



Western Australian Auditor General's Report

Implementation of the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness in Western Australia

Report 13 – October 2012





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**Office of the Auditor General
Western Australia**

7th Floor Albert Facey House
469 Wellington Street, Perth

Mail to:

Perth BC, PO Box 8489
PERTH WA 6849

T: 08 6557 7500

F: 08 6557 7600

E: info@audit.wa.gov.au

W: www.audit.wa.gov.au

National Relay Service TTY: 13 36 77
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WESTERN AUSTRALIAN AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT

Implementation of the National Partnership Agreement on
Homelessness in Western Australia

Report 13
October 2012



**THE PRESIDENT
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**THE SPEAKER
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

PERFORMANCE AUDIT: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT ON HOMELESSNESS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

This report has been prepared for submission to Parliament under the provisions of section 25 of the *Auditor General Act 2006*.

Performance audits are an integral part of the overall audit program. They seek to provide Parliament with assessments of the effectiveness and efficiency of public sector programs and activities, and identify opportunities for improved performance.

The information provided through this approach will, I am sure, assist Parliament in better evaluating agency performance and enhance parliamentary decision-making to the benefit of all Western Australians.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glen Clarke'.

GLEN CLARKE
ACTING AUDITOR GENERAL
24 October 2012

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Auditor General's Overview

In 2009, Western Australia (WA) and the Commonwealth signed the four year National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness. Data at the time indicated that there were 13 000 homeless people in WA and the objective of the Agreement was to reduce that number by seven per cent.

Tackling homelessness is very challenging as the causes are complex and interrelated. They include issues related to individual circumstances such as domestic violence, substance misuse, mental health and personal financial issues through to broad macro-economic factors such as housing supply, affordability and employment. The impact of these issues can also be different from region to region.

In that context, demonstrating that the programs under the Agreement directly reduced homelessness by seven per cent was going to be difficult at best. In fact, identifying the impact the Agreement has had on overall homelessness levels is not possible. What is clearer is that the consultation and engagement between government agencies and not-for-profit organisations has been more effective than in the past, individual programs have generally met their client targets and they are making a positive difference for the people who use them.

Not everything was done perfectly however, and there are risks to sustaining these results. The availability of housing, both public and private, was overestimated and the shortfall increases the risk of not being able to deliver programs to people who need them. The timeframes provided by the Commonwealth for the planning and start-up of the programs under the Agreement were unrealistic. This is a key lesson with broader relevance to other state and federal agreements. There is also ongoing uncertainty over the future of the Agreement which risks a loss of service delivery capacity and cutting short support for homeless people.

Almost \$70 million of the \$135 million available under the Agreement is State funding. Despite this, there is very limited reporting to Parliament on the progress and results of the State's investment. This report should partly remedy this and the similarly focused but independent reports that seven other Auditors General will produce in coming months will further broaden understanding of this Agreement across the states. Nonetheless, for this and future agreements, agencies should ensure that Parliament and the WA public receive the information they need to determine if their money has been spent effectively.

Executive Summary

In early 2009 WA, the Commonwealth and other states and territories signed the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (the Agreement). Under the Agreement, WA and the Commonwealth jointly committed \$135.1 million over four years (2009-10 to 2012-13) to address homelessness.

The causes of homelessness are complex and linked to people's personal, social and financial circumstances. Broader economic factors also contribute to homelessness. In particular the growth of the resources sector and the associated population growth in WA have had a significant impact on the availability of affordable housing throughout the state. Data available at the start of the Agreement showed that homelessness affected around 13 000 people in WA. Recent changes to the way the Australian Bureau of Statistics measures homelessness has reduced this to around 8 000 people.

To implement the Agreement, each state and territory developed its own plan. WA's Implementation Plan (the Plan) comprises 20 programs to help homeless people and those at risk of homelessness (Attachment 1). These programs provide one-on-one support for up to 12 months to help people find and stay in stable housing, to connect with mainstream mental and general health services, access financial counselling or engage in employment and education. The Department for Child Protection (DCP), the lead agency for the Agreement in WA, contracted 71 not-for-profit organisations to deliver these programs.

The Plan also includes the purchase or building of dwellings worth \$62.4 million under the oversight of WA's Housing Authority. These funds provide for the purchase of 34 houses, land for and construction of 148 units for homeless men, and construction of 98 new units and common facilities for young people (the Foyer Project). Other government agencies involved in implementing the Plan include the WA Police, the Mental Health Commission, the Department of Corrective Services and the Drug and Alcohol Office.

This audit sought to assess if WA is meeting its obligations under the Agreement and if it is making a difference for homeless people in WA.

We focused on answering three questions:

- Is WA meeting its funding and reporting commitments as agreed in the Agreement?
- Are programs being delivered as agreed in WA's Implementation Plan?
- Are programs making a positive difference for homeless people in WA?

Audit conclusion

The State has met its funding commitments. At 30 June 2012, which is three years into the four year Plan, WA has met its co-contribution commitment under the Agreement and the total \$135.1 million of joint funds is on track to be spent by the end of the Agreement.

The State has also met its reporting commitments to the Commonwealth. However, reporting to the WA Parliament on the results of WA's investment in the Agreement has been limited.

All programs have been delivered as agreed in the Implementation Plan. In 2010-11, most programs met or exceeded client targets and the programs have made a positive difference to the people using them. However, it is not possible to demonstrate that the programs will achieve WA's overall objective of reducing the number of homeless people by seven per cent. This is because the impact of the programs cannot be isolated from other initiatives and broader economic circumstances, such as the lack of affordable housing and population growth.

The planning for provision of housing could have been better. Seven programs are designed to get clients into stable housing and sustain this for at least 12 months. These programs rely on access to suitable and affordable housing. However, a shortfall in available housing has put achieving long term accommodation outcomes at risk.

The Agreement's six month timeframe to get programs started was overly ambitious and could not be met. It was expected that the Implementation Plan would be developed and programs started by July 2009. But it took another six to 12 months before most programs started. Recruiting and training 100 plus staff state-wide, and setting up new performance and contract monitoring systems were particularly challenging in the short timeframe. The lack of available housing for workers presented an additional barrier for programs in the Kimberley and the Pilbara.

Cooperation has been effective between government and non-government organisations delivering homelessness programs under the Agreement. However, the WA Government has not succeeded in meeting its guiding principle of a linked up homelessness support system that makes it easy for homeless people to access the various Commonwealth and state government and non-government services.

Key findings

DCP effectively engaged not-for-profit organisations and other government agencies to develop and deliver WA's Plan for the implementation of the Agreement. DCP developed an Implementation Plan comprising 20 programs delivered state-wide by 71 not-for-profit organisations.

The State has met its funding obligation under the Agreement. It has committed \$68.4 million or 51 per cent of the \$135.1 million Commonwealth/State joint funding. At 30 June 2012, the State had spent \$96.4 million (71 per cent of the total funds). Of this expenditure, \$50.2 million was for support programs and \$46.2 million for capital projects. The State is on track to spend all funds by the end of the Agreement at 30 June 2013.

The State has met its reporting commitments under the Agreement to provide annual reports to the Commonwealth on the performance of programs and achievements against targets and on program expenditure. However, no such information has been provided to the WA Parliament. This means there is limited visibility at state level on results of WA's investment in the Agreement.

Achievement of the Agreement's main objective of reducing homelessness by seven per cent cannot be demonstrated as it is not possible to isolate its specific impact from other initiatives and broader economic circumstances (such as the lack of affordable housing and population growth) that also impact on levels of homelessness. Another complication is the Agreement's reliance on the Australian Bureau of Statistic's (ABS) Census data to measure reductions in homelessness. Recent changes to the way the ABS measures homelessness has reduced the 2006 homelessness figure for WA from 13 391 to 8 277 (38 per cent reduction).

It is also not possible to say if the 20 programs reduced homelessness for clients assisted by them. This is because it would be necessary to know how many individuals became and remain housed over the four year life of the Plan and even beyond. At present DCP does not have reliable information on the length of clients' tenancies so their level of homelessness cannot be determined.

In the absence of a national monitoring system, DCP set up its own performance reporting and monitoring system. DCP's system monitors the number of clients assisted and reports this against program targets. However, it does not accurately monitor whether clients sustain their tenancies even though 13 programs have targets for this. DCP has acknowledged that there are problems with the data completeness and quality, and is working to improve this.

Of the 20 programs, 16 have targets for the number of clients assisted of which 12 met or exceeded their targets in 2010-11. Four programs did not meet their targets due to delays in program starts. DCP estimates that if primary clients' family members and dependents are included, around 6 000 people benefited from the 16 programs in 2010-11.

In 2010-11, 28 per cent of all clients assisted were Aboriginal people (681). This was well above the overall 11 per cent target for this client group.

Progress reports and case studies from not-for-profit organisations and third party interviews with clients show that programs make a positive difference for the majority of people who use them. Clients said that getting a house or not losing it, being reconnected to family, access to mainstream services and getting one-on-one support is what made the difference.

The State had six months to set up \$135.1 million worth of programs and capital projects. This was an unrealistic timeframe and was not met. The delays resulted in some programs not meeting targets for 2009-10 and 2010-11.

Having access to suitable housing for clients is critical to program success, but the provision of housing was not thoroughly planned. Five of the largest programs support clients for six to 12 months to get into and stay in stable accommodation. These programs rely on the availability of and access to suitable housing. Although the Housing Authority allocated 1 940 dwellings for programs over the four years of the Plan, it could not guarantee these would be available where and when clients needed them. Private rental and other options such as return to family, house sharing and boarding houses were expected to provide half of the housing. But affordable rentals are scarce due to broader housing market conditions. The lack of suitable housing means that clients cannot be housed, so programs are at risk of not meeting their objectives.

The lack of affordable private rentals is a particular problem in the North West. DCP and others involved in the design, selection and planning of programs did not make sufficient allowance for this. For example, three housing support programs aimed at assisting people in the Pilbara and the Kimberley require the availability of more than 140 private rental houses even though it is well known that these are not available.

The Agreement has improved relationships between government agencies and non-government organisations delivering programs for homeless people. The State's guiding principle for service delivery is a system that links the various Commonwealth and State government and non-government services for homeless people and makes access to these easy. However, this has not yet been achieved and there is no certainty that improved relationships will continue after June 2013 when programs finish.

Recommendations

To improve implementation and monitoring of national partnership agreements, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Department of Treasury and lead agencies should seek to ensure that:

- timeframes are reasonable for implementing programs and projects
- adequate planning has been done
- appropriate measures and monitoring systems are in place.

To monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of its services to homeless people, DCP should:

- develop and report on agency level performance indicators for homelessness service delivery
- report to the WA Parliament on the state's performance under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness
- develop the ability to count unique individuals that use different state funded homelessness services to avoid double counting of clients. This will also assist with future planning and budgeting for services
- work toward better information and data sharing with other state agencies that also provide services to homeless people or people at risk of homelessness.

