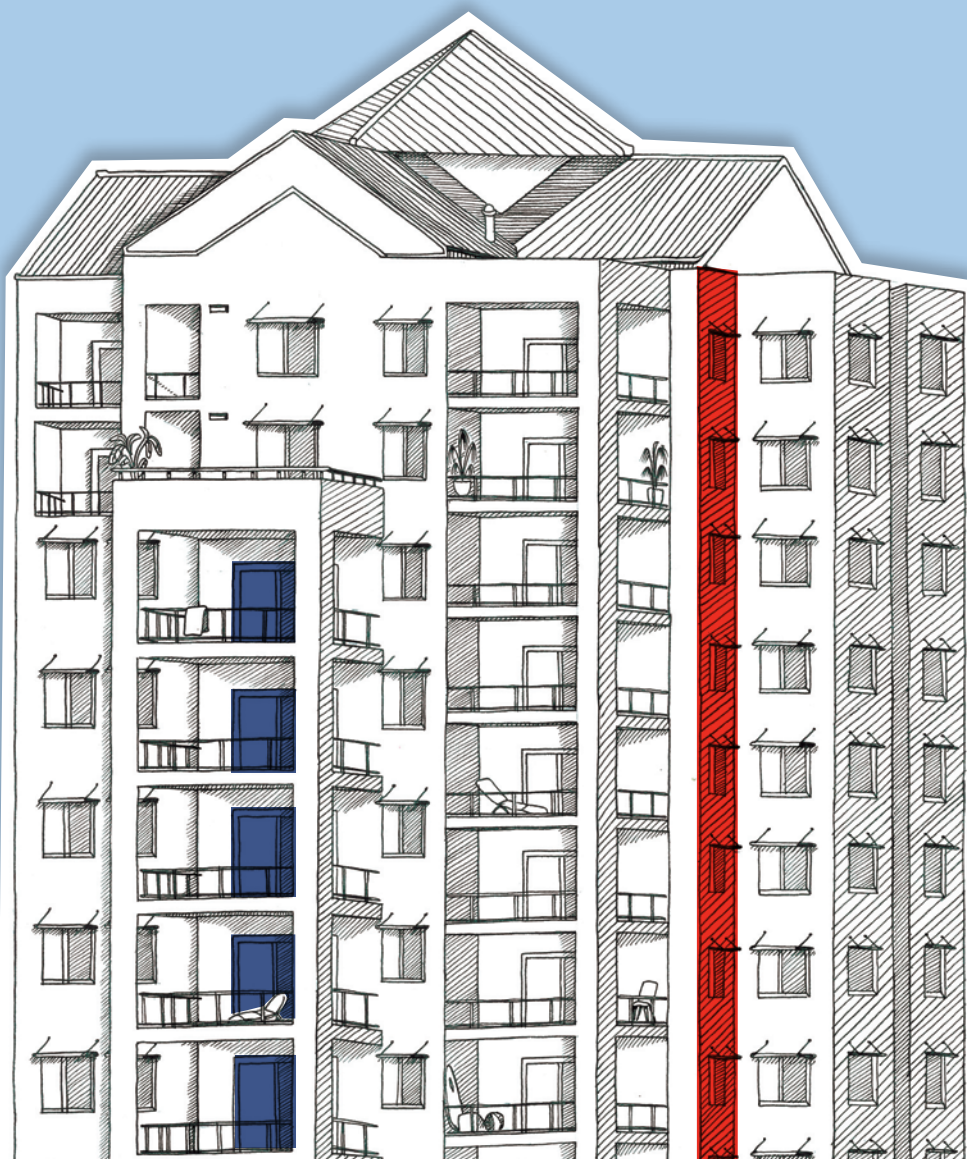


Property and tenancy management

Property and tenancy > Maintenance services
Housing solutions > Customer service > Major projects

