

6 Demand for accommodation: potential clients

People can make more than one request for SAAP accommodation. As Figure 6.1 shows, they can make a request for SAAP accommodation and either be successful on the first attempt, make subsequent requests until they are accommodated, have their needs met elsewhere, or give up trying altogether. How often people have their needs met by other means and no longer require SAAP assistance cannot at present be measured.

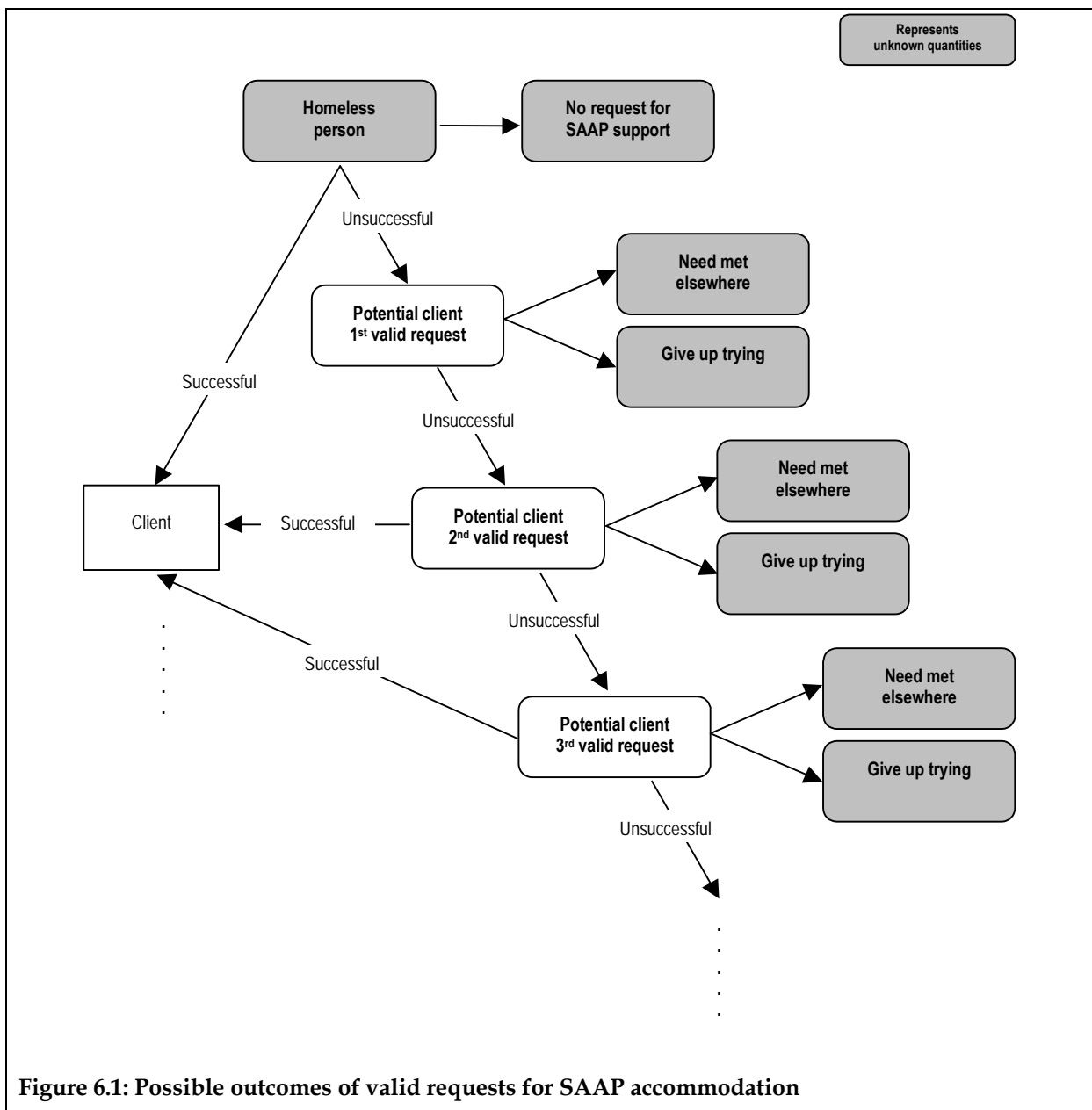


Figure 6.1: Possible outcomes of valid requests for SAAP accommodation

This chapter discusses the characteristics of potential clients who request accommodation at a SAAP agency. Potential clients are adults or children unaccompanied by a parent or guardian who request substantial assistance from a SAAP agency but do not receive it: that is, they have made valid unmet request(s) (see Chapter 5). Each request is attributed to an individual using a question on the Unmet Demand Collection form that asks if the person had been turned away from a SAAP agency earlier that day, so numerous requests can be attributed to an estimated number of individuals.

