

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

**ANSWERS TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

**Department of Communities**

**The Committee asked:**

- 1) I refer to Budget Paper No. 2, page 527, outcomes and key effectiveness indicators, *'Responsiveness – Total housing assistances provided relative to the public rental waiting list'*, and ask is the 2022-23 Budget target more or less onerous than the 2021-22 Budget target?

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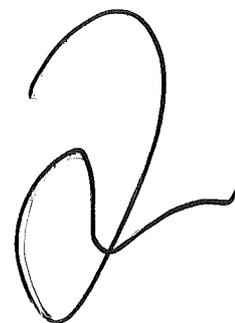
**Answer**

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented challenges that have drastically shifted the demand for housing across the nation. Reduced affordability and supply in the private rental market has seen a decrease in the number of bond assistance loans provided and an increase in the public housing waitlist, which are both critical factors in forecasting the Budget target.

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.

Further action is being taken to deliver more housing stock to the current portfolio, for example reallocating existing stock and working to reduce vacated maintenance wait times.

In addition, as at 30 April 2022, Communities had 808 properties under contract to be allocated to social housing, and added 600 properties (primarily through construction completions and spot purchases) over the 2021/22 financial year.



## STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

### ANSWERS TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Department of Communities

Hon Nick Goiran MLC asked:

- 6) I refer to item 2.1 of the Significant Issues Impacting the Agency on page 520 of Budget Paper No. 2, Volume 2, and in relation to the \$11.3 million of commercial property that the Department has purchased for use as emergency self-isolation accommodation, I ask:
- a) What is the intended purpose of this accommodation once it is no longer needed for COVID isolation purposes;
  - b) Regarding the additional purchased temporary transportable accommodation where commercial accommodation was not available, what is the intended purpose of that once it is no longer needed for COVID isolation purposes; and
  - c) Will either of these accommodation options be used to relieve pressure on housing issues for vulnerable people (for example crisis accommodation), given that Note 3 under Explanation of Significant Movements on page 528 details that "a lack of affordability and supply in the private rental market has resulted in a steadily increasing public housing waitlist... action is being taken to reduce the waitlist .... However this is unlikely to result in substantial change in the short term (12-18 months)"?

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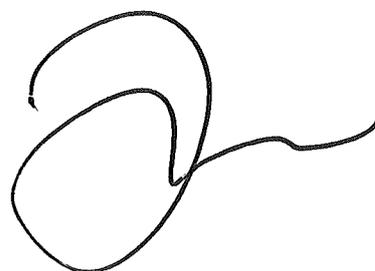
#### Answer

- a) The Department of Communities provides isolation accommodation under the direction of the WA Department of Health (Health) as the Hazard Management Agency for the pandemic.

Communities has been pre-booking commercial accommodation, based on estimated demand, for use by individuals whose usual accommodation is deemed unsuitable for the purpose of isolation according to parameters defined by Health.

There continues to be demand for COVID-19 isolation accommodation and this is expected to continue into the future.

- b-c) Communities aims to repurpose the temporary transportable accommodation for use across a range of accommodation programs. Communities will determine the best use of the assets based on strategic priorities.



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**Department of Communities**

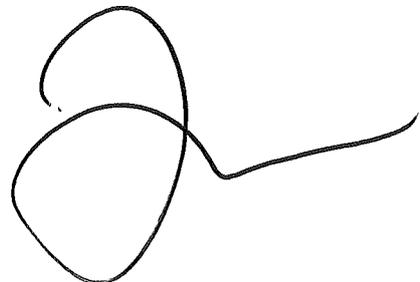
**Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:**

- 1) I refer to Question Number 28 asked prior to hearing regarding supporting homeless clients, and I ask:
  - a) What information does this website provide;
  - b) How much traffic does it receive; and
  - c) Is there any way of measuring how people who are/at risk of experiencing homelessness are able to connect to services via the website?

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**Answer**

- (a-c) As noted in the previous answer, some of these initiatives are under development. The Online Homelessness Service Portal is currently being developed in consultation with service providers and service users.

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

**ANSWERS TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

**Department of Communities**

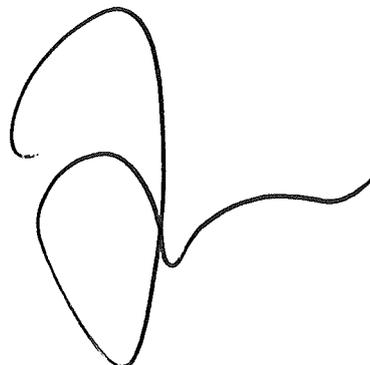
**Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:**

- 3) I refer to Question Number 26b asked prior to hearing regarding the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement. With the change in Federal government, does the State government expect this to return to a fifty-fifty arrangement in the future?

