

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2014-15 Supplementary Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 4

Question No: 457

Topic: Aged Person - Homelessness

Hansard Page: Written

Senator McLucas asked:

The Department of Social Service Annual Report has been released. Table 11.8 (p. 90) notes that 55 organisations were funded under this program in 2013-14.

(a) How many clients were assisted by the 55 organisations funded by the Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged program? Please provide a breakdown by State.

(b) How does this compare to the estimated homeless population (for the same age group) for that State?

(c) Has the Department quantified the level of unmet need? If so, what is the Department doing to address this? If not, why?

(d) What is the Department doing to ensure that these organisations meet the needs of their clients?

(e) What types of activities do these organisations undertake?

Answer:

a) In 2013-14, a total of 55 Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged (ACHA) services assisted 5,470 clients. A breakdown by State is provided in **Table A**.

b) The 2011 Census estimated there were 14,860 older homeless people in Australia. A breakdown by State is provided in **Table B**.

c) Available data does not support a direct comparison between the ACHA programme and Census data due to differences in the data collection methodology, target group definitions and time period.

d) In the development of the Commonwealth Home Support Programme, the Department, in consultation with the Commonwealth Home Support Programme Advisory Group and its respective Sub Groups, initiated a number of reviews of HACC Service Types. The needs of vulnerable clients, including homeless older people, were considered as part of the Review of HACC Service Group 2, which in turn informed the *Key Directions for the Commonwealth Home Support Discussion Paper*. The Discussion Paper was publicly released for comment in 2014 and the Department received a range of input and comments from the sector which confirmed the inclusion of ACHA as part of the Commonwealth Home Support Programme which will commence on 1 July 2015.

The performance of funded organisations under the ACHA Programme is monitored through an accountability framework comprised of a Programme Manual, Funding Agreements, service activity reports and financial accountability reports. Service activity reports provide information on services delivered, clients, hours of services delivered and qualitative data providing evidence of goal attainment. Financial compliance reports

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provide evidence that funds have been used for the intended purpose and that funds are accounted for.

- e) Organisations receive ACHA funding for activities such as locating suitable accommodation, providing advice on housing applications, coordinating removals and assisting access to accommodation-related legal and financial services. Further information on how the ACHA Programme operates is available in the ACHA Programme Manual on the Department's website at: www.dss.gov.au.

Table A. Clients assisted by ACHA services by state/territory, 2013-14

State	No. ACHA clients
NSW	1,285
VIC	2,331
QLD	307
WA	297
SA	553
TAS	159
ACT	301
NT	239
Total	5,470

Client numbers based upon service provider's 2013-14 Annual service activity reports

Table B. Estimated homeless population aged 55 years and over by state/territory, 2011

State	Estimated population of homeless people aged over 55 years*
NSW	4,530
VIC	2,710
QLD	3,446
WA	1,497
SA	817
TAS	253
ACT	172
NT	1,424
Total	14,849

Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012, Census of Population and Housing: estimating homelessness, 2011, Cat. N. 2049.0