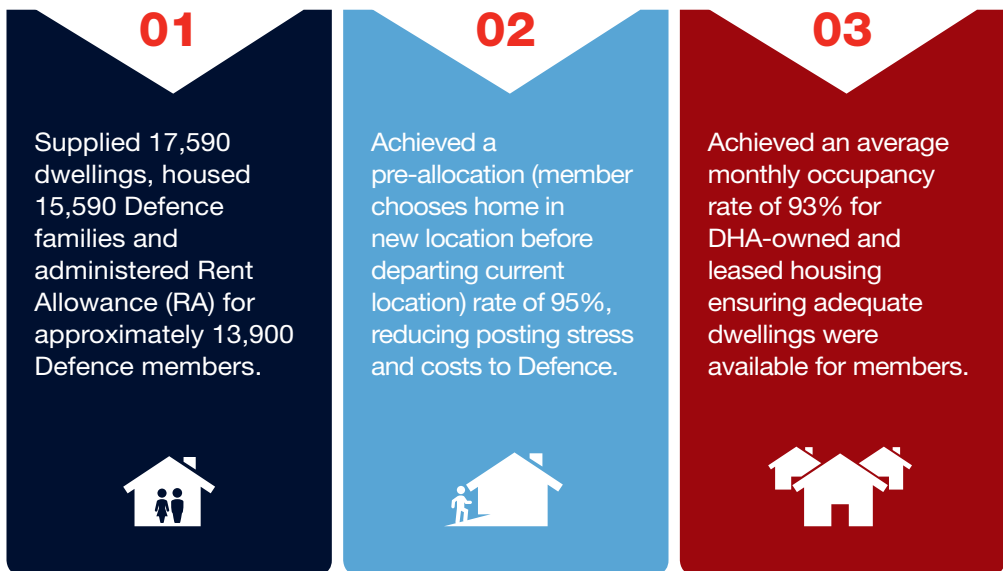


03 Objectives

- Housing supplied and managed effectively to meet the Defence Housing Forecast
- Information technology solutions supporting business capabilities
- Enhancing customer service experience and perceptions

Key performance indicator	Target	Achievement
Defence member satisfaction with completed maintenance	90%	95%
Defence member satisfaction with overall customer service	80%	92%
Maximising pre-allocation (rolling 12 month average)	75%	95%

Major outcomes



04

Achieved an average monthly vacancy rate of 5% for Defence-owned off-base houses, compared to 8% in 2012–13.



05

Achieved a monthly average of 98% of housing contribution and RA payment notifications to Defence within a 10 day period, compared to a target of 95%.



06

Implemented an online booking and allocation service for on-base LIA, covering approximately 39,900 beds at 53 Defence bases.



07

Achieved a completion rate for routine maintenance of 86% within 15 days compared to a Services Agreement target of 80% completed. The completion rate within 28 days was 98%.



08

Implemented consistent workforce structures in regional offices.



Property and tenancy

Overview

Property and Tenancy Services (P&TS) is responsible for maintaining properties, presenting properties for allocation and providing support to Defence members during their tenancy. This is the customer-facing side of the business with approximately 380 staff in regional offices providing their services. This business also manages the administration of RA to members who are accommodated in the private rental market.

P&TS matches the housing portfolio to housing demand as Defence members and their families move on posting, or as their changing personal circumstances affect their housing needs.

Defence Housing Forecast

The Defence Housing Forecast is the starting point for the property and tenancy business, as it is for property provisioning. It advises how many Defence families are expected to need accommodation in the next financial year (and the following four years). For 2013–14, Defence estimated a housing requirement for 19,406 Defence members and their families, a 1.0% decrease on 2012–13.

The forecast estimates the proportion of Defence members who will require Defence-funded housing (DHA-managed or RA), as distinct from those who will live in their own homes. The accuracy of the forecast, therefore, is affected by matters outside the control of Defence and DHA (for example, the state of residential property markets and the availability of bank finance).

Responsive maintenance

Responsive maintenance is a critical component of property and tenancy management. DHA is contracted to provide a quality 24-hour maintenance service and to deliver high-levels of tenant satisfaction with that service. To assist in achieving this objective, DHA provides a Maintenance Call Centre (MCC) to receive and take action on maintenance calls from tenants across Australia. During 2013–14, the MCC received 132,613 calls and made 116,850 outgoing calls. The MCC raised 44,672 maintenance requests and responded to 1,277 incoming emails from contractors, Defence members, real estate agents and DHA staff.

