

Housing and Homelessness Ministers' Meeting

Communiqué

Hobart, Tasmania - 6 October 2017

Housing and Homelessness Ministers met in Hobart on 6 October 2017 to consider critical housing and homelessness issues, including the negotiation of a new National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA).

Ministers last met in May 2017.

Issues from previous meeting

The Commonwealth Government provided an update on a number of budget initiatives, including progress made by the Affordable Housing Working Group.

Ministers noted the Commonwealth has tabled the *Social Services Legislation Amendment (Housing Affordability) Bill 2017* in Federal Parliament, to introduce the framework for a new **Automatic Rent Deduction Scheme (ARDS)**.

The ARDS amendments will enable tenancy charges and other housing costs to be deducted from welfare payments for occupants living in social housing to facilitate sustainable tenancies.

Those jurisdictions that intend to participate will be engaged in the drafting of amendments to the Bill to ensure the legislation meets its original intent.

Ministers also noted that work to achieve national consistency around homelessness policy will be incorporated into the broader NHHA negotiations.

National Housing and Homelessness Agreement

Ministers discussed the development of the NHHA multilateral to date, which jurisdictions have been negotiating alongside Treasury colleagues.

Ministers discussed some of the critical issues around the agreement regarding scope, funding arrangements and performance measures. The Commonwealth Government provided an update on stakeholder information sessions and timelines to finalise the agreement.

Ministers noted that in order to ensure a timely resolution of the NHHA, negotiations between the States, Territories and the Commonwealth should include both the views of Ministers for Housing and Homelessness and Treasurers.

Ministers are all committed to the importance of a well-functioning social housing system, and will be providing comment on the new agreement to the Treasurer.

Keystart Home Loans

Western Australian Minister for Housing, Hon Peter Tinley AM MLA, presented on Keystart Home Loan products.

Keystart has helped over 85,000 Western Australians access home ownership since it was established in 1989.

Way Forward

Ministers agreed a decision on a future meeting date would be withheld until the outcomes from the Treasurers' Meeting in relation to the NHHA are known.