



Community housing tenant satisfaction benchmarking

Report prepared by the NSW
Federation of Housing
Associations

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Introduction

This report presents an analysis of the benchmarking data from the 13 tenant satisfaction surveys undertaken by the NSW Federation of Housing Associations (the Federation) during the 2013/14 financial year.

Why benchmark?

Benchmarking is a powerful tool to assess performance between organisations and facilitates self-assessment and analysis. If results are below average it supports additional efforts to improve service, and in time this drives industry wide improvements in performance.

Benchmarking is not an end in its own right, rather a detailed and evidence based 'conversation starter' that enables CHPs to examine their own practice and, in time, share best practice around the industry.

International research has found that specific factors and variables can influence satisfaction results. These include the following factors (please note this list is not exhaustive and often several factors will interplay):

- Age of tenants (older tenants tend to be more satisfied)
- Regional vs. urban (regional tenants tend to be more satisfied)
- Permanent housing vs. transitional (tenants in permanent housing tend to be more satisfied)
- Length of tenure (tenants at the start of their tenancy tend to be more satisfied)

Often the individual tenant satisfaction reports written by the Federation identify one tenant group which is more or less satisfied than other groups. As well as direct service issues these differences may be driven by the groups' demographic profile. Therefore it is important to reflect and understand results within the context of the tenant base as well as any underlying service delivery issues.

Summary of benchmarking tenant satisfaction findings

- In conclusion overall, these are very positive results for the industry. For example, on average 84% overall satisfaction level and with one CHP reaching 93%.
- The analysis for all the surveys re-confirms the importance of repairs in driving satisfaction.
- Importantly the majority of providers matched or exceeded the NRSCH thresholds.
- Although there were some differences between the satisfaction levels for the two years covered by this analysis these differences are within the margin of error.
- For some service areas there is a wider range of range of satisfaction levels.
- Response rates have significant improved. These higher response rates are attributed to the Federation introducing new surveying techniques.
- Complaints and appeals are the two service areas that had the lowest levels of tenant knowledge and satisfaction.

Benchmarking tenant satisfaction: The Federation's offer

To enable tenant satisfaction benchmarking across the Australian community housing industry all CHPs that commission the Federation to undertake their tenant satisfaction survey also receive a detailed benchmarking toolkit.

The toolkit allows CHPs to interactively and confidentially compare their results against their peers. This helps CHPs to get the most out of the data and also enables preparation for the NRSCH.

In the toolkit CHPs can segment results by:

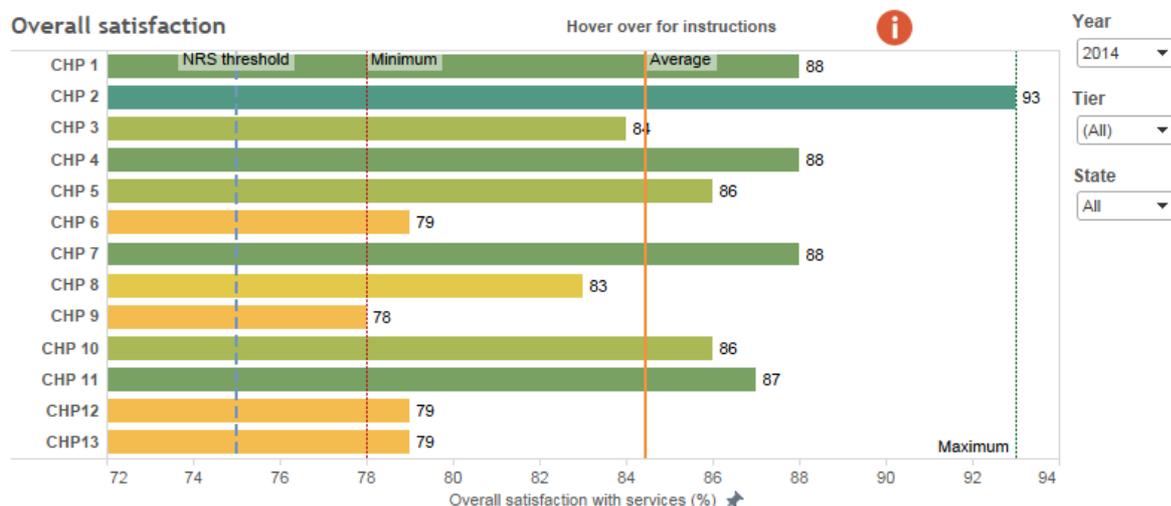
- Year
- Tier
- State¹

The toolkit also displays:

- Minimum values
- Maximum values
- Averages
- NRSCH thresholds
- Mapping information
- Ranking information

¹ Presently the toolkit filters by 'all' or 'NSW'. As more interstate CHPs join the benchmarking service, we will be able to offer a state by state filter, subject to the participation of a minimum number of CHPs per state.

Figure 1: Screen shot of the Federation tenant satisfaction benchmarking toolkit



In total, during the 2013/14 financial year 13 CHPs commissioned the Federation to complete their tenant satisfaction survey, including CHPs based in NSW, WA, Victoria and Queensland. These 13 surveys form the analysis contained in this benchmarking report.

In the current financial year (2014/15) the Federation anticipate that the number of participating CHPs will reach at least 18 CHPs and include data from the ACT, NSW, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria.

In total, 16 key satisfaction indicators are included in the Federation’s benchmarking toolkit including two new indicators:

- Overall satisfaction with repairs quality
- Satisfaction with value for money

These 16 key satisfaction indicators form the analysis contained in this benchmarking report.

