

MEDIA RELEASE

Sunday 10 May 2015

WACOSS welcomes investment in social housing

The Western Australian Council of Social Service welcomed the announcement today of a significant funding injection of \$560m by the WA Government into social housing to deliver an extra 1000 homes by 2017.

“The Council has been highlighting the need for a significant investment in social housing in WA to tackle the growing gap in appropriate and affordable housing for our most vulnerable citizens. It was the number one priority in our budget submission to the Government this year,” said Irina Cattalini, CEO of WACOSS today.

“The Council called for a minimum investment in 2015-16 of \$220m, and for this level of investment to be sustained annually. The State Government announcement surpasses this recommendation and will make a real difference over the next two years. It will then be vital to ensure that this Government and all future Governments commit to retain this level of investment until we have a sustainable and affordable housing system.”

“We applaud the Government for targeting this investment to assist those most in need, vulnerable families with children and seniors on the priority wait-list.”

“The detrimental impacts on the development of children growing up in unstable and unsuitable housing is a huge concern, and investment in providing them with a safe, clean and secure environment can be critical to giving them a better chance in life.”

“Accessible and well-located housing for seniors can play a critical role in maintaining their health and well-being and enabling their ongoing participation in and contribution to our community. This is where the commitment to re-develop existing public housing stock and support in-fill development is particularly important.”

“Western Australians at the lower end of the income spectrum have been consistently priced out of the housing market. Demand for affordable housing among this income cohort continues to outstrip supply, and the cost of housing continues to rise much faster than incomes for this segment of our community. Unfortunately the affordable housing that is available is largely located on the urban fringe, where unemployment is high and public transport is inadequate, making travelling to and from the city expensive and time consuming.”

“Safe, secure, appropriate and affordable housing remains critical as an underpinning foundation for the social and economic wellbeing of all Western Australians and should be the top priority.”

“Increased investment in public and community housing can make a significant contribution to improving outcomes and strengthening our economy, given its critical role as a pre-cursor for economic participation will be recognised in the Budget,” concluded Ms Cattalini.

More information can be found in the WACOSS Pre-Budget Submission [*“The Difference We Can Make: Building a better future for all Western Australians”*](#) at www.wacoss.org.au.

Media Contact: Irina Cattalini, CEO. 0422 422 438 or 9420 7222