Agency responses

Department for Child Protection

The Auditor General's report has provided valuable confirmation of the work undertaken by the State to make a positive difference for homeless people, it was particularly pleasing that the Auditor General determined that all programs were delivered as agreed in the Implementation Plan and that most programs met or exceeded client targets. The Department will review the Auditor General's report which will be used to enhance the Department's operations in this area.

The Department for Child Protection is committed to assisting vulnerable Western Australians at risk of or experiencing homelessness including women and children escaping domestic violence. The National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness programs are being independently evaluated over a two year period. Preliminary findings from the first stage of the independent evaluation are very positive. Programs have demonstrated success in providing support to people at risk or experiencing homelessness. The programs have been integral in leveraging reform in the homelessness services system in WA.

Should the funding for the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness continue the findings from this report will inform decisions regarding the future design of programs.

Housing Authority

I am pleased to note the report's positive conclusions that the State is meeting its obligations under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness and making a difference for homeless people in WA. The Department of Housing has built on its relationship with the Department for Child Protection and developed new relations with the non-government sector in responding effectively to homeless people in WA. At 30 June 2012, 728 public houses were allocated to people under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness to accommodate 1 645 people who had been impacted by homelessness. The opportunity to continue to work closely with funded support services and to ensure we are giving priority to those most in need of housing is

an important agenda for the Department. In addition, the Department would acknowledge significant joint venture achievements for homeless people, in particular the high quality St Bartholomew's House response to adults and the ongoing Oxford Foyer Project for youth.

The report also acknowledges that many programs developed and implemented under the Agreement rely on affordable housing to provide stable long term accommodation for clients. The high priority that is placed on providing more social housing has been demonstrated through increased investment for the provision of social and affordable housing assets in WA. For example, \$971 million was allocated through the 2012-13 State Budget. In addition, \$1.55 billion has been allocated through the 2012-13 State Budget for the delivery of social and affordable housing services and programs. The supply of affordable private rental properties is increasing in WA with 6 000 new affordable rentals to be built by June 2016. The schedule includes 554 homes completed by 30 June 2012, construction started on another 1 000, and funding for an additional 1 000 committed in 2011-12 to bring WA's commitment to 6 000 by 2016.

Department of the Premier and Cabinet

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) welcomes the Auditor General's report and findings, in particular the recognition of the partnership between the Department for Child Protection and not-for-profit organisations in the design and delivery of programs, and of the effectiveness of those programs in making a difference.

The DPC also welcomes the Office of the Auditor General's (OAG) recommendations for further improvement, particularly in relation to timeframes, planning and monitoring related to national partnership agreements. It is noted, however, that these issues are not often within the State's control when undertaking national reform initiatives, such as the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness. DPC and the Department of Treasury work closely with delivery agencies during the negotiation of national partnership agreements in order to ensure agreements comply with the principles contained within the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations, including acceptable timeframes, outcomes and delivery milestones. However, the Commonwealth, using fiscal leverage, often places pressure on states and territories to agree to outcomes early in implementation in order to demonstrate 'quick wins' or enable payments to be made within specific time periods. As is evident in the implementation of the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, this can result in optimistic timeframes or outcomes being agreed to, and in advance of appropriate performance indicators, outcome measures and monitoring systems being developed.

In relation to funding obligations under the Agreement, it is noted that the WA Government committed an additional \$8.3 million over 2011-12 and 2012-13 in the 2012-13 State Budget to not-for-profit service providers under the Agreement. This was to address sector sustainability issues including salary levels. The Commonwealth Government has recently indicated that it intends to offer an additional \$106 170 in 2012-13 in recognition of Fair Work Australia's Social and Community Services decision.

The DPC also notes the OAG's concern around the uncertainty of the programs funded under the Agreement continuing after June 2013. Despite repeated requests, the Commonwealth Government has not yet engaged in negotiations to extend or renew the Agreement.

Department of Treasury

The Department of Treasury agrees with the Auditor General that the implementation and monitoring of national partnership agreements could be improved through ensuring that:

- timeframes are reasonable for implementation of programs and projects
- adequate planning has been done
- appropriate measures and monitoring systems are in place.

However, national partnership agreements are negotiated between the Commonwealth and the State/Territory and the capacity of state agencies (both central and line agencies) to influence these factors is often limited.

Each state is only one of many parties to national agreements and in order that agreements can be reached in the timeframes required, individual state agencies have limited capacity to make material changes to Commonwealth proposals. This is exacerbated by the short timeframes often provided by the Commonwealth for state agencies to review proposed agreements and provide feedback. For example, the Commonwealth recently requested feedback from central agencies on a Project Agreement for Rheumatic Fever with a 24 hour turnaround. In this case, the comments that were provided by the State were not addressed or the issues clarified, even when they were reinforced to the Commonwealth for a second time. A similar experience occurred for a Project Agreement for Veteran Community Access to Home and Community Care, where central agencies were provided with two days to provide feedback on Commonwealth proposals despite having no involvement in preliminary negotiations.

The measurement of outcomes has been a considerable challenge across many national partnership agreements, including the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness and this can at least in part be attributed to the factors outlined above.

\$135 million has been committed to deliver the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness in Western Australia

Data available at the start of the Agreement showed that homelessness affected around 13 000 people in WA, including young and old, and families with children. People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness can be found living on the street, or in overcrowded situations with family and friends because they have no house of their own. It also includes people who live in emergency accommodation, and those who stay in boarding houses for short or long periods of time. It is estimated that 11 per cent of homeless people in WA are Aboriginal.

The causes of homelessness are complex and linked to people’s personal, social and financial circumstances. Domestic and family violence is the most common reason for seeking help with homelessness. A majority of people often have more than one issue contributing to their homelessness. These can include mental and general health conditions, alcohol and substance abuse, financial problems, and family violence (Figure 1).

Broader economic circumstances such as the availability of jobs and houses, prices of essential goods and services, and natural disasters also contribute to homelessness. For WA, the strength of the resources sector and the associated population growth has had a significant impact. There are notable shortages in affordable accommodation, prices for residential rentals are high, and waiting times for social housing are long.

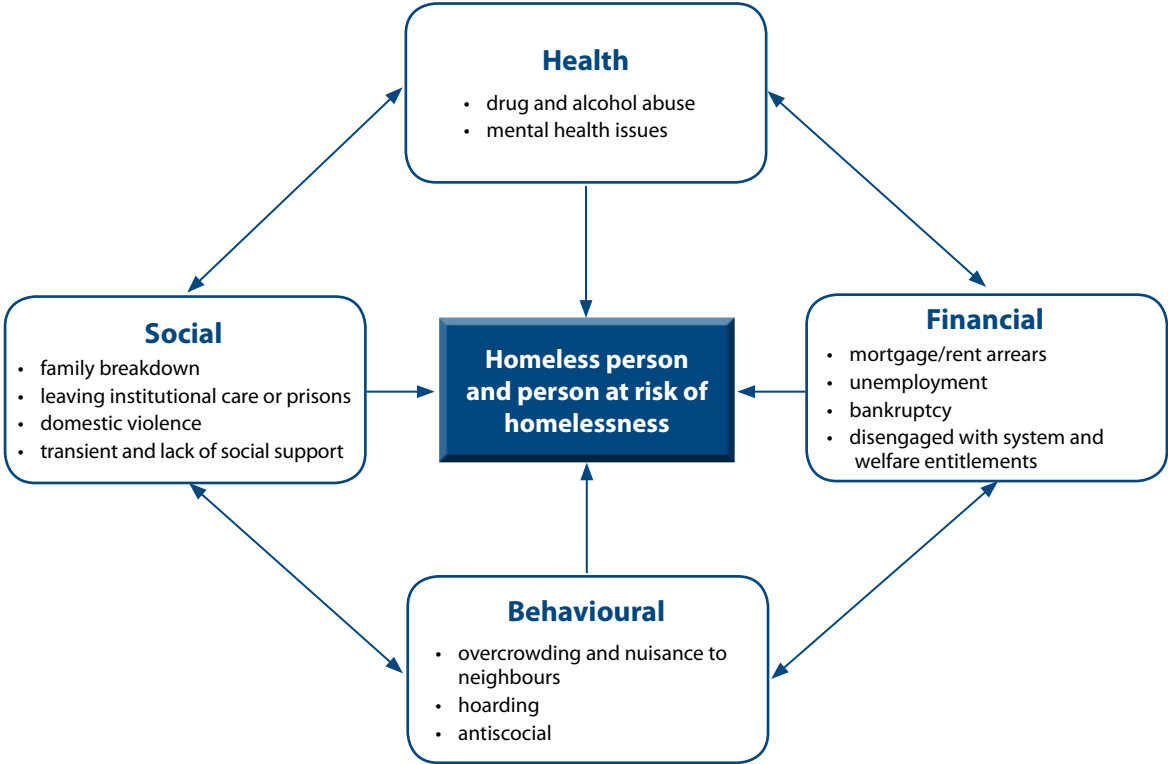


Figure 1: Factors contributing to homelessness
The causes of homelessness are complex and multi-dimensional.

The Agreement provides an additional \$135 million for homelessness services – approximately 40 per cent of total spend on homelessness in WA

The provision of services for homeless people and those at risk of homelessness has been a shared responsibility of the Commonwealth and the States/Territories since 1985. In early 2009 the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) signed the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) and the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness. These agreements provide the framework for governments to fund homelessness services Australia wide, and work together to reduce homelessness through the provision of affordable housing.

Funding under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness totals \$135.1 million. In the first three years of the Agreement, expenditure made under the Agreement represented approximately 40 per cent of the \$234 million expended on all homelessness services in WA (Figure 2).

