



**The Hon Scott Morrison MP**  
Minister for Social Services

MC15-003725

Dr Dennis Jensen MP  
Chair  
House of Representatives Standing Committee of Petitions  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Dr Jensen

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Dennis'.

Thank you for your letter of 26 March 2015 concerning a petition submitted regarding Emergency Relief funding for Holroyd Community Aid Inc. I appreciate the time you have taken to bring this matter to my attention.

The Australian Government values the role of charities and not-for-profit organisations in our society and we are committed to empowering organisations to deliver services that respond to the needs of their community. I particularly appreciate the important work of organisations that deliver Emergency Relief services to support people who are struggling financially.

The response to the recent funding round was overwhelming with my Department receiving more than 5,500 applications for grants worth more than \$3.9 billion, with approximately \$800 million in grants funding available when the new grant rounds were announced.

Emergency Relief funding was distributed based on levels of need and disadvantage. This has been done to ensure that funding is targeted appropriately. Organisations funded were selected through a rigorous, consistent and audited process and selections were based on ensuring high-quality services to the community and value for money. A decision made about funding in a Department of Social Services selection process is final. Organisations can obtain feedback on each open funding round from the Department of Social Services website at [www.dss.gov.au/grants/closed-funding-rounds](http://www.dss.gov.au/grants/closed-funding-rounds).

On becoming Minister, I made it a priority to ensure there would be no critical service gaps from the Department's grants scheme as new providers of frontline services came online. As you may be aware, I offered bridging funding until the end of March 2015 for previously funded Emergency Relief providers to ensure service continuity as we transitioned to the new providers. In addition, on 1 April 2015, I announced the Government is providing an extra \$1.7 million in Emergency Relief grants to help address identified service gaps and ensure this crucial frontline service continues to be available to those who need it across Australia.

I understand the transition to the new arrangements can be unsettling for providers and clients. My Department's Grant Agreement Managers are working closely with organisations to ensure a smooth transition for the referral of clients to the new grant arrangements. To assist with transition efforts, in March 2015, current and new Emergency Relief providers received an email from my Department with the name and website address of both current and new providers in their Statistical Area location.

An email was also sent to all local Members informing them of the outcome of the recent Emergency Relief grant selection process and providing them with a list of Emergency Relief service providers located in their electorate. I recommend Holroyd Community Aid Inc contact their Grant Agreement Manager with any questions about transition arrangements.

You may be interested to know the Department has an on-line DSS Grants Service Directory. The directory can assist people to identify funded services, including Emergency Relief, by programme, state, postcode, region (SA3) or a combination of these. The directory includes details of new grants established from 1 March 2015 and can be accessed at <http://serviceproviders.dss.gov.au/>

While funding for the Emergency Relief round is now closed, I encourage Holroyd Community Aid Inc to monitor the Department of Social Services website for future funding opportunities. The Funding Open for Application page at [www.dss.gov.au/grants/open-for-application](http://www.dss.gov.au/grants/open-for-application) lists grants which are currently open for application. Organisations can also subscribe for email updates, including when new funding rounds are available, at [www.dss.gov.au/grants](http://www.dss.gov.au/grants).

Thank you for bringing Holroyd Community Aid Inc's concerns to my attention. I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

The Hon Scott Morrison MP  
**Minister for Social Services**

3 / 8 / 2015