Information on unmet demand by potential clients is available for only 2 weeks of the year – from 22 to 28 August 2001 and from 8 to 14 May 2002. As with data on requests, because of seasonal factors and because people can make several unmet requests in a year, the daily and 2-week figures for potential clients cannot be used as a basis for deriving annual figures. The data presented in this chapter may underestimate the number of potential clients (see Sections 2.2 and A2.2.1).

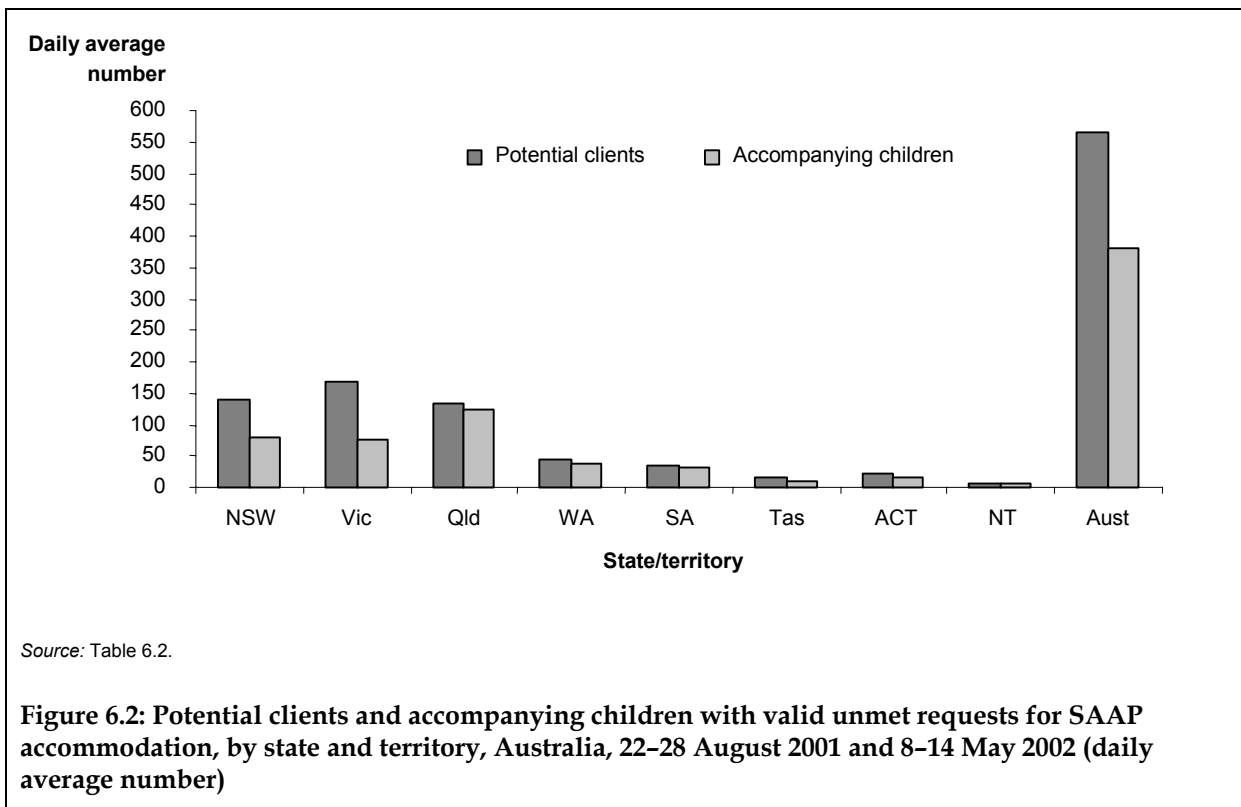
6.1 The number of people making unmet requests for accommodation

People may make more than one request for accommodation in a day. Additionally, in at least 39% of the 573 valid unmet requests for accommodation reported each day the request involved more than one person (Table 5.3). On average, on any day during the collection period 567 potential clients and 383 accompanying children were associated with valid unmet requests for accommodation, totalling 949 people per day (Table 6.1).

