

Quality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identification in community services data collections

**Update on eight
community services data collections**

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
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<p>Please note that as with all statistical reports there is the potential for minor revisions of data in this report over its life. Please refer to the online version at <www.aihw.gov.au>.</p>

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Executive summary

Improving Indigenous identification in the community services sector has been recognised as a priority by the National Community Services Information Management Group (NCSIMG). This report, along with the earlier *Data quality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identification: seven community services data collections* ('Data quality report') (AIHW 2004b), makes an integral contribution to measuring the success of strategies at the national and state/territory level, by assessing the trends in the quality of Indigenous identification in eight community services data collections.

The focus of the report is two-fold:

1. to examine the extent to which Indigenous status is missing/not stated in each of the data collections and, where applicable, to compare this to data reported in the Data quality report
2. to document data quality improvement activities undertaken in each of the eight community services data collections, since the publication of the Data quality report.

The eight community services sector data collections in this report include the seven data collections presented in the Data quality report, with the addition of the recently developed Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set (NMDS), as listed below:

- Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement National Minimum Data Set (CSTDA NMDS) (Chapter 2)
- Three aged care data collections: Home and Community Care Minimum Data Set (HACC MDS) (Chapter 3); Residential Aged Care Services (RACS) Data Collection (Chapter 4); and Community Aged Care Packages (CACP) Data Collection (Chapter 5)
- Supported Accommodation Assistance Program National Data Collection (SAAP NDC) (Chapter 6)
- National Child Protection (NCP) Data Collections, which cover information on children who are the subject of investigations and substantiations; children on care and protection orders; and children in out-of-home care (Chapter 7)
- Alcohol and Other Drugs Treatment Services National Minimum Data Set (AODTS NMDS) (Chapter 8)
- Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set (JJ NMDS) (Chapter 9).

Summary of findings

It is recognised that any analysis of Indigenous identification data in the community services sector must take into consideration that the preparedness of clients to identify may be influenced by a number of factors related to the nature of the service provided, including the purpose of the service and the voluntary nature of the clients' access to the service. For some of the services represented in the data collections analysed in this report, clients make voluntary contact with the service (for example CSTDA or HACC), while other services are imposed on the client (for example child protection or juvenile justice). In the particular case of homelessness (SAAP), although clients make voluntary contact with the service the nature of their situation may invoke a sense of social stigma.

These aspects of a client's interaction with a service mean that there is likely to be

considerable variability between the data collections in the willingness of the client to provide, and of the service provider to collect, information on Indigenous status; the quality of the information provided by the client; and the perceived relevance of the information by both the client and the service provider. For this and other reasons, direct comparison should not be drawn between rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status in the eight community services data collections presented in this report. The purpose of the analysis in each chapter is to highlight the improvement or otherwise in the quality of Indigenous status data in each of the data collections, and compare this to the data reported in the Data quality report, where appropriate.

National rates

One key indicator of identification quality is the rate of not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status. Various initiatives aimed at reducing that rate have been undertaken.

Five out of the eight data collections presented in this report reported decreases in the national not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status rates:

- The HACC MDS rate decreased from 12.6% to 10.4% between the April–June 2002 and April–June 2004 quarters (Chapter 3).
- The RACS Data Collection rate decreased from 8.7% in 2001–02 to 2.1% in 2004–05 (Chapter 4).
- Between 2001–02 and 2004–05, the not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status rate decreased in all NCP data collections – from 14.0% to 9.7% for investigations; from 9.4% to 7.2% for substantiations; from 3.9% to 1.2% for care and protection orders; and from 4.5% to 0.9% for out-of-home care (Chapter 7).
- The AODTS NMDS rate decreased from 7.6% to 6.1% between 2001–02 and 2003–04 (Chapter 8).
- The JJ NMDS rate decreased from 12.2% in 2001–02 to 8.8% in 2003–04 (Chapter 9).

The other three collections recorded an increase in the national missing/not stated Indigenous status rate. It should be noted that these increases are not necessarily indicative of a decline in the quality of the data collection – the implementation of methodologies to promote longer term improvements may also contribute to a short-term increase in the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status. One major example of this is the improvement in the CSTDA data by introducing an ongoing data collection, replacing the previous one-day snapshot collection.

- During its first two years of collecting ongoing data, the CSTDA NMDS rate increased from 8.0% to 20.5% between 2003–04 and 2004–05 (Chapter 2).
- CACP recorded a small rate increase from 0.1% to 0.7% between 2002 and 2005 (Chapter 5).
- The SAAP NDC rate increased from 2.2% to 3.6% between 2001–02 and 2004–05 (Chapter 6).

Data quality improvement activities

Between the publication of the original Data quality report and the writing of this report, a number of activities have been undertaken or instigated that have resulted in the improvements in Indigenous status data shown above. These activities have been implemented at the national level through national data working groups, in collaboration with the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) and the

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), to improve the quality of data collected, at the jurisdictional level through direct collaboration with service providers, and at the agency level through training of staff.

Activities implemented at the national level in many data collections encompass the development of improved data collection forms and software; implementation of the standard Indigenous status question; consultation with jurisdictions and agencies on the use of their data, including the return of data; and edit checks of national and jurisdictional data. Activities implemented in various data collections at the jurisdictional level include, but are not limited to, supplying feedback to participating agencies by following up on data quality issues as they arise and providing support to participating agencies through training and data guides, help-desks and data collection software packages.

1 Introduction

It is widely accepted that the health and welfare of Australia's Indigenous population is poor. But some key questions about the circumstances of Indigenous Australians, such as whether the health and welfare of Indigenous people relative to other Australians is improving or not, cannot be answered because of the lack of good quality data.

Knowledge of whether the health and welfare of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has improved over time and which aspects have changed and by how much is very important for assessing the extent to which policies and programs aimed at improvement are having an impact. There is, however, a lack of basic and comparable data, because Indigenous status is not accurately identified in many key data sets.

Information on the Indigenous status of clients of community services has been collected nationally for a number of years and efforts to improve the quality of this information have been or are currently undertaken in relation to all national data collections. An assessment of the quality of the identification of Indigenous people who receive community services was carried out in 2003, resulting in the publication of the report *Data quality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identification: seven community services data collections* ('Data quality report') (AIHW 2004b).

This report provides an update of some of the analyses presented in the previous Data quality report. It differs from the previous report in that it includes information on activities undertaken in each data collection to improve Indigenous identification. Furthermore, it contains information on the data quality of Indigenous identification in an eighth collection, namely the Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set (JJ NMDS).

Like the previous Data quality report, this report specifically focuses on instances where Indigenous status is missing or 'not stated' in data sets. Another approach to quality assessment would be to undertake an evaluation of the recorded Indigenous status for clients in each of the eight data sets. No such independent verification of the Indigenous status of clients was carried out as part of this project.

It is anticipated that the information provided in this report will facilitate further and ongoing improvements in the identification of Indigenous Australians within community services. This will in turn improve the information available on the need for and use of community services by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The importance of Indigenous identification

The accurate identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients is essential for measuring the effectiveness of community services in meeting the needs of the Indigenous population. Accurate information on Indigenous status also assists planning and improvement in service delivery, which can lead to improvements in the wellbeing of Indigenous people.

The National Community Services Information Management Group has recognised the importance of having good quality data on Indigenous Australians and its 2005–2009 Strategic Plan includes a number of priority areas to improve the quality and availability of information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the community services sector (AIHW 2005d).

However, despite continuing efforts to improve the identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including clients of health and welfare services, investigations into the quality of data related to Indigenous identification carried out in recent years indicate that problems still exist.

The standard question on Indigenous status

Many of the improvements that have taken place are the result of the development and implementation of a standard for identifying Indigenous people in data collections. The standard question is:

[Are you] [Is the person] [Is (name)] of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?
(For persons of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, mark both 'Yes' boxes.)

- No.....
- Yes, Aboriginal.....
- Yes, Torres Strait Islander.....

This question is recommended for self-enumerated or interview-based collections. It can also be used in circumstances where a close relative, friend, or another member of the household is answering on behalf of the subject. In order to encourage a response, clients/patients are not being provided with a 'not stated' option, although this response category should be recorded where the person chose not to answer the question.

The standard question was developed to improve the quality, availability and comparability of Indigenous statistics across different data collections and is included in the *National Health Data Dictionary* and the *National Community Services Data Dictionary*. The *National Community Services Data Dictionary* is the authoritative source of community services data definitions where national consistency is required. Similarly, the *National Health Data Dictionary* is the authoritative source of health data definitions where national consistency is required under the National Health Information Agreement. There has been a gradual increase in the number of health and community services data collections which include the Indigenous standard question and reporting format as a reporting requirement. The complete national standard for Indigenous status can be found in Attachment B of this report.

Gaps and limitations of existing data on Indigenous Australians

Gaps and limitations of existing community services data collections are the result of several different influences:

1. Diversity in the purpose of community service providers

It is recognised that any analysis of Indigenous identification data in the community services sector must take into consideration that the preparedness of clients to identify may be influenced by a number of factors related to the nature of the service provided, including the purpose of the service and the voluntary nature of the clients' access to the service. For some

of the services represented in the data collections analysed in this report, clients make voluntary contact with the service (for example CSTDA or Home and Community Care (HACC)), while other services are imposed on the client (for example child protection or juvenile justice). In the particular case of homelessness (SAAP), although clients make voluntary contact with the service the nature of their situation may invoke a sense of social stigma.

These aspects of a client's interaction with a service mean that there is likely to be considerable variability between the data collections in the willingness of the client to provide, and of the service provider to collect, information on Indigenous status; the quality of the information provided by the client; and the perceived relevance of the information by both the client and the service provider. For this and other reasons, direct comparison should not be drawn between rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status in the eight community services data collections presented in this report. The purpose of the analysis in each chapter is to highlight the improvement or otherwise in the quality of Indigenous status data in each of the data collections, and compare this to the data reported in the Data quality report, where appropriate.

2. Poor coverage of agencies or services within the data collection

No data collection has complete coverage of the agencies and services that fall within the scope of that data collection.

In many collections, agencies that provide a service, such as homelessness services in the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP), may not report to the national data collection. In the case of SAAP this incomplete coverage is referred to as 'agency non-participation'. Increasing the agency participation rate will also increase the completeness of reporting on Indigenous people receiving SAAP services. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6 of this report.

For other data collections, certain services are not collected and reported on, for example, the Multi-Purpose Services in the Residential Aged Care Services (RACS) and Community Aged Care Packages (CACP) data collections. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may receive aged care services through this service, but the data are not collected or reported on through the RACS or CACP data collections. This issue is discussed further in Chapters 4 and 5 of this report.

3. No data collected

While agencies are required to record and report the Indigenous status of clients receiving their services for the majority of community services data collections, some community services agencies are not mandated to collect this information.

An example of this is recreation and holiday programs provided by agencies within the scope of the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement National Minimum Data Set (CSTDA NMDS). Agencies providing these services/programs are only required to collect age and sex data. The Indigenous status of clients is not collected or reported on, and although not considered to be 'missing/not stated' data, these programs/services do contribute to the incomplete picture of the number of Indigenous people who receive CSTDA services.

4. Poor identification in currently collected data

Poor identification of Indigenous people accessing community services is the focus of this report. The presence of missing/not stated Indigenous status data in community service data

collections is an indication that identification of Indigenous people accessing the services is incomplete. Reasons for this missing/not stated Indigenous status data in community services data collections are addressed throughout this report, and in the first point in this section: Diversity in the purpose of community service providers.

About this report

This report is structured around eight community services sector data collections, with each chapter reserved for a single data collection:

- Chapter 2 – Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement National Minimum Data Set (CSTDA NMDS)
- Chapter 3 – Home and Community Care Minimum Data Set (HACC MDS)
- Chapter 4 – Residential Aged Care Services (RACS) Data Collection
- Chapter 5 – Community Aged Care Packages (CACP) Data Collection
- Chapter 6 – Supported Accommodation Assistance Program National Data Collection (SAAP NDC)
- Chapter 7 – National Child Protection (NCP) Data Collections
- Chapter 8 – Alcohol and Other Drugs Treatment Services National Minimum Data Set (AODTS NMDS); and,
- Chapter 9 – Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set (JJ NMDS).

The focus of the report is two-fold:

1. to examine the extent to which Indigenous status is missing/not stated in each of the data collections and, where applicable, to compare this to data reported in the Data quality report
2. to document data quality improvement activities undertaken in each of the eight community services data collections, since the publication of the Data quality report.

Each chapter contains four sections, with a consistent structure across each data collection and following a similar format to the original Data quality report. Most of the chapters begin with background text providing an overview of the data collection and Indigenous status data contained within it. The background text is followed by Section 1 which presents an update on analysis results by Indigenous status and state and territory for each collection, with data from the Data quality report and analyses from recent years. This section contains some additional analyses by service type or usage rates for a few collections. Section 2 in each chapter presents changes in the national rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status, providing trend data in graphical and/or tabular form. Section 3 in each chapter reports on updates to the findings in the Data quality report. Section 4 details activities to improve Indigenous data quality in each data collection, based on feedback received from data working groups and data collection administrators.

2 Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA) National Minimum Data Set

Background

Since the collection of the 2002 snapshot data presented in the report on the data quality of Indigenous identification in seven community services data collections (AIHW 2004b), a redeveloped Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement National Minimum Data Set (CSTDA NMDS) has been implemented (in the second half of 2002). The most significant changes arising from the redevelopment are:

- data are now collected on a full-year basis, rather than on a single 'snapshot' day each year, and
- several additional data items are collected.

The CSTDA NMDS, as a new ongoing data collection, has experienced increases in the rate of missing/ not stated Indigenous status data. There are many facets of the data collection both at the national and jurisdictional level that impact on the quality of the Indigenous status data detailed in this report. Two key issues affecting the reported rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status data are detailed below:

1. The redevelopment methodology, that is, the various changes in business practices and increased volume of data handled by agencies and jurisdictions, may impact on the proportion of missing/not stated Indigenous status at the various levels of data collection and collation.
2. Efforts to improve the coverage and completeness of the CSTDA NMDS collection overall, by the inclusion of new agencies which provide data on a large number of service users, result in the inclusion of relatively incomplete data in relation to each service user from these new agencies. While this situation is expected to improve over the short to medium term, the inclusion of these records has contributed to higher levels of 'not stated' responses for a range of data items, including Indigenous status.

It is important that any analyses of these data are made within the context of a new full-year, ongoing data collection, as explored above.

At the jurisdictional level, it is of particular importance to note that all jurisdictions are currently involved in data quality improvement activities, including improving the quality of the Indigenous status data. The results of these activities are expected to become apparent through a reduction in the rates of missing/ not stated Indigenous status in future data collections. Furthermore, differences between jurisdictions and across years should be interpreted with care where small jurisdictions are concerned, as large fluctuations in the rates may be expected.

Some of the CSTDA NMDS data for which Indigenous status is missing relate to service type 3.02 (recreational/holiday), which are not required to collect the Indigenous status of their

clients. Those records are described as 'not collected', and are presented separately in several tables in this chapter.

Due to the difference in the collection method used in 2002 compared to 2003–04 and 2004–05, direct comparisons cannot be drawn between the results of the 2002 'snapshot' collection and the ongoing data collections in the later years.

2.1 Update on analysis results by Indigenous status

This section contains the relevant tables from the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b), and new tables that provide updated figures for 2003–04 and 2004–05. These tables provide information on the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status in each state and territory or region.

Table 2.1 shows the number and proportion of CSTDA service users across the states and territories, by Indigenous status for the snapshot data collection in 2002. Although they are not comparable with the data in Table 2.2 and Table 2.3, this table from the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) has been included for completeness.

Table 2.1: Number and proportion of users of CSTDA-funded services, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, 2002 (snapshot)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
	Number								
Indigenous	401	243	342	249	125	28	9	167	1,884
Non-Indigenous	13,063	20,108	7,261	5,467	5,546	1,492	829	136	71,506
Missing/not stated	501	2,244	—	468	159	149	15	1	3,992
Total	13,965	22,595	7,603	6,184	5,830	1,669	853	304	77,382
	Per cent								
Indigenous	2.9	1.1	4.5	4.0	2.1	1.7	1.1	54.9	2.4
Non-Indigenous	93.5	89.0	95.5	88.4	95.1	89.4	97.2	44.7	92.4
Missing/not stated	3.6	9.9	—	7.6	2.7	8.9	1.8	0.3	5.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Adapted from Tables 2.1a and 2.1b, AIHW 2004b.

- The proportion of Indigenous users of CSTDA-funded services ranged from 1.1% in the Australian Capital Territory and Victoria to 54.9% in the Northern Territory in 2002. The national average was 2.4%.
- Across the states and territories in 2002, Victoria (9.9%), Tasmania (8.9%) and Western Australia (7.6%) had the highest rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status.
- Queensland (0%) and the Northern Territory (0.3%) had very low missing/not stated rates and were the jurisdictions with the highest proportion of Indigenous clients (4.5% and 54.9% respectively).
- The national missing/not stated rate on the snapshot day in 2002 was 5.2%.

Tables 2.2 and 2.3 show the number and proportion of CSTDA service users across the states and territories and by Indigenous status, for the ongoing collections in 2003–04 and 2004–05. The data in Table 2.2 are not comparable with the data in Table 2.1.

Table 2.2: Number and proportion of users of CSTDA-funded services, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, 2003–04

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA ^(a)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
Number									
Indigenous	1,473	1,474	1,216	1,157	556	134	22	525	6,524
Non-Indigenous	40,747	57,278	24,208	17,391	17,262	4,791	1,490	689	163,400
Missing/not stated/not collected ^(a)	1,399	9,486	928	4,348	1,281	272	126	44	17,882
Total	43,619	68,238	26,352	22,896	19,099	5,197	1,638	1,258	187,806
Per cent									
Indigenous	3.4	2.2	4.6	5.1	2.9	2.6	1.3	41.7	3.5
Non-Indigenous	93.4	83.9	91.9	76.0	90.4	92.2	91.0	54.8	87.0
Missing/not stated/not collected ^(b)	3.2	13.9	3.5	19.0	6.7	5.2	7.7	3.5	9.5
<i>Missing/not stated^(c)</i>	3.2	13.4	2.8	0.8	2.8	2.0	1.0	0.3	8.0
<i>Not collected^(c)</i>	0.0	0.5	0.7	18.2	3.9	3.2	6.7	3.2	1.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) The large number of 'not collected' for 2003–04 for WA was mainly due to data from a large recreation service (service type 3.02) where Indigenous status is not required.

(b) These figures include 1.5% not collected Indigenous status (nationally). Service type 3.02 (recreational/holiday) are not required to collect the Indigenous status of their clients.

(c) Figures calculated from the 'missing/not stated' and 'not collected' proportions may not add to the total for 'missing/not stated/not collected', due to rounding.

Source: Tables 3.8, 7.2 and A1.1, AIHW 2005c.

- The proportion of Indigenous clients accessing CSTDA-funded services nationally in 2003–04 was 3.5%. The Australian Capital Territory recorded the lowest proportion of Indigenous service users (1.3%) and the Northern Territory recorded the highest proportion (41.7%). This is in accordance with the overall Indigenous population sizes in each of the jurisdictions. The proportion of Indigenous service users for all other jurisdictions was 5.1% or lower.
- The rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status was quite variable across the states and territories in 2003–04, with the highest rate in Victoria (13.4%) and the lowest rate (0.3%) in the Northern Territory.
- The national missing/not stated/not collected rate in 2003–04 was 9.5%. Excluding the 1.5% of not collected responses, this rate is 8.0%. For all but three jurisdictions (New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland), the not collected responses made up the majority of the overall missing/not stated/not collected rate. This was most notable for Western Australia (18.2% not collected, 0.8% missing/not stated).

The data in Table 2.3 are not comparable with the data in Table 2.1, but can be compared with the data in Table 2.2.

Table 2.3: Number and proportion of users of CSTDA-funded services, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, 2004–05

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA ^(a)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
Number									
Indigenous	1,565	986	1,268	1,141	636	154	50	518	6,285
Non-Indigenous	41,854	39,900	25,495	17,650	18,043	4,734	3,531	1,043	151,774
Missing/not stated/not collected ^(a)	1,729	34,224	466	4,555	933	266	172	94	42,434
Total	45,148	75,110	27,229	23,346	19,612	5,154	3,753	1,655	200,493
Per cent									
Indigenous	3.5	1.3	4.7	4.9	3.2	3.0	1.3	31.3	3.1
Non-Indigenous	92.7	53.1	93.6	75.6	92.0	91.9	94.1	63.0	75.7
Missing/not stated/not collected ^(b)	3.8	45.6	1.7	19.5	4.8	5.2	4.6	5.7	21.2
<i>Missing/not stated^(c)</i>	3.8	45.2	1.5	19.3	1.9	1.9	1.5	1.6	20.5
<i>Not collected^(c)</i>	0.0	0.4	0.2	0.2	2.9	3.2	3.1	4.0	0.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) The large number of 'missing/not stated' for 2004–05 for WA was mainly due to the inclusion of a new electronic database for the first time.

(b) These figures include 0.7% not collected Indigenous status (nationally). Service type 3.02 (recreational/holiday) are not required to collect the Indigenous status of their clients.

(c) Figures calculated from the 'missing/not stated' and 'not collected' proportions may not add to the total for 'missing/not stated/not collected', due to rounding.

Source: Tables 3.8 and A1.1, AIHW 2006b.

- The proportion of Indigenous clients accessing CSTDA-funded services in 2004–05 was 4.9% or lower in all jurisdictions except for the Northern Territory, where 31.3% of CSTDA clients identified as being of Indigenous origin.
- Between 2003–04 and 2004–05, there was a small overall decrease in the number and proportion of Indigenous CSTDA service users from 3.5% to 3.1%. The jurisdictional rates were variable, with nearly half reporting an increase and half reporting a decrease in the number/proportion of Indigenous clients. Most notably, the number of Indigenous clients receiving CSTDA services in the Australian Capital Territory more than doubled, from 22 in 2003–04 to 50 in 2004–05. This was partially the result of increased agency participation in 2004–05 compared to 2003–04. The proportion of Indigenous clients in the Australian Capital Territory remained even at 1.3%.
- Between 2003–04 and 2004–05, the national rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status markedly increased from 8.0% in 2003–04 to 20.5% in 2004–05, and was variable across the states and territories. Three jurisdictions, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania, recorded decreases in the proportion of missing/not stated Indigenous status in that period. The increase in missing/not stated Indigenous status rates in 2004–05 compared to 2003–04 is most likely due to increased coverage of agencies (for example, in Victoria) and the phasing in of new collection methodologies associated with the ongoing CSTDA NMDS collection.

- The national rate for not collected Indigenous status was 0.7%. In 2004–05, not collected responses exceeded missing/not stated responses in four jurisdictions.

