

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICE COMMITTEE

Estimates Question on Notice

No. 1

Asked on 7 December 2020

THE COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE ASKED MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH) —

QUESTION

Will the Minister advise how the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy is supporting communities to address public intoxication and alcohol-fuelled violence?

ANSWER

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to creating a safer night-time environment, with initiatives that reduce alcohol related violence and harm in the entertainment precincts, drive cultural change around drinking behaviours and balance a reduction in harm with the interest of patrons and the hospitality industry.

In 2020-21, the Government will invest \$3.4 million in Safe Night Precinct Support Services as a component of the broader *Tackling Alcohol-fuelled Violence Policy* and Safe Night Precincts initiative. The Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy works closely with the Department of Justice and Attorney-General in the delivery of these services as part of a coordinated cross-government approach to tackling alcohol fuelled violence. The services support vulnerable people and those at risk of harm due to the influence of alcohol, within the 15 designated entertainment precincts across Queensland – Airlie Beach, Brisbane CBD, Brisbane Inner West, Broadbeach, Bundaberg, Cairns, Fortitude Valley, Gladstone, Ipswich, Mackay, Rockhampton, Sunshine Coast, Surfers Paradise, Toowoomba and Townsville.

During peak late-night entertainment hours, services provide an immediate response and practical assistance that ensures the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable people at risk of harm and violence in the entertainment precincts.

Safe Night Precinct Support Services have mobile teams to monitor public spaces and provide practical ‘on-the-spot’ assistance, such as first aid, calming down patrons in distress and helping organise a safe journey home or connection with friends and family to get home.

Safe Night Precinct Support Services also have a designated Rest and Recovery area nearby to provide a safe place for intoxicated patrons to sober-up and receive support if they are not feeling well or have been affected by alcohol fuelled violence within the entertainment precinct. Patrons may also be referred to other appropriate services that can assist them, such as Queensland Ambulance Services or Queensland Police Services.

The Queensland Government undertook an extensive evaluation of *Tackling Alcohol fuelled Violence Policy* and in July 2019, the Queensland Alcohol-related violence and Night-Time Economy Monitoring final evaluation report (QUANTEM report) was publicly released.

Led by the Attorney-General, the Queensland Government has responded to the report and is taking actions to progress recommendations made to reduce alcohol related violence and harm.

My department has worked with Safe Night Precinct Support Service providers to progress program improvements to address relevant recommendations from the report.

The Queensland Government is also committed to assisting people who are at risk of harm or at risk of being taken into police custody for intoxication in public spaces, or who are already in custody for related offences.

In 2020-21, we will invest \$17.46 million in Public Intoxication services that provide targeted and tailored support to individuals in line with recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1987-1991).

Public Intoxication program services were established in 1995 in response to recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (1991).

Services are provided across eight locations in Queensland – Brisbane, Caboolture, Cairns, Mackay, Mount Isa, Palm Island, Rockhampton and Townsville. Services are delivered by predominantly Indigenous organisations or organisations that employ a majority Indigenous staff who provide a culturally appropriate service response to support people while they recover from the impacts of alcohol.

Public Intoxication services differ based on the need of each community, including:

- Cell Visitor services - provides support to people while in custody
- Community Patrols - provides outreach services to people at risk of incarceration from public drinking or related offences
- Diversion Centres - provides a culturally safe place for people to sober up and get support
- Managing Public Intoxication services - provides case management to support people change harmful drinking behaviours and reduce the recurrence of incarceration
- Reducing Demand services - provides culturally appropriate activities and support for people to change behaviour, build skills and reduce harmful consumption of alcohol.

Often the people who require these services experience complex and underlying issues including chronic health conditions, mental health conditions, drug and/or alcohol substance abuse, displacement, at-risk tenancies and/or chronic homelessness.

My department continues to actively engage with key government and non-government stakeholders to support people who are at risk in public spaces.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Estimates Question on Notice Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020 No. 2

THE COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister advise how the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Technology is working to address the added financial pressure on families due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic?

ANSWER

The Queensland Government understands the pressures families have been experiencing and continue to face due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is why in 2019-20 \$1.1 million in one-off funding was provided to Emergency Relief providers and GIVIT (a goods and donations service) to respond to the increase in demand as a result of COVID-19, namely:

- the Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul and GIVIT who were provided with \$200,000 each to assist people impacted by COVID-19 with emergency relief – through food parcels, vouchers, assistance with utility bills and support for families with additional costs from home schooling.
- 83 local emergency relief service providers who were provided an additional \$250,000 in total to respond to people in need impacted by COVID-19.
- the Salvation Army, Wesley Mission, St Vincent de Paul, OzHarvest and the Rapid Relief Team, who were provided an additional \$250,000 in total to ensure a regionalised distribution of emergency relief.

On 25 March 2020, the Queensland Government announced a \$24.7 million Housing and Homelessness COVID-19 Immediate Response Fund (IRF), including \$2.5 million (GST exclusive) to deliver Dignity First Fund COVID-19 Response Round 2020-21.

The COVID-19 Response Round was targeted to services that met the immediate needs of vulnerable people impacted by the pandemic and deliver essential services such as food preparation and distribution, complementing Emergency Relief funding.

The COVID-19 Round in April 2020 was funded by bringing forward the \$2.5 million budget earmarked for the 2020-21 financial year. In April 2020, 24 organisations received a total of \$2.498 million (GST exclusive).

The IRF also enhanced existing service offerings across the housing and homelessness continuum, and delivered additional brokerage, emergency accommodation and outreach services so that vulnerable Queenslanders could access the services they required.

Home Assist Secure providers conducted welfare checks and provided essential supplies to assist older people and people with disability to remain safely in their homes, particularly during home confinement restrictions.

We also enacted an Emergency Housing Assistance response across the State - and provided motel or hotel accommodation to individuals and families who needed to self-isolate or otherwise needed temporary accommodation.

There are a number of circumstances that can lead people to seek emergency relief, such as losing a job, unexpected bills, personal crisis or getting back on your feet after a natural disaster.

As part of its ongoing support for Queenslanders in need of emergency relief services, department funding is provided to 87 organisations across the state, including Neighbourhood and Community Centres, Church groups, Emergency accommodation providers, Women's Centres, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services and state-wide organisations Wesley Mission and St Vincent de Paul.

