

# Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 24-28 February 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

**Department/Agency:** Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Outcome/Program:** 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Topic:** Remote Housing

**Senator:** Senator Rachel Siewert

**Question reference number:** 116

**Type of Question:** FPA, Friday 28 February 2014, page 56

**Date set by the committee for the return of answer:** 11 April 2014

**Number of pages:** 2

### **Question:**

Senator SIEWERT: I might put on notice: how assured are you with their assurances and what, in concrete, do you have which shows that they are meeting those requirements beyond their assurances to the Commonwealth?

Mr Stacey: We will take that on notice.

### **Answer:**

Reforms to Property and Tenancy Management (PTM) under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing in the Northern Territory (NT) include improvements in tenants' understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

The NT Department of Housing advises that prior to the commencement of a Tenancy Agreement, the tenants are provided with Intensive Tenancy Support to ensure that they understand their rights and responsibilities.

The Commonwealth monitors these mechanisms in a number of ways.

- *Regular Reporting* - The NT Government is required to report monthly on progress against the PTM reform milestones. This monthly update to the Commonwealth includes the number of Tenancy Agreements that have been put in place. Tenancy Agreements can only be put in place where houses meet the *Residential Tenancies Act* standard.
- *Annual Reporting* - The NT Government is required to provide an Annual Status Report to the Commonwealth at the end of each financial year. This report allows for comparison across the jurisdictions.
- *Regular Joint Steering Committee (JSC) meetings* - the NT Government reports on progress against the PTM reforms through the regular JSC meetings held between executive officers from both governments. The JSC also provides an opportunity to discuss and resolve any issues that may arise.

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- *Joint Management arrangements* - The existing Joint Management arrangement also provides oversight for the Commonwealth on progress of PTM reforms, through an embedded team within the NT Department of Housing.