2.2 Changes in the national rates of missing/not stated and not collected Indigenous status

This section presents changes over time in the rate of missing/not stated and not collected Indigenous status. Also discussed are changes in the rate of missing/not stated age and sex. Missing/not stated responses represent the records for services that are required to collect information on Indigenous status but have not done so, for reasons that may include a client not consenting to answer the question or the service staff not asking the question. Not collected responses represent the records for service type 3.02 – recreational services, in which service providers are not required to collect demographic data other than age and sex, and therefore Indigenous status is not collected. Combining the two groups as missing/not stated/not collected gives a true picture of the proportion of clients within the CSTDA collection for whom Indigenous status is unknown.

Table 2.4 shows the national missing/not stated/not collected rates for age, sex and Indigenous status for the 2003–04 and 2004–05 collection periods. In 2003–04, the overall missing/not stated not collected rate is 9.5% which comprises 8.0% missing/not stated and 1.5% not collected responses to the Indigenous status question. In 2004–05 these proportions were 21.2%, 20.5% and 0.7% respectively. As stated earlier, the increase may be due to the redevelopment of the CSTDA NMDS to an ongoing collection as well as increased coverage by the collection of larger agencies reporting minimal demographic data.

Table 2.4: Proportion of users of CSTDA-funded services with missing/not stated and not collected demographic data, Australia, 2002, 2003–04 and 2004–05 (per cent)

	Age	Sex	Indigenous status
2003–04			
Missing/not stated/not collected	1.5	0.1	9.5
<i>Missing/not stated</i>	1.5	0.1	8.0
<i>Not collected</i>	1.5
2004–05			
Missing/not stated/not collected	0.1	2.9	21.2
<i>Missing/not stated</i>	0.1	2.9	20.5
<i>Not collected</i>	0.7

Sources: Adapted from Tables 2.4 and 2.5, AIHW 2004b; Tables 7.2 and A1.1, AIHW 2005c; and Tables 7.2 and A1.1, AIHW 2006b.

- Between 2003–04 and 2004–05, there was a decrease in the rate of missing/not stated age (from 1.5% to 0.1%) and an increase in both missing/not stated sex (from 0.1% to 2.9%) and Indigenous status (from 8.0% to 20.5%).
- The proportion of not collected Indigenous status responses decreased from 1.5% in 2003–04 to 0.7% in 2004–05.

Table 2.5 shows the national missing/not stated/not collected Indigenous status rates between 2003–04 and 2004–05, for various CSTDA service groups. The missing/not stated/not collected rates for 2003–04 and 2004–05 have been broken down into missing/not stated and not collected responses to the Indigenous status question.

Table 2.5: Proportion of users of CSTDA-funded services with a missing/not stated and not collected Indigenous status by CSTDA service group, Australia, 2002, 2003–04 and 2004–05 (per cent)

	Accommodation support	Community support	Community access	Respite	Employment	All Service groups
2003–04						
Missing/not stated/not collected	3.7	7.6	16.4	6.0	4.4	9.5
<i>Missing/not stated</i>	3.7	7.6	10.3	6.0	4.4	8.0
<i>Not collected</i>	—	—	6.1	—	—	1.5
2004–05						
Missing/not stated/not collected	12.9	29.5	17.1	17.5	4.1	21.2
<i>Missing/not stated</i>	12.9	29.5	14.2	17.5	4.1	20.5
<i>Not collected</i>	—	—	2.9	—	—	0.7

Sources: Adapted from Table 2.9, AIHW 2004b; Tables 3.10 and A1.1, AIHW 2005c; and Tables 3.10 and A1.1, AIHW 2006b.

- In 2003–04, the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status was lowest for accommodation support services (3.7%) and highest for community access services (16.4%). Community access services had a not collected Indigenous status rate of 6.1%.
- In 2004–05, the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status was lowest for employment services (4.1%) and highest for community support services (29.5%).
- Between 2003–04 and 2004–05, the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status decreased from 4.4% to 4.1% for employment services, but increased for all other service types, most notably community support services with an increase of 21.9 percentage points.

2.3 Findings in the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b)

The Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) lists seven key findings in relation to not stated Indigenous status in the CSTDA NMDS collection. The key findings are listed below in Box 2.1, followed by an update on current rates and/or current data reporting practices.

Box 2.1: Key findings from the Data quality report for the CSTDA NMDS

1. *During all collection years before 2002 there was an option of ticking a box for 'not known'. Therefore the numbers and rates for the year 2002 include the not stated codes only, whereas the numbers and rates for all other years include both not known and not stated.*
2. *The rate of not known/not stated Indigenous status over the six snapshot collection years (1997–2002) was variable, with a not stated rate of 5% for 2002.*
3. *Services with moderate proportions (10–24%) of clients who identified as Indigenous appear to have the highest proportions of not stated records in 2002.*
4. *Not stated Indigenous status was most likely when other basic information, such as age and sex, was also unknown. Otherwise the highest rate was in the 5 to 14 year age group. However, the true sex and age profile of the recipients with a not stated Indigenous identifier was doubtful due to the high proportion of recipients whose sex and age were also unknown (25% and 24% respectively).*
5. *Remote and very remote locations had a lower proportion of records with not stated Indigenous status than less remote regions, with the highest proportions in inner regional locations.*
6. *Patterns suggest that people who communicate but only with the help of aids are more likely to have Indigenous status recorded as not stated, compared with people who have no difficulty communicating, and with those who cannot communicate for themselves and thus will have someone answering on their behalf.*
7. *The proportion of not stated Indigenous status may reflect the extent and/or the type of contact that agencies of each service type have with their clients. Community access and community support services had the highest proportion of not stated Indigenous status.*

Source: AIHW 2004b.

Update on data quality and reporting practices

Between 2003–04 and 2004–05 the missing/not stated Indigenous status rate increased from 8.0% to 20.5%. In the same period there was a decrease in the proportion of recorded missing/not stated age (from 1.5% to 0.1%) and an increase in the proportion of missing/not stated sex (from 0.1% to 2.9%) (Table 2.4).

The rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status increased in all service groups except accommodation support services in the period from 2003–04 to 2004–05. The greatest increase was in community support services (from 7.6% to 29.5%).

Due to the redevelopment of the CSTDA NMDS from a snapshot level data collection to an ongoing collection, with the addition of new data items, comparisons are not made in this report between the 2002 data and data for the later years. Because of this change a number of analyses presented in the 2004 Data quality report were not re-run for this report (key findings 3, 5 and 6).

2.4 Activities to improve Indigenous data quality

This section provides updated information on activities undertaken to improve Indigenous identification in the CSTDA National Minimum Data Set.

The Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) suggested five issues for follow-up in relation to not stated Indigenous status in the CSTDA NMDS, listed below in Box 2.2.

Box 2.2: Issues for follow-up from the Data quality report for the CSTDA NMDS

1. *Not stated Indigenous records are sometimes part of a broader pattern where other demographic data on clients are also missing. In these cases general efforts to improve the collection of demographic information from clients are likely to increase the Indigenous identification rate.*
2. *As regional locations (inner and outer) and major cities had the highest proportions of not stated data, as well as the largest number of clients, efforts to improve Indigenous identification in CSDA-funded services should be concentrated in those locations.*
3. *The identification rate of Indigenous clients may be increased by concentrating efforts on those clients who communicate non-verbally other than with sign language and of clients who use aids to communicate.*
4. *Efforts could also be directed at the identification of Indigenous clients of community access and community support services. These services may have particular issues due to the sporadic nature of their contact with clients.*
5. *Efforts should be concentrated on the small number of agency outlets that have very high not stated rates and account for the majority of missing data.*

Source: AIHW 2004b.

The largest improvement in the overall quality of the data that has occurred since the 2002 data collection is the introduction of an ongoing national data collection.

While there were no reported activities specifically addressing the issues for follow-up identified above, a number of mechanisms are in place that aim to improve the overall quality of data collected, including data on Indigenous status.

The following paragraphs provide information on activities and practices to improve the quality of Indigenous data in the CSTDA NMDS, undertaken at the jurisdictional and national levels, as well as future directions for improving data quality in this collection.

Jurisdictional Indigenous data quality improvement activities

General activities

Most jurisdictions participating in the CSTDA NMDS have implemented general practices to improve data quality, including the recording of Indigenous status. These efforts are centred on feedback to and support of participating agencies, including highlighting the value of collecting good quality Indigenous data, troubleshooting data quality issues as they arise and providing technical and operational support to agencies and agency staff.

General activities to improve data quality include:

- providing feedback to agencies at forums or training sessions, which provide agencies with an opportunity to see the value of the data they provide and the importance of reporting data accurately
- disseminating data to the service sector in various formats such as regular standardised reports, fact sheets and 'data marts'
- ensuring that there is feedback to and thorough follow-up of individual agencies about any data quality problems at the time of collection
- providing agency support including help-desks, on-site visits, regular training and up-to-date, readily available supporting documentation
- making improved jurisdictional software available, to assist in data quality checking.

Specific programs and practices

The general activities listed above are implemented at the agency level through specific programs, including the provision of software packages and documentation, the availability of help-desk facilities, and facilitating direct communication and contact between service providers and the jurisdictions.

Following are some examples of programs implemented by the Australian, Western Australian and Queensland governments:

- The Australian Government provides all participating agencies with Census software to enter and collate the data about disability employment services. All data items submitted by agencies are checked by the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA), with a special focus on Indigenous status, and errors/omissions reported back to agencies for resubmission if possible. FaCSIA operates a help-desk (hotline and email) and provides supporting documentation.
- Western Australia emphasises the importance of submitting complete data and the implications of not completing all fields when conducting service provider training on the software system it supplies to service providers (ACDC). This jurisdiction is moving towards online web-based data collection in 2007, at which time additional training and newsletters will be used to further promote the importance of providing complete data.
- Queensland (which already has a very low rate of missing/not stated responses for Indigenous status) is working towards improving the overall quality of data through its Client Capacity Building project. Four project officers have been employed to work directly with service providers to improve understanding of the collection concepts and resulting data quality.

National Indigenous data quality improvement activities

In addition to the jurisdiction-level activities detailed above, data quality improvements at the national level are promoted and monitored by the CSTDA NMDS Network. These practices encompass edit checks for data quality as well as reporting and consulting on data quality outcomes in the CSTDA NMDS.

The following are examples of national Indigenous data quality improvement activities:

- Jurisdictions complete annually agreed and improved national edit checks (contained in the CSTDA NMDS Network Guide, produced by the AIHW with jurisdiction input), which assist in improving data quality
- The AIHW undertakes a range of edit checks each year which include examination of the reporting of Indigenous status at an agency level to verify accuracy
- The AIHW CSTDA NMDS annual report provides a chapter on data quality, which includes details about the level of 'not stated' and 'not known' responses to every data item by jurisdiction
- The Network annual face-to-face meetings provide members with the opportunity to share information about strategies to improve the quality of data that result in improvements in jurisdictional and AIHW methods, including refinements to collection materials such as explanations in the Data Guide.

Additional information related to data quality

At the request of the National Disability Administrators, during 2006–07 the CSTDA NMDS Network plans to develop a data quality framework for the CSTDA NMDS and an annual strategy for continuous improvement of data. These initiatives recognise the importance of collecting high quality data, including high quality data on Indigenous status.

3 Home and Community Care (HACC) Minimum Data Set

Background

Data for the HACC Minimum Data Set (MDS) have been collected quarterly since July–September 2001. The HACC MDS version 2 is being implemented from 1 January 2006 (DoHA 2004). HACC MDS data reflect individual clients and are collected by HACC-funded service providers either electronically or via paper forms in a quarterly collection cycle. The collection of HACC MDS information is on the basis of informed client consent. All HACC MDS data transmissions are validated by the National Data Repository with comprehensive feedback provided to individual service providers, as a means of improving data quality in the collection (DoHA 2004).

The proportion of HACC-funded agencies that reported to the HACC MDS increased from 74% in 2001–02 to 83% in 2002–03 (DoHA 2003). The participation rate remained steady at around 83% in 2004–05 (DoHA 2006).

As the 2001–02 and 2002–03 HACC data have undergone revisions, it has not been possible to reproduce the figures reported in the original Data quality report. To ensure a meaningful comparison between the 2002 and 2004 data, updated rates using the revised data are reported for 2002, as well as the original rates reported in the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b).

The comparison of 2002 data with 2004 data should take into account that in 2002 the collection was very new and the data overall were of poor quality. Furthermore, the 2004 data are already somewhat dated and there may have been further improvements to the collection since then that would impact on current data quality in the HACC MDS.

3.1 Update on analysis results by Indigenous status

This section contains relevant tables for 2002 from the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b), and new tables that present updated figures for 2002 and for 2004.

Missing/not stated rates sourced from the Data quality report relate to the July–September 2002 quarter, while the updated rates relate to the 2002 and 2004 April–June quarters. These updated quarterly rates have been derived from unlinked annual datasets. Rates are reported by state and territory and by type of assistance.

Also presented in this chapter on Indigenous data quality in HACC are the updated HACC usage rates for 2003–04 by state and territory as there were in 2002, and still appear to be, issues around very high usage rates for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people in certain age groups.

State and territory

Table 3.1 presents rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status in the HACC MDS by state and territory for the period July–September 2002. Although they are not comparable with the data in Table 3.2 and Table 3.3, this table from the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) has been included for completeness.

Table 3.1: Number and proportion of HACC clients, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, HACC MDS July–September 2002, unlinked client data (Data quality report)

Indigenous status	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Other	Aust
Number										
Indigenous	8,849	1,006	2,113	1,533	455	178	43	786	1	14,964
Non-Indigenous	98,996	123,146	75,238	42,044	37,344	16,795	5,745	1,733	511	401,552
Missing/not stated	6,928	11,393	20,683	2,519	11,128	1,584	724	138	1	55,098
Total	114,773	135,545	98,034	46,096	48,927	18,557	6,512	2,657	513	471,614
Per cent										
Indigenous	7.7	0.7	2.2	3.3	0.9	1.0	0.7	29.6	0.2	3.2
Non-Indigenous	86.3	90.9	76.7	91.2	76.3	90.5	88.2	65.2	99.6	85.1
Missing/not stated	6.0	8.4	21.1	5.5	22.7	8.5	11.1	5.2	0.2	11.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100

Note: The number of Indigenous clients in the HACC collection exceeds the number expected for the population in some jurisdictions. This is most likely due to inconsistent coding of this item across agencies.

Source: Table 3.10, AIHW 2004b.

- The proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients in the July–September quarter of 2002 was 3.2%.
- The proportion of HACC clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status was 11.7% nationally in the July–September quarter of 2002.
- Across the states and territories, South Australia (22.7%) and Queensland (21.1%) had the highest proportions of missing/not stated Indigenous status, the Northern Territory (5.2%) and Western Australia (5.5%) had the lowest.

Table 3.2 presents the rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status in the HACC MDS by state and territory for the period April–June 2002. The data are not comparable with the data in Table 3.1.

Table 3.2: Number and proportion of HACC clients, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, HACC MDS April–June 2002, unlinked client data

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
	Number								
Indigenous	8,917	914	1,974	1,454	638	129	52	780	14,858
Non-Indigenous	95,029	114,512	68,948	37,749	33,649	13,395	7,142	1,200	371,624
Missing/not stated	7,405	10,488	21,129	2,618	10,787	1,374	1,874	206	55,881
Total	111,351	125,914	92,051	41,821	45,074	14,898	9,068	2,186	442,363
	Per cent								
Indigenous	8.0	0.7	2.1	3.5	1.4	0.9	0.6	35.7	3.4
Non-Indigenous	85.3	90.9	74.9	90.3	74.7	89.9	78.8	54.9	84.0
Missing/not stated	6.7	8.3	23.0	6.3	23.9	9.2	20.7	9.4	12.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: AIHW analysis of HACC MDS unlinked data.

- The proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander HACC clients in the April–June quarter of 2002 was 3.4% nationally.
- The proportion of HACC clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status was 12.6% nationally in the April–June quarter of 2002.
- Across the states and territories, South Australia (23.9%), Queensland (23.0%) and the Australian Capital Territory (20.7%) had the highest missing/not stated rates, while Western Australia (6.3%) and New South Wales (6.7%) had the lowest rates.

Table 3.3 presents the rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status in the HACC MDS by state and territory for the period April–June 2004. The data are not comparable with the data in Table 3.1, but are comparable with Table 3.2.

Table 3.3: Number and proportion of HACC clients, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, HACC MDS April–June 2004, unlinked client data

Indigenous status	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
Number									
Indigenous	3,922	1,273	2,269	1,463	1,067	264	68	925	11,251
Non-Indigenous	131,232	139,643	88,614	46,979	41,637	17,338	8,962	1,621	476,026
Missing/not stated	7,824	12,400	23,591	3,123	7,117	1,764	640	103	56,562
Total	142,978	153,316	114,474	51,565	49,821	19,366	9,670	2,649	543,839
Per cent									
Indigenous	2.7	0.8	2.0	2.8	2.1	1.4	0.7	34.9	2.1
Non-Indigenous	91.8	91.1	77.4	91.1	83.6	89.5	92.7	61.2	87.5
Missing/not stated	5.5	8.1	20.6	6.1	14.3	9.1	6.6	3.9	10.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: AIHW analysis of HACC MDS data, unlinked records.

- The proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients in the HACC MDS decreased from 3.4% in the April–June quarter of 2002 to 2.1% in the April–June quarter in 2004.
- In the same time period, the proportion of HACC clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status also decreased, from 12.6% to 10.4%.
- Across the states and territories in the April–June quarter of 2004, Queensland had the highest proportion of missing/not stated records at 20.6%, and New South Wales had the lowest at 5.5%.
- Compared with the April–June quarter in 2002, all jurisdictions recorded a decline in the proportion of HACC clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status. The greatest improvement in Indigenous identification was in the Australian Capital Territory, with a decrease from 20.7% to 6.6% (14.1 percentage points), and also in South Australia, with a decrease from 23.9% to 14.3% (9.6 percentage points) in two years.

Assistance type

Table 3.4 presents the proportion of HACC clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status in the HACC MDS by the type of assistance they received in the period July–September 2002. These data are from the Data quality report and are not comparable with either Table 3.5 or Table 3.6.

Table 3.4: Indigenous status, by type of service provided, HACC MDS, July–September 2002, unlinked client data (Data quality report)

Assistance type	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Missing/not stated	Total	Missing/not stated
			Number		Per cent
Domestic assistance	7,641	129,174	5,348	142,163	3.8
Personal care	1,567	31,153	1,772	34,492	5.1
Home maintenance	1,369	32,013	2,854	36,236	7.9
Respite care	234	7,749	691	8,674	8
Centre meals	961	18,624	1,716	21,301	8.1
Centre day care	1,657	37,644	3,969	43,270	9.2
Transport	2,578	50,676	5,877	59,131	9.9
Home nursing	939	50,073	7,224	58,236	12.4
Home modification	86	4,997	725	5,808	12.5
Linen services	26	559	87	672	12.9
Social support	1,573	28,534	4,794	34,901	13.7
Other food services	192	1,058	225	1,475	15.3
Centre nursing	296	6,457	1,959	8,712	22.5
Home meals	1,849	34,765	16,711	53,325	31.3
All reports	14,964	401,552	55,098	471,614	11.7

Notes

1. The HACC MDS does not include information about the agency type. The type of service provided has been used here as a surrogate for the agency type, although agencies may provide more than one type of service. As assessment, case planning and counselling may be provided by most types of agency these have not been included in this list. Similarly, the provision of aids and equipment has not been included as this service tends to be a component of personal care service.
2. The number of Indigenous clients in the HACC collection exceeds the number expected for the population in some jurisdictions. This is most likely due to inconsistent coding of this item across agencies.

Source: Table 3.15, AIHW 2004b.

- In 2002, home meals (31.3%) and centre nursing (22.5%) had the highest proportion of HACC clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status.
- Domestic assistance (3.8%) and personal care (5.1%) had the lowest rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status.

Table 3.5 presents the proportion of HACC clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status by the assistance they received in the period April–June 2002. The data are not comparable with those presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3.5: Indigenous status, by type of service provided, HACC MDS, April–June 2002, unlinked client data

Assistance type	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Missing/not stated	Total	Missing/not stated
					Per cent
	Number				
Domestic assistance	7,896	128,721	6,364	142,981	4.5
Personal care	1,683	28,580	1,820	32,083	5.7
Centre meals	979	16,886	1,659	19,524	8.5
Centre day care	1,487	34,365	3,547	39,399	9.0
Home maintenance	1,591	32,285	3,355	37,231	9.0
Allied health at a centre	234	13,691	1,587	15,512	10.2
Respite care	228	7,693	909	8,830	10.3
Counselling	660	14,015	1,851	16,526	11.2
Transport	2,441	46,228	7,003	55,672	12.6
Nursing care at home	827	46,185	7,004	54,016	13.0
Linen services	61	495	88	644	13.7
Other food services	233	1,003	208	1,444	14.4
Social support	1,653	25,280	4,552	31,485	14.5
Home modification	87	4,631	980	5,698	17.2
Allied health care at home	285	15,217	3,492	18,994	18.4
Nursing care at a centre	244	5,811	1,868	7,923	23.6
Delivered meals	1,999	31,714	16,244	49,957	32.5

Source: AIHW analysis of HACC MDS data, unlinked records.

- In the April–June quarter of 2002, delivered meals (32.5%) and nursing care at a centre (23.6%) were the assistance types with the highest proportions of clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status.
- In the same reporting period, domestic assistance (4.5%) and personal care (5.7%) had the lowest rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status.

Table 3.6 presents the proportion of HACC clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status by the assistance they received in the period April–June 2004. The data are not comparable with those presented in Table 3.4, but are comparable with Table 3.5.

Table 3.6: Indigenous status, by type of service provided, HACC MDS, April–June 2004, unlinked client data

Assistance type	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Missing/not stated	Total	Missing/not stated
	Number				Per cent
Domestic assistance	3,591	144,556	5,457	153,604	3.6
Centre meals	1,326	29,819	1,993	33,138	6.0
Personal care	1,089	33,415	2,239	36,743	6.1
Nursing care at home	1,070	57,040	4,664	62,774	7.4
Home maintenance	1,493	40,333	3,695	45,521	8.1
Allied health care at a centre	379	19,034	1,817	21,230	8.6
Respite care	148	8,858	862	9,868	8.7
Centre day care	2,080	47,313	4,996	54,389	9.2
Transport	3,283	61,750	6,742	71,775	9.4
Linen services	68	500	65	633	10.3
Counselling/support, information and advocacy	860	17,623	2,221	20,704	10.7
Social support	2,175	35,847	4,977	42,999	11.6
Nursing care at a centre	457	10,683	1,800	12,940	13.9
Allied health care at home	424	31,167	5,712	37,303	15.3
Home modification	112	4,732	1,038	5,882	17.6
Other food services	175	983	293	1,451	20.2
Delivered meals	2,179	40,263	15,975	58,417	27.3

Source: AIHW analysis of HACC MDS data, unlinked records.