Future plans

The Federation is developing the service we offer to CHPs. For example in the current financial year (2014/15) the Federation has added an additional core question on the impact of community housing. The Federation is able to offer bespoke follow up surveys to drill down into results. The Federation is also investigating demand for a new survey on impact and quality of life. Other new possible services include surveys on estate management and post occupancy.

Benchmarking analysis in full

Response rate

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
25%	44%	29%	34%

- During 2013/14 there have been some very impressive response rates including 44% recorded by one organisation. Indeed for one CALD subgroup a 64% response rate was achieved. What makes this figure so impressive is the fact that this group is traditionally are hard to engage.
- Compared to the response rate in 2012/13 (29%) there was a significant increase in response rates for 2013/14 (34%).
- All the CHPs using the Federation's service either matched or exceeded the NRSCH threshold.
- These high response rates were achieved by the Federation after introducing new surveying techniques.

Overall

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the services provided by your provider?

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
93%	73%	84%	84%

- This is the key question in the survey and overall, tenants were very satisfied with the service provided by their CHP.
- There was a wide range satisfaction levels – ranging from 93% to 73%.
- The average was 84% - which is the same as the previous year.
- Only one organisation was below the NRSCH threshold.

Satisfaction with value for money (new indicator)

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
91%	66%	N/A	82%

- This is a new question added in 2013/14.
- Overall, tenants were satisfied with value for money.
- There was a wide range satisfaction levels – ranging from 91% to 66%.

Property dashboard

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the condition of your home?

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
83%	91%	84%	86%

- Overall, tenants were very satisfied with condition of property.
- Satisfaction ranged from 91% to 83%.
- All of the CHPs were above the NRSCH threshold.
- The average was 86% - which is a 2% increase compared to the previous year.

Overall satisfaction with repairs quality (new indicator)

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
74%	89%	N/A	81%

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the repairs and maintenance services that your provider provides?

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
61%	84%	77%	76%

- From all the key driver of satisfaction undertaken by the Federation it has been found that repairs is the single most important service area driving satisfaction.
- Overall, tenants were satisfied with the repairs service.
- There was a wide range satisfaction levels – ranging from 84% to 61%.

Communications

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with communication with your provider?

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
71%	90%	83%	82%

- Overall, tenants were very satisfied with communications.
- There was a wide range satisfaction levels – ranging from 90% to 71%.

Neighbourhood

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your neighbourhood as a place to live?

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
77%	92%	85%	84%

- Overall, tenants were very satisfied with their neighbourhood.
- There was a wide range satisfaction levels – ranging from 92% to 77%.

Complaints and appeals knowledge and satisfaction

Do you know how to appeal a decision made by your provider?

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
32%	78%	46%	48%

Do you know how to make a complaint to your provider?

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
54%	89%	69%	71%

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you about how your complaint was dealt with?

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
38%	67%	52%	48%

- Complaints and appeals overall had the lowest levels of satisfaction and knowledge for the survey.
- There was a wide range of satisfaction levels.
- On average, 71% of tenants reported knowing how to complain – but this went as low as 54%.
- On average, 48% of tenants reported knowing how to appeal a decision but this went as low as 32%.
- Satisfaction with complaint handling averaged 48% but reached as low as 38%.

Tenants' rights

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your rights as a tenant are upheld by your provider?

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
68%	90%	84%	83%

- Overall tenants strongly believe the industry supports tenants' rights.
- There was a wide range satisfaction levels – ranging from 90% to 68%.

Tenant engagement benchmarks

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your provider provides you with information?

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
76%	90%	86%	84%

In relation to tenant engagement, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your provider involves tenants?

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
57%	84%	77%	76%

In relation to tenant engagement, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your provider listens to tenants' views and acts on them?

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
66%	84%	73%	74%

In relation to tenant engagement, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that tenants are able to influence your provider's decision-making?

Minimum 2013/14	Maximum 2013/14	Average 2012/13	Average 2013/14
42%	69%	62%	62%

- Overall, tenants are least satisfied with the highest level of engagement.
- There was a wide range of levels of satisfaction.

Further information about the Federation's tenant satisfaction survey and benchmarking service

The NSW Federation of Housing Associations (the Federation) is the industry peak body for Community Housing Providers (CHPs) in NSW. The Federation have developed the largest and most comprehensive tenant satisfaction survey and benchmarking service for the industry across Australia. This service has a number of unique features:

- It was developed after a year-long consultation with CHPs (including tenants). The service is based on Australian and international best practice plus meets all the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) requirements.
- Flexible service, with the ability to choose from a core of over 100 questions developed by the industry plus the opportunity to add your own questions to meet your individual strategic needs.
- Cost and time effective. The service can be tailored to meet most budgets. The Federation's service will save your organisation valuable time – no more running your own survey in-house. Plus the Federation will help you through all stages of the process including follow up work or additional analysis.
- A number of industry best practice solutions to support a higher response rate. In the most recent surveys conducted by the Federation industry beating response rates of between 39% and 44% were achieved by:
 - Targeted SMS, reminder letters or emails to those tenants who have not responded.
 - Translating questionnaires into the community languages used by tenants.
 - Offering both paper questionnaires and surveys on the web, smartphones and tablets (either in reception or off site).
- Enhanced analysis and reporting including:
 - Key drivers of tenant satisfaction.
 - Word clouds and comments toolkit.
 - Geographical reporting.
 - Statistical analysis significance testing.
- Finally the service offers a fully interactive benchmarking toolkit which allows CHPs to compare their results against their peers.

To date, CHPs that have used our service have been 100% 'very satisfied' with the service provided. The Federation thank each CHP for commissioning the Federation's tenant satisfaction survey and benchmarking service.

For more information about the tenant satisfaction survey and benchmarking service please phone Terry Jones 9281 7144 ext. 203 or email terryj@communityhousing.org.au