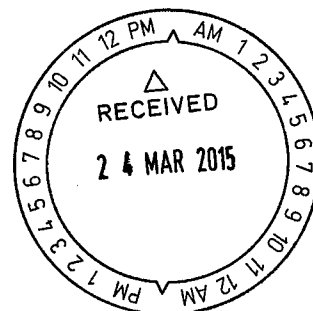




## Minister for Housing; Racing and Gaming

Your Ref: Petition 61  
Our Ref: 54-00637



Hon Simon O'Brien MLC  
Chairman  
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs  
Parliament House  
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Mr O'Brien

Thank you for your letter regarding Petition No 61 – Housing Conditions Warralong Community, which was presented to the Legislative Council following a protest day in Warralong on 20 September 2014.

The Department of Housing has contractual arrangements with Pilbara Meta Maya (PMM) for the delivery of housing management and tenancy support services to 11 of the 16 properties at Warralong. Under its contract with the Department of Housing, PMM is required to visit the Warralong community at least every six weeks. I am advised that PMM is meeting its contractual responsibilities and obligations and the Department is satisfied with its performance.

The Department of Housing and PMM have met with the Warralong community on several occasions since the protest day. All of their basic housing concerns are being addressed and an undertaking was given by the Department to continue consultation with the community.

While tenants had reported that doors were missing on some properties, this was not the case – doors were intact but some tenants had misplaced keys and door locks/handles had been damaged. Similarly, while no properties were missing windows, some window locks and security screens required replacing. PMM has arranged for these maintenance issues to be completed.

The Department of Housing advises that 10 of the 11 houses managed by PMM have had new stoves installed. There was no access to one property at the time of installation and the contractor is planning to return. The Department has also recently approved a fencing Remote Jobs and Communities Program to be undertaken at Warralong with IBN to improve individual property management and security.

PMM's responsibilities include delivering the Support and Tenant Education Program (STEP). STEP aims to increase the capacity of tenants to independently manage their tenancies by providing early intervention and support through education and case management. Since June 2014, PMM has visited the community in relation to STEP seven times. To date, when PMM has visited Warralong, many of the tenants eligible for this service have not been at the community, however, PMM has now received formal consent from four tenants to participate in the STEP.


In addition to STEP, PMM is also partnering with the Ashburton Aboriginal Corporation to deliver an education program to the Warralong community, focussing on rights and responsibilities of tenants with the aim of improving communication and increased understanding of how community members can address housing matters.

The maintenance and repair of drinking water, waste water and power infrastructure in the community is delivered under the Remote Area Essential Services Program funded through the Department of Housing. PMM is also currently funded separately by the Commonwealth Government to deliver Municipal and Essential Services (MUNS), including a fortnightly rubbish collection and PMM is exceeding their contract requirements in this regard.

There are currently 74 householders residing in the 11 properties managed by PMM and there are 19 applications on the waitlist for properties in the community. The Karntimarta Aboriginal Corporation and Warralong community have been advised there are no plans for additional houses to be built in the community in 2015-16.

I'd like to add that any future investment by the Liberal-National State Government in remote communities across Western Australia will involve consultation with Aboriginal people in remote communities, like Warralong, and this will commence over the coming months. In the meantime the Department of Housing and PMM will continue to work with the Warralong community to improve housing outcomes for tenants.

Yours sincerely



**HON. COLIN HOLT MLC  
MINISTER FOR HOUSING**

24 MAR 2015