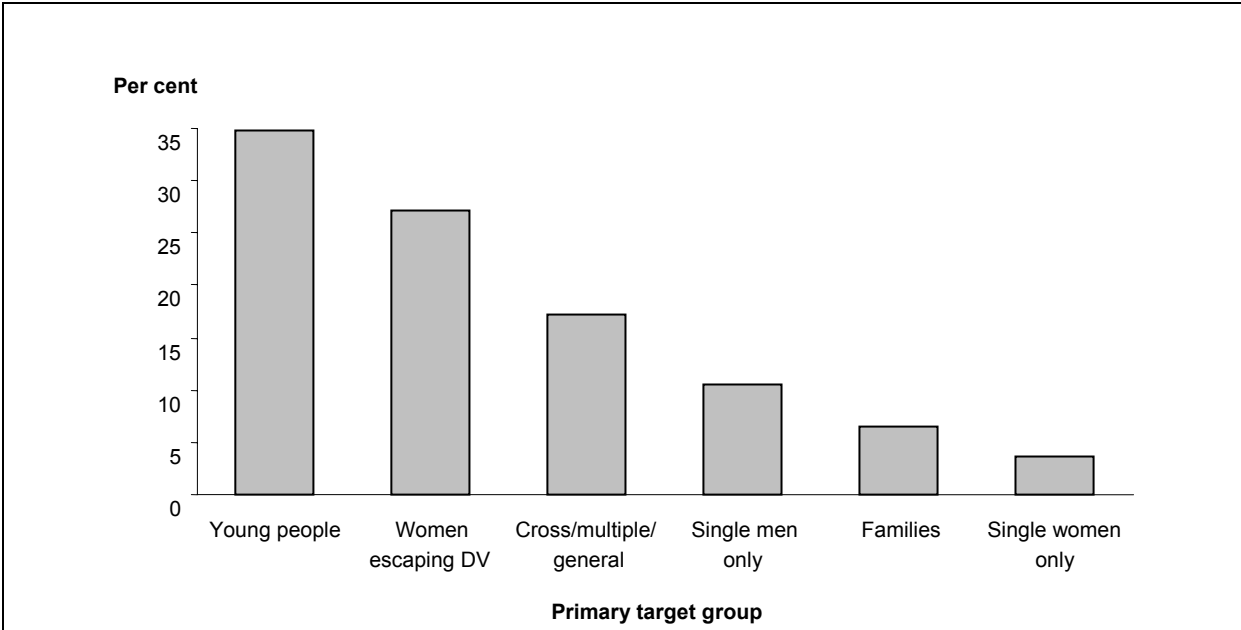
¹ The amount that can be used for administrative purposes by state and territory funding departments is determined by a formula set out under their bilateral SAAP agreements with the Australian Government.

Conversely, agencies in Victoria provided 36% of the total support periods and accompanying child support periods, but had 23% of the funds. These differences between the distributions of support and funding may reflect different approaches to service provision, rather than differences in the relative amount of support provided.

Funding to agencies

Agencies receive recurrent funds for salaries and ongoing operating costs to enable them to provide support to clients. The size of an agency and the types of services it provides affect the level of funding allocated. Caution is therefore recommended when comparing average funding per agency or using such figures to measure efficiency, since different agencies provide different services.

As noted, the total recurrent allocation for all SAAP agencies across Australia in 2003–04 was \$308.7m. Table 2.3 shows recurrent allocations to SAAP agencies and mean (average) funding per agency by state and territory, region and primary target group. In general, the number of agencies funded increases with the level of funding. The average level of funding per agency was \$237,500. There was, however, a considerable range in the average funding level per agency across the states and territories. Agencies in Tasmania received the highest average funding per agency at \$323,800, whereas agencies in Victoria received the lowest at \$191,600. Average funding was between \$199,500 and \$293,900 per agency in the other states and territories.



Source: Table 2.3.

Figure 2.1: Recurrent funding allocations by primary target group, Australia, 2003–04 (per cent)

Over half (56%) of all agencies were located in capital cities and 22% were located in other rural areas. This compares with 7% in other metropolitan centres, 9% in large rural centres and 7% in remote areas. In capital city areas, agencies were funded at an average cost of \$268,900, and agencies in other metropolitan areas received average funding of \$240,800.

Agencies in large rural centres were allocated, on average, \$235,300. The allocation of funds to agencies in other rural areas and remote areas was lower per agency than for other regions, with average allocations of \$175,100 and \$181,800 respectively.

As expected from their large number, and as Figure 2.1 illustrates, agencies targeting young people (37% of agencies) received the largest proportion of SAAP recurrent allocations, with 35% of the total funds, or \$107.3m (Table 2.3). Agencies targeting women escaping domestic violence (22 % of agencies) received the next largest allocation of recurrent funds, at 27% or \$83.7m. The small number of agencies targeting single women only (4%, or 47) received the smallest overall proportion of recurrent funds, at 4% or around \$11.5m. In terms of funding per agency, agencies targeting single men had the highest average allocation (\$338,900). Agencies for women escaping domestic violence also tended to have relatively large allocations, averaging \$289,800, whereas family agencies and agencies with cross-target, multiple or general target groups were allocated the lowest average amounts per agency (\$161,900 and \$199,300 respectively). Agencies for single women and young people were allocated an average of \$245,100 and \$225,500, respectively.

2.1 Tables

Table 2.1: SAAP funding: total recurrent allocations, by state and territory, Australia, 2003–04

State/ territory	Australian–state government agreement recurrent allocations		State-only recurrent allocations		Total recurrent allocations	
	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%
NSW	110,873,000	36.5	n.a.	0.0	110,873,000	34.5
Vic	60,783,000	20.0	13,615,000	77.5	74,398,000	23.1
Qld	47,066,000	15.5	465,000	2.6	47,531,000	14.8
WA	28,407,000	9.3	1,137,000	6.5	29,544,000	9.2
SA	26,114,000	8.6	n.a.	0.0	26,114,000	8.1
Tas	12,194,000	4.0	n.a.	0.0	12,194,000	3.8
ACT	10,465,000	3.4	2,360,000	13.4	12,825,000	4.0
NT	7,935,000	2.6	n.a.	0.0	7,935,000	2.5
Total	303,837,000	100.0	17,576,000	100.0	321,413,000	100.0

Notes

1. 'Total recurrent allocations' include funds not allocated to agencies, e.g. funds allocated for administration, training, research and evaluation. Included in this amount is \$2,300,000 for National Research and Development.
2. 'State-only recurrent allocations' as shown in the table are in addition to the SAAP funding agreement between that state and the Australian Government. The states and territories generally provide additional funds for supporting SAAP activities which are not part of the SAAP agreement. Additional funds provided by other states and territories were not reported and are not shown here.

Sources: SAAP Client Collection; FaCS unpublished data; ABS 2004d.

Table 2.2: SAAP funding: support periods, accompanying child support periods, Australian population and total recurrent allocations, by state and territory, Australia, 2003-04

State/ territory	Total Australian population		Total recurrent allocations		Support periods		Accompanying child support periods		Total support	
	Number	%	\$	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
NSW	6,682,000	33.6	110,873,000	34.5	48,600	26.0	12,900	17.6	61,500	23.6
Vic	4,911,000	24.7	74,398,000	23.1	67,200	35.9	25,700	35.1	92,900	35.7
Qld	3,801,000	19.1	47,531,000	14.8	28,400	15.2	11,100	15.2	39,500	15.2
WA	1,950,000	9.8	29,544,000	9.2	13,800	7.4	7,900	10.8	21,700	8.3
SA	1,526,000	7.7	26,114,000	8.1	14,700	7.9	9,100	12.4	23,800	9.1
Tas	477,000	2.4	12,194,000	3.8	6,600	3.5	2,700	3.7	9,300	3.6
ACT	323,000	1.6	12,825,000	4.0	3,000	1.6	1,100	1.5	4,100	1.6
NT	199,000	1.0	7,935,000	2.5	4,800	2.6	2,600	3.6	7,400	2.8
Total	19,873,000	100.0	321,413,000	100.0	187,200	100.0	73,200	100.0	260,400	100.0

Notes

1. 'Total Australian population' refers to the estimated resident population at 30 June 2003 (final estimates). Residents of external territories have been excluded from the total.
2. 'Total recurrent allocations' include funds not allocated to agencies, e.g. funds allocated for administration, training, research and evaluation.
2. 'Total recurrent allocations' include funds in addition to the SAAP funding agreement between some jurisdictions and the Australian Government (see Table 2.1). The states and territories generally provide additional funds for supporting SAAP activities which are not part of the SAAP agreement. Additional funds provided by other states and territories not shown in Table 2.1 were not reported and are not shown here.
3. Support period and accompanying child support period figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.

Sources: SAAP Client Collection; FaCS unpublished data; ABS 2004d.

Table 2.3: SAAP agencies: recurrent allocations to agencies and mean funding per agency, by state and territory, region and primary target group, Australia, 2003–04

	Agencies (number)	Agencies (%)	Recurrent allocation (\$)	Recurrent allocation (%)	Mean funding per agency (\$)
State/territory					
NSW	394	30.3	105,710,000	34.2	268,300
Vic	375	28.8	71,847,000	23.3	191,600
Qld	197	15.2	46,206,000	15.0	234,600
WA	130	10.0	28,462,000	9.2	218,900
SA	84	6.5	24,684,000	8.0	293,900
Tas	36	2.8	11,657,000	3.8	323,800
ACT	46	3.5	12,600,000	4.1	273,900
NT	38	2.9	7,582,000	2.5	199,500
Total	1,300	100.0	308,749,000	100.0	237,500
Region					
Capital city	723	55.6	194,419,000	63.0	268,900
Other metropolitan centre	87	6.7	20,947,000	6.8	240,800
Large rural centre	116	8.9	27,289,000	8.8	235,300
Other rural area	282	21.7	49,370,000	16.0	175,100
Remote area	92	7.1	16,723,000	5.4	181,800
Total	1,300	100.0	308,749,000	100.0	237,500
Primary target group					
Young people	476	36.6	107,324,000	34.8	225,500
Single men only	97	7.5	32,869,000	10.6	338,900
Single women only	47	3.6	11,521,000	3.7	245,100
Families	124	9.5	20,074,000	6.5	161,900
Women escaping domestic violence	289	22.2	83,742,000	27.1	289,800
Cross-target/multiple/general	267	20.5	53,219,000	17.2	199,300
Total	1,300	100.0	308,749,000	100.0	237,500

Note: 'Recurrent allocation' excludes funds not allocated to agencies, e.g. funds allocated for administration, training, research and evaluation. These amounts are included in the total recurrent allocations shown in Tables 2.1 and 2.2.

