



Community housing in Australia 2005–06

Findings from the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement data

Highlights

In Australia during 2005–06:

- ✦ Community housing represented approximately 8% of all Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) funded dwellings.
- ✦ There were a total of 1,115 community housing organisations managing a total of 31,584 community housing dwellings.
- ✦ A small proportion of organisations (3%) managed a large proportion of dwellings (43%).
- ✦ Organisations managing less than 20 dwellings were the most common.
- ✦ On average, organisations managed 28 dwellings.
- ✦ On average, dwellings contained 2.3 bedrooms per dwelling.
- ✦ The highest proportion of community housing was located in major cities (47% of organisations and 61% of dwellings).

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Introduction

Community housing is an important and growing sector within Australia's housing services. Better information on community housing will assist program managers and policy-makers across Australia to understand how community housing is meeting the demand for affordable housing by generating a diverse range of housing options.

This bulletin summarises the main findings from the 2005–06 Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) community housing trial collection of unit record level dwelling and organisation administrative data. Administrative data is information stored in state and territory information systems. Data for this collection were received from all jurisdictions except the Australian Capital Territory which was unable to supply data due to data quality issues. In addition, the number of variables provided by participating jurisdictions varied.

Please note that the total number of community housing organisations and dwellings reported in this briefing may differ from the number reported in the 2005–06 CSHA national data report. This is due to a number of factors including survey response rates, administrative system updates and differences in reporting of particular records such as those for boarding houses.

Social housing under the CSHA

During 2005–06 there were a total of 393,201 dwellings funded under the CSHA across Australia. Community housing dwellings represented approximately 8% of these dwellings, with a total of 31,584 community housing dwellings (Table 1).

The majority (87%) of CSHA-funded social housing dwellings in Australia in the 2005–06 period were public housing dwellings (333,968 dwellings). This was followed by community housing dwellings (8%) (excluding the Australian Capital Territory), State Owned and Managed Indigenous Housing (SOMIH) dwellings (3%) (excluding the Australian Capital Territory) and those dwellings funded under the Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) (2%).

The number of dwellings varies between jurisdictions and across program type. The Northern Territory had the greatest proportion of dwellings for public housing, Victoria had the greatest proportion of dwellings funded under the CAP (5%) and Western Australia had the highest proportion of both SOMIH and community housing dwellings (6% and 10% respectively).

Table 1: Proportion of dwellings across program type by jurisdiction, 2005–06

| Program type | NSW | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | NT | Australia ^(a) |
|------------------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Public housing | 87.1 | 87.0 | 84.0 | 82.4 | 87.3 | 92.3 | 96.2 | 86.8 |
| SOMIH | 2.9 | 1.7 | 4.9 | 6.0 | 3.7 | 2.8 | .. | 3.3 |
| Community housing | 9.0 | 6.2 | 9.2 | 10.3 | 8.5 | 3.9 | 1.6 | 8.0 |
| Crisis Accommodation Program | 1.0 | 5.1 | 1.8 | 1.3 | 0.5 | 1.0 | 2.2 | 1.9 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>100.0</i> | <i>100.0</i> | <i>100.0</i> | <i>100.0</i> | <i>100.0</i> | <i>100.0</i> | <i>100.0</i> | <i>100.0</i> |
| Total (number) | 141,555 | 74,480 | 59,017 | 37,634 | 51,356 | 12,644 | 5,603 | 393,201 |

.. not applicable

(a) Australia data includes the ACT where administrative data was available. This covers public housing and the Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP). The total includes 10,852 public housing dwellings and 60 CAP dwellings in the ACT.

Sources: AIHW 2007a; AIHW 2007b; AIHW 2006b; AIHW 2006c.

Community housing

Community housing, along with public rental housing, is part of the social housing sector and provides housing assistance on a basis which is respectful of tenants rights, including opportunities for participatory management, and construction of links with community development (AIHW 2006a). Community housing organisations manage the provision of housing assistance and are not-for-profit organisations that provide safe, secure, affordable and appropriate rental housing. Community housing organisations include housing cooperatives, housing associations and other community service organisations.

