

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES: INQUIRY INTO PUBLIC HOUSING RENEWAL PROGRAM

Questions on Notice: Deputy Secretary Housing, Infrastructure, Sport and Recreation; Department of Health and Human Services

Question	Transcript Reference	Question from Committee Secretariat	Response
		Waitlists	
1	Page 19	What are the current figures of the Victorian Housing Register, including a breakdown of Public Housing applications, Community Housing applications and Relocation applications?	<p>As at 31 December 2017, there were 43,093 applications on the Victorian Housing Register. This included:</p> <p>36,013 new applications and 7,080 applications are for a transfer. See 8 below for a breakdown of these.</p> <p>Of the 43,093 total applications: 17,259 applications for Public Housing only 281 applications for Community Housing only 25,553 applications for either Public Housing or Community Housing</p> <p>The department also maintains a separate Transition Report, which reports on the progress of transitioning approximately 15,500 community housing applications onto the Victorian Housing Register. The department will shortly commence this process, which includes a review of all community housing applications to ensure that they remain current and eligible for assistance. It is not appropriate to use the Transition Report as an indicator of demand for social housing because some community housing applications are likely to be duplicates, inaccurate, or out of date. Those that are found to be current and eligible after the review will be added to the Victorian Housing Register.</p> <p>Once the transition process is complete, all current applications for public and community housing will be identified on the Victorian Housing Register.</p>
2	Page 19	Of those Housing Register applications, approximately how many people (in total) are waiting? How many adults / children?	<p>As at 31 December 2017, there were 81,034 people on the Victorian Housing Register. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 56,395 adults • 24,639 children
3	Page 21	In relation to the 'data cleanse' conducted by the department, how many applications were removed from the Housing Register/Waiting List?	<p>The Victorian Housing Register is constantly being updated and refreshed with new applications, people being housed, and existing applicants updating their details to reflect changing situations and preferences. As part of this process, all applications are reviewed at least every two years to confirm preferences and ensure ongoing eligibility. Where applicants are no longer eligible, they are removed from the register.</p>

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4	Page 31	What is the average length of time for an application on the Housing Register before the applicant is moved into public housing? Provide both Register of Interest and priority waiting times.	<p>Allocation policies for public housing are targeted towards clients with the greatest need for housing. Allocations made to Register of Interest applicants are generally due to special circumstances such as the property being Hard to Let, or the applicant has been sponsored. Therefore, an average Register of Interest waiting time until allocation does not accurately reflect normal waiting periods.</p> <p>The average Priority waiting time for an application on the Housing Register was 10.5 months at 30 June 2017.</p>
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		Transfers																																								
5	Page 20	A breakdown of all applications (new and transfer) by bedroom number.	<p>As at 31 December 2017:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1106 596 2009 932"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Bedroom Cohorts</th> <th colspan="2">Waiting List</th> <th colspan="2">Transfer list</th> </tr> <tr> <th>#</th> <th>%</th> <th>#</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1 Bedroom</td> <td>21,957</td> <td>61.0%</td> <td>3,018</td> <td>42.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 Bedrooms</td> <td>7,608</td> <td>21.1%</td> <td>1,706</td> <td>24.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 Bedrooms</td> <td>4,653</td> <td>12.9%</td> <td>1,447</td> <td>20.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 Bedrooms</td> <td>1,353</td> <td>3.8%</td> <td>665</td> <td>9.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5+ Bedrooms</td> <td>442</td> <td>1.2%</td> <td>244</td> <td>3.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>36,013</td> <td>100%</td> <td>7,080</td> <td>100%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Bedroom Cohorts	Waiting List		Transfer list		#	%	#	%	1 Bedroom	21,957	61.0%	3,018	42.6%	2 Bedrooms	7,608	21.1%	1,706	24.1%	3 Bedrooms	4,653	12.9%	1,447	20.4%	4 Bedrooms	1,353	3.8%	665	9.4%	5+ Bedrooms	442	1.2%	244	3.4%	Total	36,013	100%	7,080	100%
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6	Page 20	A breakdown of applications on the transfer list by local government area. If this data is not available, a breakdown on whether the applications are for Melbourne or regional Victoria.	The applications on the transfer list cannot be reported by where applicants want to live, because each applicant can nominate up to 5 separate areas to live.																																							