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**Answer**

Growth in the State's proportion of funding for housing and homelessness has been due to significant additional investment from the State Government. The State Government remains committed to social housing and homelessness and has invested \$2.4 billion over the next four years in line with this commitment, including a record \$875 million investment in the 2021/22 State Budget.

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

**ANSWERS TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

**Department of Communities**

**Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:**

8. I refer to Question Number 18 asked prior to hearing regarding public housing wait times, and I ask:
- (a) Of the total number of applicants on the public housing waitlist who are still waiting for a placement, how many have spent the following number of months waiting:
    - i) 0-12 months;
    - ii) 13-18 months;
    - iii) 19-24 months;
    - iv) 25-30 months;
    - v) 31-36 months;
    - vi) 37-48 months;
    - vii) 49-60 months; and
    - viii) 61+ months;
  - (b) Of the 180 people who spent over 61 months waiting for a placement, how many people does this represent? Why had these people been waiting so long;
  - (c) Is the answer provided to b) in addition to part a), or are they included in these figures; and
  - (d) Can the Department please confirm how many people have been housed off the public housing waitlist since July 1, 2021?

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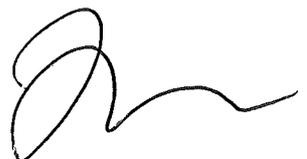
**Answer**

a)(i)-(viii)

| <b>Statewide Public Housing Wait List - as at 30 June 2022</b> |                  |
|--|------------------|
| <b>Months</b>  | <b>Wait Turn</b> |
| i) 0 - 12 Months   | 5,595            |
| ii) 13 - 18 Months   | 2,873            |
| iii) 19 - 24 Months  | 2,496            |
| iv) 25 - 30 Months   | 1,723            |
| v) 31 - 36 Months  | 1,286            |
| vi) 37 - 48 Months   | 1,794            |
| vii) 49 - 60 Months  | 1,170            |
| viii) 61+ Months   | 2,133            |

- b) The 180 applicants reported in Question Number 18 asked prior to the hearing represents 243 people.

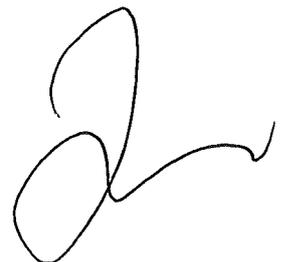
There are numerous reasons that may result in applicants remaining on the public housing wait list for an extended period and this is dependent on the individual circumstances of the client. Applicants may decline properties that they do not deem suitable which can cause



longer wait times for appropriate properties. Applicants may also have secured a private lease and they do not wish to exit, however they remain eligible for public housing assistance and choose to retain their application on the waiting list.

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.

- c) All priority applicants also have a wait turn application, therefore are included and are not in addition. Therefore, the data provided in response to part (a) of Question Number 18 asked prior to hearing includes the data provided in part (b) of that question.
- d) As at 30 June 2022, a total of 1,963 applications have been housed in public housing properties, representing 3,689 people.

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## STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

### ANSWERS TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

#### Department of Communities

#### Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

- 9) I refer to Question Number 15 asked prior to hearing regarding the SHERP Grants Program, and I ask:
- a) What were the detailed scoring criteria and assessment plans referred to in b); and
  - b) The document referenced in d) does not list the 'workstream', just the overall amount. Can the Department please table the recipients and the purposes for which the grant was to be used?

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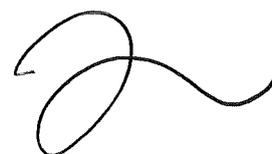
#### Answer:

- a) A roundtable to discuss potential funding with Shelter WA and the community housing sector was held in September 2020. In the development of the SHERP Grants Program guidelines, detailed scoring criteria and assessment plans for each workstream were developed in consultation with internal and external stakeholders. This approach ensured a fair and equitable assessment process and to provide detailed guidance to both the assessing officers and the Executive Advisory Panel. The assessment plan was endorsed by the Executive Advisory Panel.