- In the April–June quarter of 2004, delivered meals had the highest rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status at 27.3%, and this rate was lower than the 32.5% reported in 2002. Other food services (20.2%) also had a high missing/not stated rate in 2004.
- In the April–June quarter of 2004, domestic assistance had the lowest proportion of missing/not stated Indigenous status at 3.6%, a decrease from 4.5% in 2002. Personal care also recorded a low rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status (6.1%).

Usage rates by state and territory

Table 3.7 presents the age-specific usage rates for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander HACC clients in the period July–September 2002. This table was extracted from the Data quality report and is not comparable with the usage rate data presented in Table 3.8 or Table 3.9.

Table 3.7: HACC usage rates per 1,000 Indigenous population (50 years and over), by 5-year age groups, HACC MDS July–September 2002, linked client data (Data quality report)

Age group	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Other	Aust
Indigenous HACC clients										
50–54	297	50	151	132	33	9	2	58	—	732
55–59	372	71	179	135	45	5	4	71	—	882
60–64	433	70	221	167	58	5	4	106	1	1,065
65–69	628	75	277	195	41	12	1	111	—	1,340
70–74	888	91	281	181	43	21	—	75	1,580	
75+	3,367	308	422	234	50	31	7	112	—	4,531
Total 50+	5,985	665	1,531	1,044	270	83	18	533	1	10,130
ABS Indigenous population estimates^(a)										
50–54	4,818	1,047	4,202	2,151	867	615	96	1,849	7	15,652
55–59	3,381	659	2,716	1,431	579	401	68	1,257	10	10,502
60–64	2,469	461	2,002	1,076	435	315	36	1,042	14	7,850
65–69	1,718	317	1,405	766	278	197	18	664	4	5,367
70–74	1,040	218	918	511	210	125	6	424	1	3,453
75+	1,133	317	1,145	728	221	137	17	566	3	4,267
Total 50+	14,559	3,019	12,388	6,663	2,590	1,790	241	5,802	39	47,091
Age-specific usage rate per 1,000 population										
50–54	61.6	47.8	35.9	61.4	38.1	14.6	20.8	31.4	—	46.8
55–59	110.0	107.7	65.9	94.3	77.7	12.5	58.8	56.5	—	84.0
60–64	175.4	151.8	110.4	155.2	133.3	15.9	111.1	101.7	71.4	135.7
65–69	365.5	236.6	197.2	254.6	147.5	60.9	55.6	167.2	—	249.7
70–74	853.8	417.4	306.1	354.2	204.8	168.0	0.0	176.9	—	457.6
75+	2971.8	971.6	368.6	321.4	226.2	226.3	411.8	197.9	—	1061.9
Total 50+	411.1	220.3	123.6	156.7	104.2	46.4	74.7	91.9	25.6	215.1

(a) Estimated Indigenous population at 30 June 2001 (ABS cat. no. 3101).

Source: Table 3.18, AIHW 2004b.

- In the July–September quarter of 2002, the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander age-specific usage rate for HACC services clients aged 75 years and over was more than 1,000 per 1,000 Indigenous population (1,061.90 per 1,000 Indigenous population). As discussed in the Data quality report, such a rate is apparently illogical and not meaningful. The Data quality report provides a number of possible explanations for this problem, but the most likely reason was described as ‘software coding problems in some agencies resulting in the over-counting of Indigenous clients’ (AIHW 2004b:37).

- Across the states and territories, New South Wales reported a usage rate in the 75 years and over age group of 2,971.8 per 1,000 Indigenous population. The rate in Victoria was 971.6 per 1,000 Indigenous population.
- The national rate for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients aged 50 years and over was 215.1 per 1,000 Indigenous population in 2002.

Table 3.8 presents annual data on usage rates by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander HACC clients, by age and state and territory for 2002–03. These data are not comparable with the usage rates presented for the July–September quarter of 2002, in Table 3.7.

Table 3.8: HACC usage rates per 1,000 Indigenous population, by 5-year age groups and by state (of agency), linked client data^(a), 2002–03

Age group	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Indigenous HACC clients									
0–49	1,279	483	619	572	367	95	30	400	3,845
50–54	346	142	232	205	90	23	3	124	1,165
55–59	393	141	250	227	107	17	8	156	1,299
60–64	498	162	315	273	152	22	7	224	1,653
65–69	484	129	384	279	99	16	10	263	1,664
70–74	575	161	383	249	110	36	5	143	1,662
75+	1,543	465	592	331	133	83	14	220	3,381
50+	3,844	1,212	2,162	1,566	702	198	47	1,139	10,870
Total	5,123	1,695	2,781	2,138	1,069	293	77	1,539	14,715
ABS Indigenous population estimates									
0–49	123,874	25,837	118,081	61,228	23,750	15,927	3,819	52,567	425,284
50–54	5,095	1,154	4,542	2,416	940	690	115	2,041	17,002
55–59	3,772	727	3,105	1,585	636	416	74	1,299	11,620
60–64	2,586	511	2,055	1,115	480	330	41	1,094	8,224
65–69	1,786	314	1,455	802	307	221	31	657	5,577
70–74	1,112	249	960	573	212	141	13	433	3,695
75+	1,055	258	1,104	684	226	123	14	543	4,010
50+	15,406	3,213	13,221	7,175	2,801	1,921	288	6,067	50,128
Total	139,280	29,050	131,302	68,403	26,551	17,848	4,107	58,634	475,412
Age-specific usage rates (per 1,000 Indigenous population)									
0–49	10.3	18.7	5.2	9.3	15.5	6.0	7.9	7.6	9.0
50–54	67.9	123.1	51.1	84.9	95.7	33.3	26.1	60.8	68.5
55–59	104.2	193.9	80.5	143.2	168.2	40.9	108.1	120.1	111.8
60–64	192.6	317.0	153.3	244.8	316.7	66.7	170.7	204.8	201.0
65–69	271.0	410.8	263.9	347.9	322.5	72.4	322.6	400.3	298.4
70–74	517.1	646.6	399.0	434.6	518.9	255.3	384.6	330.3	449.8
75+	1462.6	1802.3	536.2	483.9	588.5	674.8	1000.0	405.2	843.1
50+	249.5	377.2	163.5	218.3	250.6	103.1	163.2	187.7	216.8
Total	36.8	58.3	21.2	31.3	40.3	16.4	18.7	26.2	31.0

(a) AIHW analysis of HACC MDS data, linking extract1 (unlinked annual data) records.

Notes

- 1 These figures comprise demographic data from the client record with most recent assessment date.
- 2 Only records with known Indigenous status were included.
- 3 These data exclude records with no service provision.

Source: AIHW analysis of HACC MDS data, unlinked records.

- Similar to the rates seen in Table 3.7, some Indigenous age-specific usage rates for HACC services clients aged 75 years and over were higher than 1,000 per 1,000 Indigenous population. As pointed out there, such rates are apparently illogical and not meaningful.
- New South Wales and Victoria recorded very high Indigenous usage rates for clients aged 75 years and over, both exceeding 1,000 per 1,000 Indigenous population. The Australian Capital Territory recorded a rate for that age group of 1,000 per 1,000 Indigenous population. It should be noted that this rate was based on very small numbers (14/14).
- In 2002–03, the national usage rate for clients aged 75 years and over for HACC services was 943.1 per 1,000 Indigenous population.
- The national rate for clients aged 50 years and over was 216.8 per 1,000 Indigenous population.

Table 3.9 presents annual data on usage rates by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander HACC clients, by age and state and territory for 2003–04. These data are not comparable with the usage rates presented for the July–September quarter of 2002 in Table 3.7, but are comparable with Table 3.8.

Table 3.9: HACC usage rates per 1,000 Indigenous population, by 5-year age group and by state (of agency), linked client data^(a), 2003-04

Age group	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Indigenous HACC clients									
0–49	1,506	624	792	521	487	82	27	451	4,490
50–54	365	160	250	198	135	22	10	131	1,271
55–59	418	165	295	247	149	22	9	150	1,455
60–64	526	184	333	257	181	43	14	217	1,755
65–69	484	154	385	282	133	24	7	247	1,716
70–74	486	160	383	258	120	32	6	171	1,616
75+	843	451	619	326	194	88	21	196	2,738
50+	3,122	1,274	2,265	1,568	912	231	67	1,112	10,551
Total	4,642	1,951	3,075	2,089	1,406	313	94	1,569	15,139
ABS Indigenous population projections									
0–49	125,683	26,369	120,385	62,220	24,149	16,100	3,895	53,285	432,290
50–54	5,186	1,180	4,654	2,517	974	729	120	2,113	17,482
55–59	4,019	789	3,323	1,706	692	435	82	1,365	12,417
60–64	2,642	526	2,113	1,144	486	334	39	1,090	8,383
65–69*	1,813	314	1,495	812	311	236	34	682	5,701
70–74	1,140	257	947	592	217	131	18	441	3,747
75+	1,050	248	1,096	674	231	122	16	532	3,972
50+	15,850	3,314	13,628	7,445	2,911	1,987	309	6,223	51,702
Total	141,533	29,683	134,013	69,665	27,060	18,087	4,204	59,508	483,992
Age-specific usage rate per 1,000 population									
0–49	12.0	23.7	6.6	8.4	20.2	5.1	6.9	8.5	10.4
50–54	70.4	135.6	53.7	78.7	138.6	30.2	83.3	62.0	72.7
55–59	104.0	209.1	88.8	144.8	215.3	50.6	109.8	109.9	117.2
60–64	199.1	349.8	157.6	224.7	372.4	128.7	359.0	199.1	209.4
65–69*	267.0	490.4	257.5	347.3	427.7	101.7	205.9	362.2	301.0
70–74	426.3	622.6	404.4	435.8	553.0	244.3	333.3	387.8	431.3
75+	802.9	1818.5	564.8	483.7	839.8	721.3	1312.5	368.4	689.3
50+	197.0	384.4	166.2	210.6	313.3	116.3	216.8	178.7	204.1
Total	32.8	65.7	22.9	30.0	52.0	17.3	22.4	26.4	31.3

(a) AIHW analysis of HACC MDS data, linking extract1 (unlinked annual data) records

Notes

1 These figures comprise demographic data from the client record with most recent assessment date.

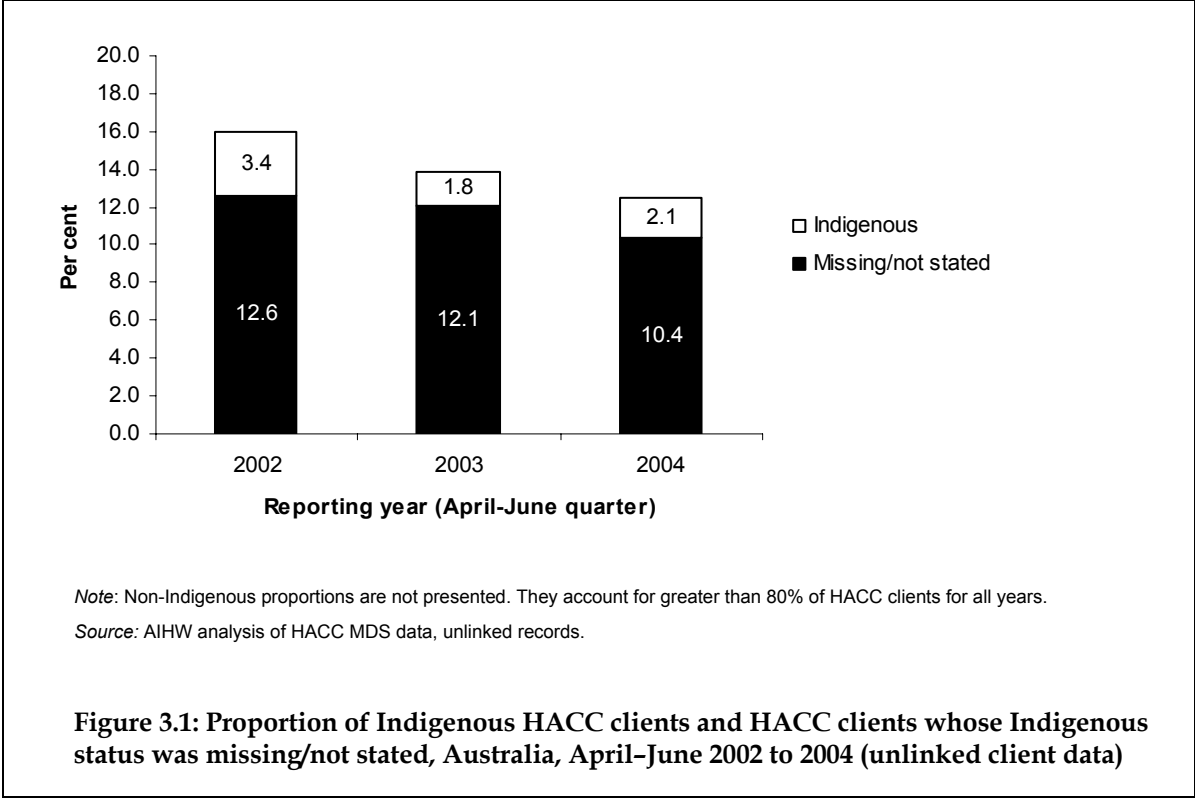
2 Data for missing Indigenous status are not pro-rated

Source: AIHW analysis of HACC MDS data, unlinked records.

- A large reduction in the usage rate for clients aged 75 years and over was seen in New South Wales, from 1,462.6 in 2002–03 to 802.9 per 1,000 in 2003–04. However, a usage rate of 1,818.5 per 1,000 Indigenous population for clients aged 75 years and over was recorded in Victoria for 2003–04. The usage rate for clients 75 years and over in the Australian Capital Territory was also more than 1,000 per 1,000 Indigenous population (1,312.5), though it should be noted that this rate was based on very low numbers (21/16).
- The national usage rate of HACC services by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients aged 75 years and over declined from 843.1 per 1,000 Indigenous population in 2002–03 to 689.3 per 1,000 Indigenous population in 2003–04.
- Although the national usage rate for clients aged 75 years and over declined in the period from 2002–03 to 2003–04, only two jurisdictions reported a reduction in the age-specific rate in that period (New South Wales and the Northern Territory).
- The usage rate for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients aged 50 years and over declined from 216.8 per 1,000 Indigenous population in 2002–03 to 204.1 per 1,000 Indigenous population in 2003–04.

3.2 Changes in the national rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status

Figure 3.1 presents data that show the change in the proportion of HACC clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status, in the April–June quarter of 2002 to 2004. The data presented were derived from unlinked client records.



- The proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients decreased from 3.4% to 2.1% between the April–June quarters of 2002 and 2004, with a low of 1.8% in the April–June quarter of 2003. This decrease was due to a reduction in the age-specific rate in only two jurisdictions. It is not clear whether this decrease is due to a decrease in the number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients, or whether it reflects improvements in the quality of the data (see Box 3.1, key finding 9).
- The proportion of HACC clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status decreased steadily from 12.6% in the April–June quarter of 2002 to 10.4% in the same quarter in 2004. The comparison of 2002 data with 2004 data should take into account that in 2002 the collection was very new and the data overall were of poor quality.

3.3 Findings in the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b)

The Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) lists nine key findings in relation to missing/not stated Indigenous status in the HACC MDS. These key findings are listed below in Box 3.1 and an update on current rates and current data reporting practices follows.

Box 3.1: Key findings from the Data quality report for the HACC MDS

1. *The proportion of missing/not stated Indigenous status has declined with time across five quarterly collections.*
2. *Over 40% of HACC agencies reported a valid code for Indigenous status for all their clients.*
3. *Seven per cent of agencies did not report Indigenous status for any of their clients in the latest quarter. This proportion had declined from 9% in the first quarter.*
4. *There were large differences in the proportion of missing/not stated records between the states and territories. The most consistent increase in Indigenous identification over the five quarters occurred in Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory.*
5. *While the sex profile of the missing/not stated records was similar to that of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients, the age profile of the missing/not stated records showed a greater resemblance to the age profile of the non-Indigenous data than to that of the Indigenous data.*
6. *HACC agencies where more than half the clients identified as Indigenous had the lowest rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status. Conversely, those agencies with less than 1% clients who identified as Indigenous had the highest rate.*
7. *Comparison of the HACC assistance types showed that for those clients receiving domestic assistance and personal care, the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status was the lowest. The highest rate of missing data was reported for those clients who were provided with delivered meals.*
8. *Analysis using linkage of records showed that Indigenous status was reported consistently for 74% of the linkage keys. The highest proportion of inconsistent multiple records concerned the combination of non-Indigenous status with missing/not stated.*
9. *The usage rates of Indigenous people in specific age groups were very high and apparently illogical, indicating data quality problems. Discussion with data custodians suggested the most likely source of this issue is the over-counting of Indigenous clients (due to software coding problems).*

Source: AIHW 2004b.

Update on data quality and reporting practices

Nationally, the proportion of records in the HACC MDS with missing/not stated Indigenous status continued to decline between 2002 and 2004, from 12.6% to 10.4% nationally. There continues to be significant variation in the reporting of Indigenous status between the states and territories, with the highest rates in the April-June 2004 quarter reported for Queensland (20.6%) and South Australia (14.3%), although both states recorded a decrease in the proportion of missing/not stated Indigenous status from the April-June quarter in 2002. Between 2002 and 2004, the strongest declines in missing/not stated Indigenous status were seen in the Australian Capital Territory (14.1 percentage points) and South Australia (9.6 percentage points).

Domestic assistance remained the service with the lowest proportion of missing/not stated Indigenous status in the HACC MDS between 2002 and 2004, and clients receiving home-delivered meals recorded the highest rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status across the same time period.

Linkage analysis performed by the AIHW for the 2003–04 data set shows that of the linked Indigenous status records, only 0.15% had a mismatch in the record, showing both Indigenous and non-Indigenous status. Approximately 1% of linked records contained a combination of missing/not stated and either Indigenous or non-Indigenous.

In 2003–04, the overall usage rate of HACC services by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients aged 75 years and over was very high (689.3 per 1,000 Indigenous population), however this rate had decreased from 843.1 per 1,000 Indigenous population in 2002–03. It is not clear whether this decrease is due to a decrease in the number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients, or whether it reflects improvements in the quality of the data. Rates equal to or greater than 1,000 per 1,000 Indigenous population in the 75 years and over age group were still reported in some jurisdictions in both 2002–03 and 2003–04. While such rates are not logical and require investigation, it is important to note that:

- The high rates in the Australian Capital Territory are based on very low numbers, making them particularly vulnerable to variability.
- Fairly high HACC usage rates for the Indigenous population are to be expected in the 75+ age group, because:
 - for a number of reasons, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people are more likely to use HACC services than Community care packages (CACP) or residential aged care services
 - the Indigenous population aged 75 years and over is more likely to need assistance than the non-Indigenous population of that age, due to poorer health.

3.4 Activities to improve Indigenous data quality

This section provides updated information on activities undertaken to improve Indigenous identification in the HACC MDS. The Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) suggests two issues for follow-up in relation to missing/not stated Indigenous status in the HACC MDS. These issues are listed below in Box 3.2 and are followed by an update on efforts to improve the quality of Indigenous data in the HACC MDS reported by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.

Box 3.2: Issues for follow-up from the Data quality report for the HACC MDS

1. *Given that rates of Indigenous identifications vary with service type, efforts to increase the rate of identification of Indigenous clients who receive delivered home meals, centre nursing, home nursing and social support would have a significant impact on the identification rates for the HACC program overall.*
2. *As HACC data custodians are already aware, there is a need for investigation into the very high usage rates of specific age groups for Indigenous people in the HACC data collection. Several possible explanations are given earlier in this chapter, and these continue to be explored, particularly in relation to software coding problems.*

Source: AIHW 2004b.

Additional information related to data quality

The Department of Health and Ageing has recently undertaken a more detailed analysis of Indigenous identification within the HACC program. This analysis showed that there was considerable diversity across states and territories within each service type. HACC Officials have committed to improving the quality and completeness of Indigenous identification in the HACC MDS. Activities to assist with this include:

- jurisdiction-specific activities to address the factors leading to missing data, particularly for certain service types
- introducing real-time monitoring of the rate of identification at each quarterly data submission
- developing and implementing a key performance indicator relating to Indigenous peoples' access to HACC, which will also focus attention on data quality in this area
- where not already addressed, investigating and addressing any remaining areas of very high usage rates for specific age groups for Indigenous people in the HACC data collection.

4 Residential Aged Care Services (RACS) Data Collection

Background

The main source of data about residential aged care is administrative by-product data from the System for the Payment of Aged Residential Care (SPARC). The socio-demographic information that feeds into the RACS Data Collection is derived from the Aged Care Application and Approval form completed by an authorised Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) officer.

A new ACAT form was introduced on 1 January 2003, and that, combined with education of staff and improved collection practices, may have led to improvements in the quality of Indigenous status data, since the publication of 2002 Residential Aged Care Services data in the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b). It is important to note, however, that responses to the question on Indigenous status on the ACAT form are non-compulsory and may contribute to an under-representation of the number and proportion of Indigenous admissions to permanent residential aged care.

When reporting on the RACS Data Collection, some data are presented for all residents in residential aged care and other data are presented for those residents newly admitted to residential care in that collection year. In this report, and in the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b), we have chosen to present new admissions to residential care, as these figures give a more accurate representation of changes in the quality of the data collected over time.

Data are not available for the 332 flexible residential aged care places operating under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Strategy, however, given the nature of the program the intended care recipients are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. Also, Indigenous status data are not available for the 1,901 operational flexible residential places provided by Multi-Purpose Services (AIHW 2006a).

The unavailability of data on Indigenous status for flexible residential care recipients, along with the non-compulsory nature of responses to the question on Indigenous status, is likely to result in an under-representation of the number and proportion of Indigenous Australian residential care recipients.

4.1 Update on analysis results by Indigenous status

This section contains relevant tables for 2001–02 from the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b), and new tables that present updated figures for 2004–05. These tables provide information on the proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people admitted to permanent residential aged care as well as information on the rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status, for each jurisdiction and remoteness area.

Table 4.1 presents the rates of admissions to permanent residential aged care for Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients and those with missing/not stated Indigenous status for all states and territories in 2001–02.