There was a daily average of 315 potential clients requesting accommodation who presented alone or with an unrelated person(s), 151 potential clients who presented alone with children, 52 potential clients who presented as a couple with children, and 33 potential clients who presented as a couple with no children. Only around 16 people presented in an ‘other or unknown’ type of group.

When children were involved, there was an average of 2 per group (derived from Table 6.1). The daily average number of accompanying children was highest for children who presented with one potential client (318). A daily average of 61 children accompanied a couple. Only 3 children a day presented as part of an ‘other’ group (Table 6.1).

Figure 6.2 shows the number of potential clients and accompanying children who made valid unmet requests for accommodation during the Unmet Demand Collection period by state and territory. Victoria reported the highest number of potential clients requesting accommodation on any given day during the period (168), accounting for 29% of the total number of potential clients requesting accommodation (Table 6.2). However, when considering accompanying children and potential clients together, Victoria had the lowest proportion of accompanying children as a percentage of all people making valid unmet requests for accommodation in the state (31%) (derived from Table 6.2). Queensland reported the largest number of accompanying children (125): nearly half (48%) of all people with valid requests who were refused accommodation in this state were accompanying children. South Australia also recorded that 48% of all people making valid unmet requests for accommodation were accompanying children.



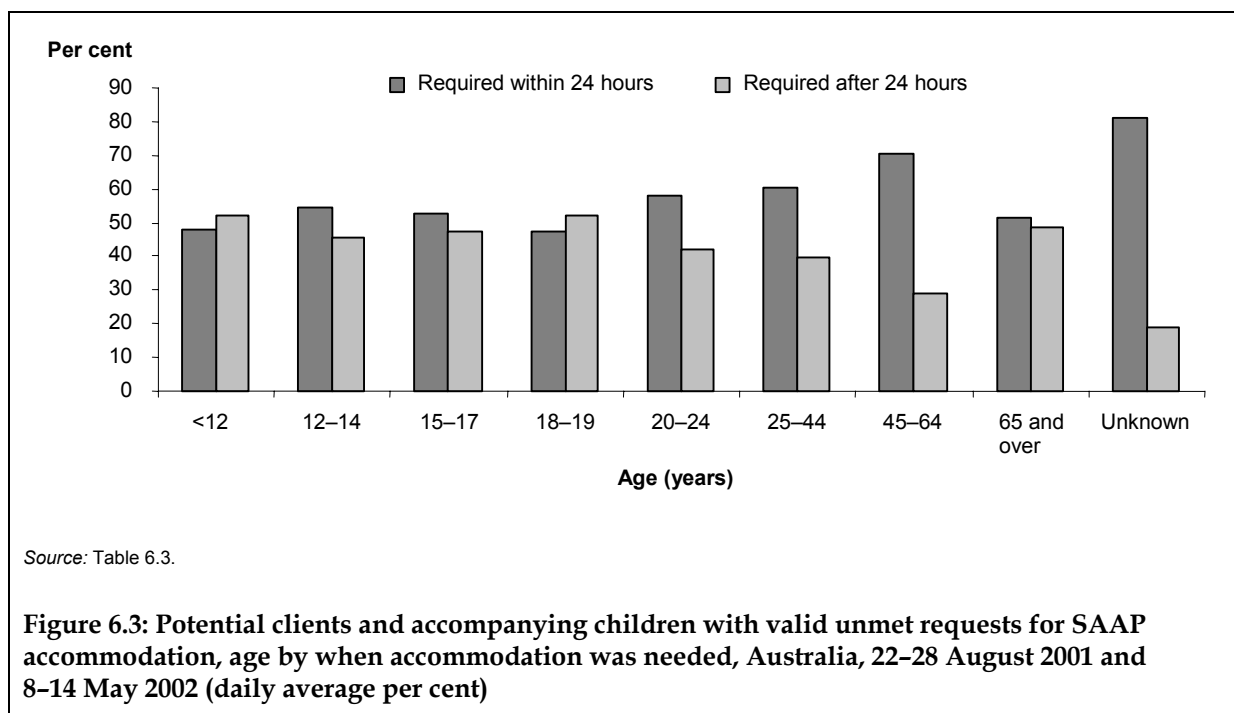
6.2 The immediacy of need for accommodation