Mobile technology

During 2013–14, 147 mobile devices were introduced for property managers and other field staff as part of improvements to the tenancy service. The mobile devices are used during property inspections and give staff remote access to IT systems. The devices also include a function that enables staff to record outcomes of inspections directly into DHA's systems, access historical information about the property or the tenant and the ability to directly raise maintenance requests. This information is electronically available to lessors and tenants via their Online Services account.

The mobile devices have improved business efficiency with a significant reduction in data re-entry and post inspection administration. Improvements to mobile technology and associated systems will continue to refine the customer service experience.

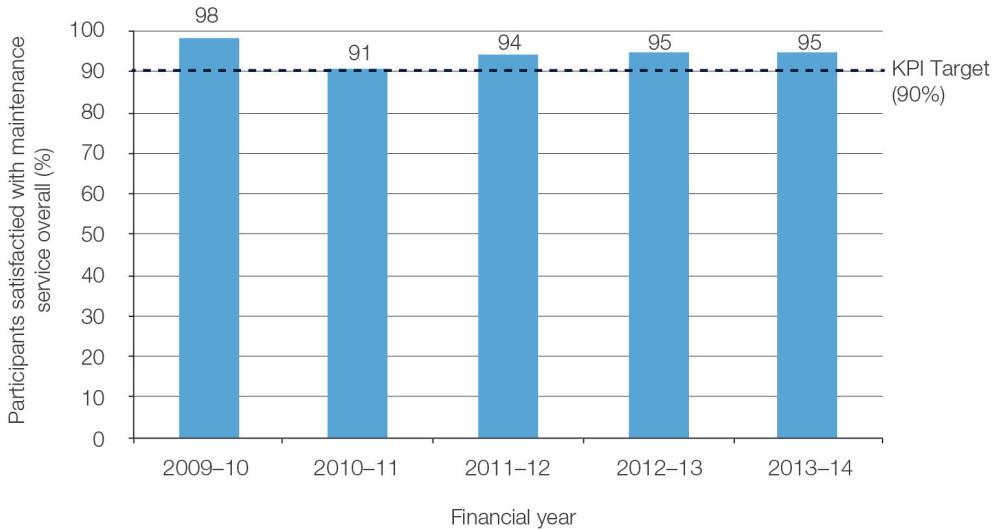
Maintenance surveys

Defence member satisfaction is measured on customer service, contractor service and overall satisfaction with the maintenance service. Performance with completed and invoiced works remained strong, with 95% of 6,998 surveyed tenants expressing satisfaction with the overall service. This result is the same as that in 2012–13.

Contractor management

To enable DHA to give tenants and lessors a prompt and high-quality maintenance service, irrespective of location, local maintenance service providers are used in each region. Sophisticated contractor management software is used to assist the MCC and regional offices to manage about 1,000 individual contractors across the country. To maintain efficient and timely maintenance support, a rolling tender program is used to ensure all engaged contractors are compliant with the high standards of service. Through the rolling tender and software enhancement programs, supervision of the contractor workforce is continually being refined, work allocation is being automated and value-for-money improved.

Figure 2: Customer satisfaction with maintenance service, 2009–10 to 2013–14



Services Agreement on housing and related matters

The relationship with Defence is managed under the provisions of the Services Agreement on housing and related matters (Services Agreement).

In June 2014, Defence and DHA agreed to align the term of the Allocation and Tenancy Management (ATM) Agreement with the Services Agreement. This extended the term of the ATM by a further four years. In doing so, Defence recognised that value-for-money was provided and services were being delivered in an efficient and effective manner.



Allocation of housing

DHA aims to maximise the number of available properties during the peak posting period, minimise vacancies at other times and minimise the number of Defence families receiving RA. The web-based system, Online Services, is the main tool used by Defence members and their families to view properties they might be eligible to occupy (determined by location, rent band and family composition). Online systems, their capabilities and the quality of the service to Defence members are continually being enhanced in conjunction with improved regional workforce structures.