Table 4.1: Number and proportion of admissions of permanent residential aged care residents, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, Australia, 2001–02 (Data quality report)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
	Number								
Indigenous	48	2	75	51	4	2	1	41	224
Non-Indigenous	14,723	11,575	7,786	3,629	3,635	1,136	460	51	42,995
Missing/not stated	2,150	269	618	326	705	25	10	23	4,126
Total	16,921	11,846	8,479	4,006	4,344	1,163	471	115	47,345
	Per cent								
Indigenous	0.3	0.0	0.9	1.3	0.1	0.2	0.2	35.7	0.5
Non-Indigenous	87.0	97.7	91.8	90.6	83.7	97.7	97.7	44.3	90.8
Missing/not stated	12.7	2.3	7.3	8.1	16.2	2.1	2.1	20.0	8.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Table 3.4, AIHW 2004b.

- The Northern Territory was the jurisdiction with the highest proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander permanent residential aged care admissions in 2001–02 (35.7%), much higher than the national rate of 0.5%.
- In 2001–02 the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status was 8.7%.
- Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory had the lowest rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status (2.1%) and the Northern Territory had the highest (20.0%).

Table 4.2 presents the rates of admissions to permanent residential aged care in 2004–05, by Indigenous status, for all states and territories.

Table 4.2: Number and proportion of admissions of permanent residential aged care residents, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, Australia, 2004–05

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
Number									
Indigenous	46	11	92	79	17	4	—	33	282
Non-Indigenous	18,445	12,902	8,178	4,593	5,055	1,349	466	73	51,061
Missing/not stated	46	12	1,054	2	4	1	—	—	1,119
Total	18,537	12,925	9,324	4,674	5,076	1,354	466	106	52,462
Per cent									
Indigenous	0.2	0.1	1.0	1.7	0.3	0.3	—	31.1	0.5
Non-Indigenous	99.5	99.8	87.7	98.3	99.6	99.6	100.0	68.9	97.3
Missing/not stated	0.2	0.1	11.3	—	0.1	0.1	—	—	2.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: AIHW (unpublished).

- Between 2001–02 and 2004–05, the national rate of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander permanent aged care admissions remained steady at 0.5%. The Northern Territory rate fell from 35.7% to 31.1%, and all other jurisdictions except New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory increased slightly.
- The national rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status decreased from 8.7% in 2001–02 to 2.1% in 2004–05.
- Queensland had the highest rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status (11.3%) and was the only jurisdiction to record a rise in the proportion of missing/not stated Indigenous status since 2001–02.

Table 4.3 presents the rates of admissions to permanent residential aged care for Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients and those with missing/ not stated Indigenous status, across the five remoteness categories in 2001–02.

Table 4.3: Number and proportion of admissions of permanent residential aged care residents, by Indigenous status and remoteness, Australia, 2001–02 (Data quality report)

	Major cities	Inner regional	Outer regional	Remote	Very remote	All regions
Number						
Indigenous	35	20	75	44	50	224
Non-Indigenous	27,524	11,554	3,665	222	30	42,995
Missing/not stated	3,131	736	232	25	2	4,126
Total	30,690	12,310	3,972	291	82	47,345
Per cent						
Indigenous	0.1	0.2	1.9	15.1	61.0	0.5
Non-Indigenous	89.7	93.9	92.3	76.3	36.6	90.8
Missing/not stated	10.2	6.0	5.8	8.6	2.4	8.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Table 3.5, AIHW 2004b.

- In 2001–02 the proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residential aged care admissions increased with remoteness (0.1% in Major cities and 61.0% in Very remote areas).
- This trend was somewhat reversed for the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status, with Major cities having the highest rate (10.2%) and Very remote areas having the lowest (2.4%).

Table 4.4 presents the rates of admissions to permanent residential aged care in 2004–05, by Indigenous status, across the five remoteness categories.

Table 4.4: Number and proportion of admissions of permanent residential aged care residents, by Indigenous status, by remoteness, Australia, 2004–05

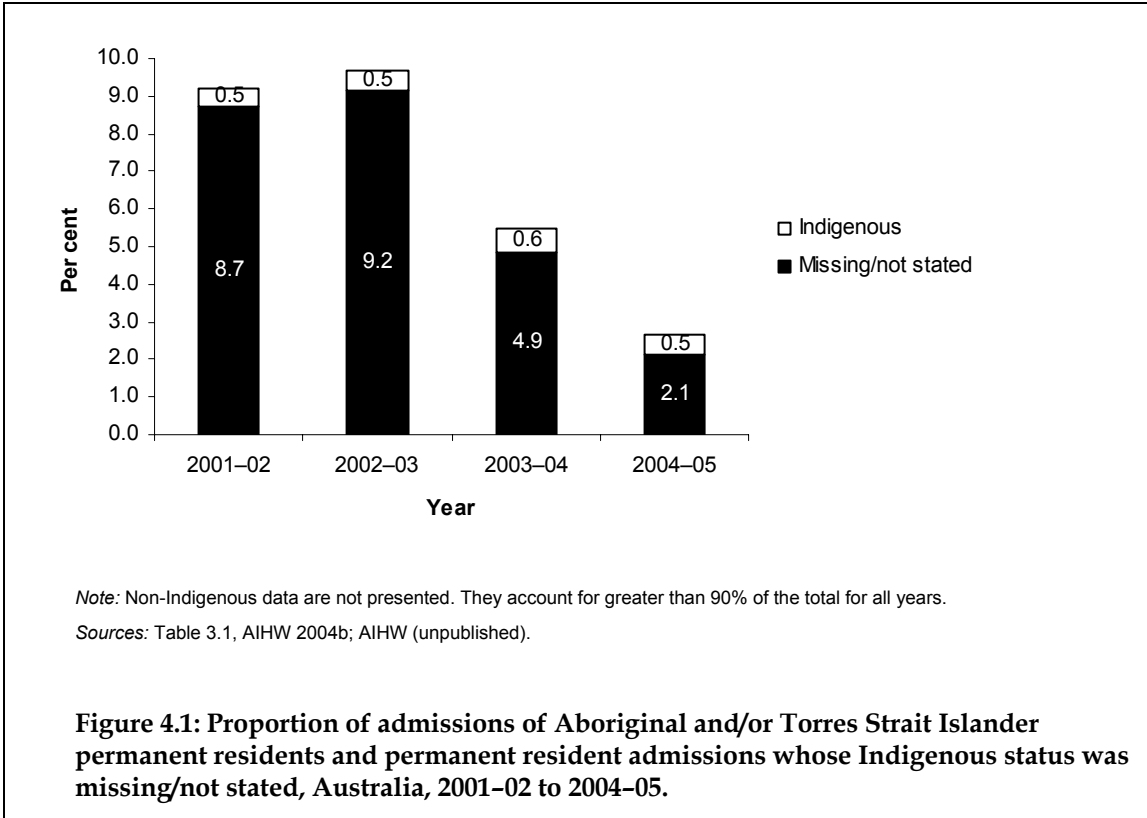
	Major cities	Inner regional	Outer regional	Remote	Very remote	All regions
	Number					
Indigenous	78	32	72	46	54	282
Non-Indigenous	34,261	12,210	4,343	202	45	51,061
Missing/not stated	834	249	32	2	2	1,119
Total	35,173	12,491	4,447	250	101	52,462
	Per cent					
Indigenous	0.2	0.3	1.6	18.4	53.5	0.5
Non-Indigenous	97.4	97.8	97.7	80.8	44.6	97.3
Missing/not stated	2.4	2.0	0.7	0.8	2.0	2.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: AIHW (unpublished).

- The proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander permanent residential aged care admissions decreased since 2001–02 in Outer regional, Remote and Very remote areas, and increased in Major cities and Inner regional areas.
- The proportion of missing/not stated Indigenous status decreased in all areas between 2001–02 and 2004–05, most noticeably in Major cities (from 10.2% to 2.4%) and Remote areas (from 8.6% to 0.8%).

4.2 Changes in the national rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status

Figure 4.1 presents the proportions of permanent residential aged care admissions who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin and those whose Indigenous status is missing/not stated, for the whole of Australia between 2001-02 and 2004-05.



- The proportion of permanent residential aged care admissions with missing/not stated Indigenous status increased slightly from 8.7% in 2001-02 to 9.2% in 2002-03.
- The rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status data in the RACS Data Collection declined substantially from 9.2% in 2002-03 to 2.1% in 2004-05.
- The proportion of permanent residential aged care admissions who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin remained constant from 2001-02 (around 0.5%).

4.3 Findings in the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b)

The Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) lists six key findings in relation to missing/ not stated Indigenous status in the RACS Data Collection. These key findings are listed in Box 4.1 below, and an update on current rates and/or current data reporting practices follows.

Box 4.1: Key findings from the Data quality report for the RACS Data Collection

1. *There has been an increase in the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status over the past three years. The 2001–02 rate was, however, lower than the rate for 1998–99 permanent admissions.*
2. *The missing/not stated rate was slightly higher in males. There was no apparent trend associated with age or sex.*
3. *The rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status decreased in some states and territories, but it increased in others.*
4. *The highest proportions of missing/not stated Indigenous status were found in Major cities, with lower proportions in Regional areas (6%) and quite small proportions in Very remote areas (2%).*
5. *Residential Aged Care Services in which more than half the residents were Indigenous had the lowest rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status. The next lowest rate was for those services with between 25–50% of Indigenous residents.*
6. *Overall, the picture is one of decreasing identification of residents in terms of their Indigenous status.*

Source: AIHW 2004b.

Update

The overall rates of missing/ not stated Indigenous status increased slightly from 8.7% to 9.2% between 2001–02 and 2002–03, but declined sharply to 2.1% by 2004–05.

While there were great variations in the rates of missing/ not stated Indigenous status across the states and territories in 2001–02 (ranging from 2.1% to 20.0%), the rates were more constant in 2004–05 (ranging from 0.0% to 11.3%) (Tables 3.1 and 3.2). All states and territories, with the exception of Queensland, reported a decline in the rate of missing/ not stated Indigenous status over the four years from 2001–02 to 2004–05. Queensland reported a rate of 11.3% compared to all other jurisdictions reporting less than 0.3% missing/ not stated.

Compared to 2001–02, all areas reported lower rates of missing/ not stated Indigenous status in 2004–05 (Tables 3.3 and 3.4). As in 2001–02, Major cities had the highest proportion of missing/ not stated Indigenous status of all areas (2.4%), however this proportion represents a significant decrease (7.8 percentage points) over the three years to 2004–05. Outer regional services also reported a strong decline in missing/ not stated rates of 5.1 percentage points between 2001–02 and 2004–05.

4.4 Activities to improve Indigenous data quality

This section provides updated information on activities undertaken to improve Indigenous identification in the RACS Data Collection. The Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) suggests one issue for follow-up in relation to missing/not stated Indigenous status in the RACS Data Collection. The project team gathered information on data quality improvement activities in the RACS Data Collection, both those undertaken since the publication of the Data quality report and those that are current and planned. The issue for follow-up is described below in Box 4.2 and the response from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing on data quality improvement activities follows.

Box 4.2: Issue for follow-up from the Data quality report for the RACS Data Collection

1. *Based on the analysis by region, most gains in Indigenous identification could be made in the category 'Major cities', as the highest number of residents and the highest missing/not stated rate is found in this category.*

Source: AIHW 2004b.

Have improvements been made to the rate of Indigenous identification, particularly in 'Major cities'?

Overall, the proportion of residents for whom Indigenous status is missing/not stated has fallen from 8.7% in 2001–02 to 2.1% in 2004–05. Missing/not stated rates in Major cities have fallen substantially from 10.2% in 2001–02 to 2.4% in 2004–05.

Additional information related to data quality

The Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing updated the ACAT form in 2002–03 and as a result of further education and improved processes for the collection of assessment data the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status responses has fallen substantially.

The Department of Health and Ageing recently transferred residential payment functions to Medicare Australia (Australian Government Department of Human Services). Data collection practices at point of capture are now the responsibility of Medicare Australia. Protocols between the two agencies have been established to facilitate data improvements, including improvements to Indigenous identification in residential aged care.

5 Community Aged Care Packages (CACP) Data Collection

Background

Data on Community Aged Care Package (CACP) recipients have been collected since the program began operation in 1992. Client information is collected on the ACAT form and entered into the Aged and Community Care Management Information System.

A new ACAT form was introduced on 1 January 2003, and that, combined with education of staff and improved collection practices, may have led to improvements in the quality of Indigenous status data, since the publication of 2002 CACP data in the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b).

Data are not available for the 243 flexible community aged care places operating under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Strategy, however, given the nature of the program the intended care recipients are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. Also, Indigenous status data are not available for the 247 operational flexible community care places provided by Multi-Purpose Services (AIHW 2006a).

The unavailability of data on Indigenous status for flexible community care recipients, along with the non-compulsory nature of responses to the question on Indigenous status, is likely to result in an under-representation of the number and proportion of Indigenous Australian community care recipients.

5.1 Update on analysis results by Indigenous status

This section contains relevant data from the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) and updated data from the most recent 2004–05 CACP statistical report (AIHW 2006a). Table 5.1 presents the rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status for CACP recipients, by sex as at 30 June 2002 and 30 June 2005.

Table 5.1: Number and proportion of CACP recipients, Indigenous status and sex, Australia, 30 June 2002 and 30 June 2005^(a)

	Males	Females	Total
2002			
		Number	
Indigenous	480	237	717
Non-Indigenous	16,853	6,996	23,849
Missing/not stated	16	3	19
Total	17,349	7,236	24,585
		Per cent	
Indigenous	2.8	3.3	2.9
Non-Indigenous	97.1	96.7	97.0
Missing/not stated	0.1	0.0	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
2005			
		Number	
Indigenous	737	404	1,141
Non-Indigenous	19,741	7,820	27,561
Missing/not stated	141	56	197
Total	20,619	8,280	28,899
		Per cent	
Indigenous	3.6	4.9	3.9
Non-Indigenous	95.7	94.4	95.4
Missing/not stated	0.7	0.7	0.7
Total	100	100	100

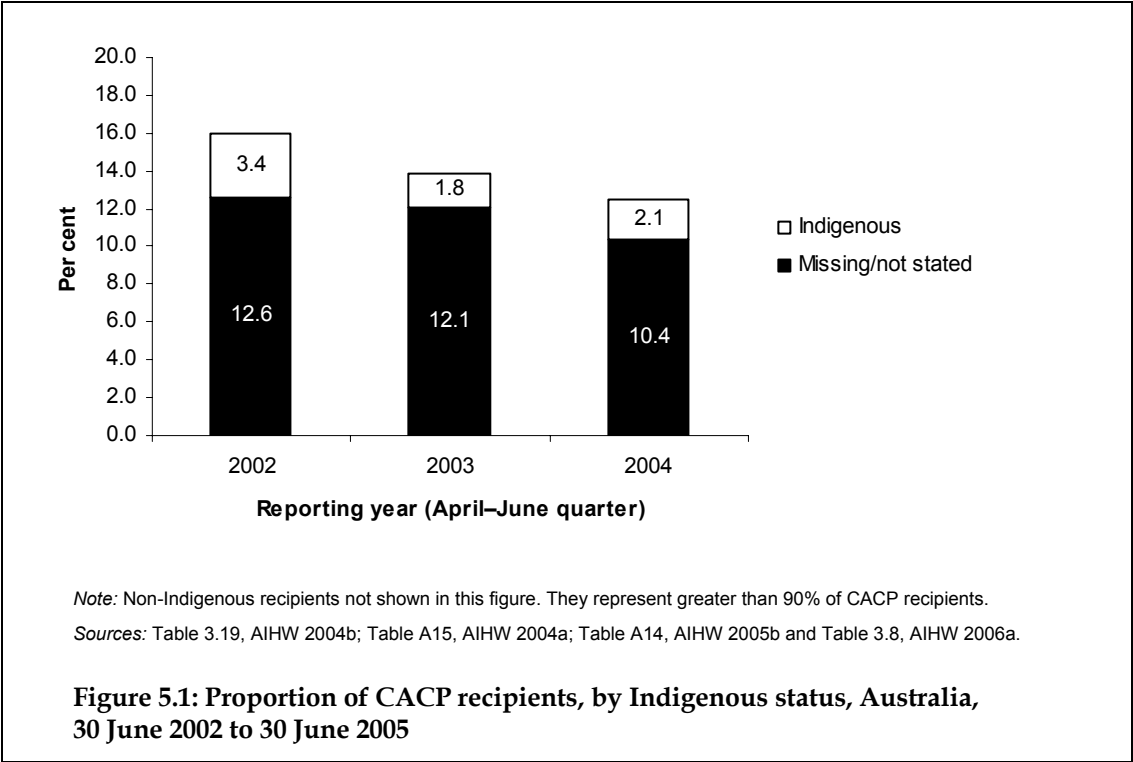
(a) In 2005, 243 packages were provided by services receiving flexible funding through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Strategy and 247 packages were provided by Multi-Purpose Services, however, no data on client characteristics are available from these services.

Sources: Adapted from Tables 3.19 and 3.20, AIHW 2004b; and Table 3.18, AIHW 2006a.

- The proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander male and female CACP recipients increased between 2002 and 2005, from 2.8% to 3.6% for males and 3.3% to 4.9% for females. The overall proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander CACP recipients increased from 2.9% in 2002 to 3.9% in 2005.
- In 2002, the proportion of CACP recipients with a missing/not stated Indigenous status was very low at 0.1% for males and 0.0% for females.
- The proportion of missing/not stated responses in 2005 was 0.7% for both male and female CACP clients.
- The proportion of CACP recipients with a missing/not stated Indigenous status was 0.7% in 2005.

5.2 Changes in the national rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status

Figure 5.1, below, presents the changing rates of CACP recipients who identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, and those whose Indigenous status was missing/ not stated, between 2002 and 2005.



- The proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander CACP recipients increased from 2.9% in 2002 to 3.9% in 2005, peaking at 4.0% in 2004.
- The rate of CACP recipients with a missing/not stated Indigenous status increased in the same period from 0.1% in 2002 to 0.7% in 2005, with a high of 1.6% in 2003.
- The rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status responses has declined for new admissions to CACPs from 3% in 2002-03 to 0.4% in 2004-05 (see Section 8.4).

5.3 Findings in the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b)

The Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) lists one key finding in relation to missing/not stated Indigenous status in the CACP program data. This key finding is listed below in Box 5.1, and an update on current rates and/or current data reporting practices follows.

Box 5.1: Key findings from the Data quality report for the CACP program

1. *The rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status was very low. However, this was at least partly due to imputation carried out at the state and territory level.*

Source: AIHW 2004b.

Update on data quality and reporting practices

The rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status for recipients of CACP services increased from 0.1% in 2002 to 1.6% in 2003, around the same time that the ACAT form was updated. It is not clear what caused this increase in the rate. However, the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status has declined since then to 0.7% in 2005.

5.4 Activities to improve Indigenous data quality

This section provides updated information on activities undertaken to improve Indigenous identification in the CACP program data. The Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) suggests one issue for follow-up in relation to missing/not stated Indigenous status in the CACP program data. The project team gathered information on data quality improvement activities in the CACP program, both those undertaken since the publication of the Data quality report and those that are current and planned. The issue for follow-up is described below in Box 5.2 and the response from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing on data quality improvement activities follows.

Box 5.2: Issue for follow-up from the Data quality report for the CACP program

1. *It is recommended that the practice of imputing clients' Indigenous status based on the main client profile or other service characteristics when their Indigenous status is missing or recorded as not stated should cease.*

Source: AIHW 2004b.

Have steps been taken to discontinue the practice of imputing clients' Indigenous status based on their client profile or other service characteristics?

Since the 2002 collection (presented in the Data quality report), some changes have been made to the collection of CACP data. The Department of Health and Ageing updated the ACAT form in 2002-03. As a result of further education and improved processes for the collection of Assessment data, the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status responses has steadily declined from 1.6% in 2003, through 1.3% in 2004, to 0.7% in 2005.

The rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status responses has declined even further for new admissions to CACPs from 3% in 2002-03 to 0.4% in 2004-05. Admissions data provide a more accurate picture of current data collection practices.

Additional information related to data quality

The Department of Health and Ageing recently transferred payment functions for CACPs to Medicare Australia. Data collection practices at point of capture are now the responsibility of Medicare Australia. Protocols between the two agencies have been established to facilitate data improvements, including improvements to Indigenous identification in CACPs.

6 Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) National Data Collection

6.1 Update on analysis results by Indigenous status

This section contains the relevant tables for 2001–02 from the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b), and new tables that provide updated figures for 2004–05, for the SAAP National Data Collection (NDC). These tables provide information on the proportion of support periods for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people in each state and territory or region, the proportion of support periods with a missing/not stated Indigenous status and the proportion of support periods for which a client did not consent to answering the question on Indigenous status, in the SAAP National Data Collection.

Table 6.1 presents the rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status for 2001–02 by state and territory.

Table 6.1: SAAP support periods: number and proportion of Indigenous identification category responses, by state and territory, Australia, 2001–02

State/territory	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total (%)	Total (no.)
Indigenous	13.7	4.0	37.1	30.6	11.5	7.6	10.7	51.8	18.7	31,100
Non-Indigenous	70.8	81.1	51.3	56.6	61.9	70.7	74.3	38.0	66.2	110,200
Missing/not stated	2.3	2.9	1.8	1.0	1.7	3.5	1.4	1.1	2.2	3,600
Consent not provided	13.1	12.0	9.9	11.8	24.8	18.1	13.6	9.1	13.0	21,600
<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>100.0</i>	—
Total (no.)	44,800	43,100	38,400	14,300	13,300	5,400	2,600	4,700	—	166,500

Notes

1. Clients may have support periods in more than one state or territory.
2. Data are unweighted.

Source: AIHW (unpublished).

- In 2001–02 the proportion of support periods for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients was 18.7%.
- The proportion of missing/not stated Indigenous status was 2.2%, nationally, in 2001–02.
- Across the states and territories in 2001–02, the rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status were consistent and low (1.0–3.5%), with Tasmania reporting a higher rate (3.5%) than all other jurisdictions.
- Client non-consent ranged from 9.1% in the Northern Territory to 24.8% in South Australia, with a national average of 13.0% in 2001–02.

Table 6.2 presents the rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status for 2004–05 by state and territory.

Table 6.2: SAAP support periods: number and proportion of Indigenous identification category responses, by state and territory, Australia, 2004–05

State/territory	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total (%)	Total (no.)
Indigenous	14.8	4.0	19.1	38.0	16.0	7.8	10.5	58.3	14.6	23,400
Non-Indigenous	70.2	86.4	65.5	51.9	69.8	70.5	74.6	37.3	72.7	116,300
Missing/not stated	5.0	2.7	3.7	3.4	3.6	4.8	3.4	0.9	3.6	5,700
Consent not provided	10.0	6.9	11.8	6.7	10.6	16.8	11.6	3.5	9.1	14,600
<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>100.0</i>	—
Total (no.)	38,500	55,400	24,700	13,700	15,000	6,400	2,100	4,100	—	160,000

Notes

1. Clients may have support periods in more than one state or territory.

2. Data are unweighted.

Source: AIHW (unpublished).

