

# 10 Support from 1996–97 to 2001–02

## Funding

Recurrent funding for SAAP in Australia has risen by 30% over the 6 years of the collection, from \$219.8m in 1996–97 to \$285.0m in 2001–02 (Table 10.1). When these figures are adjusted for inflation, in real terms funding increased by 13%. Looking at year-by-year changes, funding levels in real terms remained very similar between 1996–97 and 1998–99, but were followed by a 3% increase in 1999–00, a 6% rise in 2000–01 and a 3% rise in 2001–02.

Recurrent funding to SAAP agencies followed a slightly different pattern. From 1996–97 to 2000–01 actual recurrent funding to agencies increased by 34%, from \$200.5m in 1996–97 to \$269.0m in 2001–02 (Table 10.1). In real terms, this represented an increase of 17% over the 6 years, with relatively large annual increases in 1997–98 (4%), 2000–01 (5%) and 2001–02 (4%).

## Numbers of support periods and clients

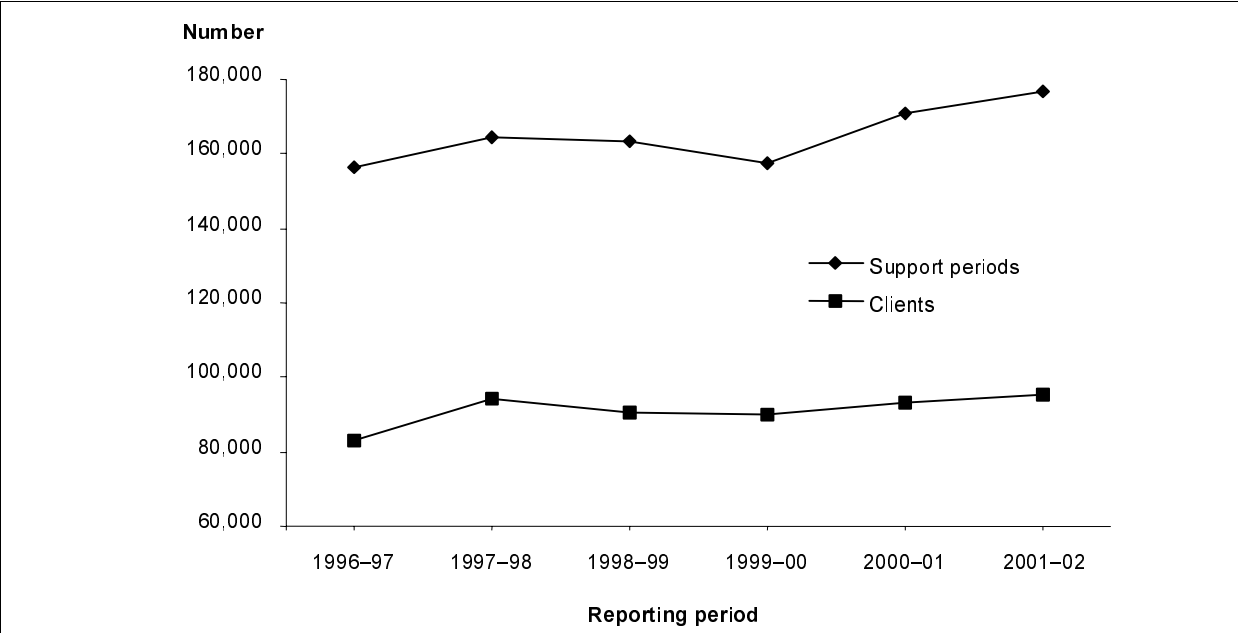
There would seem to be an obvious relationship between funds available to agencies and the amount of support they can provide for homeless people and people at risk of becoming homeless. Nevertheless, as Table 10.1 shows, an increase in funding to agencies does not automatically translate either into more resources being spent on each support period or client or into more clients being supported on more occasions. The actual funding outcome per client or support period depends on a number of factors, among them the demand for assistance, the types of services that clients need, the ability of agencies to meet those needs, and the costs agencies incur in providing services.

Overall, it is estimated that there were 156,500 support periods in 1996–97 (Table 10.2). This increased to 164,300 in 1997–98 but dropped back over the next 2 years, returning almost to 1996–97 levels in 1999–00 (Figure 10.1). In 2000–01 there was a sharp rise to 170,700 support periods. The main cause of this increase was the participation of one agency that had not previously participated in the Client Collection—this agency returned a very large number of forms. Although the weighting system adjusts for non-participation (see Appendix 1, Section A1.2), it does not allow for non-participating agencies such as this one that are quite different from other agencies. The number of support periods increased further in 2001–02 to 177,000, with increased participation by this same agency as well as the establishment of several new agencies.

