



**Queensland  
Government**  
Department of **Housing**

## Report

# Community Housing Planning Group

13 – 14 October 2008

**Developed by Community and Public Housing through  
Policy and Implementation Branch**

Approved by  
Jenny Clark  
General Manager, Community and Public Housing  
26 November 2008

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## Day 1 – Monday 13 October 2008

### Introduction and Welcome

The Community Housing Planning Group (CHPG) met on 13 & 14 October 2008. The agenda for the meeting and list of delegates is at **Attachment 1**.

### General Manager's Report and Highlights

Julie-Ann McCullough, Acting General Manager, Community and Public Housing identified a number of key projects. The presentation slides for this session are at **Attachment 2**. Key messages include:

- **The Crisis Accommodation Program / Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (CAP/SAAP):** Following the review of program arrangements Premier Anna Bligh announced that from 1 January 2009, the Department of Communities will take lead responsibility for homelessness policy in Queensland. Implementation of the changes will be carefully planned by the two departments with organisations kept informed during the process.
- **Transitional Housing Realignment:** Transitional housing is being reviewed to achieve integration within one social housing system. The first stage of the review includes establishing revised allocation and referral arrangements in the 2008-09 financial year. Once the new Allocations policy is finalised a transitional period will be established during which providers will transfer waitlists and undertake training along with area office staff on new service delivery arrangements.
- **Expansion of the Community Managed Housing Studio Units program:** On 25 March 2008, the Minister gave in-principle support for a strategy to expand the program by 2015 dwellings by 2015. This has provided the opportunity for the department to make a number of strategic purchases of existing motels.
- **Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service (Qld) Evaluation:** An evaluation is underway which aims to assess the efficiency, effectiveness and appropriateness of the program within one social housing system. Consultants KPMG are currently preparing a draft evaluation report for consideration by the project Steering Committee which consists of senior officers from the department and the Residential Tenancies Authority.
- **Home Assist Secure (HAS) Review:** A review of the HAS program is soon to be conducted to test the program's effectiveness, efficiency and identify critical linkages with other programs. A reference group has been formed consisting of representatives from eight HAS services and departmental staff.
- **Strengthening Social Housing Strategy:** Implementation of this Strategy, which is replacing the Community Housing Resourcing framework, has commenced and will occur progressively during 2008/09. The southern Business Development and Innovation Unit is being established in December 2008.
- **Standards and Accreditation Council membership:** Cabinet has approved the appointment of the new Council for a period of up to three years commencing 1 October 2008. Information on council membership can be found at:  
[http://www.housing.qld.gov.au/programs/ch/news/info\\_bulletin/2008/oct/page04.htm](http://www.housing.qld.gov.au/programs/ch/news/info_bulletin/2008/oct/page04.htm)

- **Review of the National Community Housing Standards Manual:** The current review aims to identify good practice in 2008 and establish a 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the manual. Australian states and territories undertook consultation in April 2008 and the report indicating Queensland's feedback is available at <http://www.housing.qld.gov.au/programs/ch/news/nchs.htm>. The multi-jurisdictional Not-for-Profit Housing Sector Development Sub Group is seeking to engage a consultant to develop and finalise the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the standards.
- **Service Reviews:** Service reviews of funded organisations are part of the Performance Management and Compliance Framework process to ensure compliance with the *Housing Act 2003*, *Housing Regulation 2003* and the department's contractual arrangements with organisations. Three providers participated in a trial review which enabled the refinement of the tools and processes. A letter providing details of the service review framework and its implementation will be issued very soon.

## **National Affordable Housing Agreement**

This session was presented by Alan Shaw, Manager Housing Supply, Housing Policy and Strategy. The presentation slides for this session are at **Attachment 3**. Key messages from the session include:

The Council of Australian Government's (COAG) announced new housing initiatives in December 2007. These are:

**The National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA)** – to replace the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement, NAHA is expected to be in place by January 2009 and covers:

- Homelessness
- Rental housing
- Home ownership
- Market efficiency
- Indigenous housing

**Housing Affordability Fund:** A National Rental Affordability Scheme was launched by the Australian Government on 24 July 2008 to stimulate the supply of affordable housing in the private rental market. The scheme aims to:

- increase the supply of affordable rental dwellings by 50,000 properties across Australia by 2012.
- reduce rental costs for low to moderate income households.
- encourage large scale investment and innovative delivery of affordable housing.

