



# Housing Matters

Newsletter of the **nsw** Federation of Housing Associations **inc.**

ISSN 1442-2360

Vol. 15, Issue 1

February 2009

## Federal Stimulus Package - the biggest investment in social housing ever!

One might be tempted to think we're living in happy days in relation to government investment in social housing. Compared to what we've been accustomed to over the last 20 or more years of under-investment, the recent stimulus package investment is a significant break from the past.

Indeed, the social housing stimulus package is the largest investment in social housing delivered in such timeframe ever! So, what's it all about? Well, read on...

On the 3rd of February this year, the Prime Minister launched the second stimulus package in response to the economic downturn. The package – Nation Building and Jobs Plan, includes \$6.639 billion over 4 years (2008/09 – 2011/12) for social and defense force housing. It also contains \$3.859 billion over the same 4 years for energy efficiency in dwellings.

The social housing component of the plan is \$6.388 billion to be allocated to fund construction of some 20,000 new public and community housing dwellings. The bulk of these are to be completed by the end of next calendar year.



*The Honourable Prime Minister of Australia, Kevin Rudd*

Funds will be allocated according to the table below <sup>1</sup>:

The remaining \$400 million will be allocated to repairs of some 2,500 existing public housing dwellings to be completed by 2010. Half of this amount will be allocated in each year for that period (2008/09 & 2009/10).

This first stage of the plan involves bringing forward the construction of 2,300 public housing dwellings already approved. The second stage will see the allocation of the remaining funds to states and territories via a public tender process. This is underway now, with indicative proposals having been submitted by the states on the

15th of March, and final proposals to be submitted by 30th June this year.

The NSW cut of the construction funding will be \$2 billion to construct some 6,000 new properties. It is expected that the vast majority of these properties

*Continued on pg 3*

<sup>1</sup> Source: Council of Australian Governments, National Partnership Agreement on the Nation Building and Jobs Plan: Building Prosperity for the Future and Supporting Jobs Now

### **In this edition:**

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- Governance survey results
- New legislation for associations
- CSHA national data reflects growing Community Housing sector
- New CHAC and a new division

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# From the President...



Nick Sabel

## Changes in the sector

What an exciting time. The Federal government's economic stimulus package will see the largest social housing growth ever in such a short time frame. This represents a fantastic opportunity for the sector and as such it is important that we be involved in the roll out of this growth from its inception.

While the State has a target of 4,000 homes being acquired from developers, the sector is already in negotiations with developers for up to half of this number. It is crucial that these negotiations and deals are not undercut. Either way, we hope and expect, that a very substantial part of this new housing will come across to the sector.

We keep on talking about the pace of change in the sector, but with all the initiatives underway, we are potentially facing 50% growth over the next 18 months and doubling not long after that. The next couple of years are going to be the most important for community housing since CTS was established 25 years ago.

Nazha Saad, from St George and Federation Board member and nominee has been appointed to the CHAC along with others including the past Federation Executive Director. I would like to congratulate Nazha and the new CHAC members as the CHAC will play a crucial role in all this change.

Finally, with all this going on we also have significant changes within Housing NSW, with OCH becoming a division within the department and Leonie King taking over from Maura. I would like to wish Maura well in her new role and on behalf of the Federation welcome Leonie on board.

We are entering a challenging period but with opportunities that I hope will benefit all the sector.

Nick Sabel  
President

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**Printed by**  
Pink Panther Corporate Print

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## Federal Stimulus Package (Continued from page 1)

<b>C23. Element 1 - New Construction</b>					
The following funding amounts will be available for this element of the initiative:					
<b>Stage</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>(\$m)</b>	<b>(\$m)</b>	<b>(\$m)</b>	<b>(\$m)</b>	<b>(\$m)</b>
Stage 1 & 2	60	3,872	1,744	312	5,988

will go to community housing. In addition, the NSW government will be bringing forward planned construction and contributing \$350 million each year to deliver a further 1,500 properties annually. In all, around 9,000 properties will be delivered in NSW over the next three years.

An Infrastructure Coordinator General - Bob Leece (formerly the Olympic Authority Deputy Director) has been appointed to streamline the construction process. The process will be managed centrally from Department of Premiers and Cabinet with Paul Gilbertson (formerly Housing NSW Executive Director, Living Communities Program) having been appointed to manage the process.

The NSW Premier launched the tender process for construction projects to housing industry associations at a breakfast attended by the Federation on the 11th February. Detailed tenders will need to be submitted under this process by 3pm on the 9th April. The Department of Commerce will be managing the tender process and undertaking the assessments of proposals. The focus is on small to medium sized development of between six and 20 properties, but up to 50 property developments will be considered.

To meet the significant construction commitments of the agreement, the NSW government has made changes to the Infrastructure State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure SEPP). The changes will allow the Department of Housing to self-approve social housing developments of up to 20 dwellings in residential zones, instead of going through the normal development

application process. Additional changes will extend the current provisions for allowing multi-dwelling public or community housing near 18 key metropolitan railway stations to some 32 major regional centres.

