



Australian Government

**Department of Families, Housing,
Community Services and Indigenous Affairs**

Guide to Completing the Annual Service Report 2012-13

Family Support Program

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What is the Annual Service Report for?

Under the terms of the Family Support Program Funding Agreement, the FSP Annual Service Report must be completed annually by 31 July. The Report is designed to collect additional program information to complement client level data entered into the Family Support Program Data System (FSPDS).

Providers are required to complete only one report per organisation.

How your information is used

The Annual Service Report template is designed to gather the necessary information to:

- 1) Assess your performance in meeting your Funding Agreement deliverables and fulfilling the requirements of the FSP Performance Framework. For more information see the [FSP Performance Framework](#) (Attachment A).
- 2) Assess overall performance of the program within the FSP Performance Framework and identify trends, gaps, etc. to build the evidence base and inform future funding decisions and policy development.
- 3) Fulfil departmental obligations to:
 - a) Promote the efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of Commonwealth funding as required by the Financial Management Act 1997.
 - b) Report against the Department's Key Performance Indicators in its Annual Report to Parliament.
 - c) Inform our Minister of progress towards program outcomes.

Improvements made to the 2012-13 Report

The Annual Report for the 2012-13 reporting period includes substantial improvements in appearance and usability. The new format allows FaHCSIA to fulfil its program reporting requirements, while reducing the reporting effort for providers.

These refinements incorporate recommendations arising from a review of previous reporting processes, as well as feedback provided by service providers.

The most notable changes relate to simplification of questions and improved functionality of the reporting template:

- a) Where possible, Activity data is prepopulated
- b) Drop down menus and pick lists replace free text fields where suitable
- c) In most instances, responses are limited to the overall organisational level, regardless of the Activities delivered
- d) Where data is required at Activity level, only one response is required per Activity, regardless of the number of delivery locations

- e) Removal of questions where information can be gathered from an existing source
- f) Functionality to attach existing documents to the Report

Throughout the template, providers will notice two new fields

- Do you authorise FaHCSIA to distribute this to other FSP service providers?
and
- Do you authorise FaHCSIA to distribute this to other FSP service providers?

This authorisation is required to fulfil FaHCSIA's obligations under the *Privacy Act 1988*.

PDF template

The template is developed using Smartform technology, which ensures data is provided in a uniform manner that allows the completed data to be automatically attributed against the correct provider in FOFMS (the Department's online funding management system).

Each organisation's template is automatically generated by FOFMS and is linked to the organisation's funding record. Only one template per Organisation can be submitted, therefore data for the whole organisation – regardless of Activities and locations – should be amalgamated and entered onto the one form. Providers should not attempt to submit duplicate versions of this form providing different information for different locations.

It should be noted that in order to fit into system capabilities the template includes limits on the size of text boxes, with the maximum number of characters or words identified where relevant. Providers have the opportunity to submit further information as attachments.

Part 1: Organisation Details

Activities your organisation administers with funding from FaHCSIA and / or Attorney-General's Department

This information shows all Activity types that your Organisation is funded to deliver. This information will be prepopulated by FOFMS.

Part 2 Collaborative Relationships

The aim of strengthening effective collaboration is to provide improved access to family support services for vulnerable children, families and individuals. Ideal collaborative practice has all levels of government and the community services sector working to improve family support services in a co-ordinated and co-operative manner. Forms of collaboration include:

- a) Networking to build connections, knowledge and trust
- b) Coordinating your service with others to increase service access and reduce gaps and or
- c) Integrating your service with others to support highly vulnerable children and families

What collaborative relationships have you developed with other services/agencies to provide improved services and outcomes for vulnerable and disadvantaged families?

FaHCSIA is interested learning about your regular, on-going committed relationships to deliver outcomes that could not be achieved working alone, rather than once-off or ad hoc type referrals. ¹

Assign each of your collaborative partners into one of eight categories below:

- Other FSP/FaHCSIA
- Commonwealth
- State/Local Government
- Community service/Non –Government organisation
- Welfare/charity
- Health/medical
- Education/training
- Other

Consider all types of collaboration you have undertaken with organisations from each category. To complete the table, select a new row from the drop list, for each service type relevant to collaborative partners for your Activity and place a tick in all *Collaborative Relationships Type* columns (as set out below) that apply:

- Shared knowledge/training mentoring (e.g. shared resources; formal mentoring or advice; joint research)
- Joint community planning (e.g. active participation on community council; active board membership with/from other family support providers; joint family support service or event planning)
- Joint service delivery (both organisations jointly accountable for outcomes)
- Formal referral policy/procedures (e.g. agreements and MOUs with other agencies; documented referral processes; “warm” referrals)
- Other, please describe

Example: Your service has a joint service delivery relationship with another FSP service **and** formal referral policy with a separate FaHCSIA funded homelessness service.