The Community Housing Federation of Australia (CHFA) is the national peak organisation representing the views of community housing providers in Australia. Their purpose is to ensure community housing develops as a viable housing option providing quality housing services to tenants. In addition, there are active peak bodies in each state and territory working on behalf of community housing providers (CHFA 2007).

There is considerable variation in the way community housing operates in each jurisdiction. Organisation and dwelling information may vary significantly because of the policy and program environment and the nature of the sector. Consequently, the number of community housing organisations and dwellings differs across jurisdictions.

How many organisations are there?

During the 2005–06 period, there were a total of 1,115 community housing organisations funded under the CSHA operating across Australia. These organisations managed a total of 31,584 community housing dwellings. Seventy-seven per cent of all organisations managed approximately 20% of all dwellings, while just 3% of organisations managed 43% of all dwellings (Table 2).

- ♦ The largest number of community housing organisations were located in Queensland (331 organisations). This was followed by New South Wales (225 organisations), Western Australia (191 organisations), Victoria (182 organisations) and South Australia (119 organisations) (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Number of community housing organisations by jurisdiction, 2005–06

How big are organisations?

There were a total of 1,115 organisations in Australia during the 2005–06 period managing a total of 31,584 dwellings, giving an average size of approximately 28 dwellings per organisation (Table 2). The greatest proportion (77%) of organisations managed less than 20 dwellings. The size of organisations varies between jurisdictions.

- Across all jurisdictions, organisations managing less than 20 dwellings were the most common, ranging from 100% in the Northern Territory to 60% in South Australia.
- Organisations managing between 20 and 49 dwellings were the next most common organisation size, ranging from 27% in South Australia to 6% of organisations in Tasmania.
- Organisations managing between 50 and 99 dwellings and 100 and 199 dwellings were less common in all jurisdictions and those managing 200 or more dwellings were most frequent in New South Wales (9%).

Table 2: Percentage of community housing organisations by organisation size in each jurisdiction, 2005–06

| | NSW | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | NT | Total | Per cent of dwellings |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| 200 or more dwellings | 8.9 | 1.6 | 0.3 | 1.6 | 4.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.9 | 43 |
| 100–199 dwellings | 2.2 | 2.7 | 3.3 | 1.0 | 5.9 | 2.1 | 0.0 | 2.8 | 14 |
| 50–99 dwellings | 3.1 | 4.4 | 3.0 | 4.7 | 3.4 | 2.1 | 0.0 | 3.5 | 8 |
| 20–49 dwellings | 8.0 | 19.8 | 10.6 | 16.2 | 26.9 | 6.4 | 0.0 | 13.9 | 15 |
| Less than 20 dwellings | 77.8 | 71.4 | 82.8 | 76.4 | 59.7 | 89.4 | 100.0 | 77.0 | 20 |
| <i>Total^(a)</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 (number)^(b) | 225 | 182 | 331 | 191 | 119 | 47 | 20 | 1,115 | 31,584 |
| Average dwellings per organisation | 56 | 26 | 16 | 20 | 37 | 10 | 4 | 28 | .. |

.. not applicable

(a) Due to rounding of individual percentage calculations, the total may not always sum to 100.

(b) Total number of dwellings for which organisation size was known.

- On average, New South Wales managed the largest organisations (56 dwellings per organisation), followed by South Australia, averaging 37 dwellings per organisation (Figure 2).
- Queensland, the state with the largest number of community housing organisations, averaged 16 dwellings per organisation and the two smaller jurisdictions had organisations smaller again, with Tasmania averaging 10 dwellings and those in the Northern Territory averaging 4 dwellings per organisation.