The social housing stimulus package is a major breakthrough in government investment in social housing in this country. The Federation warmly welcomes the package and congratulates the Australian Government on the initiative.

The challenge now is to ensure the deadlines are met, and the homes delivered meet the needs of those in housing need into the future.



Adam Farrar asking The Hon Tanya Pliibersek, Federal Minister for Housing, about the sector's role - at the Prime Minister's launch of the Stimulus Package in Canberra in February.

## Regulatory Code Update

Housing NSW is currently developing the Regulatory Code which will set out the requirements that registered community housing providers must comply with in relation to their operations and the provision of community housing.

The registration of community housing providers will commence after the Housing Regulation 2009 is made.

The Registrar of Community Housing's Registration Steering Committee has been discussing the Evidence Guidelines, which outline the information or evidence required from community housing providers to enable registration.

The Registrar will conduct a pilot of the new registration system from April – July 2009. Up to 10 community housing providers will participate in the pilot, including six housing associations.

Registrar, Roxane Shaw, recently announced the launch of their website; [www.rch.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rch.nsw.gov.au) which features information on the new regulatory system for community housing providers.

"The website is the first step in our efforts to engage the sector and will be the key resource for information and guidance on the registration process," Ms Shaw said.

The Registrar's office will add additional resources to the website shortly, including:

- Register of community housing providers
- Evidence Guidelines
- Fact sheets
- Registration resources
- Compliance resources
- Enquiries and complaints resources

"I encourage housing associations to visit the website and learn more about the new regulatory system and role of the Registrar's office in implementing it."

For further information please contact:

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W: [www.rch.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rch.nsw.gov.au)

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## Community Housing insurance scheme decentralised

Community Housing Providers will soon be able to make their own decisions about insurance. In the past providers had been required to purchase insurance from Marsh, the insurer preferred by the Office of Community Housing (OCH). Premiums were negotiated by OCH with Marsh to take advantage of a bulk price under the Community Housing Insurance Scheme.

However from July 1, Marsh, at the advice of OCH will be contacting providers directly to make new arrangements. There will be a transition period of at least one year - housing

providers will be required to insure properties leased by OCH through the CHIS during this time. OCH will also facilitate communication between Marsh, the Federation and providers, particularly major providers, during this transition period.

OCH will continue to insure CAP properties that OCH manages through CHIS for at least one year.

A representative from Marsh will be at the next Asset Managers Network meeting in early April.

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## New CHAC and a new division



*Minister Borger has appointed his new Advisory Committee*

After a long gap, the membership of the new Community Housing Advisory Committee (CHAC) has been announced. Five positions were being filled to join three continuing members.

The new members appointed by the Minister are Chris Jefferis from ARCH, Frank Lyons from McLachlan Lister Pty Ltd, Eleri Morgan-Thomas from Mission Australia, Prof Bill Randolph from UNSW and Nazha Saad from St George. Nazha was nominated by the Federation.

They join the continuing members: Graham Brooks from KPMG, Dr Vivienne Milligan from AHURI, and Brian Murnane from Argyle, who was nominated by Churches Community Housing.

The CHAC provides both the Department and the Minister with advice on the strategic directions for the sector. The advice from the CHAC has become increasingly influential. At this time of massive change in the sector, their advice will be needed even more.

The appointment of a new CHAC comes amid significant change within the Department. In its recent executive restructure, the previous Office of Community Housing has become a division of the Department, just as (public) housing services is. This seems to signal a recognition of the increasingly important role of community housing in the social housing system. The sector is now around 12.5% of the social and affordable housing sector, and is likely to grow to around 18% in the new couple of years.

The Community housing division now also has a new Executive Director, Leonie King. Leonie replaces Maura Boland, who has become Executive Director of Strategy and Policy.

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## Social housing growth fund tenders in-train

The National Partnership Agreement on Social Housing between the commonwealth and the states commenced on the 1st January this year. The agreement involves the commonwealth providing \$400 million for capital investment for social housing and homelessness through the Social Housing Growth Fund - \$200 million in 2008/09 and \$200 million in 2009/10.

The EOI for projects to be delivered in 08/09 closed on the 16th February, for which the NSW government made submissions to the federal government on the 2nd March. The second EOI for projects to be delivered in 09/10 closed on the 16th March, for which the NSW government will be making a submission on the 2nd May. We expect that of the \$133 million allocated to NSW, just over half will be allocated under the first tender.

## CSHA national data reflects growing community housing sector

Earlier this year, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) published their yearly report – Community Housing 2007 – 08: Commonwealth State Housing Agreement national data report.

The report presents summary and performance indicator data from the 2007-08 community housing data collection. Similar publications are also released for public housing, state owned and managed Indigenous housing, the crisis accommodation program, home purchase assistance, and private rent assistance.

