

Letter of Compliance

The Honourable Michael de Brenni MP
Minister for Housing and Public Works
Level 7, 80 George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

28 September 2016

Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit for presentation to the Parliament the Annual Report 2015–2016 and financial statements for the Department of Housing and Public Works.

I certify that this Annual Report complies with:

- the prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009*, and
- the detailed requirements set out in the *Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies*.

A checklist outlining the annual reporting requirements can be found on page 114 of this annual report.

Yours sincerely



Liza Carroll
Director-General
Department of Housing and Public Works

Message from the Director-General



The 2015–16 year has been one of consultation, collaboration and delivery for the Department of Housing and Public Works.

We have made significant progress on implementing the government's priorities in the areas of housing, building and procurement, and have continued to deliver services that matter to Queenslanders.

The department has taken forward many projects and programs of work this financial year that link to the government's key areas of focus. This annual report outlines the progress we have made in contributing to the government's vision, and recognises the significant projects and programs of work that we have delivered, based on our Strategic Plan 2015–19.

Working towards better housing futures for all Queenslanders

In 2015–16, we have continued to deliver services and outcomes for tenants and customers that are making a difference. More than 72,000 low income households were assisted with social rental housing, while over 124,000 households were assisted by programs to help them access or sustain private tenancies.

In addition, the re-establishment of the Queensland Statewide Tenant Advice and Referral Service is ensuring Queensland tenants receive free information, help and advice when they need it.

The release of the *Working together for better housing and sustainable communities* discussion paper was a key undertaking that will form the foundation for the development of our new Housing Strategy for the future. This paper

provided the opportunity for people to have their say on ways to improve housing outcomes for all Queenslanders. As well as capturing the views of the general public, the consultation process also included input from private industry and the housing assistance sector.

Other key pieces of work in the housing space were completed, including a fairness review of housing policies, the development of a Fairness Charter, and the establishment of two, 72 hour crisis shelters in Townsville and Brisbane for women and children escaping domestic and family violence.

In 2015-16, we assisted over 72,000 low income households with social rental housing. \$328.3 million was spent to complete construction of 395 new social and affordable housing dwellings, commenced construction of 413 dwellings, purchased 93 dwellings and completed over 11,800 refurbishments. In addition to this, \$256.7 million was spent on maintenance.

We also continued to support those Queenslanders experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness through new construction work in Cairns, the delivery of the Crisis Accommodation Program and the funding of 127 non-government organisations to deliver 218 specialist homelessness services.

Advancing the building and residential living sectors

The *Security of payment for subcontractors discussion paper* facilitated a significant amount of

consultation and engagement work with the community and industry sectors in the building area. This key project will feed into the development of new policies that deliver on the government's commitment to a safer and more sustainable environment for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

Fairness and safety in the building and construction industry was another key focus. Work in this space included consultation with the industry on the *Security of payment for subcontractors discussion paper*, and the re-establishment of a dedicated plumbing industry body in the form of the Service Trades Council.

In 2015–16, the department also continued its work in the area of sustainability in the built environment, participating as a core member of the Sustainable Built Environment National Research Centre, and helping to deliver the multiple award winning Brisbane Open House event which showcases Brisbane's most unique buildings.

Delivering greater value through employment and economic opportunities

A number of achievements in the procurement space were realised throughout the year. Following a major review of Queensland Government Procurement, a new agency-led operating model is being put in place which enables departments to manage their own activities within an overarching framework.



We're working together to deliver better lives and greater opportunities for people and communities.

The role of social procurement in supporting new jobs and local businesses was explored further, with the department hosting two procurement market days, in Brisbane and Cairns.

A continued commitment to the local economies throughout Queensland's regions also saw job opportunities delivered through the awarding of maintenance work on behalf of customer agencies to local contractors.

Empowering people in an integrated and collaborative organisation

During the year, we took the opportunity to reshape our organisational structure to ensure we are well placed to deliver on our vision for the future, work that will continue into the new financial year as we look to maximise our opportunities and identify areas of improvement.

We continued our focus on developing a strong and empowered workforce in 2015–16, to help us deliver on our vision for the future.

The establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy Unit has seen a concerted and connected approach to developing and delivering policies, programs and services in this space. In addition, during the year, we held our first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff forum, with staff coming from across the state to network and share their experiences in Brisbane.

Our People and Culture strategy has continued to improve our organisational capability and this past year we have seen the reintroduction of the graduate program, facilitation of Managing for Results and Emerging Leaders programs for staff, and the development and implementation of an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan.

These activities are helping to support our aim to be an inclusive and progressive organisation with improved capabilities to attract, develop and retain talented people to help deliver our objectives.

More than 84 per cent of staff completed the Working for Queensland Employee Opinion survey, which was our best ever response rate, and this valuable information is helping us strengthen our position so we can realise our future vision.

Health and safety is an ongoing priority for the department, with this high level of focus delivering excellent results, including the reduction of lost time injuries and fewer days lost due to workplace injuries compared to last year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff for their ongoing work and commitment to supporting our vision and delivering high quality services to Queenslanders. These achievements provide a strong foundation for our future programs of work, and are a strong reflection on the dedication, talent and efforts of our workforce.

Liza Carroll
Director-General
Department of Housing and Public Works