Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision

Report on Government Services 2025

Approach to performance reporting (part A)

Produced by the Productivity Commission on behalf of the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision.

The Productivity Commission acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to their Cultures, Country and Elders past and present.

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Report on Government Services 2025

PART A: RELEASED ON 30 JANUARY 2025

Produced by the Productivity Commission for the Steering Committee for Review of Government Service Provision. The content for this PDF is generated from the online, interactive publication. Data below are the most recent at the time of preparing the report. In some cases, charts and tables may present data for a single jurisdiction. To access data for all jurisdictions and the most current data available, go to: www.pc.gov.au/rogs

A Approach to performance reporting

Part A includes an introduction to the Report on Government Services 2025, Statistical context for the service-specific parts B to G, the Glossary and the Acronyms and abbreviations list.

Report on Government Services 2025

About this report

30th edition foreword by former Steering Committee Chair Bill Scales

I am delighted to have been asked to introduce this 30th edition of the Report on Government Services, established during my time as Chair of the Industry Commission.

30 years ago, the report was created to provide a source of credible and easily compared data, at a time when governments were focussed on providing more relevant, efficient and effective services to the Australian public and publicly reporting on their progress.

In the early years of the report, the Commission worked hard to convince some Australian governments that sharing their data would strengthen the insights and decisions of their policy makers. While we were hopeful that governments across Australia would come to recognise the value of the report, we could not have anticipated that it would continue to be a widely used source of data in support of good public policy three decades on.

From its very beginnings, the report aimed to be a source of information both for Australian governments and Australian taxpayers. In this sense, the report was an early forerunner of open government data provision, and the contemporary push for greater transparency by Australian governments.

The coverage of the report each January and February in the media, and the different ways the data is used to highlight the relative performance of different jurisdictions across service delivery areas continues the mission of this report that was established 30 years ago.

It is inspiring to see how the report has continued to develop and expand over those 30 years and how it now incorporates information on the equity of government services alongside their efficiency and effectiveness.

It is also to the credit of all involved in the production of this report to see that it is now entirely online and features interactive visualisations that have made the data more accessible and understandable, how coverage has expanded, and how more timely data is now available through a mid-year update.

Thanks to the 30 years of data the report has collected, researchers and evaluators can better assess how well governments are delivering on their objectives for service users and how this has changed over time.

This year’s report draws from the best of previous editions, reintroducing summaries of national trends and helping readers more easily identify key performance metrics.

The Report on Government Services continues to be a valuable government and community resource and I look forward to seeing the next wave of improvements to national performance reporting on the range of services so important to all Australians.

Bill Scales

Acknowledgment

This report was produced under the direction of the Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision (SCRGSP). The Steering Committee comprises the following current members:

Name	Government	Department/Agency
Danielle Wood Prue Holzer	Chair Secretariat	Productivity Commission Productivity Commission
James McLean Dreyfus Jaclin Craig	Australian Government	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet The Treasury
Xuan Deng Fletcher Trowse	New South Wales	NSW Treasury The Cabinet office
Laura Perriam Sharon Oxlade	Victoria	Department of Premier and Cabinet Department of Treasury and Finance
Kerry Wilson David Runge	Queensland	Department of the Premier and Cabinet Queensland Treasury
Anthony Sheehan Luke Crotty	Western Australia	Department of the Premier and Cabinet Department of Treasury
Chris McGowan Greg Raymond	South Australia	Department of the Premier and Cabinet Department of Treasury and Finance
Jodi Willcox	Tasmania	Department of Premier and Cabinet
Wilhelmina Blount	Australian Capital Territory	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate
Nadia Phillips Shaun Pearson	Northern Territory	Department of the Chief Minister Department of Treasury and Finance

Name	Government	Department/Agency
Michael Smedes	Specialist Observer	Australian Bureau of Statistics
Louise Gates	Specialist Observer	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Report on Government Services 2025

PART A, SECTION 1: RELEASED ON 30 JANUARY 2025

1 Approach to performance measurement

In this section

The Report on Government Services (the report) provides information on the equity, efficiency and effectiveness of government services in Australia, which contributes to the wellbeing of all Australians by encouraging improvements in these services. The report is used by governments to inform planning and evaluation of policies, for budgeting (including to assess the resource needs and performance of government agencies) and to demonstrate government accountability.

This report provides a dynamic online presentation underpinned by machine readable data in a CSV format as well as data provided in Excel format.

Reasons for measuring performance

Measuring the performance of government service delivery and public reporting creates incentives for better performance by:

- helping to clarify government objectives and responsibilities
- providing governments with indicators of policy and program performance over time
- making performance more transparent to the community through the provision of relevant information
- encouraging ongoing performance improvements in service delivery and effectiveness, by highlighting opportunities for improvements and innovation.

A key focus of the report is measuring the *comparative* performance of government services across jurisdictions. Reporting on comparative performance can provide incentives for service providers to improve performance where there is no or little competition, and provides a level of accountability to consumers, who have little opportunity to express their preferences by accessing services elsewhere.

The terms ‘comparative performance reporting’ and ‘benchmarking’ are sometimes used interchangeably. However, benchmarking can have a particular connotation of measuring performance against a predetermined standard. The report can be considered as a form of results or process benchmarking, but the report does not generally establish best practice benchmarks. However, governments can use the information in the report to identify appropriate benchmarks.

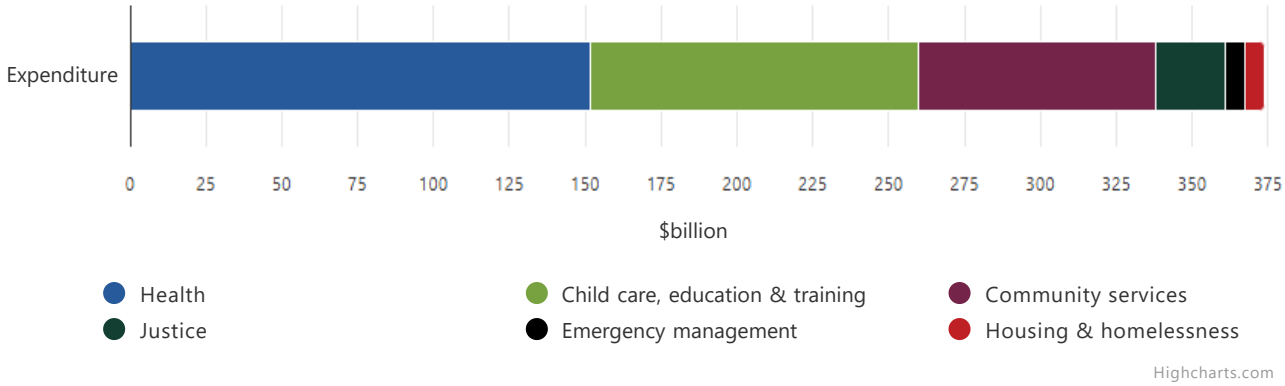
The Report's scope

Government provides a range of services to individuals, households and the community. The report focuses on 'social services', which aim to enhance the wellbeing of people and communities by improving largely intangible outcomes (such as health, education and community safety). The report contains performance information on child care, education and training, health, justice, emergency management, community services, social housing, and homelessness across 17 service areas. The service areas included in the report were chosen based on a set of formal criteria.

Read the formal criteria ›

Government recurrent expenditure on the services in this report was approximately $374 billion for the 2022-23 financial year (2022-23 dollars) (figure 1.1) – a significant proportion (around 70%) of government recurrent expenditure. This is equivalent to around 15% of gross domestic product (estimates based on data from ABS 2024). Updated financial data for the 2023-24 financial year is available for some sections.

Figure 1.1 – Governments' recurrent expenditure by sector[a]



a Changes in sector expenditure over time can be partly due to the reallocation of services between sectors in line with broad policy shifts (or changes in the data source). Readers are encouraged to check service areas within each sector to confirm coverage for the relevant year.

Governments use a mix of methods to deliver these services to the community, including providing services directly (a 'delivery/provider' role), funding external providers through grants or the purchase of services (a 'purchaser' role) and subsidising users (through vouchers or cash payments) to purchase services from external providers.

As non-government organisations are often involved in the delivery of services, funding from government may not meet the full cost of delivering a service to the community. Since the purpose of the report is to provide information to assist governments in making decisions about the effectiveness and efficiency of government purchase or supply of services, it is confined to the cost to government. Similarly, it does not provide detailed information on general government income support. For example, the report covers aged care but not the aged pension and child care but not family payments (although descriptive information on income support is provided in some cases).

Performance across agencies and jurisdictions will be affected by a range of factors outside government influence, such as geography, available inputs and input prices. The report does not attempt to adjust reported results for differences that can affect service delivery (though some

indicators incorporate adjustments where aligned with other national indicators, for example, adjustments for case mix for hospital separations in section 12). The approach used is to explain that government-provided services are often only one contributing factor and, where possible, point to data on other key contributing factors, including different geographic and demographic characteristics across jurisdictions. Section 2 contains detailed statistics on each State and Territory, which may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in the report.