Organisations who deliver emergency relief services cover the costs of administering the program from within their own resources therefore enabling 100 per cent of emergency relief funds to go directly to people in need.

Funds help support people with food, food vouchers and third-party payments such as utility bills. In 2019-2020 we invested \$2.1 million in emergency relief services:

- \$1.8 million to Emergency Relief providers
- \$291,066 to Financial Counsellors and Resilience Workers under the Financial Resilience Program.

In 2020-21, the Queensland Government continues to invest in emergency relief at a total of \$3.2 million comprised of:

- \$1.8 million to Emergency Relief providers
- \$299,562 to Financial Counsellors and Resilience Workers under the Financial Resilience Program
- \$1.1 million as part of the Government's election commitment to support individuals and families impacted by COVID-19.

Under the Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2020 Action Plan the Government invests \$2.5 million per annum to fund one-off projects of up to 12 months duration to prevent and reduce homelessness and assist people experiencing homelessness to live with dignity and improve their quality of life.

Pre-COVID rounds have focused on projects that meet an immediate need through to longer term outcomes that help people sustain tenancies. The range of projects have included:

- meal preparation and distribution (including capital upgrades e.g. new commercial kitchen)
- provision of furniture and white good packs to move into new accommodation
- hoarding and squalor counselling

- mental health support
- financial literacy and maintaining tenancy sessions.

In 2019-20, the Queensland Government invested \$229.8 million on homelessness responses and invested a further \$36.3 million on COVID-19 housing and homelessness responses to 31 October 2020. In 2020-2021, the Queensland Government has budgeted \$244.5 million to continue homelessness responses across Government.

Emergency Relief provides immediate assistance and is also a powerful tool to help connect people with other support services – while people often come in for immediate assistance, it often leads to connection with other services including budgeting support, counselling and housing services.

Financial pressure can unfortunately sometimes lead people to turn to high interest pay-day lenders. The repayment cost plus interest can amount to paying for the product purchased many times over.

That is why the Queensland Government offers pathways for people to be offered safe, fair and affordable financial products and services and to build their capacity to increase their resilience to respond to future pressures.

In 2019-20, funding of \$4.8 million for financial literacy and resilience services were provided:

- \$3.5 million to deliver Financial Literacy and Resilience services employing 28.7 financial counsellors and resilience workers in 26 locations to deliver:
 - budgeting and financial literacy skills
 - financial counselling support and a pathway to the No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) and other microfinance products where appropriate
 - Advocacy – talking to creditors to negotiate waiver of bills or repayment plans
 - case management – time-limited support to address financial crisis.
- \$1.1 million to operate the Good Money Stores at Cairns and Southport
- \$147,061 statewide coordination of No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) network by Good Shepherd.

From July 2019 to June 2020, 35,209 hours of service have been provided to 13,847 clients.

Good Money Stores provide safe alternatives to pay day lenders and offer no interest and low interest loans to vulnerable Queenslanders on low incomes who cannot get credit from mainstream financial services.

StepUp loans, which offer low interest loans for people on low income for up to \$3,000 with three years to repay, are also provided.

From July 2019 to June 2020 Good Money Stores have provided 1269 no interest and low interest loans valued at \$1,408,204 and 137 StepUp low interest loans valued at \$407,000 supporting vulnerable Queenslanders to build financial resilience.

In 2020-21, the total investment for financial literacy and resilience will increase to \$7 million due to the injection of additional \$2 million per annum for two years for an expansion of the financial resilience services being delivered from currently 26 to a total of 46 locations:

- \$3.7 million to deliver Financial Literacy and Resilience services
- \$1.2 million to operate the Good Money Stores at Cairns and Southport
- \$150,561 Statewide coordination of NILS network by Good Shepherd
- \$2 million as part of the Government's election commitment to provide financial counselling support and a pathway to the NILS and other microfinance products where appropriate.

The Department works closely with the Federal Government (which funds approximately 300 financial counselling services across Queensland) and participates in a National Financial Counselling Strategy that will help coordinate service provision effectively to ensure those most in need are able to access support from a financial counsellor.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICE COMMITTEE

Estimates Question on Notice

No. 3

Asked on 7 December 2020

THE COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE ASKED MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH) —

QUESTION

Will the Minister advise how the Palaszczuk Government is supporting thriving communities through investment in neighbourhood community centres?

ANSWER

In 2020-21, the Palaszczuk Government is investing \$19.9 million in 125 Neighbourhood and Community Centres across the state in locations of high social need. This will soon increase to 127 centres with the opening of new centres at Kallangur and Thursday Island in early 2021.

Neighbourhood and Community Centres often form the fundamental base of social services infrastructure in communities across Queensland and are a key contributor to building and sustaining thriving Queensland communities. Neighbourhood and Community Centres work to enhance community effort to respond to local priorities, and harness and leverage resources and supports available in the community, including the support of local volunteers.

Neighbourhood and Community Centres provide a universal point of access for individuals and families to obtain social supports and advocacy services. They can also serve as an entry point to targeted or crisis services such as financial counselling or parenting support. This is why when determining the location for a Neighbourhood Community centre the decision is informed by socio-economic indicators for each community together with demographic information and projections to cater for current and future needs. This will help ensure vulnerable individuals, families and groups have access to the services and the connectivity to community that Neighbourhood Community Centres provide. Neighbourhood and Community Centres operate in a localised way to respond to a range of issues and opportunities and have the capacity, flexibility and responsiveness to shift priorities and resources as new needs emerge.

As a dedicated resource, the Department funds Community Connect workers who are co-located in 12 Neighbourhood and Community Centres in high need communities at – Emerald, Monto, Manoora (Cairns), Mossman, Bowen, Upper Ross (Townsville), Gympie, Eagleby, Nerang, Chinchilla, Laidley and Darra.

In 2019-20, the Queensland Government invested \$5.74M for new builds, replacement or refurbishment of Neighbourhood and Community Centres, supporting 19 jobs.

The Department continues to fund and work with the Queensland Families and Communities Association as the peak organisation for Neighbourhood and Community Centres.