At 30 June 2014, 82% of the total Defence demand was satisfied by DHA-managed housing with the balance in private rental accommodation. The 2013–14 monthly average of Defence families on RA was 18%. One reason for the shift is the increase in the proportion of Defence members approved for RA following service recognition of an interdependent relationship, including de facto relationships. DHA generally does not have the opportunity to offer accommodation in these circumstances.

Housing is allocated in accordance with a classification system under which DHA-managed properties are assigned to one of five rent bands set by Defence, in consultation with DHA, and updated annually. Rent bands are determined by geographical location with individual houses assigned to a rent band based on their market rent. The system enables Defence members to access housing in accordance with their ranks and family-based entitlements.

Living-In Accommodation

DHA entered into an agreement with Defence in June 2013 to manage the booking and allocation of LIA. A national roll out of a new booking and allocation service for on-base LIA was completed in 2013–14.

The new arrangements include an online automated booking tool that caters for permanent, group and individual transit (short-term) requests. Defence has approximately 39,900 beds nationally across 53 Defence bases. The LIA booking and allocation service is supported by a dedicated LIA contact centre that is based in Brisbane. The ownership and responsibility for maintenance of LIA assets remain the responsibility of Defence.

Defence bases in Queensland transitioned to the new booking arrangements in the second half of 2013. The remaining bases progressively transitioned over the remainder of the 2013–14 financial year.

The booking and allocation service provides a single access point for Defence members and employees to make and confirm LIA bookings. It also provides Defence managers with real-time and historical information regarding LIA assets to inform decision making at local, regional and national levels.

Rent Allowance

In addition to supplying and managing housing for Defence members, DHA is contracted by Defence to administer the payment of RA to Defence members who are accommodated in the private rental market. Defence members are responsible for finding their own private rental accommodation. However, they engage DHA when seeking approval for the arrangements they have negotiated with agents and landlords.

In the normal course of events, administration of RA involves approving the start of a housing-related allowance, conducting an annual review to confirm a continuing entitlement and administering the termination at the end of an approved arrangement. However, administration of RA can be complex involving changes to payment as members' circumstances change (for example, deployment on operations, sharing arrangements and movement to/from Defence schools and courses).

MCA

In 2006 DHA began providing apartments for Members Without Dependants and Members With Dependants (Unaccompanied) Choice Accommodation (MCA) in Darwin as an alternative to RA. This agreement has been extended nationally. More than 11,000 Defence members are housed in private rental accommodation. By 30 June 2014, the off-base apartment portfolio held 425 apartments. The Board approved a plan to expand this to 1,000 apartments by 2015–16. Work is well advanced to meet this plan.

Customer service

Communication with Defence members occurs in a variety of ways, reflecting the expectation that modern electronic communications will be available to support the delivery of services.

Interactions with Defence members and their families, maintenance providers, builders, agents and lessors occur every day. These people and organisations are DHA's customers and success is measured by their levels of satisfaction, especially Defence members and their families who live in DHA properties.

Communicating with Defence members

Regional office staff are regular participants in briefings to Defence members in the lead up to the peak posting period. These briefings encourage ongoing contact between regional offices and Defence units and formations in relation to housing matters. Online access to the full range of housing management services is also provided. Communication and marketing materials are used to inform Defence members and their families of the services available and how to use them.

Publications and online information are available to help customers understand and access services. These are distributed through the regional offices and staff.

DHA understands the difficult circumstances Defence families can face when moving on posting. In response, during 2013–14 training was provided to frontline staff and workshops were conducted to improve customer service during the stressful peak posting period.

Regional offices

The ongoing needs of individual Defence families are fundamental to DHA's service delivery model. The workforce is spread across 19 regional offices, matched to geographical concentrations of Defence units and establishments. Twelve are designated regional offices and the balance smaller 'branch' offices. At 30 June 2014, 381 people, or about 55% of the workforce, were employed in regional offices. This staffing provides a physical presence for Defence members seeking advice on housing services. Online Services and a national telephone contact centre are also maintained to manage these needs.

