

State Budget 2006/07 Information Sheet Housing

WACOSS' Recommendation	Budget Outcomes	Comments
<p>State Homelessness Strategy Continue to fund and expand effective homeless services, introduced as part of the State Homeless Strategy. Was \$32M from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2006:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$10.5million to build new public housing; • \$7 million to assist private and public sector tenants to keep their housing; • \$3.8 million to provide services and accommodation for people with mental illness; • \$3.5 million to help homeless children; • \$2 million for non-Government organisations to provide financial counselling services; • \$2.4 million to help young people leaving long term care; • \$1.4 million to support people exiting the justice system; and • \$1 million to assist people directly into stable accommodation by bypassing crisis accommodation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for the State Homelessness strategy initiatives may be announced after the Evaluation Report is presented to Cabinet (currently early June). 	<p>Details of the specific allocation for State Homelessness Strategy initiatives are not discernable from the Budget papers.</p> <p>The evaluation of the State Homelessness Strategy has been completed and awaits the Minister's approval for its release. It has been anticipated that the Report will go to Cabinet in June.</p>
<p>Increase Funding for Existing Supported Accommodation Assistance Program Services That the State Government commit to a 25% increase in their contribution to funding under SAAP V, and that this funding be directed into increasing the funding levels for existing agencies. (From \$67.93M add \$38.68M over 5 years)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The indexation rate for 05-06 will be raised from 2.9% to 3.5%, resulting in an extra payment to services by about the end of May '06. • A 10% one-off core funding increase, calculated after the indexation adjustment for last year. • An indexation rate of 3.4% for the 06-07 financial year (to be calculated after the 10% increase). 	<p>Though this falls short of the request for a 25% increase, this increase in funding and corrected indexation rate is considered a big win for the More Than a Bed campaign. Former Minister Sheila McHale and staffers in DCD worked hard to lobby for this funding and we sincerely appreciate their efforts. However, SAAP services will continue to struggle to meet demand and more funding is needed.</p>

<p>Increase the Investment in Public Housing The State Government commit to meeting the demand for public housing, as indicated by the waiting list, by 2025.</p> <p>Increase stock by 660 extra dwellings per year: \$122M per year from 34,955 to 48,153 by 2025.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific budget allocation is evident at this stage. 	
<p>Increase Housing Appropriate for Priority Groups Increase social, community and crisis housing for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people • Women • Young people • People with mental illnesses • Prisoners exiting the justice system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific budget allocation is evident at this stage. 	
<p>A Commitment to Community Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the State Government commit to supporting the WA Community Housing Strategic Plan 2003-2008 to encourage a more viable and financially independent community housing sector. • That the State Government provide an additional \$2.5 million each year to community housing for four years from July 2005 and that this funding be targeted to emerging community housing key providers including allowing a portion to be set aside for the development of affordable housing projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific budget allocation is evident at this stage. 	
<p>Regional Housing Initiatives That the State Government develop strategies to increase the supply of affordable and appropriate accommodation in regional areas, including options for home purchasing, private rental and social housing. This should be achieved specifically through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding the subsidised home loan scheme currently offered by the Country Housing Authority • Allocating appropriate funding from the Central Revenue Fund to the Government Employees Housing Authority to allow it to build rather than lease its housing stock. • Allocate funding of \$70,000 per annum to establish a small grants scheme aimed at allowing local groups to conduct housing research in regional areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aiming to approve a further 120 loans in excess of \$10M. (increase from \$10.6M in 05-06 to \$11.9M in 06-07) • A further \$1M for new housing grants in Housing Development Incentive Program. • New \$60M program to construct up to 161 new and replacement GEHA houses. (Includes 10 dwellings in Halls Creek). • Housing research grants scheme? 	