Recognising the critical role connected communities have to the social and economic recovery of the State, the Palaszczuk Government has committed to invest \$1.7 million in 2020-2021 to fund 15 workers to connect Care Army volunteers with community through Neighbourhood and Community centres. These workers will ensure that vulnerable Queenslanders stay connected with their communities and overcome social isolation, building on the work of the Care Army.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Estimates Question on Notice Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020 No. 4

THE COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister advise how the Palaszczuk Government has supported Queenslanders who rent to sustain their tenancy and remain safe during the COVID-19 pandemic?

ANSWER

Many Queenslanders were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and some have experienced substantial income loss through no fault of their own.

The Queensland Government moved quickly to implement financial and regulatory measures to support Queenslanders to stay in their homes and keep safe during the COVID-19 emergency.

The Queensland Government provided \$5.2M in COVID-19 Rental Grants to 3,202 eligible Queensland households as part of the \$36.3 million spent on the Housing and Homelessness COVID-19 Response. This essential immediate assistance helped Queenslanders sustain their tenancy while temporary regulatory measures were developed.

On 24 April 2020, the Queensland Government implemented temporary regulatory measures to mitigate COVID-19 impacts on residential leases, including a 6-month eviction moratorium between 29 March and 29 September 2020 to protect tenants who couldn't pay their rent due to COVID-19.

The time-limited COVID-19 regulatory response kept tenants in their homes while ensuring rental income continued to flow for lessors and property managers and supported stability in Queensland's rental market.

The COVID-19 Housing Security Sub-Committee of the Ministerial Housing Council was established to oversee implementation of the COVID-19 response and provide real time insights about what was happening in the sector to inform government decision making about any adjustments required to the response. This Sub-Committee is made up of key sector stakeholders, including Tenants Queensland, Queensland Council of Social Service, Real Estate Institute of Queensland, Queensland Shelter and the Residential Tenancies Authority. The Sub-Committee monitors private market indicators, such as call volumes, conciliation information and bond data.

The Queensland Government's strong health response to the COVID-19 global pandemic and the absence of community spread, unlike New South Wales and Victoria, provided the ability for Queensland to begin transitioning back to normal residential tenancy arrangements. Monitoring data was indicating Queensland's rental market was stable and there were no health-related restrictions or requirements in place that impacted tenants' or lessors' ability to enter or leave residential leases. Supported by these market conditions the Queensland Government announced on 16 September 2020 that the eviction moratorium would not be extended beyond 29 September 2020 to balance the interests and needs of all parties in the rental market.

However, several important tenancy protections remain in place until 30 April 2021, including:

- tenants experiencing domestic and family violence can end their interest in a tenancy agreement quickly
- tenants cannot be listed in a tenancy database for COVID-19 rent arrears
- limited reletting costs for eligible tenants who need to end their fixed term lease early
- entry restrictions and requirements and relaxed repair and maintenance obligations to support social distancing in the rental sector while ensuring tenant safety is maintained.

The Queensland Government continues to closely monitor the private rental market and seek advice from the COVID-19 Housing Security Sub-Committee about significant change in trends for tenancy sustainment and affordability that may indicate further intervention is required. The recent extension of the COVID-19 emergency response legislation ensures that the Queensland Government is positioned to act quickly to implement any measures necessary if COVID-19 risks and restrictions change in Queensland.

The Residential Tenancies Authority continues to provide free advice and dispute resolution services for Queensland tenants, lessors and property managers to help them manage issues or disputes about their tenancy arrangements.

The Queensland Government response has been enhanced by measures established for social housing tenants due to their vulnerability.

In March 2020, the department implemented hardship measures to support social housing tenants through the COVID-19 pandemic to support their financial and housing stability, including implementing the evictions moratorium and supporting households to manage financial concerns regarding rent arrears recovery and debt management activity. The department kept tenants informed about:

- changes to service delivery and alternative service channels as changes were made to adhere to public health directions and requirements
- Queensland Health advice and information, including social distancing practices.

To support the Queensland Government Care Army initiative to care for Queenslanders during the COVID-19 outbreak, especially those most at risk, outbound calls were undertaken to housing tenants who were over the age of 70, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander tenants over the age of 50, and tenants over the age of 65 with a medical condition. The department worked closely with Community Housing Providers which similarly provided hardship measures, welfare checks and additional support to community housing tenants.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Estimates Question on Notice Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020 No. 5

THE COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister outline how the Palaszczuk Government is supporting Queenslanders to find and maintain long term sustainable housing through private market assistance products?

ANSWER

The *Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027* outlines the government's commitment to improving housing outcomes for Queenslanders to ensure those most in need are supported by a safety net of targeted interventions, flexible packages of support, supportive social housing and genuine wraparound services - delivering more responsive, person-centred services that proactively assist customers to access the right assistance at the right time.

The department works with all customers to connect them with services that address their immediate housing needs, including supporting them into the private rental market with products such as bond loans, rental grants and RentConnect services.

We have implemented Pathway Planning for customers which achieves tailored solutions through a holistic understanding of their needs, matching products that align to the customer's pathway and delivering integrated servicing.

The coordination of housing assistance for customers with high and complex needs is delivered with a strong focus on partnerships, referral pathways, support to access services and a multi-agency response.

During 2019-20, Queensland households or individuals received 220,547 instances of housing assistance including emergency housing, social housing, private market assistance and homelessness services.

The department facilitates the delivery of or directly delivers a range of programs, services and products to assist people to access or maintain housing in the private rental or ownership markets.

The private market products and services provided include:

Bond Loans – interest-free loans for the rental bond on properties to a maximum of four weeks rent. The term of each Bond Loan is negotiated with each client and is based on their individual circumstances. The maximum term is 30 months. A total of 25,307 households were assisted with bond loans in 2019-20 and to 30 September 2020.

Bond Loan Plus – provides the ability to borrow up to six weeks rent, interest and fee-free, repaid over 18 months. A total of 2043 households were assisted with bond loan plus in 2019-20 and to 30 September 2020.

Rental Grants – once-only, non-repayable grants equivalent to the amount of two weeks rent to help people move into a new rental home. A total of 10,964 households were assisted with rental grants in 2019-20 and to 30 September 2020.

RentConnect Advisory Service – assists Queenslanders to find, secure, and sustain a home to rent in the private market, including advisory services, tenancy assistance and tenancy guarantees. A total of 14,801 households were assisted with rent connect services in 2019-20 and to 30 September 2020.

Helping Hand Head Lease – supports tenants who wish to move into the private rental market but cannot access a tenancy on their own, due to non-financial barriers such as poor tenancy history. A total of 130 households were assisted with helping hand head leases in 2019-20 and to 30 September 2020.

