

MEDIA RELEASE

Housing transfers good news for tenants and community sector

The NSW government's announcement it will transfer management of 18,000 public housing units to the community sector is good news that will allow for greater investment in maintenance, tenant services and potentially more homes, the state's peak not for profit housing body said today.

NSW Federation of Housing Associations CEO, Wendy Hayhurst, said the new 20 year leases would allow existing public housing tenants to access Commonwealth Rent Assistance for the first time and give community housing providers the financial security to invest in more social and affordable housing for people in need.

"It is a very welcome announcement from Social Housing Minister Brad Hazzard that recognises the track record not for profit housing providers have in NSW," Ms Hayhurst said.

"Community housing providers already manage about 40,000 social and affordable housing properties in NSW and have shown they can deliver financially and for their tenants as part of local communities."

Ms Hayhurst said community housing providers were looking forward to working with social housing tenants in the Shoalhaven, Northern Sydney, Mid North Coast and Hunter and New England about their housing needs, including addressing any maintenance backlogs.

Tenant lease lengths and conditions will remain the same, and providers will work with Family and Community Services to keep tenants fully informed about the transition.

"Community housing providers are part of their local community and work with local organisations to provide support and training as well as safe, secure, affordable homes," Ms Hayhurst said.

"In our latest tenant surveys, almost 90 per cent of our tenants said they enjoyed their homes and where they lived. More than 80 per cent of our tenants say they are happy with their housing maintenance, with 97 per cent of urgent repairs completed on time.

"We also work really hard to make it a great sector to work in. Providers will talk with FACS staff in these areas about employment in our sector."

Ms Hayhurst said community housing was an important and growing alternative provider of affordable, safe and secure long-term housing for people on low and middle incomes, with any surpluses invested back into tenant outcomes and more housing for people in need.

The transfers will see almost 35 per cent of existing public housing in NSW managed by the community not for profit sector.

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