As at June 30 last year there were over 1000 community housing providers <sup>1</sup> housing some 35,000 households nationally. At the same time, there were 331,136 public housing properties. Just over half of community housing households were paying between 20% and 25% of their income in rent, one fifth were paying under 20%, and 14% were paying more than 30%. Overall community housing tenants retained 74% of their income in rent.

Of the 1000 odd providers, three-quarters managed less than 20 dwellings, 15% between 20 and 49 and 11% managed 50 or more dwellings <sup>2</sup>. The majority (67%) of community housing properties were located in major cities, with one fifth in inner-regional, one-in-ten in outer regional and 3% in remote areas.

On average community housing properties contained 2.2 bedrooms, with one-third having one, 30% two, 36% 3-4, and only 1% contained five or more bedrooms.

In relation to NSW, of the more than 35,000 community housing properties nationally, 16,325 were managed in NSW (public housing properties = 118, 839), some 10,000 of which were located in major cities. CSHA properties in community housing now account for 12% of the social housing system in NSW.

Table 2.9: CSHA community housing at March-April 2007: P7 Customer satisfaction

	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	Total <sup>(a)</sup>
Unweighted response (number)	562	445	897	307	504	153	145	3,013
<i>Percentage of tenants reporting overall satisfaction</i>								
Very satisfied	52	38	40	36	34	48	41	44
Satisfied	35	39	39	45	44	38	32	39
<b>Overall P7 result (Subtotal: Satisfied or very satisfied)</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>82</b>
<i>Standard error (per cent)</i>	<i>1.4</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>1.4</i>	<i>2.3</i>	<i>1.8</i>	<i>2.9</i>	<i>3.7</i>	<i>0.7</i>

Of all new households in community housing in NSW, just under 80% (national total = 62.4%) were allocated to households with special needs and just under 70% (national total = 71.2%) were allocated to those in greatest need. This compares with just over 50% for special needs tenants and around 40% for greatest needs tenants in public housing in NSW.

Perhaps the most pleasing results in NSW were tenant satisfaction rates. 87% of tenants were either satisfied (35%) or very satisfied (52%). This was the highest rate nationally which had a total of 82% and compares favourably with the public housing rate of 64%.

The community housing sector in NSW is by far the largest sector in the country, with more than three times the stock of the next largest (Queensland). It is earmarked to grow substantially over the next two to three years.

As the sector grows in particular, it will be critical to maintain accurate and relevant data to better understand the nature of the sector, how it goes about meeting the needs of clients, and to measure outcomes against the new funding regime. Measured against tenant satisfaction, it would seem that community housing is doing a good job.

*Data and tables in this article came from last years AIHW reports on public and community housing: <[www.aihw.gov.au](http://www.aihw.gov.au)>*

<sup>1</sup> Excludes properties managed under the Crisis Accommodation Program

<sup>2</sup> Excludes properties not funded under the CSHA program

## Russell Taylor leaves Aboriginal Housing Office

Russell Taylor has resigned his position as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office. Russ had been the CEO of the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) since his appointment in October 2003. During Russell's time with the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office, he was a strong advocate for the Aboriginal housing sector and had worked to strengthen the role of the Aboriginal Housing Office in some very uncertain times.



*Russell Taylor*

He was also the ex-officio member of the AHO Board, which also saw a number of changes to the Board during his time at AHO. There were also a number of housing ministers: starting from Carl Scully to Joe Tripodi, then along came Cherie Burton, Matt Brown through to our current Housing Minister, David Borger.

Russ, a Kamilaroi man, raised and educated in Sydney, gained extensive management experience in a range of positions in the finance and banking sector as well as in ATSIC and the former Aboriginal Development Commission. Prior to AHO, he had also headed the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. Tertiary qualifications include a Master of Business Administration (MBA) Degree as well as a Graduate Diploma in Public Sector Management from the University of Technology Sydney and a Graduate Diploma in Arts (Anthropology) from the Australian National University, Canberra.

In the short term, Mike Allen, CEO of Housing NSW will be the Acting CEO of AHO, commencing Monday 9 March 2009. As many of you would be aware, Mike has extensive experience in the social housing sector and will provide continuity for the agency and the sector.

## Accreditation Update

A contractor has been appointed by Housing NSW to provide accreditation services for the community housing sector in NSW. Global-Mark was the successful bidder. They are a nationally accredited certification company who deliver accreditations services within the quality improvement, safety, risk management, environment, sustainability, product, food, governance, human services, health and personnel areas.

Ben Wong, former Manager of the NSW Standards & Accreditation Unit, heads up the new program area for Global-Mark. "Global-Mark is committed to working in collaboration with the Community Housing sector to administer the Community Housing Accreditation System. We will maintain the Accreditation Committee structure and use peer evaluators in conducting accreditation," says Ben.

According to Ben all the members of the former Accreditation Committee and 14 peer

evaluators have agreed to continue in their respective roles with Global-Mark.