As with the number of requests made (see Chapter 5), the majority of people making valid unmet requests for accommodation required accommodation within 24 hours – 61% of potential clients and 53% of accompanying children (Table 6.1). It is interesting to note that significantly more people required accommodation in 5 or more days of making their request (19% of potential clients and 20% of accompanying children) compared with those needing accommodation 24 to 48 hours after making their request (12% of potential clients and 17% of accompanying children) and 3 to 4 days after making their request (8% and 11%). This may indicate that many people try to make arrangements for an anticipated occasion of homelessness or some other type of insecurity before their situation reaches crisis point.

People or couples who presented with children had differing requirements in relation to how soon they needed accommodation compared with people who presented without children. Nearly half (48%) of potential clients who presented as an individual with children or as a couple with children were seeking accommodation after 24 hours (derived from Table 6.1). This was higher than the figure for potential clients who presented without children, of whom around 34% required accommodation after 24 hours.

Demographic characteristics

Table 6.3 shows demographic information for people with valid unmet requests for accommodation by the immediacy of their need for accommodation. The data include accompanying children because the design of the 2001–02 Unmet Demand Collection instrument does not allow demographic information on potential clients and accompanying children to be analysed separately. Figure 6.3 shows the immediacy of need for accommodation by the age group of people requesting accommodation.



For the majority of age groups, people making valid unmet requests for accommodation were more likely to require accommodation within 24 hours, with older potential clients generally having higher proportions requiring immediate accommodation than younger potential clients or accompanying children (Table 6.3). In particular people aged 45-64 years had the highest proportion requiring immediate accommodation (71%), with the exception of the 'unknown' category. Interestingly, potential clients or accompanying children aged under 12 years and 18-19 years were slightly more likely to require accommodation after 24 hours (52% each).

For the majority of males, with the exception of those aged under 12 years, accommodation was more likely to be required within 24 hours. This was particularly apparent for males aged 45-64 years, where 81% required accommodation within 24 hours. In contrast, females aged under 12 years (51%) and 15-17 years (53%), 18-19 years (56%) and 65 years and over (69%) were more likely to request accommodation after 24 hours.

The majority (60%) of potential clients and accompanying children were Australian-born. A further 2% were born in other predominantly English-speaking countries, and 5% were born in predominantly non-English speaking countries. Information on birthplace was not recorded for 33% of people making valid unmet requests for accommodation (derived from Table 6.3).

People who were born in Australia or in other English-speaking countries were more likely to require accommodation within 24 hours (54% and 58% respectively). People from non-English speaking countries were more likely to require accommodation after 24 hours (63%). This trend also applied to males, with those born in Australia or other English speaking countries more likely to require accommodation within 24 hours, and those born in non-English speaking countries after 24 hours. With the exception of females whose country of birth was unknown, females were more likely to request accommodation after 24 hours, particularly those born in non-English speaking countries (67%).

Table 6.3 also shows data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people making valid unmet requests for accommodation; however, caution should be exercised in drawing conclusions on the basis of this data because of the large proportion of people of 'unknown' status and the large amount of missing information: Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status was unknown for 32% of people requiring accommodation within 24 hours and for 19% of people requiring accommodation after 24 hours (or in 27% of valid unmet requests for accommodation) (derived from Table 6.3). In addition, data on Indigenous status were missing for an average of 34% of people per day.

The available data show, however, that 15% of people making valid unmet requests for accommodation were of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background (derived from Table 6.3). Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people were more likely to request accommodation within 24 hours (56%) than after 24 hours (Table 6.3). Non-Indigenous and Indigenous males had similar proportions for accommodation required within 24 hours (59% and 58% respectively) and after 24 hours. Female Indigenous people were more likely to require accommodation within 24 hours (54%) than non-Indigenous females (45%).

6.3 Summary

On average, on any day during the Unmet Demand Collection period, 567 adults or unaccompanied children and 383 accompanying children were associated with valid unmet requests for accommodation, totalling 949 people per day. The majority of potential clients presented alone or with unrelated people (315).