Customer Service Institute of Australia

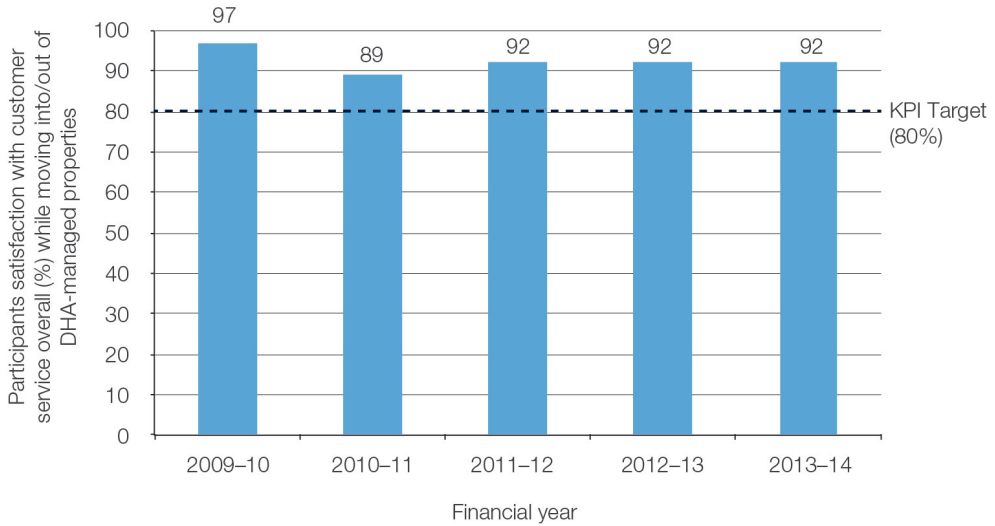
Certification with the Customer Service Institute of Australia (CSIA) was first sought in 2005–06 as part of a broad strategy to improve performance at the customer interface. The CSIA offers evaluation and certification by independent assessors against 29 international customer service standards. Certification is a recognised benchmark in both the public and private sectors. In addition, CSIA offers valuable insight and coaching in customer service. Since 2005–06, recertification has occurred five times: in 2007–08, 2008–09, 2010–11, 2011–12 and 2012–13.

The business was reassessed in August 2013 and achieved an overall score of 7.32 (out of 10); an improvement on the previous result and an excellent score.

Satisfaction with customer service

The quarterly housing survey measures Defence member satisfaction with overall customer service experienced while finding, occupying and vacating Service Residences. Survey results remain above the target of 80% with 92% of 3,229 participants indicating that they were satisfied with their customer service experience.

Figure 3: Defence member satisfaction with overall customer service while moving into/out of DHA-managed properties, 2009–10 to 2013–14



Customer relations management

Through regular surveys, the majority of customers tell DHA that they are satisfied with the services provided, especially with the quality of new housing. DHA also receives positive customer feedback on its services through regional offices and the national customer relations team. In 2013–2014, more than 220 compliments were received nationally from Defence members and their families and lessors. The main reasons for compliments were exemplary customer service, exceeding customer expectations, professional conduct and high levels of communication.

However, some complaints were also received. Complaints can be referred directly by tenants, other Defence personnel, lessors, the Defence Ombudsman or Ministers. DHA's objective is to manage complaints at the point at which customers first express dissatisfaction. Logged complaints are reported to Defence on a monthly basis.

In 2013–14, 947 complaints were received nationally comprising a 25% increase on 2012–13 (756 complaints). The four main reasons for complaints were repairs and maintenance (382), neighbourhood disputes (87), condition of the property (89) and customer service (83). The increase in complaints can be partly attributed to better collection of data. This has helped to identify earlier customer trigger points and provide an in-depth understanding of customer satisfaction with the service provided. To assist in reducing the number of complaints, staff have undertaken training in issues management. This training has been developed to build staff knowledge and awareness and to help provide higher levels of customer service.

All complaints are managed in accordance with the complaints resolution process that is outlined in the *DHA Customer Service Charter*. If customers are not satisfied with the handling of their complaints they can request a review of the response. The customer relations team oversees these escalated complaints and provides assistance in complaint resolution. Most complaints are resolved at the local level.

A look at regional highlights across the organisation places the number of complaints received in context.