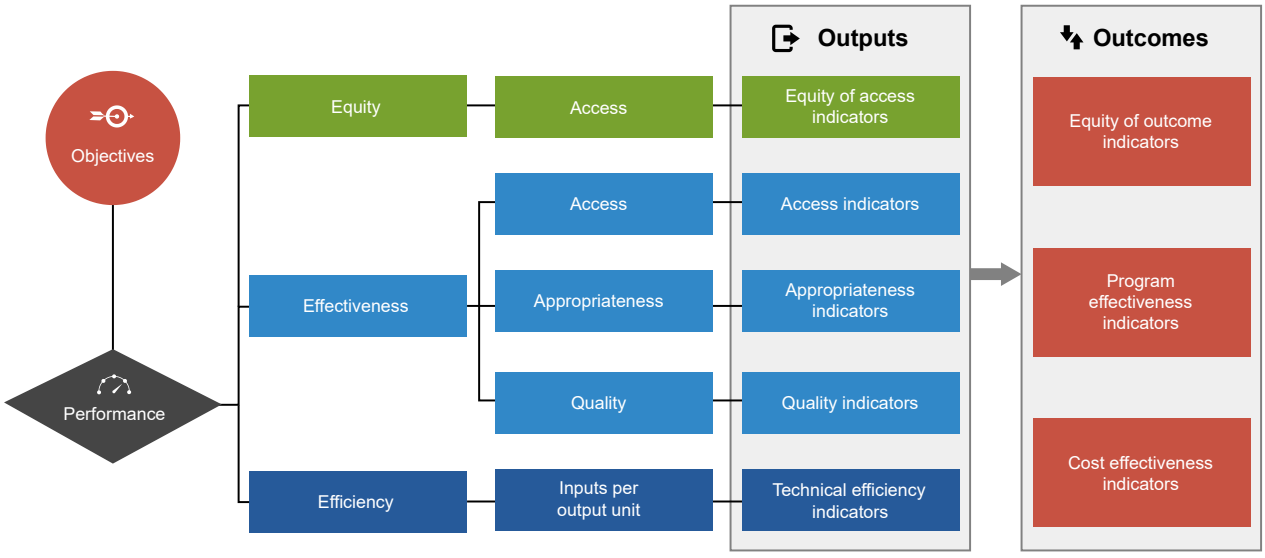
Conceptual approach

The report uses a consistent conceptual approach for reporting performance across service areas. This allows for comparisons in performance across services, improvements in reporting in one service area to be drawn upon for reporting in other areas, and issues that arise across service areas to be addressed in a consistent way.

The performance indicator framework

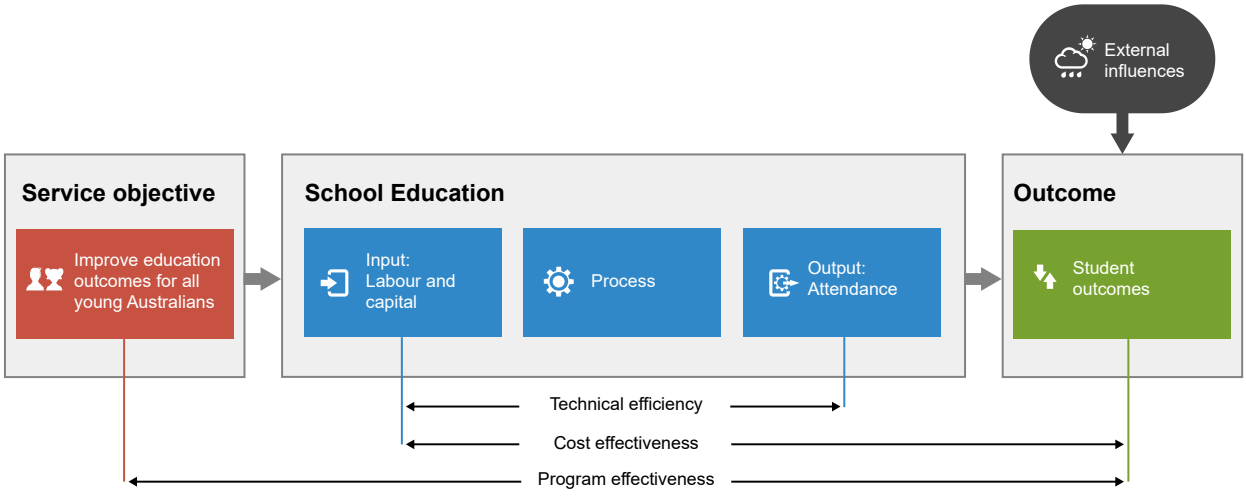
Each service area in the report has a performance indicator framework and a set of objectives against which performance indicators report (figure 1.2). Performance indicators include output indicators, grouped under equity, effectiveness and efficiency, and outcome indicators.

Figure 1.2 – General performance indicator framework



The framework reflects the process through which inputs are transformed into outputs and outcomes in order to achieve desired objectives (figure 1.3). Service providers transform resources (inputs) into services (outputs). The rate at which resources are used to make this transformation is known as ‘technical efficiency’.

Figure 1.3 – Example of a service process – school education



The impact of these outputs on individuals, groups and the community are the outcomes of the service. In the report, the rate at which inputs are used to generate outcomes is referred to as 'cost effectiveness'. Although no explicit cost-effectiveness indicators are currently included in the report, implicit cost-effectiveness reporting is achieved through combinations of efficiency and effectiveness indicators, and combinations of efficiency and outcome indicators.

Objectives

Each service area has a set of objectives against which performance is reported. The structure of objectives is consistent across service areas and includes three components:

- The high-level objectives or vision for the service, which describes the desired impact of the service area on individuals and the wider community.
- The service delivery objectives, which highlight the characteristics of services that will enable them to be effective.
- The objectives for services to be provided in an equitable and efficient manner.

Indicators that are linked to the high-level vision are outcome indicators, whereas indicators that report on the effectiveness of service delivery, or how equitable or efficient the service delivery is, are output indicators. These are discussed in more detail below.

The objectives in this report are similar across jurisdictions. However, the priority given to each objective can vary. For example, one jurisdiction might prioritise improving accessibility and another might prioritise improving quality. The report focuses on the extent that each shared objective for a service has been met.

Output indicators

While the report aims to focus on outcomes, these are often difficult to measure. The report therefore includes measures of outputs, where there is a relationship between those outputs and desired outcomes. Output information is also critical for equitable, efficient and effective management of government services, and is often the level of performance information that is of most interest to individuals who access services.

Equity, effectiveness and efficiency indicators are given equal prominence in the report's performance reporting framework, as they are the three overarching dimensions of service delivery performance. It is important that all three are reported on as there are inherent trade-offs in allocating resources and dangers in analysing only some aspects of a service. For example, a service provided may have a high cost but be more effective than a lower-cost service, and therefore be more cost effective. In addition, improving outcomes for a group with special needs may lead to an increase in the average cost per unit of providing a service.

Equity indicators

Equity indicators measure how well a service is meeting the needs of particular groups that have specific needs or difficulties in accessing government services. The equity–access indicators focus on measuring if services are equally accessible to everyone in the community regardless of personal characteristics such as cultural background or location. Effectiveness indicators can also have an equity dimension when the focus is on any gap in performance between selected equity groups and the comparison/general population (for example, readmissions to hospital within 28 days of discharge, by Indigenous status). Equity of outcomes is also reported on under outcome indicators in some sections.

Criteria are used to classify groups that may have special needs or difficulties in accessing government services. Some service areas have selected equity groups identified; the groups most often identified across the report are:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- People living in rural or remote areas
- People from a non-English speaking background
- People with disability (whose access to specialist disability services is also reported in section 15).

To measure equity of access, the report often compares the proportion of the community in the selected equity group with their proportion in the service user population. This approach is suitable for services that are provided on a virtually universal basis (for example, preschool education), but must be treated with caution for other services where service provision is based on the level of need. Ideally for these latter services, comparisons should be made across selected equity groups on the basis of need (for example, disability services uses potential populations for each selected equity group).

Effectiveness indicators

Effectiveness indicators measure how well the outputs of a service meet its delivery objectives. The reporting framework groups effectiveness indicators according to characteristics that are considered important to the service. For most sections, these characteristics include access, appropriateness and quality.

Access

Access indicators measure how easily the community can obtain a service. Access indicators can generally be categorised under three domains:

- *Overall access* indicators show how readily services are accessed by those who need them across the eligible or relevant population (for example, access to specialist disability services is measured according to the 'potential population' based on disability rates). Due to difficulties in directly measuring access, indirect measures are often included, such as measures of unmet need (section 15) or enrolment in preschool (section 3).
- *Timeliness of access* indicators are important for services where there is limited supply of services, sometimes resulting in consumers experiencing delays accessing those services. For example, waiting times for health services, such as public dentistry and public hospitals (sections 10 and 12).
- *Affordability indicators* are included for service areas where consumers face at least part of the cost of the service and cost can be a barrier to obtaining the service. For example, the proportion of income spent on particular services, such as parents' out-of-pocket cost of child care (section 3), or the proportion of people who delayed getting or did not get a prescription filled at any time in the previous 12 months due to cost (section 10).

Appropriateness

Appropriateness indicators measure how well services meet clients' needs. Appropriateness is distinct from access, in that it is measuring performance in meeting the needs of people who already have access to the service. For example, whether students achieve their main reason for training (section 5).

Appropriateness indicators also seek to identify whether the level of service received is appropriate for the level of need (HWA 2012; Birrell 2013). Some services have developed measurable standards of service need, against which levels of service can be assessed (for example, the 'match of dwelling to household size' measure in housing (section 18) measures the appropriateness of the size of the dwelling relative to the size and composition of the household). Other services have few measurable standards of service need; for example, the desirable number of medical treatments for particular populations is not known.

Quality

Quality indicators measure whether a service is suited to its purpose and conforms to specifications. Information about quality is particularly important when there is a strong emphasis on increasing efficiency. There is usually more than one way in which to deliver a service, and each alternative has different implications for both cost and quality. Information about quality is needed to ensure all relevant aspects of performance are considered.

The approach in the report is to identify and report on all aspects of quality including both actual and implied competence:

- Actual competence can be measured by the frequency of positive (or negative) events resulting from the actions of the service.
- Implied competence can be measured by proxy indicators, such as the extent to which aspects of a service conform to specifications.

Quality indicators in the report generally relate to one of four categories:

- Standards – whether services are accredited and/or meeting required standards, such as legislation. For example, compliance with service standards for aged care services (section 14).
- Safety – whether services provided are safe. For example, road safety and deaths in police custody (section 6).