The majority of people making valid unmet requests for accommodation required accommodation within 24 hours (61% of potential clients and 53% of accompanying children). Significantly more people required accommodation in 5 or more days of making their request (19% of potential clients and 20% of accompanying children) than those needing accommodation 24 to 48 hours after making their request (12% of potential clients and 17% of accompanying children) and 3 to 4 days after making their request (8% and 11%).

Nearly half (48%) of potential clients who presented as an individual with children or as a couple with children were seeking accommodation after 24 hours. Around 34% of potential clients who presented without children required accommodation after 24 hours.

For the majority of males, with the exception of those aged under 12 years, accommodation was more likely to be required within 24 hours. In contrast, females aged under 12 years (51%) and aged 15–17 years (53%), 18–19 years (56%) and 65 years and over (69%) were more likely to request accommodation after 24 hours.

People who were born in Australia or in other English-speaking countries were more likely to require accommodation within 24 hours (54% and 58% respectively). People from non-English speaking countries were likely to require accommodation after 24 hours (63%).

Data on Indigenous status were missing or 'unknown' for a large proportion of potential clients. The available data show, however, that 15% of people making valid unmet requests for accommodation were of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background.

6.4 Tables

Table 6.1: Potential clients and accompanying children with valid unmet requests for SAAP accommodation, by when accommodation was needed and requesting group, Australia, 22–28 August 2001 and 8–14 May 2002 (daily average)

Requesting group	Required within 24 hours	Required in 24–48 hours	Required in 3–4 days	Required in 5 or more days	Total
Daily average number of potential clients needing accommodation					
Person alone	213.2	29.1	20.2	52.6	315.1
Person with children	80.1	24.2	16.4	29.9	150.5
Couple without children	19.9	2.6	3.0	7.7	33.1
Couple with children	24.6	9.4	6.3	11.6	51.9
Other/unknown	6.6	2.0	1.4	6.0	15.9
Total (number)	344.3	67.3	47.2	107.8	566.6
Total (%)	60.8	11.9	8.3	19.0	100.0
Daily average number of accompanying children needing accommodation					
Person with children	173.9	50.6	32.9	60.5	317.9
Couple with children	26.5	13.1	7.4	14.3	61.3
Other/unknown with children	1.2	0.4	0.8	0.9	3.3
Total (number)	201.6	64.1	41.1	75.6	382.5
Total (%)	52.7	16.8	10.8	19.8	100.0

Notes

1. Cases excluded due to missing data: 0.
2. Adjustments have been made for missing data (see Appendix 2).
3. The 'other/unknown' requesting group includes those cases where the assisted unit was reported as 'other' or where it was not reported at all.
4. People may make more than one request for accommodation in a day. Data are based on the first valid request made by the person or group (see Glossary).
5. Only data from agencies that participated in all 3 collections (the Client Collection, the Unmet Demand Collection and the Met Demand Collection) are included in this table. Consequently, the figures understate the level of activity in SAAP agencies.
6. Figures are unweighted.

Source: SAAP Unmet Demand Collection.

Table 6.2: Potential clients and accompanying children with valid unmet requests for SAAP accommodation, by when accommodation was needed and state and territory, 22–28 August 2001 and 8–14 May 2002 (daily average)

State/territory	Required within 24 hours	Required in 24–48 hours	Required in 3–4 days	Required in 5 or more days	Total
Daily average of number of potential clients needing accommodation					
NSW	91.6	15.0	8.8	23.4	138.8
Vic	78.9	21.9	16.6	50.3	167.6
Qld	88.6	18.1	12.6	14.8	134.1
WA	32.1	3.1	2.9	6.1	44.3
SA	18.3	3.8	3.7	9.9	35.6
Tas	12.8	2.1	0.7	1.1	16.6
ACT	15.8	2.3	1.6	1.9	21.6
NT	6.3	1.0	0.3	0.4	7.9
Total (number)	344.3	67.3	47.2	107.8	566.6
Total (%)	60.8	11.9	8.3	19.0	100.0
Daily average of number of accompanying children needing accommodation					
NSW	43.7	11.4	7.3	15.7	78.1
Vic	25.6	13.4	9.1	28.6	76.6
Qld	65.4	27.4	16.4	15.9	125.1
WA	26.2	3.2	2.0	6.4	37.9
SA	18.4	4.1	4.3	6.4	33.2
Tas	7.2	1.4	0.2	0.5	9.4
ACT	11.1	2.4	1.9	2.0	17.4
NT	4.1	0.6	0.1	0.0	4.8
Total (number)	201.6	64.1	41.1	75.6	382.5
Total (%)	52.7	16.8	10.8	19.8	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 are based on the first valid request made by the person or group (see Glossary).
4. Only data from agencies that participated in all 3 collections (the Client Collection, the Unmet Demand Collection and the Met Demand Collection) are included. Consequently the figures understate the level of activity in SAAP agencies.
5. Figures are unweighted.