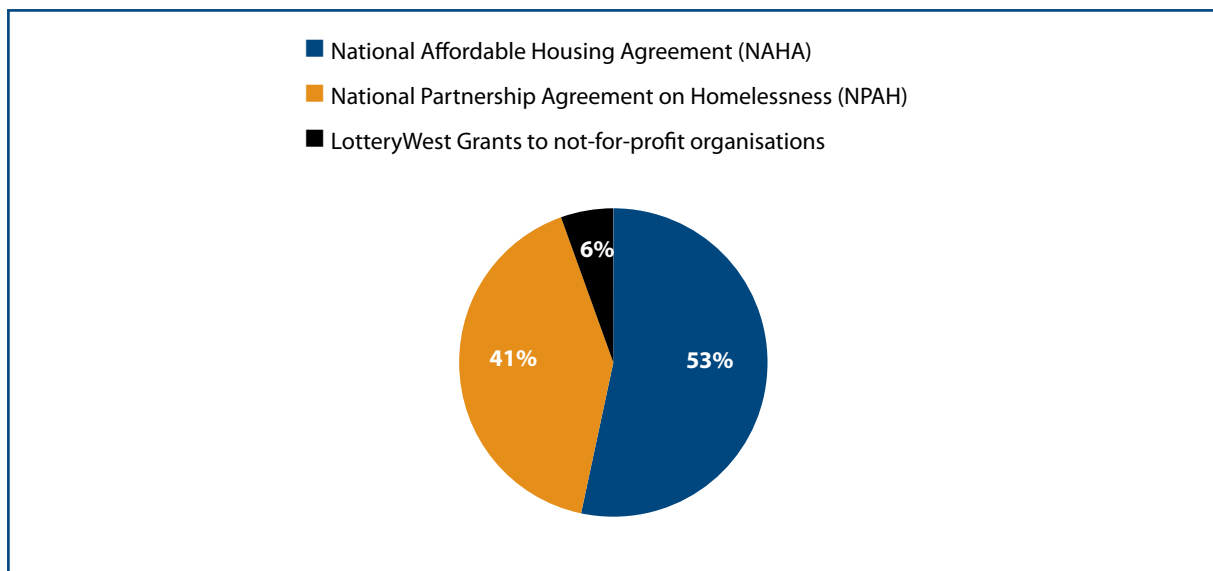


Figure 2: Sources of funding for WA's spending on homelessness services for the financial years 2009-10 to 2011-12

DCP is responsible for WA's Implementation Plan of 20 programs delivered by 71 not-for-profit organisations

Each state and territory agreed to develop an Implementation Plan to deliver four core outputs:

- implementation of the Commonwealth's 'A Place to Call Home' initiative
- 'Street to Home' initiatives for chronic homeless people
- support for public and private tenants to help sustain their tenancies
- assistance for people leaving child protection services, correctional and health facilities to access and maintain stable, affordable housing.

WA's Implementation Plan was agreed by the State and the Commonwealth in July 2009 and expires with the Agreement in June 2013. The Department for Child Protection (DCP) is the agency responsible for WA's

Plan. The agency has contracted 71 not-for-profit organisations to deliver 20 programs. The Plan also requires support from a number of other government agencies, in particular, the Housing Authority. The Plan covers the whole of the state.

The 20 programs delivered under the Plan are listed in Attachment 1 and offer:

- one-on-one support for up to 12 months for those that need help with finding and sustaining housing
- outreach services for people that sleep on the street
- help for people whose tenancies are at risk
- support for women and children impacted by family violence but who want to stay in their own home
- hardship grants to pay gas, water or electricity bills
- linkages to mainstream services that help people resolve problems that impact on their housing
- new social housing dwellings and supported accommodation facilities.

The intention of the programs is to:

- intervene early to prevent people from becoming homeless
- break the cycle of homelessness by helping people get back on their feet
- provide pathways between homelessness services and connect people to mainstream services that help them to sustain their housing.

Programs have specific client targets and service different groups of people, including:

- people who live and sleep on the street in metropolitan and remote areas
- young people leaving institutional care
- people exiting prison or youth detention facilities
- people with mental illness and/or substance abuse problems
- families under stress from domestic violence
- children disconnected from school as a result of homelessness
- people at risk of losing their tenancies in the private or public housing markets.

In line with the nationally agreed target to reduce homelessness by seven per cent by 2013, WA established the following targets based on 2006 Census information:

- reduce the number of homeless people by seven per cent (937 people) from 13 391 people to 12 455
- reduce the number of people who live on the street by 25 per cent (598 people) from 2 392 people to 1 794
- reduce the number of homeless Aboriginal people by one-third (499 people) from 1 496 to 997.

Since these WA targets were set in September 2010, the ABS changed the way homeless people are counted and released revised 2006 figures in September 2012. As a result, the homelessness count for WA was reduced from 13 391 to 8 277. New homelessness data resulting from the 2011 Census will become available in November 2012. Both these developments will impact on WA's targets and its measurement of changes to homelessness.

Audit Focus and Scope

The objective for this audit was to examine if WA is meeting its obligations under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness and if it is making a difference for homeless people in WA.

The focus of the audit was on three questions:

- Is WA meeting its funding and reporting commitments as agreed in the Agreement?
- Are programs being delivered as agreed in WA's Implementation Plan?
- Are programs making a positive difference for homeless people in WA?

The audit only examined programs funded under the Agreement. It did not examine LotteryWest grants.

Concurrent audit with Australian jurisdictions

The Auditor General for WA, as a member of the Australasian Council of Auditors-General (ACAG), agreed to conduct a concurrent, but independent, performance audit of the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness along with seven other Auditors General. The audit objective and questions are broadly consistent between ACAG members but decisions about the audit scope and methodology are made independently by each Auditor General.

What we did

For this audit we met with WA agencies involved in the implementation of the Agreement. These include:

Key agencies:

- Department for Child Protection (lead agency)
- Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- Department of Treasury
- Housing Authority

Other stakeholder agencies:

- Department of Corrective Services
- Drug and Alcohol Office
- LotteryWest
- Mental Health Commission
- WA Police

We audited 10 not-for-profit organisations. We ensured that this sample covered:

- the majority of programs in WA's Implementation Plan
- regional and metropolitan based organisations
- organisations with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal client bases.

The metropolitan organisations are:

- AnglicareWA
- Centrecare
- Lucy Saw Centre Association Inc.
- Parkerville Children and Youth Care Inc.
- Ruah Community Services
- St Patrick's Community Support Centre.

Regional organisations are:

- AccordWest
- Geraldton Resource Centre
- Kimberley Community Legal Services Inc.
- Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

For each not-for-profit organisation we interviewed staff and analysed relevant financial and performance data for 2009-10 and 2010-11. Data for 2011-12 was unavailable at the time of the audit.

For DCP we analysed expenditure to 30 June 2012 against agreed budgets for programs in the Plan. We also examined results reported in WA's 2010-11 annual report to the Commonwealth and used original output data from the 10 sampled organisations to verify these. For the Housing Authority we examined 2009-10 to 2011-12 financial and performance data for programs that involved the purchase or build of new social housing dwellings and supported accommodation.

We also analysed information collected for an independent evaluation of WA's implementation of the Agreement. We examined the record of 81 interviews with people participating in programs. We also examined the summary of a survey conducted with more than 100 staff delivering the programs.

Two members of the audit team participated in 'Perth Registry Week 2012' which involved interviewing homeless people who sleep on the street. We also attended an informal meeting of the Western Australian Council on Homelessness and the Specialist Homeless Services Conference in Perth in May 2012, and met with the Chair and CEO of the Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services (WA).

This audit was conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards.

Programs make a difference for clients, but it is unclear what impact these will have on overall levels of homelessness

Sixteen of WA's 20 programs have targets for the number of clients assisted of which 12 met or exceeded their targets in 2010-11. In addition to program targets, WA agreed to contribute to reducing homelessness by seven per cent by June 2013. While it is clear that the programs are making a positive difference for individual clients, it is not possible to show that the programs have reduced WA's overall level of homelessness. A description of each program is given at Attachment 1.

In 2010-11 most programs exceeded client targets

Most programs in WA's Plan have primary client targets for the number of people to be assisted. WA also set a specific target of 11 per cent for the proportion of Aboriginal people to be assisted. In 2010-11, twelve programs met or exceeded primary client targets and four did not due to delays in the start-up of programs. Targets for assisting Aboriginal people were exceeded. For 13 programs, WA also set targets for the proportion (50 or 75 per cent) of clients that sustain their tenancies for at least 12 months. But, shortcomings in data collection mean that it cannot accurately report on outcomes against the 12 month targets.

We examined the 2010-11 performance of the 16 programs that have client targets. Data for 2009-10 was incomplete as not all programs had started and 2011-12 data was unavailable at the time of the audit.

In 2010-11, these programs assisted 2 447 primary clients, 287 more than the target for the year (Figure 3). If family members and dependents were included, DCP estimates that more than double the number (approximately 6 100 people) benefited from the programs in 2010-11.

Reporting period 2010-11			
Programs	All primary clients assisted	Program targets	Difference between targets and number of clients assisted
A Place to Call Home *	17	10	7
Homelessness Accommodation Support *	390	390	0
Street to Home Assertive Outreach	111	75	36
Street to Home Housing Support *	219	261	-42
Rough Sleeper Assertive Outreach – Remote	62	25	37
Support for Young People Leaving Child Protection	26	12	14
Support for Children in Homeless Families	162	120	42
Safe At Home	279	225	54
Domestic Violence Outreach	222	125	97
Domestic Violence Child Support	128	60	68
Private Rental Tenancy Support Services	261	275	-14
Public Tenancy Support Services	154	240	-86
Housing Support – Mental Health*	153	85	68
Housing Support – Corrective Services*	103	80	23
Housing Support – Drug and Alcohol*	151	172	-21
People with Exceptionally Complex Needs*	9	5	4
Total	2 447	2 160	287

*These programs include an allocation of public housing from the Housing Authority for a proportion of clients.

Source: OAG and DCP

Figure 3: Difference between primary client targets and actual clients assisted on 16 programs in 2010-11

Programs make a difference for clients, but it is unclear what impact these will have on overall levels of homelessness

In 2010-11, sixteen programs assisted 681 Aboriginal people (28 per cent of all clients). This is 498 people more than the target (183) for the year, and above the 11 per cent target (Figure 4).

Reporting period 2010-11				
Programs	Programs with 11 per cent Aboriginal target	Reported primary clients (all)	Reported primary Aboriginal clients	Percentage of clients assisted that are Aboriginal
A Place to Call Home	Yes	17	5	29%
Homelessness Accommodation Support	Yes	390	134	34%
Street to Home Assertive Outreach	Yes	111	30	27%
Street to Home Housing Support	Yes	219	30	14%
Rough Sleeper Assertive Outreach – Remote	Majority of people assisted	62	57	92%
Support for Young People Leaving Child Protection	Yes	26	7	27%
Support for Children in Homeless Families	Yes	162	36	22%
Safe At Home	No	279	46	16%
Domestic Violence Outreach	No	222	79	36%
Domestic Violence Child Support	No	128	65	51%
Private Rental Tenancy Support Services	No	261	11	4%
Public Tenancy Support Services	Yes	154	102	66%
Housing Support – Mental Health	Yes	153	25	16%
Housing Support – Corrective Services	Yes	103	31	30%
Housing Support – Drug and Alcohol	Yes	151	19	13%
People with Exceptionally Complex needs	No	9	4	44%
Total		2 447	681	28%

Source: OAG and DCP

Figure 4: Difference between Aboriginal primary client targets and actual Aboriginal clients assisted on 16 programs in 2010-11

Clients say that programs make a positive difference to their lives

Progress reports and case studies from not-for-profit organisations and third party interviews with clients show that the programs make a positive difference for the majority of people who use the services. Specifically, this information shows that the programs have helped:

- individuals, families and people who sleep on the street to access and maintain accommodation
- people to access mainstream services such as Centrelink, drug and alcohol services, and mental and general health services
- children in homeless situations to engage in education and recreation
- adults and children experiencing family violence to access safe accommodation, legal services, counselling and other support services.

