

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC asked:

1. I refer to Budget Paper No. 2 Vol. 2, Outcomes and Key Effectiveness Indicators, on page 527, and I ask has the government any plans to publish a performance dashboard for Public Housing including information on the public waitlist length, average waitlist time by region, net increase of decrease in housing stock?

Answer

No.

Minister's initials

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS
2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC asked:

4. I refer to point 3 in Explanation of Significant Movements on page 528, and what is the current annual repayment percentage on the Department of Communities Bond Assistance Loan Scheme?

Answer

Between May 2021 and May 2022, the amount of loan value repaid has been 46.6 per cent.

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC asked:

5. I refer to Budget paper No. 2 Vol. 2, Explanation of Significant Movements, 7. Rental Housing and Employees (Full-Time Equivalents) on page 533. The number of Public Housing Employees (FTEs) has fallen from 1,504 in 2020-21 to 1,493 in 2022-23, a net decrease of 11 in two years. I ask:

- (a) What is the ratio of Property Manager to Tenant the Department uses; and
- (b) What evidence base guides this ratio to determine if it is suitable and how does it compare to other states?

Answer

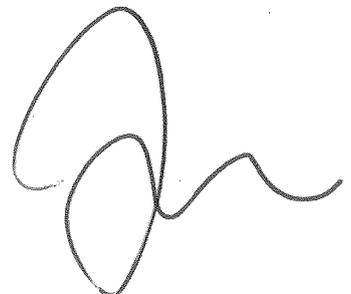
(a)–(b)

Communities does not stipulate a Property Manager to tenant ratio, as there are a number of factors that determine appropriate public housing property management by region and by suburb. To determine the needs of each tenancy, the following are considered:

- geographical spread and location to the office,
- population density,
- suburb breakdown,
- property types (complexes often require more intensive management than single dwellings); and
- job roles in metropolitan and regional locations (officers with specialised or multipurpose skills to achieve efficiency and coverage).

Communities' inspection requirements (frequency, safety checks), and property management functions are undertaken by various roles across Communities and may differ considerably to other states, therefore Communities is unable to compare to other states or, the private sector.

Communities works to ensure the provision of holistic supports for tenants is responsive to their needs on a case-by-case basis.



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2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC asked:

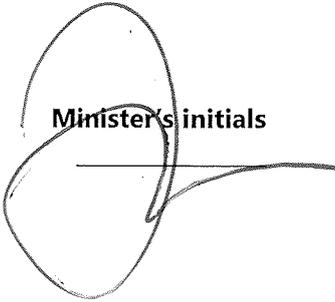
6. I refer to point 2.1 on page 520 and Budget Paper No.2 Vol. 2, Significant Issues Impacting the Agency, COVID-19 and Emergency Welfare Services and I ask:

- (a) With Western Australia's borders now open, who is this self-isolation accommodation intended for;
- (b) Will people experiencing homelessness have access to these isolation accommodations; and
- (c) How long are people able to stay in this self-isolation accommodation?

Answer

(a)-(c) The Department of Communities (Communities) is a support agency to the Department of Health and the Hazard Management Agency for the COVID-19 pandemic. Communities provides emergency self-isolation accommodation for a range of people who are unable to isolate safely, including people experiencing homelessness and people whose usual accommodation is deemed unsuitable for the purpose of isolation according to parameters defined by the Department of Health. Communities provides self-isolation accommodation for the period of isolation as per the Government health directions.

Minister's initials



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC asked:

8. I refer to Budget paper No. 2 Vol. 1 Significant Issues Impacting the Agency, Social Housing and Homelessness points 7-13 and I ask please provide a detailed budget breakdown of funding committed by the state government to building new social housing, and refurbishment of existing stock.

Answer

The below table provides the funding committed, by program, to deliver new social housing and refurbishment of existing social housing stock.

Table 1 – Committed Funding from 2021-22 to 2025-26

Programs	Total 2021-22 to 2025-26 \$'000
Acquisition Program (land)	269,581
Social Housing Maintenance	838,864
Common Ground - Perth CBD	45,003
Common Ground - Mandurah	28,015
Crisis Accommodation Program (capital)	76,321
Crisis Accommodation Program (operational)	16,694
Housing and Homelessness Investment Package - Land Acquisition	29,288
Housing and Homelessness Investment Package - New Builds	88,654
Housing and Homelessness Investment Package - Social Housing Refurbishments	3,950
Investment into new social housing	353,274
Metronet Social and Affordable Housing and Jobs Package	72,147
Other (Specialised accommodation and FDV refuges)	20,848
Redevelopment Program	9,520
Regional Renewal	21,640
SHERP maintenance	42,184
SHERP refurb grants	46,586
Social Housing Economic Recovery Package - Land Acquisition	22,456
Social Housing Economic Recovery Package - New Build	49,109
Social Housing Economic Recovery Package - New Build (Grants)	33,000
Social Housing Economic Recovery Package - Social Housing Refurbishments	92,765
Social Housing Investment Fund - Yet to be drawn down	489,209
Urban Renewal	4,770

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Wilson Tucker MLC asked:

1. My questions relate to GROH in the Kimberley, Pilbara, Midwest/Gascoyne and Goldfields regions:
 - (a) Since 1 September 2021 has there been any change in the total number of GROH properties in each region? If so, please explain any changes;
 - (b) Please provide a table outlining the number of vacant and unallocated properties in each region, broken down in to vacancy periods of 3-6 moths, 6-12 months, and 12+ months. For each property vacant for more than 6 months, please provide an explanation; and
 - (c) Please provide a progress update on the Department's effort to assess vacant GROH properties in the regions, particularly:
 - (i) How many properties have been refurbished and returned to the regular pool of GROH stock;
 - (ii) How many properties have been removed from GROH stock;
 - (A) What happens to these properties in such cases; and
 - (iii) Have any properties in the regions been made available to clients on the public housing wait list?