- Responsiveness – whether services are client orientated and respond to clients' stated needs. For example, measures of patient satisfaction (sections 10 and 12).
- Continuity – whether services provide coordinated or uninterrupted care over time and across service providers. For example, community follow-up after psychiatric admission (section 13).

Efficiency

Economic efficiency requires satisfaction of technical, allocative and dynamic efficiency:

- *Technical efficiency* requires that goods and services be produced at the lowest possible cost.
- *Allocative efficiency* requires the production of the set of goods and services that consumers value most, from a given set of resources.
- *Dynamic efficiency* means that, over time, consumers are offered new and better products, and existing products at lower cost.

The report focuses on technical (or productive) efficiency. Technical efficiency indicators measure how well services use their resources (inputs) to produce outputs for the purpose of achieving desired outcomes. Government funding per unit of output delivered is a typical indicator of technical efficiency – for example, cost per annual hour for vocational education and training (section 5).

Some efficiency indicators included in the report are incomplete or proxy measures for technical efficiency. For example, as only the cost to government is reported on, some efficiency measures do not include the full cost of providing services and, are therefore, incomplete measures of technical efficiency. Other indicators of efficiency, such as partial productivity measures, are also reported on where there are shortcomings in the data. For example, judicial officers per finalisation (section 7).

In addition, some service areas report on the cost per head of total/eligible population, rather than the cost per person actually receiving the service or another unit of output. These are not measures of technical efficiency, but the cost of providing the service relative to the total/eligible population.

Outcome indicators

Outcome indicators provide information on the overall impact of a service on the status of individuals and the community, as opposed to output indicators, which report on the characteristics of service delivery. Outcomes may be short or longer term and the approach in the Report is to use both types of outcome indicators, as appropriate. In school education, for example, learning outcomes at years 3, 5, 7 and 9 may be considered intermediate outcomes, while completion of year 12 or school leaver destinations may be considered final outcomes (section 4).

In contrast to outputs, outcome indicators:

- typically depend on a number of service characteristics
- are more likely to be influenced by factors outside the control of governments or entities delivering services.

Guiding principles for the report

Along with the conceptual approach, the guiding principles provide the basis for reporting performance across service areas (box 1.1). There are often trade-offs that need to be made across the principles; for example, between the accuracy of data and its timeliness. Sometimes data that is provided in a timely manner has had less time to undergo rigorous validation. The approach in the report is to publish imperfect data that is available, where it is fit for purpose, with the necessary caveats. This approach allows increased scrutiny of the data and reveals the gaps in critical information, providing the foundation for developing better data over time. Important information

about data quality is included in the relevant sections and attachment tables. More information on data quality for some indicators and measures is available from external data providers including the ABS and AIHW. Data Quality Statements for National Agreement indicators and datasets maintained by the AIHW can be accessed here:

- AIHW Data Quality Statements

Box 1.1 – Guiding principles for the report

Comprehensiveness – performance should be assessed against all important objectives.

Streamlined reporting – a concise set of information about performance against the identified objectives of a sector or service should be included.

A focus on outcomes – high-level performance indicators should focus on outcomes, reflecting whether service objectives have been met.

Hierarchical – high-level outcome indicators should be underpinned by lower-level output indicators and additional disaggregated data where a greater level of detail is required.

Meaningful – reported data must measure what it claims to measure. Proxy indicators should be clearly identified and the development of more meaningful indicators to replace proxy indicators is encouraged where practicable.

Comparability – data should be comparable across jurisdictions and over time. However, comparability may be affected by progressive data availability. Where data is not yet comparable across jurisdictions, time series data within jurisdictions is particularly important.

Completeness and progressive data availability – aim to report data for all jurisdictions (where relevant), but where this is not possible report data for those jurisdictions that can report (not waiting until data is available for all).

Timeliness – data published is the most recent possible. Incremental reporting when data becomes available, and then updating all relevant data over recent years, is preferable to waiting until all data is available.

Use acceptable (albeit imperfect) performance indicators – relevant performance indicators that are already in use in other national reporting arrangements are used wherever appropriate.

Understandable – data must be reported in a way that is meaningful to a broad audience, many of whom will not have technical or statistical expertise.

Accurate – data published will be of sufficient accuracy to provide confidence in analysis based on information in the report.

Validation – data can vary in the extent to which it has been reviewed or validated (at a minimum, all data is endorsed by the provider and subjected to peer review by the Working Group for the relevant service area).

Full costing of services – efficiency estimates should reflect the full costs to government (where possible).

Source: Adapted from Ministerial Council for Federal Financial Relations (MCFFR) (2009).

Costing of services

In addition to the Review objective that expenditure on services be measured and reported on a comparable basis, efficiency estimates should also reflect the full costs to government. Issues that have affected the comparability of costs in the report include:

- accounting for differences in the treatment of payroll tax (SCRCSSP 1999)
- including the full range of capital costs (SCRCSSP 2001)
- apportioning applicable departmental overhead costs
- reporting non-government sourced revenue.

Payroll tax

The Steering Committee's preference is to remove payroll tax from reported cost figures, where feasible, so that cost differences between jurisdictions are not caused by differences in payroll tax policies. However, in some sections it has not been possible to separately identify payroll tax, so a hypothetical amount is included in cost estimates for exempt services.

Capital costs

Under accrual accounting, the focus is on the capital used (or consumed) in a particular year, rather than on the cash expenditure incurred in its purchase (for example, the purchase costs of a new building). Capital costs comprise two distinct elements:

- Depreciation – defined as the annual consumption of non-current physical assets used in delivering government services.
- User cost of capital – the opportunity cost of funds tied up in the capital used to deliver services (that is, the return that could have been generated if the funds were employed in their next best use).

Both depreciation and the user cost of capital should be included in unit cost calculations (with the user cost of capital for land to be reported separately). The user cost of capital rate should be applied to all non-current physical assets, less any capital charges and interest on borrowings already reported by the agency (to avoid double counting). The rate applied for the user cost of capital is based on a weighted average of rates nominated by jurisdictions (currently 8%).

Differences in asset measurement techniques can have a major impact on reported capital costs (SCRCSSP 2001). However, the differences created by these asset measurement effects are generally relatively small in the context of total unit costs, because capital costs represent a relatively small proportion of total cost (except for housing). In housing, where the potential for asset measurement techniques to influence total unit costs is greater, the adoption under the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement and subsequent national agreements of a uniform accounting framework has largely prevented this from occurring. The adoption of national uniform accounting standards across all service areas would be a desirable outcome for the Review.

Other costing issues

Other costing issues include the apportionment of costs shared across services (mainly overhead departmental costs) and the treatment of non-government sourced revenue.

- Full apportionment of departmental overheads is consistent with the concept of full cost recovery. The practice of apportioning overhead costs varies across the services in the report.

- The treatment of non-government sourced revenue varies across services in the report. Some services deduct such revenue from their efficiency estimates. Ideally when reporting technical efficiency for services which governments provide directly, the estimates should be reported both including and net of revenues. Some services report net of revenue only, this is usually in cases where the amounts concerned are relatively small (for example, courts). The costs reported are therefore an estimate of net cost to government. However, where revenue from non-government sources is significant (such as with public hospitals, fire services and ambulance services), both the gross cost and the net cost to government are reported, in order to provide an adequate understanding of efficiency.

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Birrell, B 2013, *Too many GPs,* Centre for Population and Urban Research Report, Monash University.

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Report on Government Services 2025

PART A, SECTION 2: RELEASED ON 30 JANUARY 2025

2 Statistical context

In this section

The Statistical context contains information to assist interpretation of the performance information in this report. It includes information and data on population, families and households, and income and employment. Information on some of the statistical concepts that are used in the report is available in the Statistical concepts note.

Data referenced by a '2A' prefix (for example, table 2A.1) is included in the data tables, which can be downloaded below.

Section 2 Data tables (XLSX 567.2 KB)

Section 2 dataset (CSV 1.4 MB)

Refer to the Statistical concepts document and corresponding table number in the data tables above for detailed definitions, caveats, footnotes and data source(s).

Population

The Australian people are the principal recipients of the government services covered by this report. The size, trends and characteristics of the population can have significant influences on the demand for government services and the cost of service delivery.

Population size and trends

More than three-quarters of Australia's 26.6 million people lived in the eastern mainland states as at 30 June 2023. As the majority of Australia's population lives in the eastern mainland states, data for these jurisdictions generally has a large influence on national averages. Nationally, the average annual growth rate of the population between 2019 and 2023 was approximately 1.3% (table 2A.1).

As in most other developed economies, greater life expectancy and declining fertility have contributed to an 'ageing' of Australia's population. However, the age distribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is markedly different to that of all Australians (figure 2.1). At 30 June 2023, 12.1% of Australia's population was aged 70 years or over, compared with just 3.1% of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population as at 30 June 2021 (tables 2A.1 and 2A.4).

