

INNER CITY HOMELESS COUNT AUGUST 2007

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

1. Background

The ABS Homelessness Enumeration Strategy is exceptional in the quality of data it produces and the extent and depth of its coverage. Unfortunately, however, new data is only available every 5 years, with a considerable lag between data collection and release. This is an acute issue in South Australia, where the government has identified reducing homelessness as a key social policy goal - the South Australian Strategic Plan has a specific target of halving 'rough sleeping'. Additional approaches are therefore needed to collect more regular and 'up to the minute' information on homelessness numbers, especially in key areas such as the inner city.

A strategy has therefore been devised to conduct a twice annual count of homeless people in the City of Adelaide. This is being done as a collaborative project between state government and key inner city homelessness services.

The first survey was conducted on 19th June 2007, a second count was undertaken on 21st August 2007. This Report examines both counts and investigates areas where change has occurred.

2. Method

The second Inner City Homeless Count was conducted on 21st August 2007. Collection was undertaken by and through four agencies: Street to Home; Byron Place Day Centre; Westcare; and Hutt Street Day Centre.

In the early morning on the day of the Count, Street to Home visited the Parklands and other locations known to be frequented by people sleeping in unsheltered accommodation. Day Centres approached all people attending their service and invited their participation in the survey. All collection was undertaken in the morning.

The questionnaire (see appendix) was amended from the June 2007 survey based on feedback from agencies and to obtain more specific information on current location and accommodation status over the past 12 months.

The methodology for the count was very similar to that used by the ABS in the 2006 Census (ie, the same agencies were involved in the collection of data and similar collection strategies were used). However, the ABS count occurred over 3 days. The ABS Census Short Form (specifically targeted at 'rough sleepers') was modified to fit the specific purposes of this Count (for example, to provide more information on housing history and less information on demographic characteristics such as marital status and income).

3. Total Numbers

On the 21st August a total of 365 surveys were completed by the 4 agencies. Matching of identifiers and other information indicated that 3 people completed the survey twice. The first and repeated surveys from those 3 people were then combined into one record. Therefore, it is considered that a total **362 individuals**¹ were in contact with the designated agencies on the day of the count. The June survey identified **357 individuals** from 362 completed survey forms.

Of those who gave their identifiers in both surveys 43 people were present in both the June and August survey.

The number of people who stated they were *homeless unsheltered* fell from 108 (30%) to 93 (26%) and the number who were in their own house or flat increased from 93 (26%) to 105 (29%).

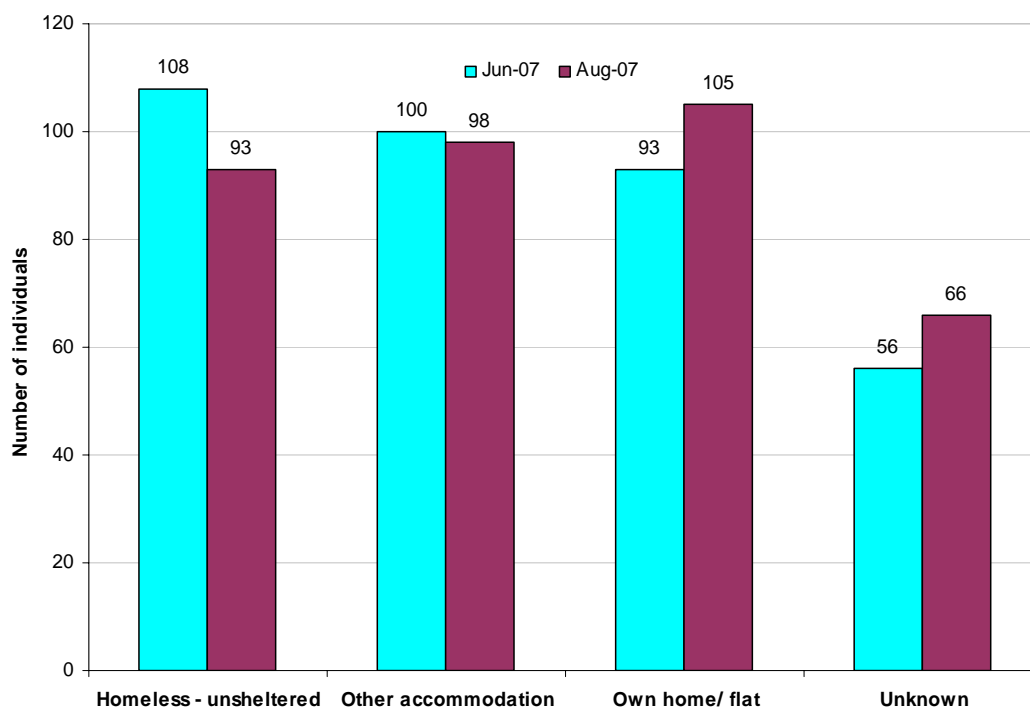
Of the 362 people in the August count, 66 (18.2%) declined to participate in the survey or were regarded as too incapacitated to respond and their accommodation type is unknown. (Table 1 and Figure 1).