An information package was recently sent to all Community Housing organisations. If you are interested to receive a package and/or have any queries, you can contact Ben on 9886-0222 or 0433-580-705.

The National Community Housing Standards which provide the framework for the Accreditation process are currently under review. Three NSW community housing representatives attended a practitioners workshop in Adelaide recently. A new standard to cover sustainability has been flagged for inclusion, along with updates to standards relating to asset management, financial management and development. The standards were last updated in 2003.

The consultants are JPX and the review is being managed by the Queensland Department of housing.

## The Road Home – a major reform in

On the Sunday before Christmas 2008 The Prime Minister Kevin Rudd finally released the Federal Government's White Paper on homelessness- The Road Home. This was the culmination of nearly a year's work. On Australia Day 2008 he had announced that the Federal Government's first social policy agenda item would be homelessness.

In May 2008 the Government released its Green Paper and when submissions closed five weeks later almost 600 had been received – evidence of the widespread awareness in the community on this issue.

Five months later The Road Home was released to extensive interest. Homelessness NSW said that it "heralded a new era in the development of services for homeless people". The Council for Homeless Person's Victoria called it an 'historic, nation-building commitment to ending homelessness'. The Youth Accomodation Association gave it the 'thumbs up'.

The Road Home is an aspirational and historic document in the development of homelessness policy and planning in Australia. To achieve its aims, it will require a commitment from all levels of government, business and the community. It will force radical rethinking about how to deliver broad services to prevent people becoming homeless in the first place, and a changed response for those who still become homeless.

There are three strategic directions identified

in the White Paper to focus activity.

### 1. Turning off the tap

Services will intervene early to prevent homelessness

### 2. Improving and expanding services

Services will be more connected and responsive to achieve sustainable housing, improve economic and social participation and end homelessness for their clients

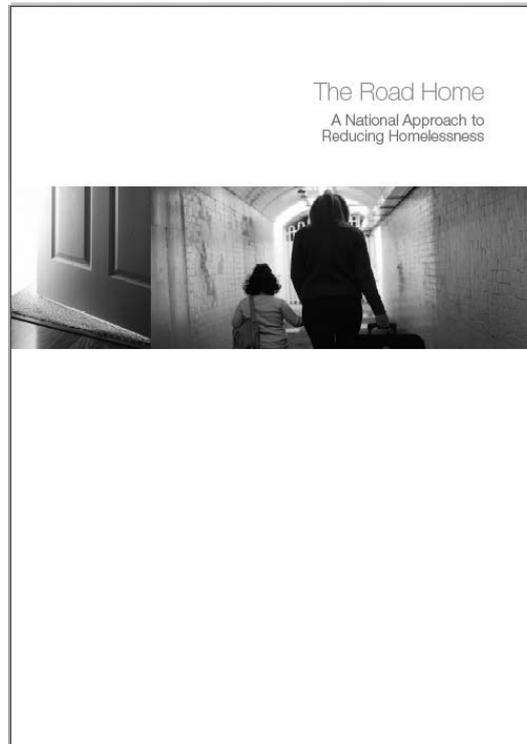
### 3. Breaking the cycle

People who become homeless will move quickly through the crisis system to stable housing with the support they need so that homelessness does not reoccur.

A major focus of the reforms outlined in the Road Home is of joined up service delivery responses. It identifies that an overarching policy framework is needed to guide all government approaches to addressing

homelessness. Program funding and accountability boundaries must be changed to allow governments and funded organisations to take a multidisciplinary approach to addressing people's needs.

A few months later and the reality of The Road Home is being viewed through the prism of COAG negotiations, the National Affordability Housing Agreement (NAHA), the National Partnerships on Social Housing, Homelessness, Nation Building and Jobs Plan and Remote Indigenous Housing. All States and Territories are also in the process of finalising their Implementation Plans.



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## homelessness policy

All Governments, including NSW, have till 31 March to lodge their Implementation Plans with the Federal Government. The NSW Implementation plan is built upon the NSW Homelessness Action Plan that is currently under development.

One of the drivers of The Road Home is that homelessness is everybody's business. With this in mind, it is clear that the system of working with the NSW Government has fundamentally altered. Homelessness NSW, the Youth Accomodation Association (YAA) and the NSW Women's Refuge Movement Resource Centre (WRRRC) along with the Council of Social Service of NSW (NCOSS) decided that the best way to influence the direction of the NSW Government's Implementation plan was to work collaboratively with the other new players.

The result of this has been The NSW Homelessness Community Alliance (the Alliance). Membership of the Alliance consists of Homelessness NSW, YAA, WRRRC, NCOSS, Shelter NSW, the Homeless Person's Legal Service, the Network of Alcohol and Drug Agencies, the Mental Health Coordinating Council and the NSW Federation of Housing Associations.