Answer

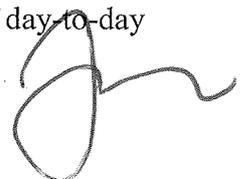
- (a) From 21 September 2021 to 30 April 2022, the total Government Regional Officer Housing (GROH) stock numbers in the Kimberley, Pilbara, Midwest/Gascoyne, and Goldfields regions has increased by 34 properties.

- (b) The following table is current as at 30 April 2022.

Region	3-6 Months	6-12 Months	12 months +
Kimberley	0	4	22
Pilbara	5	3	42
Midwest-Gascoyne	1	2	10
Goldfields	0	1	23

Providing a property status for all properties (2.1% of the portfolio) that have been unallocated and vacant for more than six months would be an inefficient use of government resources as there is also significant turnover in unallocated void properties.

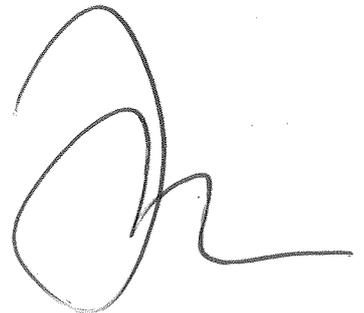
- (c)
 - (i) Many properties across the portfolio will receive void works as part of day-to-day



operations to return them to service after a vacate. In addition to this in these regions ten properties have received major refurbishments to return them to service and 19 major refurbishments are underway to return properties to service.

(ii) As at 30 April 2022, a total of 22 GROH unallocated vacant properties across the state have been transferred to public housing (15 in these specific regions) and in this financial year eight unallocated vacant properties were sold (five in these specific regions).

(a) Properties transferred to public housing receive works if required to ensure they meet public housing standard specifications, and are then made available to tenants from the public housing waitlist.

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

1. I refer to page 519 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, line 'North West Aboriginal Housing Fund':

- (a) What initiatives and support are included in the funding for the Program; and
- (b) How many people is the program intended to help?

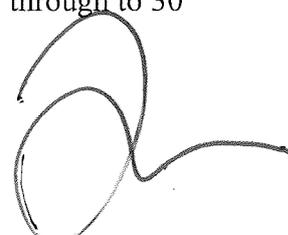
Answer

(a)

The McGowan Government is committed to increasing wellbeing and employment opportunities through partnering with Aboriginal people and organisations to develop pathways to economic empowerment.

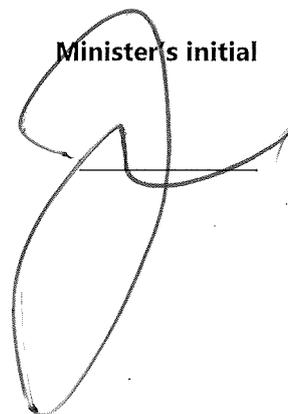
To date the Fund has committed \$105.1 million to deliver seven projects across the Kimberley and Pilbara, with all projects led and delivered by, or co-designed with, Aboriginal organisations and people. This includes:

- \$39.6 million for the expansion of transitional housing across East Kimberley whereby 50 homes have been made available to Aboriginal families.
- \$16.8 million for the refurbishment of 40 homes in the Pilbara for use as transitional housing enabling Aboriginal families to achieve independent living.
- \$9.7 million for the delivery of affordable housing, comprising of 25 homes for rental/ownership as well as a support service in Broome by Nyamba Buru Yawuru.
- \$6.3 million for the delivery of a transitional housing project to support Aboriginal workers in Roebourne, including people who have exited prison by Yindjibarndi Aboriginal Corporation. It is anticipated the construction of 10 homes will commence in late 2022.
- \$3.3 million for the delivery of a housing and career development program by Yura Yungi Medical Services. It is anticipated the construction of five homes will commence in mid-2022.
- \$0.8 million for the delivery of an in-situ housing support program, to assist Aboriginal people in the Pilbara to build capacity to achieve housing in the private market, including homeownership, by Robe River Kurama Aboriginal Corporation. It is anticipated the program will commence in mid-2022 and operate for an initial period of three years.
- \$22.83 million has been allocated via the 2022-23 State Budget to enable delivery the Fitzroy Crossing Aboriginal Housing program. The program aims to deliver 42 homes for homeownership and employee housing.
- \$5.8 million has also been allocated to Department of Communities to fund the NWAHF Program Office to oversee the investment and delivery of Fund investments through to 30 June 2022.



(b) The Fund was established to leverage investment in innovative housing supply to create pathways towards social and economic independence and wellbeing for Aboriginal people and communities in the Pilbara and Kimberley regions.

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

2. I refer to page 520 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, line 'Community Housing – Crisis Accommodation':

(a) Who is eligible for crisis accommodation; and

(b) Will the Department explain why the funding for crisis accommodation has decreased by over \$500,000 this year and decreasing over the forward estimates?

Answer

(a)-(b)

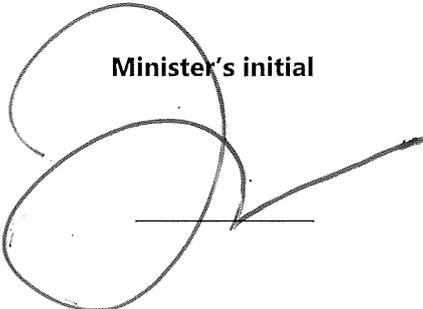
People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness are eligible for crisis accommodation.