- The proportion of support periods for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients decreased from 18.7% in 2001–02 to 14.6% in 2004–05.
- In 2004–05, there was an overall increase in the proportion of support periods with missing/not stated Indigenous status (from 2.2% to 3.6% since 2001–02), with an increase in all jurisdictions except Victoria and the Northern Territory, which both decreased by 0.2 percentage points.
- Over this period, Victoria had the lowest proportion of support periods for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients (4.0%) and the Northern Territory had the highest (58.3%).
- The rates of client non-consent ranged from 3.5% in the Northern Territory to 16.8% in Tasmania. The national rate in 2004–05 was 9.1%, an improvement of 3.9 percentage points from 2001–02.

Table 6.3 presents rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status in the SAAP NDC for 2001–02 by five remoteness categories.

Table 6.3: SAAP support periods: proportion of Indigenous identification responses, by geographical location, Australia, 2001–02

Geographical location	Major cities	Inner regional	Outer regional	Remote	Very remote	Total (%)	Total (no.)
Indigenous	7.0	11.8	47.4	63.3	86.2	18.7	31,100
Non-Indigenous	75.5	72.8	43.9	25.5	5.0	66.2	110,200
Missing/not stated	2.5	2.3	1.6	0.7	1.1	2.2	3,600
Consent not provided	15.0	13.1	7.1	10.6	7.8	13.0	21,600
<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>	—
Total (no.)	97,000	31,200	29,300	4,900	4,200	—	166,500

Notes

1. Clients may have support periods in more than one state or territory.
2. Data are unweighted.

Source: AIHW (unpublished).

- In 2001–02, the proportion of support periods for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients increased and the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status decreased, with increasing remoteness.
- Major cities had the lowest proportion of Indigenous records (7%) and the highest missing/not stated rate (2.5%). In contrast, Very remote areas had the highest proportion of Indigenous records (86.2%) and a lower missing/not stated rate (1.1%).
- The rate of client non-consent was lowest for Outer regional (7.1%) and Very remote (7.8%) agencies.

Table 6.4 presents the rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status for 2004–05 by five remoteness categories.

Table 6.4: SAAP support periods: proportion of Indigenous identification responses, by geographical location, Australia, 2004–05

Geographical location	Major cities	Inner regional	Outer regional	Remote	Very remote	Total (%)	Total (no.)
Indigenous	7.7	13.6	29.9	63.3	85.1	14.6	23,400
Non-Indigenous	79.7	71.3	58.9	29.8	6.4	72.7	116,300
Missing/not stated	3.7	3.7	3.8	1.1	2.5	3.6	5,700
Consent not provided	9.0	11.3	7.4	5.8	6.1	9.1	14,600
<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>	—
Total (no.)	103,200	31,400	16,700	5,600	3,100	—	160,000

Notes

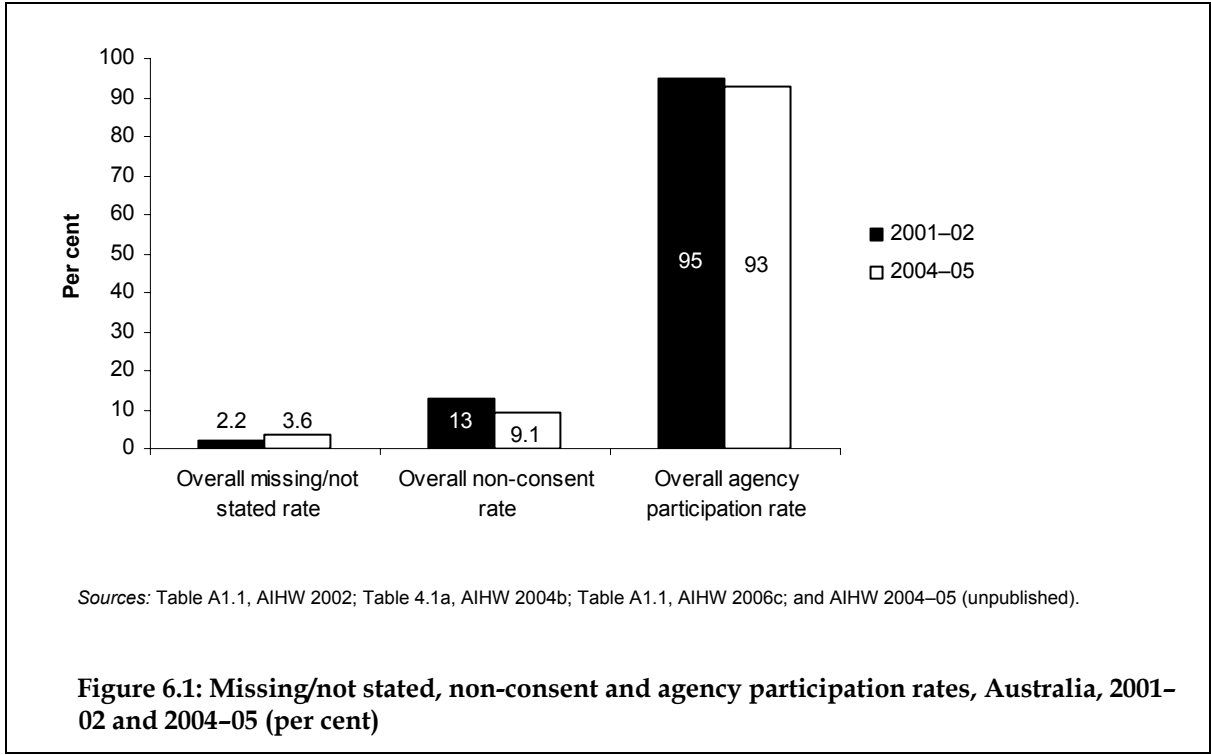
1. Clients may have support periods in more than one state or territory.
2. Data are unweighted.

Source: AIHW (unpublished).

- In 2004–05, agencies in Remote and Very remote areas had both the highest proportion of support periods for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients (63% and 85%) and the lowest rates of missing/not stated data (1.1% and 2.5%) and client non-consent (5.8% and 6.1%).
- Outer regional agencies had a rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status 0.2 percentage points above the national average of 3.6%, and was the only region to record an increase in client non-consent since 2001–02.
- All regions recorded an increase in the proportion of support periods with missing/not stated Indigenous status in the period between 2001–02 and 2004–05.

6.2 Changes in the national rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status

Figure 6.1 shows the national missing/ not stated, non-consent and agency participation rates for the collection periods 2001–02 and 2004–05.



- The overall missing/ not stated rate for Indigenous status was 2.2% in 2001–02.
- The overall missing/ not stated rate for Indigenous status was 3.6% in 2004–05. This reflects an increase of 1.4 percentage points over three years.
- The overall client non-consent rate improved from 13% in 2001–02 to 9.1% in 2004–05 and the agency participation rate decreased from 95% to 93% in the same three-year period.

6.3 Findings in the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b)

The Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) lists five key findings in relation to missing/not stated Indigenous status in the SAAP National Data Collection. These key findings are listed below in Box 6.1, and an update on current rates and/or current data reporting practices follows.

Box 6.1: Key findings from the Data quality report for the SAAP NDC

1. *The proportion of valid responses to each category from the Indigenous status question have increased across the six years of data collection as consent rates to the data collection have improved.*
2. *The proportion of missing/not stated responses to Indigenous status decreased across all years with the exception of 2001–02. In the last four years the Northern Territory reported the lowest proportion of clients whose Indigenous status was missing/not stated, generally 1% of clients or less.*
3. *The proportion of missing/not stated responses by type of service provided tended to be smaller where there were high proportions of Indigenous records.*
4. *The results from analyses related to target group and service delivery model tended to indicate that the less targeted the service provision, the higher the proportion of missing/not stated responses to the Indigenous status question.*
5. *Linkage key analysis showed that Indigenous status was reported consistently for 95% of SAAP clients for the period 2001–02.*

Source: AIHW 2004b.

Data quality and data reporting practices update

The overall non-consent rate in 2001–02 was 13%, in 2004–05 it was 9.1% (Figure 6.1), showing that the consent rates have continued to improve since the publication of the 2004 Data quality report. As improving the rate of consent is regarded as the most effective way to improve the rates of Indigenous identification, practices have been introduced across the board to improve consent rates in participating SAAP agencies. These practices have not been targeted to agencies, target groups or service delivery models with high rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status.

Despite the improvement in consent rates, and the training of SAAP staff on the importance of accurately collecting responses to the question on Indigenous status, the overall missing/not stated rate for Indigenous status increased from 2.2% in 2001–02 to 3.6% in 2004–05 (Figure 6.1). Further in-depth analysis is required to identify the cause of this increase.

The proportion of missing/not stated responses increased in all jurisdictions, except Victoria and the Northern Territory, where the Northern Territory reported the lowest proportion of clients whose Indigenous status was missing/not stated, 0.9% in 2004–05. New South Wales and Tasmania had the highest proportion of missing/not stated Indigenous status, 5.0% and 4.8% respectively.

In 2001–02 Queensland reported that 37.1% of 38,300 support periods were for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients; in 2004–05 this dropped to 19.1% of 24,700 support periods (Tables 5.1 and 5.2). This reduction is thought to be due to one high-volume agency changing the way it defined and counted a support period, in 2003–04. This resulted in a four-fold reduction in the number of support periods reported by this agency. Because the

agency had low rates of missing Indigenous status, this had the effect of increasing the overall proportion of missing/not stated responses to the Indigenous status question in Queensland, from 1.8% in 2001–02 to 3.7% in 2004–05 (AIHW 2006c).

6.4 Activities to improve Indigenous data quality

This section provides updated information on activities undertaken to improve Indigenous identification in the SAAP NDC.

The Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) suggests two issues for follow-up in relation to missing/not stated Indigenous status in the SAAP National Data Collection. These issues for follow-up are listed below in Box 6.2, and were used by the project team as a guide for gathering information on data quality improvement activities in the SAAP NDC, both those undertaken since the publication of the Data quality report and those activities that are current or planned.

Box 6.2: Issues for follow-up from the Data quality report for the SAAP NDC

1. *Strategies to improve the consent rate will also assist in an improvement in the identification rate of Indigenous clients.*
2. *Likewise, strategies to improve the participation rate of SAAP-funded agencies in the SAAP collection will also facilitate a more accurate count of Indigenous clients. Strategies are currently being considered by the major SAAP data collection stakeholders.*

Source: AIHW 2004b.

Client consent

Informed consent is one of the key foundations of the SAAP National Data Collection when assessing program and client data.

The client has the right to decide what personal information is recorded about them on the client form. So while some clients may generally consent to provide personal details about themselves, they may still decide not to consent to a particular question, such as the Indigenous status question. Therefore, the total missing/not stated figure possibly comprises a number of non-responses allowed for under the collection's protocols.

It is not known what proportion of the missing/not stated responses constitute these 'non consents', but strategies to improve consent rates will also improve the missing/not stated rates for the Indigenous status question.

Issue for follow-up 1

Have strategies been developed to improve the consent rate among Indigenous SAAP clients?

As part of the standard data quality monitoring of all agencies in the SAAP National Data Collection, the consent rate achieved at every agency is produced annually and compared with the average and median.

Where agency consent rates are substantially below the average, the agencies and their rates are reported to the administering department for follow-up action.

No procedures specific to agencies with relatively high percentages of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients have been considered. This is because agencies with high proportions of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients do not have below average consent rates, and the above procedures are considered sufficient to improve the quality of

all agencies. If there are biases in the non-consenting clients, however, overestimating or underestimating of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients could occur.

The rate of client consent for all SAAP agencies in 2004–05 was 91%, up from 87% in 2001–02.

A sophisticated system of adjustment for non-consent has ensured that the total number of clients and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients can be estimated.

Agency participation

The participation of previously non-participating SAAP-funded agencies in the collection has the potential to provide greater improvements to the quality of Indigenous data than improving the low rates of errors and missing/not stated responses. This is because agencies that are likely to have large numbers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients are more likely not to participate in the SAAP NDC than agencies with smaller numbers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients.

Consequently, strategies to improve the participation of agencies supporting predominantly Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients will also improve the quality of Indigenous status reporting in the SAAP NDC.

Issue for follow-up 2

Have strategies been developed to improve the participation rate of SAAP-funded agencies?

The SAAP Co-ordination and Development Committee has provided resources over the past two years to develop a strategy to improve participation of agencies with high numbers of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients in the SAAP National Data Collection. Agencies with difficulties in collecting the SAAP data have been consulted and their preference was to develop a training package addressing their collection difficulties rather than to develop different collection instruments. A SAAP Indigenous Data Training Reference Group has been formed. It met in early April 2006 to develop, among a number of initiatives, a framework for the Indigenous SAAP data training package. The AIHW is currently developing the training package in consultation with the Reference Group. Pilot testing of the package is planned for May 2007. It is planned to implement the package in 2007–08.

Additional information related to data quality

Has other work been undertaken, or is other work planned, to improve Indigenous identification in the SAAP data collection?

Missing data for Indigenous status in the SAAP 'Demand for Accommodation' collection is high (although improving). Refinements to the demand collection have been suggested for the SAAP National Data Collection work program in 2006-07.

From 1 July 2005, the Indigenous status of children has been included in the SAAP National Data Collection. The first data on this data element will be produced for the SAAP NDC annual national and state and territory reports in April 2007.

The AIHW plans to impute missing information for the SAAP National Data Collection for the purposes of reporting credible, consistent totals for data elements with low rates of missing data. Given that the Indigenous status data element has a low rate of missing information, imputation will be undertaken for missing Indigenous status in the collection.

Data quality will continue to be monitored for all agencies and questions on the SAAP client questionnaire, including rates of missing data, consent, participation, and inconsistent responses. The quality assurance will include the Indigenous questions in the collection.

As mentioned above, a training program that includes data collection, use of the electronic data collection instrument, data interpretation and analysis supports the SAAP National Data Collection. The Indigenous questions (adults and children) receive particular attention in the data training course.

The AIHW will continue to return to participating agencies a professionally produced report of the data the agencies provided to the AIHW. All participating Indigenous agencies will receive this report.

The AIHW is currently revising its electronic data collection tool. The new tool will streamline data collection for agencies including reducing multiple entry of the same client for different programs, and allowing for the collection of data not part of the SAAP collection. The tool should assist agencies to manage or advocate on behalf of their clients, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients. In so doing, the tool will also facilitate collecting quality national data, including the Indigenous status questions. The revised tool is planned to be rolled out during 2006-07.

7 National Child Protection (NCP) Data Collection

7.1 Update on analysis results by Indigenous status

This section contains the relevant tables from the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b), and new tables that provide updated figures for 2004–05. It should be noted that some corrections have been made to the tables from the Data quality report (containing data from the period 2001–02). These amendments are referred to both in the relevant text and in the footnotes to these tables.

Child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations

Tables 7.1 and 7.2 show the number and proportion of investigations and substantiations where Indigenous status was unknown/missing/not stated for the period 2001–02 and 2004–05 respectively.

Data on the Indigenous status of children at the notification stage are not reliable. As outlined later in this chapter, feedback received from members of the National Child Protection and Support Services (NCPASS) Working Group indicated that, while Indigenous status should be recorded at the notification stage of a child protection matter, this information should not be reported.

Table 7.1: Number and proportion of investigations and substantiations, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, 2001–02

Indigenous status	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Investigations									
Number									
Indigenous children	4,442	1,052	2,180	913	1,069	7	50	479	10,192
Other children	24,297	12,159	17,965	1,671	4,098	23	251	356	60,820
Not known/missing/not stated	4,879	..	2,889	353	466	499	349	—	9,435
Total	33,618	13,211	23,034	2,937	5,633	529	650	835	80,447
Per cent									
Indigenous children	13.2	8.0	9.5	31.1	19.0	1.3	7.7	57.4	12.7
Other children	72.3	92.0	78.0	56.9	72.7	4.3	38.6	42.6	75.6
Not known/missing/not stated ^(b)	14.5	..	12.5	12.0	8.3	94.3	53.7	—	14.0
Total^(c)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Substantiations									
Number									
Indigenous children	1,101	630	1,206	426	483	2	11	236	4,095
Other children ^(a)	7,224	7,057	7,546	646	1,568	8	102	113	24,264
Not known/missing/not stated ^(a)	281	..	1,284	115	179	172	107	—	2,138
Total	8,606	7,687	10,036	1,187	2,230	182	220	349	30,497
Per cent									
Indigenous children	12.8	8.2	12.0	35.9	21.7	1.1	5.0	67.6	13.4
Other children ^(a)	83.9	91.8	75.2	54.4	70.3	4.4	46.4	32.4	79.6
Not known/missing/not stated ^(b)	3.3	..	12.8	9.7	8.0	94.5	48.6	—	9.4
Total^(c)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) The number of substantiated cases for other children and children with not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status and the total proportion of substantiated cases for other children have been amended since the publication of the Data quality report. These amendments do not affect the jurisdictional figures.

(b) The Victoria missing/not stated Indigenous status rates were deemed to be 'not applicable' for 2001–02, but Victoria was included when calculating the national unknown/missing/not stated Indigenous status rate. In the preparation of Table 7.1, a re-analysis of the 2001–02 data was carried out excluding Victoria. This has resulted in national rates that are higher than those reported in the Data quality report.

(c) Totals may not add to sum of components due to rounding.

Source: Table 5.1, AIHW 2004b (amended).

- In 2001–02, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children accounted for 12.7% of investigations and 13.4% of substantiations.
- In 2001–02, the overall proportion of unknown/missing/not stated Indigenous status responses was 14.0% at the point of investigation and 9.4% for substantiations.
- There were marked variations by jurisdiction in 2001–02. The unknown/missing/not stated Indigenous status rates for investigations and substantiations ranged from zero in the Northern Territory to 95% in Tasmania.
- It should be noted that the national rates in Table 7.1 are not the same as those published in the Data quality report. The national missing/not stated Indigenous status rates in the Data quality report were calculated using data from all states and territories, even though the Victorian rates were deemed to be 'not applicable' when the Data quality report was written. While preparing the national rates for Table 7.1, a re-analysis of the

2001–02 data was carried out excluding Victoria. This has resulted in national rates that are higher than those reported in the Data quality report.

- Since the publication of the Data quality report, changes have been made to the national totals for substantiations. These changes do not affect the overall proportion of substantiated cases with unknown/missing/not stated Indigenous status or the state and territory figures.

Table 7.2: Number and proportion of investigations and substantiations, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, 2004–05

Indigenous status	NSW	Vic ^(a)	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Investigations									
Number									
Indigenous children	10,770	1,251	3,598	1,066	1,716	74	337	753	19,565
Other children	42,526	10,607	28,367	1,840	4,326	373	1,489	403	89,931
Not known/missing/not stated	5,276	30	3,396	256	237	1,386	1,191	24	11,796
Total	58,572	11,888	35,361	3,162	6,279	1,833	3,017	1,180	121,292
Per cent									
Indigenous children	18.4	10.5	10.2	33.7	27.3	4.0	11.2	63.8	16.1
Other children	72.6	89.2	80.2	58.2	68.9	20.3	49.4	34.2	74.1
Not known/missing/not stated	9.0	0.3	9.6	8.1	3.8	75.6	39.5	2.0	9.7
Total^(b)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Substantiations									
Number									
Indigenous children	3,140	816	1,707	385	736	43	136	337	7,300
Other children	11,713	6,577	14,048	677	1,581	201	610	131	35,538
Not known/missing/not stated	640	—	1,552	42	67	538	467	5	3,311
Total	15,493	7,393	17,307	1,104	2,384	782	1,213	473	46,149
Per cent									
Indigenous children	20.3	11.0	9.9	34.9	30.9	5.5	11.2	71.2	15.8
Other children	75.6	88.9	81.2	61.3	66.3	25.7	50.3	27.7	77.0
Not known/missing/not stated	4.1	—	9.0	3.8	2.8	68.8	38.5	1.1	7.2
Total^(b)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Victorian data for substantiations in 2004–05 exclude five cases without Indigenous status, due to a data system error.

(b) Totals may not add to sum of components due to rounding.

Source: AIHW (unpublished).

- In 2004–05, the proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children increased compared to 2001–02, from 12.7% to 16.1% for investigations and from 13.4% to 15.8% for substantiations.
- In 2004–05, the national not known/missing/not stated rate was 9.7% for investigations and 7.2% for substantiations.
- Compared to 2001–02, the not known/missing/not stated rates improved for the majority of jurisdictions in 2004–05, most notably in Tasmania where the not known/missing/not stated rates decreased from 94.3% to 75.6% for investigations and from 94.5% to 68.8% for substantiations.
- The rates for the Northern Territory increased from close to zero in 2001–02 to 2.0% for investigations and 1.1% for substantiations in 2004–05. The increase in these not known/missing/not stated rates for the Northern Territory are due to data quality improvements since 2001–02. The proportion of not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status for substantiations also increased in New South Wales, from 3.3% to 4.1%.

Children on care and protection orders

Table 7.3 shows the number and proportion of children on care and protection orders at 30 June 2002.

Table 7.3: Number and proportion of children on care and protection orders, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, at 30 June 2002

Indigenous status	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total ^(a)
Number									
Indigenous children	1,992	510	880	469	233	29	32	126	4,271
Other children	6,000	4,463	2,762	914	926	208	161	68	15,502
Not known/missing/ not stated	237	2	123	1	127	227	68	—	785
Total	8,229	4,975	3,765	1,384	1,286	464	261	194	20,558
Per cent									
Indigenous children	24.2	10.3	23.4	33.9	18.1	6.3	12.3	64.9	20.8
Other children	72.9	89.7	73.4	66.0	72.0	44.8	61.7	35.1	75.4
Not known/missing/ not stated	2.9	—	3.3	0.1	9.9	48.9	26.1	—	3.8
Total^(b)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Corrections have been made to data published in the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b).

(b) Totals may not add to sum of components due to rounding.

Source: Table 5.2, AIHW 2004b (amended).

- The overall proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children on care and protection orders in 2002 was 20.8%.
- The national rate of not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status for children on care and protection orders in 2002 was 3.8%.
- In 2002, three jurisdictions (Victoria, Western Australia and the Northern Territory) reported not known/missing/not stated rates of zero or close to zero. Across other jurisdictions, the proportion of not known/missing/not stated records was 2.9% in New South Wales, 3.3% in Queensland, 9.9% in South Australia and 48.9% in Tasmania and 26.1% in the Australian Capital Territory.

Table 7.4 shows the number and proportion of children on care and protection orders at 30 June 2005.