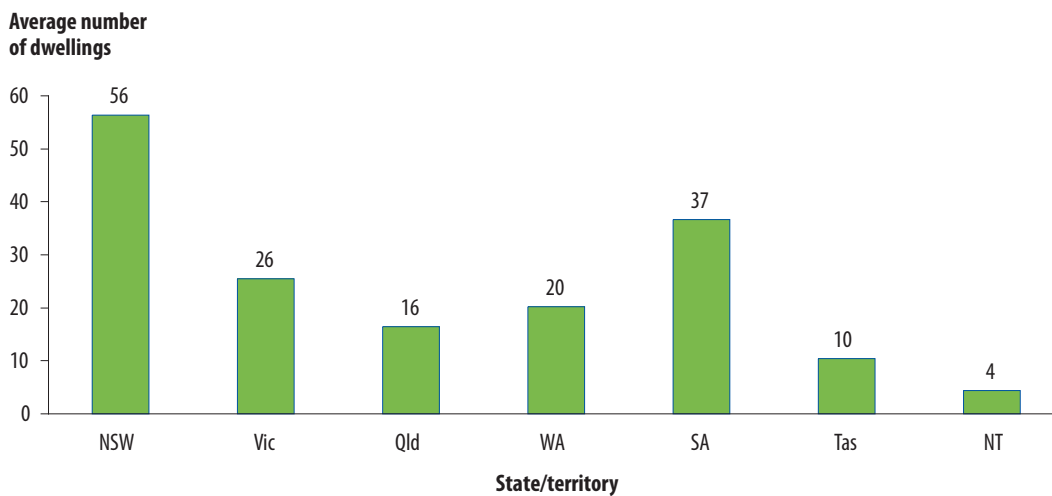


Figure 2: Average number of community housing dwellings per organisation by jurisdiction, 2005–06

Where are the organisations?

During the 2005–06 period, the greatest proportion of community housing organisations across Australia were located in Major cities (47% of organisations in the four jurisdictions who provided organisation postcode). A further 43% of organisations were located in regional areas and the remaining 10% in remote areas (Table 3). The distribution of community housing varies across jurisdiction.

- South Australia had the greatest proportion of community housing organisations located in Major cities (78%), followed by Victoria (65%).
- Queensland had the greatest proportion of organisations located in Remote areas (9%) and Very remote areas (12%).

Table 3: Proportion of community housing organisations by Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) remoteness category, by jurisdiction, 2005–06

| ASGC remoteness category | Vic | Qld | SA | Tas | Total |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Major cities | 64.6 | 29.7 | 78.2 | 0.0 | 46.6 |
| Inner regional | 30.4 | 19.6 | 11.8 | 57.4 | 24.0 |
| Outer regional | 4.4 | 29.7 | 6.7 | 40.4 | 19.0 |
| Remote | 0.6 | 8.7 | 2.5 | 2.1 | 4.7 |
| Very remote | 0.0 | 12.2 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 5.7 |
| Total ^(a) | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Total (number) | 181^(b) | 286^(c) | 119 | 47 | 633 |

(a) Due to rounding of individual percentage calculations, the total may not always sum to 100.

(b) Excludes one organisation missing postcode information.

(c) Excludes 45 organisations missing postcode information.

Note: There are no Major cities or Very remote areas located in Tasmania (as Hobart is classified as Inner regional).

How many dwellings are there?

During 2005–06 there were a total of 31,584 community housing dwellings across Australia (excluding the Australian Capital Territory), representing approximately 8% of all dwellings funded under the CSHA during this period. The number of dwellings varies between jurisdictions, ranging from 12,680 dwellings in New South Wales to 87 dwellings in the Northern Territory (Figure 3).

- New South Wales had more than double the number of dwellings of Victoria and Queensland and around three times the number of dwellings compared to South Australia and Western Australia, regardless of having only the second largest number of community housing organisations. Comparatively, this shows that organisations in New South Wales are each managing a large number of dwellings.
- The two jurisdictions with the least number of community housing organisations also had the least number of dwellings, with 490 dwellings located in Tasmania and 87 dwellings located in the Northern Territory.