Source: SAAP Administrative Data Collection.

3 Level of support

It is estimated that 1 in every 130 Australians received substantial SAAP support at some time during 2003–04.² More specifically, SAAP agencies supported an estimated 152,900 people during 2003–04. Of these, 100,200 were adults or unaccompanied children (clients) and 52,700 were accompanying children (Tables 3.1 and 3.2).

The total number of support periods (187,200) exceeded the number of clients as each client can receive support or supported accommodation on more than one occasion. Similarly, the total number of accompanying child support periods (73,200) exceeded the number of accompanying children as individual children may accompany a parent or guardian during more than one period of support. Note also that the estimated number of accompanying children includes only those children recorded on general client forms and excludes high-volume records.³ In 2003–04, there were 68,800 accompanying child support periods recorded on general client forms.

There have been changes in the distribution and number of support periods and clients overall and specifically in Victoria and Queensland from 2002–03 to 2003–04 (see Chapter 9). This is due to the participation of a large Victorian agency with a high turnover of clients with short durations of support, and a change in reporting practice by a large Queensland agency. Although support periods have increased dramatically, the number of accompanying child support periods has decreased slightly. Again the change is caused mainly by these two agencies. In particular, there were at least 2,500 forms submitted by the large Victorian agency that indicated that information on accompanying children should have been recorded but was not. In addition, the methods of delivering services differ between jurisdictions and this accounts for some of the variations reported between the states and territories.

Adults and unaccompanied children

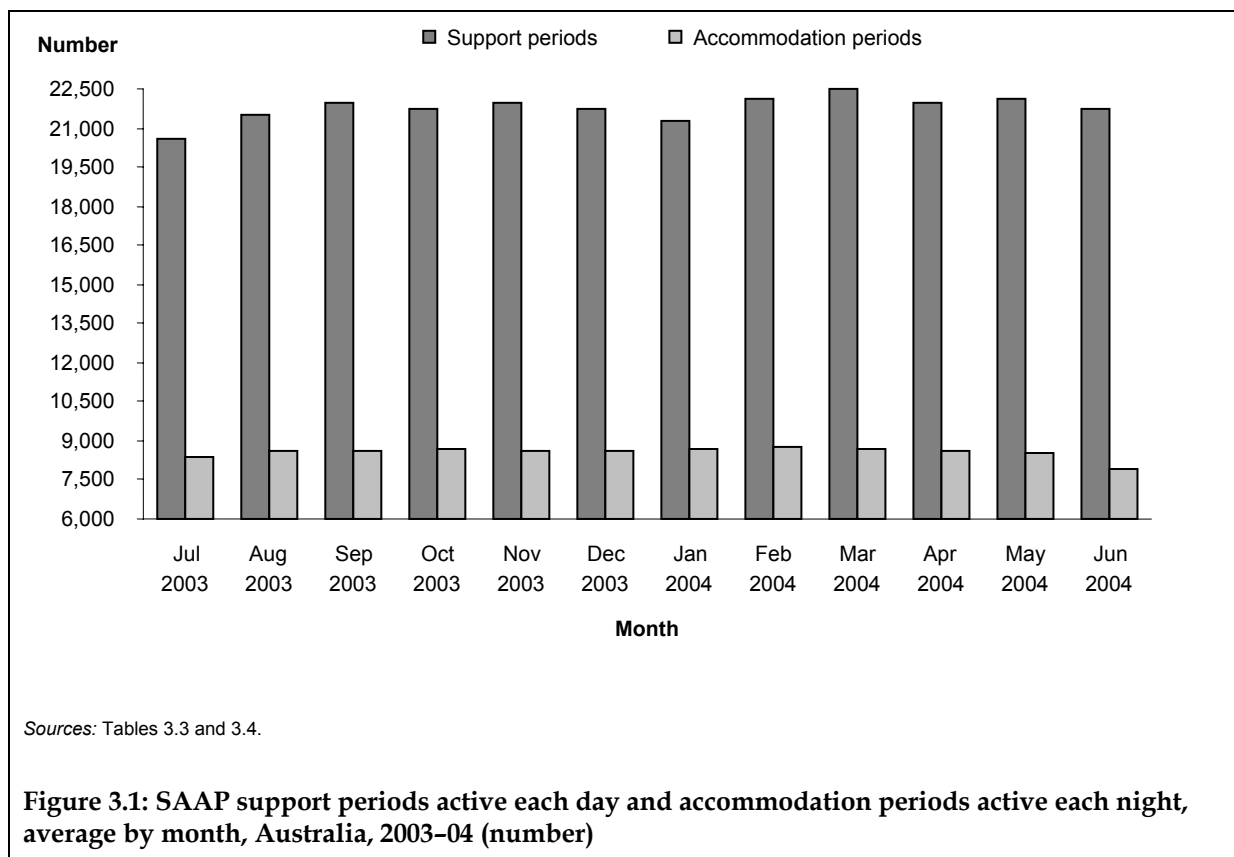
Seventy-two per cent of clients had only one support period during the year (Table 3.1). The average number of support periods per client was 1.9. Agencies in New South Wales and Victoria reported the highest average number of support periods, at 1.9 per client in each state. The lowest average of 1.5 support periods per client was recorded in Tasmania, the Northern Territory and South Australia. Nationally, of every 10,000 people aged 10 years and over in the general population, 58 people became SAAP clients. The Northern Territory had the highest number of clients per 10,000 people in the general population aged over 10 years (195) and New South Wales had the lowest (43).

² From tables 3.1, 3.2 and 2.2, respectively, we calculate: clients (100,200) + accompanying children (52,700) = 152,900/total Australian population (19,873,000) x 10,000 = 76.9; 10,000/76.9 = 130.

³ High-volume forms were used by SAAP agencies with a high turnover of clients. As is the case for estimates of clients, alpha codes and year of birth are required to estimate the number of children. Alpha codes and year of birth for accompanying children were collected only on the general client form (see Appendix 2 for a copy of the high-volume and general client forms).

Daily support

The daily level of support provided by SAAP agencies can be examined by looking at the average number of support periods active each day and the average number of accommodation periods active each night. Note that accommodation periods occur during support periods and are therefore not in addition to the number of support periods. Figure 3.1 shows the average number of support periods that were active each day during each month of 2003–04 and the number of accommodation periods that were active each night.



Support periods

SAAP agencies across Australia provided a fairly constant level of service throughout 2003–04, with the average daily number of support periods ranging from 20,600 to 22,500. A total of 7,964,100 days of support were provided (Table 3.3).

Overall, agencies in Victoria provided the most support periods on a daily basis (between 7,100 and 7,800 a day). This state also reported the most days of support (2,731,600) and the highest number of support periods overall (67,200) (Tables 3.3 and 3.1). On the other hand, agencies in the Northern Territory provided the lowest average daily number of support periods, averaging around 300 to 400 support periods each day, and the Australian Capital Territory reported the second lowest daily average number of support periods (between 500 and 600 support periods each day) (Table 3.3). However, the Northern Territory reported more support periods in 2003–04 than the Australian Capital Territory (4,800 compared with 3,000) (Table 3.1). An explanation for the higher average daily number of support periods in the Australian Capital Territory is the higher median length of support in this jurisdiction (21 days) compared with the Northern Territory (6 days) (Table 6.1). The longer length of support in the Australian Capital Territory also explains why the Australian Capital

Territory provided more total days of support than the Northern Territory (200,900 compared with 138,800) (Table 3.3).

Accommodation periods

A total of 3,033,100 nights of accommodation were provided by SAAP agencies in Australia during 2003–04 (Table 3.4). The average nightly number of accommodation periods ranged from 7,900 to 8,800.

Victoria reported the highest average daily number of support periods and total days of support (Table 3.3), but New South Wales provided the most nights of accommodation during 2003–04 (965,500) and reported the highest average nightly figures for accommodation (ranging from 2,500 to 2,800) (Table 3.4). An explanation for this can be found in Table 6.2 in the state and territory supplements associated with this publication. Although this table shows only closed support periods with accommodation, it still gives an indication of the number of support periods with accommodation. For example, New South Wales provided 21,500 closed support periods with accommodation lasting at least 1 day. Victoria, on the other hand, reported 10,000 closed support periods with accommodation that lasted at least 1 day. Another explanation for the lower number of accommodation nights in Victoria is that many SAAP clients in Victoria are accommodated in both crisis and medium-term accommodation by the Transitional Housing Management (THM) program. Some of the accommodation periods provided to clients at THM properties are reported to the NDCA, but an indeterminate number are not.

Tasmania reported the lowest number of nights of accommodation (62,400) and had the lowest average nightly number of accommodation periods of between 100 and 200 accommodation periods each night.

Accompanying children

This section focuses on children who accompanied their parent(s) or guardian(s) to SAAP agencies, or who required or received assistance from a SAAP agency as a result of their parent or guardian being a client of the same agency. The estimates presented here relate to accompanying children and accompanying child support periods (see Glossary).