We reviewed the record of 81 client interviews conducted by an independent research organisation commissioned by DCP to evaluate WA's Plan. Of these, 60 clients said that getting a house or not losing the house they lived in was a direct result of the help received from the programs. More than half (45 people) said they experienced improved well-being and 30 per cent (25 people) said having a house gave them greater confidence to deal with their problems and make changes in their lives.

HOMELESSNESS ACCOMMODATION SUPPORT PROGRAM

CASE STUDY 1

Client C is a mother of two children who received assistance from the Homelessness Accommodation Support program. Client C had previously been living in a women's refuge and had also spent some time moving between friends' houses. During this time her children stayed with her parents where she would visit regularly. She had become homeless following an abusive relationship that involved her ex-partner damaging her private rental home. She was still paying off the debt to repair the damage, and could not get new private rental due to being 'black listed' (considered a high risk tenant).

Following a referral to the Homelessness Accommodation Support program Client C was housed and received regular and ongoing support. She and her children have been living in stable housing since early 2011. "I have a home and I feel so happy." Client C said the program had given her hope she had lost as a result of her traumatic life experiences. The program had also helped her gain skills in budgeting and increased her self esteem and confidence. She continues to regularly meet with a support worker. "All the steps that we did ... all the appointments we had, it made me stronger and stronger ... There are no words I can find to express my gratitude."

Of the interviews we reviewed, 71 people reported suffering from substance abuse, family related violence, or mental health issues. Some people suffered from a combination of these. For people with multiple issues impacting on their homelessness, getting the appropriate referrals to mainstream services is important. Data for 2010-11 shows the following number of referrals were made for clients on programs:

- 2 156 referrals to schools and recreational services for children
- 1 671 referrals to Centrelink
- 1 017 referrals to other social services
- 664 referrals to financial counselling services
- 636 referrals to mental health services
- 362 referrals to legal services.

Interviews also showed that people benefited from the long term one-on-one support provided by the programs. Clients say that program workers stick with them and help them with organising and attending appointments with landlords, HomesWest, schools, medical services, and obtaining Violence Restraining Orders. Support workers also help people move and set up homes.

“I wouldn’t have been where I am without her (support worker)...I would never have been able to think like this if it wasn’t for her. I don’t know how she did it but it’s just opened me up. We talked about everything from the past to what I want in the future and how I can get there.”

Client interviewee

Clients said they valued the assistance they received with buying small but essential goods and services to setup and sustain their home. This discretionary funding (referred to as brokerage funds) is an important feature of 15 programs. The majority of staff surveyed (94 of 106) said that without these funds it would have been more difficult to meet client needs.

Some of the reported uses of brokerage funds include:

- assisting young people to remain in school, join a sporting club or attend holiday camps
- funding counselling sessions, or paying for vocational training
- helping people pay for rental arrears, bond and other outstanding debt
- improving security of houses – in particular to reduce the risk of continuing violence posed to women and children.

STREET TO HOME PROGRAM

CASE STUDY 2

Clients A and B are a couple assisted by the Street to Home program. Prior to joining the program both had been homeless for more than five years. They had spent time moving between living on the street and living with family. Client A had previously had a three-bedroom house but was evicted due to social issues. Client B had never had his own house. Client A also had health problems and was suffering from grief from the loss of her son.

The couple was referred to the program through another homelessness service, and following acceptance into the program they were assisted to acquire a house. They also got help with practical items such as food, clothing, blankets, furniture and some white goods. Client A was overwhelmed by this support, “I cried. I actually did.”

The couple has been successfully housed for one year. Client A said she had stopped drinking and was in the process of gaining custody of her grandchildren.

It is not possible to demonstrate the effectiveness of the programs in reducing homelessness

The overall objective of the Agreement was to reduce homelessness by seven per cent. From early in the Agreement it became clear that collecting data and reporting on its effectiveness in reducing overall levels of homelessness would be problematic and that a reduction in homelessness was not a good measure of the Agreement's success.

This is because the achievement of reducing homelessness by seven per cent cannot be demonstrated. It is not possible to isolate the Agreement's specific impact from other initiatives and broader economic circumstances (such as the lack of affordable housing and population growth) that also impact on levels of homelessness. Another complication is the reliance on ABS Census data. Recent changes to the way the ABS measures homelessness has reduced the 2006 homelessness figure for WA from 13 391 to 8 277 (38 per cent).

Because of the difficulties in measuring success against the overall objective, Australian governments agreed to use proxy measures such as the number and type of people accessing programs. However, these are measures of activity or output rather than outcomes.

To demonstrate the effectiveness of the programs in reducing homelessness, it would be necessary to know how many individuals became and remain housed over the four year life of the Plan and beyond. WA has set targets for 13 programs for 'the proportion of people assisted to obtain and maintain accommodation for at least 12 months'. To obtain data for this, not-for-profit organisations need to follow up with individual clients 12 months after they were housed or started on a program. Our review shows that this data is often incomplete as organisations have difficulty tracking individual clients for this information. As a result, DCP cannot accurately determine the level of homelessness amongst the people assisted by the programs. We note that DCP has commissioned an independent evaluation to report on the effectiveness of programs including housing outcomes but this information is not available until early 2013.

Cooperation between government and non-government organisations has been good, but service integration has not yet been achieved

WA's Plan has fostered greater collaboration between government and non-government organisations. However, we found no evidence of systemic change that will ensure services are better integrated, particularly as there is no certainty that the programs will continue after June 2013. Not-for-profit organisations emphasised that the uncertainty over the continuation of the Agreement affects both their staff and clients as there are no plans in place for phasing out programs. This risks staff job security and clients being left without support.

Key priorities of the Agreement are to improve links between mainstream support services, such as for mental illnesses and drug and alcohol addiction, with homelessness services, and to transition at risk people from temporary to long term accommodation. Governments agreed that this requires a change in the way homelessness services are delivered. We note that WA's own State Homelessness Plan 2010-13 commits to an integrated service system and that the Agreement is central to achieving this (Attachment 2).

Programs make a difference for clients, but it is unclear what impact these will have on overall levels of homelessness

The Plan has improved links and cooperation between government and non-government organisations. Examples include:

- A program is delivered which provides support for 'People with Exceptionally Complex Needs'. The program is a whole-of-government initiative which provides a coordinated response to the housing and support needs of people with complex needs. This includes people with an intellectual disability, a severe mental illness, and significant substance use problems. Seven government agencies work closely to meet the needs of this group of people who are at high risk of homelessness. An interagency committee oversees the program.
- Over a third of the programs require the involvement of the Housing Authority. These include capital work projects and several programs that support people to maintain their public housing tenancies.
- Housing support workers in several programs work with referrals from the Department of Corrective Services, hospitals and organisations funded by the Drug and Alcohol Office.
- A Memorandum of Understanding has been established between the WA Police and 11 not-for-profit organisations delivering two programs, 'Safe at Home' and 'Domestic Violence Outreach' to improve the sharing of information and achieve a faster response time for support services.
- The Street to Home – Mobile Clinical Outreach program works with the Mental Health Commission and the Department of Health who supplies two clinical nurses and a consultant psychiatrist.

WA put structures in place to improve communication across organisations and with government agencies involved in delivering the Plan:

- A Senior Officers Group was set up in 2009 with representatives from all relevant WA agencies.
- DCP facilitates regular meetings for workers from not-for-profit organisations that deliver the same programs.
- The WA Council on Homelessness organised Specialist Homelessness Services Conferences in 2011 and 2012 for agencies and organisations involved in delivery of programs.
- The Housing Authority appointed dedicated staff to liaise with not-for-profit organisations on the placement of program clients in public housing.

Ninety-two of the program staff surveyed (86 per cent) agreed that the different service providers are prepared to work collaboratively to achieve good outcomes for clients. However, we found a number of examples where better arrangements and cooperation would improve overall effectiveness:

- The Housing Authority separately flags clients participating in six programs and collects data on their length of tenancy over the life of the Agreement. This data is not formally shared with DCP even though it could be used to better understand the performance of the programs.

'WA agencies have a lot of data, but it is patchy and there is not good coordination of data between agencies and it is not always shared.'

WA central agency

'Housing says "these are our houses it will be done our way", the Department of Corrective Services says "they are our clients we want it done this way"'

Not-for-profit organisation delivering a program for people leaving custodial services

Programs make a difference for clients, but it is unclear what impact these will have on overall levels of homelessness

- The Foyer Project assists young homeless people by providing secure (purpose built) housing with onsite support services and assistance with education and training. One of the organisations involved in the Project is required not only to report to DCP, but also to the Housing Authority, the Department of Finance, and the Department of Training and Workforce Development. Further, none of the reporting formats of these agencies fits the national data collection tool for the Plan.

The links between mainstream services and specialist homelessness services, and government and non-government organisations have improved. However, as it is uncertain that programs will continue after June 2013, supporting structures that link the various services and organisations are at risk.

Availability of housing was overestimated, and timeframes were insufficient for setting up systems and recruiting staff

WA had six months after it signed the Agreement to develop the Implementation Plan and start the delivery of \$135.1 million worth of new and expanded programs. Planning and implementing such large initiatives require that major risks are identified and addressed, and supporting systems to monitor performance are put in place.

We found that the development of the Plan and the roll out of programs could have been better and that this was probably related to the unrealistic timeframe. For many programs the availability of housing was overestimated and the limited timeframe for start-up created operational problems.

Shortfalls in availability of housing have put the success of programs at risk

Getting people housed in long term accommodation is fundamental to achieving successful outcomes for most of the programs in the Plan. We found that the housing component of some programs was not as carefully considered as it could have been. The Housing Authority cannot foresee with any certainty when and where public housing will become available, and private rental properties are invariably too expensive. Half of the 10 organisations we reviewed have difficulty sourcing suitable housing for clients and this puts achieving client targets and long term accommodation outcomes at risk.

Suitable public housing cannot be guaranteed

Seven programs specifically depend on the availability of public housing. DCP and the Housing Authority informally agreed that the Authority would allocate 1 940 public houses for these programs over the four years of the Plan. This was based on the assumption that approximately 60 per cent of clients would be provided with public housing with the remainder sourced from the private market (Figure 5). However, there was no agreement in writing or any guarantee from the Housing Authority that this number of public houses could be provided when and where needed.