Trends in the number of clients provided with SAAP services showed a pattern similar to that for support periods over the 6 years, although the changes were less pronounced in the last 4 years (Figure 10.1). In 1996–97 an estimated 83,200 clients were provided with support; the figure rose to 94,100 in 1997–98 and then fell to 90,000 by 1999–00. In 2000–01 the number of clients increased again to 93,000. The highest number of clients of any of the 6 years was recorded in 2001–02, with 95,600 clients provided with SAAP services.

The pattern of support over the 6 years varied across jurisdictions and did not necessarily replicate the national pattern for either support periods or clients (Table 10.2). For example, although it accounted for the greatest number of support periods each year, New South Wales was the only jurisdiction to show a decrease in support periods provided between 1996–97 and 1997–98. It should be noted, however, that the relatively high number of

support periods recorded in New South Wales for 1996–97 was largely the result of the collection’s reporting practices for people placed by police for 8 hours with SAAP agencies because of intoxication. Between 1998–99 and 2001–02 New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory showed continuing decreases in the number of support periods provided. In contrast, Queensland showed increases over this period, with a very large increase in 2000–01 – from 26,100 support periods in 1999–00 to 38,700 the next year. This jump was primarily due to the participation of a very high-volume agency for the first time in that year. Victoria and South Australia have shown continued increases in the number of support periods provided each year from 1999–00 to 2001–02.



Source: Table 10.2.

**Figure 10.1: Number of SAAP support periods and clients, by reporting period, Australia, 1996–97 to 2001–02**

In general terms, the number of clients receiving support over time reflected the pattern observed for support periods within each jurisdiction. However, there were a number of exceptions. For example, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory showed decreases in both clients and support periods between 2000–01 and 2001–02 despite the increase in both numbers at the national level. In New South Wales between 1996–97 and 1997–98, and 2000–01 and 2001–02, the number of support periods fell but the number of clients rose. Between 1999–00 and 2000–01, while the number of support periods changed in Tasmania and the Northern Territory, the number of clients in these regions remained static. Furthermore, support periods in Queensland increased by 48% between 1999–00 and 2000–01 but client numbers increased by only 12%, reflecting that clients of the newly reporting high-volume agency tended to access the service repeatedly during the year. While New South Wales accounted for the greatest number of support periods in all reporting periods, from 1998–99 Victoria had the greatest number of clients.

Table 10.2 also shows the daily average number of support periods and nightly average support periods with accommodation. The average number of support periods active on any

day of a reporting year has gradually increased from 13,600 in 1996–97 to 20,400 in 2001–02, despite the actual number of support periods fluctuating during that period. In addition to the total number of support periods active in a reporting year, the length of support periods may also influence the daily average number of support periods. Where the number of support periods declined between 1998–99 and 1999–00, the median length of support was relatively high (see Table 10.6). Therefore, although there were fewer support periods, the longer support lengths contributed to the higher average number of support periods active on any day of the year. The large increase in the average daily number of support periods between 2000–01 and 2001–02 may be explained by the significant increase in support periods between the years (6,300), as well as the increase in the mean length of support (from 40 to 44 days). The higher mean length of support in 2001–02 indicates that there were more long support periods in that year than in 2000–01.

The daily average number of support periods with accommodation followed the same trend as that shown by the number of support periods. That is, when the number of support periods increased or decreased between each year, so did the daily average number of support periods with accommodation. It should be noted that there can be more than 1 accommodation period within a support period. Therefore, the length of an accommodation period can be the same as, or shorter than, the associated support period. This contributes to the smaller average number of support periods with accommodation compared to the average number of support periods, along with the fact that many SAAP clients require non-accommodation support services only, or can not be provided with SAAP or CAP accommodation during their support period.