Grant applications were assessed on their ability to meet evaluation criteria one to five, as outlined in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 provided. The grant guidelines were publicly available documents which were circulated to organisation's who expressed interest in applying for SHERP Grants.

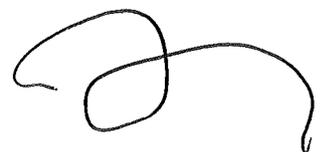
**Table 1.1 Evaluation Criteria – New Builds and Refurbishments**

| NO. | CRITERIA                          | SUB-CRITERIA   | WEIGHTING |
|-----|-----------------------------------|--|-----------|
| 1   | Project Proposal                  | The extent to which the application addresses the requirements of social housing tenants.  | Medium    |
| 2   | Project Cost, Finance and Funding | The extent to which the application demonstrates value for money.  | Medium    |
| 3   | Demand and Location               | The extent to which the build is in an appropriate location, meeting social housing demand and access to services and amenities.   | High      |
| 4   | Technical and Assets              | The extent to which the application provides certainty that:<br>(i) The design of the dwelling is appropriate to the cohort and location;<br>(ii) A technically compliant project will be delivered; and<br>(iii) The project will be delivered on time. | High      |
| 5   | Operations                        | The extent to which the application demonstrates that the capability and capacity to deliver operations and management of the completed new build.   | Medium    |



**Table 1.2 Evaluation Criteria – Aboriginal Remote Communities Maintenance**

| <b>NO.</b> | <b>CRITERIA</b>                        | <b>SUB-CRITERIA</b>  | <b>WEIGHTING</b> |
|------------|--|--|------------------|
| 1          | Project Proposal                       | The extent to which the grant application demonstrates it satisfies the requirements of social housing tenants.  | Medium           |
| 2          | Project Cost, Finance and Funding      | The extent to which the grant application demonstrates value for money   | Medium           |
| 3          | Demonstrated Experience and Capability | The extent to which the grant application demonstrates capability and experience in delivering a project of this type.   | High             |
| 4          | Demand and Location                    | The extent to which the grant application demonstrates that:<br>(i) The project will benefit the local community;<br>(ii) The project will create or maintain employment opportunities within the local community;<br>(iii) The proposed scope of works will build capacity in remote Aboriginal communities, businesses and/or organisations;<br>(iv) The proposed scope of works will be delivered in a culturally safe and appropriate manner; and<br>(v) There is community support and endorsement for the project. | High             |
| 5          | Technical and Assets                   | The extent to which the grant application demonstrates how the proposed scope of works will improve assets, extend asset life and/or support improvements in liveability and sustainability.   | High             |



- b) The details of grant recipients and purpose for each workstream are listed outlined in Tables 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 below.

**Table 2.1 Grant Recipients – Workstream 1 – New Builds.**

Grants for new builds were made available to registered community housing providers and local government authorities..

| <b>Organisation</b>                         |
|---|
| Agencies for Southwest Housing (Accordwest) |
| Bethanie Housing                            |
| Community Housing Limited                   |
| Housing Choices WA                          |
| Indigo Junction                             |
| Shire of Harvey                             |
| Shire of Murray                             |
| Stellar Living                              |
| UnitingCare West                            |

**Table 2.2 Grant Recipients – Workstream 2 – Refurbishments.**

Grants for refurbishments were made available to registered community housing providers, unregistered community housing services providing community housing services, local government authorities providing social housing services and other providers of social housing in remote and regional areas.

| <b>Organisation</b>   |
|---|
| 55 Central  |
| Aboriginal Biodiversity & Conservation Foundation           |
| Agencies for SouthWest Accommodation Inc. (t/as Accordwest) |
| Albany Youth Support Association                            |
| Amaroo Care Services Inc                                    |
| Autism Association of Western Australia Inc                 |
| Bethanie Housing Limited                                    |
| Brightwater Care Group Limited                              |
| Broome Community Housing Group                              |
| Bunbury Housing Assoc Inc trading as Alliance Housing WA    |
| Co-operation Housing  |
| Community Housing Limited                                   |
| Connect Victoria Park Inc                                   |
| Eastern Region Domestic Violence Services Network Inc.      |
| Foundation Housing  |
| Housing Choices Western Australia                           |
| Indigo Junction   |
| Mawarnkarra Health Service                                  |
| Menzies Aboriginal Corporation                              |
| Mission Australia   |
| Mosaic Community Care Incorporated                          |
| Multicultural Services Centre of Western Australia          |
| Murchison Region Aboriginal Corporation                     |
| Newman Women's Shelter                                      |