In relation to your query about a \$500,000 decrease in the 'Community Housing – Crisis Accommodation' funding on page 520 of Budget Paper 2, the Department of Communities is unable to locate where this decrease is referenced in the budget papers.

In relation to page 520 'Community Housing - Crisis Accommodation' the overall movements in the spending changes table relate to the following:

- The 2021-22 and 2022-23 increases of \$8.9 million and \$8.6 million respectively reflects expenditure from the crisis accommodation program that is going towards the Social Housing Economic Recovery Package Refurbishment Grants Program to meet the needs of organisations managing crisis and transitional accommodation.
- The spending increases in 2023-24 and 2024-25 of \$339,000 and \$233,000 respectively, relate to an increase in salary expenses for the crisis accommodation program.
- The decrease in 2025-26 is primarily due to bringing forward expenses from the Crisis Accommodation Program towards the Social Housing Economic Recovery Package Refurbishment Grants Program that are occurring over 2021-22 and 2022-23.

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS
2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

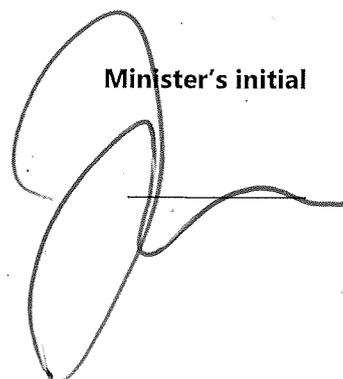
4. I refer to page 520 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, line 'Geraldton and Kununurra Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation'. Why is the accommodation only receiving funding for the 2022-23 financial year?

Answer

The 'Spending Changes' table on page 520 of Budget Paper 2 reflects changes in operational funding. Initial funding has been provided in 2022-23 for the development of an operational service model. Further funding for the program will be requested in a future budget process.

Geraldton and Kununurra Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation projects have received capital funding from 2021-22 to 2023-24 as shown on page 536 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2 – Assets Investment Program.

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

5. I refer to page 520 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, line ‘Social Housing Economic Recovery Package – New Builds’:

- (a) How many new dwellings were built over the 2021;
- (b) How many are expected to be built over the forward estimates;
- (c) Will the Department please provide a breakdown of how many builds are in each region;
- (d) Will the Department please provide a breakdown of the number of the following dwellings built for the 2021-22 year:
 - (i) 1-bedroom dwellings;
 - (ii) 2-bedroom dwellings;
 - (iii) 3-bedroom dwellings;
 - (iv) 4-bedroom dwellings;
 - (v) 5-bedroom dwellings;
 - (vi) 6+ bedroom dwellings; and
- (e) For those in (d), will the Department please provide an average cost of building a dwelling?

Answer

(a)-(e)

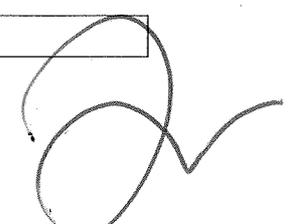
As at 30 April 2022, 397 new social housing dwellings have been added in 2021-22 financial year. Of these, 13 social housing dwellings have been completed through the Social Housing Economic Recovery Package (SHERP).

From 2021-22 to 2023-24, a total of 323 social housing dwellings will be delivered through SHERP new builds, including 173 social housing dwellings will be delivered by the community sector.

The anticipated social housing delivery by the Department through the SHERP program in each region is outlined in Table 1:

Table 1 – SHERP New Build by Region

Region	Target
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1 North Metro	40
2 South Metro	42
3 East Metro	28
4 Great Southern	6
5 Southwest	10
6 Goldfields	3
7 Midwest/Gascoyne	6
8 Pilbara	5
A West Kimberley	5
B Wheatbelt	2
C East Kimberley	3
Total	150

The Department of Communities provides the following breakdown of number of completed public housing dwellings by bedrooms (Table 2):

Table 2 – Dwelling Configuration - Completed

Dwelling Configuration	Dwellings
2 Bed x 1 Bath	2
3 Bed x 1 Bath	8
4 Bed x 2 Bath	1
5 Bed x 2 Bath	1
6 Bed x 2 Bath	1
Grand Total	13

The Department of Communities' average cost for completed dwellings is outlined in Table 3, noting that cost per dwelling is driven by many factors such as dwelling type, materials and regional location.

Table 3 – Average costing

No. of Bedrooms	Average cost (\$)
2 bed	192,557
3 bed	206,933
4 bed	419,354
5 bed	248,027
6 bed	523,013



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

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2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

6. I refer to page 520 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, line 'Digital Capability Fund – Property Asset Management System Project':

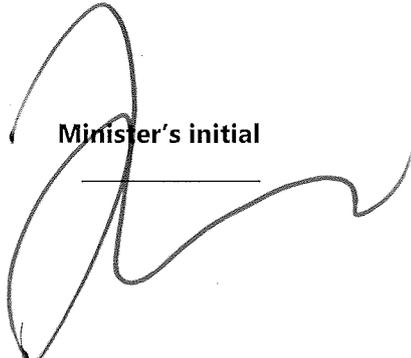
- (a) What is this project; and
- (b) What are the benefits expected to be gained from the project?

Answer

(a)-(b)

The Department of Communities' Property Asset Management System Project is developing a replacement solution for existing software that supports the delivery of new housing and capital works activities, and its property asset register (It will update processes and replace a core business information system and several supporting software applications that have reached the end of their useful life).