**National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS):** Aim of this initiative is to increase the supply of affordable rental properties by 50,000 dwellings through tax incentives from the Australian Government and State funding. The first round of proposals from interested developers has now closed and an announcement on the outcome is expected during November 2008.

**Use of Surplus Land:** An audit of Commonwealth, State and Territory land is underway to identify possible locations for housing developments.

**National Housing Supply Council:** The aim of the National Housing Supply Council is to provide research, forecasts and advice about the adequacy of housing and land supply and improve the evidence base for housing policy development. The first State of Supply report is expected in January 2009.

**A Place to Call Home:** This is an Australian Government initiative to provide 600 new homes for people experiencing homelessness. Under this scheme households would receive intensive support for 12 months before the property and tenant is transferred to social housing. Queensland has been allocated 143 dwellings under this scheme and the first households are expected to be assisted in late 2008.

**Questions and responses:**

1. Is design and accessibility taken into consideration when the department funds or part-funds property development through initiatives such as NRAS?

**Response:** NRAS is a form of private market supply and there is no explicit expectation that properties will be designed to a particular specification. Initiatives such as NRAS need to be attractive to investors and not overly prescriptive. The department matches its property portfolio to need.

2. The outcomes from the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement will require expenditure on the part of the State. Is there sufficient funding and resources to deliver these outcomes?

**Response:** This is uncertain as it relates to outcomes to be negotiated between the Australian and State Governments at the Council of Australian Governments (CoAG). It is dependant upon what is agreed, and how this is costed by the Australian and State Treasuries and line departments.

## **Queensland Shelter and Tenants' Union of Queensland (TUQ)**

**Penny Carr, Tenants' Union Queensland – key messages include:**

- The Tenants' Union has a Social Housing worker on staff to engage with tenants and tenant groups and to assist the TUQ to identify policy and law reform issues.
- A Social Housing Tenant Reference Group has been established for the purpose of information gathering, issue identification and analysis.
- The TUQ now has a bi-monthly newsletter that provides updates, feedback and discussion on policy issues.
- The Fraser Coast Tenants' Union has now taken on management of a local tenant advice service.
- A small project is underway at the Cape York Peninsula to engage with communities to educate on services available and consult on how tenant advisory services can be delivered.
- The Residential Tenancies Conference will take place at the Gold Coast on 9 – 11 September 2009.

**Adrian Pisarski, Queensland Shelter – key messages include:**

- It has been one year since Queensland Shelter and the Tenants' Union were selected as the two Peak organisations for tenancy and policy advice to the department. The first initiative of Queensland Shelter was to ensure staff of peak organisations previously funded by the department were offered employment opportunities.
- Shelter has now grown from 16 to 20 branches with some having special interests covering women, seniors, Indigenous housing and asylum seekers. Queensland Shelter's new staff structure is at **Attachment 4**.

- Shelter has no mandate to represent organisations previously funded by the department as peaks and these organisations continue to represent their own clients. Queensland Shelter operates as a policy peak, not a peak representing other organisations.
- Queensland Shelter has been very active in providing submissions to State and Commonwealth bodies on a number of initiatives including:
  - National Rental Affordability Scheme
  - Green Paper on Homelessness
  - National Affordable Housing Agreement
  - Transition of Indigenous Community Housing Organisations from Commonwealth to State management

Adrian is contactable on 3393 2433 or by email at [director@qshelter.asn.au](mailto:director@qshelter.asn.au)

## Delegate Reports

### South East Queensland North - Morrie Evans

- **National Rental Affordability Scheme:** A number of challenges have been identified in the region including the dispersed nature of the Sunshine Coast, availability and cost of land and lack of infrastructure particularly public transport.
- **Rental market challenges:** Large rent increases in the Sunshine Coast region are contributing to discriminatory practices in the private rental market. People without a rental history or who do not present well are most affected.
- **New market factor:** A large number of self-funded retirees on the Sunshine Coast are liquidating assets under the existing economic conditions. This is impacting on the sale of property and the rental market.
- **Community rent scheme funding shortfalls:** Major issue with rent increases, the cost of head-leasing properties is causing a short-fall in budgets.
- **Implementation of the Client Intake and Assessment Process:** Clients are required to submit evidence to support their housing need assessment. Access to a check-list with examples of supporting documentation will help organisations assist applicants to complete the housing needs assessment.

