

Property Utilisation Reporting Campaign Follow-up



What is this summary report about?

The NSW Registrar of Community Housing (the Registrar) conducted a campaign in 2018 to address concerns identified by the Registrar over the quality of property utilisation metrics reported as part of the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) compliance assessment process. The campaign led to interaction with individual community housing providers (CHPs) on a range of measures to improve the quality of utilisation data.

Many CHPs deliver a diverse range of housing services under different programs across various locations. Hence, the Registrar is still considering improved methods of collecting turnaround time data to reflect CHP performance in a meaningful way.

This summary paper reviews the effectiveness of the actions identified in the campaign a year ago and suggests possible follow-up measures.

Methodology used

Under NRSCH requirements the Registrar assesses Tier 1 and Tier 2 CHPs annually. The Registrar used this program to initially test the quality of property utilisation data in the 17/18 compliance period. In this phase approximately half of all Tier 1 and Tier 2 CHPs were contacted as was NSW Department of Communities and Justice; Community Housing Contracting (Contracting). Consultation was also held with two complex Tier 1 CHPs to obtain deeper insights as a sample of the community housing sector.

In the 18/19 compliance period, data was retested to assess if the quality data had improved from this broad intervention in the year period. Approximately half of all providers were contacted, including two site visits. A sample of Contracting's property level data was collected and analysed.

Throughout this process when data quality issues were identified, this was communicated to CHPs and corrected within CHRIS as part of the compliance assessment program. CHPs responded promptly to rectify issues.

Subsequent finding – data quality

While it is challenging to validate the quality of utilisation metrics, the analysis identified turnaround time data quality has improved.

The improvements in data quality have been acknowledged by a peak body during a meeting in November 2018. However despite significant sector engagement on this issue there remains

uncertainty by CHPs regarding their turnaround time reporting requirements. For instance, despite efforts to clarify data requirements, the 18/19 testing of data revealed ongoing confusion from many CHPs as to whether they should include nomination rights properties into their metric calculations.

Along with this, the 18/19 analysis reconfirmed the ambiguity in guidance material has resulted in CHP's applying differing assumptions for their utilisation metrics. For instance the NRSCH would benefit from guidance as to when a property should be classified as untenable. The majority of CHPs interviewed stated they used the seven day rule as the basis of counting a property as untenable. However, one CHP interviewed stated it defined an untenable property as being if the work done to a vacant property would have required the tenant to leave that property if it had been occupied.

CHP assumptions are often disclosed to the Registrar and hence these differences do not represent a compliance concern. However, differing assumptions may have an impact on sector reporting.

The 18/19 analysis confirmed the reasons for inconsistent data were complex and in many instances related to issues specific to the organisation. This combined with limitations on guidance available means significant resources will be required to resolve these issues on an ongoing basis.

Subsequent finding – property level analysis

The 18/19 analysis examined property level performance data obtained from Contracting and considered the total turnaround time performance of the sector, not at the provider level, but rather how performance varied across location, program type and dwelling type.

Additional detail regarding this analysis and assumptions are contained in Appendix A: Performance at Property Level.

While there are limitations to this analysis, the research strongly indicates factors largely outside of the control of individual CHPs, are significant drivers of performance. This is especially true for locations where the average turnaround time varied from 21 days to 43 days. An implication of this suggests poor performance by CHPs could either be the result of deficiencies in internal systems or a legacy of it holding housing stock in a particular area.

Evidence provided by CHPs also demonstrates they have the capacity to run reports on the categories outlined above, however there appears to be gaps in overall sector performance reporting. This means individual CHPs may not be aware of the extent to which external factors are affecting their own performance.

Implications and considerations

The findings of this review continue to support the need for the Registrars' to collect property utilisation data at the individual property level. If the data was collected in a consistent and appropriate form, methodology would be applied to conduct more effective turnaround time analysis. Collecting data at the individual property level would also allow for more nuanced sector reporting which would be beneficial to the sector and policy makers. As CHPs would be providing data in a disaggregated form, similar to what is currently collected by Contracting, it would mean additional guidance would not need to be provided.

A key implication from this report is more research is required and enhancements need to be made to the Registrar's analytical systems. While empirically there is significant variation in performance between the categories listed in Appendix A, the reasons for this are not known. To improve CHP performance a better understanding of the external factors affecting the sector is required.