### **Use of SAAP services**

Nationally, the number of support periods clients received in a reporting period remained relatively stable over time (Table 10.3). In 2001–02 the number of support periods per client was relatively high, at 1.8. The highest level of repeat use of SAAP services was recorded in 1996–97 (see AIHW 2001b), when clients averaged 1.9 support periods each. The number of support periods per client using Queensland agencies increased dramatically from 1.9 in 1999–00 to 2.3 in 2000–01, and increased again in the following year to 2.4 support periods per client. Again, this is due to a recently participating very high-volume agency in that State. Clients who used agencies in New South Wales or the two Territories had relatively high repeat-use rates in all years, averaging 2 or more support periods in nearly every year, with the level of repeat use dropping below 2.0 support periods for both Territories in 2001–02. Compared with other jurisdictions, clients who accessed agencies in Tasmania or Victoria returned to SAAP agencies less often, with clients who used Victorian agencies averaging between 1.6 and 1.8 support periods in a year.

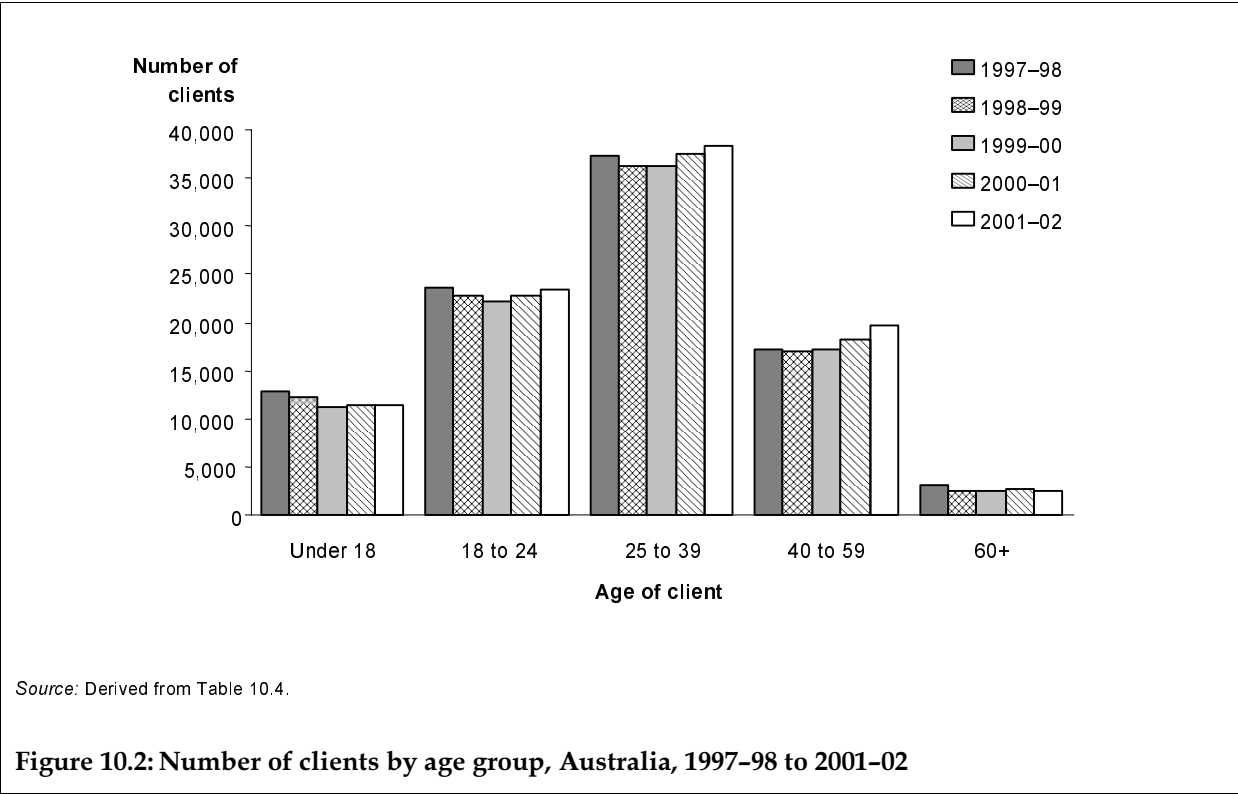
Nationally, the rate of SAAP use was highest in 1997–98, when 59 people out of every 10,000 aged 10 years and over (or 0.6%) became SAAP clients (Table 10.3). The lowest rate during the 5 years presented was in 1999–00, when 55 people per 10,000 aged 10 years and over used SAAP services at some time during the year.