Select “**Other FSP/FaHCSIA**” and place a tick in the ***Joint service delivery*** and ***Formal referral policy/procedures*** columns.

Why? The information gathered in this report is required to assess how well FSP

- provides an integrated suite of local services

¹ For more information see “[Advancing Collaboration Practice - Fact Sheet 1, - What is collaboration](#)”, and “[Promoting successful collaboration in the communities for children context](#)” on the Australian Research Alliance for Children & Youth (ARACY) website.

- makes services easier to access
- is supportive of Australia's most vulnerable families and children

Do you wish to provide further comment about your organisation's collaborative relationships?

This is a free text field where you can include all qualitative information that may be required for your Agreement Manager to properly assess your performance.

Part 3 Service Availability & Staffing/Workforce

Do you wish to provide any comment on factors that affected the availability of your service/s?

This is a free text field. Include any information about factors that impacted on the availability of your service.

How many positions are devoted to FSP service delivery and administration for each Activity?

Enter the total number of paid FTE allocated to *Administration Support* and to *Service Delivery* for each Activity your organisation is funded to deliver. Where applicable, also enter the number of volunteers working in each Activity.

Do you wish to provide any further comments on staffing/workforce?

This is a free text field. Include any information about issues affecting recruitment and staffing availability

Part 4 Complaints

It is a requirement of your funding agreement to have a **transparent and accessible** complaints handling policy.

Complete the table, including only those issues escalated to management. Do not include minor complaints or complaints managed through your Organisation's routine processes or procedures.

A complaint is *substantiated* if an investigation of the complaint found that remedial action was warranted. If the complaint remains unresolved, provide a summary of what has occurred to date.

Example

Summary of complaint	Was the complaint substantiated?	Summary of outcome
<i>A complaint was received regarding non-eligibility to attend a playgroup service activity.</i>	Yes	<i>An internal investigation identified an alternative playgroup for the client. The client subsequently joined the organisation's other playgroup activity which better suited the client's needs. This approach resolved the complaint.</i>

Part 5 Funding

Does your organisation receive funding from other sources to deliver similar activities to those funded by FSP?

For activities similar to those funded by FSP only:

- a) select those sources of funding that are applicable
- b) state the percentage of total funding that is provided by the Family Support Program

Why? This information provides a snapshot of where co-funded services are being delivered, and provides insight into where the greatest need, as well as gaps may be.

Part 6 Performance Indicators of Client Outcomes

For a more detailed guidance about collecting Immediate and Intermediate client feedback, refer to the [FSP Performance Framework Help Guide](#)

Immediate outcomes (or client feedback) are client outcomes expected as a result of the FSP in the short term and are collected at or near the time of service.

From 2013, all CfC providers must address all four immediate performance indicators unless an exemption has been granted in writing by FaHCSIA.

Intermediate outcomes (or client feedback) are client and community outcomes expected from the FSP in the medium term. Intermediate client outcomes are collected 3-6 months after the leaving the service, or, for ongoing clients, 3-6 months after commencing with the service. The survey sample size is determined by FaHCSIA.

Service providers are required to report on any two intermediate performance indicators unless an exemption has been granted in writing by FaHCSIA.

The [FSP Performance Framework Help Guide](#) contains a list of suggested questions that can be used for collection of data for each of the performance indicators for intermediate and immediate client outcomes.

Alternative questions may be used, subject to approval from your FSP Agreement Manager.

Table

Complete a separate table for each FSP Activity your organisation is funded to deliver, using data collected through your survey processes

- Multiple questions may be listed against each Performance Indicator
- One response per Performance Indicator per client
- The number of responses in the “Yes”, “No” and “Don’t Know” columns must equal the total responses
- For Immediate Performance Indicators do not exceed the sample size identified by FaHCSIA. Exceeding this limit affects the statistical validity of the FSP survey results
- Where an exemption has been granted in writing by FaHCSIA, enter zero in table columns.

Part 7 Statement of Compliance against Approval Requirements

The [FSP Administrative Approval Requirements](#) are a set of 15 quality service standards, covering the five key risk areas of governance, financial management, viability, performance management and issues management that must be complied with under the terms of FSP Funding Agreements.

If your organisation is also required to submit a Performance Report, the Statement of Compliance against Approval Requirements only needs to be completed on the Annual Service Report template.