### Greater Gundi Group - Carol Carn

- There is no high school in Boulia and this is causing an influx into Longreach, particularly of Indigenous families.
- The mining industry in the region has put pressure on the availability of rentals and property prices. There is a depleting stock of affordable rental properties available for low income households.
- Barcaldine Home Assist Secure program has been nominated for a Regional Services award.
- A greater number of young mothers and families seeking accommodation had been noticed in Longreach.

### **Wide Bay Burnett Regional Community Housing Council - Brett Hanna**

- Two large housing providers are continuing to strengthen their relationship and identify systems and resources they can share.
- Several organisations in the area are considering becoming companies with one large organisation in Bundaberg aiming to become a company by early 2009.
- There has been increased turnover in CRS stock due to needs based allocations under the Client Intake and Assessment Process (CIAP). This turnover has increased the operating costs for providers associated with reletting properties.
- Providers are working through issues arising from Community-managed Housing – Studio Unit allocations with the area office. Good communication between providers and the area office has helped resolve these issues.
- There is considerable interest in the National Affordable Rental Scheme in the region. Several interested parties are waiting for information from the first round of proposals. Consortiums are coming forward with proposals, however, most organisations are approaching this with care.

### **Mackay-Whitsunday Regional Community Housing Council - Lorraine Wirth**

- Lack of supply of affordable housing and increasing rents remain an issue in the region. This is exacerbated by population growth caused by the mining boom. Rentals have increased and infrastructure such as affordable accommodation and other services have not kept pace.
- Mackay is predicted to be in the top 10 regional centres in Australia in 2026. It is frequently reported in the media that Mackay has a housing crisis and this will hinder key workers remaining or moving to the area. For example, Police Officers have rejected offers of promotion to move to the region because of the cost of living.
- In the hinterland, lack of affordable housing is a major concern and in some instances rental costs are greater than in Mackay.
- Mackay Regional Council is interested in the establishing an Affordable Housing entity.
- Caravan Park closures continue – another 22 sites have been lost and only one caravan park remains.

### **Far North Queensland Regional Community Housing Council - Sharon Large**

- There have been some instances of increased vacancy turn-around times from the implementation of CIAP. The relationship between the community housing sector and area office remains strong and productive.
- An issue in the region is the length of time for rental grants to be processed and this has caused some distress to clients and providers have met the cost in the interim.

**Response:** The issuing of a rental grant is a manual process. Before the rental grant cheque can be produced a Tenancy Confirmation Form must be signed by the provider stating that the tenancy will proceed. Once signed, the cheque is issued by post from Central Office (Brisbane). The timeliness of this process is reliant upon the client ensuring the Tenancy Confirmation Form is signed and returned to the area office so the payment can be authorised.

### **Darling Downs Regional Community Housing Council - Jenny Fluri**

- The Darling Downs Regional Community Housing Council is currently in caretaker mode moving towards becoming a Housing Area Network. The three sub-groups that make up the council have been dismantled.
- Providers in the region have questioned how the Home Assist Secure (HAS) program can assist social housing tenants. Currently it is predominately used to assist private tenants remain in their home, particularly those who are ineligible for social housing.

**Response:** The HAS program is relevant and beneficial to eligible community housing tenants in the following ways:

- Assistance to tenants in meeting their responsibilities under lease agreements. For example an eligible client experiencing a period of illness or injury who is unable to maintain their property.
- Safety assistance, for example changing light bulbs for elderly tenants who would be at risk on a chair or footstep.
- Free referral to qualified trade workers.
- Where a service provider is not obliged to undertake modifications (such as grab rails, chair raisers or access ramps), a HAS service provider may assist the client where the landlord gives permission. This applies only to properties that are not department owned.