Table 1: Type of current shelter on day of count, individuals

Type of shelter	19th June 2007		21st August 2007	
	N	%	N	%
Homeless - unsheltered	108	30.3	93	25.7
Other accommodation	100	28.0	98	27.1
Own home/ flat	93	26.1	105	29.0
Unknown	56	15.7	66	18.2
Total	357	100.0	362	100.0

¹ Note that there may have been less individuals due to potential 'double counting' in the non-participant group (ie identifiers and other information were not recorded, but the same individuals could have been recorded more than once in different services on the same day as 'refused').

Figure 1: Type of current shelter on day of count

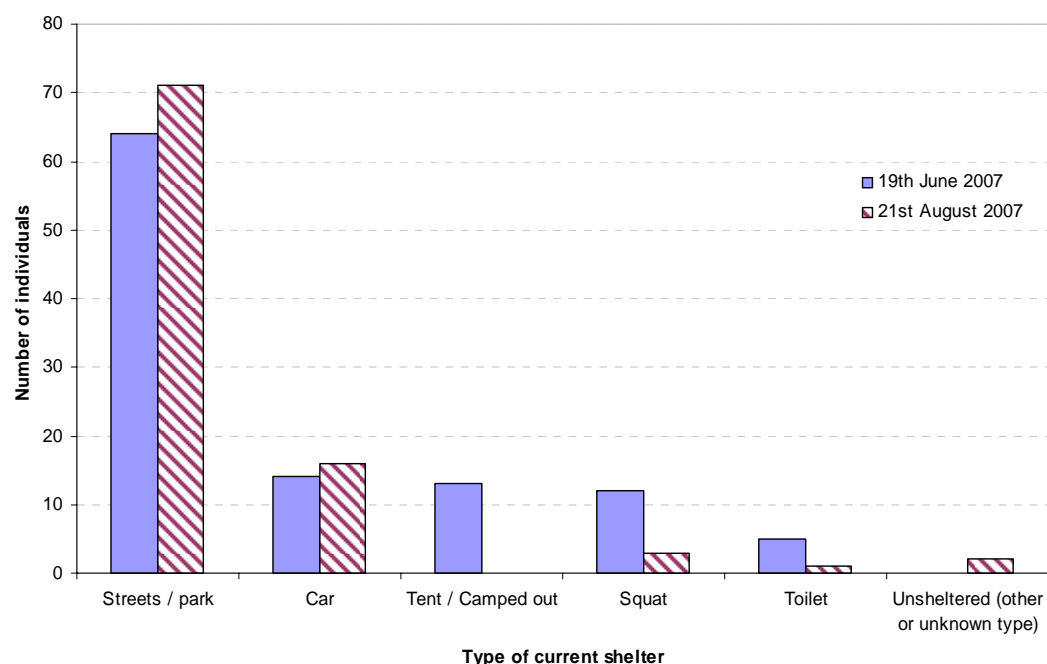


In both surveys, the majority of unsheltered people were living in the streets or park with fourteen and sixteen people respectively living in their car (Table 2 and Figure 2).

Table 2: Type of Current Shelter for people in Homeless - Unsheltered accommodation

Type of shelter	19th June 2007		21st August 2007	
	N	%	N	%
Streets / park	64	59.3	71	76.3
Car	14	13.0	16	17.2
Tent / Camped out	13	12.0	0	0
Squat	12	11.1	3	3.2
Toilet	5	4.6	1	1.1
Unsheltered (other or unknown type)			2	2.2
Total	108	100.0	93	100.0

Figure 2: Type of current shelter for people in Homeless - Unsheltered accommodation



People who stated they were living in *other accommodation* were more evenly spread across accommodation types in the August survey, although boarding houses were still the most common option. Fewer were living temporarily with their friends or relatives or in a hotel / motel.