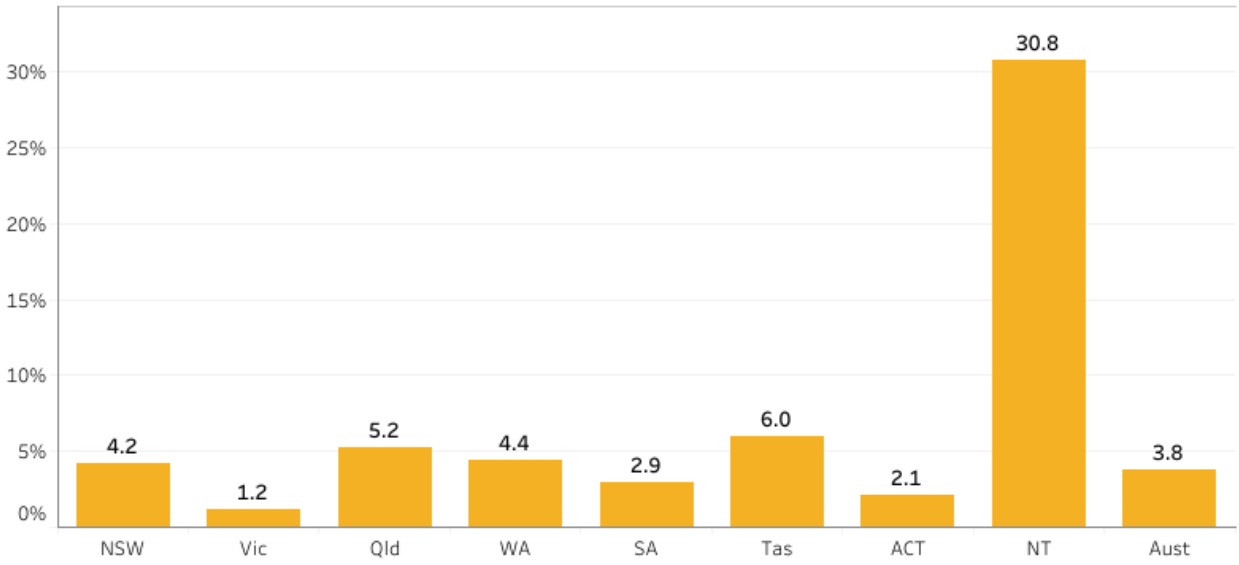
The most recent Census count of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population (2021) is used to make comparisons with the estimated Australian population for the same year (2021). Annual data

is based on the 2021 Census of Population and Housing and is available in tables 2A.1 and 2A.4.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population

There were an estimated 983,709 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (49.8% female, similar to the total population) in Australia at 30 June 2021, accounting for approximately 3.8% of the total Australian population in 2021 (figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2 **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as a proportion of the population, 2021**



Source: tables 2A.1 and 2A.4

Data tables are referenced above by a '2A' prefix and all data (footnotes and data sources) is available for download above (in Excel and CSV format).

Population, by ethnicity and proficiency in English

Some new Australians face specific problems when accessing government services. Language and cultural differences can be formidable barriers for otherwise capable people. Cultural backgrounds can also have a significant influence on the support networks offered by extended families.

People born outside Australia accounted for 27.7% of the population in August 2021 (8.0% from the main English speaking countries and 19.7% from other countries) (table 2A.7). Of those born outside Australia, 89.4% spoke only English, or spoke another language as well as speaking English well or very well (table 2A.6). Approximately 22.3% of Australians spoke a language other than English at home in August 2021 (table 2A.8).

Population, by geographic location

Those living in remote areas can have greater difficulty in accessing government services, often needing to travel long distances, or facing lower service levels than provided in major cities. The Australian population is highly urbanised, with 72.6% of the population located in major cities as at 30 June 2023 (table 2A.3).

Family and household

Family structure

There were 7.6 million families in Australia in June 2024. Nationally, 36.2% of families had at least one child aged under 15 years, and 15.7% of families had at least one child aged under five years (table 2A.10). Lone parent families might have a greater need for government support and particular types of government services (such as childcare for respite reasons). Nationally in June 2024, 20.4% of families with children aged under 15 years were lone parent families (table 2A.11).

Employment status also has implications for the financial independence of families. Nationally in June 2024, in 3.4% of couple families with children aged under 15 years neither parent was employed and in 4.0% of lone parent families with children aged under 15 years, the parent was unemployed (table 2A.12).

Household profile

There were a projected 10.5 million households in Australia at 30 June 2024 (based on the 2021 Census), and 26.5% of these were lone person households (table 2A.14). As at 30 June 2024, the proportion of people aged 65 years or over who lived alone (24.8%) was around three times higher than the proportion for people aged 15–64 years (9.2%).

Income and employment

Income

Nationally in August 2021, 16.8% of people aged 15 years or over had a relatively low weekly individual income of $299 or less (table 2A.16). The proportion was higher for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (24.7%) and more than four times higher for younger people (73.9% for people aged 15–19 years) (tables 2A.17 and 2A.18).

Nationally, 17.0% of the total population was receiving income support in June 2024, an increase from 16.9% in June 2023 due to the increase in the proportion of people receiving single-parent payments (an increase from 0.9% in 2023 to 1.2% in 2024). The age pension was received by 9.6% of the population (63.5% of the qualifying population), while 2.9% received a disability support pension and a further 3.3% of the population received some form of labour market allowance (table 2A.19).

Employment and workforce participation

Of the 15.0 million people aged 15 years or over in the labour force in Australia in June 2024, 96.1% were employed. The majority of employed people (68.9%) were in full-time employment. Nationally, the unemployment rate was 3.9% (table 2A.24). The unemployment rate needs to be interpreted within the context of labour force participation rates (the proportion of the working age population either in employment or actively looking for work). The labour force participation rate for Australia was 67.0% in June 2024 (table 2A.24). When compared to June 2023, the unemployment rate has increased (from 3.3%) and the labour force participation rate has remained stable.

Income and employment are strongly influenced by education. Census data on highest level of schooling and type of educational institution attended is available in tables 2A.20–23. Additional educational data is also available in Part B of this report (Child care, education and training).

Statistical concepts

Adjusting financial data to real dollars

Time series financial data is adjusted to real dollars using an appropriate chain price deflator so that comparisons over time are not affected by inflation.

Most financial data in the report is deflated using the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) general government final consumption expenditure (GGFCE) deflator. The exceptions are the Public hospitals section, the Services for mental health section, the Vocational education and training section and the Emergency services section (insurance claim tables only), which use

service specific ABS deflators to calculate real dollars. All sections use an identical process for deflating financial data which consists of two steps: re-basing the deflator and converting nominal dollars to real dollars (box 1).

Box 1 – Deflator formulas

Step 1. The formula used to re-base deflators is

$$D_t = 100 \times \frac{O_t}{B}$$

where:

D_t is the re-based deflator in financial year t ; O_t is the index in June of financial year t ; B is the index in June of the financial year that will be the new base.

Step 2. The formula to convert nominal dollars to real dollars is

$$R_t = \frac{N_t}{D_t} \times 100$$

where, for financial year t :

R_t is real dollars; N_t is nominal dollars; D_t is the deflator.

The process used for deflating financial data is demonstrated below, using the GGFCE deflator as an example.

Step 1. Re-basing a deflator (table 1).

The ABS publishes the GGFCE deflator with the base year lagged two years (for example, for June 2024 the available deflator has a base year of June 2022 = 100). This report requires a base year of 2022-23 and 2023-24. Table 1 shows how the GGFCE deflator is rebased for use in this report. Five GGFCE deflator series are published, from 2019-20 = 100 to 2023-24 = 100 (table 2A.26).

Table 1 – Re-basing the GGFCE deflator[a]

Year	ABS chain price index (June 2022 = 100)	Calculation	Financial year	Re-based GGFCE deflator (June 2024 = 100)
June 2020	96.1	96.1⁄109.7 × 100	2019-20	87.6
June 2021	97.2	97.2/109.7 × 100	2020-21	88.6
June 2022	100.0	100.0/109.7 × 100	2021-22	91.2
June 2023	104.6	104.6/109.7 × 100	2022-23	95.4
June 2024	109.7	109.7/109.7 × 100	2023-24	100.0

a Based on the chain price index values from ABS (2024).

Source: ABS (2024), 'Table 36. Expenditure on Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Chain volume measures and Current prices, Annual' [time series spreadsheet], *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product, June 2024,* https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/national-accounts/australian-national-accounts-national-income-expenditure-and-product/jun-2024, accessed 4 September 2024; table 2A.26.

Step 2. Converting nominal dollars into real dollars (table 2).

Nominal dollars are converted into real dollars by dividing the nominal dollars by the GGFCE deflator for the applicable financial year and multiplying by 100. The deflator used may vary according to the most current year for which financial data is available. For example, if the most current data is for 2022-23 then the data is deflated using the deflator series for 2022-23 = 100. If the most current data is for 2023-24 then the data is deflated using the deflator series for 2023-24 = 100. Table 2 shows how the GGFCE deflator for 2023-24= 100 is applied.

Table 2 – Applying the GGFCE deflator to derive real dollars[a]

Financial year	Nominal expenditure	GGFCE deflator (2023-24 = 100)	Calculation	Real expenditure
2019-20	6,300	87.6	(6,300/87.6) × 100	7,192
2020-21	6,350	88.6	(6,350/88.6) × 100	7,167
2021-22	6,485	91.2	(6,485/91.2) × 100	7,111
2022-23	7,020	95.4	(7,020/95.4) × 100	7,358
2023-24	7,200	100.0	(7,200/100.0) × 100	7,200

a Based on the chain price index values from ABS (2024).

Source: Table 1.

Reliability of estimates

Data for some indicators in this report is based on samples, either from surveys or observations from, for example, administrative data sets. The potential for sampling error (the error that occurs by chance because the data is obtained from a sample and not the entire population) means that the reported estimates might not accurately reflect the true value.

This report indicates the reliability of estimates based on samples generally by reporting either relative standard errors (RSEs) or confidence intervals (CIs). RSEs and CIs are calculated based on the standard error (SE). The larger the SE, RSE or CI, the less reliable the estimate is as an indicator for the whole population (ABS 2015).

Standard error

The SE measures the sampling error of an estimate (box 2). (There can also be non-sampling error, or systematic biases, in data.) There are several types of SE. A commonly used type of SE

in this report is the SE of the mean (average), which measures how much the estimated mean value might differ from the true population mean value.

Box 2 – Standard error

The SE of a method of measurement or estimation is the estimated standard deviation of the error in that method. Specifically, it estimates the standard deviation of the difference between the measured or estimated values and the true values. Standard deviation is a measure of how spread out the data is, that is, a measure of variability.

