

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: 121

Type of Question: Written

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

Number of pages: 1

Question:

The National Partnership on Remote Indigenous Housing - Progress Review (2008 - 2013) states “The need for ongoing tenant support and engagement with tenants about rights and responsibilities is particularly important”. There is currently no adequately funded legal service to meet the legal demands of remote tenants in the NT. Will a remote tenancy service be funded in the NT?

Answer:

Under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing, the Australian Government provides funding for a number of tenant support and engagement programmes. These include:

- Intensive Tenancy Support prior to the commencement of a tenancy, to ensure that tenants understand their rights and responsibilities;
- the Living in a House Program, which uses primary prevention through hands-on education, early intervention and case management to ensure tenancy sustainability;
- strengthening community-based Housing Reference Groups;
- ongoing work with Centrelink and employers regarding rent deductions; and
- provision of information to the community about the wait list, housing allocations and the review and appeal mechanism.

The Australian Government also provides funding for Indigenous legal services under the National Partnership on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory to offer services including tenancy assistance for remote tenants. The Government is currently considering a review of all Indigenous programmes. Decisions regarding funding arrangements beyond 2013-14 are a matter for the Government.