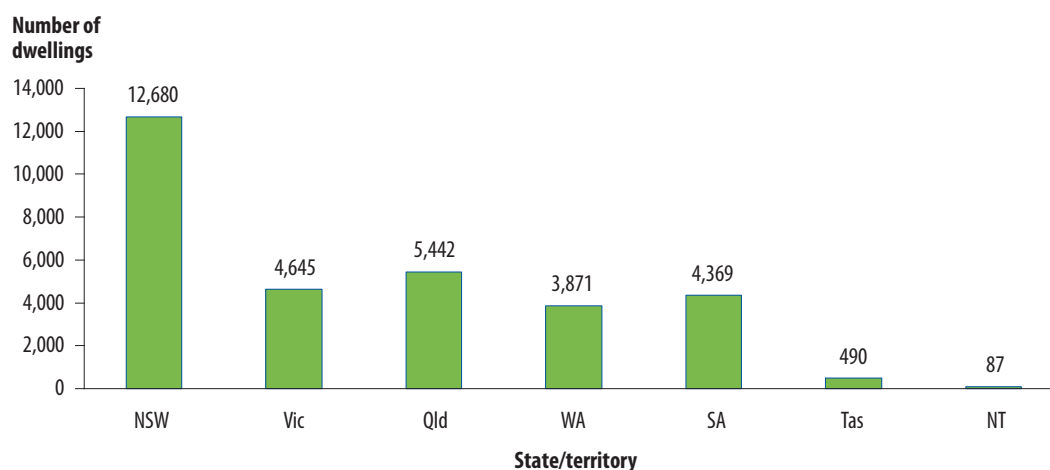
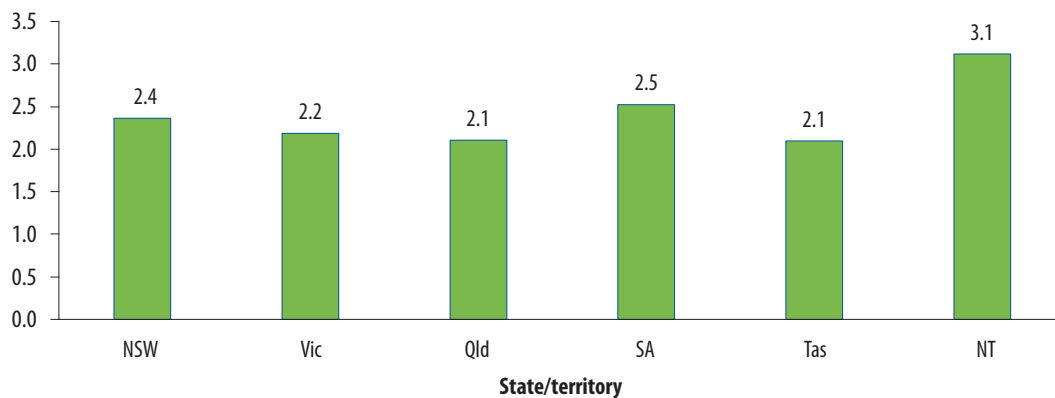


Figure 3: Number of community housing dwellings by jurisdiction, 2005–06

How big are the dwellings?

There were a total of 27,713 (excluding Western Australia) dwellings in Australia during the 2005–06 period with an average size of approximately 2.3 bedrooms per dwelling (Figure 4). The average size of dwellings varies between jurisdictions, ranging from 3.1 bedrooms in the Northern Territory to 2.1 in both Queensland and Tasmania (Figure 4).

Average number of bedrooms



Note: Western Australia was not included in these calculations as figures were not considered accurate due to assumptions that had to be made in relation to the number of bedrooms in some dwellings.

Figure 4: Average number of bedrooms per dwelling by jurisdiction, 2005–06

- Overall, the greatest proportion of community housing dwellings in Australia contained three bedrooms (36%). Thirty-two per cent of dwellings contained two bedrooms and a further 23% contained one bedroom. Approximately 8% of dwellings contained four bedrooms or more. The size of dwellings varies between jurisdictions (Table 4).
- The proportion of smaller dwellings was greater in Victoria and Queensland, with 38% and 35% of dwellings respectively containing one bedroom. There was also a considerable proportion of one bedroom dwellings in Tasmania (32%), accounting for the lower average number of bedrooms in this jurisdiction (Table 4).

Table 4: Proportion of dwellings, by bedroom size, by jurisdiction 2005–06

| Number of bedrooms | NSW | Vic | Qld | SA | Tas | NT | Total |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|-----------|---------------|
| One | 17.4 | 37.6 | 34.5 | 10.4 | 32.4 | 4.6 | 23.3 |
| Two | 38.5 | 19.1 | 29.5 | 31.1 | 28.4 | 18.4 | 32.1 |
| Three | 35.1 | 31.8 | 28.2 | 54.5 | 36.5 | 48.3 | 36.3 |
| Four | 8.0 | 9.9 | 6.4 | 3.4 | 2.2 | 18.4 | 7.2 |
| Five or more | 1.0 | 1.6 | 1.4 | 0.6 | 0.4 | 10.3 | 1.1 |
| Total ^(a) | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Total (number)^(b) | 12,680 | 4,645 | 5,442 | 4,363 | 490 | 87 | 27,707 |

(a) Due to rounding of individual percentage calculations, the total may not always sum to 100.