Source: SAAP Unmet Demand Collection.

Table 6.3: Potential clients and accompanying children with valid unmet requests for SAAP accommodation: age, birthplace and Indigenous status, by gender and when accommodation was needed, Australia, 22–28 August 2001 and 8–14 May 2002 (average per cent daily)

	Male			Female			Total			Total number
	Accommodation									
	Required within 24 hours	Required after 24 hours	Total	Required within 24 hours	Required after 24 hours	Total	Required within 24 hours	Required after 24 hours	Total	
Age										
Under 12 years	46.8	53.2	100.0	49.1	50.9	100.0	48.0	52.0	100.0	228.9
12–14 years	53.6	46.4	100.0	55.3	44.7	100.0	54.5	45.5	100.0	39.7
15–17 years	60.7	39.3	100.0	46.7	53.3	100.0	52.9	47.1	100.0	98.5
18–19 years	51.9	48.1	100.0	44.0	56.0	100.0	47.6	52.4	100.0	49.6
20–24 years	66.4	33.6	100.0	51.8	48.2	100.0	57.8	42.2	100.0	96.9
25–44 years	69.4	30.6	100.0	53.7	46.3	100.0	60.6	39.4	100.0	185.6
45–64 years	81.2	18.8	100.0	52.8	47.2	100.0	70.7	29.3	100.0	27.8
65 years and over	68.4	31.6	100.0	31.3	68.8	100.0	51.4	48.6	100.0	2.5
Unknown	83.5	16.5	100.0	79.6	20.4	100.0	81.0	19.0	100.0	52.4
Total (%)	60.3	39.7	100.0	52.7	47.3	100.0	56.1	43.9	100.0	..
Total (number)	215.4	141.9	..	223.5	200.9	..	438.9	342.9	..	781.8
Birthplace										
Australia	59.1	40.9	100.0	49.0	51.0	100.0	53.7	46.3	100.0	570.7
Other English-speaking countries	69.7	30.3	100.0	46.7	53.3	100.0	57.6	42.4	100.0	16.5
Non-English speaking countries	42.0	58.0	100.0	32.6	67.4	100.0	36.9	63.1	100.0	47.6
Unknown	72.5	27.5	100.0	75.3	24.7	100.0	74.2	25.8	100.0	107.9
Total (%)	60.0	40.0	100.0	52.1	47.9	100.0	55.7	44.3	100.0	..
Total (number)	201.8	134.4	..	211.6	194.9	..	413.4	329.4	..	742.8
Indigenous status										
Not Indigenous	59.0	41.0	100.0	45.3	54.7	100.0	52.0	48.0	100.0	362.6
Indigenous	58.1	41.9	100.0	54.4	45.6	100.0	55.9	44.1	100.0	93.6
Unknown	69.7	30.3	100.0	68.4	31.6	100.0	68.9	31.1	100.0	167.4
Total (%)	61.5	38.5	100.0	53.5	46.5	100.0	57.1	42.9	100.0	..
Total (number)	175.6	110.1	..	180.8	157.3	..	356.4	267.4	..	623.7

Notes

1. Data on age were missing for an estimated 167.3 people per day out of 949.1.
2. Data on birthplace were missing for an estimated 206.3 people per day out of 949.1.
3. Data on Indigenous status were missing for an estimated 325.4 people per day out of 949.1.
4. Adjustments have been made for missing data (see Appendix 2).
5. People may make more than one request for accommodation in a day. Data are based on the first valid request made by the person or group (see Glossary).
6. Data include accompanying children.
7. Only data from agencies that participated in all 3 collections (the Client Collection, the Unmet Demand Collection and the Met Demand Collection) are included. Consequently, the figures understate the level of activity in SAAP agencies.
8. Figures are unweighted.

Source: SAAP Unmet Demand Collection.