### **The aims of the Alliance are:**

- To prepare for the White Paper and to assist in its implementation
- To provide input into the State Plan in light of the Premier's decision to add homelessness as a priority
- To provide advice to both State and Federal Governments on matters relating to homelessness
- To contribute to the ongoing development and implementation of good policy
- To provide a focus for the community to be informed, educated and to debate issues around homelessness
- To be helpful.



Sue Cripps, CEO Homelessness NSW

The Alliance has written to the Premier and Ministers Burney and Borger expressing their desire to work with the Government in the development of its response to The Road Home. In early February the Alliance held a meeting with both Ministers and senior staff from Premiers and Cabinet, Treasury, Housing NSW, the Department of Community Services and other government agencies to discuss the development of the NSW Homelessness Action Plan.

The Alliance has also developed a list of ideas that it believes could be worked on with Government to significantly add to the measures contained within the NSW Homelessness Action Plan.

The Alliance has a strong desire to work closely with the Government and believes that for any plan to succeed it will require the commitment of resources and actions across a range of government and community agencies.

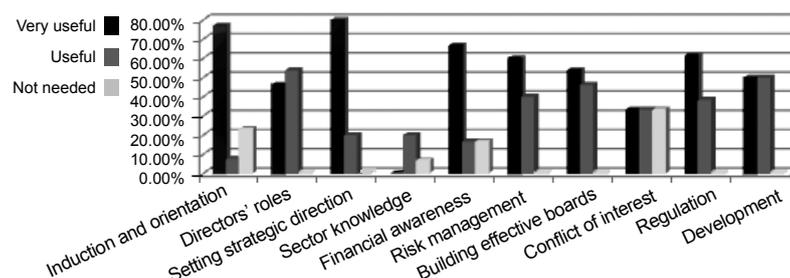
We are at the beginning of a major process of reform in the way that services are delivered and agencies held accountable for how they deliver responsive and accountable services to some of the most vulnerable people in NSW.

## Governance Survey Results

Thank you to all the directors who responded. Directors identified a clear need for additional training to support them in their roles: 83% felt that they had a need for additional training and skill development. 90% of directors who responded thought that face to face delivery of training in their community was the best way to run training.

The most popular suggestions for additional training were setting the strategic direction, sector knowledge and values and induction and orientation to community housing.

The Federation has also consulted some of the leading boards in the sector and a regional sector meeting to ensure that we have a practical focus on what support directors need.



We now have a clear direction to target resources to support directors. Our priorities will be to:

- Keep directors up to date on changes in their operating environment. We will do this using re-launched directors' bulletins and new technology, like the webcast on the economic stimulus package that featured in the most recent Directors' Bulletin. This can be found at [www.communityhousing.org.au/S1\\_Members\\_section.html#ham](http://www.communityhousing.org.au/S1_Members_section.html#ham)
- Generate an interactive governance induction pack for directors who are new to community housing
- Focus our training and briefings on sector specific knowledge and skills
- And seek out opportunities to bring our updated governance training sessions to your boardroom.

For more information please contact Adam West on 9281 7144 ext 211 or [adamwest@communityhousing.org.au](mailto:adamwest@communityhousing.org.au).

## New legislation for associations

The Associations Incorporation Bill 2009 was debated and agreed to in principle in the NSW parliament on March 12th. This Bill will replace the Associations Incorporation Act 1984.

There are a number of key changes which board members will need to understand. The bill will now require that directors disclose their pecuniary interests in any matter discussed at a committee meeting, and that a book recording all disclosures of interest must be kept and made available for inspection by members. Specific penalties for directors who dishonestly use information, or misuse their position, for self advantage or for causing detriment to the association have now been included. For the purposes of financial reporting requirements there will now be Tier 1 and Tier 2 organisations, determined by

income and assets. The regulations defining the amounts are still to be drawn up. Tier 1 organisations will be required to submit an auditors report, while Tier 2 will not. Board meetings can now legally be held at two or more venues to take advantage of available technology. The public officer can now only be removed by a vote of the members at a general meeting rather than by a board.

The Federation will provide more detailed information about the full implications of these and other changes to the Act for board members in future directors' bulletins.

According to Virginia Judge, the Minister for Fair Trading "the primary aim of the [Bill] is to rewrite and overhaul the current legislation. The bill will bring the regulation of associations up to date with the modern business environment."

## February Board Report

### Strategic issues

The Board met just as the changes to Housing NSW executive were announced. It was pleased that Leonie King, the new Executive Director of the Community Housing Division was able to meet the board. The board wishes Maura Boland, who has become ED of Strategy & Policy, well.

The main focus of the board's discussion was the social housing part of the Federal Government's economic stimulus package. It discussed Adam Farrar's report of his meeting with the Director General on the package and noted that he was to meet the Minister the following week.

The board agreed that a special Housing Association's Meeting (HAM) should be held to identify the sector's position on its role in implementing the stimulus package.

The board also agreed that the Federation should collect information from members on their involvement in and the quantum of possible developments in the pipeline to be able to bring concrete information to discussions with Mike Allen.