(b) Total number of dwellings for which bedroom number was known.

Note: WA was not included in these calculations as figures were not considered accurate due to assumptions that had to be made in relation to the number of bedrooms in some dwellings.

- Smaller organisations (i.e. those managing less than 20 dwellings), had the highest proportion of dwellings with four or more bedrooms (12%) (Table 5). These organisations also had the highest proportion of three bedroom dwellings (39%), while organisations managing between 50–99 dwellings had the smallest proportion (30%).
- Larger organisations (i.e. managing 200 or more dwellings) had the smallest proportion of one bedroom dwellings (21%).

Table 5: Proportion of dwellings, by bedroom size and organisation size, 2005–06

| Number of bedrooms | Less than 20 dwellings | 20–49 dwellings | 50–99 dwellings | 100–199 dwellings | 200 or more dwellings | Total dwellings |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| One | 22.5 | 27.8 | 25.2 | 28.1 | 20.5 | 6,448 |
| Two | 27.2 | 29.3 | 36.9 | 29.9 | 34.9 | 8,889 |
| Three | 38.6 | 36.1 | 30.0 | 34.8 | 36.9 | 10,066 |
| Four | 9.5 | 6.2 | 6.1 | 6.0 | 7.1 | 1,992 |
| Five or more | 2.2 | 0.7 | 1.9 | 1.1 | 0.7 | 312 |
| Total ^(a) | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Total (number)^(b) | 5,310 | 3,678 | 2,065 | 3,967 | 12,687 | 27,707 |

(a) Due to rounding of individual percentage calculations, the total may not always sum to 100.

(b) Total number of dwellings for which bedroom number was known.

Note: WA was not included in these calculations as figures were not considered accurate due to assumptions that had to be made in relation to the number of bedrooms in some dwellings.

Where are the dwellings?

Overall (for the six jurisdictions who provided dwelling postcode), the greatest proportion of dwellings were located in Major cities, with 61% of dwellings located in these areas (Table 6). Eighteen percent of dwellings were located in Inner regional areas, 14% in Outer regional areas and the remaining 6% in Remote and Very remote areas.

The location of dwellings varies across jurisdiction.

- South Australia had the greatest proportion of dwellings located in Major cities (85%), followed by Victoria (75%) and Western Australia (60%).
- Tasmania had the greatest proportion of dwellings located in Inner regional areas (60%) and the Northern Territory had the greatest proportion of dwellings located in Outer regional areas (71%).
- The Northern Territory had the greatest proportion of dwellings located in Remote areas (21%) and in Very remote areas (8%).

Table 6: Proportion of community housing dwellings by ASGC remoteness category, by jurisdiction, 2005–06

| ASGC remoteness category | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | NT | Total |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Major cities | 75.1 | 37.3 | 60.3 | 85.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 61.2 |
| Inner regional | 20.9 | 24.9 | 11.0 | 9.3 | 60.2 | 0.0 | 18.3 |
| Outer regional | 3.7 | 26.9 | 15.2 | 4.3 | 38.2 | 71.3 | 14.1 |
| Remote | 0.3 | 4.2 | 10.2 | 1.3 | 1.6 | 20.7 | 3.8 |
| Very remote | 0.0 | 6.6 | 3.3 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 8.0 | 2.6 |
| <i>Total^(a)</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 (number)^(b) | 4,645 | 5,442 | 3,872 | 4,368 | 490 | 87 | 18,905 |

(a) Due to rounding of individual percentage calculations, the total may not always sum to 100.

(b) Total number of dwellings for which postcode was known.

Notes:

1. There are no Major cities or Very remote areas located in Tasmania (as Hobart is classified as Inner regional).
2. There are no Major cities or Inner regional areas located in the Northern Territory (as Darwin is classified as Outer regional).