During 2003–04, there were 73,200 accompanying child support periods (Table 3.2). There was significant variation in the number of accompanying child support periods across the states and territories, ranging from 1,100 in the Australian Capital Territory to 25,700 in Victoria. Differences in agency profiles and the level of commitment to completing child data may explain why several jurisdictions reported higher numbers of accompanying child support periods than larger states or territories (for a more detailed discussion, see Appendix 1 of *Children Accompanying Homeless Clients 2002–03*, AIHW 2004a).

Eighty-four per cent of accompanying children had only one support period during the year (Table 3.2). The average number of accompanying child support periods per accompanying child was 1.3. Agencies in the Australian Capital Territory reported the highest average number of accompanying child support periods, at 1.5 per accompanying child. The lowest average of 1.1 accompanying child support periods per accompanying child was recorded in South Australia.

Across the states and territories, the number of accompanying children per 10,000 of the general population aged under 18 years generally followed the same pattern as clients per 10,000 of the population aged over 10 years. The Northern Territory reported significantly higher numbers of accompanying children per 10,000 population aged under 18 years (314),

followed by Tasmania (159) and Victoria (158). New South Wales reported the lowest number of accompanying children compared with the general population aged under 18 years (64). Nationally, 106 children per 10,000 of the general population aged under 18 years accompanied their parent or guardian to a SAAP agency.

Support and accommodation dates for accompanying children are not collected in the Client Collection and it should be noted that an accompanying child may or may not be present for the entire duration of their parent's or guardian's support period. However, if it is assumed that accompanying children had the same periods of support and accommodation as their parent(s) or guardian(s), there was an average daily number of 12,600 accompanying child support periods and an average nightly number of 5,100 periods of accommodation (Table 9.3).

3.1 Tables

Table 3.1: SAAP support periods and clients, by state and territory, Australia, 2003–04

State/ territory	Support periods (number)	Clients (number)	Clients		Per 10,000 population aged 10+	
			Clients with only one support period (%)	Mean no. of support periods per client (number)	Actual	Age- standardised
NSW	48,600	25,000	75.9	1.94	43	43
Vic	67,200	34,900	69.9	1.92	81	80
Qld	28,400	17,900	76.6	1.58	54	54
WA	13,800	8,400	72.8	1.63	49	48
SA	14,700	9,700	75.5	1.52	72	75
Tas	6,600	4,500	76.7	1.46	109	116
ACT	3,000	1,700	74.3	1.81	59	54
NT	4,800	3,200	75.0	1.50	195	173
Australia	187,200	100,200	71.6	1.87	58	58

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 0.
2. The 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. 'Per 10,000 population aged 10+' shows how many people out of every 10,000 aged 10 years and over in the general population became SAAP clients. The rate is estimated by comparing the number of SAAP clients aged 10 years and over with the estimated resident population aged 10 years and over at 30 June 2003 (final estimates). Age-standardised estimates have been derived to allow for different age distributions in the various jurisdictions. The Australian estimated resident population at 30 June 2003 has been used as the reference population.
4. Support period figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.
5. Client figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Sources: SAAP Client Collection; ABS 2004a.

Table 3.2: SAAP accompanying child support periods and accompanying children, by state and territory, Australia, 2003–04

State/ territory	Accompanying child support periods		Accompanying children			
	All (number)	General form only (number)	Accompanying children (number)	Accompanying children with only one accompanying child support period (%)	Mean no. of accompanying child support periods per accompanying child (number)	Per 10,000 population aged 0–17
NSW	12,900	12,800	10,100	89.8	1.27	64
Vic	25,700	25,700	19,700	83.0	1.30	158
Qld	11,100	10,500	8,600	90.1	1.21	88
WA	7,900	7,900	5,900	79.7	1.35	121
SA	9,100	5,500	4,900	87.6	1.14	140
Tas	2,700	2,700	2,400	85.5	1.15	159
ACT	1,100	1,100	700	90.5	1.48	103
NT	2,600	2,600	2,100	84.7	1.24	314
Australia	73,200	68,800	52,700	83.8	1.30	106

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 0.
2. 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.
3. 'Per 10,000 population aged 0–17' shows how many children out of every 10,000 aged 17 years and under in the general population accompany SAAP clients. The rate is estimated by comparing the number of accompanying children aged 17 years and under with the estimated resident population aged 17 years and under at 30 June 2003 (final estimates).
4. Accompanying child support period figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.
5. Accompanying children figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent and exclude high-volume records because not all items were collected on the high-volume form.

Sources: SAAP Client Collection; ABS 2004a.

Table 3.3: SAAP support periods: number of support periods active each day, average by month and state and territory, Australia, 2003–04

Date	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
July 2003	5,400	7,300	2,600	1,200	2,200	1,000	600	300	20,600
August 2003	5,500	7,700	2,700	1,200	2,300	1,100	600	300	21,500
September 2003	5,600	7,800	2,700	1,300	2,400	1,200	600	400	22,000
October 2003	5,700	7,600	2,700	1,300	2,400	1,200	600	400	21,700
November 2003	5,800	7,600	2,800	1,300	2,400	1,200	600	400	22,000
December 2003	5,800	7,400	2,700	1,300	2,400	1,100	600	400	21,700
January 2004	5,800	7,300	2,800	1,300	2,300	1,000	500	400	21,300
February 2004	6,000	7,500	2,900	1,300	2,400	1,000	500	400	22,100
March 2004	6,300	7,600	2,900	1,400	2,400	1,000	500	400	22,500
April 2004	6,100	7,400	2,900	1,400	2,300	1,000	500	400	22,000
May 2004	6,200	7,300	2,800	1,500	2,400	1,000	500	400	22,100
June 2004	6,100	7,100	2,700	1,500	2,400	1,100	500	300	21,700
Support periods: total number of days	2,140,000	2,731,600	1,014,700	485,700	859,400	392,900	200,900	138,800	7,964,100

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 75.
2. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.
3. Please refer to the counting rules (Appendix 1, Section A1.4) for the method used to calculate the monthly average.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 3.4: SAAP support periods with accommodation: number of accommodation periods active each night, average by month and state and territory, Australia, 2003–04

Date	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
July 2003	2,700	2,300	1,400	700	700	200	200	200	8,400
August 2003	2,800	2,400	1,500	700	800	200	300	200	8,600
September 2003	2,700	2,400	1,500	600	800	200	300	200	8,600
October 2003	2,700	2,400	1,500	700	800	200	300	200	8,700
November 2003	2,700	2,400	1,500	700	800	100	200	200	8,600
December 2003	2,700	2,300	1,500	700	800	200	300	200	8,600
January 2004	2,800	2,400	1,500	700	800	200	200	200	8,700
February 2004	2,800	2,400	1,600	700	800	200	200	200	8,800
March 2004	2,800	2,300	1,500	700	800	200	200	200	8,700
April 2004	2,700	2,300	1,500	700	800	200	200	200	8,600
May 2004	2,700	2,300	1,500	600	800	200	200	200	8,500
June 2004	2,500	2,100	1,400	600	800	200	200	200	7,900
Accommodation periods: total number of nights	965,500	821,000	531,700	231,100	275,100	62,400	82,800	63,600	3,033,100

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 7,579.
2. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.
3. Please refer to the counting rules (Appendix 1, Section A1.4) for the method used to calculate the monthly average.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

4 Age, gender, and cultural and linguistic diversity

This chapter discusses the demographic characteristics of SAAP clients (adults and unaccompanied children) and accompanying children. In addition, patterns of service use are examined according to age, gender, and cultural and linguistic diversity.

Client characteristics

Figure 4.1 shows the age and gender distribution of SAAP clients in Australia during 2003–04. In all age groups of clients under 50 years there were more female than male clients. As a consequence, more females (58,300) than males (41,300) received services (Table 4.1). The largest group of clients was aged 20–24 years, with 15% of all clients being in this age group (Table 4.1). In contrast, only 6% of all clients were over the age of 54. The average age of clients was 34 for males and 31 for females.

Eighty-five per cent of SAAP clients were born in Australia (Table 4.5). The next most common places of birth were 'Other Europe and the former Soviet Union' and Oceania (just under 3% each), and South-East Asia (just over 2%). Just under 2% of SAAP clients were born in the United Kingdom, Ireland and associated islands. Less than 1% of SAAP clients were born in the Americas.

People born in Australia were more likely to become SAAP clients than those born elsewhere: 74% of the Australian population aged 10 years and over were Australian-born, but this group made up 85% of SAAP clients. On the other hand, people born in the United Kingdom and Ireland, 'other Europe and the former Soviet Union', North America and various parts of Asia were underrepresented among SAAP clients.