Regional offices highlights

Region	Offices	Client services delivered	Highlights
Northern Territory	Darwin Katherine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,207 properties managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgraded 18 houses on Larrakeyah Barracks Upgraded 51 houses on RAAF Base Tindal Delivered 83 constructions in Muirhead, Bellamack and Johnston Acquired 10 new MCA properties
North Queensland	Townsville Cairns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,160 properties managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalised program to upgrade 30 Defence-owned properties in remote localities Started land sales and house construction at Bluewattle in Rasmussen Attended Townsville and Cairns Defence Community Organisation (DCO) family days

Regional offices highlights (continued)

Region	Offices	Client services delivered	Highlights
South Queensland	Brisbane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,977 properties managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Started civil works for stages one and two 'A' at Warner Lakes The Reserve, Warner Awarded the tender to construct seven townhouses and 48 apartments at Samford Rd, Enoggera Gained development approval for 44 townhouses at Wardell St, Enoggera Started the redevelopment of four rent band three properties at Taurama St, Gaythorne Began construction of final 23 townhouses at Gordon Olive Estate, McDowall Expanded the MCA portfolio to 120 properties
	Ipswich Toowoomba Canungra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,244 properties managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established new regional office on 1 July 2013 Constructed 52 houses in stage two at Yamanto Hills Started civil works in stage three at Yamanto Hills that will deliver 62 houses Secured Raceview development site Attended Oakey DCO family day Attended tree planting event for the Bundamba Creek rehabilitation project
Hunter	Newcastle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,040 properties managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocated office and MCC from Raymond Terrace to Newcastle CBD Acquired development sites in Thornton Attended charity runs for cancer-related charities

Regional offices highlights (continued)

Region	Offices	Client services delivered	Highlights
Sydney	Parramatta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3,032 properties managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivered 111 dwellings at AE2 Ermington, the first Sydney development to receive UDIA EnviroDevelopment certification Substantially completed houses scheduled for delivery in early 2014–15 at Heartwood, Voyager Point Moved forward with construction at Crimson Hill, Lindfield Completed seven on-base upgrades at RAAF Base Richmond Started refresh of Coogee/Little Bay leased houses; 45 shared cost upgrades and lease extensions completed Attended Sydney and Liverpool DCO family days
Nowra	Nowra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 356 properties managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attended Nowra DCO family day
Australian Capital Territory	Canberra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,040 properties managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed civil works and started construction of 50 dwellings at Weston Started construction work on 23 new dwellings at Casey Attended Canberra DCO family day
Riverina	Wagga Wagga Wodonga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 660 properties managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgraded 15 on-base houses at Kapooka Completed infrastructure works at Kapooka Village Attended Wagga Wagga and Wodonga DCO family days
Victoria/ Tasmania	Melbourne Puckapunyal Cerberus Sale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,382 properties managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgraded 147 houses at Puckapunyal Upgraded 28 on-base houses at Cerberus Retrofitted 276 properties with air-conditioning at a total cost of \$1.5 million Replaced 20 old wall furnaces with ducted heating

Region	Offices	Client services delivered	Highlights
South Australia	Adelaide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 955 properties managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed construction of 40 houses at Bayriver, Largs North and tenanted them within two weeks Attended Adelaide DCO welcome day Supported the Cancer Council and Operation Flinders
Western Australia	Perth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,088 properties managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchased development site in Victoria St, Fremantle Acquired 12 MCA properties Attended Welcome to the West DCO day Attended Pilbara Regiment family induction day

Major projects

Information and communication technologies

During 2013–14, the development of new and improved information technology solutions continued while sustaining business-as-usual capabilities. To support and deliver services such as property management, leasing operations, customer relationship management, staff training and development, DHA relies on robust information and technology systems. These systems support thousands of interactions every week with Defence members, builders, contractors, lessors, valuers, staff and Government.

Throughout the year, the suite of online services continued to expand to support field staff, Defence members and external stakeholders. This included delivering an extension to the overall housing allocation model by providing LIA booking and allocation services. The success of the delivery of this was reliant on a technology based solution that was integrated into Online Services. It now provides a seamless experience for Defence members when booking all types of on-base LIA.