What types of dwellings are there?

Six jurisdictions provided information about the types of dwellings managed. Considerable work was undertaken regarding the recording and mapping of dwelling type in order to enable this variable to be comparable across jurisdictions. Table 7 summarises information on the types of dwellings for the six jurisdictions who provided this information.

Table 7: Proportion of dwellings by type of dwelling, by jurisdiction, 2005–06

| Dwelling type | NSW | Vic | Qld | SA | Tas | NT | Total |
|--|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Separate house | 39.4 | 43.2 | 35.0 | 0.0 | 39.8 | 77.0 | 33.1 |
| Semi-detached, row or terrace house, townhouse, etc. | 7.1 | 18.8 | 12.9 | 40.4 | 11.0 | 0.0 | 15.5 |
| Flat, unit or apartment | 41.5 | 2.5 | 42.4 | 9.0 | 49.2 | 23.0 | 30.1 |
| Boarding/rooming house unit | 0.0 | 33.2 | 9.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 7.4 |
| Other | 9.5 | 0.0 | 0.3 | 50.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 12.3 |
| Not stated/inadequately described | 2.5 | 2.4 | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.6 |
| <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> |
| Total (number) | 12,680 | 4,645 | 5,442 | 4,369 | 490 | 87 | 27,713 |

Further data development

A mapping of the information provided by jurisdictions for the trial collection to national standards was agreed following the 2004–05 data collection. The use of this mapping has allowed the analysis of data provided for the 2005–06 collection to be consistent and comparable across jurisdictions. More detailed information and a description of the mapping can be found in the full report (AIHW 2007a).

In order to allow unique identification of organisations and dwellings, jurisdictions agreed to supply a unique organisation identifier and a unique dwelling identifier for each record for future data collections. In the case of boarding/rooming/lodging houses and hostels, a tenancy (rental) unit identifier should also be provided. In addition, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has agreed to include inconsistent recording of unique identifiers in the edit checks accompanying the extraction plans for the 2006–07 data collection.

It was recommended that data supplied for the 2006–07 collection is used by all jurisdictions for national reporting of the count of community housing organisations and where possible for the count of organisations by type. Further investigation of the use of administrative data for national reporting has been undertaken as part of data development work.

This work sits alongside other work being undertaken, in particular the National Social Housing Survey of Community Housing and research being done by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI), a national research organisation, specialising in housing and urban research and policy (AHURI 2007).

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Full report

More detailed information about the 2005–06 trial collection, issues arising and its findings can be found in the working paper *Community housing data collection 2005–06: Results for the trial collection of unit record level dwelling and organisation administrative data*. This report can be accessed online at <www.aihw.gov.au/housing/assistance/publications>.

Scope

Community housing for the purpose of this data briefing includes dwellings where: funding (capital and/or recurrent) is provided fully or partly through the CSHA; the tenancy management functions are undertaken by a community provider or local government; and a principle of the community provider is to provide medium to long-term housing tenure to tenants.

Counting organisations and dwellings

The analysis in this briefing is based on organisations and dwellings. A community housing organisation is defined as ‘a not-for-profit organisation that provides safe, secure, affordable and appropriate rental housing’ and may include housing cooperatives, housing associations and other community service organisations. A dwelling is defined as ‘a structure or discrete space within a structure intended for people to live in or where a person or group of people live’. In the case of boarding/rooming/lodging houses and hostels, counting the structure as only one dwelling is not desirable due to the large number of bedrooms and tenancy agreements attached to such dwellings. Therefore, each record refers to a tenancy (rental) unit rather than a dwelling (see AIHW 2006a for further definitions).

Limitations

All jurisdictions except the Australian Capital Territory participated in the 2005–06 trial collection of unit record level dwelling and organisation administrative data and therefore results only include the seven jurisdictions that participated. In addition, the number of variables provided by participating jurisdictions varied.

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Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Board Chair

Hon. Peter Collins, AM, QC

Director

Penny Allbon

Any enquiries about or comments on this publication should be directed to:

Housing Assistance Unit

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

GPO Box 570

Canberra ACT 2601

Phone 02 6244 1000

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