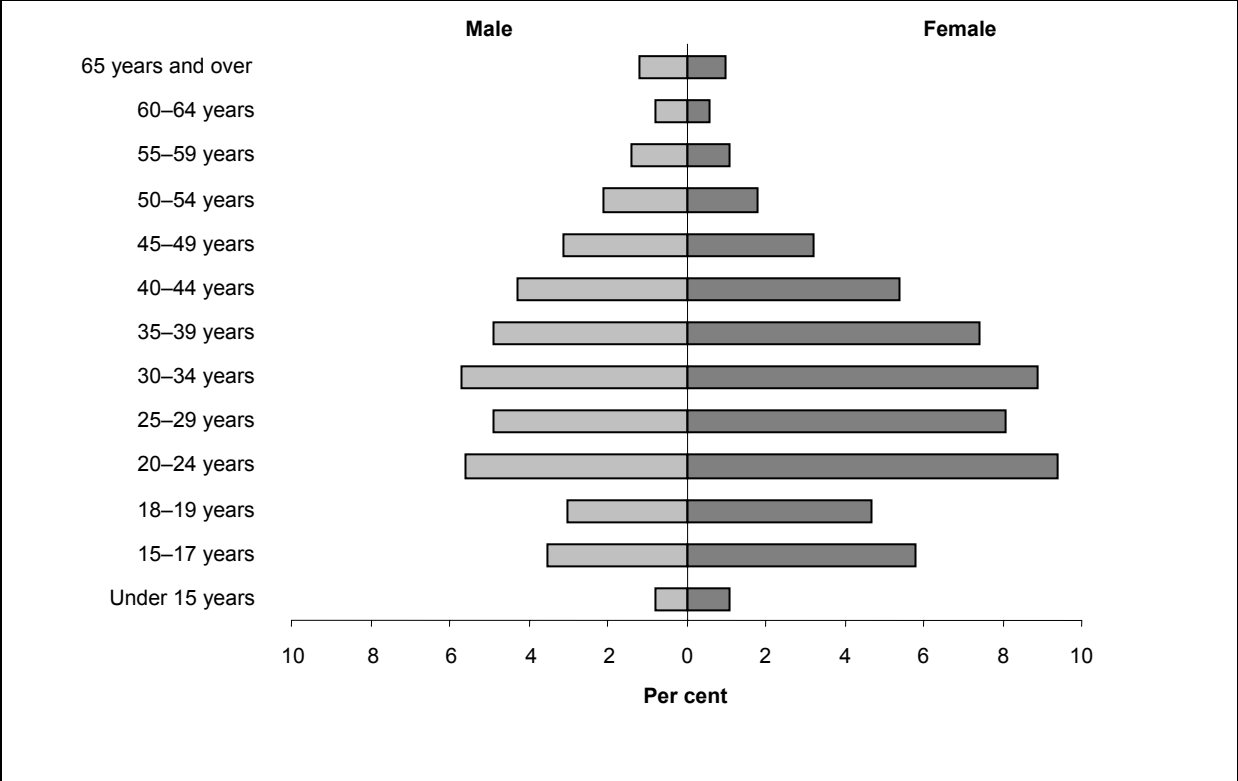
The distributions of male and female clients by country of birth were generally similar. However, the percentages of female clients from South-East Asia and North-East Asia were more than double those for males.

There was some variation between male and female clients in terms of cultural and linguistic diversity. While a slightly higher proportion of male clients (5%) than female clients (4%) were born in English proficiency group 1 countries, clients born overseas in other countries (English proficiency groups 2–4) had a higher percentage of female clients than male clients.⁴ Twelve per cent of the 56,500 female clients were born in these countries, compared with 8% of the 40,000 male clients (Table 4.7).

A higher proportion of female clients than male clients were Indigenous Australians (20% of female clients compared with 11% of male clients). Overall, Indigenous Australians were overrepresented as SAAP clients relative to their population size: 2% of Australians aged 10 years and over were estimated to be Indigenous Australians in June 2002, but this group made up around 17% of SAAP clients in 2003–04. The overrepresentation of Indigenous

⁴ English proficiency group 1 countries are Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. English proficiency groups 2–4 refer to all other countries (excluding Australia).

Australians influences the relative proportions of other cultural and linguistic groups in SAAP, in particular the large proportion of Australian-born people as shown in Table 4.5.



Source: Table 4.1.

Figure 4.1: SAAP clients by age and gender, Australia, 2003-04 (per cent of all clients)

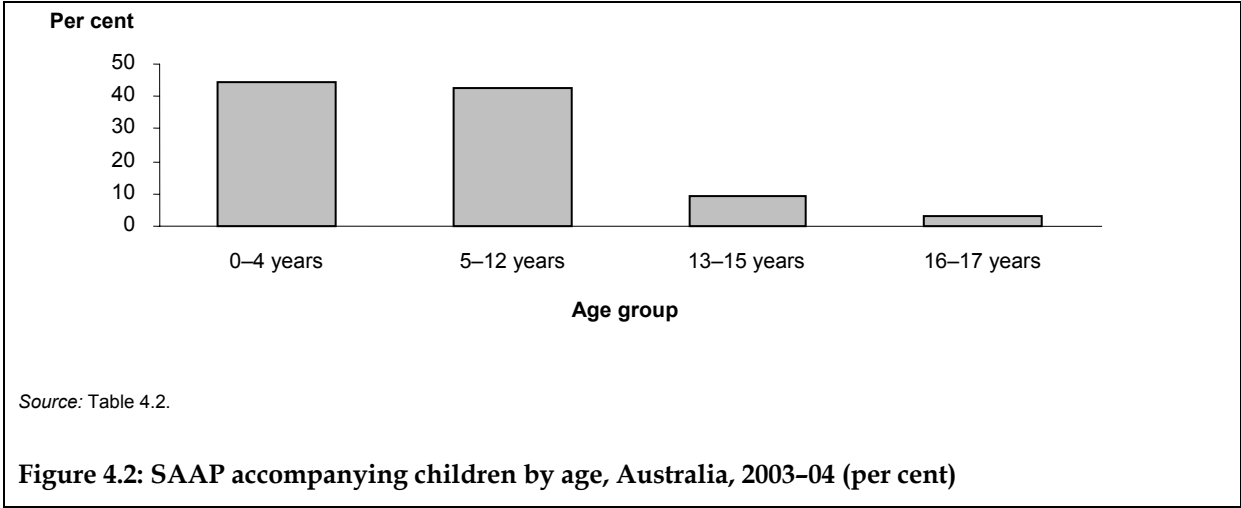
Table 4.8 shows the cultural and linguistic diversity of SAAP clients across the states and territories. Reflecting the large proportion of Indigenous people in the general population, the Northern Territory had the largest proportion of Indigenous clients, 57%, whereas the national proportion was 17%. This overrepresentation was even more pronounced among female clients: 72% of female clients in the Northern Territory were Indigenous Australians, whereas the national proportion was 20%. The lowest percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients was recorded in Victoria (5%). On the other hand, Victoria had the highest proportion of clients born overseas in countries in English proficiency groups 2-4 (15% compared with 10% nationally). The percentage of male clients who were born in these countries was smaller than the corresponding percentage of female clients in all jurisdictions except the Northern Territory.

Characteristics of accompanying children

In 2003-04, there were at least 52,700 accompanying children (Table 4.2). As noted in Chapter 3, the number of accompanying children is likely to be an underestimate as it excludes high-volume records. Not all necessary items to count children were collected on the high-volume form.

Eighty-eight per cent of accompanying children were 12 years of age and under, with children aged 4 years and under accounting for slightly more accompanying children than

5–12 year-olds (45% compared with 43%). Nine per cent of accompanying children were aged 13–15 years. The remaining 3% of children were aged 16–17 years. There was little difference reported in the gender of accompanying children, with the proportions divided evenly between girls and boys.



Just under 95% of accompanying children were born in Australia (Table 4.6). Just over 1% per cent of children were born in Oceania. All other birthplaces accounted for the remaining 4% of accompanying children.

SAAP use

As mentioned in Chapter 3, 72% of all clients had just one support period during 2003–04, and clients averaged 1.9 support periods each (Table 3.1). The pattern of repeat use varied with age and gender (Table 4.3). Overall, 73% of female clients had one support period and the corresponding figure for male clients was 69%. Males averaged slightly more support periods, at 2.1 each, with females averaging around 1.7 support periods each.

Clients aged 25–44 years made up nearly 50% of all SAAP clients. They also returned to SAAP agencies more often than other clients (averaging 1.9 support periods each). This was due to the relatively high average number of support periods per client for males in this age category (2.2). In comparison, females aged 25–44 years averaged 1.7 support periods each. In contrast, clients under 15 years of age made up less than 2% of all clients. They returned less often than others to SAAP services, averaging around 1.6 support periods each; 79% of this client group had only one support period.

The average number of support periods per client also varied according to cultural and linguistic diversity. Clients from Australian-born non-Indigenous backgrounds had the highest number of support periods each, averaging 1.9 (Table 4.7). In comparison, clients from countries in English proficiency groups 2–4 had fewer support periods per client, averaging 1.6. Indigenous Australian clients averaged 1.8 support periods each. This is a change from the average number of support periods per client reported in 2002–03, where Indigenous clients reported more support periods per client than the other groups (AIHW 2003:19). This is due mainly to a change in reporting practices resulting from increased data collection training to SAAP agencies around Australia. In preparation for the introduction of the SAAP NDC core data set in 2005, some agencies have started applying the refined definition of a support period in which clients who regularly return (such as

every day or every week) have their support period left open rather than closed after each return. In particular, a large agency in Queensland which deals primarily with Indigenous clients has changed its reporting practices in this way. As such, the decrease in the number of support periods per client in 2003–04 does not necessarily indicate that Indigenous clients are using SAAP less often, but that they are being supported for longer in each support period. SAAP agencies will be kept informed by the NDCA and the SAAP Information Subcommittee about the introduction of the core data set in 1 July 2005.

In Australia during 2003–04, for every 10,000 people aged 10 years and over in the general population, 58 people used SAAP services (Table 4.3). There was, however, a large variation across the states and territories. After adjusting for different age distributions, the number of SAAP clients per 10,000 people aged 10 years and over ranged from 43 in New South Wales to 195 in the Northern Territory (Table 4.8). These differences largely reflect the varying usage of SAAP services by clients of different cultural backgrounds and the different population profiles in the states and territories. It may also reflect the availability of SAAP services across the states and territories.

The proportion of people accessing support varied considerably by age. People aged from 15 to 24 years were more likely to go to SAAP agencies than people in other age groups (Table 4.3). The highest rate of use was by 18–19-year-olds, with 139 clients for every 10,000 people in this age bracket. The next highest usage rates were by 15–17-year-olds and 20–24-year-olds, among whom there were 114 and 110 clients, respectively, for every 10,000 people. Only 9 people per 10,000 aged 65 years and over and 12 people per 10,000 aged under 15 years became SAAP clients.