Table 3: Type of current shelter for people in other accommodation

Type of shelter	19th June 2007		21st August 2007	
	N	%	N	%
Boarding house	39	39.0	30	30.6
Friend's or relative's house (temporary)	31	31.0	19	19.4
SAAP Accommodation	14	14.0	17	17.3
Hotel / motel	7	7.0	11	11.2
Sobering up unit / Detox	3	3.0	6	6.1
Caravan	3	3.0	0	0.0
Hospital	0	0.0	3	3.1
Sheltered - Other	3	3.0	12	12.2
Total	100	100.0	98	100.0

In the August survey respondents were asked a specific question regarding the location of their current accommodation. This improved the response rate, with a non-response of 19% compared with 28% in June. In both surveys almost two thirds of all respondents were staying in Adelaide city or parklands, although the distribution varied according to the type of shelter. The majority of the unsheltered were living in the inner city, whereas the majority of those in their own homes were in the suburbs (Table 4 and Figure 3).

Table 4: Location of current shelter (number of individuals)

Location	Homeless-Unsheltered		Other shelter		Own home		Total	
	19th June	21st August	19th June	21st August	19th June	21st August	19th June	21st August
	Adelaide city or parklands	82	78	55	70	33	36	168
Adelaide suburbs	11	12	30	27	47	67	88	106
Other	-	2	-	1	-	1	-	4
Not indicated	15	1	15	0	13	1	101	68
Total	108	93	100	98	93	105	357	362

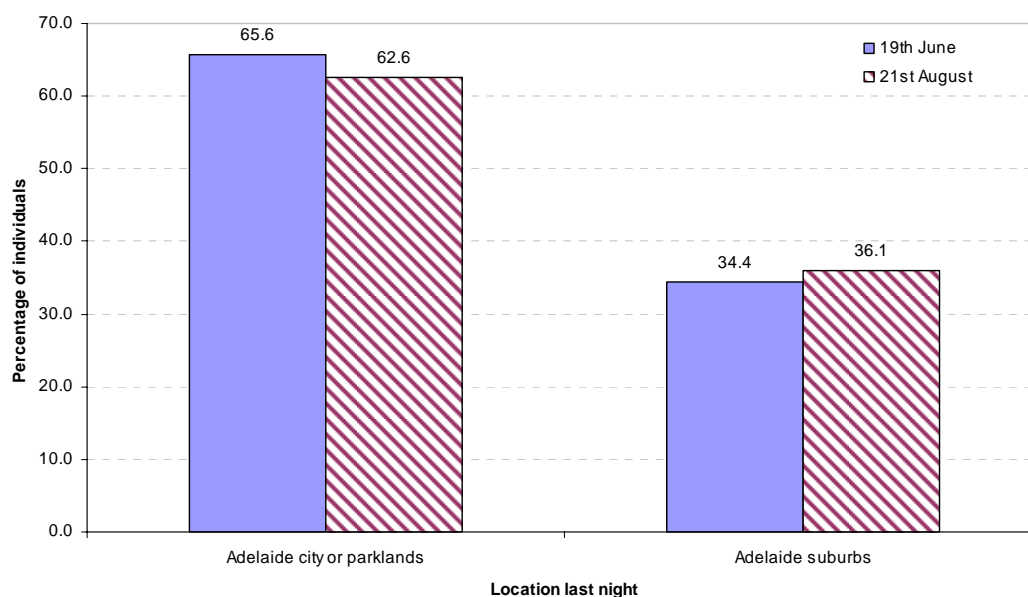


Figure 3: Location of current shelter

Respondents were also asked how long they had been staying in their current accommodation (Table 5 and Figure 4). Generally, answers to this question were not precise and expressed in months or years. Results should therefore be treated with caution.

The '*homeless – unsheltered*' group in the August survey had, overall, been homeless for shorter periods of time, with 69% living in the situation for three months or less compared with 56% of the June survey. The maximum length indicated in the '*homeless – unsheltered*' group was 10 years (compared with 15 years in June).

The situation was similar for the '*other accommodation*' group. In June 67% had lived in their accommodation for 3 months or less (compared with 63% in August). Six people in August had lived in their accommodation for 10 years or more whereas no people in this group had lived in their accommodation for that length of time in the June survey.