SAAP use varied between the States and Territories (Table 10.3). Even allowing for its relatively young age profile, the Northern Territory had the highest rate throughout the 5-year period, ranging between 167 and 184 clients for every 10,000 people aged 10 years and over (age-adjusted). This was around three times the national average in all years. In actual (unadjusted) terms in any year, between 188 and 211 people became SAAP clients for every 10,000 people aged 10 years and over in the Northern Territory. Victoria, Tasmania and the

Australian Capital Territory also had above-average rates, ranging between 63 and 97 clients per 10,000 people aged 10 years and over (age-adjusted).

**Age profile**

Between 1997-98 and 2001-02, nationally there has been very little change in either the average or median age of clients (Table 10.4). The average age of clients hovered between 30 and 31 years throughout the period, while the median age was either 28 or 29 in each year. There have, however, been some minor changes in the proportion of clients in the various age groups. In particular, the proportion of clients aged under 20 years dropped from 23% in 1997-98 to 20% in 2001-02, while over the same period the proportion of clients aged between 30 and 49 rose from 38% to 41%. In absolute terms, as illustrated in Figure 10.2, the number of clients aged under 18 has been dropping since 1997-98, while numbers in the age brackets between 25 and 59 years have been increasing since 1998-99.



**Case management**

There are indications that the way support is being delivered in Australia has changed over the past 5 years. In particular, among general agencies (that is, not high-volume agencies) since 1997-98 there has been a continuing increase in the percentage of support periods in which support plans have been used (Table 10.5). In these agencies, support plans were used in 54% of support periods that finished in 1997-98, compared with 60% of completed support periods in 2001-02. However, the use of support plans in 2001-02 declined from 2000-01, when they were used in 62% of cases. Over the first 4 years of the period in question, the proportion of support periods in which support plans were not thought to be appropriate dropped from 28% to 22%. However, this proportion increased to 24% in

2001–02. By 2001–02, support plans were being used in 78% of support periods for which they were thought to be appropriate; this compares with 75% in 1997–98.<sup>4</sup>

In 2001–02, all goals were achieved in 14% of cases, with some or most goals being achieved in a further 36% of support periods with a support plan. No goals were achieved in 4% of cases with a support plan for which there were data.

### **Length of support**

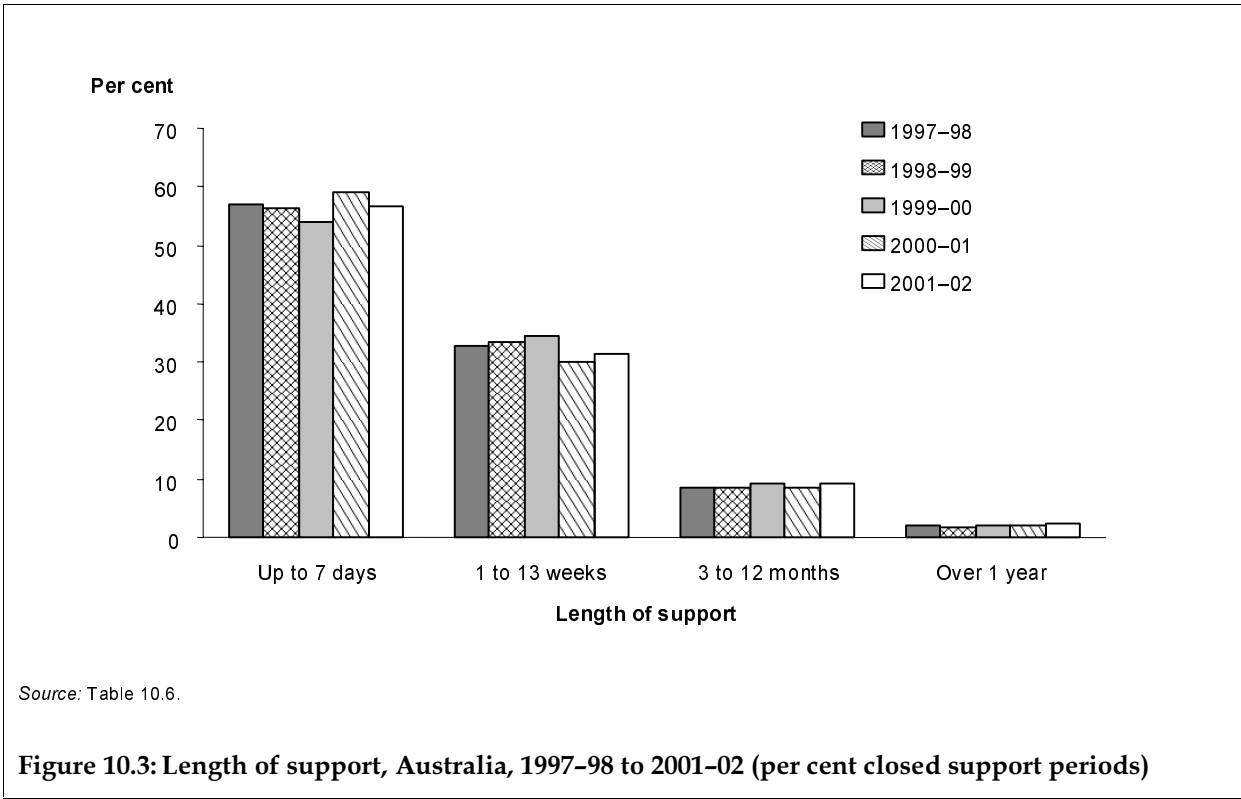
As Figure 10.3 illustrates, from 1997–98 to 1999–00 there was a small but continuing decrease in the proportion of support periods lasting up to 1 week, accompanied by an increase in the proportion of support periods lasting 1 to 13 weeks. However, between 1999–00 and 2000–01 the proportion of support periods lasting up to 1 week rose sharply, before dropping back to the 1997–98 level in 2001–02. The main contributor to the peak of 2000–01 was a rise in the proportion of support periods lasting just 1 day – up from 16% of closed support periods in 1999–00 to 22% in 2000–01 and 2001–02 (Table 10.6). This is mainly a result of the large increase in the proportion of support periods lasting 1 day in Queensland – from 15% in 1999–00 to 42% in 2000–01 and 46% in 2001–02 (see Table 10.5 in the Queensland supplement to this publication). This jump was mainly caused by a large high-volume agency reporting for the first time in 2000–01.