The proportion of people accessing SAAP services also varied by gender. Females were more likely to use SAAP services than males: there were 67 female clients for every 10,000 females aged 10 years and over in the general population and 48 male clients per 10,000 males aged 10 years and over. The highest rate of use was by 18–19-year-old females among whom there were 174 clients per 10,000 females in this age bracket, compared with 107 male clients. Females were more likely to use SAAP services in all states and territories (Table 4.8).

SAAP use by accompanying children

As mentioned in Chapter 3, 84% of all accompanying children had just one accompanying child support period during 2003–04, and accompanying children averaged 1.3 accompanying child support periods each (Table 3.2). The pattern of repeat use for children accompanying a parent(s) or guardian(s) to a SAAP agency varied with age. On average, accompanying children aged 0–4 years generally had more occasions where their parent(s) or guardian(s) were supported (1.3) than accompanying children in other age groups (Table 4.4). Accompanying children aged 16–17 years had the lowest average number of accompanying child support periods (1.2).

In Australia during 2003–04, for every 10,000 people aged 0–17 years in the general population, 106 children accompanied a parent(s) or guardian(s) who used SAAP services (Table 4.4). The highest rate of use was for 0–4-year-olds, with 186 children for every 10,000 children in this age bracket accompanying a SAAP client. The next highest usage rate was for 5–12-year-olds, for whom there were 104 accompanying children for every 10,000 children. There were 59 children per 10,000 children aged 13–15 years and 31 children per 10,000 children aged 16–17 years that accompanied a client to a SAAP agency.

There was a large variation across the states and territories. After adjusting for different age distributions, the number of accompanying children per 10,000 children aged 0–17 years ranged from 63 in New South Wales to 349 in the Northern Territory (see the state and

territory supplementary reports). This is a result of the varying usage by and availability of SAAP services to the parent(s) and guardian(s) of these children.

4.1 Tables

Table 4.1: SAAP clients by age and gender, Australia, 2003–04

Age	Percentage of all clients		Percentage of gender group		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	%	Number
	%	%	%	%	%	
Under 15 years	0.8	1.1	1.9	1.9	1.9	1,900
15–17 years	3.5	5.8	8.5	9.9	9.3	9,300
18–19 years	3.0	4.7	7.3	8.0	7.7	7,700
20–24 years	5.6	9.4	13.5	16.1	15.0	14,900
25–29 years	4.9	8.1	11.9	13.9	13.1	13,000
30–34 years	5.7	8.9	13.6	15.2	14.5	14,500
35–39 years	4.9	7.4	11.9	12.6	12.3	12,300
40–44 years	4.3	5.4	10.5	9.2	9.7	9,700
45–49 years	3.1	3.2	7.5	5.5	6.3	6,300
50–54 years	2.1	1.8	5.1	3.1	4.0	4,000
55–59 years	1.4	1.1	3.4	1.8	2.5	2,500
60–64 years	0.8	0.6	2.0	1.1	1.5	1,500
65 years and over	1.2	1.0	3.0	1.8	2.3	2,300
<i>Total</i>	<i>41.5</i>	<i>58.5</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (number)	41,300	58,300	41,300	58,300	..	99,700
Mean age (years)	..	..	33.8	31.2	..	32.3
Median age (years)	..	..	32	30	..	31

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 562.
2. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 4.2: SAAP accompanying children by age and gender of child, Australia, 2003–04

Accompanying children		
Age	%	Number
0–4 years	44.7	23,500
5–12 years	42.9	22,600
13–15 years	9.2	4,800
16–17 years	3.2	1,700
Total	100.0	52,500
Gender		
Male	49.9	26,300
Female	50.1	26,400
Total	100.0	52,700

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions in age (weighted): 226.
2. Number excluded due to errors and omissions in gender (weighted): 72.
3. Table excludes high-volume records because not all items were included on the high-volume form.
4. Accompanying children figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 4.3: SAAP clients: number of support periods per client, by age and gender of client, Australia, 2003–04 (per cent)

Number of support periods	Under 15 years	15–17 years	18–19 years	20–24 years	25–44 years	45–64 years	65+ years	Total	
								%	Number
Male clients									
1	78.9	68.0	74.4	71.3	67.0	69.2	74.5	69.0	28,500
2	12.1	15.6	13.0	13.6	15.1	14.6	13.8	14.6	6,000
3	4.2	6.8	5.2	6.1	6.5	6.4	5.2	6.3	2,600
4	1.3	2.9	2.9	2.6	3.4	3.2	1.9	3.1	1,300
5	1.0	2.4	1.2	1.9	2.2	1.7	1.3	2.0	800
6+	2.6	4.3	3.4	4.3	5.9	5.0	3.4	5.1	2,100
<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>..</i>
Total (%)	1.9	8.5	7.3	13.5	47.9	18.1	3.0	100.0	..
Total (number)	800	3,500	3,000	5,600	19,800	7,500	1,200	..	41,300
Mean number of support periods	1.56	1.89	1.72	1.87	2.24	2.25	2.15	..	2.11
Per 10,000 population	10	84	107	80	68	31	11	..	48
Female clients									
1	79.2	70.4	72.5	71.3	73.0	78.5	76.0	73.2	42,700
2	9.6	14.9	15.5	14.8	14.5	12.4	16.4	14.4	8,400
3	5.7	7.2	5.4	6.1	5.5	4.4	3.8	5.6	3,300
4	2.2	3.0	2.9	3.0	2.7	2.0	1.3	2.7	1,600
5	1.1	1.6	1.3	1.6	1.5	1.0	0.8	1.4	800
6+	2.1	2.8	2.4	3.1	2.8	1.7	1.7	2.7	1,600
<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>..</i>
Total (%)	1.9	9.9	8.0	16.1	50.8	11.5	1.8	100.0	..
Total (number)	1,100	5,800	4,700	9,400	29,600	6,700	1,000	..	58,300
Mean number of support periods	1.60	1.77	1.69	1.76	1.71	1.55	1.57	..	1.70
Per 10,000 population	14	145	174	140	100	28	7	..	67
All clients									
1	79.1	69.5	73.3	71.3	70.6	73.6	75.2	71.5	71,200
2	10.6	15.2	14.5	14.4	14.7	13.6	15.0	14.5	14,400
3	5.1	7.0	5.3	6.1	5.9	5.5	4.5	5.9	5,900
4	1.8	3.0	2.9	2.9	3.0	2.6	1.6	2.8	2,800
5	1.1	1.9	1.3	1.7	1.8	1.4	1.1	1.7	1,700
6+	2.3	3.4	2.8	3.6	4.0	3.4	2.6	3.7	3,600
<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>..</i>
Total (%)	1.9	9.3	7.7	15.0	49.6	14.2	2.3	100.0	..
Total (number)	1,900	9,300	7,700	14,900	49,400	14,200	2,300	..	99,700
Mean number of support periods	1.59	1.82	1.70	1.80	1.93	1.92	1.88	..	1.87
Per 10,000 population	12	114	139	110	84	30	9	..	58

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 562.
2. 'Per 10,000 population' shows how many people out of every 10,000 in the general population become SAAP clients. The rate is estimated by comparing the number of SAAP clients with the estimated resident population in the designated age group as at 30 June 2003 (final estimates). For the age group under 15 years, only those aged 10–14 are included in the calculations.
3. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Sources: SAAP Client Collection; ABS 2004a.

Table 4.4: SAAP accompanying children: number of accompanying child support periods per accompanying child, by age of child, Australia, 2003–04 (per cent)

Number of accompanying child support periods	0–4 years	5–12 years	13–15 years	16–17 years	Total	
					%	Number
1	82.2	84.1	86.5	90.9	83.7	44,000
2	12.0	11.0	10.3	7.2	11.2	5,900
3	3.3	2.9	2.1	1.4	3.0	1,600
4	1.4	1.1	0.6	0.3	1.2	600
5	0.6	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.5	300
6+	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.4	200
<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 (%)	44.7	42.9	9.2	3.2	100.0	..
Total (number)	23,500	22,600	4,800	1,700	..	52,500
Mean number of accompanying child support periods	1.33	1.30	1.24	1.18	..	1.30
Per 10,000 population aged 0–17 years	186	104	59	31	..	106

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 226.
2. Table excludes high-volume records because not all items were included on the high-volume form.
3. 'Per 10,000 population' shows how many children out of every 10,000 in the general population aged 17 years and under accompany SAAP clients. The rate is estimated by comparing the number of SAAP clients with the estimated resident population in the designated age group as at 30 June 2003 (final estimates).
4. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Sources: SAAP Client Collection; ABS 2004a.

Table 4.5: SAAP clients: birthplace by gender, Australia, 2003-04

Birthplace	Male	Female	Total	Australian population 10+		
	%	%	%	Number	%	Number
Australia	86.6	84.4	85.3	83,400	73.8	12,565,500
Oceania (excluding Australia)	2.8	2.8	2.8	2,800	2.9	500,100
UK, Ireland and associated islands	2.4	1.4	1.8	1,800	6.8	1,165,500
Other Europe and the former Soviet Union	2.8	3.0	2.9	2,800	6.7	1,142,200
Middle East and North Africa	1.3	1.8	1.6	1,600	1.4	237,500
South-East Asia	1.3	2.9	2.2	2,200	3.2	546,800
North-East Asia	0.3	0.9	0.7	600	1.9	331,400
Southern Asia	0.6	0.7	0.6	600	1.2	204,700
North America	0.3	0.2	0.2	200	0.5	85,600
South and Central America and Caribbean	0.3	0.6	0.5	500	0.5	85,500
Africa (excluding North Africa)	1.2	1.3	1.2	1,200	0.9	158,900
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	41.5	58.5	100.0	..	..	..
Total (number)	40,500	57,200	..	97,800	..	17,023,700

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 2,457.
2. 'Australian population 10+' refers to the estimated resident population aged 10 years and over at 30 June 2002 and includes people resident in the external territories.
3. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Sources: SAAP Client Collection; ABS 2004c.