Table 7.4: Number and proportion of children on care and protection orders, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, at 30 June 2005

Indigenous status	NSW	Vic^(a)	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
	Number								
Indigenous children	2,113	682	1,342	660	322	94	70	281	5,564
Other children	6,455	4,973	4,515	1,122	1,147	536	314	130	19,192
Not known/missing/ not stated	52	—	—	1	84	86	80	3	306
Total	8,620	5,655	5,857	1,783	1,553	716	464	414	25,062
	Per cent								
Indigenous children	24.5	12.1	22.9	37.0	20.7	13.1	15.1	67.9	22.2
Other children	74.9	87.9	77.1	62.9	73.9	74.9	67.7	31.4	76.6
Not known/missing/ not stated	0.6	—	—	0.1	5.4	12.0	17.2	0.7	1.2
Total^(b)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Victorian data for children on care and protection orders in 2005 exclude three cases without Indigenous status, due to a data system error.

(b) Totals may not add to sum of components due to rounding.

Source: AIHW (unpublished).

- The proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children on care and protection orders increased from 20.8% in 2002 to 22.2% in 2005.
- In the three years between 2002 and 2005, the national not known/missing/not stated rate had declined from 3.8% in 2002 to 1.2% in 2005.
- The reduction in the national not known/missing/not stated rate reflected the reduced rates in a majority of jurisdictions, with particularly large reductions in Tasmania (from 48.9% to 12.0%) and the Australian Capital Territory (from 26.1% to 17.2%).

Children in out-of-home care

Table 7.5 shows the number and proportion of children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2002.

Table 7.5: Number and proportion of children in out-of-home care, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, at 30 June 2002

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Indigenous	2,098	489	708	511	232	22	27	105	4,192
Non-Indigenous	5,687	3,354	2,429	983	851	191	135	n.a.	13,630
Not known/missing/ not stated	299	75	120	—	113	172	62	n.a.	841
Total	8,084	3,918	3,257	1,494	1,196	385	224	163	18,721
Per cent									
Indigenous	26.0	12.5	21.7	31.8	19.4	5.7	12.1	64.4	22.4
Non-Indigenous ^(a)	70.3	85.6	74.6	68.2	71.2	49.6	60.3	n.a.	73.4
Not known/missing/ not stated ^(a)	3.7	1.9	3.7	—	9.4	44.7	27.7	n.a.	4.5
Total^(b)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Total percentages do not include the Northern Territory (nominator and denominator).

(b) Totals may not add to sum of components due to rounding.

Source: Table 5.3, AIHW 2004b (amended).

- The proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care was 22.4% in 2002.
- In 2002, 4.5% of children in out-of-home care had a not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status.
- The proportion of children with not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status in each jurisdiction was similar to the proportions on care and protection orders. Proportions ranged from 1.9% of children in Victoria to 44.7% of children in Tasmania (although this state has a relatively low number of children in out-of-home care).

Table 7.6 shows the number of children in out-of-home care at 30 June 2005.

Table 7.6: Number and proportion of children in out-of-home care, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, at 30 June 2005

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
Number									
Indigenous	2,543	526	1,275	692	286	78	60	218	5,678
Non-Indigenous	6,610	3,868	4,382	1,136	1,043	440	222	104	17,805
Not known/missing/ not stated	77	14	—	1	—	58	60	2	212
Total	9,230	4,408	5,657	1,829	1,329	576	342	324	23,695
Per cent									
Indigenous	27.6	11.9	22.5	37.8	21.5	13.5	17.5	67.3	24.0
Non-Indigenous	71.6	87.7	77.5	62.1	78.5	76.4	64.9	32.1	75.1
Not known/missing/ not stated	0.8	0.3	—	0.1	—	10.1	17.5	0.6	0.9
Total^(a)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Totals may not add to sum of components due to rounding.

Source: AIHW (unpublished).

- In 2005, the proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care increased to 24.0% from 22.0% in 2002.
- In the three years between 2002 and 2005, the national not known/missing/not stated rate declined from 4.5% to 0.9%.
- In the same period there were reductions in the not known/missing/not stated rates in most jurisdictions, most notably in Tasmania (from 44.7% to 10.1%), the Australian Capital Territory (from 27.7% to 17.5%) and South Australia, which reported a reduction from 9.4% in 2002 to zero in 2005.

7.2 Changes in the rates of unknown/missing/not stated Indigenous status

This section presents comparisons between the 2001–02 and 2004–05 not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status rates for each jurisdiction for all NCP data collections, and comparisons between national rates for the same period for care and protection orders and out-of-home care. The national rates for investigations and substantiations are not comparable due to differences in how these rates were calculated for the Data quality report. At the time the Data quality report was written, while the Victorian not known/missing/not stated rate was deemed to be ‘not applicable’, Victorian data was included in the national estimates. The current not known/missing/not stated Victorian rate (2004–05) is zero. As this difference affects the national rate, a reliable comparison of the national rates over time is not possible.

State and territory rates

Table 7.7 shows the proportion of not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status in the NCP data collections in 2001–02 and 2004–05 for each jurisdiction.

Table 7.7: Not known/missing/not stated rates for Indigenous identification in the National Child Protection data collections, by state and territory, 2001–02 to 2004–05 (per cent)

	NSW	Vic ^(a)	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT
2001–02								
(Data quality report)								
Investigations	14.5	..	12.5	12.0	8.3	94.3	53.7	—
Substantiations	3.3	..	12.8	9.7	8.0	94.5	48.6	—
Care and protection orders	2.9	—	3.3	0.1	9.9	48.9	26.1	—
Out-of-home care	3.7	1.9	3.7	—	9.4	44.7	27.7	n.a.
2004–05								
Investigations	9.0	0.3	9.6	8.1	3.8	75.6	39.5	2.0
Substantiations	4.1	—	9.0	3.8	2.8	68.8	38.5	1.1
Care and protection orders	0.6	—	—	0.1	5.4	12.0	17.2	0.7
Out-of-home care	0.8	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.0	10.1	17.5	0.6

(a) In 2004–05, five substantiated cases with missing/not stated Indigenous status and three cases on care and protection orders with missing/not stated Indigenous status were excluded due to data system error.

Source: Tables 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3, AIHW 2004b; and AIHW (unpublished).

- Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory reported consistent decreases in the rates of not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status for all child protection collections.
- While the not known/missing/not stated rates for Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory remained comparatively high across all child protection data collections in 2004–05, substantial improvements were seen in both these jurisdictions, particularly in the care and protection orders and the out-of-home care data collections.
- In New South Wales, the proportion of substantiated cases with not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status increased from 3.3% in 2001–02 to 4.1% in 2004–05. The proportion of not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status for

children in out-of-home care increased slightly in Western Australia from zero in 2001–02 to 0.1% in 2004–05.

- In 2004–05, the Victorian not known/missing/not stated rates at the investigation and substantiation phases were 0.3% and 0.0%, respectively. The Victorian rate for care and protection orders remained at 0.0% between 2001–02 and 2004–05, while the out-of-home care rate decreased from 1.9% to 0.3%.
- The increase in rates in the Northern Territory is due to data quality improvements between 2001–02 and 2004–05.

National rates

Table 7.8 shows the proportion of not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status in the care and protection and out-of-home care data collections in 2001–02 and 2004–05 nationally.

Table 7.8: Not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status rates for children on care and protection orders and in out-of-home care, 2001–02 and 2004–05 (per cent)

	2001–02 (Data quality report)	2004–05
Care and protection orders	2.7	1.2
Out-of-home care ^(a)	4.5	0.9

(a) The national rate for out-of-home care excludes the Northern Territory (unknown/missing/not stated data were not provided for 2001–02). It should be noted that, both with the Northern Territory included in, and excluded from, the denominator, the 2004–05 national rate was 0.9%.

Sources: Tables 5.2 and 5.3, AIHW 2004b; and AIHW (unpublished).

- Between 2001–02 and 2004–05, the proportion of children with not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status decreased in both the care and protection and out-of-home care data collections, from 2.7% to 1.2% for children on care and protection orders and from 4.5% to 0.9% for children in out-of-home care.

7.3 Findings in the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b)

The Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) lists five key findings in relation to unknown/missing/not stated Indigenous status in the NCP Data Collection. The key findings are listed below in Box 7.1, followed by an update on current rates and/or current data reporting practices.

Box 7.1: Key findings from the Data quality report for the NCP Data Collection

1. *Data on the number of children and young people with not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status were first collected in 2001–02. Therefore there are no time series data of this kind for Indigenous status; however, these data will now be collected annually.*
2. *The proportion of not known/missing/not stated records decreased from 13% at the point of notification, to 12% at the point of investigation and 7% at substantiations. There were, however, marked variations by jurisdiction, due to differences in practices adopted to identify and record Indigenous status (Table 5.1).*
3. *In Tasmania the proportion of not known/missing/or not stated was higher than other jurisdictions. However, this is probably more a reflection of recording practices than case workers' knowledge of the child's Indigenous status.*
4. *In the data collection for children on care and protection orders there were three jurisdictions with virtually no not known/missing/not stated records for Indigenous status.*
5. *When providing data for the National Child Protection Data Collection to the AIHW, jurisdictions allocate all children with not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status to the non-Indigenous category, as instructed in the counting rules.*

Source: AIHW 2004b.

Update

Not known/missing/not stated data for the National Child Protection Data Collection have been collected and reported to the AIHW annually since the 2001–02 collection period, but have not been published.

Although not known/missing/not stated rates have improved across the majority of jurisdictions in the period from 2002 to 2005 and the size of the differences between jurisdictions has decreased, substantial variations still exist between the states and territories.

The increase seen in the Northern Territory's not known/missing/not stated rates from 2001–02 to 2004–05 is due to data quality improvement rather than a reduction in data quality over that time period.

The proportion of not known/missing/not stated records continued to be higher in Tasmania than other jurisdictions for the investigations and substantiations data. However, in 2005, this was no longer the case for care and protection orders and out-of-home care.

In 2005, the majority of jurisdictions had rates of not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status responses below 1% for children on care and protection orders and for children in out-of-home care.

7.4 Activities to improve Indigenous data quality

This section provides updated information on activities undertaken to improve Indigenous identification in the NCP Data Collection.

The Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) suggested three issues for follow-up in relation to not known/missing/not stated Indigenous status in the NCP Data Collection, listed below in Box 7.2. These issues for follow-up were used by the project team as a guide for gathering information on data quality improvement activities in the NCP Data Collection, both those undertaken since the publication of the Data quality report and those activities that are current or planned.

Box 7.2: Issues for follow-up from the Data quality report for the NCP Data Collection

1. *To reduce variations across jurisdictions it is recommended that child protection workers be encouraged to ask the standard ABS question of clients about Indigenous status. For this to be done effectively staff would need to be supported and trained appropriately.*
2. *Indigenous status should ideally not be recorded¹ at the notification stage of a child protection matter. The quality of the data is questionable, as many notifications are from third parties who do not know the child or family well.*
3. *Indigenous status should be reviewed by the case workers at the substantiation² stage of a child protection matter. One way to do this is to use pop-up screens on the computerised records to automatically prompt staff to check the accuracy of the Indigenous status.*

Source: AIHW 2004b.

Indigenous data quality improvement activities at the national level

In response to the second issue for follow-up, it was reported that a decision has been taken at a national level not to report Indigenous status at the notification level in *Child Protection Australia* and *Report on Government Services*, Chapter 15. Jurisdictions may continue to record Indigenous status at the notification stage.

Additional information on national activities to improve the quality of Indigenous data

The NCPASS Working Group is working towards a best practice statement on the gathering, recording, storing and quality assurance processes of Indigenous status. The paper will also address issues of staff training.

¹ Feedback was received from NCPASS members that the original wording of this issue for follow-up in the data quality report may not have been accurate. Alternative wording has been suggested as follows: 'Indigenous status should ideally not be *reported* at the notification stage of a child protection matter.'

² Feedback was received from NCPASS members that the original wording of this issue for follow-up in the data quality report may not have been accurate. Alternative wording has been suggested as follows: 'Indigenous status should be reviewed by the case workers at the *investigation* stage of a child protection matter.'

Indigenous data quality improvement activities at the jurisdictional level

New South Wales

Issue for follow-up	Comments
1a. <i>Are data on Indigenous status recorded in accordance with the ABS standard?</i>	<p>Data relating to Indigenous status are recorded into the client information system (KiDS) and is in accordance with the ABS standard.</p> <p>In New South Wales, two fields are collected: Indigenous status and Indigenous language group. The values for Indigenous status are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander • Torres Strait Islander • Not Indigenous • Not stated. <p>The Indigenous status field is a mandatory field.</p>
1b. <i>Have appropriate staff training and support systems been introduced to encourage child protection workers to ask the standard ABS question on Indigenous status?</i>	<p>Caseworkers and case managers are all provided with in-service training on the use of the client information system. Training is conducted over a four-day period on the use of the system. The training is provided in a face-to-face classroom situation.</p> <p>In addition, a caseworker development course, consisting of eight modules, is also offered to new staff. One module includes <i>Working with Aboriginal Children and Families</i>.</p>
2. <i>Have steps been taken to discontinue the practice of recording¹ Indigenous status at the notification stage of a child protection matter?</i>	<p>Indigenous status (if it is known) is collected when first contact is made to DoCS. This information is updated if the report is investigated or substantiated.</p>
<p>¹ See: 'Indigenous data quality improvement activities at the national level'.</p>	
3. <i>Have strategies or procedures been implemented to prompt staff to review Indigenous status at the substantiation² stage of a child protection matter?</i>	<p>Indigenous status is held on a person's profile. This is updated by caseworkers during investigation and/or substantiation stages. It is also verified during service provision.</p>
<p>² See: 2nd footnote to Box 7.2.</p>	

Additional information on improving the quality of Indigenous data – New South Wales

The client information system has a data validation file relating to Indigenous status. Data remediation is also conducted to improve the quality of data relating to Indigenous status. Case reviews are another means of improving Indigenous identification.

Victoria

Issue for follow-up	Comments
1a. Are data on Indigenous status recorded in accordance with the ABS standard?	Yes
1b. Have appropriate staff training and support systems been introduced to encourage child protection workers to ask the standard ABS question on Indigenous status?	Staff training and support systems are currently in place and others are planned.
2. Have steps been taken to discontinue the practice of recording ¹ Indigenous status at the notification stage of a child protection matter?	— ¹
¹ See: 'Indigenous data quality improvement activities at the national level'.	
3. Have strategies or procedures been implemented to prompt staff to review Indigenous status at the substantiation ² stage of a child protection matter?	Victoria requires Indigenous status to be reviewed at case closure.
² See: 2nd footnote to Box 7.2.	

Queensland

Issue for follow-up	Comments
1a. Are data on Indigenous status recorded in accordance with the ABS standard?	Yes. Data on Indigenous status will be recorded in accordance with the ABS standard in the new Integrated Client Management System from November 2006. This system will record the Indigenous status of a child, if known, at the earliest stage of the child being known to the Department of Child Safety. The system will identify a need to complete the Indigenous status and not allow the recording of a data field with unknown Indigenous status. This is a mandatory data field. The child's Indigenous status will need to be known prior to the Department engaging the child in any 'strength and needs assessment'.
1b. Have appropriate staff training and support systems been introduced to encourage child protection workers to ask the standard ABS question on Indigenous status?	Appropriate training will be given in two phases before and after implementation of the new Integrated Client Management System.
2. Have steps been taken to discontinue the practice of recording ¹ Indigenous status at the notification stage of a child protection matter?	Steps have not been made to discontinue the recording of the Indigenous status of a child at notification. A question will be asked of the notifier whether any of the subject children are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
¹ See: 'Indigenous data quality improvement activities at the national level'.	
3. Have strategies or procedures been implemented to prompt staff to review Indigenous status at the substantiation ² stage of a child protection matter?	The new Integrated Client Management System will have intelligence built into the system to prompt staff to enter mandatory fields in Releases 4.0 April 2007 and Release 5.0 December 2007. The Indigenous status will be reviewed through child protection practice and procedures through the life of the case management. The officer will be required to review the Indigenous status of a client at each point through the child protection case management system as new and valid information is presented.
² See: 2nd footnote to Box 7.2.	

Additional information on improving the quality of Indigenous data – Queensland

In the development of the new Integrated Client Management System, a Business Reference Group was responsible for the development, design and review of the system. The working group also reviewed the identification of a client's Indigenous status.

The outcome was that each Child Safety Service Centre will be supplied with a Tindal Map to accurately identify the client communities group and language group related to the community group. This should improve the Indigenous identification in the National Child Protection Data Collection.

Western Australia

Issue for follow-up	Comments
1a. <i>Are data on Indigenous status recorded in accordance with the ABS standard?</i>	<p>Western Australia has a small Torres Strait Islander population and its information system collects the following values:</p> <p>Y—Indigenous N— Non-Indigenous U— Indigenous status unknown</p> <p>While there are no plans to modify the existing data collection system to allow differentiation of clients who are Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, this is under consideration for the new client information system being developed.</p>
1b. <i>Have appropriate staff training and support systems been introduced to encourage child protection workers to ask the standard ABS question on Indigenous status?</i>	<p>Staff are trained in cultural awareness and Indigenous issues which assist their identification of Indigenous clients which has flow-on effects (for example adherence to the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle). However, staff are not trained to ask the ABS version of the question at the point of contact for child protection notifications.</p>
2. <i>Have steps been taken to discontinue the practice of recording¹ Indigenous status at the notification stage of a child protection matter?</i>	— ¹
<p>¹ See: 'Indigenous data quality improvement activities at the national level'.</p>	
3. <i>Have strategies or procedures been implemented to prompt staff to review Indigenous status at the substantiation² stage of a child protection matter?</i>	<p>Western Australia is the leading jurisdiction in this regard, and in fact the 'pop-up', which asks staff to review the Indigenous identification of clients with an unknown Indigenous status at the point of substantiation, was a Western Australian initiative.</p>
<p>² See: 2nd footnote to Box 7.2.</p>	

South Australia

Issue for follow-up	Comments
1a. <i>Are data on Indigenous status recorded in accordance with the ABS standard?</i>	<p>The South Australia data systems record the following values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aboriginal• Torres Strait Islander• Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander• Unknown• Other. <p>Although the 'Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander' category is not included as a specific data field, it is inferred.</p> <p>Computer screens have been redesigned to record cultural status, and in that the ABS standard will be used; development work will commence late in 2006.</p>
1b. <i>Have appropriate staff training and support systems been introduced to encourage child protection workers to ask the standard ABS question on Indigenous status?</i>	A staff training program is currently being designed.
2. <i>Have steps been taken to discontinue the practice of recording¹ Indigenous status at the notification stage of a child protection matter?</i>	South Australia will continue to record Indigenous status at the notification stage.
¹ See: 'Indigenous data quality improvement activities at the national level'.	
3. <i>Have strategies or procedures been implemented to prompt staff to review Indigenous status at the substantiation² stage of a child protection matter?</i>	Yes, a pop-up question on the Client Information System at the substantiation screen asks staff to review the cultural status of the child.
² See: 2nd footnote to Box 7.2.	

Issue for follow-up	Comments
1a. <i>Are data on Indigenous status recorded in accordance with the ABS standard?</i>	<p>The standard notification form records Indigenous status in the following way:</p> <p>'Aboriginal yes no.'</p> <p>Compliance with asking this question and recording in the information system is very low. Further, there are limitations in the current information system.</p> <p>The information system uses the following values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander • Other Australian • Overseas • Unknown. <p>This coding does not align with the ABS standard.</p> <p>The ABS question has been implemented into the new information system currently being developed by the Child Protection Service. This question will be mandatory.</p> <p>For children in out-of-home care more detailed information, including Indigenous status according to the ABS standard, is recorded within a separate information system. However, because of current limitations in this information system there are some issues in relation to reporting on this data.</p>
1b. <i>Have appropriate staff training and support systems been introduced to encourage child protection workers to ask the standard ABS question on Indigenous status?</i>	<p>Tasmania has provided staff training on the ABS question in different forums (one-off trainings, part of supervision, regional professional development and induction), however, systems are not in place to encourage ongoing training and development.</p> <p>There is an intention to include the ABS question in the implementation of the new state-wide induction program commencing in July 2006.</p>
2. <i>Have steps been taken to discontinue the practice of recording¹ Indigenous status at the notification stage of a child protection matter?</i>	<p>— ¹</p>
<p>¹ See: 'Indigenous data quality improvement activities at the national level'.</p>	
3. <i>Have strategies or procedures been implemented to prompt staff to review Indigenous status at the substantiation² stage of a child protection matter?</i>	<p>The new information system currently under development (see response to question 1) will prompt staff to review Indigenous status at the substantiation stage.</p>
<p>² See: 2nd footnote to Box 7.2.</p>	

Australian Capital Territory

Issue for follow-up	Comments
1a. <i>Are data on Indigenous status recorded in accordance with the ABS standard?</i>	<p>The Australian Capital Territory records Indigenous status on the central database according to the ABS standard. The codes available are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal • Torres Strait Islander • Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander • Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander • Unknown/not stated. <p>This can be recorded and/or updated at any point onwards from the entry of new client details.</p>
1b. <i>Have appropriate staff training and support systems been introduced to encourage child protection workers to ask the standard ABS question on Indigenous status?</i>	<p>Indigenous cultural awareness training is run several times a year for all new staff. Currently the ABS question is not part of that training, but this change is currently underway.</p>
2. <i>Have steps been taken to discontinue the practice of recording¹ Indigenous status at the notification stage of a child protection matter?</i>	<p>—¹</p>
	<p>¹ See: 'Indigenous data quality improvement activities at the national level'.</p>
3. <i>Have strategies or procedures been implemented to prompt staff to review Indigenous status at the substantiation² stage of a child protection matter?</i>	<p>The document template detailing the investigation and outcome contains a reminder to update the database with any new information and specifically indicates Indigenous status.</p>
	<p>² See: 2nd footnote to Box 7.2.</p>

Northern Territory

Issue for follow-up	Comments
1a. <i>Are data on Indigenous status recorded in accordance with the ABS standard?</i>	<p>The Northern Territory records the following values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander • Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander • Not stated.
1b. <i>Have appropriate staff training and support systems been introduced to encourage child protection workers to ask the standard ABS question on Indigenous status?</i>	<p>Cultural competency training is compulsory for new child protection workers. The identification of Indigenous clients constitutes part of this.</p>
2. <i>Have steps been taken to discontinue the practice of recording¹ Indigenous status at the notification stage of a child protection matter?</i>	<p>The Northern Territory's information system shares a Client Master Index with the entire health system. If a client has an episode of care in ANY government health service (that is, they are born in a public hospital etc) their Indigenous status will most likely be populated already. Indigenous status is CONFIRMED at the commencement of a child protection investigation.</p>
	<p>¹ See: 'Indigenous data quality improvement activities at the national level'.</p>
3. <i>Have strategies or procedures been implemented to prompt staff to review Indigenous status at the substantiation² stage of a child protection matter?</i>	<p>Not at present.</p>
	<p>² See: 2nd footnote to Box 7.2.</p>

Additional information on improving the quality of Indigenous data – Northern Territory

Ongoing steps are being taken to improve Indigenous identification for children in the child protection system in the Northern Territory through cultural competency training.