The board discussed the mixed signals coming from government. It noted support for sector growth; but also that Cabinet had rejected the chance to invest in the next round of NRAS proposals, and that Cabinet has yet to be convinced by the sector's capacity to manage the title transfer. The Board agreed that a group of high profile directors be organised to advocate for title.

The board considered recent discussions with the Community Housing Division on a range of initiatives that have suddenly been progressed. These included: capacity building initiatives, IT, Insurance, Accreditation and the

proposed new funding model.

### Sector issues

A range of issues were discussed and it was agreed that a number of these would be pursued in the forthcoming meeting with the Executive Director of the Community Housing Division. These included: losses incurred as a result of the interim CHLP changes not coinciding with the introduction of the new rent model; selective tendering and the growth allocations policy, liaison with Centrelink through the Federation, the Police MOU, mandatory reporting, and the resource implications of a current self-service Rentstart pilot.

The Board also discussed the request from the last Housing Associations Meeting that there be more involvement from the sector in advocacy. It approved a staff proposal to create an advocacy section of the web-site for members to inform and facilitate direct member involvement in Federation advocacy and campaigns.

The board agreed that the Federation should explore a Non Growth Provider Network beginning with an issues based meeting.

### Federation business

The process for the CEO's performance appraisal was agreed; and it was noted that the training contract with Housing NSW has been renegotiated and the training contract with the ACT has been renewed for the next financial year.

The board also noted proposals to develop a members only section of the web site to change the way that a range of member services are delivered.

**Next meeting 17th April 2009**

### NSWFHA Board of Directors

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Director	John Nicolades	(02) 9699-6055	j.nicolades@swish.org.au
Director	Toni Comber	(02) 6772-5133	tonicomberhousingmanager@bigpond.com.au

## NRAS 1 projects rolling out in NSW

On the 4th December last year 507 incentives were offered to 10 successful applicants in NSW under round 1 of NRAS. NSW tenderers represent a third of applicants nationally and (currently) just under 20% of incentives provided nationally (a further 560 are expected to be approved imminently).

In all, 2,800 incentives were allocated nationally. Of the 507 approved incentives, 287 were under 'NRAS A' and 220 were 'NRAS B', with five proponents for each type.

NRAS A was directed to registered community housing providers who were able to access more than the minimum state contribution of \$2000 through the debt equity model approach. This involves an equity contribution from the state government (see NRAS A table).

NRAS B involves the minimum state contribution of \$2000 and was open to all comers.

A call for applications under Round 2 of NRAS opened on the 17th December. This round closes on Friday 27th March, with an early assessment closing date of 1st February. The NSW government contribution will be as per NRAS B - \$2000. This is likely to pose greater challenges for community housing providers in ensuring that deals under the scheme are financially viable.

Perhaps the greatest challenges for community housing providers wanting to be involved in NRAS have been the timeframes for tendering and for completing construction. While the urgency to get properties on the ground is understandable, the time

for responding to both Calls under a new initiative, requiring identification of land, partners and finance is likely to have limited the number of providers submitting tenders.

However, NRAS is a very positive development for the community housing sector in NSW. With 507 incentives approved, a further 560 expected to be approved shortly,

### NRAS A breakdown <sup>1</sup>

NSW NRAS A – Call 1			
Organisation	Local Government Area	Number of units	NSW component of incentive
Community Housing Ltd	Randwick, Bega Valley & Other	40	\$3.56 m*
Compass	Cessnock Newcastle Wyong Lake Macquarie	26	\$1.73 m*
		43	\$5.67 m
Blue CHP	Bankstown Campbelltown Shoalhaven Parramatta Penrith Fairfield	40	\$0*
		12	
		100	\$4.25 m*
ARCH	Fairfield	26	\$2.08 m
<b>Total</b>		<b>287</b>	<b>\$17.3 m new funds</b>
* A total of \$15.9 million in AHIF funding had been previously awarded to these applicants.			

### NRAS B breakdown <sup>2</sup>

NSW NRAS B – Call 1 (NSW component \$2000 per annum per unit of housing)		
Organisation	Local Government Area	Number of units
Cardev NSW Pty Ltd	Lake Macquarie	45
Churches Community Housing Ltd	Fairfield	50
Edgeworth Projects Pty Ltd	Lake Macquarie	21
The Claireleigh Joint Venture	Gosford	28
	Wollondilly	60
Mission Australia	Penrith	16
<b>Total</b>		<b>220</b>

and NRAS 2 in-train, the response has been a solid start for the sector. Hopefully, NRAS 2 will build on that success to cement the sectors central role in the development of an affordable housing industry.