Rental Security Subsidy – financial support to overcome unexpected, short-term life events (illness, relationship breakdown) to maintain a private tenancy. A total of 213 households were assisted with rental security subsidies in 2019-20 and to 30 September 2020.

No Interest Loan Scheme – set-up and sustainment loans providing an interest and fee free loan to cover the costs of removalists, key deposits, essential home furnishings, rent arrears and other expenses associated with obtaining or maintaining a private tenancy. Currently delivered by Good Shepherd Microfinance in Cairns, Gold Coast, Inala and Buranda. A total of 98 households were assisted with no interest loans in 2019-20 and to 30 September 2020.

Skillsets for Successful Tenancies – Dollars and Sense – Competency based, tenancy skills training course to equip people to access and sustain private tenancies (recognised by REIQ). A total of 1,196 households were assisted with this course in 2019-20 and to 30 September 2020.

Queensland Statewide Tenancy Advice and Referral Service – delivered by Tenants Queensland, provides advice and referral services to all Queensland tenants, including people living in social housing. A total of 154,430 households were assisted through this service in 2019-20 and to 30 September 2020.

Housing and Employment Program – housing subsidy and support for people undertaking education and training to improve their circumstances. A total of 119 households were assisted with this program in 2019-20 and to 30 September 2020.

Better Together Housing – links older women who are interested in sharing housing and cost of living expenses in Sunshine Coast and Mackay.

Home Assist Secure (HAS) – 41 services across Qld - supports older people and people with disability to age in place with advice and referral for low cost maintenance and repair services. A total of 55,236 households were assisted with this service in 2019-20 and to 30 September 2020.

Building Consumer Confidence – Queensland Retirement Village and Park Advice Service – Specialist advice and information to manufactured home and retirement village residents to understand and exercise their rights under the contracts and legislation governing their living arrangements. A total of 482 households were assisted with this service in 2019-20 and to 30 September 2020.

The private home ownership lending products provided by the department include:

Queensland Housing Finance Loan – lending assistance for Queenslanders experiencing difficulty in obtaining finance from a bank or building society to buy or build their own home. A total of 21 loans were provided in 2019-20 and to 30 September 2020.

Mortgage Relief Loan – for existing Queensland homeowners with a mortgage experiencing difficulties with their home loan repayments as a result of an unforeseen change in their circumstances (unemployment, accident, illness, etc), the interest free Mortgage Relief loan, of up \$20,000, is available to eligible Queenslanders. A total of two loans were provided in 2019-20 and to 30 September 2020.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Estimates Question on Notice Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020 No. 6

THE COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister outline how the Palaszczuk Government is investing to increase the supply of social and affordable housing for vulnerable Queensland and supporting Queensland construction jobs?

ANSWER

We have continued to deliver under the *Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027* new social and affordable housing and support for Queensland jobs. Through the \$1.6 billion *Housing Construction Jobs Program* we are on track to deliver over 5,500 new social and affordable housing dwellings through to 2027.

In 2020-21, our capital funding commitment for social housing is \$526.2 million which includes the *Housing Construction Jobs Program* and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing.

In 2020-21 we will deliver 452 new social housing dwellings and commence construction of a further 832 dwellings – the capital investment alone will support more than 1,540 full-time jobs in the construction sector.

This includes \$70 million in 2020-21 of the \$100 million housing construction – Works for Tradies program which will see the commencement of 215 new social homes in 2020-21 and will extend through to 2021-22. This will drive economic activity and support approximately 240 jobs in the construction sector. The department has already tendered 90 dwellings with contracts in place for 30 dwellings so far.

We are also building Queensland's social housing supply through Partnering for Growth with the community housing sector which is delivering new supply in a way that supports the growth and sustainability of the sector.

Since the launch of the Partnering for Growth initiative on 21 November 2018 through to 5 October 2020 – 1,121 new social and affordable dwellings have been approved to the value of \$203.1 million, supported by \$136.9 million of government investment.

The department is also collaborating with Queensland Treasury on the Build-to-Rent Pilot project to ensure key inner-city workers, such as health workers, have a new source of affordable housing close to their employment.

The Queensland Government has approved two Brisbane-based affordable housing projects by developers including:

- Frasers Property at 210 Brunswick Street Fortitude Valley
- Mirvac at 60 Skyring Terrace, Newstead.

These properties combined will offer almost 750 apartments in total with up to 240 dwellings to be provided at a discounted rent. It is anticipated construction will commence mid-2021 following the finalisation of designs for the projects, with operations expected to commence in 2023.

Through the 10-year Housing Strategy, we are not just building social housing supply, but providing a range of products and support services to meet individual needs.

The Queensland Government is delivering a comprehensive range of assistance to people across the housing continuum, including head-leasing properties from the private market to respond quickly to customer need, and new products and services to assist people with less complex needs to access or sustain private housing.

Community Support and Services Committee

Estimates Question on Notice Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020 No. 7

THE COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister outline how the Palaszczuk Government is providing protections for Queenslanders living in regulated accommodation?

ANSWER

The Palaszczuk Government supports and protects Queenslanders living in regulated accommodation sectors of residential (manufactured home) parks, residential services and retirement villages. It does this by maintaining a regulatory framework that includes legislation, registration and accreditation services, information and advice, and ensuring compliance with the legislative schemes.

The department works to protect consumers through a compliance and communication approach that strongly emphasises prevention and seeks voluntary compliance. Proactive engagement occurs with consumers, providers and operators to inform them of their rights and responsibilities and provide guidance about how to comply.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the department made 958 outbound welfare calls to providers across all sectors, including community housing providers, and took 120 COVID-19-related inbound phone calls. The department ensured that all sectors were informed about the Chief Health Officer's directions and that they understood how they should be applied in their settings by providing clarification, interpretation or further guidance.

To meet the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have worked actively across the regulated accommodation industries. Relationships with peak consumer, industry and community stakeholder groups have been vital to staying abreast of emerging issues and have enabled us to co-design solutions where required.

The Palaszczuk Government has also put in place a number of reforms aimed at further strengthening protections for those living in regulated accommodation.