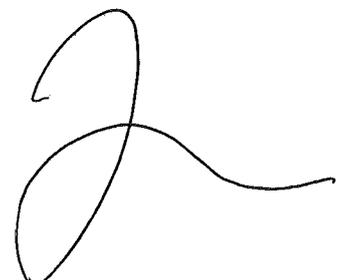
|  |
|--|
| Noongar Mia Mia Pty Ltd                                  |
| Nulsen Group   |
| Pat Thomas House Inc (t/as OVIS Community Services)      |
| Pathways Southwest                                       |
| Rise Network Incorporated                                |
| Rocky Bay Ltd  |
| RUAH Community Services                                  |
| Share & Care Community Services Group Inc<br>Atkinson St |
| Shire of Boyup Brook                                     |
| Shire of Donnybrook Balingup                             |
| Shire of Williams  |
| South West Refuge Inc                                    |
| Southern Aboriginal Corporation                          |
| Southern Cross Housing Limited                           |
| St Bartholomew's House Inc                               |
| St Vincent de Paul Society (WA) Inc.                     |
| Stellar Living Limited                                   |
| Sun City Care Incorporated                               |
| The Goldfields Indigenous Housing Organisation (GIHO)    |
| UnitingCare West   |
| West Court Retirement Village Inc.                       |
| Yaandina Community Services                              |
| Zonta House Refuge Association                           |

**Table 2.3 Grant Recipients – Workstream 3 - Remote Aboriginal Communities Maintenance**

Grants for remote Aboriginal community maintenance are made available to Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations, Aboriginal business enterprises, community development program providers and business partnerships with Aboriginal businesses and organisations providing maintenance to properties in remote Aboriginal communities.

Please note this grant round is still ongoing and this is not a finalised list. Below are the contracts already awarded under Workstream 3.

|  |
|--|
| <b>Organisation</b>                          |
| Kurrawang Aboriginal Christian Community     |
| Western Desert Lands Aboriginal Corporation  |
| Ngaanyatjarra Council Aboriginal Corporation |



**STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

**ANSWERS TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

**Department of Communities**

**Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:**

- 11) I refer to Question Number 12 asked prior to hearing regarding spot purchasing provisions and comments made by Mr McIvor in the hearing on June 23, and I ask:
- a) How is the lack of spot purchasing in regions, particularly the West Kimberley, Goldfields and wheatbelt, being addressed; and
  - b) What is the Department doing to ensure there is enough housing available to meet the needs of those on the waitlist in regional WA?

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**Answer**

a-b) The Spot Purchase Program has an acquisition target of 124 dwellings based on a budget of \$45 million. A range of the State Government's housing investment programs, including the Spot Purchase Program, focused on supporting regional and remote areas to increase their public housing stock portfolio.

Spot purchasing is not suitable or advisable for all housing markets. The Department must consider the suitability of available housing stock to purchase, including value for money, the cost of required refurbishments, the age of housing stock, and the availability of stock in smaller markets and remote locations

The State Government is investing \$2.4 billion over four years, to improve the quality and accessibility of social housing and homelessness services in WA. This is the single largest, one-off investment into social housing in the state's history and will provide an immediate boost to social housing. This includes spot purchasing as one element of the overall program of works, but also includes the delivery of a grants program for new housing construction and refurbishments projects, the use of flexible construction methods such as building modular, prefabricated and timber framed homes.

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## STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

### ANSWERS TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

#### Department of Communities

#### Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

13) I refer to Question Number 9c asked prior to hearing regarding public housing stock and I ask why are the 420 dwellings not returning to stock?

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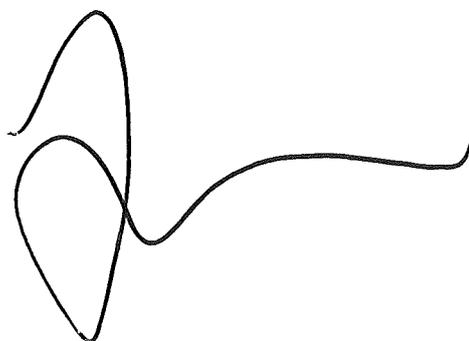
#### Answer

Non Returning Voids represent properties that are void (vacant) and have been earmarked for a purpose other than reletting to an applicant on the wait list.

These properties will not be 'returned' to public housing stock until further assessment has been completed.