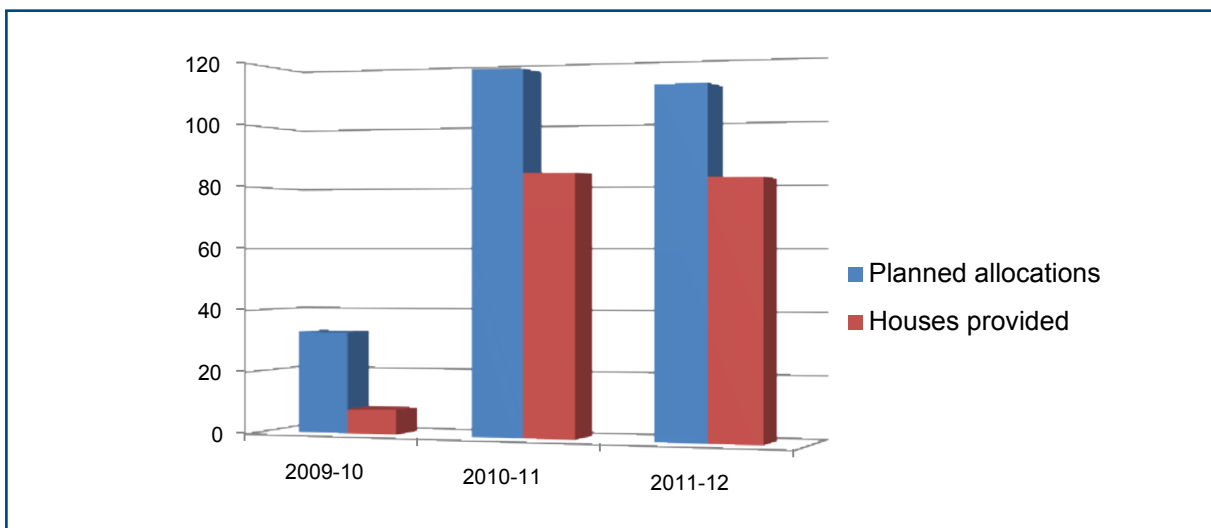
Programs requiring housing for clients	Client targets over four years	Public housing allocations over four years
Homelessness Accommodation Support	1 260	553
Housing Support – Drug and Alcohol	561	327
Housing Support – Mental Health	305	260
Housing Support – Corrective Services	255	219
Housing Support – Street to Home	839	513
A Place to Call Home (Social Housing Project) <i>100 per cent public housing</i>	33	33
A Place to Call Home (Foyer Project) <i>100 per cent public housing</i>	35	35
Total clients and housing	3 288	1 940

Source: OAG and DCP

Figure 5: Programs that require public housing and the allocations over the four years of the Plan

Based on historical information on the number of public houses that become vacant each year, the Housing Authority assumed it could meet this commitment. However, since 2009, higher private rental costs and an undersupply of affordable rentals have reduced public housing turnover and the number of vacancies. In addition, the Housing Authority cannot foresee with any certainty when and where these public houses will become available. Neither can program providers foresee when clients will be ready to move into public housing. Some clients need longer and more support to help them transition to independent living, in particular people coming out of institutional care or those that have lived on the street for a long time.

The type of dwelling that the Housing Authority has available may also not suit the needs of clients. For example a family cannot be housed in a single unit. Stakeholders commented that public housing was more readily available for program participants in the first two years of the Plan, when new social housing stock came online as a result of the Commonwealth's Stimulus Package. Of the 10 not-for-profit organisations we reviewed, half had difficulties getting clients into suitable affordable housing in 2010-11. Between July 2009 and May 2012 the Housing Authority committed to allocate 261 houses to the 10 sampled organisations. However, only 174 houses have been occupied by program clients (Figure 6).



Source: OAG and the Housing Authority

Figure 6: Planned allocations of public houses and actual houses provided to 10 organisations by the Housing Authority between July 2009 and May 2012

The Housing Authority's explanation for the shortfall between the committed allocations and occupied houses is:

- houses were not always available when clients were ready to move in
- dedicated staff in the regions were not in place until after May 2010 to process program applications
- organisations did not always provide the required notifications for access to public housing.

Lack of affordable private rental housing has also impacted on the effectiveness of programs

In addition to relying on public housing, the five Housing Support programs require housing to be sourced from the private rental market (Figure 5). We estimate that around 1 350 private rentals would need to be found for clients of these programs.

It has been broadly recognised for some time that private rental houses are scarce and expensive in much of WA, but this situation has worsened since early 2009 when the Plan was developed. First quarter figures from the Real Estate Institute of WA for 2012 show that the average rental prices for two to three bedroom units is \$420 per week in metropolitan areas (compared with \$360 in 2009) and \$1 374 per week in the North West. At June 2012, the vacancy rate in the private rental market was about two per cent compared with nearly three per cent in March 2009.

DCP and others involved in the design, selection and planning of programs did not make sufficient allowance for this situation. For example, three Housing Support programs aimed at assisting people in the Pilbara and the Kimberley require the availability of more than 140 private rental houses even though it is well known that private accommodation is not available.

Organisations delivering programs in the South West and parts of Perth also have difficulty finding private rental accommodation for clients. Affordability is the main barrier to finding private rentals for clients.

The program roll out timeframe was unrealistic, national data systems were not ready and programs started six to 12 months later than planned

When WA and the Commonwealth signed the Agreement in January 2009 it was expected that the Implementation Plan would be developed and programs started by July 2009. This ambitious starting date was fortuitously served by evaluation work that DCP had already undertaken of existing homelessness services and pilot projects. DCP supplemented this work with wide consultation with the not-for-profit sector for program design input. The early set up of a Senior Officers Group brought the necessary government agencies on board. All stakeholders commented positively on DCP's collaborative approach to developing the Plan.

However, the six month timeframe was ultimately unrealistic. The Commonwealth did not have its data and reporting systems in place for start-up, and it took DCP 12 months to contract 71 not-for-profit organisations to deliver the programs. The tight timeframe for the roll out of programs meant that agencies and organisations faced challenges:

- establishing data collection and reporting systems
- finding and training staff
- establishing and managing contracts.

National data systems were not ready when programs started and DCP had to set up its own

When WA's Plan was agreed in June 2009, the national performance reporting framework and its data collection system were not finalised. The national Specialist Homelessness Service Collection (data system) was only introduced in July 2011 and the final reporting framework did not get signed off until April 2012.

To fill this gap, DCP developed its own data collection tool to monitor program performance and report to the Commonwealth on progress with the Plan. The system complemented the existing reporting framework for DCP's contracted services. The agency developed a specific tool to collect additional information for reporting on the Agreement. Not all information collected is reported to the Commonwealth. Some of the information, for example the 12 month tenancy outcomes, is collected for an independent evaluation of programs which will not be completed until early 2013.

We reviewed DCP's data collected for 2010-11 which was sufficient for reporting to the Commonwealth on client targets. However, we note that the tenancy outcome data is often incomplete as organisations have difficulty tracking individual clients.

Recruitment issues and lack of program awareness contributed to programs starting late

Programs are delivered by multiple not-for-profit organisations in many locations. Most of the 20 programs were meant to start by July 2009. This required the recruitment and training of 110 full-time equivalent workers across 71 service providers. Stakeholders told us that this created problems as providers all started recruiting around the same time. Organisations with contracts for service delivery in remote areas found it particularly difficult to attract and retain staff. Organisations in the Kimberley and Pilbara had the added disadvantage of lack of accommodation for staff. This meant services were not available as intended from July 2009.

DCP was still tendering for services at the end of November 2009. By 30 June 2010, DCP had contracted about half of the 71 service providers. As a result, programs started at different times in different locations and at least six months later than intended.

The 10 organisations in our sample underspent funds in the first two years of the Plan mainly due to the long lead up periods to hire and train staff. Surpluses at 30 June 2010 represented 38 per cent (\$987 642) of funds received (\$2.6 million). By June 2011, only 20 per cent (\$1.3 million) of the funds received (\$6.6 million) were unspent as most organisations commenced delivery with the full complement of trained staff.

Contracted organisations also lost time at the start of programs because their staff needed to educate government agencies and mainstream organisations about the programs. Most of the sampled organisations advised us of a lack of awareness about programs amongst Housing Authority staff and regional DCP staff.

Programs started before contracts were signed

The limited timeframe for implementation also created risks for the proper management of contracts by DCP and the Housing Authority as priority was given to the roll out of programs. Of the 17 contracts we reviewed 12 were signed after their programs had started. The project agreement for the Foyer Project (\$19.8 million) between the Housing Authority and Foundation Housing has still not been finalised despite construction starting in August 2011. The Housing Authority advised that it entered into a Heads of Agreement (a framework document) with Foundation Housing in June 2011 and both parties agreed to work in good faith towards the completion of the project agreement for Foyer.

The State has met its funding and reporting commitments to the Commonwealth but there is limited reporting to the WA Parliament

The terms of the Agreement require states and territories to match Commonwealth funding. WA and the Commonwealth committed to a total budget of \$135.1 million over four years. WA contributes \$68.4 million or 51 per cent of the total budget.

WA has to report annually to the Commonwealth on progress against targets and expenditure. The State has submitted two annual reports on the implementation of its Plan as well as financial acquittals on the agreed funds.

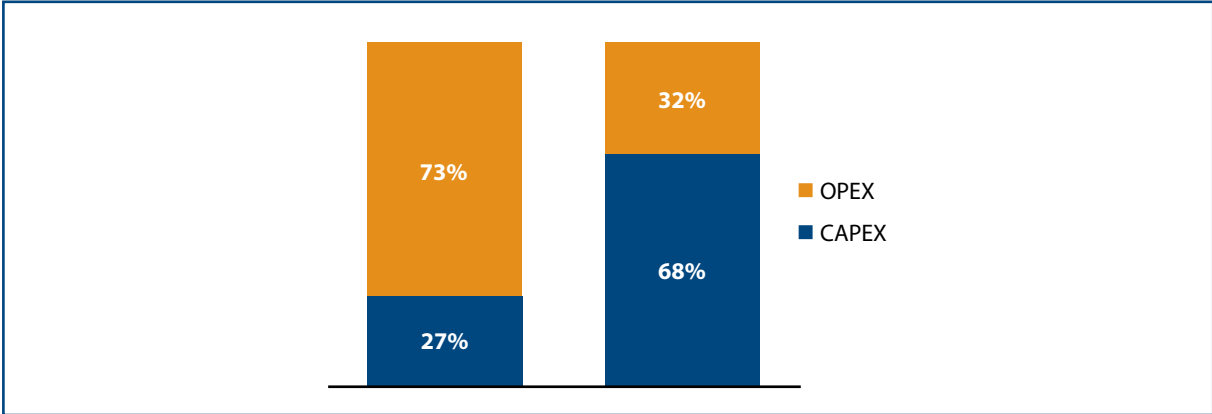
DCP provides regular information to the Minister for Child Protection and the WA Council on Homelessness on the performance of the Agreement. However, WA's Parliament has received little information about performance or expenditure on the Agreement. Further, DCP has no specific performance indicators for any of its state funded homelessness services.