Residential (manufactured homes) parks

In September 2019, implementation of changes made by the *Housing Legislation (Building Better Futures) Amendment Act 2017* (HLA Act) was concluded with amendment of the Manufactured Homes (Residential Park) Regulation 2017. Amendments made by the HLA Act included:

- new behavioural standards for home owners, park owners and staff
- improved fairness of site rent increase processes and utility charging
- a new, staged dispute resolution process
- improved precontractual disclosure and clearer cooling-off provisions
- emergency park access requirements
- new requirements to create and maintain emergency plans in residential parks.

In September 2020, the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020 was made to address concerns from home owner and industry stakeholders that processes for undertaking market rent reviews in residential parks were adversely impacted by COVID-19 restrictions.

This emergency regulation included:

- enhanced dispute resolution provisions for market reviews of site rent that occurred in the period 19 March 2020 to 31 December 2020
- a moratorium on market reviews which occurred in the period 25 May 2020 to 31 December 2020 (with an allowance for market reviews to be replaced by a CPI increase or continue where certain criteria were met)
- clarification that meetings can be held remotely using technology to ensure meeting requirements in the MHRP Act can take place with appropriate social distancing.

Residential services

In November 2017, the HLA Act amended the *Residential Services Accreditation Act 2002* so that the address of a service accommodating women and children fleeing domestic and family violence does not have to go on to the searchable register. Amendments also ensured Level 3 residential services, which are those providing a personal care service, must notify the department of the death of a resident in the service.

In July 2018, the Residential Services (Accreditation) Regulation 2018 was made. This regulation clarified accreditation standards and how these can be met to improve compliance and ensure resident choice about access to external service providers is respected.

Retirement villages

In November 2017, the HLA Act amended the *Retirement Villages Act 1999* (RV Act) with the implementation of reforms occurring in stages. All RV Act amendments made by the HLA Act have now commenced, including powers to require more standardised residence contracts and standardised village budgets and financial statements. A new Retirement Villages Regulation 2018 was made and sets out detailed requirements under particular HLA Act improvements.

The amendments brought about significant reforms increasing transparency and fairness in the relationship between village operators and residents. Key reforms include:

- new behavioural standards for operators, staff and residents
- requirements that operators must pay exit entitlements to former residents 18 months after permanent departure unless this would cause the operator financial hardship. This protection was extended by the *Health and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019* to require operator purchase of unsold units held by former residents under freehold title
- improved two-stage 21-day precontractual disclosure process prior to signing the residence contract including a new Village Comparison Document and Prospective Costs Document
- clarification of requirements for resident reinstatement of a unit to the condition it was in when the resident moved in, minus fair wear and tear
- improved access for residents and prospective residents to prescribed operational documents of the retirement village, to improve transparency of village operations
- improved processes for agreement on resale value of a unit and requirements for valuation of a unit by a registered valuer
- new processes for operators seeking to close or wind down a village, redevelop or transfer control of the village to another operator, including the requirement for operators to prepare plans and consult with residents.

In November 2019, a review of exit payment and freehold unit mandatory purchase laws started with approved terms of reference. During 2020, an independent review panel consulted stakeholders, delivering an Interim Report in September 2020 and a Final Report in November 2020. The Government is considering the review findings and recommendations of the Interim and Final Reports and will engage with stakeholders on the implementation of the recommendations.

Consultation on more standardised village budgets and financial statements to increase transparency and accountability for residents' funds, and more standardised residence contracts to make them fairer and clearer, has been undertaken and further consultation will take place before any changes to the regulation are made.

Consultation has also commenced on options to improve dispute resolution in residential parks and retirement villages.

A number of free practical support measures are provided for manufactured home owners in residential parks, retirement village residents and resident operated retirement villages:

- since February 2018, the Building Consumer Confidence program has funded resident and manufactured home owner peak groups to support consumers with implementation of the changes in the HLA Act
- since October 2019, the Queensland Resident Operated Retirement Village Support Service has assisted resident-operators of freehold villages to comply with legislation including unit buyback requirements or consider alternative operating models
- on-going legal information and advice is available to consumers from the Queensland Retirement Village and Park Advice Service which is conducted by the Caxton Legal Centre.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Estimates Question on Notice Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020 No. 8

THE COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister provide an update on the continued work of the Palaszczuk Government on providing digitally enabled, easy access to integrated, person centric and responsive Government services to Queenslanders?

ANSWER

The Queensland Government understands that Queenslanders expect their experiences with government services to be convenient, integrated and personalised, in line with expectations set by the private sector.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Queenslanders have been more reliant on government support with increasing expectations that services are easy to access no matter where you are or how you access it. Our commitment is to make Queensland the number one state in customer service delivery, by providing a world-class customer experience for Queenslanders.

In person, over the phone or on the internet, the Queensland Government puts Queenslanders front and centre and is making it easy to do business with the government – whether it's finding a concession, seeking relief from COVID-19 impacts, renewing your driver's licence, getting a camping permit, a building licence or finding out what you need to do to start a small business.

All Queensland Government departments have been working to improve the customer experience for their services to citizens and businesses. There is an initial bundle of services that have already been re-engineered by sitting down with citizens and completely mapping their service journey to make it better and where possible, put it online.

A few examples include Vehicle registration and renewal, Driver licence application/renewal, Prep L Learners Licensing Online Course, Community Recovery Grants Portal, Application for Blue Card, Change of Address, Application for Birth, Death, Marriage Certificate, Bond Loan and Rental Grant Application lodgement, Seniors Card applications, Application for a Camping Permit, Fuel Price Reporting aggregator and the Tenant Assist App.

During the pandemic services were rapidly designed and re-designed. The *COVID19.qld.gov.au* website was developed as the single authoritative source of state government information for citizens and businesses. In addition, the *COVID19 Rental Hub* was delivered as to provide clear up to date information on rental changes and protections put in place. The *Care Army* was launched, and members of the community could register as volunteers or those needing support. Finally, government quickly and efficiently delivered multiple online forms for Border movements and Hotel Quarantine as new Health Directives were issued.

The Queensland Government Regional Network (QGRN) has been initiated. From a pilot in Roma in 2016 to its commencement in 2017 providing better connectivity to support regional service delivery.

QGRN supports enhanced performance of regional data connectivity. Better government telecommunications support staff productivity and performance and make it easier for Queenslanders to interact with government services.

