



Australian Government  
Department of Families, Housing,  
Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

S109/60

SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

13 JUL 2009

RECEIVED

Ms Glenda Baker  
Senior Council Officer  
Standing Committee on Social Issues  
NSW Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Ms Baker

**INQUIRY INTO HOMELESSNESS AND LOW COST RENTAL ACCOMMODATION**

Thank you for your letter of 26 June 2009 to Mr Chris Wojtas of this Department, providing a transcript of the evidence we gave to the NSW Standing Committee on Social Issues' Inquiry into homelessness and low cost rental accommodation. As I was this Department's senior representative appearing before the Committee, I am responding on behalf of both myself and Mr Wojtas.

Some minor corrections are marked on the attached transcript.

Our responses to the additional questions forwarded with the transcript are also attached.

Please contact me on 02 6244 6900 if clarification of any of the suggested corrections is required.

Thank you, once again, for the opportunity to provide evidence to the Inquiry.

Yours sincerely

Clare Wall  
Senior Housing Adviser

9 July 2009

**Question 1.** *Given the lack of affordable housing for low to moderate income earners do you support the current qualification criteria for entry into public and community housing?*

Response. The current qualification criteria for entry into public and community housing is Government policy. It is not appropriate for a Departmental officer to comment on a Government policy position.

**Question 1. (a)** *If yes, how do you envisage low to moderate income people being provided with affordable housing in both the long and short term.*

**Question 1 (b)** *What initiatives is the Federal Government taking, either alone or in conjunction with the NSW State Government to address the under supply of housing for low to moderate income earners?*

Response. Please refer to the Department's written submission which provides information on housing assistance measures.

**Question 1 (c)** *What is the estimated time frame for delivery of sufficient housing all income levels to have an impact on their life expectations and standard of living?*

Response. The Social Housing Initiative announced on 3 February 2009 will provide \$6.4 billion nationally which will provide 20,000 new dwellings and upgrade a further 45,000 social housing properties by the end of 2011-12. The National Rental Affordability Scheme is also providing funding for an additional 50,000 dwellings; over five years. These initiatives will significantly improve the living circumstances of those households accessing this assistance, and will be in addition to the assistance provided under a range of other measures described in the Department's submission.

**Question 2.** *Given the problems that have occurred in large scale housing estate developments across Australia, such as those reported at Rosemeadow, how do you see these problems being addressed.*

Response. The Commonwealth Minister for Housing, the Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP, included in her speech to the Sydney Institute on 19 March 2009 her response to difficulties arising in large public housing estates such as Rosemeadow. Minister Plibersek's speech is available on her website [http://www.aph.gov.au/T\\_Plibersek MP/](http://www.aph.gov.au/T_Plibersek_MP/).

**Question 3. (a) and (b)** *The provision of Commonwealth funding for social housing has traditionally been based on state and territory population share. This is currently under discussion. Why is change needed? What are the expected results, specifically in relation to NSW?*

Response. Under a population-based distribution of funds there is a substantial variation between jurisdictions in the subsidy provided per social housing dwelling. A range of different ways of allocating funds have been proposed by different jurisdictions, but there is no consensus and hence it is premature to identify the potential impact of any change.