While outside of the scope of this report it is reasonable to assume similar variations of provider performance is likely with other performance metrics collected by the Registrar. Further research is suggested to determine whether performance data should be collected at the asset level for other metrics.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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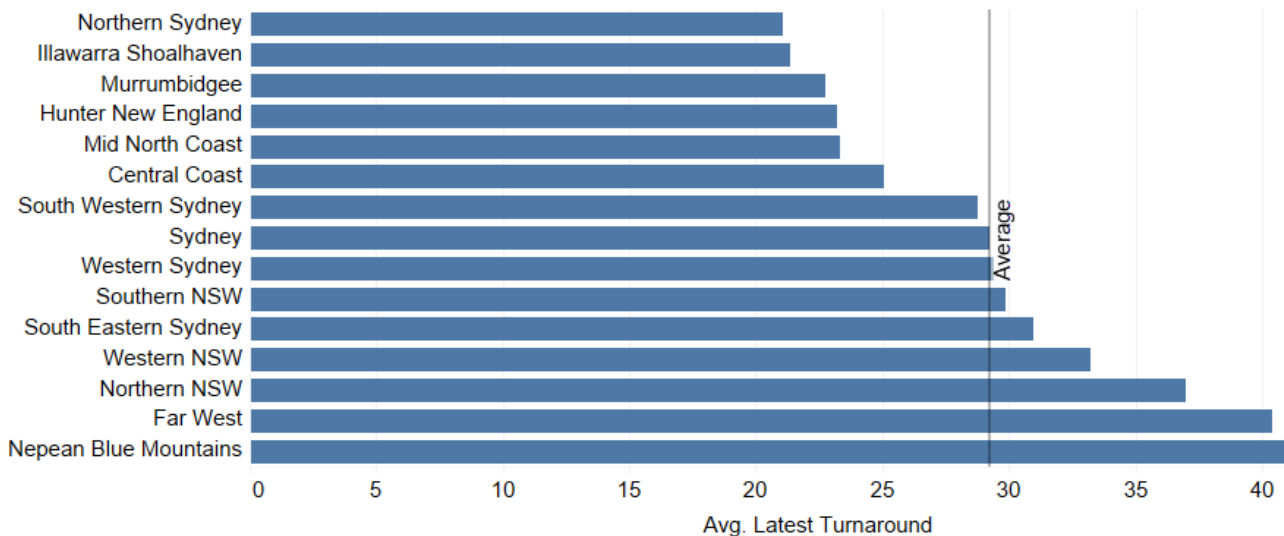
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Note: These findings are an interpretation of a sample of provider performance at a point in time.

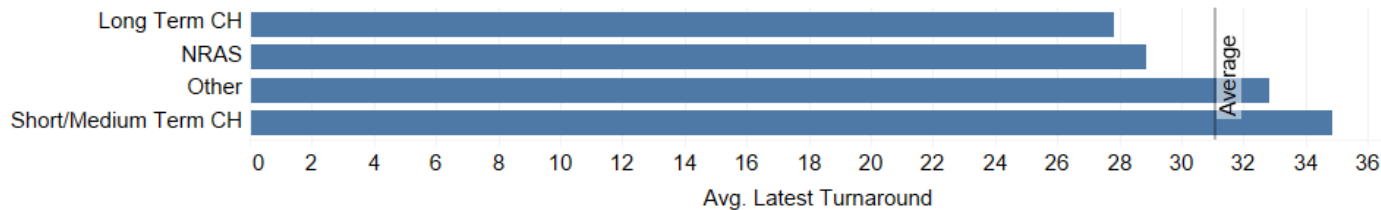
Appendix A: Performance at Property Level

The graphs below use property level data obtained from Contracting as part of their data submission to Australian Institution of Health & Welfare (AIHW) May 2019. From this data turnaround times are calculated and comparison made to how performance varied across: location as defined by the Department Communities and Justice districts (formerly FACS Insights, Analysis and Research (FACSIAR) districts); housing program as defined by Contracting; and dwelling type as defined by Contracting. The average line is an unweighted calculation. There are limitations on the data supplied; specifically Contracting does not collect data for the entire sector and the data supplied was limited for only one reporting period.

Performance by Departmental Districts



Performance by Program Type



Performance by Dwelling Type