The SE of the mean, an unbiased estimate of expected error in the sample estimate of a population mean, is the sample estimate of the population standard deviation (sample standard deviation) divided by the square root of the sample size (assuming statistical independence of the values in the sample):

$$\mathrm{SE}_{\bar{x}} = \frac{s}{\sqrt{n}}$$

Where:

$\mathrm{SE}_{\bar{x}}$ is the SE of the sample estimate of a population mean, s is the sample's standard deviation (the sample based estimate of the standard deviation of the population), and n is the size (number of items) of the sample.

Decreasing the uncertainty of a mean value estimate by a factor of two requires the sample size to increase fourfold. Decreasing SE by a factor of ten requires the sample size to increase hundredfold.

Relative standard error

The RSE is used to indicate the reliability of an estimate (box 3). The RSE shows the size of the error relative to the estimate and is derived by dividing the SE of the estimate by the estimate. The higher the RSE, the less confidence there is that the sample estimate is close to the true value of the population mean. A rule adopted in this report is that estimates with an RSE of less than 25% are considered reliable, estimates with an RSE between 25% and 50% are to be used with caution, and estimates with an RSE greater than 50% are considered too unreliable for general use.

Box 3 – Relative standard error

The SE can be expressed as a proportion of the estimate – known as the RSE. The formula for the RSE of an estimate is:

$$\mathrm{RSE}(x) = \frac{\mathrm{SE}(x)}{x}$$

Where:

x is the estimate and $\mathrm{SE}(x)$ is the SE of the estimate.

RSEs are multiplied by 100 and expressed as a percentage.

Proportions and percentages formed from the ratio of two estimates are also subject to sampling error. The size of the error depends on the accuracy of both the numerator and the denominator.

For proportions where the numerator is a subset of the denominator, for example the ratio of people who completed a certification over the people who attended the training to get the certification, then an approximation of the RSE can be calculated using the following formula:

$$\mathrm{RSE}\left(\frac{x}{y}\right) = \sqrt{[\mathrm{RSE}(x)]^2 - [\mathrm{RSE}(y)]^2}$$

Where:

x is the numerator, and y is the denominator, of the estimated proportion.

For proportions where the denominator and numerator are independent estimates (for example, a ratio of rates regarding two separate populations such as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous), and where the RSEs on the denominator and numerator are small, an approximation of the RSE can be calculated using the following formula:

$$\mathrm{RSE}\left(\frac{x}{y}\right) = \sqrt{[\mathrm{RSE}(x)]^2 + [\mathrm{RSE}(y)]^2}$$

Note that the formulas shown above for approximating the RSE of a proportion are considered unsuitable when the RSE of the numerator is close to, or below, the RSE of the denominator. In this case, it is recommended to use the following formula to calculate the RSE of the proportion:

$$\mathrm{RSE}\left(\frac{x}{y}\right) = \sqrt{[\mathrm{RSE}(x)]^2 + \left(1 - \frac{2x}{y}\right) \times [\mathrm{RSE}(y)]^2}$$

Source: ABS (2019).

Confidence intervals

Confidence intervals (CIs) are used to indicate the reliability of an estimate. A CI is a specified interval, with the sample statistic at the centre, within which the corresponding population value can be said to lie with a given level of confidence (ABS 2015). Increasing the desired confidence level will widen the CIs (figure 2.3). CIs are useful because a range, rather than a single estimate, is more likely to encompass the real figure for the population value being estimated.

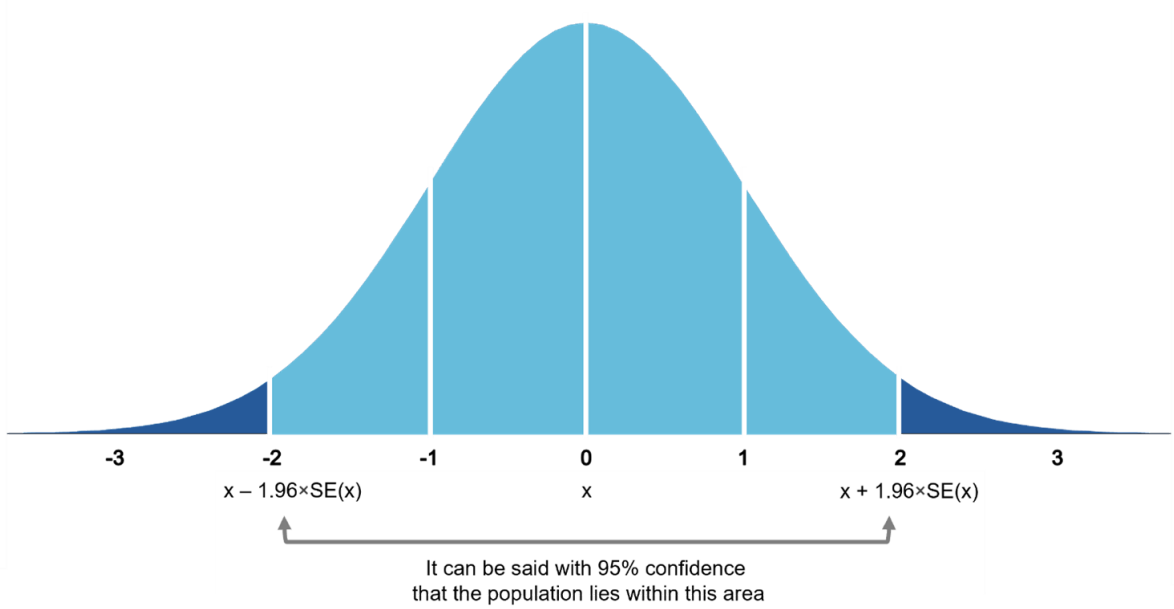
CIs are calculated from the population estimate and its associated SE. The CI used most commonly is calculated for 95% levels of probability, with 95% of all values falling within 1.96 standard errors of the mean. For example, if the estimate from a survey was that 628,300 people report having their needs fully met by a government service, and the associated SE of the estimate was 10,600 people, then the 95% CI would be calculated by:

- lower confidence limit = $628{,}300 - (1.96 \times 10{,}600) = 628{,}300 - 20{,}776 = 607{,}524$
- upper confidence limit = $628{,}300 + (1.96 \times 10{,}600) = 628{,}300 + 20{,}776 = 649{,}076$

This indicates that we can be 95% sure the true number of people who perceive that their needs are met by a government service is between 607,524 and 649,076.

The smaller the SE of the estimate, the narrower the CIs and the closer the estimate can be expected to be to the true value.

Figure 2.3 – Normal distribution with 95% confidence intervals



CIs also test for statistical differences between sample results (box 4).

Box 4 – Using confidence intervals to test for statistical significance

The CIs – the value ranges within which estimates are likely to fall – can be used to test whether the results reported for two estimated proportions are statistically different. If the CIs for the results do not overlap, then there can be confidence that the estimated proportions differ from each other. To test whether the 95% CIs of two estimates overlap, a range is derived using the following formulas:

$$R_1 = (\frac{x_2}{y_2} - \frac{x_1}{y_1}) - 1.96 \sqrt{(\text{RSE } (\frac{x_2}{y_2}) \times (\frac{x_2}{y_2}))^2 + (\text{RSE } (\frac{x_1}{y_1}) \times (\frac{x_1}{y_1}))^2}$$

and

$$R_2 = (\frac{x_2}{y_2} - \frac{x_1}{y_1}) + 1.96 \sqrt{(\text{RSE } (\frac{x_2}{y_2}) \times (\frac{x_2}{y_2}))^2 + (\text{RSE } (\frac{x_1}{y_1}) \times (\frac{x_1}{y_1}))^2}$$

If none of the values in this range is zero, then the difference between the two estimated proportions is statistically significant.

For example, consider survey data that estimated that the proportion of people who perceived that their needs were met by government services was 50% in jurisdiction A, with a 95% CI of ±5%, and 25% of people in jurisdiction B, with a 95% CI of ±10%. These results imply that we can be 95% sure the true result for jurisdiction A lies between 55% and 45%, and the true result for jurisdiction B lies between 15% and 35%. As these two ranges do not overlap, it can be said that the results for jurisdiction A and jurisdiction B are statistically significantly different.

Variability bands

Rates derived from administrative data counts are not subject to sampling error but might be subject to natural random variation, especially for small counts. For mortality data, variability bands are used to account for this variation (box 5).

Box 5 – Variability bands

The variability bands to be calculated using the standard method for estimating 95% confidence intervals are:

Crude rate (CR)

$$\text{CI (CR)}_{95\%} = \text{CR} \pm 1.96 \frac{\text{CR}}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^{I} d}}$$

Where:

d is the numerator of the estimated proportion.

Age-standardised rate (ASR)

$$\text{CI (ASR)}_{95\%} = \text{ASR} \pm 1.96 \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^{I} \frac{w_i^2 d_i}{n_i^2}}$$

Where:

w_i is the proportion of the standard population in age group i

d_i is the number of deaths in age group i

n_i is the number of people in the population in age group i .

Infant mortality rate (IMR)

$$\text{CI (IMR)}_{95\%} = \text{IMR} \pm 1.96 \frac{\text{IMR}}{\sqrt{d_0}}$$

Where:

d_0 is the number of deaths in infants aged less than one year.

Variability bands accompanying mortality data should be used for the purpose of within jurisdiction analysis at a point in time and over time. They should not be used for comparing mortality rates at a single point in time or over time between jurisdictions as they do not account for differences in under identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's deaths between jurisdictions.

Typically, in this standard method, the observed rate is assumed to have natural variability in the numerator count (for example, deaths) but not in the population denominator count. Variations in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's death rates may arise from uncertainty in the recording of Indigenous status on the death registration forms (in particular, under-identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's deaths) and in the ABS Census of Population and Housing, from which population estimates are derived. These variations are not considered in this method. Also, the rate is assumed to have been generated from a normal distribution (figure 2.3). Random variation in the numerator count is assumed to be centred around the true value – that is, there is no systematic bias.