The drop in support periods lasting up to 1 week in 2001–02 is a result of the decrease in the number of support periods lasting less than 1 day and between 2 and 4 days. As a consequence of the increase in support periods lasting only 1 day, the median length of stay dropped from 6 days in 1999–00 to 4 days in 2000–01 and 2001–02. The mean length of support fell back to 1997–98 levels (40 days) in 2000–01, and rose to the highest mean of the 5-year period in 2001–02. This is due to a small increase in the number of support periods lasting 13 weeks or more and the decrease in some shorter support lengths as mentioned above.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> From Table 10.5 we calculate:  $59.6 / (100.0 - 23.5) \times 100 = 78\%$ .

<sup>5</sup> Being an arithmetic average, mean length of support is highly influenced by the small percentage of support periods that are very long. See Appendix 1, Section A1.4, for a description of ‘mean’ and ‘median’.



## 10.1 Tables

**Table 10.1: SAAP funding to agencies and mean funding per support period and client: current and constant 2001-02 dollars, by reporting period, Australia, 1996-97 to 2001-02**

Reporting period	Total recurrent funding	Funding to agencies	Funding per support period	Funding per client
<b>Current \$</b>				
1996-97	219,771,000	200,539,000	1,280	2,410
1997-98	223,661,000	212,768,000	1,300	2,260
1998-99	229,889,000	220,328,000	1,350	2,430
1999-00	245,511,000	231,717,000	1,470	2,570
2000-01	268,537,000	251,367,000	1,470	2,700
2001-02	285,039,000	268,960,000	1,520	2,810
<b>Constant 2001-02 \$</b>				
1996-97	251,587,000	229,571,000	1,470	2,760
1997-98	251,833,000	239,568,000	1,460	2,550
1998-99	253,840,000	243,284,000	1,490	2,680
1999-00	261,539,000	246,845,000	1,570	2,740
2000-01	276,056,000	258,405,000	1,510	2,780
2001-02	285,039,000	268,960,000	1,520	2,810

### Notes

1. Funding per support period and funding per client are based on recurrent allocations to agencies.
2. 'Total recurrent funding' for 1999-00, 2000-01 and 2001-02 includes relatively small amounts provided through the Partnerships Against Domestic Violence Program (Table 2.1; AIHW 2000b: Table 2.1; AIHW 2001a: Table 2.1).
3. 'Funding to agencies' in 2001-02 includes \$7,842,000 provided by the Victorian funding department which was in addition to the SAAP funding agreement between that State and the Commonwealth. 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.
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.