Table 4.6: SAAP accompanying children: birthplace of child, Australia, 2003-04

Birthplace	Accompanying children		Australian population 0-17	
	%	Number	%	Number
Australia	94.7	48,300	93.4	4,479,200
Oceania (excluding Australia)	1.4	700	1.4	67,600
Europe and the former Soviet Union	0.6	300	1.6	76,400
South-East, North-East and Southern Asia	1.0	500	2.3	109,100
Other (including the Middle East, Africa, the Americas and Caribbean)	2.3	1,200	1.4	65,800
Total	100.0	51,000	100.0	4,798,100

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions in birthplace (weighted): 1,760.
2. Table excludes high-volume records because not all items were included on the high-volume form.
3. 'Australian population 0-17' refers to the estimated resident population aged 17 years and under at 30 June 2002 and includes people resident in the external territories.
4. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection ABS 2004c.

Table 4.7: SAAP clients and support periods per client, by cultural and linguistic diversity and gender of client, Australia, 2003–04

Cultural and linguistic diversity	Male	Female	Total	Australian population 10+		
Clients	%	%	%	Number	%	Number
Indigenous Australians	11.1	20.3	16.5	15,900	2.0	345,000
Australian-born non-Indigenous people	75.6	64.2	68.9	66,500	71.8	12,220,500
People born overseas, English proficiency group 1	5.1	3.7	4.3	4,100	10.2	1,730,700
People born overseas, English proficiency groups 2–4	8.3	11.8	10.4	10,000	16.0	2,727,500
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (%)	41.4	58.6	100.0	..	..	..
Total (number)	40,000	56,500	..	96,500	..	17,023,700
Support periods	Mean number per client			Total number		
Indigenous Australians	2.01	1.76	1.83	28,900	..	..
Australian-born non-Indigenous people	2.18	1.71	1.92	128,300	..	..
People born overseas, English proficiency group 1	2.00	1.68	1.84	7,400	..	..
People born overseas, English proficiency groups 2–4	1.73	1.52	1.59	16,000	..	..
<i>Total</i>	<i>2.11</i>	<i>1.70</i>	<i>1.87</i>	<i>..</i>	<i>..</i>	<i>..</i>
Total support periods (%)	46.8	53.2	100.0	..	..	..
Total support periods (number)	84,500	96,100	..	180,700	..	..

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 3,747 clients; 6,497 support periods.
2. For derivation of cultural and linguistic diversity, see the counting rules (Appendix 1, Section A1.4). English proficiency groups are based on country of birth—see Glossary.
3. 'Australian population 10+' refers to the estimated resident population aged 10 years and over at 30 June 2002. The figures for Indigenous Australians are from experimental estimates based on the 2001 Census produced by the ABS. The number of 'Australian-born non-Indigenous people' is derived from the Australian-born population minus the number of Indigenous Australians.
4. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Sources: SAAP Client Collection; ABS 2004b; ABS 2004c.

Table 4.8: SAAP clients: cultural and linguistic diversity and gender of clients, by state and territory, Australia, 2003–04 (per cent)

Cultural and linguistic diversity	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total	
									%	Number
Male clients										
Indigenous Australians	12.0	3.7	17.2	16.3	10.5	8.2	10.0	32.9	11.1	4,400
Australian-born non-Indigenous people	73.9	82.2	72.2	64.9	78.6	84.8	76.7	54.4	75.6	30,200
People born overseas, English proficiency group 1	6.1	3.2	5.7	9.5	4.6	4.2	4.3	6.1	5.1	2,000
People born overseas, English proficiency groups 2–4	7.9	11.0	4.9	9.3	6.2	2.8	9.0	6.6	8.3	3,300
<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 (%)	29.2	33.2	19.2	7.0	8.7	4.7	1.9	3.0	..	..
Total (number)	11,700	13,300	7,700	2,800	3,500	1,900	800	1,200	..	40,000
Per 10,000 population	42	65	49	34	54	96	56	140	..	48
Female clients										
Indigenous Australians	22.5	5.1	27.2	50.3	20.0	10.3	15.6	72.4	20.3	11,500
Australian-born non-Indigenous people	61.6	74.7	61.8	35.3	68.8	83.1	70.5	22.3	64.2	36,200
People born overseas, English proficiency group 1	3.7	3.4	4.3	5.0	3.5	2.8	2.8	2.1	3.7	2,100
People born overseas, English proficiency groups 2–4	12.2	16.8	6.7	9.5	7.8	3.8	11.2	3.2	11.8	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 (%)	21.8	36.3	17.0	9.5	10.2	4.3	1.5	3.5	..	..
Total (number)	12,300	20,500	9,600	5,400	5,800	2,500	900	2,000	..	56,500
Per 10,000 population	43	96	59	65	89	121	62	257	..	67
All clients										
Indigenous Australians	17.4	4.5	22.7	38.7	16.4	9.4	12.9	57.3	16.5	15,900
Australian-born non-Indigenous people	67.6	77.7	66.4	45.4	72.5	83.8	73.4	34.5	68.9	66,500
People born overseas, English proficiency group 1	4.9	3.3	4.9	6.5	3.9	3.4	3.5	3.7	4.3	4,100
People born overseas, English proficiency groups 2–4	10.1	14.5	5.9	9.4	7.2	3.3	10.2	4.5	10.4	10,000
<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 (%)	24.8	35.0	17.9	8.5	9.6	4.5	1.7	3.3	..	..
Total (number)	24,000	33,800	17,300	8,200	9,200	4,300	1,600	3,200	..	96,500
Per 10,000 population	43	81	54	49	72	109	59	195	..	58

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 3,747.
2. Number of clients in 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. 'Per 10,000 population' refers to the estimated resident population aged 10 years and over at 30 June 2003 (final estimates).
4. For derivation of cultural and linguistic diversity see the counting rules (Appendix 1, Section A1.4).
5. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

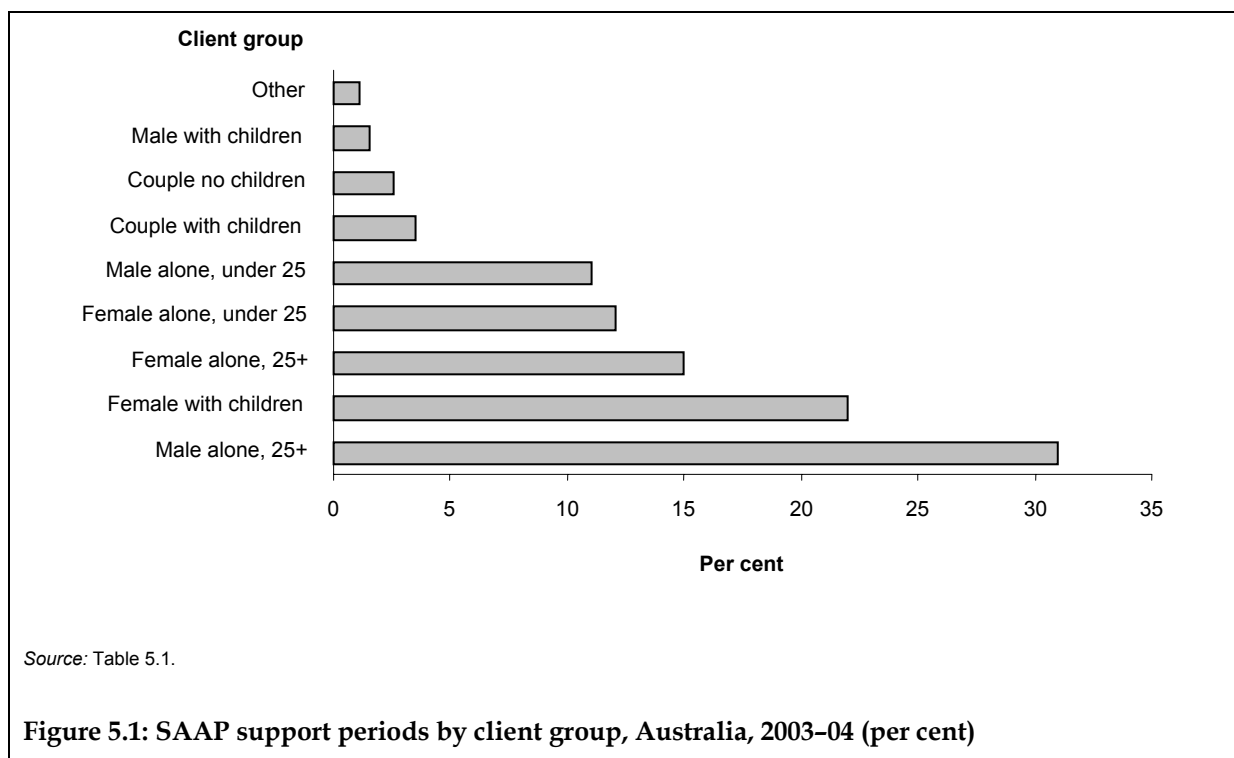
Sources: SAAP Client Collection; ABS 2003a.

5 Client groups and reasons for seeking assistance

This chapter contains information about the number of support periods for 9 main client groups. For client groups presenting at SAAP agencies with accompanying children, the number of accompanying child support periods associated with each client group is also reported. Data about the main reason for seeking assistance reported in each support period for the different client groups is also included in this chapter.