The State has matched the Commonwealth funding as required

All states and territories were required to match the Commonwealth's contribution under the Agreement. WA and the Commonwealth agreed a budget of \$135.1 million for the four year period (2008-09 to 2012-13). Fifty-one per cent or \$68.4 million is provided by WA and \$66.7 million by the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth agreed that WA's contribution would include programs already provided in the 2008-09 State Budget. As a result, the State incorporated funds allocated to the Hardship Utilities Grants Scheme (HUGS) and Financial Counselling Services as part of its contribution. These two programs represent 24 per cent (\$16.4 million) of WA's contribution. WA also agreed to match funds for the Commonwealth's 'A Place to Call Home' initiative. It contributed \$11.9 million to this initiative and purchased 34 extra houses for homeless people.

Sixty-eight per cent of the State's contribution is budgeted for capital projects, with the largest share of funding for services coming from the Commonwealth (Figure 7).



Source: OAG and DCP

Figure 7: State and Commonwealth funding for the Agreement showing operational (OPEX) and capital (CAPEX) expenditure

DCP receives \$72.7 million (54 per cent) of the total funds and the Housing Authority receives the remaining 46 per cent (\$62.4 million) which is for capital works. DCP has contracted 71 not-for-profit organisations to deliver the programs (Figure 8).

Not-for-profit organisations also received \$12.9 million in LotteryWest grants between 2009 and June 2012 for the delivery of programs under the Agreement. These funds are in addition to the \$135.1 million and so their use is not included in reports to the Commonwealth.

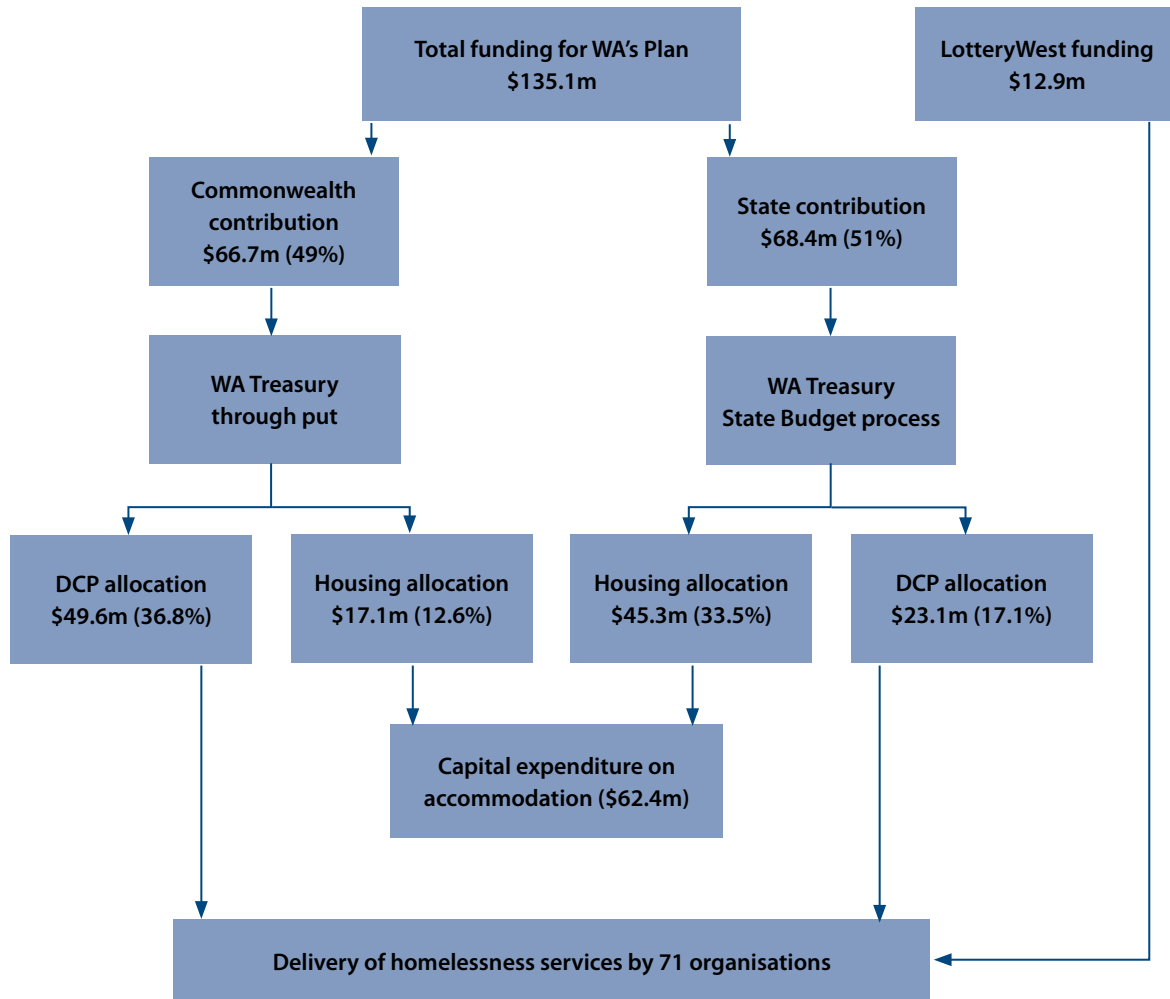


Figure 8: Distribution of funds for WA's implementation of the Agreement

The State is spending funds on agreed programs and projects

At 30 June 2012, the third year into the Agreement, WA's expenditure is on track. It has spent \$96.4 million (71 per cent) to 30 June 2012 of the \$135.1 million budgeted (Figure 9). Just over \$50 million is for operational cost of service delivery. Just over \$46 million is for capital expenditure for three projects:

1. the purchase of 34 houses for homeless people. The Housing Authority bought the dwellings for a total of \$11.8 million from a budget of \$11.9 million.
2. land for and the construction of a new accommodation facility (148 units) for homeless men (St Bartholomew's House). The project has a budget of \$23.7 million and by 30 June 2012, \$21 million was spent. The State also contributed land for this project to the value of \$7 million.

The State has met its funding and reporting commitments to the Commonwealth but there is limited reporting to the WA Parliament

3. the construction of 98 new units and common facilities for young people, including 35 homeless young people (Foyer project). The project was allocated a budget of \$19.8 million and \$6.4 million was spent by 30 June 2012. The Housing Authority contributed nearly an extra \$1 million for site works which was over and above the budget.

Services	Budget (services only)			Expenditure to 30 June 2012 \$
	Commonwealth \$	State \$	Total Budget \$	
A Place to Call Home (Foyer Project)		2 469 000	2 469 000	1 590 620
Street to Home for Chronic Homeless People (3 programs)	9 546 878	2 641 195	12 811 073	8 157 952
Support for Private and Public Tenants (2 programs)	9 335 186		9 335 186	5 747 191
HUGS and Financial Counselling Services ¹ (2 programs)		16 380 000	16 380 000	12 570 000
Assistance for People Leaving Child Protection Services, Correctional and Health Facilities (3 programs)	6 432 396		6 432 396	4 936 760
Services to Assist People with Substance Abuse (1 program)	5 037 947		5 037 947	3 267 056
Improvements in Service Coordination and Provision (1 program)	150 000		150 000	157 698
Support for Women and Children experiencing Domestic and Family Violence	5 330 284	1 563 873	6 894 157	4 809 433
Assistance for Homeless People, including Families with Children (1 program)	8 208 057		8 208 057	5 176 383
Outreach Program for Rough Sleepers (1 program)	2 415 032		2 415 032	1 472 177
Support for Children to Maintain Contact with the Education System (1 program)	3 215 973		3 215 973	2 320 456
Total Services	49 671 753	23 054 068	72 725 821	50 205 727
Capital Projects	Budget (capital only)			Expenditure to 30 June 2012 \$
	Commonwealth \$	State \$	Total Budget \$	
A Place to Call Home (33 Dwellings and Foyer Project)	17 080 000	14 609 000	31 689 000	18 154 903
Street to Home (St Bartholomew's House – Lime Street)		23 700 000	23 700 000	21 038 835
Street to Home (State land contribution)		7 000 000	7 000 000	7 000 000
Total Capital	17 080 000	45 309 000	62 389 000	46 193 738
TOTAL	66 751 753	68 363 068	135 114 821	96 399 465

¹ The expenditure of \$12.6 million for the Hardship Utilities Grant Scheme and Financial Counselling Services is an estimate.

Source: OAG, DCP and the Housing Authority

Figure 9: WA Implementation Plan budget for 2009-10 to 2012-13 and expenditure to 30 June 2012

\$16 million has been budgeted for HUGS and Financial Counselling Services but DCP cannot identify how much of this has been spent on clients under the Agreement

HUGS provides financial assistance to people, including those at risk of homelessness, who cannot pay their utility bills and are likely to be disconnected from electricity, water or gas. The Financial Counselling Services program provides support for people at risk of homelessness due to financial stress. The program assists people to manage their financial situation and prevents them from exiting social or private housing into homelessness.

Neither program is exclusively targeting clients of the programs in WA's Plan. DCP cannot identify whether people accessing HUGS and/or financial counselling are clients of programs under the Agreement or not. As a result it is not possible to identify how much of the budgeted \$16.4 million is used for clients under the Agreement. As a result WA reports to the Commonwealth on the total expenditure for these programs and not expenditure relating solely to the budgeted \$16.4 million under the Agreement.

For the first three years (2009-10 to 2011-12) around \$12.6 million was budgeted for the HUGS and Financial Counselling Services programs. We have assumed that the \$12.6 million budgeted under the Agreement has been spent. Actual total expenditure over the three years including expenditure on people who were not clients of the Agreement was \$35.7 million.

The State is meeting its reporting obligations to the Commonwealth but there is limited reporting at the state-level

WA has provided the Commonwealth with an annual report on progress against the targets in its Plan and separate reports on expenditure for both 2009-10 and 2010-11. Although WA has met its reporting obligations to the Commonwealth and provides regular information to the Minister for Child Protection, only limited information is available to the WA Parliament (Figure 10).

DCP provides general information about the Plan and progress on its website and in its agency Annual Report and other promotional materials. DCP's Annual Reports provide limited information on activities but no information on performance against targets. DCP does not have Key Performance Indicators for its homelessness programs that could provide WA's Parliament with information on the outcomes of the State's investment in homelessness services.

The Implementation Plan annual reports to the Commonwealth provide detailed information on the achievements for each of the programs and a summary of broader issues impacting on implementation. Progress against client targets is reported for single programs and case studies demonstrate other benefits for clients.

We reviewed the client numbers shown in the 2010-11 annual report to the Commonwealth and compared these to data held by DCP. We noted that the annual report somewhat overstated (nine per cent) the number of persons assisted during the year. This was mainly due to incorrect data provided to DCP by one service provider who had not understood definitions for counting clients.