If relevant, verify that all statements against approval requirements are representative of all consortium members or subcontracting arrangements.

Complete the table using the drop list to select if your organisation was “fully compliant”, “partially compliant” or “non-compliant” against each of the four Approval Requirements.

If your organisation does not fully comply with an Approval Requirement, enter details including a timeline of future improvements planned to achieve compliance in the final column.

Why? This information is used by FaHCSIA to monitor and assess compliance rates across the program. The results are published in the FSP Report annually. Note you are not required to provide evidence of compliance in the table but your Agreement Manager may require evidence to be supplied separately.

Part 8 What Works

Only complete if your organisation has relevant information to share, otherwise select ‘No’.

The “FSP Future Directions” consultations process received an overwhelming number of requests by providers to share information on “what works”. Although not mandatory, FaHCSIA would encourage your organisation to submit your case studies, promising practices and information on research and evaluation activities.

Why? Information on what works for FSP providers adds to the evidence base. FaHCSIA will compile the best examples for distribution to providers.

If your organisation has undertaken any research or evaluation activities relevant to the FSP, are there any findings you would like to share with the Department?

Provide details of relevant information or findings that would be valuable to add to the FSP evidence base.

You may provide this information as an attachment.

Do you wish to provide a story of innovation, outcomes, best practice or success in the implementation of FSP reforms or requirements delivering FSP? This may or may not involve clients.

Provide details relating to your service of an innovative practice (even a small practice), an unexpected positive outcome or success in implementing FSP reforms. Include in your story:

- A brief case outline of the circumstances
- Comment on how this story might benefit other providers
- Who the beneficiaries are (demographic group)
- Which FSP outcome/s this case demonstrates
- How it is effective at achieving FSP objectives

It is preferable that you include your story within the limited space provided. You may attach an additional document if there is insufficient space on the form.

Why? By sharing those practices:

- Services have an opportunity to demonstrate their innovation and responsiveness to a community need
- The Department can add to the evidence base of what works
- Examples of “promising practice” can be shared with other FSP providers.

Part 9 Progress against Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Client Access Strategy (VADCAS) or abridged Access Strategy

This section contains questions about progress against your VADCAS and must be completed by all service providers, excepting those who have been granted an exemption in writing by FaHCSIA.

The format is designed to prompt service providers to review the effectiveness and relevancy of their VADCAS. A key objective of your Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Client Access Strategy (VADCAS)/ Abridged Access Strategy and/or Indigenous Access Plan (if applicable) documents, is to keep it ‘alive’.

With this in mind, when completing the Performance Report you are asked to review your VADCAS and/or Indigenous Access Plan. You are also asked to report on progress made towards documented actions in your VADCAS.

The updated VADCAS/Abridged Access Strategy and progress summary can be submitted by either attaching to:

- your Performance Report or Annual Service Report template or
- an email forwarded separately to your Agreement Manager

Note: If your organisation is also required to submit one or more than one PR for CfC and CP, the updated VADCAS/Abridged Access Strategy update and progress summary only needs to be attached to one report template.

Part 10 Additional Information/Feedback

Do you have any further comments on your organisation's performance not identified elsewhere?

Providing information in this part is optional. If you do wish to provide additional information and/or feedback, select 'Yes' and provide information in the space provided. You may attach any supporting documentation and materials.

Do you have any feedback regarding this performance report?

This is an opportunity to provide feedback to the Department about the Performance Report. The Department takes all feedback into consideration when revising the Report's format.

Attachment A

FSP Performance Framework **What is the Family Support Program?** The Family Support Program (FSP) is a national program that provides funding to non-government organisations to support families and children, especially those who are vulnerable or in areas of disadvantage. It provides early intervention and preventative family support focusing on family relationships, parenting and family law services to help people navigate life events. It also aims to protect children who are at risk of neglect or abuse.

The FSP complements state and territory government services to help support families during critical life events and provide access to a wider range of support for families living in locations of high and/or multiple disadvantage.

Family support services are a vital part of the Australian Government's efforts as part of the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children to intervene early to guard against the abuse and neglect of our children and to complement the state and territory governments' child protection systems.

The Family Support Program comprises two core streams:

- Family and Children's Services; and
- Family Law Services (FLS).

Family and Children's Services has four services types:

- Communities for Children (CfC);
- Family and Relationship Services (FaRS);
- Specialist Services; and
- Community Playgroups.

What is the FSP Performance Framework?

