

PUBLIC HOUSING — DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR REPORTS

1704. Hon Steve Martin to the minister representing the Minister for Housing:

I refer to the online disruptive behavior reporting form on the Department of Communities website, and I ask:

- (a) how many of these online forms have been submitted each month from January to September this year; and
- (b) how many of these online forms were submitted last year, by month?

Hon Jackie Jarvis replied:

The Department of Communities (Communities) assesses all disruptive behaviour forms made through its online reporting system, prior to a complaint being lodged for further assessment.

The number of online forms submitted to Communities are not equivalent to the number of formal complaints. Some online forms are submitted against tenancies that are not public housing, whilst others may relate to incidents that are not defined as disruptive behaviour.

If during the initial assessment, the submitter advises they do not want an investigation to proceed or a formal strike to be taken against the tenant, and the incident is not considered serious or dangerous, it cannot proceed. If a form has been lodged anonymously and there is insufficient information to support an investigation, the matter cannot proceed.

Communities may also receive multiple forms regarding the same incident. If, following an investigation process, a matter remains uncorroborated, it will be closed and the complainant advised of the outcome. If a complaint is corroborated through investigation, proportionate action will be taken against the tenancy such as the issuing of a strike.

Eviction is a last resort for the Department of Communities. Communities works with tenants to ensure they are given every opportunity to rectify the issues impacting on their tenancy. This includes making appropriate referrals to supports and programs such as Thrive, which provides support to public housing clients.

Under the current Government, evictions are significantly down. As Communities' focus has moved from evictions under the former Liberal–National Government to sustaining more complex and vulnerable tenancies, it is expected that there will be a rise in online form reporting for disruptive behaviour. Nevertheless, Communities continues to focus on sustaining tenancies. This is consistent with recommendation 13 of the *Inquiry Into the Financial Administration of Homelessness Services in Western Australia* – to increase the focus on prevention and early intervention of homelessness, which was supported by the majority of members on the committee.

Where a tenant is at risk of eviction, Communities will increase their contact with the client and link them with relevant support services to help address the issues impacting their tenancy and, in most cases, people remedy the issues impacting their tenancy.

The below data reflects online forms submitted but is not indicative of the total number of complaints, warning, or strikes issued against a tenancy as the number of online forms submitted are not equivalent to the number of formal complaints.

(a)

Month	Online Form Submitted
January 2023	863
February 2023	855
March 2023	953
April 2023	741
May 2023	670
June 2023	599
July 2023	604
August 2023	642
September 2023	653

(b)

Month	Online Form Submitted
January 2022	532
February 2022	500

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Hon Steve Martin; Hon Jackie Jarvis

March 2022	650
April 2022	631
May 2022	611
June 2022	470
July 2022	501
August 2022	502
September 2022	518
October 2022	554
November 2022	721
December 2022	779