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MEDIA RELEASE

Not- for-profit community sector to help transform social housing

The state's peak community housing body today welcomed NSW Government plans to engage the non-government sector in delivering up to 23,000 new and replacement social housing dwellings to address the chronic shortage of social and affordable housing in NSW.

NSW Federation of Housing Associations CEO Wendy Hayhurst said the Government's Future Directions paper released today provided a much needed framework for tackling the state's housing crisis.

"The Government's own figures show 150,000 families on low to moderate incomes are in housing stress, so fresh approaches are really needed," Ms Hayhurst said,

"With the right Government support and investment this plan could provide more homes on the ground – for people on public housing waiting lists and for families struggling to find anywhere they can afford to rent."

Ms Hayhurst said it was heartening to see the community housing sector's capacity to transform public housing recognised.

"Community housing organisations are already investing in employment and education services for many thousands of people living in social housing. We can do even more

"Plus, average tenant satisfaction rates of 84 per cent in our sector show community housing providers can guarantee better experiences than government run public housing estates."

Ms Hayhurst said the Federation has been urging the government to transfer an initial 30,000 homes to not-for-profit community housing providers over two years.

"In the past five years the largest 20 providers have increased the homes they manage by 60 percent and used the surpluses they have made to reinvest in building more homes for people who need them the most," she said.

"Unlike the private sector there are no shareholders to pay, every dollar is used to improve services and build more homes.

"We're looking forward to working with government on the detail of how their ideas can be translated into a lot more homes on the ground, not just for those on the waiting list for social housing, but affordable housing for those many lower paid workers who are such vital contributors to the health of the NSW economy.

"As part of our conversations we will be emphasising the need for planning reform to ensure all major redevelopments include a significant element of social and affordable housing."

Ms Hayhurst said the Federation would seek more detail about the timetable property at the Government's industry briefing for community housing providers on Wednesday.

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