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7	Page 20	How many applications on the transfer list are seeking 2 dwellings rather than 1?	There were 7,080 Transfer applications on the Victorian Housing Register at 31 December 2017. Of these, 28 applicants (14 tenancies) were seeking 2 dwellings rather than 1 as the household is no longer planning to reside together.
8	Page 20	A breakdown of the reasons that people have sought transfers.	<p>As at 31 December 2017, applicants had the following Priority Transfer reasons approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Needs – 985 • Property Size Unsuitable – 982 • Redevelopment/Property Management – 530 • Family Violence – 452 • Threat of Violence – 183 • Other Priority (eg greater employment opportunity) – 157 <p>Register of Interest applicants are not required to provide a reason for a transfer application. There were 3,791 Register of Interest transfer applicants at 31 December 2017</p>
		Right to Return Pledge and Agreement	
9	Page 25	Updated agreement with new clause granting legal rights to tenants to return to their existing site (when complete).	A draft Deed Poll confirming the Minister’s pledge is being prepared and will be circulated with key stakeholders before being finalised, at which time it will be provided to the Committee.
		Sale of Land	
10	Page 29	Data on Director of Housing public land sold in the past 10 years.	Property sales is an ongoing part of the Director’s asset management activities, alongside renewal, redevelopment, construction and acquisition. Property sales in each year represent a very small part of the Director’s portfolio, and have been less than 0.5% of the total value of the asset portfolio each year since 2008/9. Proceeds from sales are reinvested into the public housing portfolio.
		Tenancies	
11	Page 32	What is the average duration of tenancies?	As at 31 December 2017, current public housing tenancies were 10.9 years duration on average.

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		Modular Homes and Sleeping out figures	
12	Page 22	What is the current number of young people sleeping rough?	<p>People are considered to be sleeping rough if they are living:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • without shelter or in an improvised dwelling • in a tent • in a car <p>Youth homelessness is particularly hard to measure due to its often hidden nature and is universally recognised by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and service providers as likely to be substantially undercounted.</p> <p>Young people may resort to short stints of rough sleeping in between temporary arrangements with friends where they are sheltered but not stably housed. These 'couch surfing' arrangements are by their very nature prone to break down quickly.</p> <p>On Census night 2016, 130 young people aged between 12-24 were estimated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics to be sleeping rough. This is a 39 per cent decrease from the 212 young people estimated in the 2011 Census.</p>
13	Page 29	What are the locations of each of the five Towards Home modular unit sites?	Preston, Reservoir, Brighton, Doveton, Chadstone
14	Page 29	What are the values of the Towards Home units?	The units are funded under the Towards Home package, a \$9.8 million commitment to help reduce rough sleeping.

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		Security											
15	Page 32-33	What are the costs for security at Public Housing estates (including trends / increases)?	<p>The current budget for state based security services is \$14.8million, including an allowance for contingencies. The trend over recent years has been for a steady increase of approximately 2.5 per cent per annum:</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Expenditure (\$'000)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2014-15</td> <td>13.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015-16</td> <td>14.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2016-17</td> <td>14.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2017-18</td> <td>14.8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Expenditure (\$'000)	2014-15	13.7	2015-16	14.1	2016-17	14.4	2017-18	14.8
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16	Page 33	How many security officers (roving or fixed to premises) are there per site?	There are currently 72 security personnel rostered for a variety of duties on a daily basis. Duties cover control room management foot and vehicle based patrols and concierge services.										

Subsequent question from Committee Secretary

17	N/A	Which of the six PHRP sites form part of the current procurement process (alongside Flemington and Preston)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brunswick West • Heidelberg West • North Melbourne • Northcote • Prahran • Brighton
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