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

7. I refer to page 520 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, Paragraph 2.1:

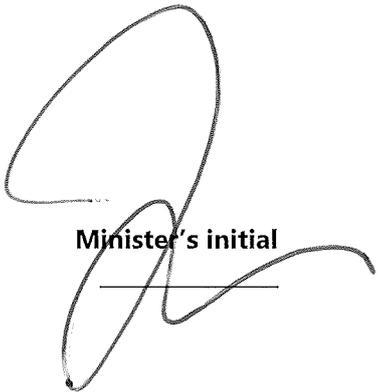
- (a) How many beds were purchased under the \$11.3 million for emergency self-isolation accommodation, including temporary transportable accommodation.
 - (b) What type of accommodation are these beds (ie: hotel, hostel, etc);
 - (c) Are each of these beds currently available for use; and
 - (d) Does the Department have a plan for what these beds will be used for once self-isolation protocols have eased?
-

(a)-(d) The Department of Communities (Communities) is a support agency to the Department of Health and the Hazard Management Agency for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Communities provides emergency self-isolation accommodation for a range of people who are unable to isolate safely, including people experiencing homelessness and people whose usual accommodation is deemed unsuitable for the purpose of isolation according to parameters defined by the Department of Health.

Communities provides self-isolation accommodation for the period of isolation as per the Government health directions. Accommodation types included hotels, motels, apartments, cabins and caravan parks suitable for self-isolation purposes as defined by the Department of Health. On 7 April 2022, the number of pre-booked rooms peaked at 408 rooms/sites. Accommodation bookings rise and fall based on the most current health advice on requirements for self-isolation.

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

9. I refer to page 522 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, Paragraph 7

- (a) How many public housing dwellings does the Department currently own, regardless of who operates them;
- (b) How many of these dwellings are vacant; and
- (c) Will the Department please provide a breakdown of those in (a)-(b). by region?

Answer

I thank the Honourable Member for some notice of this question.

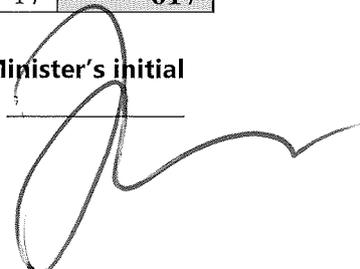
(a - b)

As at 30 April 2022, there were 35,554 Public Housing Stock state-wide. Properties can become vacant for a number of reasons and are generally only vacant for a period of time. Of these, 1,801 are listed as vacant, with 1,381 undergoing maintenance and listed as returning to stock.

(c)

Public Housing State-wide Stock - as at 30 April 2022					
Region	Occupied	Returning	Not-Returning	Other Use	Total
North Metro	10,042	321	202	1,190	11,755
South Metro	5,961	192	65	636	6,854
East Metro	5,775	151	4	548	6,478
Great Southern	971	34	5	110	1,120
Southwest	2,216	86	22	125	2,449
Goldfields	800	134	17	41	992
Midwest/Gascoyne	1,337	194	36	90	1,657
Pilbara	1,169	129	38	53	1,389
West Kimberley	1,141	49	10	27	1,227
Wheatbelt	943	41	17	15	1,016
East Kimberley	546	50	4	17	617

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

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2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

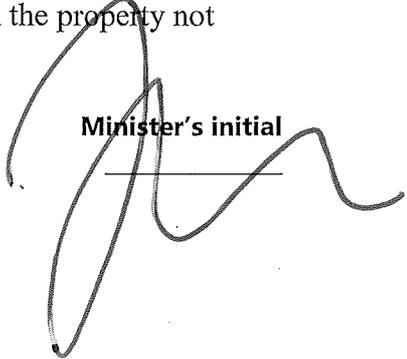
10. I refer to page 522 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, Paragraph 7

- (a) How many dwellings were sold-off in 2021-22;
- (b) How many dwellings were kept under Department ownership in 2021-22 rather than sold off or otherwise offloaded; and
- (c) How many dwellings are expected to be sold in 2022-23?

Answer

- a) As at 30 April 2022, a total of 15 social housing dwellings have been sold this financial year, with 10 of those sold to public housing tenants to enable them to enter home ownership.
- b) More than 42,000 dwellings form part of the Department of Communities social housing portfolio. The State Government is investing more than \$1 billion of refurbishment and maintenance funding from 2021-22 to 2025-26 to minimise attrition of stock from the social housing system. As at 30 April 2022, Communities has contracted refurbishment works for 900 dwellings, valued at \$64.7 million, and maintenance works for 4,079 properties, valued at \$29.8 million.
- c) The Department is unable to provide a number on how many dwellings are expected to be sold in 2022-23. Social housing may be sold or demolished for a number of reasons, including sales to tenants, urban and regional renewal to help revitalise communities or due to natural hazards, intentional or accidental damage, resulting in the property not being economically viable to repair.

Minister's initial



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS
2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

12. I refer to page 522 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, Paragraph 9:

- (a) How many homes were purchased under spot provisions in 2021-22;
- (b) What is the breakdown of these dwellings by region;
- (c) Will the Department please provide a breakdown of the number of the following dwellings purchased under spot provisions:
 - (i) 1-bedroom dwellings;
 - (ii) 2-bedroom dwellings;
 - (iii) 3-bedroom dwellings;
 - (iv) 4-bedroom dwellings;
 - (v) 5-bedroom dwellings;
 - (vi) 6+ bedroom dwellings; and
- (d) For those in (c), will the Department please provide an average cost per spot purchase?

