

Public Accounts Committee inquiry into a framework for performance reporting and driving wellbeing outcomes in NSW

October 2024

Homelessness NSW welcomes the opportunity to provide further comment to the NSW Public Accounts Committee (the Committee) inquiry into a framework for performance reporting and driving wellbeing outcomes in NSW.

In response to the Committee's list of supplementary questions, Homelessness NSW provides the following comments, focusing on the Housing theme within the *NSW Budget 2024-25 Performance and Wellbeing Consultation Paper* (the consultation paper).

Question 1 (i) what is the right number of indicators to capture a holistic, integrated set of outcomes?

Homelessness NSW believes there is scope for additional indicators within the Housing theme to ensure a more comprehensive and accurate reflection of housing and homelessness outcomes. These suggested indicators are outlined in both our previous submission and below.

We also have concerns about the quality of certain existing indicators in the consultation paper. To ensure these indicators capture a holistic and integrated set of outcomes, they must adhere to SMART criteria: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

For example, the current indicator on 'social housing dwelling standards' lacks clarity, making it difficult to measure effectively. The consultation paper does not specify what aspects of 'social housing dwelling standards' are being assessed, rendering the indicator too vague. Additionally, the indicator 'Proportion of people experiencing homelessness who are assisted by Specialist Homelessness Services' requires refinement to better reflect the true demand for homelessness services in NSW. Addressing these issues would result in more meaningful and actionable indicators that offer valuable insights into housing and homelessness outcomes.

Recommendation One: That indicators within the Housing theme be reviewed to ensure fully align with SMART criteria—Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

Question 1 (ii) what the appropriate balance between lead and lag indicators?

Homelessness NSW advocates for a balanced approach to using lead and lag indicators within the well-being framework under the Housing theme. Achieving this balance is essential for a comprehensive assessment of both proactive actions and current outcomes in housing and homelessness.

a) Lead indicators

We strongly support the inclusion of lead indicators in the Housing theme, as they provide critical measures of whether budget allocations are sufficient to meet social housing needs and deliver effective homelessness services. Lead indicators also support decision-making by ensuring policies remain on track to achieve long-term goals, serving as benchmarks for progress, and allowing timely interventions if targets are not met. They enable proactive monitoring by tracking

actions and initiatives before issues fully develop, allowing policymakers to adjust strategies early to enhance housing availability, quality, and affordability.

Under the Housing theme, the consultation paper currently lists only two lead indicators:

1. The number of new potential dwellings unlocked through rezonings.
2. The assessment of government-owned sites as part of the Government Land Audit for potential housing use.

We recommend adding additional lead indicators to better track proactive measures, such as:

- *Number of social housing properties planned or under construction* – This would track efforts to expand the social housing stock and provide an early indication of future improvements in housing availability.
- *Funding allocated for social housing developments* – This indicator measures government investment in social housing, reflecting the level of commitment to addressing housing needs.

These additional lead indicators would enhance the ability to monitor and assess the effectiveness of government actions in real time, ensuring greater accountability in housing and homelessness initiatives.

b) Lag indicators

Homelessness NSW supports the inclusion of lag indicators to assess the impacts of budgets and government policies in the housing space. Lag indicators are vital for evaluating budget allocations and measuring the outcomes of housing and homelessness initiatives, as they reflect the actual results of actions taken. By providing crucial data on the ongoing impact of policies, lag indicators allow for an accurate assessment of whether allocated resources are achieving the desired outcomes.

The consultation paper lists six lag indicators:

1. The rate of serious identified defects rectified in residential buildings.
2. The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriately sized housing.
3. The standard of social housing dwellings.
4. The wait time for priority social housing applicants.
5. The proportion of people experiencing homelessness who are assisted by Specialist Homelessness Services.
6. The number of visits to public spaces and events.

We believe this is a sufficient number of lag indicators. However, as noted in our previous submission, we recommend revisions to the indicators related to the standard of social housing dwellings, the wait time for priority social housing applications, and the proportion of people

experiencing homelessness. These revisions should align the indicators with SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) to enhance their effectiveness.

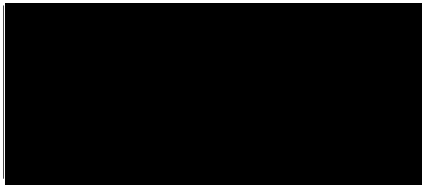
Recommendation Two: That two additional lead indicators be included under the Housing theme: (1) the number of social housing units planned and under construction, and (2) the funding allocated for social housing development.

Conclusion

Homelessness NSW looks forward to ongoing collaboration and discussions to ensure that the *NSW Performance and Wellbeing Framework* fosters long-term improvements in housing solutions and wellbeing outcomes for all NSW residents.

Please contact [REDACTED], Senior Policy Officer at [REDACTED] should you wish to discuss any element of our submission further.

Yours sincerely,



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