<sup>1</sup> Housing NSW, National Rental Affordability Scheme, accessed 16 Feb 2009, <http://www.housing.nsw.gov.au/Centre+For+Affordable+Housing/NRAS/>

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

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## Farewell to Tony Ho

Tony Ho joined the board of St George Community Housing as Treasurer in November 2002 and was elected Chairman in February 2003 and remained Chairman until his retirement from the board in December 2008. Tony developed the vision of St. George as a large scale community housing provider and the Directors and staff saw this vision through as St. George grew strongly and became a Preferred Growth Provider.



*Tony Ho, Non-Executive Chairman, St George Community Housing Ltd.*

Under Tony's stewardship St. George became the successful bidder as part of the Bonnyrigg Partnership for the social housing public and private partnership.

St. George will be providing redevelopment, community renewal and tenancy management

services of the Bonnyrigg Public Housing Estate.

Tony brought a strong commercial focus to the organisation, leading to record surpluses and a discipline to financial management and accounting.

St. George also implemented community and tenant activities like the education bursary scheme and the white goods loans scheme was also introduced.

We wish Tony all the best for the future and thank him and all the other community housing directors for their commitment to the sector.

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## \$5,000 collected for VIC Bushfire Appeal

At the request of one of our housing associations, the NSW Federation of Housing Associations took on the task of collecting donations for the Victorian Bushfire Appeal on behalf of the community housing sector.

Donations large and small were made by a number of associations and the Federation, as well as by individual staff members of both. The total raised was sent to the Red Cross Victorian Bushfire Appeal 2009.

Funds raised will be used to provide assistance to individuals and communities in towns and suburbs affected by the 2009 Victorian bushfires. An independent panel made up of community leaders will oversee the Appeal Funds operation. The Red Cross will not deduct any costs from public donations to cover Appeal costs.

## Best of luck to Stacey

The Federation would like to wish Stacey Hampton, Administrative Assistant Trainee at the Federation, all the best as she begins her one year maternity leave in early April.

Stacey has nearly completed her Certificate III in Business Administration, and has been a huge asset to the organisation. We will miss her over the next year, and wish her well on her new adventure.



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## Regulation reshuffle in England

Major changes are underway for the funding and regulation of the housing association sector in England. There are around 1,400 housing associations in England, and they vary in size from fewer than 10 homes to more than 50,000. In total, housing associations provide about two million homes. On the 30th November 2008 the Housing Corporation closed its doors for the final time. The Corporation was the national Government agency that funded new affordable housing and regulated housing associations in England. It had been in operation since 1964.

The Corporation's unified funding and regulatory role has been given to two separate agencies; the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and the Tenants Services Authority (TSA). The Homes and Communities Agency is largely an amalgamation of the Housing Corporation with the regeneration

agency English Partnerships (EP). They have funding totalling £17.3 billion available to spend between 2008-11, including £8.4bn for affordable housing through the National Affordable Housing Programme. HCA has nearly 1,000 members of staff based in 21 offices across nine regions.

The Tenant Services Authority is the new regulator. It will operate the Corporation's regulatory system until the end of the year. It will regulate all parts of the social housing sector – housing associations, Councils (public housing) and co-ops. Its first act was to develop a year long consultation program to ask tenants what they thought should be in a new regulatory framework. The consultation exercise is called 'the national conversation' and it includes a film crew touring in country in a pink camper van, collecting tenants' views from around the country.

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## Recent training awards

NSW Federation of Housing Associations recently awarded Kim Ingham from Housing NSW, Mt Druitt Office an award for excellence for her efforts in achieving the Certificate IV in Social Housing via Recognition. The Centre for Training in Social Housing provided recognition assessment services for 10 Housing NSW staff who had completed their training in December 2008. Kim and her Team Leader attended a morning tea in Surry Hills to accept the award.

Toni Comber from Homes North Community Housing recently achieved her Certificate IV in Social Housing. She was presented with her certificate by Leonie King, Acting Executive Director, Community Housing Division Housing NSW at the February NSWFA board meeting.

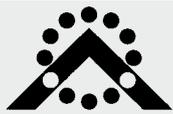
Congratulations to both Kim and Toni on their achievements.



*From left: Laurel Draffen, Brian May, Kim Ingham, Adam Farrar and Jacqui Moreno*



*From left: Leonie King, Toni Comber, Homes North Community Housing Co, and Adam Farrar*



NSW Federation of Housing Associations Inc



# HOUSING MANAGEMENT HOTLINE.....

**Non-Metropolitan**

Telephone

**1800 652 877**

**Sydney**

**Metropolitan**

Telephone

**(02) 9211 8420**

The **HOTLINE** will give information on:

- ♦ Tenancy Management
- ♦ Maintenance and Repairs
- ♦ Policy and Best Practice

**Operating Hours**

Monday to Friday  
10.00 am to 1.00 pm

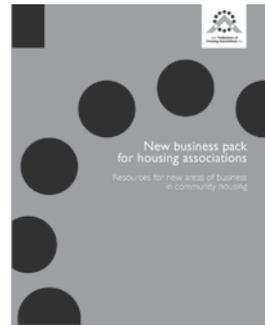
## New Business Pack for Housing Associations

Author: Andrew Meehan

Publisher: NSWFHA

A new package of resources is now available to assist housing associations to better understand and prepare for emerging areas of business in community housing such as affordable housing provision and community building activities. These publications will ensure informed decision making should organisations wish to pursue these options.