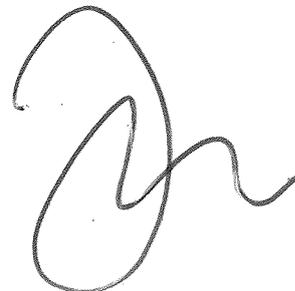
Answer

- (a) From 1 September 2021, when the Spot Purchase Program commenced, until 15 May 2022, a total of 286 dwellings have been acquired, this includes dwellings under contract and yet to settle.

The Department of Communities is consistently assessing properties across Western Australia that may be suitable for spot purchase. Some regions have a lack of appropriate stock with a significant number of ageing properties and properties in unsuitable condition for spot purchasing.

- (b) The breakdown of the dwellings purchased is as follows:

Region	Total Acquisitions
North Metro	107
South Metro	51
East Metro	38
Pilbara	19
West Kimberley	0
East Kimberley	17
Great Southern	21
Southwest	13
Goldfields	2
Midwest	16



Wheatbelt	2
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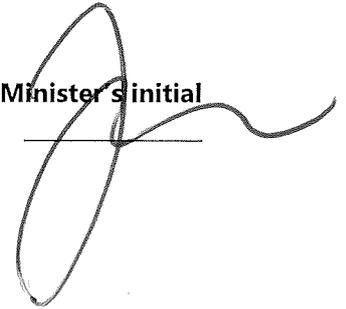
(c) The breakdown of dwellings purchased under spot purchase provisions is as follows:

Region	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	6 bed
North Metro	37	36	22	12	0	0
South Metro	16	30	5	0	0	0
East Metro	6	7	5	15	4	1
Pilbara	4	3	8	4	0	0
West Kimberley	0	0	0	0	0	0
East Kimberley	16	0	1	0	0	0
Great Southern	1	4	7	8	1	0
Southwest	0	0	5	7	1	0
Goldfields	0	1	0	1	0	0
Midwest	0	0	3	12	1	0
Wheatbelt	0	0	2	0	0	0

(d) The median contract price of dwellings purchased under spot purchase provisions is as follows:

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	6 bed
Median Contract Price (\$)	234,651	335,107	381,345	440,695	522,000	400,000

Minister's initial



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

14. I refer to page 522 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, Paragraph 10.1:

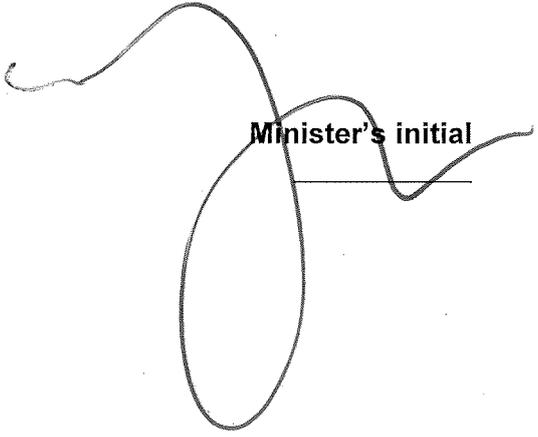
- (a) How many dwellings are expected to be purchased under spot provisions in 2022-23; and
- (b) In which regions is the Department planning to purchase these dwellings?

Answer

(a-b) The Spot Purchase Program has been successful in the boosting of social housing stock across Western Australia and this \$45 million funding ensures this program will continue to provide new social housing to the system.

The Department of Communities is consistently assessing properties across Western Australia that may be suitable for spot purchase. The Department will endeavour to spot purchase when suitable are available on the market across all of its 11 operational regions.

Minister's initial

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

16. I refer to page 522 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, Paragraph 11. For those on the public housing waitlist:

- (a) How many applications are there on the general waitlist;
- (b) How many applications are there on the priority waitlist;
- (c) How many people are represented in (a)-(b);
- (d) How many children under the age of 18 are represented in (a)-(b); and
- (e) Will the Department please provide a breakdown of those in (a)-(b) by region?

Answer

I thank the Honourable Member for some notice of this question.

(a – c)

As at 30 April 2022, there were 18,837 applications on the Public Housing waitlist, representing 33,084 people. This includes 4,005 priority applications representing 8,105 people.

(d)

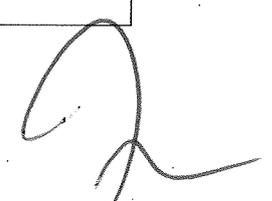
The age of people listed on an application is based on information which applicants have provided to the Department of Communities. Most applicants have a roof over their head while they wait to be housed.

Of the 33,084 people on the public housing waitlist, a total of 11,260 of these people were children under 18.

Of the 8,105 people on the priority waitlist, a total of 3,378 of these people were children under 18.

(e)

Preference Region	Wait Turn Applications	Priority Applications
North Metro	5,896	1,271
South Metro	3,869	866
East Metro	3,141	640
Great Southern	611	171
Southwest	1,334	163
Goldfields	547	98
Midwest/Gascoyne	1,118	188



Pilbara	757	257
West Kimberley	841	150
Wheatbelt	369	73
East Kimberley	354	128
Total	18,837	4,005

Minister's initial

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

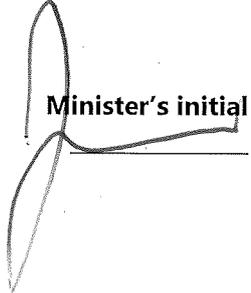
Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

17. I refer to page 526 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, Point 7. Why will the funding for rental housing decrease over the forward estimates?

Answer

Page 526 of the Budget Paper provides an overview of Communities operational expenses by service summary. The decrease in Rental Housing expenses across the forward estimates is due to several factors but primarily due to the bulk of underspends from 2021-22 being carried over into 2022-23 for Social Housing Maintenance and Remote Aboriginal Communities resulting in a spike in spending in 2022-23. The underspends are mostly due to trade and material shortages and other factors related to COVID.