Client groups

Figure 5.1 gives a breakdown of the number of support periods provided to the main client groups. Nationally, nearly one-third (31%) of support periods were provided to males aged 25 years and over presenting alone at SAAP agencies and 22% were provided to female clients with children. Unaccompanied females aged 25 years and over accounted for 15%, and unaccompanied females under 25 years accounted for around 12% of support periods. This was followed by unaccompanied males aged under 25 years (11% of support periods), couples with children (4%) and couples without children (3%). Males with children accounted for just 2% of all support periods.



Client group profiles varied between states and territories. For example, agencies in New South Wales more commonly supported unaccompanied males compared with other states and territories, with 58% of their support periods being for this client group (Table 5.1). At the same time, agencies in New South Wales had the lowest percentage of support periods

for unaccompanied females, at 23%. Agencies in South Australia and Western Australia provided the lowest percentage of support periods to unaccompanied males (31% in each state), and agencies in the Australian Capital Territory provided the highest proportion of support periods to unaccompanied females (37%). Support periods provided to females with children ranged from 14% in the Australian Capital Territory to 31% in South Australia. Agencies in Victoria and Tasmania provided relatively more support periods to couples with or without children (9%).

The client profile within agencies of various target groups is shown in Table 5.2. As might be expected, agencies with specific target groups tended to provide services predominantly to that client group. Consequently, 80% of support periods at agencies targeting young people were for people under 25 presenting on their own, and agencies targeting single men were overwhelmingly used by unaccompanied males aged 25 or over (87% of their support periods). Similarly, agencies that targeted women escaping domestic violence were mainly used by females with children (accounting for 56% of support periods in these agencies) and unaccompanied females (41%). Forty-one per cent of the support periods provided by cross-target group agencies were to unaccompanied males aged 25 years and over.

Support periods for clients with accompanying children

There were 35,700 support periods where SAAP clients presented with accompanying children in 2003–04 (Table 5.3). There were 73,300 accompanying child support periods associated with these support periods, giving an average of 2 accompanying child support periods per SAAP client support period.

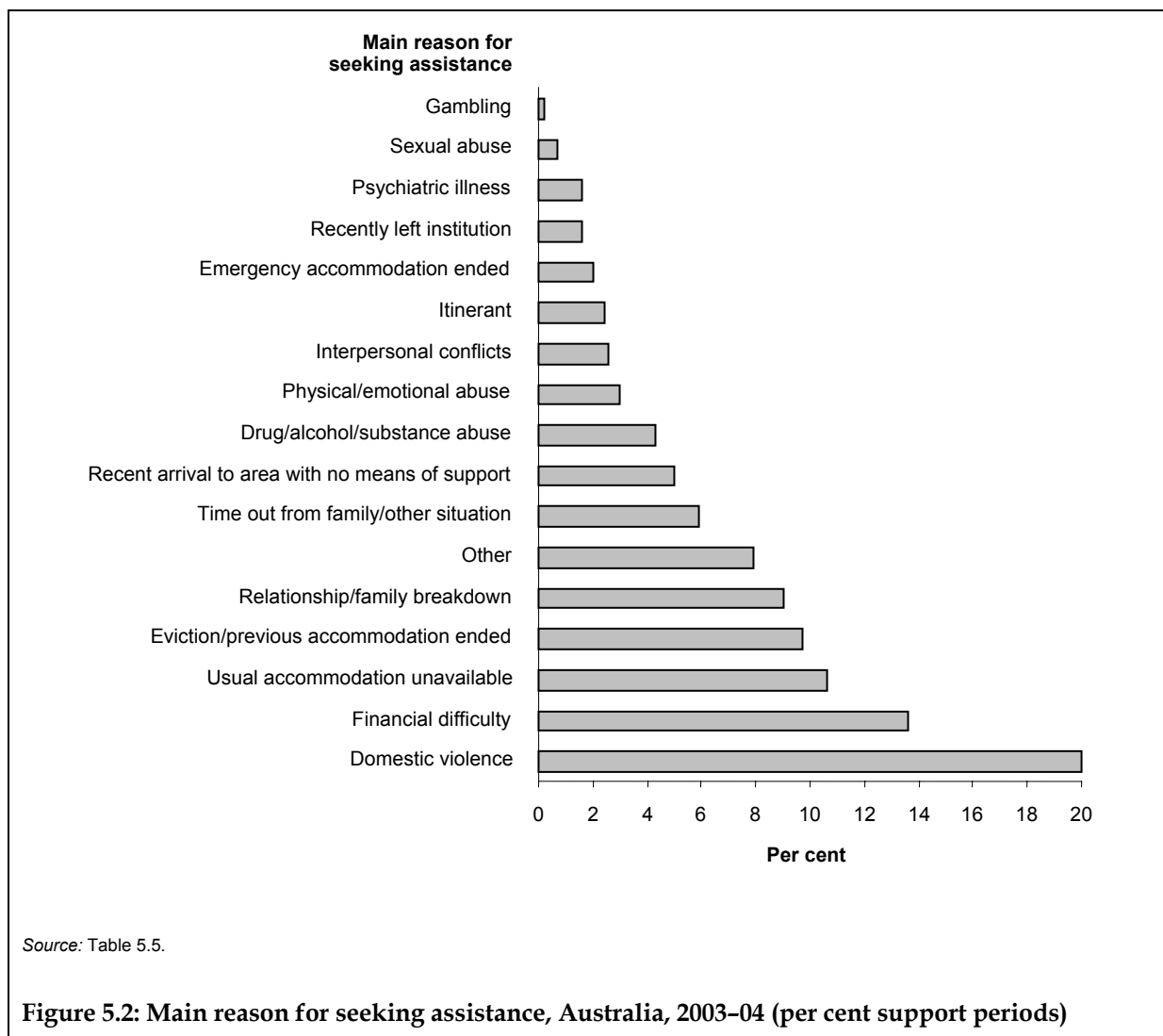
Couples with children had the highest average number of accompanying child support periods per client support period (2.2), followed by females with children (2.0), males with children (1.8) and 'other' groups with children (1.7).

There were some significant variations in the number of support periods reported for client groups with accompanying children and the associated accompanying child support periods. For example, the Australian Capital Territory had higher proportions of support periods for couples with children (15%) and males with children (19%) than the national averages of 9% and 4%, respectively. Correspondingly, the proportion of accompanying child support periods reported for these client groups was also highest in the Australian Capital Territory (16% for couples with children and 18% for males with children) compared with the national averages (10% for couples with children and 4% for males with children).

The Northern Territory and Western Australia had the highest proportion of support periods for females with children (both 93%) compared with 65% of support periods for this client group in the Australian Capital Territory. The proportions of accompanying child support periods for this client group in these jurisdictions followed the same pattern. The highest average number of accompanying child support periods per support period was recorded in Queensland and Western Australia (2.1 each).

Main reason for seeking assistance

In addition to recording client characteristics, the SAAP Client Collection collects information on the main reasons clients seek assistance from SAAP agencies. Overall, the most common main reasons that clients gave for seeking assistance in 2003–04 were domestic violence (in 20% of support periods), financial difficulty (14%), and usual accommodation unavailable (11%) (Figure 5.2).



Drug, alcohol or substance abuse was cited as the main reason for seeking assistance in 4% of support periods. Substance abuse and some other presenting reasons may be understated, however, because data on reasons for seeking assistance are not collected from high-volume agencies, which most often support single men (see Table 5.5 for reasons given by unaccompanied males).

The main reason given for seeking support varied considerably according to the client group. In 48% of support periods for females with children and 39% for unaccompanied females aged 25 years and over, assistance was sought primarily because of domestic violence (Table 5.5). Unaccompanied females aged under 25 years most often reported relationship or family breakdown as their main reason for seeking assistance (in 20% of their support periods), and unaccompanied males aged under 25 years most often reported that the main reason they sought assistance was because their usual accommodation was unavailable, or because of a relationship or family breakdown (in around 17% of their support periods each). For unaccompanied male clients aged 25 years and over, the most common main reason for seeking assistance was financial difficulty (in 21% of support periods for this client group). Drug, alcohol or substance abuse was cited as the main reason for seeking assistance by this client group in 9% of support periods, compared with between 1% and 4% for the other client groups. Among couples with children, eviction or the ending

of previous accommodation was the most common main reason for seeking assistance (in 24% of support periods for this client group). Couples without children most commonly reported that the main reason they sought assistance was due to financial difficulty (in 25% of their support periods).

In general, there were only small variations across the states and territories in the proportions for most of the main reasons for seeking assistance. However, some main reasons showed marked variation. Most notably, domestic violence ranged from 12% of cases in Tasmania to 34% in the Northern Territory (Table 5.4). There was also substantial variation in the proportions of support periods for which financial difficulty was cited as the main reason for seeking assistance, ranging from 5% in the Australian Capital Territory and South Australia to 22% in Victoria. Eviction or the ending of previous accommodation was given as the main reason in 5% of support periods in the Northern Territory and in 16% in the Australian Capital Territory, and the proportions in which relationship and family breakdown was reported ranged from 4% in the Northern Territory to 14% in South Australia.

Other main reasons for seeking assistance varied across the states and territories, including drug, alcohol or substance abuse, from 2% of support periods in Victoria and Tasmania to 8% in New South Wales; time out from their family or another situation, from 4% in New South Wales and Tasmania to 10% in Queensland; and recent arrival in the area with no means of support, from 4% in Victoria to 9% in the Northern Territory. Sexual abuse was reported as the main reason for seeking assistance in 1% or less of support periods in all states and territories except Tasmania where it was cited in 5% of support periods.

