



Victorian Local Governance Association

MEDIA RELEASE

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Public Housing solutions required

As the Parliamentary Inquiry into the adequacy, safety and location of Public Housing in Victoria continues, the VLGA is asking the Parliament's Family and Community Development Committee to recommend improving the quality and quantity of public housing, while strengthening consultation with local government in the process.

"Our verbal submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry tomorrow will highlight that local governments and communities are under pressure to cope with inadequate public housing, but that a consultative approach to planned solutions is required," said Cr Rose Iser, VLGA President.

"Local governments are keen to work closely with the Office of Housing to ensure that housing outcomes can be achieved that provide quality housing in well serviced locations and excellent provision of management and support services," Cr Iser said.

"Local governments readily identify a need for increased investment in affordable housing, and that the Federal and State Governments are in the best position to provide this investment.

"There is also a need for creative solutions that involve all levels of government, communities, support agencies and the development industry. Current waiting lists are excessive, quality in public housing is not assured and services are not always available to assist residents with long-term needs. More of the same is simply not good enough.

“Public housing is essential in providing people with the basic human right of a roof over their head, and the Office of Housing needs to address issues of quality and quantity as a priority – rather than merely tinker with waiting list structures.

“Without limiting the goal of improving existing public housing, we also welcome initiatives to make land available for genuinely affordable housing, to work with suitable partners to identify sustainable ways of managing affordable housing including public and community housing.

“Critically, however, local governments are frustrated by the lack of consultation at the planning stages with the Minister able to approve social housing projects under the stimulus package.

“Local governments seek collaborative discussions with affordable housing stakeholders to work with people in need of affordable housing and address the needs within each municipality. There must also be a significantly expanded role for well regulated community housing providers.

“Local governments and local communities request ongoing consultation to ensure communities have quality public and community housing that is well serviced, cohesive and the democratic principles of consultation and community engagement are not only upheld but given real meaning, “ Cr Iser concluded.

For further information or comment, contact Cr Rose Iser on 0414 959 427.