Minister's initial

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

18. I refer to page 527 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, 'Waiting times for accommodation – applicants housed':

(a) How many applicants have spent the following on the general waitlist;

- (i) 0-12 months;
- (ii) 12-18 months;
- (iii) 18-24 months;
- (iv) 24-30 months;
- (v) 30-36 months;
- (vi) 36-48 months;
- (vii) 48-60 months; and
- (viii) 60+ months;

(b) How many applicants have spent the following on the priority waitlist:

- (i) 0-12 months;
- (ii) 12-18 months;
- (iii) 18-24 months;
- (iv) 24-30 months;
- (v) 30-36 months;
- (vi) 36-48 months;
- (vii) 48-60 months; and
- (viii) 60+ months

Answer

(a) As at 30 April 2022, the following number of applicants who have been housed had spent the following periods of time on the general waitlist.

(i) 0-12 months;	694
(ii) 13-18 months;	302
(iii) 19-24 months;	206
(iv) 25-30 months;	168
(v) 31-36 months;	97
(vi) 37-48 months;	149
(vii) 49-60 months; and	83
(viii) 61+ months;	180

It should be noted that reporting categories have been adjusted from the original request to avoid counting errors.



(b) As at 30 April 2022, the following number of applicants who have been housed had spent the following periods of time on the Priority waitlist.

(i) 0-12 months;	745
(ii) 13-18 months;	230
(iii) 19-24 months;	131
(iv) 25-30 months;	71
(v) 31-36 months;	41
(vi) 37-48 months;	29
(vii) 49-60 months; and	21
(viii) 61+ months	7

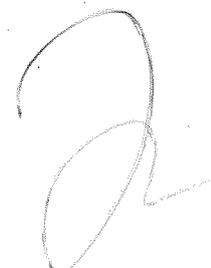
It should be noted that reporting categories have been adjusted from the original request to avoid counting errors.

Applicants who require a specific type of property, may experience a longer waiting time due to the properties that do become available not suiting their specific requirements.

Offers of a public housing property may be declined for valid reasons, in which case their public housing application is returned to the waiting list without penalty. There is no limit to the number of times an applicant may validly decline an offer of public housing, and this can lead to applicants remaining on the public housing waitlist for extended periods.

It should be noted that most applicants have a roof over their head or are housed while they wait for public housing to become available.

Minister's initial



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

20. I refer to page 536 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, item 'GROH Program':

- (a) How many GROH properties does the Department own;
- (b) Will the Department please provide a breakdown of the number of properties in each region;
- (c) How many GROH properties are currently vacant and in which regions; and
- (d) How many people are currently waiting on allocation to a GROH property?

Answer

(a)-(b) Government Regional Officers Housing (GROH) properties, Owned and Leased by Region as at 30 April 2022.

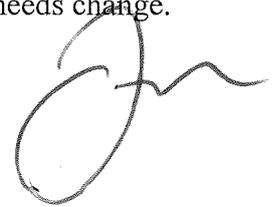
Region	Owned	Leased	Total
North Metro	1	0	1
South Metro	20	9	29
East Metro	2	0	2
Great Southern	150	108	258
Southwest	88	125	213
Goldfields	356	437	793
Midwest/Gascoyne	331	240	571
Pilbara	672	672	1344
Wheatbelt	438	138	576
West Kimberley	355	450	805
East Kimberley	246	169	415

- (c) As at 30 April 2022, there were 692 vacant properties in the GROH Portfolio of which 543 are allocated to Client Agencies, and 149 were unallocated.

Client Agencies may hold allocated properties vacant for a range of operational requirements, such as recruitment processes and staff changeover.

- (d) Communities does not maintain a waitlist of GROH applicants but has an Agency portal for client agencies to regularly update their priorities and requirements. Client agency needs fluctuate over time and agencies regularly submit and updated requirements for GROH Properties.

These requests fluctuate throughout the course of the year as business needs change.



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

21. I refer to page 536 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, item 'GROH Program':

- (a) How many GROH properties were purchased or built in 2021-22;
- (b) How many GROH properties are expected to be purchased or built in 2022-23;
- (c) Will the Department please provide a breakdown of the number of properties expected to be purchased or built in 2022-23 by region; and
- (d) Which Government Departments currently manage GROH homes, and how many does each Department manage?

Answer

- a) As at 30 April 2022, 62 Government Regional Officer Housing Program (GROH) properties have been either purchased, are under contract or under construction.
- b) It is expected the capital budget for 2022-23 will deliver an additional up to 40 new properties to the GROH portfolio through a mix of spot purchasing and construction.
- c) The Department of Communities expects to commence construction on 32 new GROH properties in 2022/23, as detailed in the table below.

GROH Contracted or Under Construction

Region	Location	New Builds
West Kimberley	Broome	9
East Kimberley	Halls Creek	1
Pilbara	Wickham	2
	Karratha	9
	Tom Price	2
Goldfields	Eucla	2
	Munglinup	1
Wheatbelt	Wagin	1
	Pingelly	1
	Southern Cross	2
Midwest / Gascoyne	Meekatharra	2

The spot purchase of GROH properties in 2022-23 will be made where appropriate properties become available in high demand or priority locations.



- d) The Department of Communities manages properties as the appointed authority under the *Government Employee Housing Act 1964 (GEHA Act)*, which is known as the Government Regional Officer Housing Program (GROH Program). Some agencies manage their own employee housing outside of the program, for example WA Country Health Service and Main Roads.