The longest period in accommodation for those living in their own home was 39 years in August (29 years in June). In both surveys, approximately two thirds of people living in their own home had been there for at least one year, with a third living there for five years or more.

Table 5: Distribution of how long staying in current accommodation

	Homeless - unsheltered		Other accommodation		Own home/ flat		Total	
	19th June	21st Aug	19th June	21st Aug	19th June	21st Aug	19th June	21st Aug
1 week or less	16	25	32	32	0	1	48	58
2 to 4 weeks	21	17	23	19	3	5	47	41
5 to 12 weeks	18	10	11	10	10	3	39	34
4 to 6 months	14	15	11	12	5	12	30	28
7 to 12 months	2	8	6	11	12	11	20	30
1 to 2 years	8	6	5	6	14	20	27	32
3 to 5 years	10	5	3	4	20	17	33	26
6 to 9 years	4	0	1	1	5	12	11	15
greater than 10 years	6	0	6	0	18	21	30	21
not stated	9	7	2	3	5	3	16	77
Total	108	93	100	98	93	105	301	362

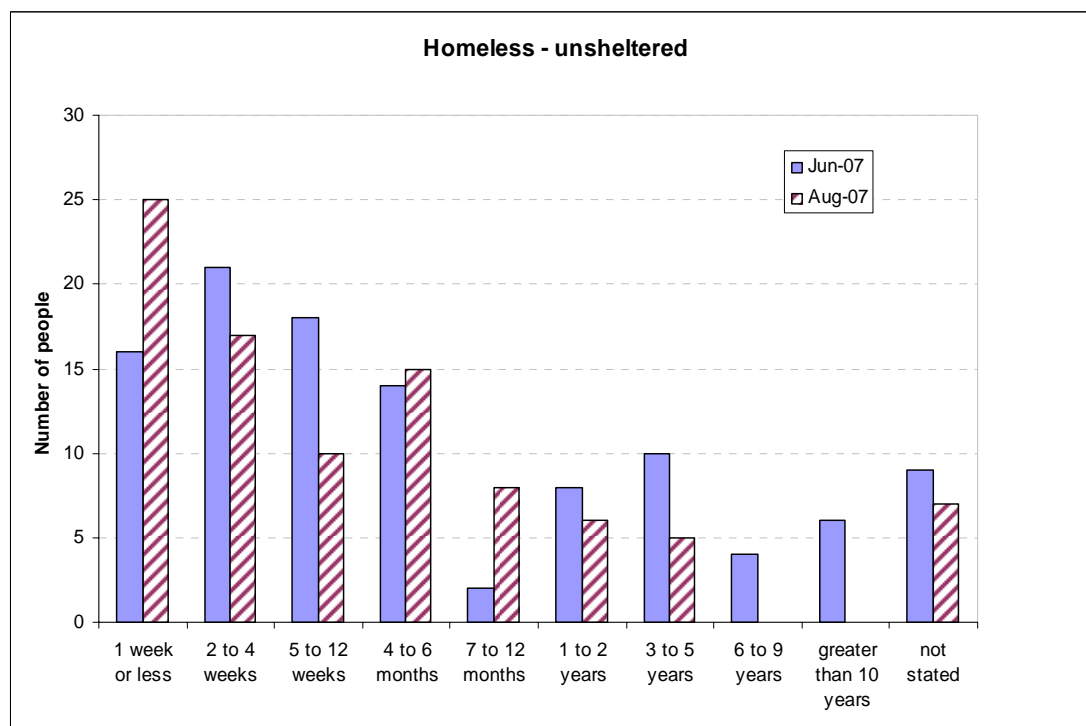


Figure 4: Distribution of how long staying in their accommodation (*Homeless unsheltered*)

Sixty-eight of the people who were currently *homeless-unsheltered* had also experienced other periods of unsheltered homelessness during the last twelve months, a slight increase from the June survey. Only a small number had lived in their own house or flat at some stage during the year.

A third of respondents in both surveys had experienced primary homelessness at some stage during the past twelve months.