We are also working nationally to transform the moments that matter for people. We are collaborating an initiative known as “Birth of a Child” which is looking at the feasibility of a seamless, digital end-to end pathway for new parents to remove the burden of form-filling, leveraging information that the Government already holds and sharing that information across the necessary parties (Hospitals, Birth Deaths and Marriages, Medicare, Centrelink).

Since May 2020, we have also been working at a national level to address the life event of “*Experiencing a natural disaster*”. Significant bushfires and weather events in 2019 highlighted the need for an integrated response to disasters across all jurisdictions of government. The work aims to coordinate efforts across jurisdictions to make service improvements to ensure that citizens can adequately prepare, respond and recover from these events.

Finally, the “Looking for Work” life event is another important national initiative that we are collaborating on which aims to help Australians whose employment was impacted by COVID19. Work is focussed on identifying opportunities to consolidate the myriad of information with the view of providing proactive, tailored and clear solutions for people needing government support.

The Queensland Government is committed to delivering digitally enabled, easily accessible, integrated and responsive government services that meet the needs of Queenslanders.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICE COMMITTEE

Estimates Question on Notice

No. 9

Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020

THE COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister provide an update on the construction of the New Performing Arts Venue?

ANSWER

The New Performing Arts Venue is transformational for the Queensland arts and culture sector. It is the largest investment in our arts and cultural infrastructure since the Gallery of Modern Art, and a signifier of the maturity of Queensland's the sector. The new venue will make QPAC the nation's largest performing arts centre with the potential to welcome an additional 300,000 visitors per year.

The Queensland Government is proudly continuing its strong track record of investment in arts infrastructure. The 1500 seat capacity New Performing Arts Venue is on track to be completed in late 2022. Considerable progress has been made; preliminary site works and demolition works have been completed, and now major excavation and construction activities are underway.

The New Performing Arts Venue will support more than 134 full time equivalent design and construction jobs for Queenslanders, with more ongoing employment opportunities for artists and arts workers when open. So far, the project has inducted 356 workers on-site, who have worked more than 63,000 hours to date.

The project is also providing opportunities to skill the construction workforce for the future with over 22 apprentices working on the project to date. This project has delivered a \$30 million boost to the Queensland economy through contracts, utilising local consultancies, local sub-contractors and Queensland products to build the new theatre.

The theatre's design will deliver a performing arts venue of national significance that is supported by state-of-the-art digital and back-of-house technology.

The 1500 seat capacity is an ideal size to support the growth of Queensland's performing arts companies and will allow the Queensland Performing Arts Centre to secure more large touring shows that deliver significant cultural tourism outcomes for Queenslanders.

Almost half of audiences to QPAC's world-class musical theatre productions visit from outside the region. The New Performing Arts Venue will enable QPAC to program more of these productions, which support over 63,000 event-related nights in Brisbane per production, directly supporting cafes, restaurants and accommodation providers and adding approximately \$29 million to the local economy.

The response of performing artists and audiences during COVID-19 has made it clear that the new theatre needs to reach audiences beyond its auditorium and be able to tell Queensland stories to larger audiences state-wide, nationally, and globally. As such, the new theatre will have an increased focus on cutting edge digital capabilities to meet the future needs of the arts sector and audiences.

The new venue will also employ significant contemporary technological advancements back-of-house, to enable the efficient movement of set and scenery, and support a safer workplace for production employees.

We have one chance to get it right. The Government is proud to ensure the investment needed to deliver Queenslanders, our visitors and the performing arts sector a truly world class performing arts venue.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICE COMMITTEE

Estimates Question on Notice Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020 No. 10

THE COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister outline the programs under the Arts and Cultural Recovery Package aimed at supporting the live music sector to unite and recover from the impacts of COVID-19?

ANSWER

The live music sector is a crucial part of Queensland's arts and cultural ecosystem and makes an important economic, social and cultural contribution across the State.

The Queensland Government's \$22.5 million Arts and Cultural Recovery Package includes a number of targeted programs to support live music venues to re-open and continue to program artists and engage audiences across Queensland.

This includes the Live Music Venue Support program, which opened for applications in July 2020, and has provided much-needed cash grants to live music venues that have been significantly impacted by COVID-19. Grants of up to \$25,000 are available, depending on venue capacity.

As at 31 October, a total of \$458,862 has been provided across 24 music venues to support re-opening and recovery from the impacts of COVID-19. Grant recipients include iconic Brisbane venue, *The Zoo*, *Sol Bar* on the Sunshine Coast, the *Kuranda Amphitheatre* and many more across Queensland.

The Play Local program, which provided funding to Queensland's live music and performance venues to program Queensland artists and arts organisations during COVID-19 and the recovery phase, funded a total of \$429,272 towards 26 successful grants for live music projects.

Queensland Music Festival was awarded \$250,000 through the Spaces and Places program for the *Outback Music Trail*. This funding will deliver an innovative new music pilgrimage, including a range of performances and events, at locations along the Warrego Highway in June 2021.

These are some of the initiatives that have assisted the live music sector to progressively reopen under the Queensland Government's Roadmap to easing restrictions.

The Government consulted extensively with the arts and cultural sector, including live music sector representatives, in the development of the \$22.5 million Arts and Cultural Recovery Package and will continue to consult with the sector as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Estimates Question on Notice Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020 No. 11

THE COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION

With reference to page 107 of SDS Volume 1, which relates to improving the wellbeing of individuals and communities through quality responsive services—

Will the Minister advise, between 2017/18 and 2020/21 to date, (a) the total amount provided to Queenslanders under the Commonwealth-State Disaster Funding Arrangements to Queenslanders, (b) the total number who received funding, (c) a list of what funding was provided for i.e. bushfire relief and (d) of the total amount provided, how much was provided by the State Government?

ANSWER

Under the Commonwealth-State Disaster Funding Arrangements between 2017-18 and 7 December 2020 the department has supported individuals and communities impacted by the following disasters:

- Central Coast Severe Weather and Flooding, October 2017
- North Queensland Flooding and Tropical Cyclone Nora, March 2018
- Mareeba Tablelands Bushfire, September 2018
- Central Queensland Bushfires, November 2018
- North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough, January – February 2019
- Severe Tropical Cyclone Trevor and associated low pressure system, March 2019
- Queensland Bushfires, September – December 2019
- South East Queensland Hailstorm, 31 October 2020.