Source: SAAP Administrative Data and Client Collections; AIHW 1997, 1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2002; ABS 2002; FaCS unpublished data.

**Table 10.2: SAAP support periods and clients: States and Territories by reporting period, Australia, 1996–97 to 2001–02 (number)**

	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>State/Territory</b>	<b>Support periods</b>					
NSW	57,900	55,000	55,400	51,200	49,300	47,900
Vic	36,800	41,800	44,200	42,700	43,400	45,200
Qld	25,100	26,800	25,800	26,100	38,700	41,400
WA	12,000	12,500	12,400	13,100	15,200	14,700
SA	11,400	12,900	11,100	10,900	11,000	14,400
Tas	5,200	6,400	5,600	5,800	5,100	5,800
ACT	3,200	3,300	3,000	3,200	2,900	2,700
NT	4,800	5,500	5,600	4,700	5,200	4,800
<b>Australia</b>	<b>156,500</b>	<b>164,300</b>	<b>163,200</b>	<b>157,600</b>	<b>170,700</b>	<b>177,000</b>
<b>Nightly average support periods with accomm.</b>	<b>5,200</b>	<b>7,600</b>	<b>7,200</b>	<b>7,000</b>	<b>7,200</b>	<b>8,100</b>
<b>Daily average support periods</b>	<b>13,600</b>	<b>15,500</b>	<b>16,500</b>	<b>18,000</b>	<b>18,100</b>	<b>20,400</b>
<b>State/Territory</b>	<b>Clients</b>					
NSW	26,600	29,100	27,300	25,800	25,900	26,400
Vic	23,700	28,000	29,100	28,500	28,200	29,200
Qld	14,900	16,500	15,300	16,100	18,000	18,400
WA	7,700	8,200	7,900	8,500	9,700	9,000
SA	7,000	8,600	7,500	7,600	7,700	8,800
Tas	3,200	3,800	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,700
ACT	2,200	2,300	2,100	2,200	2,100	1,900
NT	2,500	3,100	3,300	3,100	3,100	3,100
<b>Australia</b>	<b>83,200</b>	<b>94,100</b>	<b>90,700</b>	<b>90,000</b>	<b>93,000</b>	<b>95,600</b>

*Notes*

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 0 client and support periods.
2. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 22,631 daily average support periods with accommodation.
3. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 13,882 daily average support periods.
4. 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. This has changed since the 1999–00 annual report (AIHW 2000b), in which clients were tabulated according to the State or Territory of the agency they first visited in the financial year.
5. Support period figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.
6. Client figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Administrative Data and Client Collections.

**Table 10.3: SAAP clients: support periods per client and clients per 10,000 population, by State or Territory ever visited and reporting period, Australia, 1997–98 to 2001–02**

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<b>State/Territory</b>	<b>Support periods per client</b>				
NSW	2.15	2.15	2.07	2.02	2.00
Vic	1.65	1.76	1.74	1.73	1.73
Qld	1.83	1.81	1.85	2.31	2.44
WA	1.74	1.77	1.73	1.85	1.88
SA	1.93	1.97	1.88	1.84	1.79
Tas	1.71	1.86	1.89	1.76	1.74
ACT	2.39	2.22	2.33	2.18	1.87
NT	2.04	2.14	1.92	2.13	1.94
<b>Australia</b>	<b>1.72</b>	<b>1.77</b>	<b>1.73</b>	<b>1.80</b>	<b>1.82</b>
<b>State/Territory</b>	<b>Actual number of clients per 10,000 population aged 10+</b>				
NSW	54	50	46	46	46
Vic	71	72	69	68	69
Qld	57	52	53	59	58
WA	53	50	53	60	54
SA	67	58	58	58	67
Tas	94	86	87	86	91
ACT	86	78	81	77	69
NT	201	211	193	188	189
<b>Australia</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>State/Territory</b>	<b>Age-standardised number of clients per 10,000 population aged 10+</b>				
NSW	54	50	47	46	46
Vic	71	72	70	68	69
Qld	56	51	52	58	58
WA	52	49	52	59	53
SA	70	61	61	61	69
Tas	97	90	91	91	96
ACT	79	72	75	72	63
NT	180	184	171	165	167
<b>Australia</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>56</b>