The FSP Performance Framework is one key way to demonstrate the effectiveness of the whole FSP. The FSP Performance Framework aims to:

- ensure services are clearly focused on achieving positive outcomes for clients;
- provide a logical and consistent approach for measuring outcomes across the program; and
- link the performance reporting of specific activities to the overall program performance including the achievement of FSP outcomes.

How has the Performance Framework been Developed?

The development of a Performance Framework for the new FSP has been a dynamic process involving consultation with FSP service providers. Further feedback is invited through schedule managers at any time. Revisions of the Performance Framework are possible over the life of the Funding Agreement, with new Editions created as required.

Program Outcomes	Ref	Objectives	Performance Indicators	Examples of information to be collected by service providers	Purpose and collection method
<p>Client outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families function well in nurturing and safe environments Children and families have the knowledge and skills for life and learning Families, including children, especially those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged, benefit from better social inclusion and reduced disadvantage <p>Service system outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisations provide integrated services and work in collaboration with other services and the community Services focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged families and children 	Intermediate outcomes / impacts: Did we make a lasting difference?				
	1.1	To improve family functioning	% clients with improved family functioning including child wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of clients reporting they are better equipped to deal with family issues e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> family conflict harmful behaviours relationships with (ex) partner relationship with children workable parenting arrangements improved communication complex family separation issues 	Used to assess program performance. Data collection via a client follow up survey 3-6 months after the service (or 6 months after commencement of service for ongoing clients) to be undertaken by the service provider. Service providers will be informed of the number of clients to be followed up.
	1.2	To improve child development	% children with improved development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of clients (parents / carers) reporting they are better able to support their child's development e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> better use of services to support their child's development changed parenting practices that support child development 	
	1.3	To increase the safety of family environments	% clients that live in safer family and community environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of clients reporting that they feel safer at home and in their communities 	
	1.4	To increase community connectedness / social inclusion	% clients who are included in and socially connected to their community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of clients reporting they are able to get support in a time of crisis Number of clients reporting that they feel connected to social support networks and/or their community 	
	Immediate outcomes / impacts: Did we make an immediate difference?				
	2.1	To improve family's knowledge and skills for life and learning	% clients with improved knowledge and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of clients reporting improved knowledge & skills related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> parenting practices making parenting arrangements supporting child development seeking help / articulating problems Number of clients demonstrating that they can apply new knowledge & skills 	Used to assess program and service provider performance. Data collection via an anonymous survey of clients, at the time of service. All clients accessing the service during a defined period should be offered the survey.
	2.2	To provide services in a manner appropriate to client which satisfies their needs	% clients satisfied with the service they received % clients reporting that the service was responsive / respectful of their needs and / or cultural / language background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of clients satisfied that they received adequate information / referrals for their needs Number of clients reporting that the service was responsive / respectful of their needs and / or cultural / language background 	

Program Outcomes	Ref	Objectives	Performance Indicators	Examples of information to be collected by service providers	Purpose and collection method	
	2.3	To improve the client's access to and engagement with support services	% clients with improved access/ engagement with services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of clients who can find and go to services when needed Number of clients with better voluntary engagement with community services relevant to their needs 	PI 2.3 and 2.4 are compulsory for FaRS, FLS and Specialist Services and voluntary for CfC in 2011-12. All service providers will collect these data from July 2012.	
	2.4	To improve family, social and economic participation	% of clients with improved family, community and economic engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of clients reporting improved relationships / contact with family, friends and / or community members Number of clients assisted to participate in activities with the potential to enhance family incomes (e.g. employment, education and training) Number of clients assisted to increase their civic or community participation 		
	Service delivery quality: How well have we done it?					
	3.1	To increase service to vulnerable and at-risk target groups	% clients from priority groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of clients from Indigenous background Number of clients from CALD background 	Used to assess program and service provider performance. Service providers will collect demographic information from clients.	
	3.2	To increase integration and collaboration between service providers and with the community	% partner agencies reporting satisfaction with the contribution of the service providers to integrated service delivery/coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of partner agencies reporting satisfaction with the contribution of the service providers to integrated service delivery/coordination 	Used to assess program and service provider performance. A survey of service provider partner agencies will be conducted to measure partner agency satisfaction.	
	3.3	To provide services that are high quality	% service providers that meet approval requirements	Refer to FSP Approval Requirements	Used to assess program and service provider performance.	
	Service outputs: How much did we do?					
	4.1	To provide appropriate levels of service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of clients assisted by demographic characteristics Number of service events / service episodes / activities Number and location of service sites 		Used to assess program and service provider performance. Service providers will collect these data.	