### **Peak Organisation for Regional and Remote Community Housing (PORRCH) - Neil Polglase**

- Potential mining activity in the Surat Basin is likely to impact significantly on housing in the region, both sales and rental.
- Some councils in the west of the region are exploring options to end their relationship with the department as many local people do not meet social housing eligibility criteria under the one social housing system. The department originally provided funding to these Councils to build capacity in rural and remote locations but current policy is having the reverse effect.
- The department's Hard to Let policy and procedure is proving to be effective in the region with ten properties endorsed by the department as hard to let.
- Murweh Shire Council is currently managing 11 units of accommodation for Morven Progress Association. A management agreement has been entered into for Murweh Shire Council to assist with the management and administration of these properties.

### **Home Assist Secure (Rockhampton) - Sandra Ware**

- The HAS program in the Rockhampton mainly services the private sector.
- The department could consider incentives for lessors of private rental properties who are prepared to adapt property so that it is accessible. The department – private rental sector relationship is important and needs to be strengthened.

**Question:** Can community housing tenants access the department's Occupational Therapist (OT) services?

**Response:** If the property is owned by the department then community housing providers can access the department's OT services via the local area office. If the property is owned by the provider or privately then OT services can be accessed via Home and Community Care or Home Assist Secure OT services

## Department Presentations

### Rural Housing Service Centre (RHSC)

This session was presented by Jeff Fisher, A/Principal Project Officer, Planning, Research and Investment - Community and Public Housing. The presentation for this session is at **Attachment 5**. Key messages include:

- A RHSC is a single registered community housing entity that consolidates the management of Long Term Community Housing, Public Housing and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing.
- A pilot RHSC will be offered to the Roma Neighbourhood Centre. Roma was selected as it is already well established, has approximately 200 social housing properties and is likely to be financially viable.
- Stage 1 of the pilot will require the RHSC to be an access point initially and the organisation will operate on a head-lease model. Maintenance arrangements will remain with the department and a grant will be provided for establishment costs (computers, cash flow etc).
- Stage 2 of the pilot will progress the RHSC to an entry point with access to departmental information and access points. At stage 2 the RCHC will have the option to coordinate responsive maintenance.
- At present a letter and prospectus has been sent to Roma Regional Council for future discussion. It is likely that they will accept the department's proposal and trial the first RHSC in the region.

#### Questions and responses:

1. How will Commonwealth Rent Assistance be treated?

**Response:** Tenants in properties directly managed by the department under the Public Housing program are not eligible to receive Commonwealth Rent Assistance as they have a direct relationship with the State Housing Authority. In the proposed Rural Housing Service Centre model the Public Housing properties would be transferred or leased to the community housing organisation / local government. The tenant / department relationship would not be direct and the tenant would be able to attract Commonwealth Rent Assistance.

#### Comments

North Queensland (Charters Towers) is interested in having a service centre / access point.

### National Social Housing Survey

This session was presented by Len Verrall, Senior Project Officer, Planning, Research and Investment - Community and Public Housing. The presentation for this session is at **Attachment 6**. Key messages from this session include:

- The current Commonwealth State Housing Agreement requires each State to conduct a bi-annual tenant satisfaction survey. In 2007, tenants from Community Rent Scheme, Community-managed

Housing – Studio Unit and Long Term Community Housing programs across Queensland were randomly selected for participation in the survey.

- The survey reports on tenant satisfaction with three performance indicators:
  - overall service provided by housing provider
  - amenity of home
  - location of the home with regard to the tenants' needs.
- Satisfaction with other factors such as the condition of the home, maintenance service and tenancy management is also surveyed.
- Queensland's 2007 overall results for tenants who were satisfied or very satisfied were:
  - service 79%
  - amenity 81%
  - location 87%
- The results have been analysed for each program so they can be used to:
  - inform development of policy
  - acknowledge the strengths of CH programs
  - identify opportunities and strategies to increase tenant satisfaction

The National Social Housing report will be available shortly on the department's internet site. In the meantime, organisations wanting to access the report can do so via Service Delivery, Community and Public Housing, telephone 322 51227.