Population measures

Data is frequently expressed relative to population in this report. For example, expenditure per person, or proportion of people who utilise a service or who benefit from a service. This enables comparison of data across populations of different sizes using relative numbers – standardised by population size – as distinct from absolute numbers.

Estimated Resident Population (ERP) data is available quarterly – that is, at end March, June, September, and December of each year. The midpoint ERP is typically used for the calculation of population rates in this report – for example, the 30 June ERP for calendar year data (table 2A.1) and the 31 December ERP for financial year data (table 2A.2).

This report uses first preliminary ERP data wherever possible and replaces this with final rebased data when available. For the 2025 report, this equates to:

- for June, ERP for 2014 to 2016 are final based on the 2016 Census of Population and Housing; ERP for 2017 to 2021 are final based on the 2021 Census; ERP from 2022 are first preliminary based on the 2021 Census
- for December, ERP for 2014 to 2015 are final based on the 2016 Census of Population and Housing; ERP for 2016 to 2020 are final based on the 2021 Census; ERP from 2021 are first preliminary based on the 2021 Census.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population

This year's Report on Government Services uses data from the ABS' estimates and projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, based on the 2021 Census. The 2021 Census-based population data include the estimated resident population as at 30 June 2021, plus an updated time series for previous periods ('backcast') and for forward periods ('projections'). This approach is consistent with RoGS' use of the most up-to-date Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population data available from the ABS at the time of publication.

The use of the 2021 Census-based population series has had a material impact on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rates in the report. Across the time series, the 2021 Census-based estimates and projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population are about 12% higher than the those based on the 2016 Census. This is due to the growth in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, which increased by 25.2% between 2016 and 2021. Non-demographic factors (such as changes in the propensity of people to identify as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person) accounted for the majority of this growth (ABS 2023).

As a result, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rates in this report are generally lower than rates in the 2024 report and may differ from results published elsewhere. Based on advice from the ABS, the time series for indicators and measures which draw on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population data in this report have been shortened (generally no further back than the penultimate (2016) Census).

Average annual growth rate

This report presents a growth rate to facilitate meaningful comparisons of changes over time. The method used is the *average annual growth rate* (AAGR) which is the uniform growth rate that would need to have applied each year for the value in the first year to grow to the value in the final year of the period of analysis (box 6).

Box 6 – Average annual growth rate

The formula for calculating a compound average annual growth rate (AAGR) is:

$$\text{AAGR}_{(t_0, t_n)} = [(\frac{P_{(t_n)}}{P_{(t_0)}})^{(\frac{1}{t_n - t_0})} - 1] \times 100$$

Where:

$P_{(t_0)}$ is the value in the initial period, $P_{(t_n)}$ is the value in the last period and $t_n - t_0$ is the number of periods (which will be one less than the total number of years).

Age-standardisation of data

Rationale for age-standardisation of data

The age profile of Australian people varies across jurisdictions, periods of time, geographic areas and/or population subgroups (for example, between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous people). Variations in age profiles are important because they can affect the likelihood of using a particular service (such as a public hospital) or particular 'events' occurring (such as death, incidence of disease or incarceration). Age-standardisation adjusts for the effect of variations in age profiles when comparing service usage, or rates of particular events across different populations.

Calculating age-standardised rates

Age-standardisation adjusts each of the comparison/study populations (for example, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous people) against a standard population (box 7). The latest standard population used is the final 30 June ERP for the 2001 (AIHW 2015)[1]. The result is a standardised estimate for each of the comparison/study populations.

The report generally publishes age-standardised rates that have been calculated using either one of two methods, as appropriate.

- The direct method is generally used for comparisons between study groups and is recommended by the AIHW (2011) for the purposes of comparing health and welfare outcome measures (for example, mortality rates, life expectancy, hospital separation rates and disease incidence rates) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous people.
- The indirect method is recommended when the age-specific rates for the population being studied are not known (or are unreliable), but the total number of events is known (AIHW 2015).

The *direct method* has three steps:

- Step 1: Calculate the age-specific rate for each age group for the study/comparison group.
- Step 2: Calculate the expected number of 'events' in each age group by multiplying the age-specific rates by the corresponding standard population.
- Step 3: Sum the expected number of cases in each age group and divide by the total of the standard population.

The *indirect method* has four steps:

- Step 1: Calculate the age-specific rates for each age group in the standard population.
- Step 2: Apply the age-specific rates resulting from step 1 to the number in each age group of the study population and sum to derive the total 'expected' number of cases for the study population.
- Step 3: Divide the observed number of events in the study population by the 'expected' number of cases for the study population derived in step 2.
- Step 4: Multiply the result of step 3 by the crude rate in the standard population.

Box 7 – Direct and indirect age-standardisation

The formula for deriving the age-standardised rate using the *direct method* is:

$$\text{ASR} = \frac{\sum(r_i \ P_i)}{\sum P_i}$$

The formula for deriving the age-standardised rate using the *indirect method* is:

$$\text{ASR} = \frac{C}{\sum(R_i \ p_i)} \times R$$

Where:

ASR is the age-standardised rate for the population being studied

r_i is the age group specific rate for age group i in the population being studied

P_i is the population of age group i in the standard population

C is the observed number of events in the population being studied

$\sum(R_i \ p_i)$ is the expected number of events in the population being studied

R_i is the age group specific rate for age group i in the standard population

p_i is the population for age group i in the population being studied

R is the crude rate in the standard population.

Source: AIHW (2015).

Tables 3–4 contain examples of the application of direct and indirect age-standardisation, respectively. Age-standardised rates are generally multiplied by 1,000 or 100,000 to avoid small decimal fractions. They are then reported as age-standardised rates per 1,000 or 100,000 people (AIHW 2015).

Table 3 – Age-standardisation of data using the direct method

Step 1

Age groups	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people			Non-Indigenous people		
	Population	People with severe / profound limitations	Age-specific severe / profound limitations	Population	People with severe / profound limitations	Age-specific severe / profound limitations
	C1	C2	C3 = C2/C1 × 100	C4	C5	C6 = C5/C4 × 100
18–24	54,400	2,800	5.1	1,869,200	34,200	1.8
25–29	36,300	1,600	4.4	1,389,700	24,700	1.8
30–34	34,800	2,800	8.0	1,458,500	37,100	2.5
35–39	31,200	1,600	5.1	1,432,000	43,900	3.1

Age groups	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people			Non-Indigenous people		
40–44	26,600	2,800	10.5	1,475,000	70,200	4.8
45–49	20,600	2,000	9.7	1,366,300	43,800	3.2
50–54	17,700	3,000	16.9	1,263,900	47,900	3.8
55–59	12,400	1,400	11.3	1,060,700	63,500	6.0
60–64	7,000	1,100	15.7	816,400	49,700	6.1
65+	12,900	3,200	24.8	2,222,200	283,400	12.8
Total	**253,900**	**22,300**	**8.8**	**14,353,900**	**698,400**	**4.9**

Step 2

Age groups	Standard population	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people expected number of 'events'	Non-Indigenous people expected number of 'events'
	C7	C8 = C7 × C3 / 100	C9 = C7 × C6 / 100
18–24	1,844,162	94,920	33,742
25–29	1,407,081	62,020	25,009
30–34	1,466,615	118,004	37,306
35–39	1,492,204	76,523	45,746
40–44	1,479,257	155,711	70,403
45–49	1,358,594	131,902	43,553
50–54	1,300,777	220,471	49,298
55–59	1,008,799	113,897	60,393
60–64	822,024	129,175	50,042
65+	2,435,534	604,163	310,607
Total	**14,615,047**	**1,706,787**	**726,098**

Step 3

	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people age-standardised rate	Non Indigenous people age-standardised rate
	$C10 = \sum C8 / \sum C7 \times 100$	$C11 = \sum C9 / \sum C7 \times 100$
Total	**11.7**	**5.0**

Source: AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) 2006, *'Potential Population'– Updating the Indigenous factor in disability services performance indicator denominators,* Welfare Working Paper Series Number 50, Cat. no. DIS 45, Canberra;
ABS (2008) *Population by Age and Sex, Australian states and territories* , June 2007, Cat. no. 3201.0, Canberra.