8 Alcohol and Other Drugs Treatment Services (AODTS) National Minimum Data Set

Background

Since the collection of AODTS data in 2000–01, there have been changes to the collection and reporting of data in the AODTS National Minimum Data Set (NMDS). These changes have implications for the comparison of data collected in 2000–01 (and reported in the 2004 Data quality report) with data collected in 2003–04.

In 2000–01, a mix of client registration³ and treatment episode data⁴ were collected. In the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) AODTS data were reported as ‘client data’. Treatment episode data were collected by three jurisdictions (New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory) and converted to client registration data for publication. This methodology resulted in an under-estimation of actual client numbers in these jurisdictions and nationally as current treatment episodes (without a cessation date) were excluded from the count.

In 2001–02, closed treatment episode data were provided by all jurisdictions except South Australia, and so for consistency, the South Australian data were converted to reflect closed treatment episodes (AIHW 2003). In 2002–03 and 2003–04, the standard counting method across all jurisdictions was closed treatment episodes.

As it is not possible to directly compare changes in the rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status and in the proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander AODTS clients between 2000–01 and 2003–04 (due to the change in counting method), data from the 2001–02 collection period have been included in this chapter where possible. Improvements in or deterioration of the quality of Indigenous data in the AODTS NMDS over time can be deduced from a comparison between 2001–02 and 2003–04 data.

It is important to note that the AODTS NMDS was still a fairly new data collection in 2001–02, with new collection methods likely to affect the data quality. This should be taken into account when interpreting any changes in the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status, as either an increase or a decrease in this rate over time can be a sign of improved practices in Indigenous identification, particularly in the early stages of a data collection.

³ ‘Client registration data’ refers to clients starting new treatment episodes, including clients who are seeking treatment for the first time, are re-registering for treatment after an extended break of more than three months, or have recorded a change in their treatment plan (that is, in their principle drug of concern, treatment delivery setting or main treatment type).

⁴ ‘Closed treatment episode data’ has a defined commencement and cessation date and no change in the client’s treatment plan. It is possible for a client to have multiple concurrent treatment episodes with distinct start and end dates.

Although the AODTS NMDS is considered to be a health-related collection and the AODTS NMDS Working Group reports on matters of data definition to the Health Data Standards Committee and the Statistical Information Management Committee, it is included in this report because it was one of the collections examined in the Data quality report. The items of the collection are approved for inclusion in the *National Health Data Dictionary*.

8.1 Update on analysis results by Indigenous status

This section contains the relevant AODTS NMDS tables from the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b), data from the 2000–01 collection and new tables that provide updated figures for 2003–04. These tables provide information on the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status in each state and territory.

Table 8.1 shows the number and proportion of clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status in the AODTS NMDS for 2000–01. These data are not comparable with the data presented in Table 8.2 and Table 8.3.

Table 8.1: Number and proportion of clients, by Indigenous status, by state and territory^(a), Australia, 2000–01 (Data quality report)

	NSW	Vic	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total ^(b)
Number								
Indigenous	1,725	1,325	1,479	397	92	116	1,099	6,571
Non-Indigenous	23,980	25,518	9,677	4,125	1,165	2,599	1,354	69,896
Missing/not stated	1,689	2,044	953	2,034	129	15	111	7,062
Total	27,394	28,887	12,113	6,556	1,400	2,743	2,564	93,529
Per cent								
Indigenous	6.3	4.6	12.2	6.1	6.6	4.2	42.9	7.9
Non-Indigenous	87.5	88.3	79.9	62.9	83.2	94.8	52.8	83.7
Missing/not stated	6.2	7.1	7.9	31.0	9.2	0.5	4.3	8.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Excludes Queensland.

(b) Includes other National Illicit Drug Strategy Non-Government Organisation Treatment Grants Program (NGOTGP) services not currently reported through a specific state or territory collection.

Source: Table 6.3, AIHW 2004b.

- The proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients was 7.9% nationally in 2000–01.
- The proportion of clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status was 8.5% nationally.
- South Australia had the highest rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status (31.0%) and the Australian Capital Territory had the lowest rate (0.5%) in 2000–01.

Table 8.2 shows the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status for closed treatment episodes in the AODTS NMDS for 2001–02. These data are not comparable with the data presented in Table 8.1, but can be compared with Table 8.3.

Table 8.2: Number and proportion of closed treatment episodes, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, Australia, 2001–02

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia ^(a)
	Number								
Indigenous	2,764	2,281	372	2,211	423	148	164	918	9,615
Non-Indigenous	34,049	38,950	3,754	12,013	5,464	1,473	2,650	1,390	102,071
Missing/not stated	2,535	3,593	25	1,008	1,277	394	10	97	9,183
Total	39,348	44,824	4,151	15,232	7,164	2,015	2,824	2,405	120,869
	Per cent								
Indigenous	7.0	5.1	9.0	14.5	5.9	7.3	5.8	38.2	8.0
Non-Indigenous	86.5	86.9	90.4	78.9	76.3	73.1	93.8	57.8	84.4
Missing/not stated	6.4	8.0	0.6	6.6	17.8	19.6	0.4	4.0	7.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(a) Australia total includes NGOTGP services not currently reported through a state or territory collection.

Source: Table A3.4, AIHW 2003.

- The overall proportion of closed treatment episodes for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients in 2001–02 was 8.0%.
- In 2001–02 the overall rate of closed treatment episodes for clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status was 7.6%.
- There was variation in the rates of missing/not stated data across the states and territories, with the Australian Capital Territory reporting a low rate of 0.4% and Tasmania reporting a higher rate of 19.6%.

Table 8.3 presents the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status for closed treatment episodes in 2003–04. These data are not comparable with Table 8.1, but can be compared with Table 8.2.

Table 8.3: Number and proportion of closed treatment episodes, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, Australia, 2003–04

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
	Number								
Indigenous	4,141	2,827	1,797	1,926	578	147	113	1,709	13,238
Not Indigenous	36,490	40,950	15,504	12,136	6,374	1,790	1,156	938	115,338
Missing/not stated	1,898	3,861	1,165	194	661	420	49	45	8,293
Total	42,529	47,638	18,466	14,256	7,613	2,357	1,318	2,692	136,869
	Per cent								
Indigenous	9.7	5.9	9.7	13.5	7.6	6.2	8.6	63.5	9.7
Not Indigenous	85.8	86.0	84.0	85.1	83.7	75.9	87.7	34.8	84.3
Missing/not stated	4.5	8.1	6.3	1.4	8.7	17.8	3.7	1.7	6.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

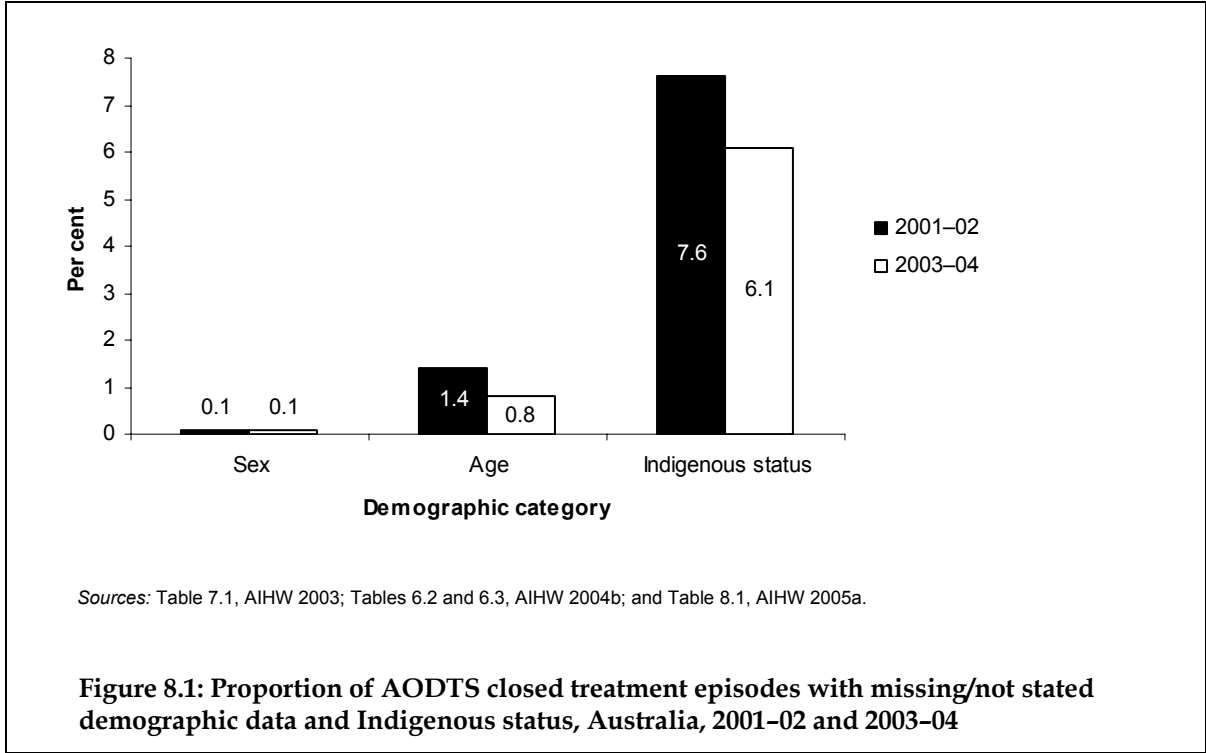
Source: Table A4.4, AIHW 2005a.

- The overall proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander AODTS clients in 2003–04 was 9.7% compared to 8.0% in 2001–02.
- The national missing/not stated Indigenous status rate was 6.1% in 2003–04, compared to 7.6% in 2001–02.
- Tasmania recorded the highest rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status of 17.8%. Western Australia recorded the lowest rate of 1.4%.
- The proportion of closed treatment episodes for clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status increased slightly in Victoria (from 8.0% to 8.1%) and more dramatically in Queensland (from 0.6% to 6.3%) and the Australian Capital Territory (from 0.4% to 3.7%) between 2001–02 and 2003–04. All other jurisdictions recorded a reduction in the rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status over the same period.
- As pointed out earlier in this chapter, the AODTS data collection was in its early stages in 2001–02, and these changes should be interpreted with care—both an increase or a decrease in the missing/not stated rate over time can be a sign of improved practices in Indigenous identification. Also, differences between jurisdictions and across years should be interpreted with care where small jurisdictions are concerned, as large fluctuations in the rates may be expected.

8.2 Changes in the national rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status

This section presents changes in the rates of missing/ not stated demographic data (sex, age and Indigenous status) and for missing/ not stated Indigenous status by age group, between 2001–02 and 2003–04. Table 8.4 also presents the rates reported in the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) for 2000–01 (italicised), however, these figures are included for completeness only and are not comparable to either of the later years.

Figure 8.1 presents the changes in the rates of missing/ not stated Indigenous status by state and territory for 2001–02 and 2003–04.



- The proportion of closed treatment episodes for which Indigenous status and age data were missing/ not stated declined in 2003–04 to 6.1% and 0.8% respectively, compared to 7.6% and 1.4% in 2001–02.
- The proportion of closed treatment episodes for which sex was missing/ not stated remained at 0.1% for 2001–02 and 2003–04.

Table 8.4 presents the overall rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status by age group for client registration data in 2000–01, and for closed treatment episodes in 2001–02 and 2003–04.

Table 8.4: Proportion of missing/not stated Indigenous status, by age group, Australia, 2000–01, 2001–02 and 2003–04^(a)

	10–19	20–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+	Unknown	Total
2000–01	11.4	34.2	27.1	17.0	6.6	2.0	1.8	100.0
2001–02	12.1	33.8	27.2	16.2	6.3	2.3	2.1	100.0
2003–04	11.1	33.7	28.2	16.5	6.6	2.5	1.3	100.0

(a) 2000–01 data are based on client registrations, 2001–02 and 2003–04 data are based on closed treatment episodes.

Sources: Table 6.3, AIHW 2004b; and Table A4.3, AIHW 2005a.

- In 2000–01, the 20–29 year and 30–39 year age groups had the highest proportions of clients with missing/not stated Indigenous status. The rate of missing/not stated Indigenous status declined from age 40 onwards.
- The proportion of closed treatment episodes for which Indigenous status was missing/not stated was highest for the 20–29 year and 30–39 year age groups in both 2001–02 and 2003–04.
- The rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status were reasonably constant in the period from 2001–02 to 2003–04, decreasing slightly from 33.8% to 33.7% in the 20–29 year age group and increasing from 27.2% to 28.2% in the 30–39 year age group, over the two-year period.

8.3 Findings in the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b)

The Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) lists five key findings in relation to missing/not stated Indigenous status in the AODTS NMDS. The key findings are listed below in Box 8.1, followed by an update on current rates and/or current data reporting practices.

Box 8.1: Key findings in the Data quality report for the AODTS NMDS

1. *Of all clients of alcohol and other drug treatment services, 8.5% had a missing/not stated Indigenous status.*
2. *In general, where a client did not provide information on a particular question such as age, sex, or client type, they were also less likely to provide information on their Indigenous status.*
3. *Of all clients with a missing Indigenous identifier, the majority were aged 20–29 years (34%) and 30–39 years (27%). This was also true for both the Indigenous and the non-Indigenous clients. However, below age 20 years and from age 40 years onwards, the age profile of the clients with a missing Indigenous identifier had greater similarities to the age profile of non-Indigenous clients than that of Indigenous clients.*
4. *Clients who were seeking treatment for the drug use of others, or both their own and others' drug use, had higher proportions of missing/not stated Indigenous status than those seeking treatment for their own drug use.*
5. *Within agencies, the higher the proportion of clients who were reported as Indigenous, the lower the proportion with a missing/not stated Indigenous status.*

Source: AIHW 2004b.

Update on data quality and reporting practices

The overall missing/not stated Indigenous status rate was 7.6% in 2001–02 (Table 8.2) and decreased to 6.1% in 2003–04 (Table 8.3). The rate of missing/not stated age also decreased in this period from 1.4% in 2001–02 to 0.8% in 2003–04. There was no change in the rate of missing/not stated sex, which was very low at 0.1%.

The pattern of Indigenous status categories across age groups in 2003–04 was similar to that seen in 2000–01. In 2003–04, the majority of closed treatment episodes for Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients and for clients with a missing/not stated Indigenous status were in the 20–29 and 30–39 year age groups. On the other hand, the age profile for closed treatment episodes for clients aged 10–19 years and aged over 40 years with a missing/not stated Indigenous identifier was similar to the age profile of episodes for non-Indigenous clients (Table 8.4).

8.4 Activities to improve Indigenous data quality

This section provides updated information on activities undertaken to improve Indigenous identification in the AODTS National Minimum Data Set.

The Data quality report (AIHW 2004b) suggested four issues for follow-up in relation to missing/not stated Indigenous status in the AODTS NMDS, listed below in Box 8.2. These issues for follow-up were used by the project team as a guide for gathering information on data quality improvement activities in the AODTS NMDS, both those undertaken since the publication of the Data quality report and those activities that are current or planned.

Box 8.2: Issues for follow-up from the Data quality report for the AODTS NMDS

1. *Missing/not stated Indigenous records are sometimes part of a broader pattern where other demographic data on clients are also missing. In these cases general efforts to improve the collection of demographic information from clients are likely to increase the Indigenous identification rate.*
2. *Agencies with a low proportion of clients who identified as Indigenous were more likely to report missing/not stated Indigenous status. It is expected that the efforts made by the jurisdictions to encourage service providers to ask the standard ABS question on Indigenous status will result in an increase in the level of Indigenous identification.*
3. *Some agencies had higher rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status than others. Follow-up work is being undertaken to alert those agencies so that they can then explore ways to increase the level of Indigenous identification in their agency.*
4. *It is suggested that, when available, the rate of missing/not stated records in the 2001–02 data set be examined and compared with the data in this report, to ascertain whether the rate has decreased.*

Source: AIHW 2004b.

Issue for follow-up 1

Has the collection of demographic data in general improved since the release of the 2004 Data quality report?

The collection of demographic data, including Indigenous status, continues to improve in each year of the AODTS NMDS collection. The proportion of 'not stated' responses for Indigenous status has fallen from 8.5% in 2000–01 (client data), through 7.6% in 2001–02, to 6.1% in 2003–04 (episode data). Similar improvements have been seen in most other demographic data items.

Issue for follow-up 2

Have steps been taken to encourage service providers to ask the standard ABS question on Indigenous status?

The standard ABS question on Indigenous status is included in all collection materials for the AODTS NMDS collection.

Issue for follow-up 3

Have steps been taken to increase the Indigenous identification rate of specific agencies with higher rates of missing/ not stated Indigenous status?

Jurisdictions continue to promote the need for high quality data through the provision of data guides and other collection materials, training and information forums. Agencies with

higher rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status have not been specifically targeted in these efforts.

Additional information related to data quality

Has other work been undertaken, or is other work planned, to improve Indigenous identification in the AODTS NMDS?

The issue of Indigenous identification continues to be of high importance to the AODTS NMDS Working Group, and is discussed in the context of overall data quality at each annual Working Group meeting. As part of the annual data return to the AIHW, jurisdictions provide a report on the quality of data reported for Indigenous status and the acceptability or need for improvement of these data.

A number of jurisdictions routinely send out reminders to data providers about checking all data items before submitting data for the AODTS NMDS return and all jurisdictions have strategies in place for monitoring the levels of 'not stated' responses and asking agencies to resubmit their data wherever possible.

In Tasmania, the importance of high quality data on Indigenous status has been recognised in the Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Aboriginal Data Improvement Project. This project was an extension of the 2002 Data Improvement Project that was developed under the auspices of the Australian Bureau of Statistics. It has resulted in a DHHS Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Strategic Plan (AHWSP) (available at the website <www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/agency/pro/aboriginalhealth/index.php>). Improving data quality is a priority in the AHWSP and as a result an Aboriginal Project Officer was employed in 2004 for six months, later extended to 12 months, to implement the DHHS Aboriginal Data Improvement Project. The project updated action plans from priority service areas within DHHS and then developed and implemented a training program. Cultural awareness training was also provided to explain why accurate data were important. It is envisaged that all sites will be revisited annually with updated training. Data improvement will be an ongoing project of the Aboriginal Health Unit.

Other comments related to the quality of Indigenous status data in the AODTS NMDS

Reported AODTS NMDS numbers do not include the majority of Australian government-funded Indigenous substance use services or Aboriginal primary health care services that also provide treatment for alcohol and other drug problems. These services are generally not under the jurisdiction of the state or territory health authority and are not included in the specific program under which the Australian Government currently reports AODTS NMDS data.

The AODTS NMDS Working Group's current work plan includes the goal of improving comparability between all of these collections. The AODTS NMDS annual report presents a selection of data from the Drug and Alcohol Service Report (DASR) and Service Activity Reporting (SAR) collections that describe the above services.

The issue of Indigenous identification and data quality was recently highlighted in an AIHW report reviewing data collections relating to drug use among Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. The AODTS NMDS Working Group was represented on the Advisory Group for this project.

In 2000-01, the majority of Australian Government-funded Indigenous substance use services and Aboriginal primary health services that provide substance use services, along with most National Illicit Drug Strategy Non-Government Organisation Treatment Grants Program (NGOTGP) services, were not included in the data set (AIHW 2004b).

The Indigenous substance use services and the Aboriginal primary health care services that also provide treatment for alcohol and other drug problems routinely report to the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, through the DASR and SAR.

The AODTS NMDS identifies the number of agencies reporting to the AODTS NMDS collection as well as the SAR and DASR. The number of these agencies reporting in the AODTS NMDS is quite low:

- in 2001–02, five out of 43 Australian Government -funded Indigenous substance use services and seven out of 133 Aboriginal primary health care services that also provide treatment for alcohol and other drug problems provided data to the AODTS NMDS (AIHW 2003).
- in 2003–04, three out of 42 Australian Government-funded Indigenous substance use services and six out of 140 Aboriginal primary health care services that provide treatment for alcohol and other drug problems, provided data to the AODTS NMDS (AIHW 2005a).

Therefore, the number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients in the AODTS NMDS under-represents the total number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Australians who received treatment for alcohol and other drug problems during 2001–02 and 2003–04.

In 2003–04 the total number of agencies represented increased, with the inclusion of all NGOTGP services.

9 Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set

Background

The Juvenile Justice NMDS was developed during 2000 and 2001, with field and pilot testing occurring in 2002 and 2003. The first national report, *Juvenile justice in Australia 2000–01 to 2003–04*, was published early in 2006.

Information on Indigenous status has been collected since the implementation of the national data collection, although some differences still exist in how jurisdictions collect the information. Not all jurisdictions use the recommended national standard question and standard codes for collecting Indigenous status. Of those jurisdictions that do not use the complete ABS standard, most are currently taking steps to rectify this.

9.1 Update on analysis results by Indigenous status

This section presents analyses of unknown/not stated Indigenous status in the JJ NMDS for 2000–01 and 2003–04. These data are reported by age, sex, state and territory and episode type.

Age and sex

Table 9.1 shows the rates of young people aged 10 years and over under juvenile justice supervision for 2000–01 and 2003–04.

Table 9.1: Number and proportion of young people under juvenile justice supervision, by Indigenous status and age, Australia, 2000–01 and 2003–04

Indigenous status	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18+	Total
2000–01										
Number										
Indigenous	11	35	115	257	457	687	838	858	603	3,861
Non-Indigenous	8	31	71	262	692	1,215	1,872	1,998	1,678	7,827
Missing/not stated	1	11	7	43	85	196	296	427	554	1,620
Total	20	77	193	562	1,234	2,098	3,006	3,283	2,835	13,318
Per cent										
Indigenous	55.0	45.5	59.6	45.7	37.0	32.7	27.9	26.1	21.3	29.0
Non-Indigenous	40.0	40.3	36.8	46.6	56.1	57.9	62.3	60.9	59.2	58.8
Missing/not stated	5.0	14.3	3.6	7.7	6.9	9.3	9.8	13.0	19.5	12.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
2003–04										
Number										
Indigenous	14	63	123	311	502	720	854	840	699	4,126
Non-Indigenous	9	36	84	264	633	1,183	1,780	1,904	1,832	7,725
Missing/not stated	2	10	21	37	94	163	204	253	353	1,137
Total	25	109	228	612	1,229	2,066	2,838	2,997	2,884	12,992
Per cent										
Indigenous	56.0	57.8	53.9	50.8	40.8	34.8	30.1	28.0	24.2	31.8
Non-Indigenous	36.0	33.0	36.8	43.1	51.5	57.3	62.7	63.5	63.5	59.5
Missing/not stated	8.0	9.2	9.2	6.0	7.6	7.9	7.2	8.4	12.2	8.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Notes

1. Percentages in the total column are based on total minus unknowns. There was a total of 10 unknowns in 2000–01 and a total of 4 in 2003–04.
2. Age is calculated as at 1 January 2004.
3. Australian Capital Territory data are only available for 2003–04.