Under these arrangements 155,773 Queenslanders benefitted from funding totalling \$42,065,988 which includes a contribution from the State Government of \$10,516,497.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Estimates Question on Notice Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020 No. 12

THE COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION

With reference to page 110 of SDS Volume 1, which relates to administering grants programs that support a range of community projects and initiatives—

Will the Minister advise, between 2018/19 to 2020/21 to date (reported separately) (a) the total number of grants programs delivered to support community projects and initiatives, (b) detail of what the programs were and (c) the total cost (reported separately per grant program)?

ANSWER

- (a) Six grants programs have been delivered to support community projects and initiatives.
- (b) Refer to the below table for the detail of the program
- (c) The total cost is \$16,327,067. Refer to the below table for the cost per program.

Note this does not include grants made under the Commonwealth-State Disaster Relief Funding Arrangements.

Name of Program	Details of Program	2018-19 \$	2019-20 \$	2020-21 YTD Nov \$	Total Funding \$ (ex GST)
Emergency Relief	The Emergency Relief grants program distributes food vouchers, food parcels and payment of essential bills e.g. utilities to families and individuals in immediate financial crisis. This program aims to prevent future financial crises by referring people to appropriate financial and social support services.	2,021,933	2,097,214	2,108,621	6,227,768
Emergency Relief - COVID	To assist people impacted by COVID-19 with emergency relief including food vouchers, food parcels and payment of essential bills e.g. utilities.	-	1,056,984	-	1,056,984
Community Drought Support Program	The Community Drought Support Program aims to strengthen the resilience of drought-affected Queenslanders by building on existing community support mechanisms to increase access and participation in the community. This is done through a contribution to the delivery of community events or activities and the delivery of Flexible Financial Hardship funding.	33,800 (final payment from 2017-18)	4,878,083	121,917	5,033,800
Regional School Breakfast Program	The Queensland Budget 2019-20 provided increased funding to expand the School Breakfast Program to additional schools across regional Queensland and paid to individual schools, via P&Cs, Chaplaincy organisations etc. The funding is administered by the department in consultation with the Department of Education.	-	260,000	267,000	527,000
Thriving Queensland Communities Grants for Neighbourhood and Community Centres	The Thriving Queensland Communities Grants for Neighbourhood and Community Centres provided three rounds of funding to support and build on existing engagement and networking with local communities that establishes a stronger platform to listen to local community priorities.	839,158 (part Round 1 & Round 2)	-	978,400 (Round 3)	1,817,558
Thriving Cohesive Communities Grants	The Thriving Cohesive Communities grants program provides funding for projects that strengthen family and community connection and support young people to take up meaningful roles in their community. Funded projects form part of the Queensland Government's social cohesion program to build cohesive and resilient Queensland communities and foster a strong sense of belonging.	-	673,888	990,069	1,663,957

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Estimates Question on Notice Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020 No. 13

THE COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION

With reference to page 115 of the SDS 2019-20 service area highlight percentage of under occupied government-owned and managed social rental housing—

Will the Minister provide details on the total number of government-owned and managed social rental housing (houses, units etc.) including by region and the percentage that are ‘under-occupied’ and un-occupied?

ANSWER

The department actively manages under-occupancy and vacancy turnaround of properties to maximise the use of housing assets within the portfolio for allocation to people in need of housing assistance. The department actively works with tenants to relocate households to more appropriately sized housing where tenant’s needs, and available stock can be aligned.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic saw Queenslanders stabilising their tenancies in the private market and social housing, with a focus on safety and reducing unnecessary movement.

Under-occupancy rates are impacted by the profile of the properties in the portfolio and the change in the needs of people in social housing over time. As a model landlord, the department will always have a level of under-occupancy given the vulnerability and complex needs of the people housed. This can include an ongoing need for the specific features of a property, to support ageing in place or a need to remain in the local area to access support services. A property is considered under-occupied where a household resides in a property which has two or more unoccupied bedrooms over the bedroom entitlement.

The department works with households who are under-occupying properties to consider their ongoing needs to determine whether they have a continued need to remain in the particular property. The department will consider the individual circumstances of households including the current demand for the dwelling and the availability of suitable alternative housing when managing underoccupancy.

The department provides homes to some of the most vulnerable people in Queensland, many of whom require additional support to sustain a successful tenancy. The department manages its vacancies to ensure people in high housing need receive timely assistance and to minimise financial costs through loss of rent.

The department commences managing the allocation of vacant properties at the point when the property becomes vacant, while the maintenance work is underway; identifying households from the housing register whose needs match the vacant property.

There is a 1.5% vacancy rate for the portfolio of public housing units across Queensland. Vacancy rates reflects a point in time capture of tenancy movement across the portfolio as at 30 September 2020 and is consistent with the average vacancy rate for the private rental market which ranged from 1.2% to 3.1% across Local Government Areas for 2019-20.

Under-Occupancy

Government owned and managed social housing	As at 30 September 2020		
	Current tenancies (number)	Under-occupied	Percent (%) under-occupied
Queensland	54,299	8,545	15.7%
Brisbane Region	14,790	1,715	11.6%
South West Region	16,305	2,965	18.2%
Central and North Coast Region	12,925	2,333	18.1%
Northern Region	9,960	1,479	14.8%
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Delivery (Thursday Island)	319	53	16.6%

Vacant Dwellings

Government owned and managed social housing	As at 30 September 2020			
	Dwellings under vacant maintenance (number)	Dwellings being allocated (number)	All dwellings (number)	Percent (%) Vacant dwellings
Queensland	518	310	828	1.5%
Brisbane Region	113	49	162	1.1%
South West Region	174	111	285	1.8%
Central and North Coast Region	114	90	204	1.6%
Northern Region	114	58	172	1.7%
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Delivery (Thursday Island)	3	2	5	0.7%

Community Support and Services Committee

Estimates Question on Notice Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020 No. 14

THE COMMITTEE ASKED MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION

With reference to page 114 of the SDS, will the Minister advise (in table format) (a) how many complaints about tenants in government housing relating to illegal activity were received by the Department in 2019-20, (b) how many of these led to eviction/removal from their Departmental property, (c) how many of those were subsequently given any other form of public housing assistance and (d) how many properties required decontamination work after the eviction and what was the cost involved?