Minister's initial

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

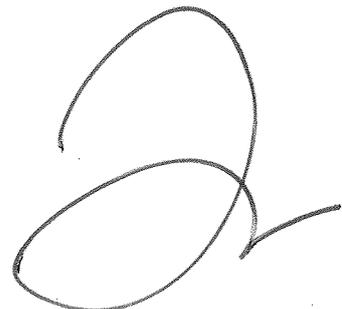
The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

22. I refer to page 536 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, item 'New Social Housing Builds'.
Why will the amount allocated to new social housing builds decrease considerably in 2023-24?

Answer

The Housing and Homelessness Investment Package 'new social housing builds' outlined on page 536 is one of many programs designed to deliver social housing with most of the expenditure and delivery of dwellings to occur in 2021-22 and 2022-23, with a smaller portion in 2023-24.

Social housing delivery will continue from 2023-24 through other programs such as the \$522 million Social Housing Investment Fund which will begin delivery in the 2023-24 financial year.

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS
2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

23. I refer to page 537 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, Paragraph 7:

- (a) How many homes have been built under the regional modular build program in 2021-22;
- (b) How many homes are expected to be built under the program in 2022-23 and beyond; and
- (c) Will the Department please provide a breakdown of both the completed and expected builds by region?

Answer

- (a) As of 30 April 2022, a total of 35 modular dwellings have been contracted in the regions, including three that have been completed.
- (b) The regional modular program will deliver approximately 150 modular homes across regional Western Australia.
- (c) Table 1 below provides a breakdown of the 35 modular dwellings that have either been completed or are under contract. The remaining dwellings to be delivered via the regional modular program are currently in the planning and procurement process.

Table 1

Region	Completed	Under Contract
Midwest/Gascoyne		2
Wheatbelt		2
Great Southern		10
Goldfields	2	6
Pilbara	1	9
Southwest		6
Grand Total	3	35

Minister's initial



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

24. I refer to page 522 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, Paragraph 12.1:

- (a) What operations does Safe Perth City Initiative specifically undertake that help in curbing homelessness;
- (b) How many staff are working on the Safe Perth City Initiative; and
- (c) How many homeless is the initiative predicted to help into secure accommodation, or otherwise?

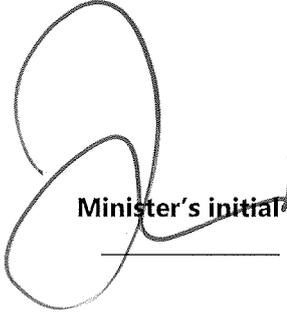
Answer

(a)-(c) The Safe Perth City Initiative (Initiative) is a collaborative partnership between the Department of Communities, WA Police Force, City of Perth and specialist homelessness services to tackle antisocial behaviour, boost safety and provide support to vulnerable people in the Perth CBD and Northbridge.

It provides a suite of new measures, including two dedicated homeless coordinators within the Department of Communities and community safety patrols that connect vulnerable individuals with services that can assist them in a respectful and culturally safe way.

The initiative assists a complex cohort where relationship building is important and since implementation in February 2022 it has so far successfully assisted:

- 24 people to access short-term or transitional accommodation.
- 26 people to connect to case management support.
- 47 people to Return to Country.


Minister's initial

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS
2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

25. I refer to page 522 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, Paragraph 12.2:

- (a) How many people were supported by Koort Boodja and HEART over 2021-22;
- (b) How many people were helped into interim accommodation by Koort Boodja; and
- (c) Is the Department aware of how many of those in (b), were then able to access permanent housing?

Answer

- (a)-(c) Koort Boodja provides a low barrier supported accommodation option, connecting residents with individualised wrap-around support and case management.

Over 2021-22 Koort Boodja and HEART provided support to 204 people. Additionally rapid outreach was provided to a number of rough sleeper locations. Eighteen people have transitioned to alternative and long-term accommodation options from Koort Boodja.


Minister's initial

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS
2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

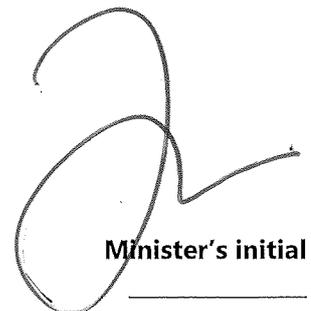
26. I refer to page 519 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, Paragraph 13:

- (a) What benefits does entering into the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement bring to Western Australia; and
- (b) What support has entering into the NHHA provided those experiencing homelessness thus far?

Answer

(a)-(b) Western Australia's social housing system and homelessness sector receives funding from the Commonwealth Government under the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) to achieve specified agreed outcomes. The NHHA funding arrangement under the previous Government was a fifty fifty split in the contributions made by the State and Commonwealth Government. While the State Government now contributes additional funding towards addressing homelessness, the NHHA remains a significant part of funding to the sector.

Funding is allocated through the NHHA for specialist homelessness service providers to deliver accommodation related and personal support services to people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or those who have experienced family and domestic violence.


Minister's initial

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS

2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

27. I refer to page 525 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, desired outcome 'families and individuals experiencing family and domestic violence, homelessness or other crises are assisted to build their capabilities and be safe':

- (a) Does the Department have an estimated number of people who are experiencing homelessness; and
- (b) Does the Department know how many children under the age of 18 are experiencing homelessness?

Answer

- (a)-(b) Capturing accurate data on the number, location, and demographics of people experiencing homelessness is difficult due to the hidden and highly transient nature of the homeless population. Additionally, no one single data source is reliable in its own right and therefore must be interpreted with caution.