Source: Tables 3.8 and A10, AIHW 2006d.

- In 2000–01 and 2003–04, there were higher proportions of young people who were reported as being Indigenous than non-Indigenous in the 10 to 12 year age groups. In 2003–04, this was also true for the 13-year age group.
- Between 2000–01 and 2003–04, the proportion of juvenile justice clients with a missing/not stated Indigenous status decreased in most age groups.
- The 18+ year age group had the highest proportion of missing/not stated Indigenous status in both 2000–01 (19.5%) and 2003–04 (12.2%).

Table 9.2 shows the rates of young males and females under juvenile justice supervision for 2000–01 and 2003–04.

Table 9.2: Number and proportion of young people under juvenile justice supervision, by sex and Indigenous status, 2000–01 and 2003–04

	Male	Female	Total
2000–01			
		Number	
Indigenous	3,075	781	3,856
Non-Indigenous	6,648	1,180	7,828
Unknown	1,359	257	1,616
Total	11,082	2,218	13,318
		Per cent	
Indigenous	27.7	35.2	29.0
Non-Indigenous	60.0	53.2	58.8
Unknown	12.3	11.6	12.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
2003–04			
		Number	
Indigenous	3,302	821	4,123
Non-Indigenous	6,612	1,113	7,725
Unknown	918	213	1,131
Total	10,832	2,147	12,992
		Per cent	
Indigenous	30.5	38.2	31.7
Non-Indigenous	61.0	51.9	59.5
Unknown	8.5	9.9	8.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Notes

1. Percentages calculated from total minus unknowns. There was a total of 18 unknowns in 2000–01 and 13 in 2003–04.

2. Australian Capital Territory data are only available for 2003–04.

Source: Adapted from Tables 3.10 and A16, AIHW 2006d.

- The proportion of males and females under juvenile justice supervision who were reported as being Indigenous increased in the period 2000–01 to 2003–04, from 27.7% to 30.5% for males and from 35.2% to 38.2% for females.
- In 2000–01, 12.3% of males and 11.6% of females under juvenile justice supervision had no recorded Indigenous status. This proportion decreased to 8.5% and 9.9% for males and females respectively in 2003–04.

State and territory

Table 9.3 presents the rates of young people under juvenile justice supervision in each state and territory for 2000–01.

Table 9.3: Number and proportion of young people under juvenile justice supervision, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, Australia, 2000–01

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	Total
Number								
Indigenous	1,073	164	1,237	809	313	33	234	3,863
Non-Indigenous	1,885	1,957	1,930	806	941	203	110	7,832
Missing/not stated	825	1	74	283	130	307	3	1,623
Total	3,783	2,122	3,241	1,898	1,384	543	347	13,318
Per cent								
Indigenous	28.4	7.7	38.2	42.6	22.6	6.1	67.4	29.0
Non-Indigenous	49.8	92.2	59.6	42.5	68.0	37.4	31.7	58.8
Missing/not stated	21.8	0.1	2.3	14.9	9.4	56.5	0.9	12.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Notes

1. Australia totals do not include Australian Capital Territory data which were only available for 2003–04.
2. The Department of Health and Human Services, Tasmania has reported that the Indigenous data for Tasmania may not be reliable due to limitations in the reporting capabilities of the information system.

Source: Table A7, AIHW 2006d.

- Nationally, the proportion of clients under juvenile justice supervision who were reported as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin in 2000–01 was 29.0%.
- Across the states and territories this proportion ranged from 6.1% in Tasmania to 67.4% in the Northern Territory.
- In 2000–01, the percentage of young people under juvenile justice supervision with missing/not stated Indigenous status ranged from 0.1% in Victoria to 56.5% in Tasmania.
- The Northern Territory also recorded a missing/not stated rate of less than 1% (0.9%).

Table 9.4 presents the rates of young people in each state and territory under juvenile justice supervision for 2003–04.

Table 9.4: Number and proportion of young people under juvenile justice supervision, by Indigenous status, by state and territory, Australia, 2003–04

Indigenous status	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
Number									
Indigenous	1,125	183	1,128	952	364	71	51	254	4,128
Non-Indigenous	2,096	1,707	1,670	637	843	420	284	70	7,727
Missing/not stated	302	—	2	234	111	486	1	1	1,137
Total	3,523	1,890	2,800	1,823	1,318	977	336	325	12,992
Per cent									
Indigenous	31.9	9.7	40.3	52.2	27.6	7.3	15.2	78.2	31.8
Non-Indigenous	59.5	90.3	59.6	34.9	64.0	43.0	84.5	21.5	59.5
Missing/not stated	8.6	—	0.1	12.8	8.4	49.7	0.3	0.3	8.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The Department of Health and Human Services, Tasmania has reported that the Indigenous data for Tasmania may not be reliable due to limitations in the reporting capabilities of the information system.

Source: Table 3.6, AIHW 2006d.

- Nationally, the percentage of young people in juvenile justice supervision who were reported as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin in 2003–04 was 31.8%.
- Across the states and territories the percentage ranged from 7.3% in Tasmania to 78.2% in the Northern Territory.
- The proportion of juvenile justice clients who were reported as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin increased in all jurisdictions in the period between 2000–01 and 2003–04.
- In 2003–04, across the states and territories the percentage of young people with missing/not stated Indigenous status ranged from 0% in Victoria to 49.7% in Tasmania (Table 9.4). Queensland (0.1%), the Australian Capital Territory (0.3%) and the Northern Territory (0.3%) also reported rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status close to zero.
- The rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status improved in all jurisdictions in the period from 2000–01 to 2003–04, with the largest improvement observed in New South Wales (from 21.8% to 8.6%).

Episode type

Table 9.5 shows the proportions of supervision periods containing each pre-sentence or sentenced episode type for 2003–04.

A supervision period provides broad-level information on contacts between young people and juvenile justice departments, and episodes provide the detail regarding the length and type of that contact. Supervision periods may consist of one continuous or multiple contiguous episodes.

An episode is defined as:

A period of time during which a juvenile justice young person is under the supervision of, or is case managed by, a state or territory juvenile justice department, as a result of having committed or allegedly committed an offence, and *where there is no change in the type of supervision provided or the specific Juvenile Justice agency responsible* (AIHW 2006d).

Episodes provide a view of the highest known category of supervision, including both pre-sentence and sentenced community- and detention-based supervision.

The NMDS will only record a young person as being on one episode at a time. If a young person is subject to more than one type of supervision simultaneously, the highest episode according to a hierarchy is recorded by the NMDS. The hierarchy contains 12 possible episode types, with Sentenced-detention at the highest level. This means that all Sentenced-detention episodes will be recorded on the NMDS, but episode types lower down the hierarchy may not be recorded.

It should be noted that the NMDS reports on supervision periods and episodes, and that these are not equivalent to, nor can they be interpreted as, a count of court orders for young people.

Table 9.5: Supervision periods, by episode type and Indigenous status, Australia, 2003–04 (per cent)

Episode type	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Unknown
Pre-sentence			
Community	5.3	10.2	3.1
Detention	64.3	45.7	15.7
Sentenced			
Community	42.1	53.2	81.0
Detention	10.0	8.0	3.4
Other	8.8	6.7	7.6

Notes

1. Data on unsupervised bail are not collected in the NMDS.
2. Column percentages will not add to 100% because each supervision period may contain more than one episode type.
3. Queensland is excluded from pre-sentence categories as no data were available for supervised bail episodes.
4. Tasmania is excluded from pre-sentence categories as data were unavailable.
5. Other includes: immediate release or suspended detention, parole or supervised released, home detention, other sentenced episode type.

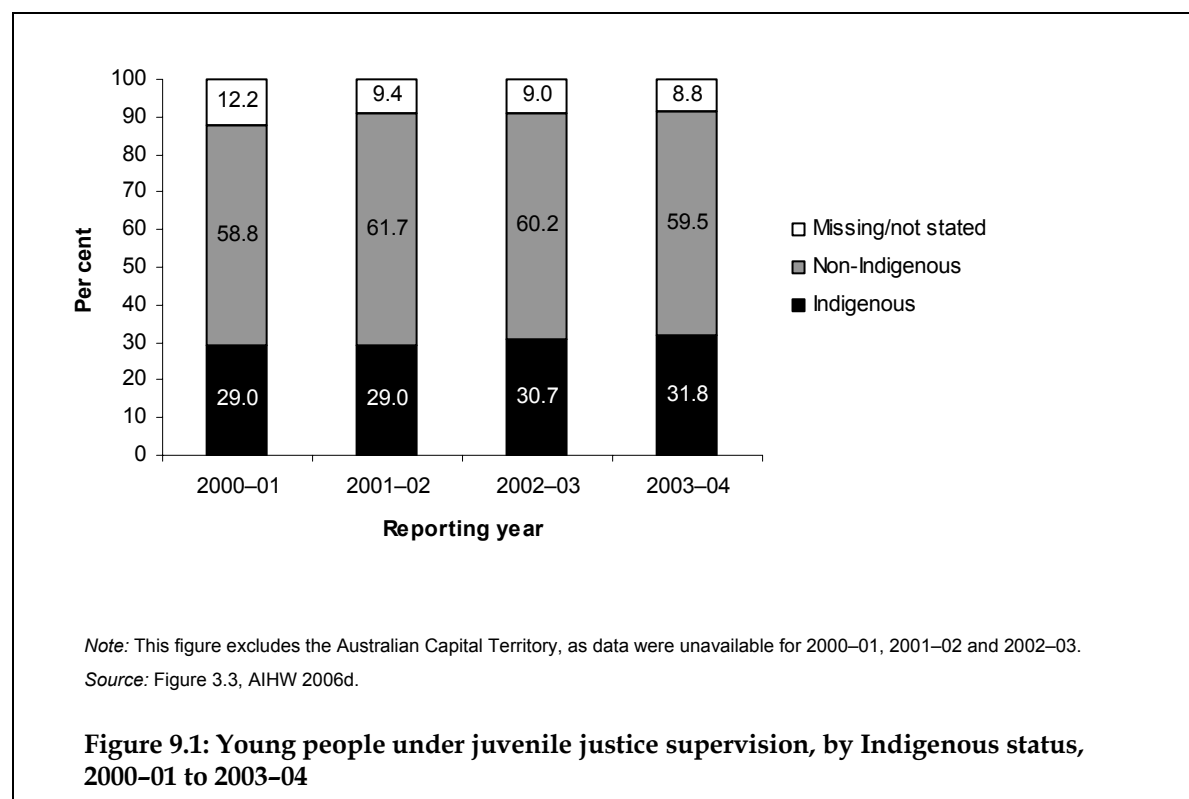
Source: Adapted from Table 4.20, AIHW 2006d.

- In 2003–04, for both those juvenile justice clients who were reported as being Indigenous and for non-Indigenous clients, the majority of supervision periods contained sentenced community (42.1% and 53.2% respectively) or pre-sentence detention (64.3% and 45.7% respectively) episode types.

- There was a particularly high proportion of supervision periods containing sentenced community-based episodes for clients with missing/ not stated Indigenous status (81.0%).

9.2 Changes in the national rates of missing/not stated Indigenous status

Figure 9.1 shows the proportions of Indigenous clients, non-Indigenous clients and clients whose Indigenous status was unknown, across the four years of the JJ NMDS, from 2000-01 to 2003-04.



- The proportion of young people who were reported as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin increased from 29% to 31.8% between 2000-01 and 2003-04.
- Between 2000-01 and 2003-04, the proportion of young people with missing/ not stated Indigenous status decreased from 12.2% to 8.8%.

9.3 Activities to improve Indigenous data quality

This section provides information on the progress made by jurisdictions to improve Indigenous identification in the Juvenile Justice NMDS, with particular reference to adopting the standard ABS question on Indigenous status.

The Juvenile Justice NMDS was not included in the Data quality report (AIHW 2004b), as the collection was in its development phase at the time. However, since the inception of the JJ NMDS, efforts have been made by all jurisdictions to collect good quality Indigenous data. In order to report good quality Indigenous data at a national level it is important for jurisdictions to adopt the national standard for the collection of Indigenous status – the ABS Standard for Indigenous Status.

Jurisdictional reports on collecting Indigenous status in the JJ NMDS

The following table outlines whether the jurisdictions use the standard ABS codes for Indigenous status, whether clients self-identify or are identified by another person, such as a relative or receiving officer, and any other comments relating to Indigenous identification in that jurisdiction.

Table 9.6: Jurisdictional reports to the Juvenile Justice Data Sub-Committee on developments in Indigenous status reporting, 2006

Jurisdiction	ABS standard codes	Identification method	Comments
NSW	Y	Self	NSW reports that the standard ABS question is used to collect Indigenous status information.
Vic	Y	Self	In the 2000–01 to 2003–04 collection, clients in Vic were unable to identify as both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Vic reports that it is now compliant with the ABS standard codes.
Qld	Y	Self	In Qld, the standard ABS question is used to collect Indigenous status information.
WA	N	Self	WA is committed to collecting Indigenous status based on the standard ABS question and is taking steps to achieve this.
SA	Y*	Self	SA also allows clients to identify at the clan level. These classifications can be collapsed to fit the standard ABS categories for Indigenous status, for reporting purposes.
Tas	Y	Self	In the first NMDS (2000–01 to 2003–04) Tas did not follow the ABS standard codes. However, it reports it is now compliant with the ABS standard codes.
ACT	Y	Self/Other	The ACT uses a fairly inconsistent mix of self-identification and identification of clients by another person. The ACT reports compliance in the use of the ABS standard codes for Indigenous status. The ACT, however, reports that due to limitations in the community based data systems and the processes for the entry of data, there is potential for inaccuracy in community based records. These processes and associated forms are being updated to further ensure compliance.
NT	Y	Self	The NT advises that the recording of Indigenous status is fairly accurate in the detention system, but more inaccurate in the community system. The current practice is for clients to self-identify, but previously clients have been identified by the receiving officer. A comparison between the two modes of identification found comparability of 98%.

* In some instances only the two categories 'Indigenous' and 'non-Indigenous' are collected, resulting in an inability to report the standard codes.

Further comments on the quality of Indigenous status data in the JJ NMDS

The Community Services Integration and Linkage Unit at the AIHW is currently collecting the data for 2004–05.

For the recently released report on *Juvenile justice in Australia 2000–01 to 2003–04* (AIHW 2006d), categories have been collapsed into 'Indigenous/non-Indigenous/not known or not recorded', due to the inconsistency between jurisdictions on the methods of obtaining and recording information on this data item (see Table 9.6).

Jurisdictions will continue to work towards collecting Indigenous status according to the ABS standard. Until such a time as all jurisdictions are compliant with the ABS standard, Indigenous status reporting will be by Indigenous/non-Indigenous categories.

Appendix A: Example of feedback template

This appendix provides an example of the feedback template used to gather the information presented in Section 4, 'Activities to improve Indigenous data quality', of each chapter.

Example of feedback template

HACC MDS

Issues for follow-up	Details of activities	Completed	Current	Planned
	(Please complete)	(Check relevant box/es)		
1. Have steps been taken to increase the rate of identification of Indigenous clients who receive delivered home meals, centre nursing, home nursing and social support?				
2. Have steps been taken to improve the very high usage rates of specific age groups of Indigenous people in the HACC data collection, for example, by correcting software coding problems?				
3. Has other work been undertaken, or is other work planned, to improve Indigenous identification in the HACC data collection?				

Other comments:

Appendix B: METeOR standard definition for Indigenous status

This appendix contains the METeOR (Metadata Online Registry) standard definition for Indigenous status. This definition is the national standard, endorsed by both National Health Information Group (NHIG) and National Community Services Information Management Group (NCSIMG), for use in the collection and reporting of Indigenous status information. The standard contains the recommended ABS question for the collection of Indigenous status.

Person—Indigenous status, code N

Identifying and definitional attributes

<i>Metadata item type:</i>	Data element
<i>Short name:</i>	Indigenous status
<i>METeOR identifier:</i>	291036
<i>Registration status:</i>	NHIG, Standard 04/05/2005 NCSIMG, Standard 25/08/2005
<i>Definition:</i>	Whether a person identifies as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, as represented by a code. This is in accord with the first two of three components of the Commonwealth definition.
<i>Data element concept:</i>	Person – Indigenous status
<i>Value domain:</i>	Indigenous status code N

Collection and usage attributes

Collection methods: The standard question for Indigenous Status is as follows:

[Are you] [Is the person] [Is (name)] of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

(For persons of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, mark both 'Yes' boxes.)

No.....

Yes, Aboriginal.....

Yes, Torres Strait Islander.....

This question is recommended for self-enumerated or interview-based collections. It can also be used in circumstances where a close relative, friend, or another member of the household is answering on behalf of the subject. It is strongly recommended that this question be asked directly wherever possible.

When someone is not present, the person answering for them should be in a position to do so, i.e. this person must know well the person about whom the question is being asked and feel confident to provide accurate information about them.

This question must always be asked regardless of data collectors' perceptions based on appearance or other factors.

The Indigenous status question allows for more than one response. The procedure for coding multiple responses is as follows:

If the respondent marks 'No' and either 'Aboriginal' or 'Torres Strait Islander', then the response should be coded to either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander as indicated (i.e. disregard the 'No' response).

If the respondent marks both the 'Aboriginal' and 'Torres Strait

Islander' boxes, then their response should be coded to 'Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Origin'.

If the respondent marks all three boxes ('No', 'Aboriginal' and 'Torres Strait Islander'), then the response should be coded to 'Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Origin' (i.e. disregard the 'No' response).

This approach may be problematical in some data collections, for example, when data are collected by interview or using screen-based data capture systems. An additional response category

Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander...

may be included if this better suits the data collection practices of the agency or establishment concerned.

Comments:

The following definition, commonly known as 'The Commonwealth Definition', was given in a High Court judgement in the case of *Commonwealth v Tasmania* (1983) 46 ALR 625:

'An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is a person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives'.

There are three components to the Commonwealth definition:

- descent
- self-identification
- community acceptance.

In practice, it is not feasible to collect information on the community acceptance part of this definition in general purpose statistical and administrative collections and therefore standard questions on Indigenous status relate to descent and self-identification only.

Source and reference attributes

Origin:

National Health Data Committee

National Community Services Data Committee

Reference documents:

Australian Bureau of Statistics 1999. *Standards for social, labour and demographic variables. Cultural diversity variables*, Canberra. Viewed 3 August 2005.

Relational attributes

<i>Related metadata references:</i>	Supersedes Person – Indigenous status, code N NHIG, Superseded 04/05/2005
<i>Implementation in Data set specifications:</i>	Acute coronary syndrome (clinical) Data Set Specification (DSS) NHIG, Superseded 07/12/2005
	Acute coronary syndrome (clinical) DSS NHIG, Standard 07/12/2005
	Admitted patient care NMDS NHIG, Superseded 07/12/2005
	Admitted patient care NMDS 2006–2007 NHIG, Standard 07/12/2005
	Admitted patient care NMDS 2007–2008 NHIG, Candidate 28/07/2006
	Admitted patient mental health care NMDS NHIG, Superseded 07/12/2005
	Admitted patient mental health care NMDS NHIG, Standard 07/12/2005
	Admitted patient palliative care NMDS NHIG, Superseded 07/12/2005
	Admitted patient palliative care NMDS 2006–2007 NHIG, Standard 07/12/2005
	Admitted patient palliative care NMDS 2007–08 NHIG, Candidate 28/07/2006
	Alcohol and other drug treatment services NMDS NHIG, Superseded 21/03/2006
	Alcohol and other drug treatment services NMDS NHIG, Standard 21/03/2006
	Cardiovascular disease (clinical) DSS NHIG, Standard 01/03/2005
	Community mental health care 2004-2005 NHIG, Superseded 08/12/2004
	Community mental health care NMDS 2005–2006 NHIG, Superseded 07/12/2005
	Community mental health care NMDS 2006–2007 NHIG, Standard 07/12/2005
	Computer Assisted Telephone Interview demographic module DSS NHIG, Standard 04/05/2005

Information specific to this data set

For data collection using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) the suggested questions are:

Q.1 Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

Yes – go to Q.2

No – no more questions

Q.2 Are you of Aboriginal origin, Torres Strait Islander origin, or both?

Aboriginal

Torres Strait Islander

Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Diabetes (clinical) DSS NHIG, Superseded 21/09/2005

Diabetes (clinical) DSS NHIG, Standard 21/09/2005

Health care client identification DSS NHIG, Standard 04/05/2005

Non-admitted patient emergency department care NMDS NHIG, Superseded 24/03/2006

Non-admitted patient emergency department care NMDS NHIG, Standard 24/03/2006

Non-admitted patient emergency department care NMDS NHIG, Superseded 07/12/2005

Perinatal NMDS NHIG, Superseded 07/12/2005

Perinatal NMDS NHIG, Superseded 06/09/2006

Perinatal NMDS NHIG, Standard 06/09/2006

Residential mental health care NMDS 2005–2006 NHIG, Superseded 07/12/2005

Residential mental health care NMDS 2006–2007 NHIG, Standard 07/12/2005

Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACAT	Aged Care Assessment Team
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AHWSP	Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Strategic Plan
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
AODTS	Alcohol and Other Drugs Treatment Services (National Minimum Data Set)
CACP	Community Aged Care Packages
CSTDA	Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement (National Minimum Data Set)
DASR	Drug and Alcohol Service Report
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services (Tasmania)
DoHA	Department of Health and Ageing
DSS	Data Set Specification
FaCSIA	(Department of) Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
HACC	Home and Community Care (Minimum Data Set)
JJ	Juvenile Justice (National Minimum Data Set)
MDS	Minimum Data Set
NCP	National Child Protection (Data Collection)
NCPASS	National Child Protection and Support Services (Working Group)
NCSDD	National Community Services Data Dictionary
NCSIMG	National Community Services Information Management Group
NDC	National Data Collection
NGOTGP	(National Illicit Drug Strategy) Non-Government Organisation Treatment Grants Program
NHDD	National Health data Dictionary
NHIG	National Health Information Group
NCSIMG	National Community Services Information Management Group
NMDS	National Minimum Data Set
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
Qld	Queensland
RACS	Residential Aged Care Services (Data Collection)
SA	South Australia
SAAP	Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (National Data Collection)
SAR	Service Activity Reporting
Tas	Tasmania

Vic	Victoria
WA	Western Australia

Symbols used in tables

..	Not applicable
–	Nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)
n.a.	Not available for publication

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