## **Client Intake and Assessment Process (CIAP)**

This session was presented by Simon Fordham, Acting Manager CIAP Project. The presentation for this session is at **Attachment 7**. Key messages include:

- Key features of one social housing system include standard assessment and system process, one register of need and clients matched with an appropriate level of assistance.
- The new Client Intake and Assessment Process was implemented on 22 September 2008. The purpose of CIAP is to identify household need through a Housing Need Assessment and match households to the most appropriate product. Applicants are categorised on the department's Housing Register according to their assessed level of need.
- There are two high level indicators of housing need:
  1. Appropriateness – where the household lives now and whether current accommodation meets the household's housing need. Assessment criteria include homelessness, location, physical amenity, rent affordability and the formation of new households.
  2. Accessibility and sustainability – the applicant's barriers to finding and sustaining suitable housing in the private market. Criteria include barriers to access, housing supply, medical condition / disability and sustainability.
- A key part of CIAP is matching for success where the household is matched to the product/s most likely to resolve their need. Some considerations when identifying the most appropriate product include:
  - Type of household need

- Duration of need
- Product options available
- Successful housing outcomes for the household
- Household's previous housing history.
- To support CIAP and provide options for clients in need of housing assistance, a number of existing and new products are in use. These include:
  - RentConnect (trial underway in Caboolture and Rockhampton)
  - Rent Start
  - National Rental Affordability Scheme
  - Long Term Community Housing referrals
  - Crisis and Supported Accommodation
  - Transitional Housing referrals from 2009

### Questions and responses:

1. NRAS is not social housing, how does it sit within one social housing system?

**Response:** The department is establishing a separate list from the housing register that will contain only applicants who are eligible for the NRAS product. These applicants will have met the department's common eligibility criteria but will have no demonstrated need for a subsidised social housing product.

2. Should area offices be providing a list to providers to guide the provision of supporting documentation for clients?

**Response:** The application form for housing provides a check-list identifying where the applicant is required to provide supporting evidence. Under the State Government's 'Right to Information' initiative there will be further information provided on the department's website from December 2008. Applicants and/or support staff requiring further information on the application process or supporting documentation are encouraged to contact their local area office.

3. CIAP applicant referral implementation issues – some issues were raised including delays in receiving referral lists and applicants on referral lists who were not suitable for the vacant property.

**Response:** Applicant referral arrangements are being closely monitored by the department as CIAP is implemented. Area offices are keen to work closely with clients and providers experiencing difficulties with the process and any referral issues should be raised with the local Area Manager. Clients are being advised of their right to appeal a decision about their housing need assessment.

4. There is concern in some areas of South West Queensland that the area office may refer applicants with high needs to remote areas with no support.

**Response:** Providers make the final decision about whom from the referral list is offered a vacancy. If a provider is concerned about referrals they are encouraged to discuss this with the area office. The area office will not knowingly refer applicants with support needs to areas that lack the appropriate resources to meet the need.

5. Some clients have experienced difficulty in providing documents such as passports and birth certificates.

**Response:** To be eligible for housing assistance applicants are required to produce two forms of identification and evidence that they are an Australian citizen or permanent resident. An Australian passport or birth certificate can be used to prove citizenship and be used as one form of primary

identification. Those applicants who do not have a passport or birth certificate are encouraged to contact the *Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs* and request a status letter. For Australian citizens, a replacement birth certificate can be obtained through the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

## National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS)

This session was presented by Mark Wall, Acting Director Private Housing Support. There are no presentation slides for this session. Key messages include:

- The National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) was launched by the Australian Government on 24 July 2008 to stimulate the supply of affordable housing in the private rental market: The scheme aims to:
  - increase the supply of affordable rental dwellings by 50,000 properties across Australia by 2012
  - reduce rental costs for low to moderate income households
  - encourage large scale investment and innovative delivery of affordable housing.
- NRAS offers investors financial incentives to build new affordable rental properties in high need areas. The Australian Government will provide investors with tax credits or cash grants of \$6,000 per new dwelling per year, for 10 years.
- The department will provide investors with an additional \$2,000 per new dwelling per year for 10 years in the form of cash grants, land contributions or other in-kind support. New dwellings will be rented to low to moderate income households at a minimum of 20% below the median market rents in the demographic area.
- NRAS dwellings will be rented to clients referred from the department's housing register. These clients will most likely be the applicants assessed as having the lowest need of all applicants on the register, although other applicants on the register are not excluded. NRAS income limits are higher than the department's eligibility limits. The income limit for a single person to be eligible is \$39,351, the maximum eligibility limit for the program is \$85,855 for a couple with 3+ children.
- The first round of expressions of interest generated 16 proposals for 54 projects totalling 3,000 properties. The Commonwealth will make the final decision on successful expressions of interest and there could be some properties available during the 2008/09 financial year subject to planning permissions.
- Further information is available from the Australian Government website by clicking on the National Rental Affordability Scheme link under 'Housing' at [www.fahcsia.gov.au](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au)

### Questions and responses:

1. What is the Australian Tax Authority (ATO) ruling on Public Benevolent Institution status for affordable housing organisations participating in NRAS?

**Response:** Since the CHPG meeting in October 2008, the federal government has announced that it will introduce a transitional safety net to cover charities participating in NRAS. This will be in the form of an amendment to both charity and tax laws to ensure that existing charities in the Establishment Phase of NRAS (projects built in 2008-09 and 2009/10) will not risk their charitable status by taking part in the initiative.

2. If the rent for NRAS properties is not based on the household income, what is the minimum income to ensure an applicant can afford an NRAS property?

**Response:** All applicants for NRAS properties will need to be on the department's housing register. The organisation managing the property will determine the successful applicant for a

vacancy. The department has developed a Price Point table showing indicative price points for affordable rentals based on 30% of gross monthly income. This will enable both the property manager and applicant to determine whether the property is affordable.

3. How often will local rents be reviewed?

**Response:** Rents will be reviewed three times during the 10 year period but can only be increased by CPI annually.

## RentConnect

This session was presented by Kelli Lamperd, Acting Principal Project Officer, Private Housing Support. The presentation for this session is at **Attachment 8**. Key messages include:

- RentConnect is a new way to help people find and secure a tenancy in the private rental market. Products have been developed to widen options as part of one social housing system and assist people to find and secure a private rental tenancy.
- Three products have been developed to assist 'rent ready' clients, these are currently being trialled in Caboolture and Central Queensland area offices:
  - Advisory Service – Specialist RentConnect Officers assist clients with information and advice and Connect Point, a public access computer that provides information on the private rental market and access to other helpful websites
  - Loan – To be piloted in 2009 the RentConnect Loan will be available to Advisory Service clients who have been assessed as having the ability to sustain a tenancy. The loan will be interest free to assist with tenancy costs such as rent in advance, utility bond and connect and removalists.
  - Tenancy Guarantee – Also to be piloted in 2009, the RentConnect Tenancy Guarantee is a commitment from the department to compensate a lessor above and beyond the rental bond for rental arrears and/or property damage.
- The RentConnect advisory service commenced assisting clients in the Caboolture and Central Queensland area and a trial of the loan and tenancy guarantee products will begin in early 2009. An evaluation of the pilot and associated products will to test effectiveness will be undertaken in late 2009.

For more information you may contact Kelli at: [Kelli.lamperd@housing.qld.gov.au](mailto:Kelli.lamperd@housing.qld.gov.au)

## Indigenous Community Housing Organisation's (ICHO)

This session was presented by Christine Henderson, Communication and Engagement Manager and Dan Jenkins, Principal Policy Officer, Indigenous Community Housing Transition, Housing Policy and Strategy. The presentation for this session is at **Attachment 9**. Key messages include:

- There are approximately 90 ICHOs across the State managing 2,000 housing assets. These providers have varying levels of management and operational practices, property standards and viability with some deregistered or under administration.
- The Australian Government has made an initial offer to the Queensland Government of \$60 million to upgrade housing assets managed by ICHOs that become registered providers and transition to the one social housing system.