*Notes*

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 0.
2. Clients may have support periods at agencies in more than one State or Territory. Consequently, the number of clients (from Table 10.2) multiplied by the average number of support periods for clients who ever visited a particular State or Territory is greater than the number of support periods provided within that State or Territory. This has changed since the 1999–00 annual report (AIHW 2000b), in which clients were tabulated according to the State or Territory of the agency they first visited in the financial year.
3. Since a client may have support periods in more than one State or Territory, national numbers of support periods per client and clients per 10,000 population are not the simple mean of the State and Territory figures.
4. 'Clients 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 clients of SAAP. 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 just prior to the reporting period. Age-standardised estimates have been derived to allow for different age distributions in the various jurisdictions. The Australian estimated resident population at 30 June 2001 (preliminary estimates) has been used as the reference population.
5. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Administrative Data and Client Collections; ABS 2001a.

**Table 10.4: SAAP clients: age of client by reporting period, Australia, 1997-98 to 2001-02 (per cent)**

<b>Age of client</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-00</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>2001-02</b>
Under 15 years	2.0	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.9
15-17 years	11.7	11.5	10.7	10.4	10.0
18-19 years	9.0	8.8	8.7	8.5	8.5
20-24 years	16.1	16.3	16.1	16.2	16.1
25-29 years	14.9	14.8	15.0	14.6	14.0
30-34 years	13.3	13.7	13.8	14.2	14.5
35-39 years	11.4	11.5	11.7	11.8	11.8
40-44 years	7.8	8.3	8.5	8.6	9.2
45-49 years	5.0	5.0	5.4	5.3	5.7
50-54 years	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.7
55-59 years	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.1
60-64 years	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.2
65 years and over	2.0	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<b>Total (number)</b>	<b>94,100</b>	<b>90,500</b>	<b>89,600</b>	<b>92,600</b>	<b>95,000</b>
<b>Mean age (years)</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>30.4</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>30.9</b>	<b>31.1</b>
<b>Median age (years)</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>

*Notes*

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 1,589.
2. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

*Source:* SAAP Client Collection.

**Table 10.5: SAAP closed support periods: existence of a support plan by reporting period, Australia, 1997–98 to 2001–02 (per cent)**

Existence of support plan	1997–98	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
<i>Support plan</i>	53.9	57.7	60.8	61.8	59.6
All goals achieved	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	10.5	13.9
Most or some goals achieved	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	30.0	35.7
No goals achieved	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	3.7	3.8
No information given	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	17.5	6.2
<i>No support plan</i>	17.8	14.8	14.7	16.3	16.9
<i>Not appropriate</i>	28.3	27.5	24.6	21.8	23.5
<i>Total</i>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Total (number)</b>	<b>100,900</b>	<b>99,100</b>	<b>96,800</b>	<b>92,300</b>	<b>105,000</b>

*Notes*

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 54,296.
2. Table excludes high-volume records because not all items were included on the high-volume form.
3. Data on goal achievement were not collected before 2000–01. In addition, the percentage with 'No information given' on goal achievement is high for 2000–01: these data were not collected for the first half of the year by agencies using the electronic reporting tool.
4. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

**Table 10.6: SAAP closed support periods: length of support by reporting period, Australia, 1997–98 to 2001–02 (per cent)**

Length of support	1997–98	1998–99	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
Less than 1 day	18.3	17.7	16.7	17.6	16.5
1 day	17.1	16.6	15.7	21.9	21.8
2 days	6.2	6.3	6.0	5.7	5.1
3 days	4.9	5.2	5.2	4.6	4.2
4 days	3.3	3.2	3.2	2.9	2.7
5 days	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.2	2.2
6 days	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.1
7 days	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.2
>1–2 weeks	9.0	9.1	9.5	8.1	8.0
>2–4 weeks	8.7	9.0	9.2	7.9	8.2
>4–13 weeks	15.0	15.4	15.9	14.1	15.2
>13–26 weeks	5.5	5.6	5.9	5.5	5.9
>26–52 weeks	2.9	2.9	3.3	3.2	3.4
>52 weeks	2.0	1.7	2.1	2.0	2.3
<i>Total (%)</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<b>Total (number)</b>	<b>147,900</b>	<b>147,700</b>	<b>140,500</b>	<b>153,300</b>	<b>158,000</b>
<b>Mean length (days)</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Median length (days)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

*Notes*

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 7,590.
2. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.

*Source:* SAAP Client Collection.