

**Submission
No 18**

**FOLLOW-UP REVIEW OF THE MANAGEMENT OF NSW PUBLIC
HOUSING MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS**

Name: Ms Alison George
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SUBMISSION TO NSW PUBLIC HOUSING MAINTENANCE REVIEW

1. My experience reporting maintenance issues:

I always call the Maintenance line in the late evening when waiting times are brief and have invariably had friendly and efficient service from those taking my call.

HOWEVER, while I have found that the [REDACTED] appears to function well, I have criticisms of the changing and/or inadequate guidelines for the service, for example:

- a. At one time urine and excrement were cleaned up promptly, yet with [REDACTED] I have been informed that the mess would be cleaned up when the cleaners were next scheduled to work in that area. A number of days then passed before the mess was attended to – even though this was in an area tenants had to move through in order to access the communal laundry. A neighbour who has to use the laundry every day as the carer of a seriously ill wife was injured when he slipped in the urine which covered the corridor floor.

The hypocrisy during this pandemic year of having hygiene advice dispensed to tenants and hand sanitisers set up in the foyers while many of us had to wade through urine and vomit to wash our clothes was not lost on tenants, who had largely given up reporting these health hazards because to do so was pointless, given this policy.

- b. I used to be able to get assistance to change the fluoro lights in the bathroom. This changed under [REDACTED] which caused difficulties for me and I imagine many others who are elderly, and/or have a disability. (I have a severe spinal stenosis, aggravated by further spinal injury sustained in an accident, so that I am no longer able to stand unsupported. Changing a fluoro tube is an impossibility.

2. The quality of the work completed:

There is great disparity between the state of cleanliness of the entrance foyer to the main building at [REDACTED] and the foyers on other levels. Because of under investment in new public housing stock for decades, there is an extreme shortage of units and people with serious mental and physical health issues, including ICE addiction, comprise a much larger

proportion of the tenant population than they did ten years ago. While such tenants may be prioritised for emergency housing at [REDACTED], the support services they also need are often inadequate or non-existent and so they often make poor neighbours. Other long-term tenants are upset by the poor hygiene practices of many newer tenants who leave food and garbage of various sorts around in the common areas. It seems obvious to us that MORE cleaning is needed these days and that ALL AREAS – not just the main foyer should be cleaned daily.

Cleaning for the maintenance of a safe and healthy environment is the main issue for me. As well as more regular cleaning, I would like to see our cleaners better equipped. The poor cleaner who was having to deal with the urine that swamped the corridor to the laundry on level 1 in B Block recently was seen trying to do so with an old-fashioned string mop. Neither effective nor hygienic!

If the corridors into the communal laundries had been covered by CCTV – as tenants would have suggested if anyone had consulted them about camera sites – they would have been less likely to have been used as toilets and laundries would have been less likely to have been broken into.

Alison George

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]