

RESIDENTIAL PARKS

1062. Hon LYNN MacLAREN to the Minister for Commerce:

I refer to the Residential Parks (Long-stay Tenants) Act 2006.

- (1) What was the age demographic of the residents of residential parks in 2010–11?
- (2) How many residential parks closed in 2009; 2010; and 2011?
- (3) What were the principal reasons for such closures?
- (4) How many people were evicted from their homes in residential parks in 2009; 2010; and 2011?
- (5) What protection is afforded to long-stay tenants against eviction through unaffordable rent increases?
- (6) Will the act be reviewed in 2012 in accordance with section 96?
- (7) Does the minister believe that the act has achieved its stated objective to “balance the needs of residential park residents for greater security of tenure while supporting the maintenance of existing, and the development of new, residential parks”?

The PRESIDENT: That is a very long question.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

I have a suitably long answer, Mr President.

I thank the honourable member for notice of the question.

- (1) This information is not collected for legislative or operational purposes by the Department of Commerce.
- (2) In 2009, none; in 2010, one; and in 2011, three. It is possible that there are other park closures or parks no longer accommodating long-stay tenants that have not been brought to the Department of Commerce's attention by affected tenants. For further information the member may refer to the Economics and Industry Standing Committee report titled “Provision, Use and Regulation of Caravan Parks (and Camping Grounds) in Western Australia”.
- (3) The four parks closed were either undergoing development or were sold for future development. Three sites still operate but no longer accommodate long-stay tenants; they became tourist-only sites.
- (4) There is no clear way to know the number of tenants evicted from residential park long-stay tenancies. As up to two years' advance notice is often provided, many tenants move out prior to eviction processes being employed.
- (5) The Residential Parks (Long-stay Tenants) Act 2006 provides that long-stay tenancy agreements must state whether rent increases are allowable; and, if so, what method of calculation will be used to determine the variation in rent. Under section 62(4) of the act, the State Administrative Tribunal may determine the amount of rent payable under a long-stay agreement when the method used to raise the rent is not in accordance with the specified method detailed in an agreement. Additionally, section 63 of the act allows SAT to order a reduction in rent when there has been a reduction in the size or quality of park amenities or when the park operator has been wholly or partly motivated by a desire to terminate a tenancy when determining the rent payable.
- (6) Yes. The statutory review of the operation of the parks act is due in August 2012 and early preparation and planning for the review has commenced.
- (7) Achieving a workable balance between competing interests is a difficult and ongoing process. I am committed to a review process that is consultative, fully investigates the issues and thoroughly considers the consequences of any proposal that may be developed.