Table 4 – Age-standardisation of data using the indirect method[a,b]

Variable	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
C **– Observed number of imprisonments**									
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	3,467.0	715.1	3,442.0	2,564.6	728.1	154.3	101.4	1,609.4	12,781.8
Non-Indigenous people	8,906.0	5,800.3	6,146.6	3,821.3	2,227.3	479.3	284.7	256.3	27,921.7

Variable	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
p_i **– Study populations**[c]									
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people									
18–19 years	12,862	2,921	10,239	4,277	1,930	1,180	422	2,826	36,659
20–24 years	30,115	7,377	24,177	10,358	4,617	2,752	1,030	6,916	87,359
25–29 years	26,569	6,815	21,728	9,868	4,247	2,380	939	6,752	79,312
30–34 years	22,176	5,693	18,287	9,037	3,723	2,215	762	6,328	68,228
35–39 years	18,630	4,480	15,621	7,797	3,128	2,023	618	5,545	57,851
40–44 years	15,950	3,798	13,615	6,650	2,461	1,659	518	4,825	49,480
45–54 years	32,845	7,573	27,223	12,118	5,149	3,379	920	8,658	97,902

Variable	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
55+ years	46,708	10,093	34,495	14,758	6,540	5,476	1,035	9,257	128,437
Non-Indigenous people									
18–19 years	168,615	143,731	114,320	57,397	38,107	10,552	10,958	3,137	546,876
20–24 years	468,803	406,987	306,583	154,291	106,107	28,905	33,297	10,072	1,515,231
25–29 years	532,331	475,941	334,619	173,927	115,474	37,411	38,594	16,227	1,724,790
30–34 years	570,246	503,758	348,032	195,839	117,388	37,346	38,174	17,505	1,828,592
35–39 years	565,466	493,192	351,447	202,406	118,528	33,995	36,546	15,425	1,817,348
40–44 years	509,679	430,074	325,301	179,727	106,942	30,589	31,730	12,685	1,627,016
45–54 years	979,947	819,490	656,091	346,796	220,710	66,679	54,848	23,101	3,168,279
55+ years	2,317,824	1,821,544	1,469,114	747,141	578,738	188,368	104,926	38,295	7,267,584

Variable	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
N_i **– Number of prisoners (30 June 2001)**									
All people									
18–19 years									972
20–24 years									4,681
25–29 years									4,856
30–34 years									3,986
35–39 years									2,889
40–44 years									1,947
45–54 years									2,056
55+ years									1,002
Total									**22,389**

Variable	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
S_i – Standard population (30 June 2001)									
All people									
18–19 years									541,750
20–24 years									1,302,412
25–29 years									1,407,081
30–34 years									1,466,615
35–39 years									1,492,204
40–44 years									1,479,257
45–54 years									2,659,371
55+ years									4,266,357
Total									**14,615,047**

Step 1: Calculate R_i as $N_i / S_i * 100{,}000$

Variable	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
R_i – Standard population age-specific imprisonment rates per 100,000 adults (30 June 2001)									
18–19 years									179.42
20–24 years									359.41
25–29 years									345.11
30–34 years									271.78
35–39 years									193.61
40–44 years									131.62
45–54 years									77.31
55+ years									23.49
Total									**153.19**

Step 2: $(R_i p_i)/100{,}000$

Variable	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people									
18–19 years	23.1	5.2	18.4	7.7	3.5	2.1	0.8	5.1	65.8
20–24 years	108.2	26.5	86.9	37.2	16.6	9.9	3.7	24.9	314.0
25–29 years	91.7	23.5	75.0	34.1	14.7	8.2	3.2	23.3	273.7
30–34 years	60.3	15.5	49.7	24.6	10.1	6.0	2.1	17.2	185.4
35–39 years	36.1	8.7	30.2	15.1	6.1	3.9	1.2	10.7	112.0
40–44 years	21.0	5.0	17.9	8.8	3.2	2.2	0.7	6.4	65.1
45–54 years	25.4	5.9	21.0	9.4	4.0	2.6	0.7	6.7	75.7
55+ years	11.0	2.4	8.1	3.5	1.5	1.3	0.2	2.2	30.2
Total	**376.7**	**92.6**	**307.3**	**140.2**	**59.6**	**36.2**	**12.6**	**96.4**	**1,121.9**
Non-Indigenous people									
18–19 years	302.5	257.9	205.1	103.0	68.4	18.9	19.7	5.6	981.2
20–24 years	1,684.9	1,462.8	1,101.9	554.5	381.4	103.9	119.7	36.2	5,445.9
25–29 years	1,837.1	1,642.5	1,154.8	600.2	398.5	129.1	133.2	56.0	5,952.4
30–34 years	1,549.8	1,369.1	945.9	532.3	319.0	101.5	103.7	47.6	4,969.8
35–39 years	1,094.8	954.9	680.4	391.9	229.5	65.8	70.8	29.9	3,518.5
40–44 years	670.8	566.1	428.2	236.6	140.8	40.3	41.8	16.7	2,141.5
45–54 years	757.6	633.6	507.2	268.1	170.6	51.6	42.4	17.9	2,449.4
55+ years	544.4	427.8	345.0	175.5	135.9	44.2	24.6	9.0	1,706.9
Total	**8,442.0**	**7,314.6**	**5,368.6**	**2,862.0**	**1,844.1**	**555.3**	**555.8**	**218.8**	**27,165.6**

Step 3: $C/$ ('Total' from Step 2)

Variable	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	9.2	7.7	11.2	18.3	12.2	4.3	8.0	16.7	11.4

Variable	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Non-Indigenous people	1.1	0.8	1.1	1.3	1.2	0.9	0.5	1.2	1.0

Step 4: (Result of Step 3) × ('Total' from Step 1)

Variable	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Aust
Age-standardised rate (per 100,000 adults)									
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	**1,409.9**	**1,182.4**	**1,716.1**	**2,802.3**	**1,870.1**	**652.1**	**1,232.4**	**2,558.2**	**1,745.3**
Non-Indigenous people	**161.6**	**121.5**	**175.4**	**204.5**	**185.0**	**132.2**	**78.5**	**179.4**	**157.5**

a Rates are based on the indirect standardisation method, applying age group imprisonment rates derived from Prison Census data. **b** Rates are based on the 2021-22 daily average prisoner populations supplied by states and territories, calculated against adult population figures at December 2021 for people aged 18 or over, reflecting the age at which people are remanded or sentenced to adult custody. **c** The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander study population as at 31 December 2021 is derived as the average of two June projections based on the 2021 Census of Population and Housing, and on the medium series for the fertility assumption. The non-Indigenous study population is calculated by subtracting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander study population from the total preliminary estimated resident population as at 31 December 2021 based on the 2021 Census. Australia total population includes other territories.

Source: State and territory governments (unpublished); ABS 2024, 'Table 4' [data set] and 'Projected resident population' [Data Explorer], *Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2011 to 2031,* https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples/estimates-and-projections-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-australians/2011-2031, accessed 11 October 2024; ABS 2022 'Quarterly Population Estimates (ERP)' [Data Explorer], *National, state and territory population, December 2021,* https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/national-state-and-territory-population/dec-2021, accessed 22 August 2022; ABS 2013, 'Standard population for use in age-standardisation table' [data set], *Australian Demographic Statistics, June 2001,* https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/3101.0Main+Features1Mar%202013?OpenDocument, accessed 23 July 2024; ABS 2002, 'Summary information of all prisoners, by demographic and legal characteristics' [data set], *Prisoners in Australia, 2001,* https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4517.02001?OpenDocument, accessed 21 October 2024; Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision 2025, *Report on Government Services 2025,* table 8A.5.

1. Refer to page 2.27 in SCRGSP (2015) for the background on choice of year for the standard population and timeline for revision. Locate Footnote 1 above

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Report on Government Services 2025

PART A, GLOSSARY: RELEASED ON 30 JANUARY 2025

Glossary

The glossary of terms used in the Report on Government Services 2025

Term	Definition
Access	Measures how easily the community can obtain a delivered service (output).
Appropriateness	Measures how well services meet client needs including the extent of any underservicing or overservicing.
Comparability	Data is considered comparable if, (subject to caveats) it can be used to inform an assessment of comparative performance. Typically, data is considered comparable when it is collected in the same way and in accordance with the same definitions. For comparable indicators or measures, significant differences in reported results allow an assessment of differences in performance, rather than being the result of anomalies in the data.
Completeness	Data is considered complete if all required data is available for all jurisdictions that provide the service.
Constant prices	Refer to ‘real dollars’.
Cost effectiveness	Measures how well inputs (such as employees, cars and computers) are converted into outcomes for individual clients or the community. Cost effectiveness is expressed as a ratio of inputs to outcomes.
Current prices	Refer to ‘nominal dollars’.

Term	Definition
Descriptors	Descriptive statistics included in the Report that relate, for example, to the size of the service system, funding arrangements, client mix and the environment within which government services are delivered. This data is provided to highlight and make more transparent the differences among jurisdictions.
Effectiveness	Reflects how well the outputs of a service achieve the stated objectives of that service (also refer to program effectiveness).
Efficiency	Reflects how resources (inputs) are used to produce outputs and outcomes, expressed as a ratio of outputs to inputs (technical efficiency), or inputs to outcomes (cost effectiveness). (Also refer to ‘cost effectiveness’, ‘technical efficiency’ and 'unit costs'.)
Equity	Measures the difference between service access, outputs and outcomes for special needs groups compared to the general population. Equity of access relates to all Australians having adequate access to services, where the term adequate may mean different rates of access (depending on need) for different groups in the community.
Inputs	The resources (including land, labour and capital) used by a service area in providing a service.
Latest update	Refers to the date (month) when a data update was made to the Report on Government Services since the initial annual Report release (January/February). Details on which indicator(s) have updated data are specified on the relevant Report service area webpage.

Term	Definition
Nominal dollars	Refers to financial data expressed ‘in the price of the day’ and which is not adjusted to remove the effects of inflation. Nominal dollars do not allow for inter-year comparisons because reported changes may reflect changes to financial levels (prices and/or expenditure) and adjustments to maintain purchasing power due to inflation.
Output	The service delivered by a service area, for example, a completed episode of care is an output of a public hospital.
Outcome	The impact of a service on the status of an individual or a group, and the success of a government service area in achieving its overarching or high-level objectives. A service provider can influence the outcome of a service but external factors can also affect outcomes. For example, a desirable outcome of school education is that students are well positioned to transition to further study or work. School education is an important factor in achieving these outcomes, but broader economic factors might also influence these outcomes.
Process	Refers to the way in which a service is produced or delivered (that is, how inputs are transformed into outputs).
Program effectiveness	Reflects how well the outcomes of a service achieve the stated objectives of that service (also refer to effectiveness).
Quality	Reflects the extent to which a service is suited to its purpose and conforms to specifications.
Real dollars	Refers to financial data measured in prices from a constant base year to adjust for the effects of inflation. Real dollars allow the inter-year comparison of financial levels (prices and/or expenditure) by holding the purchasing power constant.