We also noted that WA's 2010-11 financial report to the Commonwealth only showed expenditure for the Commonwealth's contribution. The Department of Treasury advised that not acquitting the State's contribution for that year was an oversight.

The State has met its funding and reporting commitments to the Commonwealth but there is limited reporting to the WA Parliament

The Commonwealth does not require and does not receive information from WA about the number of Aboriginal people assisted. However, WA has set its own target of ensuring that 11 per cent of all people assisted are Aboriginal people. As previously stated, WA easily exceeded this target with 28 per cent of people assisted being Aboriginal.

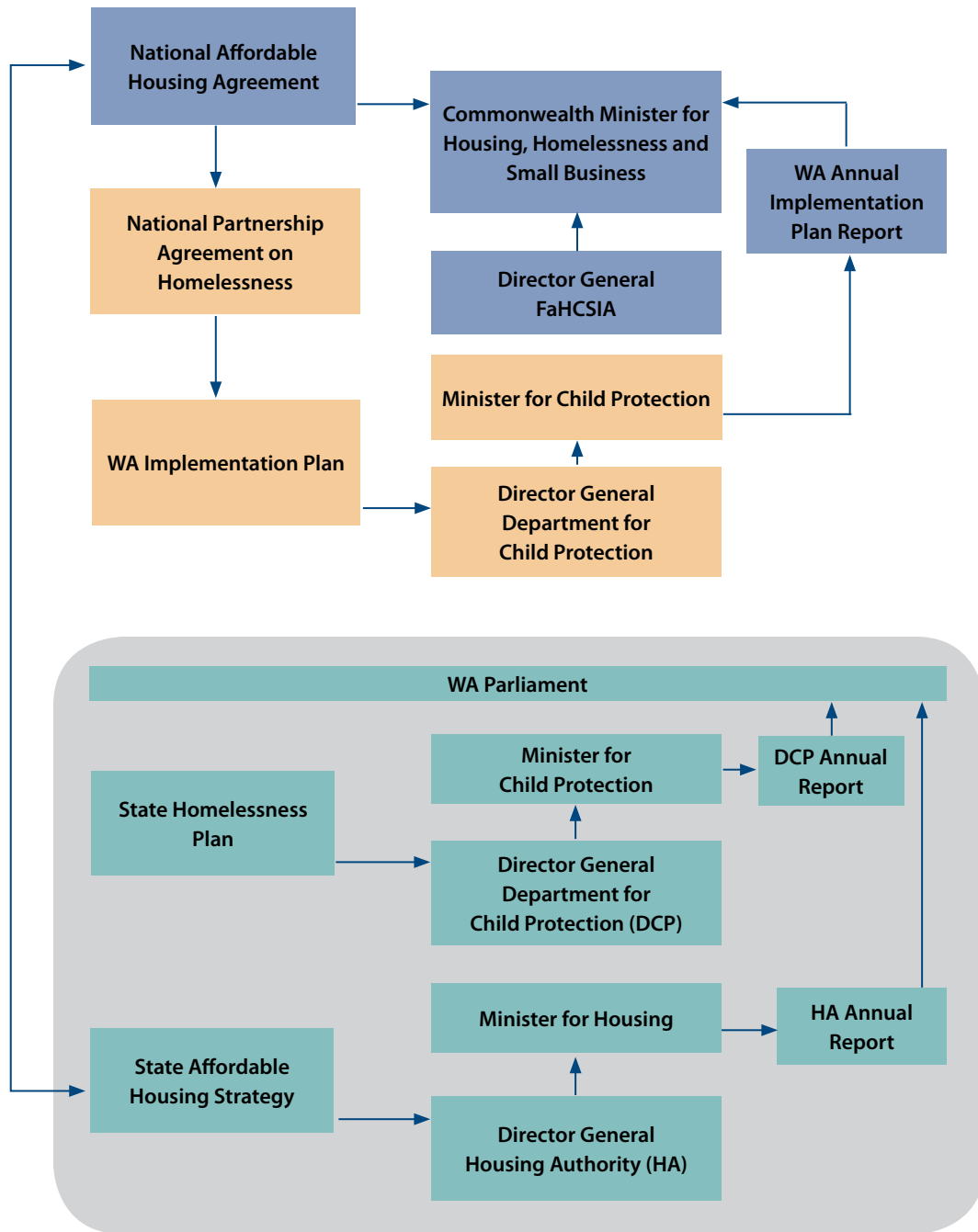


Figure 10: Overview of the reporting arrangements for the Agreement

Attachment 1

Overview of programs in WA's Implementation Plan

Homelessness Programs	Contracted Service Providers and Program Location
<p>Place to Call Home Program, project 1: an extra 33 public housing dwellings</p> <p><i>Under this program the Housing Authority is to purchase 33 properties to house homeless people from the State's priority wait list and provide them with targeted support for the first year of their tenancy.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AnglicareWA Inc. (metropolitan area) • Ruah Community Services (metropolitan area) • Centrecare (metropolitan area) • Swan Emergency (metropolitan area) • Fremantle Multicultural Services WA (metropolitan area) • Mission Australia (metropolitan area) • Red Cross (metropolitan area) • St Bartholomew (metropolitan area) • St Patrick's Community Support Centre (metropolitan area) • Mercy Care (metropolitan area) • Hills Community Support Group (metropolitan area) • Salvation Army (metropolitan area)
<p>A Place to Call Home Program, project 2: Foyer Model – accommodation for homeless young people</p> <p><i>This program assists 35 young homeless people by providing secure (purpose built) housing (Oxford Street Perth) with onsite support services and assisting people into education and training. The new accommodation is next to the Central Institute of Technology and can house up to 98 people.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation Housing (metropolitan area) • AnglicareWA Inc. (metropolitan area)
<p>Coordination Worker: Children in Domestic Violence Accommodation Services Program</p> <p><i>This program provides training and support for child support workers in regionally based domestic violence accommodation services.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services (WA) (regional WA only)
<p>Domestic Violence Outreach Program</p> <p><i>This program offers an immediate follow up service to women the day after a domestic violence incident. A police officer attending a domestic violence incident (with victim's permission) can make a referral to a support service. A formal MOU between WA Police and contracted service providers underpins this program.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AnglicareWA Inc. (metropolitan area) • Chrysalis Support Service Inc. (Murchison region) • Goldfields Women's Refuge Association Inc. (Goldfields region) • Pat Thomas Memorial Community House Inc. (Peel region) • Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. (Pilbara region)
<p>Domestic Violence Child Support Worker Program</p> <p><i>This program offers help for children under the age of 12 who live in refuges. Child support workers ensure that the children maintain contact with school, and help women with their parenting skills.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AnglicareWA Inc. (Great Southern region) • Share and Care Community Services Group Inc. (Wheatbelt region)

Homelessness Programs	Contracted Service Providers and Program Location
<p>Financial Counselling Services Program</p> <p><i>This program provides support for people at risk of homelessness due to financial stress. The help provided assists people to manage their financial situations and prevent them from exiting social or private housing into homelessness. It is noted that this program is also open to people who have accommodation and are not necessarily at risk of homelessness.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37 not-for-profit organisations (state-wide)
<p>Hardship Utilities Grant Scheme (HUGS)</p> <p><i>The Scheme provides financial assistance to people, including those at risk of homelessness, who cannot pay their utility bills and are likely to be disconnected from electricity, water or gas. Applications for grants under this Scheme can be made by Financial Counsellors or utilities staff.</i></p> <p><i>It is noted that the Scheme is also open to people who have accommodation and are not necessarily at risk of homelessness.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department for Child Protection (state-wide)
<p>Homelessness Accommodation Support Workers Program</p> <p><i>This program offers support to people exiting short or medium term homelessness accommodation services (e.g. shelters, refuges). Workers help with sourcing and maintaining long term stable accommodation and link people into mainstream services such as education and employment.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AnglicareWA Inc. (South West metropolitan area and Great Southern region) • Centrecare (South East metropolitan area and North West metropolitan area) • Fremantle Multicultural Services Centre Inc. (South West metropolitan area) • MercyCare Community Services Inc. (North East metropolitan area) • Mission Australia (South East metropolitan area) • Patricia Giles Inc. (North West metropolitan area) • Swan Emergency Accommodation Inc. (North East metropolitan area) • Youth Futures Inc. (North West metropolitan area) • AccordWest (South West region) • Australian Red Cross Society (Goldfields region) • Geraldton Resources Centre Inc. (Murchison region) • Share and Care Community Services Group Inc. (Wheatbelt region) • Westaus Crisis and Welfare Service Inc. (Peel region) • Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. (Pilbara region) • Marin Bowa Dumbara Aboriginal Corporation (Kimberley region)