5.1 Tables

Table 5.1: SAAP support periods: client group by state and territory, Australia, 2003–04 (per cent)

Client group	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total	
									%	Number
Male alone, under 25	11.8	9.1	13.3	11.1	12.3	13.4	16.3	6.5	11.0	20,300
Male alone, 25+	46.6	26.6	29.5	19.8	18.3	27.1	20.5	27.7	31.0	56,900
Female alone, under 25	10.8	10.7	15.7	11.0	14.0	13.0	26.6	10.3	12.1	22,200
Female alone, 25+	11.8	16.1	14.7	21.6	15.4	11.8	10.1	21.8	15.0	27,500
Couple, no children	1.3	4.5	1.5	1.8	1.4	3.9	1.6	1.5	2.6	4,900
Couple with children	1.4	4.9	3.3	3.3	4.7	4.6	5.0	2.5	3.5	6,500
Male with children	0.6	2.5	0.8	0.6	1.7	2.2	4.5	0.5	1.5	2,800
Female with children	14.7	24.0	20.6	29.6	31.4	23.1	14.4	28.1	22.0	40,400
Other	1.0	1.6	0.6	1.1	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1	2,100
<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 (%)	25.8	36.0	15.2	7.3	7.9	3.6	1.6	2.6	100.0	..
Total (number)	47,400	66,200	27,900	13,400	14,400	6,500	2,900	4,800	..	183,600

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 3,611.
2. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 5.2: SAAP support periods: client group by primary target group of agency, Australia, 2003–04 (per cent)

Client group	Young people	Single men only	Single women only	Families	Women escaping DV	Cross-target/multiple/general	Total	
							%	Number
Male alone, under 25	36.8	9.6	0.4	1.3	0.3	7.1	11.0	20,300
Male alone, 25+	2.0	86.6	0.6	4.2	0.7	41.4	31.0	56,900
Female alone, under 25	43.6	0.4	14.6	2.6	7.1	5.9	12.1	22,200
Female alone, 25+	1.1	1.7	56.1	5.7	33.9	16.1	15.0	27,500
Couple, no children	2.9	0.8	0.2	4.0	0.3	5.0	2.6	4,900
Couple with children	2.1	0.1	0.4	24.1	0.6	5.2	3.5	6,500
Male with children	0.5	0.2	0.2	7.7	0.2	2.8	1.5	2,800
Female with children	9.0	0.4	26.8	48.2	56.1	15.4	22.0	40,400
Other	2.0	0.2	0.6	2.2	0.9	1.2	1.1	2,100
<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>..</i>
Total (%)	18.2	18.5	2.7	5.1	21.1	34.4	100.0	..
Total (number)	33,400	34,000	5,000	9,300	38,700	63,100	..	183,600

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 3,611.
2. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Sources: SAAP Client and Administrative Data Collections.

Table 5.3: SAAP support periods for clients with accompanying children and associated accompanying child support periods, client group by state and territory, Australia, 2003–04 (per cent)

Client group	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total	
									%	Number
Support periods (%)										
Couple with children	6.0	11.2	9.5	5.6	8.6	11.6	14.8	4.7	8.9	3,200
Male with children	2.5	5.8	3.8	1.0	4.1	6.6	19.3	1.9	4.4	1,600
Female with children	90.3	82.4	86.0	92.9	86.9	81.2	65.2	93.0	86.0	30,700
Other with children	1.2	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.7	200
<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 (%)	17.6	35.6	14.7	10.4	12.4	4.0	1.7	3.7	100.0	..
Total (number)	6,300	12,700	5,200	3,700	4,400	1,400	600	1,300	..	35,700
Accompanying child support periods (%)										
Couple with children	5.9	12.1	11.6	6.4	9.5	11.9	15.7	4.8	9.8	7,100
Male with children	2.1	5.5	3.2	0.9	3.6	5.4	18.3	2.2	3.9	2,800
Female with children	90.8	81.9	84.7	92.4	86.5	82.0	65.5	92.7	85.7	62,000
Other with children	1.2	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.6	0.3	0.6	400
<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 (%)	17.4	35.2	15.2	10.9	12.4	3.7	1.5	3.6	100.0	..
Total (number)	12,600	25,400	11,000	7,800	9,000	2,700	1,100	2,600	..	72,300
Mean number of accompanying child support periods per support period (number)										
Couple with children	1.97	2.17	2.57	2.41	2.24	1.96	1.97	2.03	..	2.21
Male with children	1.65	1.89	1.76	1.78	1.82	1.57	1.77	2.35	..	1.82
Female with children	2.01	1.99	2.07	2.11	2.02	1.93	1.88	1.98	..	2.02
Other with children	2.09	1.53	1.66	1.44	1.40	2.11	1.67	1.40	..	1.72
Total	2.00	2.00	2.10	2.12	2.03	1.91	1.87	1.99	..	2.03

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 448 support periods.
2. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 876 accompanying child support periods.
3. Although each member of a couple has an individual support period, in this table a couple presenting with children contributes only 1 support period. The table is therefore not directly comparable with other tables showing the number of support periods by client group.
4. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 5.4: SAAP support periods: main reason for seeking assistance by state and territory, Australia, 2003–04 (per cent)

Main reason for seeking assistance	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total	
									%	Number
Usual accommodation unavailable	9.7	9.4	14.3	11.8	10.8	14.7	9.1	10.2	10.7	16,400
Time out from family/other situation	4.2	5.3	9.6	8.0	5.2	4.3	7.0	6.7	5.9	9,000
Relationship/family breakdown	9.0	8.7	8.8	7.4	13.9	11.1	12.3	3.8	9.0	13,900
Interpersonal conflict	2.5	2.1	3.1	3.5	3.4	3.7	3.8	1.6	2.6	4,100
Physical/emotional abuse	1.8	2.3	3.5	6.4	4.0	2.8	2.9	8.1	3.0	4,600
Domestic violence	17.0	18.5	22.8	27.5	25.6	11.6	12.7	34.3	20.0	30,700
Sexual abuse	0.7	0.4	0.6	0.4	1.1	4.6	1.1	0.4	0.7	1,100
Financial difficulty	9.6	22.0	8.1	5.5	4.9	12.0	4.8	6.5	13.5	20,800
Gambling	0.5	0.1	0.2	—	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	300
Eviction/previous accommodation ended	8.0	11.1	8.7	7.1	9.2	14.5	15.9	5.2	9.6	14,800
Drug/alcohol/substance abuse	8.4	2.1	3.3	6.7	3.5	2.0	3.7	2.7	4.3	6,600
Emergency accommodation ended	1.1	3.3	1.1	0.7	1.3	1.5	3.1	0.8	2.0	3,000
Recently left institution	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.2	2.5	1.9	3.9	1.9	1.6	2,400
Psychiatric illness	2.1	1.6	1.1	1.1	1.5	1.3	2.8	0.5	1.6	2,400
Recent arrival to area with no means of support	4.8	3.6	7.7	5.4	5.2	7.0	5.1	9.4	5.0	7,800
Itinerant	2.1	2.1	2.5	3.0	4.1	2.1	3.6	2.8	2.4	3,700
Other	16.7	5.9	3.2	4.1	3.6	4.7	8.1	5.0	7.8	12,100
<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 (%)	24.3	38.9	13.2	8.4	6.4	4.2	1.9	2.7	100.0	..
Total (number)	37,400	59,900	20,300	13,000	9,900	6,400	2,900	4,200	..	153,900

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 12,407.
2. Table excludes high-volume records because not all items were included on the high-volume form.
3. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 5.5: SAAP support periods: main reason for seeking assistance by client group, Australia, 2003–04 (per cent)

Main reason for seeking assistance	Male alone under 25	Male alone 25+	Female alone under 25	Female alone 25+	Couple no children	Couple with children	Male with children	Female with children	Other	Total
Usual accommodation unavailable	17.2	12.4	12.8	6.3	14.7	13.2	14.8	5.9	11.5	10.6
Time out from family/other situation	8.0	5.8	9.1	5.4	3.9	4.5	3.0	4.1	6.0	5.9
Relationship/family breakdown	17.0	4.7	19.9	4.7	6.5	5.6	14.3	7.1	12.1	9.0
Interpersonal conflict	4.3	1.9	4.4	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.2	1.9	4.5	2.6
Physical/emotional abuse	1.5	0.5	4.2	4.8	1.0	1.1	1.3	5.1	4.2	3.0
Domestic violence	1.0	0.6	12.0	39.1	2.4	3.5	3.8	47.9	12.4	20.0
Sexual abuse	0.4	0.1	2.1	1.1	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.5	0.7
Financial difficulty	10.4	21.1	6.8	12.2	25.0	19.4	22.7	8.9	11.1	13.6
Gambling	0.1	0.6	—	0.1	0.1	—	—	0.1	0.1	0.2
Eviction/previous accommodation ended	14.6	7.3	11.9	5.0	18.2	23.6	16.2	7.7	13.8	9.7
Drug/alcohol/substance abuse	4.2	9.2	2.5	4.3	1.9	0.7	1.6	1.0	1.7	4.3
Emergency accommodation ended	2.9	2.1	2.3	1.6	3.0	3.4	2.4	1.1	1.2	2.0
Recently left institution	3.1	3.0	1.1	1.1	0.6	0.7	1.2	0.3	0.3	1.6
Psychiatric illness	1.4	3.0	1.1	2.1	0.7	0.3	0.8	0.3	0.9	1.6
Recent arrival to area with no means of support	5.6	8.5	2.9	3.2	7.5	9.8	5.3	2.2	8.3	5.0
Itinerant	3.3	3.4	2.6	2.0	4.1	2.0	2.0	1.1	2.7	2.4
Other	4.9	15.8	4.2	4.7	8.0	9.2	8.0	4.6	8.9	7.9
<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>100.0</i>
Total (%)	11.7	25.7	13.0	15.9	2.9	3.9	1.6	24.1	1.3	100.0
Total (number)	17,700	39,000	19,700	24,200	4,400	5,900	2,400	36,700	1,900	151,900

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 14,432.
2. Table excludes high-volume records because not all items were included on the high-volume form.
3. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.