Housing stock is reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure it aligns with demand, delivers value for money, and enables service delivery. Considerations that may lead to review include, but are not limited to assets which are:

- nearing or have exceeded their useful life;
- structurally unsound, significantly damaged, or which pose a health/safety risk;
- suited for redevelopment (underutilised, contiguous landholdings, favourable zoning);
- uneconomical to return to service (i.e., cost to return exceeds demolition & rebuild costs);
- subject to a request to purchase by an occupied tenant; or
- Assets falling into large-scale redevelopment or urban renewal programs.

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## STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

### ANSWERS TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

#### Department of Communities

#### Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:

15) I refer to Question Number 5e asked prior to hearing regarding SHERP - New Builds, and I ask:

- a) Why hasn't there been more investment in regional areas, particularly when there are almost 6,000 applications on the public housing waitlist for regional WA;
- b) Where were the 13 completed dwellings located by suburb or town;
- c) What was used to determine the location of these builds? (ie: greatest need? Cheapest land?); and
- d) Will the Minister please table the suburbs/towns where these remaining houses are intended to be built?

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#### Answer

- a) In the 2021/22 financial year, 600 dwellings were added to the social housing stock, with 24 per cent located in regional areas. As part of the State Government's commitment to deliver 3,300 dwellings, a pipeline of works is being developed that will continue to boost housing stock in regional WA through various initiatives.

This includes over 150 dwellings to be delivered through a regional modular program, in addition to spot purchasing, transferring long term vacant properties from Government Regional Officer Housing to the social housing stock, and through other construction streams. In addition to the above, there are 173 new build dwellings funded through the SHERP new build grants program across the three regions and nine organisations. This is in line with broader waitlist demand with over 70% of demand in the Perth metropolitan region.

b)

| <b>Suburbs/Towns</b> | <b>SHERP Dwellings Completed</b> |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Banksia Grove        | 1                                |
| Girrawheen           | 2                                |
| Golden Bay           | 3                                |
| Parmelia             | 1                                |
| Sunset Beach         | 1                                |
| Wandina              | 1                                |
| Wellard              | 3                                |
| Yanchep              | 1                                |
| <b>Grand Total</b>   | <b>13</b>                        |

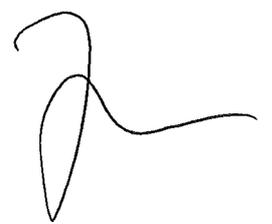
- c) A mix of criteria is used to determine the location of build including land availability/supply, public housing demand, suitability for social housing client needs (e.g. being close to amenities) and cost.



d)

| <b>Suburb/Town</b> | <b>SHERP</b> |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Armadale           | 3            |
| Balga              | 8            |
| Banksia Grove      | 1            |
| Bayonet Head       | 2            |
| Beachlands         | 4            |
| Beldon             | 3            |
| Booragoon          | 13           |
| Broome             | 5            |
| Bunbury            | 1            |
| Byford             | 1            |
| Cloverdale         | 6            |
| Collie             | 5            |
| East Victoria Park | 5            |
| Eglinton           | 1            |
| Esperance          | 1            |
| Fremantle          | 3            |
| Girrawheen         | 4            |
| Golden Bay         | 1            |
| Greenwood          | 3            |
| Hamilton Hill      | 7            |
| Haynes             | 2            |
| Hilbert            | 1            |
| Innaloo            | 4            |
| Karratha           | 1            |
| Karrinyup          | 3            |
| Katanning          | 4            |
| Kununurra          | 1            |
| Laverton           | 2            |
| Margaret River     | 4            |
| Nollamara          | 7            |
| Northam            | 1            |
| Parmelia           | 1            |
| Quinns Rocks       | 1            |
| Rockingham         | 2            |
| Seville Grove      | 10           |
| South Lake         | 1            |
| Tom Price          | 4            |
| Wellard            | 3            |
| Willagee           | 4            |
| Wundowie           | 1            |
| Wyndham            | 2            |
| Yanchep            | 1            |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>137</b>   |

There are 173 new build dwellings funded through the SHERP new build grants program which is one of many programs utilised by the McGowan Government to increase the supply of social housing.



**STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**  
**ANSWERS TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

**Department of Communities**

**Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:**

16) I refer to Question Number 5 asked prior to hearing regarding SHERP - New Builds, and I ask:

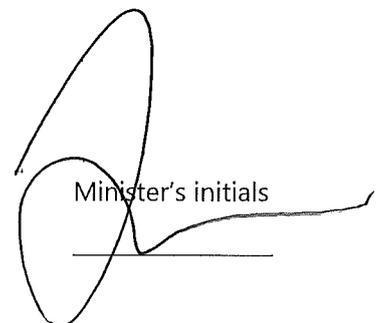
- a) How many social housing dwellings does the government currently own, whether managed by the government or other organisations;
- b) How many social housing dwellings have been added to the total stock since March 12, 2017; and
- c) How many social housing dwellings have been removed from the total stock since March 12, 2017?

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**Answer**

- a) As of 31 May 2022, the Department of Communities owned or managed 43,012 social housing dwellings.
- (b-c) Between 12 March 2017 and 31 May 2022, Communities has added over 1,308 dwellings to the social housing stock, 600 of which have been delivered in the 2021/22 financial year.

Upon coming into Government, the public housing portfolio consisted of a significant number of dilapidated social houses and buildings that were unsafe, expensive to maintain and not fit for purpose. Difficult decisions had to be made about the removal of ageing stock from the system such as Brownlie Towers, which saw 300 dwellings removed in one go and it must be acknowledged that it will take time to replace stock with the challenges of the current construction market. 2,044 have been removed between 12 March 2017 and 31 May 2022.

  
Minister's initials

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

**ANSWERS TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

**Department of Communities**

**Hon Steve Martin MLC asked:**

18) I refer to Question Number 1b asked prior to hearing regarding the North West Aboriginal Housing Fund. The answer provided does not answer the question. Can the Department provide a number on how many people are expected to benefit from the Fund?

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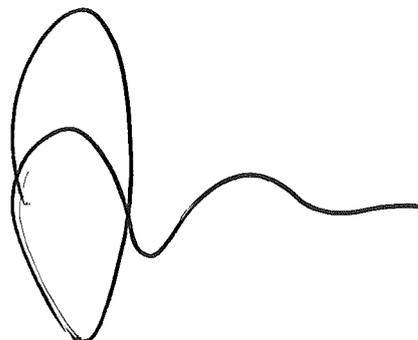
**Answer**

The Member's previous questions asked how many people the North-West Aboriginal Housing Fund (the Fund) is intended to help. The Fund is intended to benefit all Aboriginal people across the Kimberley and Pilbara. As the Fund is not yet fully expended, with a number of projects still in development. It is not possible to provide an absolute figure of how many people will benefit from the Fund at this time.

However, as of 30 June 2022, so far over 733 people are expected to directly benefit from the Fund. This includes 60 apprenticeships and 172 Aboriginal construction jobs in addition to providing housing and support services for more than 350 people. This does not include the benefits to the wider community.

Investments commencing delivery in 2022 are expected to support at least 63 families through housing and support services, enable the employment of an additional 80 Aboriginal people and support an additional eight Aboriginal people to complete their apprenticeships.

These investments, in addition to the housing it will provide, will create apprenticeship and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people, and capacity building for Aboriginal Owned organisations.

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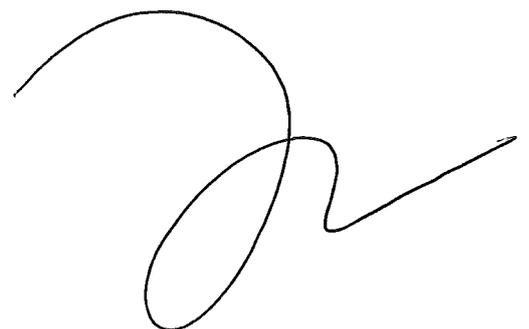
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**ANSWERS TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

**Department of Communities**

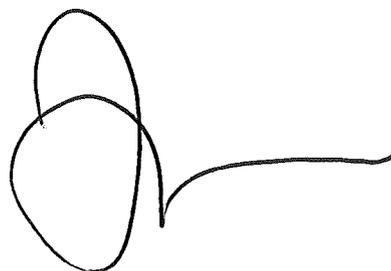
**Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC asked:**

5) I refer to point 10.1, Spot Purchasing on page 522, Budget Paper No. 2 Vol. 2. What is the current average turnaround for spot purchased properties, once settled?

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**Answer**

5) The average turnaround time for a Spot Purchase acquisition to be occupied post settlement is approximately 10 weeks. Properties that are spot purchased need to be in clean, safe and working order. In line with this, refurbishments are often required before letting the property.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'B' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.