Table 6: Type of Shelter used within last 12 months

Shelter used in last 12 months	Homeless - unsheltered		Other accommodation		Own home/ flat		Total	
	19th	21st	19th	21st	19th	21st	19th	21st
	June	Aug	June	Aug	June	Aug	June	Aug
Homeless - unsheltered	62	68	39	38	17	10	118	116
Boarding house	14	15	31	41	3	9	48	65
Friends or relatives house	12	18	23	26	1	5	36	49
SAAP Accommodation	8	9	15	10	1	3	24	22
Detox/ Sobering up unit	5	9	4	7	1	0	10	16
Hotel/ motel	5	6	4	7	1	1	10	14
Caravan	2	6	3	5	1	0	6	11
Prison	2	4	10	3	0	1	12	8
Hospital	1	2	3	5	1	0	5	7
City watchhouse		3		1		0		4
Support residential facility	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Own house or flat	12	11	17	22	68	87	97	120
Other	8	2	7	5	2	1	17	8
Total	108	93	100	98	93	105	357	362

† People may have been in more than one form of accommodation therefore aggregate totals will be more than number of respondents

Includes those people who had resided in their current accommodation more than twelve months.

4. Demographic information

Respondents' ages are summarised in Table 7 and Figure 5 and additional demographics in Table 9. There was little variation in the age profile of the respondents between surveys. The median age of respondents for both surveys was 40 years for both the *homeless-unsheltered* and those in other accommodation; whilst the median age for those in their own home was slightly older (49 in June and for 48 in August).

Table 7: Age distribution

Age	Homeless - unsheltered				Other accomm		Own home/ flat		Unknown		Total	
	19th June	21st August	19th June	21st August	19th June	21st August	19th June	21st August	19th June	21st August	19th June	21st August
	Under 18	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
18 to 24	8	9	9	5	1	4	4	3	22	21		
25 to 34	26	20	23	23	8	9	11	18	68	70		
35 to 44	38	34	29	34	20	26	27	19	114	113		
45 to 54	30	20	22	20	31	27	8	12	91	79		
55 to 64	5	8	10	8	21	24	5	7	41	47		
65 and over	0	1	7	7	11	14	0	4	18	26		
Not stated	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	3	2	4		
Total	108	93	100	98	93	105	56	66	357	362		

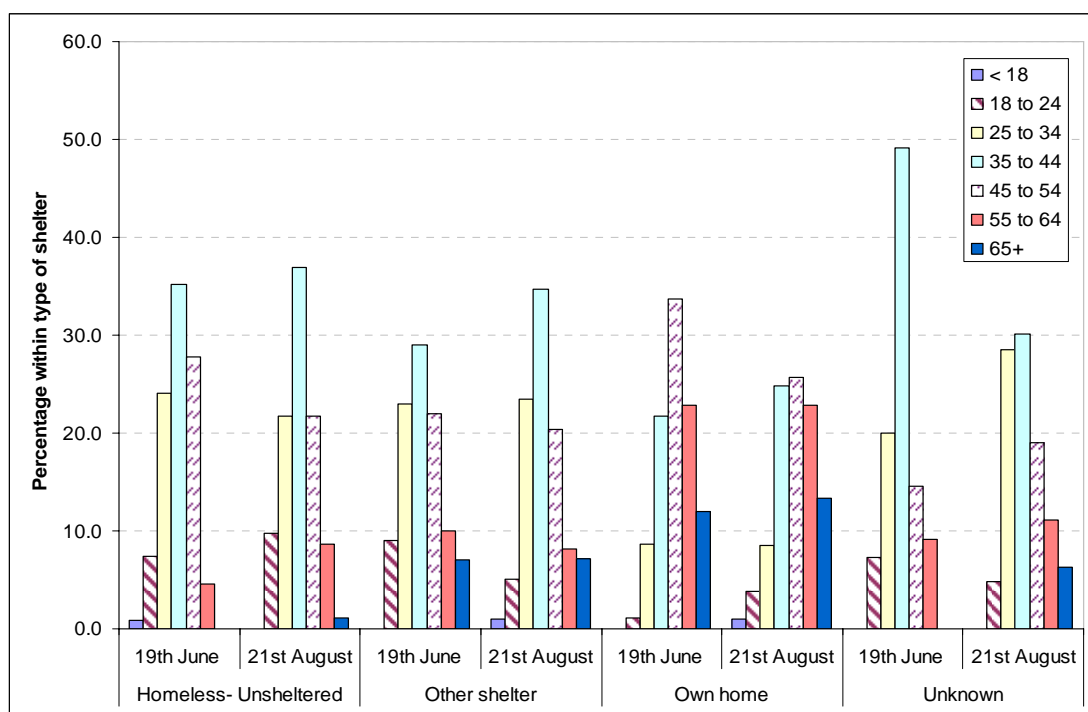


Figure 5: Age (years) distribution within Type of Current Shelter

In both surveys, the majority of participants were born in Australia, non-indigenous, single and male (Table 8). There was a slight increase in people born overseas in the August survey. Most of these (58%) were born in the United Kingdom.