- In order to benefit from the new arrangements, a decision needs to be made at board level within ICHO organisations by 1 April 2009.
- Other options may also be available for organisations, such as to merge their assets with another participating organisation, or transfer their housing assets to the Department of Housing or another participating organisation.

Information contained within this presentation represented the best available advice at the time of writing and may be subject to amendment. Members are welcome to contact the project team directly to confirm or clarify the information, by email [CHIPchange@housing.qld.gov.au](mailto:CHIPchange@housing.qld.gov.au) or telephone Jonathan Leitch, 3247 6388.

## Day Two – Tuesday 16 October 2007

### Introduction – Broad Government Strategies: Q2, Mental Health and Homelessness

This session was presented by Jennifer Clark, Acting General Manager, Housing Policy and Strategy. The presentation for this session is at **Attachment 10**.

Jennifer Clark provided a broad context to the roles of housing and housing related services in delivering the State government's vision, 'Q2 – Tomorrow's Queensland'. Key messages include:

- Q2 targets by 2020 are:
  - Creating a diverse economy
  - Protecting lifestyle and environment
  - Delivering world class education and training
  - Making Queenslanders Australia's healthiest people; and
  - Supporting caring communities
- Homelessness
  - A White Paper and National Action Plan are scheduled for release in late 2008
  - *A Place to Call Home* was announced in the 2009-09 federal budget committing to 600 new homes for persons experience homelessness (143 allocated to Queensland).
  - A review of the Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP) and Supported Accommodation and Assistance Program (SAAP) commenced in early 2008. From 1 January 2009, the Department of Communities will take a lead responsibility for homelessness policy in Queensland.
- Mental Health
  - The Housing and Support Program (HASP) links support and housing from Disability Services Queensland, Queensland Health and Queensland Housing.
  - The Queensland Mental Health plan 2007 – 2017 outlines priorities for reform and development of mental health care in Queensland

### Strengthening Social Housing Strategy

This session was presented by Marie Skinner, Manager Major Projects and Kelly Neill, and Rebecca Foote, Manager, Policy and Implementation Branch, Community and Public Housing. The presentation for this session is at **Attachment 11**. Key messages include:

- Objectives of the Strengthening Social Housing Strategy are:
  - Improved integration and coordination of service delivery
  - Effective communication and collaboration
  - Facilitate access to relevant training and professional development
  - Encourage innovation and continuous quality improvement; and
  - Increase the capability of not-for-profit housing providers to become major providers.
- Four mechanisms will be introduced to be progressively implemented from 1 July 2008:
  - Housing Area Networks
  - Queensland Social Housing Forum
  - Triennial Queensland Housing Convention
  - Business Development and Innovation Units
- The Director-General has recently approved the establishment of the Business Development and Innovation Unit (BDIU) and has endorsed the Work Unit Profile that outlines the objectives, functions and immediate work priorities.
- The BDIU will be part of the Policy and Implementation Branch and will have two teams:
  - Resource Development and Innovation, and
  - Capacity Building and Regional Coordination.
- Recruitment to the Southern positions will begin in November 2008 with a view to having the new team in place by December 2008. Recruitment to the Central and Northern teams will take place next year with a view to finalising recruitment for Central by March 2009 and Northern by June 2009.
- A reference group has been established to over see the implementation of these mechanisms and provide strategic level oversight of the project. During the transition period, Community Housing Resource Workers have work-plans to guide activities and reflect the different timelines for transition (i.e. 6 months, 9 months and 12 months).

## Workshops

Workshops were conducted on three key projects discussed during the meeting. These are:

- Strengthening Social Housing Strategy
- RentConnect
- CIAP workshop

An overview of feedback received from Planning Group members is at **Attachment 12**.

## Meeting Close

### Director General

The meeting was closed by Natalie MacDonald, Director-General Department of Housing.

The Director-General thanked the organisations represented at the Planning Group for their contribution to this forum, performing an important role in making the sector stronger and making community housing work on the ground.

The Director-General announced that the Business Development and Innovation Units had been signed-off and that the department was committed to working with a range of stakeholders and the community sector to take advice and explore ideas in the future.