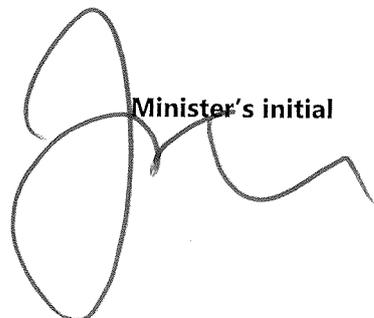
Homelessness is defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) as follows:
"When a person does not have suitable accommodation alternatives, they are considered homeless if their current living arrangement:

- is in a dwelling that is inadequate; or
- has no tenure, or if their initial tenure is short and not extendable; or
- does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations"

The most recent available ABS report *Census of Population and Housing: Estimating Homelessness, 2016* was released in March 2018. The report shows that on 2016 Census night in Western Australia, a total of 9,005 people were classified as being homeless.

According to the ABS report *Census of Population and Housing: Estimating Homelessness, 2016* there were 1,949 children and young people aged 18 and under.

Minister's initial



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS
2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

28. I refer to page 527 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, line item 'Percentage of homelessness clients with some or all goals achieved at the completion of a homelessness service support period'. What is the Department doing to improve the number of clients who meet their goals?

Answer

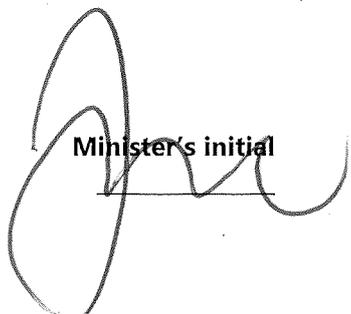
Specialist homelessness services are delivered by community organisations supported by funding of over \$100 million from the State Government. The Department of Communities will continue to work with funded service providers to improve the design and delivery of homelessness services.

In 2019 Communities launched the *All Paths Lead to Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy of Homelessness 2020-2030 (the Strategy)*. This whole-of-community evidence based Strategy creates the foundation for a significant shift in homelessness policy in Western Australia.

Communities is committed to the reform direction outlined in the Strategy and is continuing to work in partnership to progress its priorities.

In addition Communities has continued to lead the development and implementation of new initiatives and partnerships to address homelessness and improve outcomes for individuals. These include:

- Housing First Homelessness Initiative
- Online Homelessness Services Portal
- Common Ground facilities (East Perth and Mandurah)
- Aboriginal Short Stay facilities (Kununurra, Geraldton and Perth)
- HEART (Homelessness Engagement, Assessment and Response Team) as part of the Housing First Rapid Response Project and the establishment of the Homelessness Integrated Action Group
- Boorloo Bidee Mia and Koort Boodja supported low-barrier accommodation, and
- The Safe Perth City Initiative


Minister's initial

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS
2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

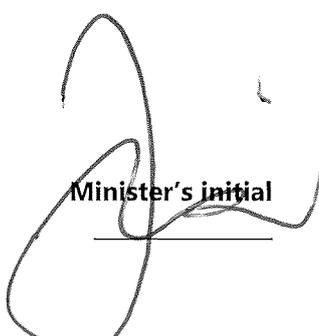
29. I refer to page 530 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, Paragraph 1:

- (a) When is Boorloo Bidee Mia expected to be completed; and
- (b) Why has the facility experienced delays in completion?

Answer

(a)-(b) Boorloo Bidee Mia opened on 5 August 2021 and only minor building works were undertaken following the facility's opening. It is the first low barrier homelessness service in Western Australia of its kind offering medium-term accommodation for some of the most complex individuals, many of whom have experienced long-term homelessness.

Accommodation services, particularly those dealing directly with complex cohorts, typically scale up over time to ensure the safety of residents and staff. The total number of residents accommodated at Boorloo Bidee Mia at any given time is dependent on the support needs of residents, with the delivery of a safe, culturally appropriate, and effective service being the priority at all times. For many homed at the facility, this is the first time that they have been able to sustain accommodation.


Minister's initial

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARINGS
2022-23 BUDGET ESTIMATES

Department of Communities

The Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

30. I refer to page 519 of Budget Paper 2, Volume 2, line item 'Boorloo Bidee Mia':

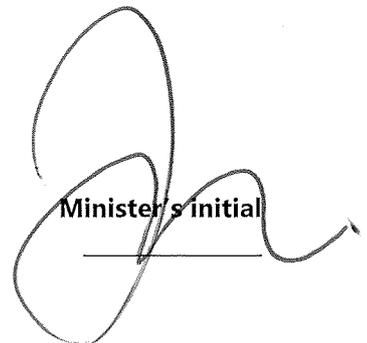
- (a) How many clients are currently living in Boorloo Bidee Mia;
- (b) How many rooms are currently available to be utilised, whether occupied or not; and
- (c) How many FTE staff are employed at Boorloo Bidee Mia?

Answer

(a)-(c) Boorloo Bidee Mia is the first low barrier homelessness service in Western Australia of its kind offering medium-term accommodation for some of the most complex individuals, many of whom have experienced long-term homelessness.

Accommodation services, particularly those dealing directly with complex cohorts, typically scale up over time to ensure the safety of residents and staff. The total number of residents accommodated at Boorloo Bidee Mia at any given time is dependent on the support needs of residents, with the delivery of a safe, culturally appropriate, and effective service being the priority at all times. As at 3 June 2022 there are 66 rooms available at Boorloo Bidee Mia and the facility is operating near full capacity, providing a home to 60 individuals with highly complex needs. For many, this is the first time that they have been able to sustain accommodation.

The staff at Boorloo Bidee Mia are not direct employees of the Department of Communities.


Minister's initial