Table 9: Demographics

	Homeless- Unsheltered		Other accom		Own home		Declined/ unknown		Total	
	19th June	21st August	19th June	21st August	19th June	21st August	19th June	21st August	19th June	21st August
Country of birth										
Australia	89	82	84	78	73	82	18	42	264	284
Other†	16	12	16	19	20	22	2	6	54	59
Not indicated	3	0	0	0	0	1	36	18	39	19
Cultural background										
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander										
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	32	25	18	11	16	18	19	14	84	68
Non-Indigenous	75	68	81	80	76	85	35	39	267	272
Not indicated	1	1	1	6	1	2	2	13	5	22
Presenting Family Unit										
Single Person										
Single Person	93	77	91	86	82	89	54	52	320	304
Person with children										
Person with children	0	0	0	2	4	5	0	2	4	9
Couple										
Couple	14	13	8	7	7	8	0	0	29	28
Couple with children										
Couple with children	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	2
Other										
Other	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	4
Not indicated	1	1	0	2	0	0	1	12	2	15
Gender										
Male										
Male	81	74	79	80	73	76	46	51	282	281
Female										
Female	25	13	19	14	20	24	6	10	70	61
Not indicated	2	6	2	4	0	5	1	5	5	20
Total	108	93	100	98	93	105	56	66	357	362

There were notably fewer Aboriginal people in the August survey (from 23.5% of participants in June to 20% in August). Fewer Aboriginal people were in unsheltered accommodation (32 in June compared to 25 in August). However, Aboriginal people still comprised 26.5 of those in unsheltered accommodation (compared to 29.6% in June).

