



Hon Peter Tinley AM MLA
Minister for Housing; Veterans Issues; Youth

Our Ref: 73-07193
Your Ref: A748971

Ms Janine Freeman MLA
Chair
Education and Health Standing Committee
Email: laehsc@parliament.wa.gov.au

Dear Ms Freeman

Janine
Thank you for your letter dated 11 April 2019 regarding Report No. 6 of the Education and Health Standing Committee, The food fix: The role of diet in type 2 diabetes prevention and management, tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 11 April 2019.

Out of the 36 Recommendations, Recommendation 7 is the only recommendation that relates to my housing portfolio which states: the Department of Housing consult with Aboriginal people in remote communities to ensure that the housing is appropriate for their lifestyle.

Accommodation requirements for Indigenous Australians living in remote localities are different from other Australians living in the city or in the country. As a result, the National Indigenous Housing Guide (which links the principles of environmental and public health with evidence based housing condition data) was developed as a resource to assist and improve the design, construction and maintenance of housing for Indigenous people.

When providing housing for remote Aboriginal communities, the Department of Communities applies the principles of the National Indigenous Housing Guide and follows a rigorous consultation process to ensure accommodation is suitable and that the living aspirations of a community are met ie providing accommodation options for aged persons and singles who may otherwise not be eligible for standard community housing.

In 2010, State legislation was amended to allow the Housing Authority to manage housing it does not own on remote Aboriginal land. In support of this, A Protocol to Ascertain the Wishes of Aboriginal Inhabitants was developed, prescribing the process for entering into a Housing Management Agreement (HMA). It necessitates repeated conversations with community members, community councils, elders and traditional owners to guide the decisions to improve the use of living spaces.

A HMA establishes a formal relationship between the Department of Communities and the owner of the land/community. HMA communities have input into all phases of planning, decision making and construction. The HMA process also requires that an Agreement to Construct is negotiated with the land owners/community to ensure:

- construction is on agreed lots;
- the necessary approvals are in place;
- land and heritage issues are resolved;
- regular consultation occurs with the Organisation on plans/specifications; and
- they are informed of progress.

Three different housing designs were developed for the 2008-18 National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing capital works program. The designs were developed over many years, working closely with the communities and refining the designs to reflect and complement the regional community lifestyles.

These designs have been very well received and can be modified for households to accommodate specific cultural needs, for example, dual-key designed houses constructed in Tjuntjuntjara in 2018, which accommodate multi-generational households and facilitate in-home delivery of support services.

Houses are built to withstand extreme weather conditions and have other social and environmental factors including:

- cyclone proof (where required) and more robust than mainstream public housing designs;
- excellent energy efficient ratings;
- disability friendly with accessible toilets and bathrooms with larger toilets, hobless shower, separate baths and grab rails;
- steel frame kitchen, laundry and vanity cabinetry, elevated to assist with pest control;
- commercial grade vinyl sheeting to floors, including no-slip ceramic tiles to wet areas;
- 9mm cement sheet internal walls and 6 mm cement sheet ceilings;
- solid core doors, except for toilet and linen closets;
- outdoor living spaces including covered verandas to accommodate sheltered gatherings;
- lower front fences to allow social interactions; and
- fitting of Crimsafe doors and window screens to maximise tenant safety.

Once again thank you for the opportunity to comment on the report and I trust this information will be of use.

Yours sincerely



HON PETER TINLEY AM MLA
MINISTER FOR HOUSING

22 MAY 2019