



The Hon Pru Goward MP

Minister for Family and Community Services

Minister for Social Housing

Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault



Your ref: D16/31928

Ms Helen Minnican
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House, Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Ms Minnican

Thank you for your letter of 11 October 2016 to the former Minister for Family and Community Services and Minister for Social Housing regarding the report of the Public Accounts Committee entitled *Management of NSW public housing maintenance contracts*.

I am pleased to provide you with the NSW Government response to the Committee's report.

Yours sincerely

Pru Goward MP

Encl: NSW Government response to report No. 3/56 of the Public Accounts Committee - *Management of NSW public housing maintenance contracts*.

**NSW Government Response to report 3/56 of the Public Accounts Committee -
Parliamentary Inquiry into the Management of NSW Public Housing Maintenance Contracts**

Recommendation	Agency Responsible	Support/ Not Support	Comment
<p>1 The Committee recommends that the Department of Family and Community Services provides a progress report to the Committee 12 months after the Committee's report is tabled, detailing progress on the new maintenance contracts. The progress report should contain specific measures of performance against agreed targets, as well as client satisfaction ratings for the work undertaken.</p>	FACS	Support	The Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) will provide a progress report in October 2017 on the maintenance contract, including performance measures and tenant satisfaction.
<p>2 The Committee recommends that the Department of Family and Community Services implements new procedures to better inform tenants about how their Client Service Officer can assist them in seeking repairs to their home.</p>	FACS	Support	Completed. Support tools have been provided to Client Service Officers to better support tenants to sustain their tenancies which includes working with tenants to identify maintenance concerns. In addition, the FACS website advises tenants about how they can access maintenance services and provide feedback. Tenants were advised about the maintenance contact in the March 2016 Your Home tenant newsletter prior to its implementation.
<p>3 The Committee recommends that the Department of Family and Community Services reviews the protocols introduced with the new maintenance contract, designed to ensure effective communication between Housing NSW staff and LAHC staff twelve months after implementation, to ensure that the protocols are working effectively.</p>	FACS	Support	FACS Housing Services and the Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) have an improved protocol for communication and coordination of maintenance requests. In addition, the current maintenance contract enables tenants to deal directly with maintenance contractors to have work undertaken. A further update will be provided as part of the progress report in October 2017.

Recommendation		Agency Responsible	Support/ Not Support	Comment
4	The Committee recommends that the Department of Family and Community Services reviews the complaints handling process after 12 months of operation and reports its findings to the Committee as part of the progress report called for in Recommendation 1.	FACS	Support	Tenants have various ways of advising of a complaint, including the FACS Client Feedback Unit. FACS has also introduced a tenant experience dashboard on its website which gives tenants the ability to rate the service they receive from contractors and view the performance of contractors in their area. Tenants satisfaction is also independently measured by FACS. FACS will report on tenant feedback and complaint handling as part of the progress report in October 2017.
5	The Committee recommends that the Department of Family and Community Services includes an assessment of the operation of the codes of conduct for contractors and complaints mechanisms in relation to contractor behaviour as part of the twelve month review of the new maintenance contract progress report to the Committee.	FACS	Support	FACS will report on codes of conduct for contractors, complaints and tenant feedback mechanisms as part of the progress report in October 2017.
6	The Committee recommends that the Department of Family and Community Services ensures that consistent and mandatory codes of conduct for contractors are implemented across the public housing and community housing sectors.	FACS	Support	The new contract requirement for maintenance contractors, and their subcontractors and suppliers, to comply with the FACS Code of Ethical Conduct is also being extended to include Community Housing Providers in their lease agreements. A further update will be provided as part of the progress report in October 2017.
7	The Committee recommends that the Department of Family and Community Services monitors, evaluates and reports on the success of the new system in addressing maintenance difficulties experienced by tenants with disability, as part of the progress report recommended earlier in the report.	FACS	Support	FACS will report on the new system in addressing maintenance issues experienced by tenants, including those with disability, as part of the progress report in October 2017.

Recommendation	Agency Responsible	Support/ Not Support	Comment
<p>8 The Committee recommends that the Department of Family and Community Services examines the current funding formula for maintenance and modifications of housing stock with a view to funding modifications separately, thereby improving service delivery arrangements for tenants with a disability.</p>	FACS	Support	The NSW Government and the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) have largely agreed the arrangements for home modifications to public housing dwellings under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). Implementation of these arrangements is presently being finalised. FACS will provide an update as part of the progress report in October 2017.
<p>9 The Committee recommends that the Department of Family and Community Services includes in its progress report to the Committee the results of the Council of Australian Governments' examination of the impact of the National Disability Insurance Scheme arrangements on the social housing sector.</p>	FACS	Support in principle	The national evaluation of the impact of the NDIS on mainstream services excludes social housing. Information from the national evaluation will therefore not be available for the Department's response.
<p>10 The Committee recommends that the Department of Family and Community Services provides an update on the transfer of property management to community housing providers in the progress report to the Committee on the new maintenance contract arrangements.</p>	FACS	Support	FACS will provide an update on the transfer of property management to community housing providers as part of its October 2017 progress report.