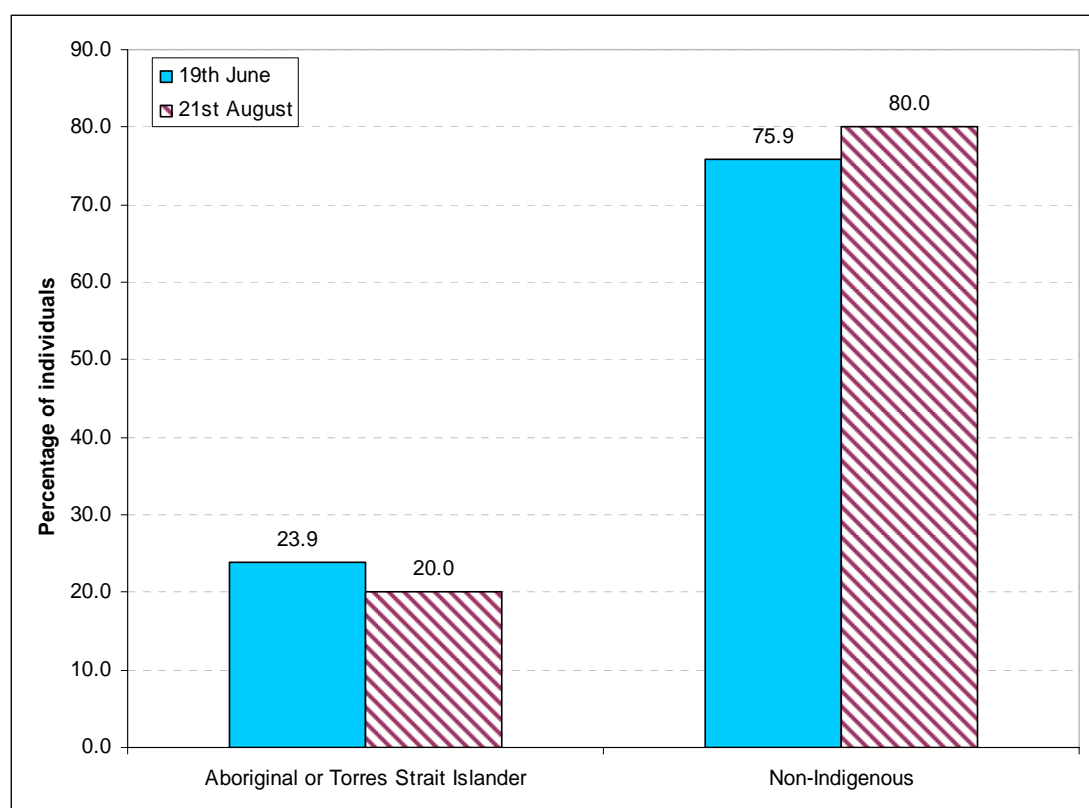


Figure 6: Distribution of Indigenous status 19th June and 21st August 2007

The number of females decreased from June to August. In particular, there were less women in unsheltered accommodation (from 25 females in June to 13 in August). This was probably influenced by the lower rates of Aboriginal participants in the survey (the great majority of women in unsheltered situations in June were Aboriginal). There was a marginal increase in the number of women who were in their own home.

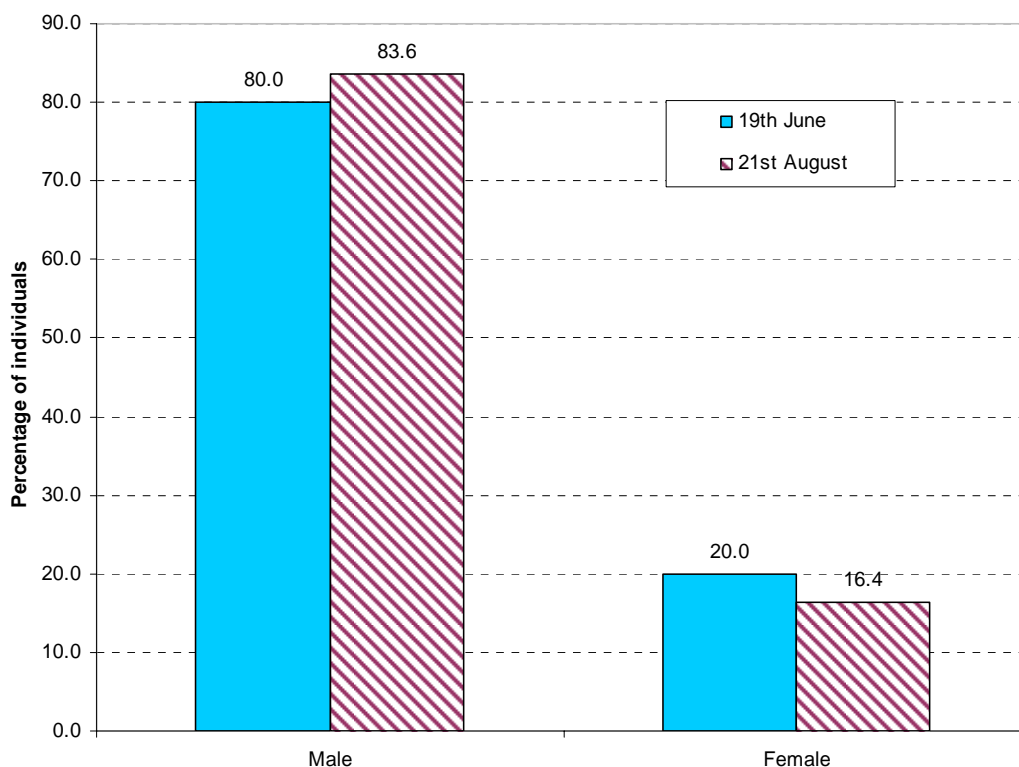


Figure 7: Distribution of Gender, 19th June and 21st August 2007

In the August survey an attempt was made to gather more accurate information on the number of children living with respondents. Only 13 out of the 362 people surveyed indicated they currently had children living with them. Ten of these (77%) were living in their own house or flat. No people with children were in the *homeless – unsheltered group*. (In the June survey only seven people currently had children living with them, and none of these were in unsheltered circumstances).

The 13 people had 19 children living with them, with 11 children twelve years or under.

Table 10: Age of children currently living with them

Number of children 21st August	Homeless - unsheltered	Other accom	Own home/ flat	Unknown	Total
0 - 4	0	0	3	0	3
5 - 12	0	0	7	1	8
13 - 15	0	1	4	0	5
16 - 18	0	0	3	0	3
Total children	0	1	17	1	19
Total people with children August	0	1	10	2	13
Total people with children June	0	2	4	1	7

5. Location over past twelve months

The August survey requested specific information on people's primary location over the last twelve months. Almost a quarter of the *homeless unsheltered group* indicated that they had spent most of their time in the past year interstate, Few people had lived in country South Australia for most of the year (12 people, 4.1%). Some information had been obtained from the June survey through a more open question which revealed a similar picture to the August survey. 13% of all respondents (and 23% of the *homeless – unsheltered group*) were predominately interstate in the past twelve months.