ANSWER

There is zero tolerance for criminal behaviour and illegal activity and there are strong behaviour management policies in place to ensure that tenants meet their obligations to pay rent, look after their properties and be good neighbours.

These are fundamental responsibilities of any tenant in Queensland, whether in a public or private tenancy.

The department does not discriminate against vulnerable people; public housing tenants have the same rights to natural justice as private market tenants.

Complaints about Illegal activity (including drug labs and drug supply) in public housing – 2019-20 FY	
Complaints received ¹	391
Eviction due to illegal activity from public housing	6
Other public housing assistance provided to households evicted for illegal activity	0
Remediation work number of properties	2
Remediation work associated costs	\$25,472

Note: 1. The 391 complaints relates to 319 tenancies

Community Support and Services Committee

Estimates Question on Notice Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020 No. 15

THE COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE ASKED MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH) —

QUESTION

With reference to page 114 of the SDS, will the Minister advise how many applications were on the social housing register for each month from April 2019 to the present (reported in table format, from low to very high, by housing need)?

ANSWER

Social Housing is an important part of the options on offer to meet housing needs of Queenslanders; but it's not the only type of housing that can resolve a household's housing need. Eligible households can apply for social housing and will appear on the housing register while the department works with them actively to meet their housing needs.

The department actively works with households taking the time to have deeper conversations to better understand their needs and circumstances more holistically to make it as easy as possible to access housing products and services, and coordinated referrals to support services, that address their immediate and longer-term housing and support needs.

In 2019-20 the department provided over 220,500 housing assistance responses to households or individuals including those on the register, including emergency housing, social housing, private market assistance and homelessness services.

Households can remain on the register even if they are housed through the variety of departmental products, if that is their preference.

Number of applications by segment of need				
Month	Very high	High	Moderate	Lower
Apr-19	8,924	6,184	4,603	629
May-19	9,202	6,334	4,590	629
Jun-19	9,457	6,378	4,600	605
Jul-19	9,883	6,584	4,596	619
Aug-19	10,184	6,757	4,631	630
Sep-19	10,784	7,221	4,915	664
Oct-19	11,517	7,729	5,124	684
Nov-19	11,871	7,503	5,041	676
Dec-19	12,136	7,315	4,984	671
Jan-20	12,433	7,112	4,894	664
Feb-20	12,753	6,885	4,810	653
Mar-20	13,312	6,726	4,727	637

Apr-20	13,704	6,498	4,606	624
May-20	14,182	6,289	4,522	620
Jun-20	14,698	6,116	4,438	601
Jul-20	15,200	5,919	4,346	583
Aug-20	15,651	5,712	4,230	574
Sep-20	16,270	5,443	4,130	554

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

**Estimates Question on Notice
Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020
No. 16**

THE COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister provide the specific page and line item reference in the budget papers for the \$3.5 million commitment to a Queensland Holocaust Museum announced as an election commitment?

ANSWER

This matter falls under the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs' portfolio. I refer the Committee to the relevant Minister.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Estimates Question on Notice Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020 No. 17

THE COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION

With reference to bonds held and discharged by the Residential Tenancies Authority—

Will the Minister advise how many bonds were released 100 per cent to the owner in the following periods (a) January-June 2019, (b) July-December 2019, (c) January-June 2020 and (d) July 2020 onwards?

ANSWER

Tenancies where a full refund was paid to the managing party:

Period	No. of tenancies
January – June 2019	25,046
July – December 2019	23,122
January – June 2020	23,292
July 2020 to 8 December 2020 ^	16,268

^ recent figures exclude refunds currently being disputed through the RTA or the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal and are subject to change.

^The RTA does not have knowledge of ownership of a rental property, the information provided has utilised the managing party as a proxy of the owner.

Community Support and Services Committee

Estimates Question on Notice Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020 No. 18

THE COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE ASKED
MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL
ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH) —

QUESTION

With reference to support for renters during the COVID-19 recession –

Will the Minister advise how many applications were made (a) to RentConnect for support finding a tenancy in March-September 2020 versus March-September 2019 and (b) for bond loans and rental grants in March-September 2020 versus March-September 2019?

ANSWER

- a) The RentConnect service is not delivered through an application process. The RentConnect service is delivered by department staff through discussion and one-on-one practical assistance and general advice to people.

Through RentConnect services, Queenslanders access assistance to explore all options to find, apply for and/or maintain a place to rent. This service also helps people who may have non-financial barriers to also access the private rental market.

- b) The department works with all customers to connect them with services that address their immediate housing needs based on their circumstances, needs and eligibility, including supporting them into the private rental market with products such as Bond Loans, Bond Loans Plus and Rental Grants.

From March to September 2019 there were a total of 16,460 approved applications for Rental Grants, Bond Loans and Bond Loan Plus; compared to 19,097 approved applications for the March to September 2020 period.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

**Estimates Question on Notice
Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020
No. 19**

THE COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION

With reference to mandatory conciliation by the Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA) under COVID-19 emergency provisions –

Will the Minister advise how many mandatory conciliations (a) have been completed by the RTA under these provisions and (b) under these provisions are outstanding?

ANSWER

- a) During the mandatory conciliation period, 2,646 disputes were conciliated by the RTA.
- b) No mandatory conciliations under these provisions are outstanding.

Community Support and Services Committee

Estimates Question on Notice Asked on Monday, 7 December 2020 No. 20

THE COMMITTEE ASKED MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH) —

QUESTION

Will the Minister provide the amount of taxpayers funding spent on rectifying damage caused in public housing properties in 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 and the budget for 2020/21?

ANSWER

The department aims to optimise social housing assets and provides safe and secure homes through regular upgrade and maintenance works with focus on tenant's safety and extending the remaining useful life of the social housing portfolio.

Planned maintenance and upgrade programs ensure social housing properties provide contemporary amenity, are safe and secure and where possible provides accessibility features.

The department funds the cost of maintenance and repairs through the planned and responsive social housing maintenance budget. In 2020/21, a budget of \$252.8M is allocated for planned and responsive social rental housing maintenance activities, excluding Indigenous communities.

Expenditure for planned and responsive social housing maintenance for 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 is outlined below.

Maintenance (including planned and responsive)	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Total Actual Expenditure	\$235.6M	\$248.9M	\$247.1M

Costs for damage that is over \$10,000 are referred to the Queensland Government Insurance Fund as an insurance claim.