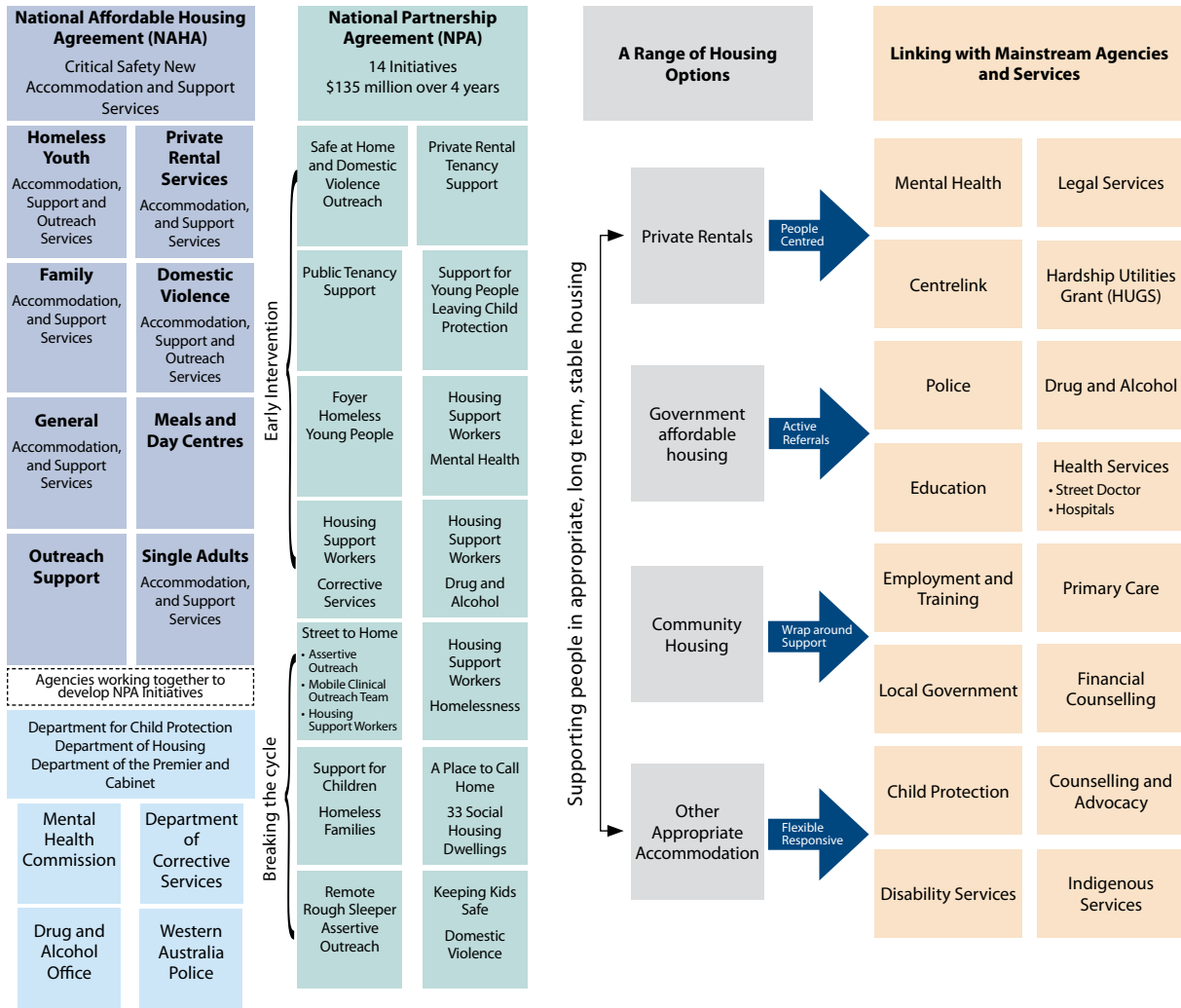
Homelessness Programs	Contracted Service Providers and Program Location
<p>Housing Support Workers – Drug and Alcohol Program</p> <p><i>This program offers support to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness as a result of drug and/or alcohol use. Workers help people with sourcing or maintaining accommodation and engagement with drug and alcohol treatment programs. Referrals to this program mainly come from specialist drug and alcohol services.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AnglicareWA Inc. (South West metropolitan area and Peel region) • Mission Australia (North West and South East metropolitan areas) • Swan Emergency Accommodation (North East metropolitan area) • Centrecare (South West region) • Nindilingarri Cultural Health Services (Kimberley region) • Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. (Pilbara region)
<p>Housing Support Workers – Corrective Services Program</p> <p><i>This program provides one-on-one support for people exiting prisons or juvenile detention centres with sourcing and maintaining stable accommodation to avoid homelessness. Referrals are made from the discharge units at correctional facilities. The support period begins three months prior to release and continues for 12 months post release.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruah Community Services (metropolitan area) • Youth Futures WA Inc. (metropolitan area). • Centrecare (metropolitan area) • AccordWest (South West region) • Geraldton Resource Centre Inc. (Murchison region)
<p>Housing Support Workers – Mental Health Program</p> <p><i>This program provides dedicated support for people with severe and persistent mental illness who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. People participating in this program are close to exiting hospital mental health inpatient units. Workers offer one-on-one support up to 12 months with sourcing, accessing and maintaining suitable long term accommodation.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hills Community Support Group Inc. (Swan/Joondalup area) • Ruah Community Services (metropolitan area) • St Patrick's Community Support Centre (Fremantle and Rockingham) • Albany Halfway House Association Inc. (Great Southern region) • Australian Red Cross Society (Goldfields region) • Centacare Kimberley Association Inc. (Kimberley region) • Lamp Inc. (South West region)
<p>People with Exceptionally Complex Needs Program</p> <p><i>This pilot program coordinates housing and other support services for a small number of people (maximum 18) with multiple and complex issues (e.g. intellectual disability, mental illness, substance use, acquired brain injury). Workers provide one-on-one support for at least 12 months to ensure housing and other support needs are addressed in an integrated manner.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Commission (metropolitan area) (other government agencies partner with the Commission in this pilot program)
<p>Private Rental Tenancy Support Program</p> <p><i>This program assists people at risk of homelessness because of difficulties in maintaining private rental tenancies. Workers help people with addressing the issues that may lead to evictions. Referrals can be made by the workers to HUGS and Financial Counselling programs.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AnglicareWA Inc. (South West metropolitan area and Great Southern region) • Australian Red Cross Society (North West metropolitan area) • Multicultural Services Centre of WA Inc. (metropolitan area) • AccordWest (South West region)

Homelessness Programs	Contracted Service Providers and Program Location
<p>Public Tenancy Support Program</p> <p><i>This program assists public housing tenants who are at risk of homelessness because of difficulties in maintaining tenancies. Workers help people with addressing the issues that may lead to evictions. Participation in the program is with tenants' consent but can become a condition of tenancy where there has been a breach of prior tenancy agreements. The Housing Authority has a role in identifying people for this program.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AnglicareWA Inc. (South West metropolitan and South West region) • Centrecare (South East metropolitan area) • Mission Australia (North West metropolitan area and Murchison region) • Avon Youth Community and Family Services Inc. (Wheatbelt region) • Carnarvon Family Support Service (Gascoyne region) • Kimberley Community Legal Services Inc. (Kimberley region) • Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. (Pilbara region)
<p>Remote Rough Sleeper Assertive Outreach Program</p> <p><i>This program gives intensive and one-on-one support to primarily Aboriginal homeless people who live on the street in remote locations. Long term support is offered with a strong focus on linking people with other services and return to 'country' where appropriate.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bega Garnbirringu Health Services Inc. (Goldfields region) • Centacare Kimberley Association Inc. (Kimberley region)
<p>Safe At Home Program</p> <p><i>This program gives support to women and children who want to stay in their own home following domestic violence and reduce their risk of homelessness. Workers assess the safety and support needs (e.g. legal advice) and provide assistance to stabilise safe housing. Referrals come from domestic violence services. This program is also underpinned by the MOU signed between WA Police and contracted service providers for the Domestic Violence Outreach program.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Stirling (North East metropolitan area) • Patricia Giles Centre Inc. (North West metropolitan area) • Ruah Community Services (South East metropolitan area) • Lucy Saw Centre Association Inc. (South West metropolitan area) • Share and Care Community Service Group Inc. (Wheatbelt region) • South West Refuge (South West region)
<p>Street to Home – Assertive Outreach Program</p> <p><i>Street to Home programs focus on people sleeping rough and outreach. Workers in the Assertive Outreach Program find and support people living on the street and offer help with access to mainstream services and accommodation. The workers are supported by a Mobile Clinical Outreach Team and Housing Support Workers.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruah Community Services (metropolitan areas) • St Patrick's Community Support Centre (metropolitan area) • Uniting Care West (metropolitan area)
<p>Street to Home – Mobile Clinical Outreach Program</p> <p><i>Two clinical nurses and a consultant psychiatrist bring medical services to people living on the streets in Perth and Fremantle. The clinical outreach team acts on referrals from the Assertive Outreach Workers and visit people in crisis accommodation. The team can treat people on location and make referrals to primary or specialist health care services.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Commission and the Department of Health (metropolitan area)

Homelessness Programs	Contracted Service Providers and Program Location
<p>Street to Home – Housing Support Workers Program</p> <p><i>This program works closely with the mobile outreach teams and help rough sleepers into stable accommodation. Workers also assist people who live in crisis accommodation to move into independent accommodation.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 55 Central Inc. (metropolitan area) • Foundation Housing (metropolitan area) • Salvation Army (WA) Property Trust (metropolitan area) • St Bartholomew’s House Inc. (metropolitan area) • St Patrick’s Community Support Centre (metropolitan area)
<p>Street to Home – St Bartholomew’s House (Lime Street, East Perth project)</p> <p><i>This program consists of the construction of 148 new units in East Perth (Lime Street) for homeless men. Residents will receive additional support from Street to Home – Housing Support Workers.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Bartholomew’s House Inc. (metropolitan area)
<p>Support for Children in Homeless Families Program</p> <p><i>This program is for children living in or being supported by specialist homelessness accommodation services for families. Children get help to overcome trauma and disruption as a result of their homelessness experience. An important aspect of this program is to get children back into regular school attendance.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centrecare (metropolitan area) • Fremantle Multicultural Services (metropolitan area) • Multicultural Services Centre WA (metropolitan area) • Parkerville Children and Youth Care Inc. (metropolitan area) • Women’s Health Care Association (metropolitan area)
<p>Support for Young Women Leaving Child Protection Services</p> <p><i>This program offers supported accommodation and independent living options for young women, including mothers, who leave child protection services. Participants are supported for 12 months and can access education, parenting and independent living skills services to help them transition to long term independent accommodation. DCP is the referring agency for this program.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parkerville Children and Youth Care Inc. (metropolitan area)
<p>Note: Perpetrator Response Program</p> <p><i>This program which was listed in the WA Implementation Plan was never operational under the Plan. As a result of reform of domestic violence services this program was transferred in July 2010 to the National Affordable Housing Agreement.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable.

Attachment 2

Overview of WA's integrated homelessness service system



Source: DCP

The National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness is central to WA's commitment to an integrated service system for homeless people.

Auditor General's Reports

REPORT NUMBER	2012 REPORTS	DATE TABLED
12	Major Capital Projects	17 October 2012
11	Second Public Sector Performance Report 2012 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Business Continuity Management by Port Authorities – Western Australian Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Funding – Housing's Implementation of the Head Contractor Maintenance Model 	26 September 2012
10	Information Systems Audit Report	28 June 2012
9	Public Sector Performance Report 2012 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Regional Procurement – Ministerial decision not to provide information to Parliament on the amount of funding tourism WA provided for the Perth International Arts Festival 	28 June 2012
8	New Recruits in the Western Australia Police	20 June 2012
7	Pharmaceuticals: Purchase and Management of Pharmaceuticals in Public Hospitals	13 June 2012
6	Victim Support Service: Providing assistance to victims of crime	16 May 2012
5	Audit Results Report – Annual Assurance Audits completed since 31 October 2011 including universities and state training providers and Across Government Benchmarking Audits: Accuracy of Leave Records; Act of Grace and Like Payments; and Supplier Master Files	16 May 2012
4	Supporting Aboriginal Students in Training	2 May 2012
3	Beyond Compliance: Reporting and managing KPIs in the public sector	19 April 2012
2	Opinion on Ministerial decisions not to provide information to Parliament on the amount of funding Tourism WA provided for some events	22 February 2012
1	Working Together: Management of Partnerships with Volunteers	22 February 2012

The above reports can be accessed on the Office of the Auditor General's website at www.audit.wa.gov.au.

On request these reports may be made available in an alternative format for those with visual impairment.

**Office of the Auditor General
Western Australia**

**7th Floor Albert Facey House
469 Wellington Street, Perth**

**Mail to:
Perth BC, PO Box 8489
PERTH WA 6849**

T: 08 6557 7500

F: 08 6557 7600

E: info@audit.wa.gov.au

W: www.audit.wa.gov.au