Resources in the package focus on four areas of operations that support new opportunities. They are intended to build understanding of what managers and directors of associations need to consider in relation to partnerships, large-scale partnerships, group structures, community building activities and finance.



### *New Business Pack & Tenant Participation Good Practice Guide*

To purchase a copy:

You can download a copy of our publications order form from our website: [www.communityhousing.org.au](http://www.communityhousing.org.au) and then fax the form to (02) 9281 7603

## Tenant Participation Good Practice Guide

Author: Adam West

Publisher: NSWFHA

The Tenant Participation GPG provides practical guidance to involve tenants to build stronger communities and deliver better services. The guide has been written by Adam West who has extensive first hand experience in working with tenants in the UK and NSW.

This good practice guide examines what genuine tenant participation is and the barriers that prevent tenants getting involved in their organisations and communities. It describes inspirational examples of tenant participation from NSW and internationally and provides

readers with a tenant participation 'toolbox' full of suggestions for new ways of involving people. It also includes sections on tenant participation in a growing community housing sector, on rural and regional tenant participation and information on the most frequently used methods of tenant participation including Tenant Advisory Groups and tenant planning days.



**Subscription for 'Housing Matters'**



## Housing Matters

Federation Members receive a free subscription to Housing Matters newsletter. Additional subscriptions are \$55 per year for members (or 1/2 price for Housing Association Board Members, \$27.50 each). Non-member subscriptions are \$66 per year for 6 issues.

Organisation .....

Name .....

Address .....

Phone ..... Fax .....

<input type="checkbox"/> Type	# of subscriptions	
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Member	_____	(\$66.00 each)
<input type="checkbox"/> Member	_____	(\$55.00 each)
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**Please send this form and payment to:**

NSW Federation of Housing Associations  
Suite 301, 64-76 Kippax Street,  
Surry Hills, NSW 2010

**Ph:** (02) 9281 7144 **Fax** (02) 9281 7603

Email: [nswfha@communityhousing.org.au](mailto:nswfha@communityhousing.org.au)

Website: [www.communityhousing.com.au](http://www.communityhousing.com.au)

# Calendar of Events

## Cert. IV in Social Housing Training

### **Social Housing - The Big Picture**

CHCCH1C Compulsory

Wed 25 Mar 2009

### **Applications & Allocations:**

#### **Manage Housing Applications**

CHCCH11B and Manage

Housing Allocations CHCCH12B

- Electives

Thur 26 Mar 2009

### **Work Within a Legal and Ethical Framework**

CHCCS301A

Compulsory

Wed 29 Apr 2009

### **Work Safe: Participate in Workplace Safety Procedures**

CHCOHS301A Compulsory

Thur 30 Apr 2009

## Diploma in Social Housing Training

### **Management & Leadership in the Workplace**

CHCORG6B

Compulsory Wed 11 Mar 2009

### **Manage the Delivery of Quality Client Service**

CHCCS4C

Compulsory Thu 12 Mar 2009

### **Going to the Tribunal**

CHCAD6A

Elective 2 Day Unit

Wed 1 Apr & Thur 2 Apr 2009

## Asset Managers Network Workshop

9 am to 5 pm,

Monday 6 April 2009 and

Tuesday 7 April 2009

2009 Training Calendar is now online. Visit our Website:

<http://www.communityhousing.org.au/>

If you would like to organise additional training, on a fee for service basis, please contact the Training Co-ordinator Estelle Lohman, at the Federation on (02)9281 7144 Ext. 205 or [estelle@communityhousing.org.au](mailto:estelle@communityhousing.org.au)

## COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTRES

### HELPING SOLVE PROBLEMS BETWEEN NEIGHBOURS

If you are having a disagreement with a neighbour that you just can't settle, it may be best to get some help.

Community Justice Centres have trained mediators who can help you solve your problems quickly and fairly.

Mediation can help solve problems between neighbours on issues like:

- pets
- children
- noise
- garbage
- unreasonable behaviour
- family disputes.

### What is mediation?

Mediation is where people voluntarily get together with mediators to settle their conflict in a way which is fair and acceptable for everyone involved.

### How can Community Justice Centres help?

Mediators are trained to help people to settle their disagreements by:

- Listening to each person talk about their concerns;
- Helping people talk to each other about their problems; and
- Helping people to come up with their own solutions.

### CONTACT

If you think mediation can help you, why not contact the Community Justice Centre:

**Phone:** Client Service Line - 1800 990 777

**Website:** [www.cjc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cjc.nsw.gov.au)

**Email:** [info@cjc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@cjc.nsw.gov.au)