Term	Definition
Technical efficiency	A measure of how well inputs (such as employees, cars and computers) are converted into service outputs (such as hospital separations, education classes or residential aged care places). Technical efficiency reflects the ratio of outputs to inputs. It is affected by the size of operations and by managerial practices. There is scope to improve technical efficiency if there is potential to increase the quantity of outputs produced from given quantities of inputs, or if there is potential to reduce the quantities of inputs used in producing a certain quantity of outputs.
Unit costs	Measures average cost, expressed as the level of inputs per unit of output. This is an indicator of efficiency.

Report on Government Services 2025

PART A, ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS: RELEASED ON 30 JANUARY 2025

Acronyms and abbreviations

The acronyms and abbreviations used in the Report on Government Services 2025

Abbreviations	Spelt out
AAGR	Average annual growth rate
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ABSTUDY	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Study Assistance Scheme
ACARA	Australian Curriculum and Assessment Reporting Authority
ACAT	Aged Care Assessment Teams
ACECQA	Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
ACFI	Aged Care Funding Instrument
ACQSC	Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission
ACSQHC	Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care
ACT	Australian Capital Territory

Abbreviations	Spelt out
ACTAS	ACT Ambulance Service
ACTCS	Australian Capital Territory Corrective Services
ACTSES	ACT State Emergency Service
ADHD	Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder
ADR	Alternative dispute resolution
AEDC	Australian Early Development Census
AFP	Australian Federal Police
AG	Activity Group
AHMC	Australian Health Ministers' Conference
AHPRA	Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
AIDR	Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
AIRS	Australian Incident Reporting System
AISC	Australian Industry and Skills Committee

Abbreviations	Spelt out
AMEP	Adult Migrant English Program
AMI	Acute Myocardial Infarction
AN-ACC	Australian National Aged Care Classification
ANC	Absolute Neutrophil Count
AOD	Alcohol and Other Drug
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
ARIA+	Accessibility/Remoteness Index for Australia
ASCSIMT	Australian School Climate and School Identification Measurement Tool
ASGS	Australian Statistical Geography Standard
ASQA	Australian Skills Quality Authority
ASR	Age-Standardised Rate
Aust	Australia
AVIP	Adolescent Violence Intervention Program
AVETMISS	Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard

Abbreviations	Spelt out
BCC	Basic Community Care
BLP	Better Lives Program
C&P	Care and Protection Orders
CAD	Computer Aided Dispatch
CAP	Conditional Adjustment Payment
CaFIS	Children and Family Intensive Support
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CCB	Child Care Benefit
CCC	Choice, Change and Consequences
CCET	Child care, education and training (CCET)
CCMS	Child Care Management System
CCOPMM	Consultative Council for Obstetric and Perinatal Morbidity and Mortality
CCS	Child Care Subsidy
CCSS	Child Care Subsidy System

Abbreviations	Spelt out
CD	Collection District
CFA	Country Fire Authority
CFS	Country Fire Service
CH	Community Housing
CHART	Changing Habits and Reaching Targets
CHBOI	Core Hospital-Based Outcome Indicators
CHS	Canberra Health Services
CHSP	Commonwealth Home Support Programme
CI	Confidence Interval
CNOS	Canadian National Occupancy Standard
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
CR	Crude Rate
CRA	Commonwealth Rent Assistance

Abbreviations	Spelt out
CRIS	Client Relationship Information System
CSV	Court Services Victoria
CYPQ	Children and Youth Person Questionnaire
DBT	Dialectical Behaviour Therapy
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act 1992
Dept	Departmental
DES	Disability Employment Services
DFES	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
DOHAC	Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care
DoH	Department of Health
DMS	Disability Management Services
DPP	Director of Public Prosecutions
DRG	Diagnosis Related Group
DSS	Department of Social Services

Abbreviations	Spelt out
DVA	Department of Veterans' Affairs
ECEC	Early childhood education and care
EQUIPS	Explore, Question, Investigate, Practice, Succeed
ERP	Estimated Resident Population
ESS	Employment Support Services
FCA	Federal Court of Australia
FCFCOA	Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia
FCNSW	Forestry Corporation NSW
FFMVIC	Forest Fire Management Victoria
FRNSW	Fire and Rescue NSW
FRV	Fire Rescue Victoria
FSS	Family support services
FTB	Family Tax Benefit
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent

Abbreviations	Spelt out
GFS	Government Finance Statistics
GGFCE	General Government Final Consumption Expenditure
GP	General Practitioner
GTO	Group Training Organisation
HIPUs	High Intensity Program Units
HISOP	High Intensity Sex Offender Program
HIVIP	High Intensity Violence Intervention Program
HPV	Human Papillomavirus
HRT	Health Round Table
HSMR	Hospital Standardised Mortality Ratio
IADP	Intensive Alcohol and Drug Program
ICD	International Classification of Diseases
ICD-10-AM	International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems - 10th Revision - Australian modification
ICH	Indigenous Community Housing

Abbreviations	Spelt out
ICSEA	Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDATP	Intensive Drug and Alcohol Treatment Program
IEA	International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
IFSS	Intensive Family Support Services
IHACPA	Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority
IMR	Infant mortality rate
Invns	Investigations
IRSD	Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage
ISR	Incident Severity Rating
JFLIP	Juvenile Fire Lighting Intervention Program
JSA	Jobs and Skills Australia
JSC	Jobs and Skills Council
KIND	Kinship, improving relationships, No violence and Developing skills

Abbreviations	Spelt out
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LAC	Looking After Children
LGA	Local Government Area
MACR	Minimum age of criminal responsibility
MBI	Modified Barthel Index
MBS	Medicare Benefits Schedule
MCEECDYA	Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs
MDMS	Main Derived Major Speciality
MISOP	Moderate Intensity Sex Offender Program
MIVIP	Moderate Intensity Violence Intervention Program's
MMM	Modified Monash Model
MMR	Measles, Mumps and Rubella
MP	Management Policy
MPS	Multi-Purpose Service

Abbreviations	Spelt out
MRSA	Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus
MST	Multisystemic Therapy
NAP	National Assessment Program
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NASHH	National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness
NCVER	National Centre for Vocational Education Research
NDA	National Disability Agreement
NDS	National Disability Services
NDIA	National Disability Insurance Agency
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NECECC	National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection
NESB	Non-English Speaking Backgrounds
NFD	Not further defined
NFRC	National Federal Reform Council

Abbreviations	Spelt out
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NHHA	National Housing and Homelessness Agreement
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NHRA	National Health Reform Agreement
NICS	Norfolk Island Central School
NMDS	National Minimum Data Set
NMHPSC	National Mental Health Performance Subcommittee
NP UAECE	National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education
NPA	National Partnership Agreement
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
NQA ITS	National Quality Agenda Information Technology System
NQF	National Quality Framework
NQS	National Quality Standard
NSCSP	National Survey of Community Satisfaction with Policing

Abbreviations	Spelt out
NSHS	National Social Housing Survey
NSMHS	National Standards for Mental Health Services
NSQHS	National Safety and Quality Health Service
NSRA	National School Reform Agreement
NSSC	National Schools Statistics Collection
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
NTES	NT Emergency Service
Ntfns	Notifications
NYPR	National Youth Participation Requirement
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OOHC	Out-of-home care
OSHC	Outside School Hours Care
PBS	Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

Abbreviations	Spelt out
PC	Productivity Commission
PH	Public Housing
PIP	Practice Incentives Program
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PM&C	Prime Minister and Cabinet
PP	Pathways Program
PPRR	Prevention and mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery
PRA	Preschool Reform Agreement
PRN	Pro Re Nata
PWS	Parks & Wildlife Service
QAC	Quality Assurance Committees
QAF	Quality Assurance Framework
QI	Quality Indicator

Abbreviations	Spelt out
QCS	Queensland Corrective Services
QEW Survey	Queensland Engagement and Wellbeing Survey
QFES	Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
QLD	Queensland
QPWS&P	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships
QRA	Queensland Reconstruction Authority
QSG	Quality Surveillance Group
RACGP	Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
RAGE	Recognising Anger and Gaining Empowerment Program
RAS	Regional Assessment Services
RES	Residents' Experience Survey
RN	Registered Nurse
RFS	Rural Fire Service
RoGS	Report on Government Services

Abbreviations	Spelt out
RPBS	Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme
RSE	Relative Standard Error
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SA	South Australia
SAB	Staphylococcus Aureus Bacteraemia
SAC	Severity Assessment Code
SASS	Sexual Assault Support Services
SCRGSP	Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision
SCV	Safer Care Victoria
SDAC	Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers
SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
SE	Standard Error
SEE	Skills for Education and Employment
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas

Abbreviations	Spelt out
SES	Socio-Economic Status
SHS	Specialist Homelessness Services
SIH	Survey of Income and Housing
SIL	Supported Independent Living
SLS	Safety Learning System
SNAICC	Secretariat National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care
SOMIH	State Owned and Managed Indigenous housing
SOS	Speaking Out Survey
SOTP	Sex Offender Treatment Programs
SRLS	Safety Reporting and Learning System
SSIP	Short Sentence Intensive Program
STES	State and Territory Emergency Services
STRCP	Short-Term Restorative Care Programme
STT	Sustainable Timber Tasmania

Abbreviations	Spelt out
Subns	Substantiations
SWES	Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey
TAC	Training Accreditation Council
Tas	Tasmania
TAFE	Technical And Further Education
TCP	Transition Care Programme
TFS	Tasmania Fire Service
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
UCC	User cost of capital
VCAT	Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VF	Ventricular Fibrillation
VHC	Veteran Home Care
Vic	Victoria

Abbreviations	Spelt out
VICSES	Victoria State Emergency Service
VOTP	Violent Offenders Therapeutic Program
VPP	Violence Prevention Program
VRQA	Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority
VT	Ventricular Tachycardia
WA	Western Australia
WEC	Wellbeing and Engagement Collection
WHO	World Health Organization
WRTAL	Survey of Work–Related Training and Adult Learning
YBFS	Year Before Full-time Schooling