Table 11: People Inter-state or Regional SA over last 12 months, 21st August

Location	Homeless - unsheltered		Other accommodation		Own home/ flat		Total	
	19th June	21st August	19th June	21st August	19th June	21st August	19th June	21st August
	Country SA	6	4	4	7	1	1	11
Interstate	20	21	12	15	6	1	38	37
Total	108	93	100	98	93	105	301	362

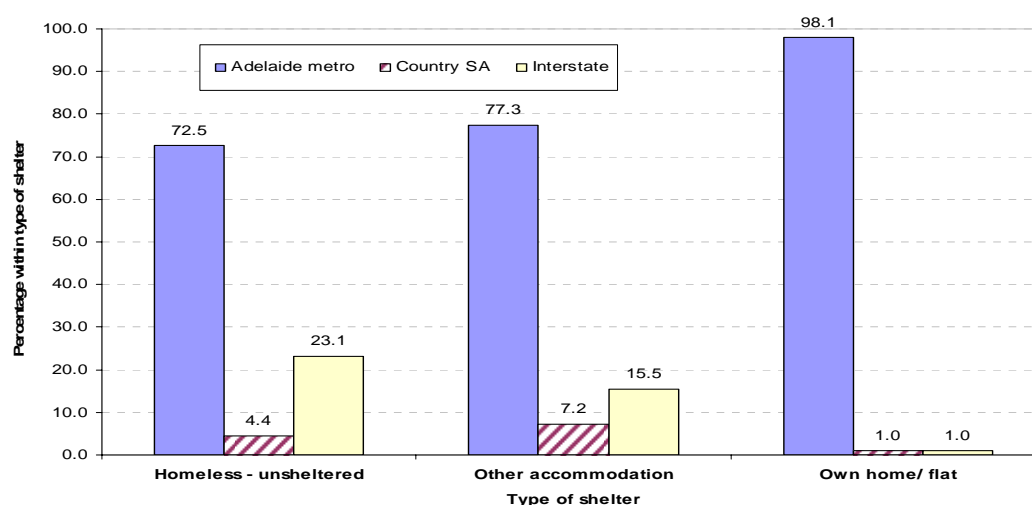


Figure 8: Location of People over last 12 months, 21st August (%)

6. Use of other Inner City Services

Participants were asked if they intended to use another inner city service on the day of the count. 28% of August respondents, and 30% of those in June, indicated that they would use another service. Westcare was the most commonly indicated in both surveys (predominantly reflecting the intention of people at Byron Place to attend Westcare for a meal) (Table 12).

Table 12: People who indicated they would use another Inner City Services

Service	19th June N= (107)	21st August (N=101)
Westcare	65	58
Byron Place	13	20
Hutt St	10	9
Fred's Van	4	7
Magdalene Centre	4	4
Adelaide Day Centre	3	1
Nunkawarrin Yunti	3	1
Otherway Centre	2	2
RAH	2	
SAHT	2	
Centrelink	1	1
Magistrates Court	1	
Positive Living Centre	1	
Salvation Army	1	2
Stabilisation Unit	1	
St Vincent de Paul	1	1
Anglicare		1
BCS PSP		1
Centacare		1
Community based program		1
Hospital		1
Southern Community Centre		1
Street to Home		1
Teen Challenge		1
Accommodation (not stated)		1
Service not indicated	5	3

Of the 101 people that indicated on 21st August that they had used or intended to use another inner city service, 88 intended to use only 1 other service.

Table 13: Number of services used or planned to use 21st August

Number of services used or plan to use	Homeless - unsheltered		Other accommodation		Own home/ flat		Unknown		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0	49	52.7	61	62.2	86	81.9	65	98.5	261	72.1
1	35	37.6	35	35.7	17	16.2	1	1.5	88	24.3
2	6	6.5	2	2.0	2	1.9	0	0.0	10	2.8
3	2	2.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6
4	1	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3
Total	93	100	98	100	105	100	66	100	362	100

7. Individual identifier

261 people (72%) provided individual identifiers in August compared to 265 (74%) in June. Of those who gave identifiers 43 people participated in both surveys.