Briefing Material for the Economics and Governance Committee – Queensland Parliament

Inquiry into the Queensland Government's economic response to COVID-19

Department of Housing and Public Works

INTRODUCTION

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact across Queensland with a profound impact on the community, workers, business, industry and the economy as a whole.

2. The Queensland Government has met the COVID-19 crisis by continuing to deliver critical frontline housing services and requests for government assistance through Smart Service Queensland and other key cross government delivery functions. The crisis has also required agility in the response of government agencies to meet the changing priorities associated with each phase of response and into recovery associated with implementation of the Roadmap to Easing Restrictions.

3. The Department of Housing and Public Works has a broad portfolio of interests, touching on a range of industries, and supports individual Queenslanders, industry (including contractors, providers and suppliers), government agencies and other jurisdictions. Through this period, the department has played a key role in the response:
   - to people who are homeless, needing housing assistance or at increased risk of infection due to COVID-19
   - the procurement of equipment and services to support other government agencies
   - supporting our network of building suppliers and contractors to continue to operate and deliver government projects and programs
   - managing digital and other enquiry channels for members of the public
   - development of sector and industry assistance for sport and recreation organisations and housing and homelessness services.

4. Within the context of the crisis, the Department of Housing and Public Works has introduced a range of support measures for the housing, homelessness, building, procurement, digital and sport industries such as:
   - assisting over 2,700 Queenslanders at risk of becoming homeless were eligible to receive the COVID-19 Rental Grant, alongside other emergency protections were introduced to protect tenants and property owners alike
   - finding accommodation solutions for over 3,200 Queenslanders in need and requiring immediate accommodation through the Emerging Housing Assistance Response and $24.7M Housing and Homelessness COVID-19 Immediate Response Fund (IRF)
   - preparing for the return to organised sport, recreation and fitness, $51.3M in funding has been provided to support the sector to be ready to encourage Queenslanders to resume physical activity
   - developing a COVID-19 Supplier Portal to provide the details of suppliers of a variety of products, with critical supplies being provided to 24 agencies and 35 new suppliers established for the procurement of critical Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
   - processing faster payment with over 96% of QBuild payments fast tracked to suppliers in the construction industry, worth over $318.5M
   - developed the COVID-19 website as a single source of information for Queenslanders about the COVID-19 response and recovery
   - worked closely with other government agencies to conduct an outbound campaign in support of vulnerable Queenslanders

- ramped up triage services with over 387,000 COVID-19 related calls directed through the Smart Service Queensland managed 13Health line, and during the peak over 29,000 calls managed within one day.
- facilitating more than 262,000 outbound welfare calls made to vulnerable Queenslanders and over 21,000 calls to people directed to self-quarantine
- worked closely with the former Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning and Queensland Treasury as part of the Government's Economic Recovery Plan to develop a longer-term phased approach to support the building and construction industry through COVID-19
- administered a $21.25M expansion of the Household Resilience Program (comprising $11.25M in state funding and $10M in Australian Government funding) to help eligible home owners in coastal parts of Queensland improve the resilience of their homes against cyclones.

KEY POINTS

Housing support for the homeless and Queenslanders in financial hardship, including efforts to expand service levels while adapting service and staffing models to implement social distancing and reduce the risks associated with COVID-19

5. Housing and homelessness support has been provided for Queenslanders affected by COVID-19, including those who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or experiencing financial hardship.

6. This includes continued essential service delivery alongside expanding services, supports and housing levels across the State while adapting and designing services and resource models for safe, secure accommodation solutions that allow for social distancing and reduce risks and impacts of COVID-19 on the community.

7. Housing Service Centres remained open, delivering housing to individuals and families as an essential service. Some changes have been made to the way housing services are delivered and measures have been implemented to support good practice, meet Health directives and protect our staff, customers and the broader community in managing the impacts of COVID-19 including:
   - Encouraging use of telephone and online service channels where possible
   - Screening of customers when attending face to face service environments
   - Adjusting front-of-house set-ups to maintain 1.5 metre social distancing guidelines
   - Increasing cleaning in high contact areas and installing fixed hand sanitiser units
   - Adding COVID-19 safety alerts to Service Delivery software systems where required
   - Postponing community facing events
   - Update of Smart Service Queensland call centre and QGSC scripts to incorporate screening scripts
   - Ensuring appropriate distancing between workstations; observing the four-square metre rule in meeting rooms; limiting numbers of people in small enclosed spaces like lifts and vehicles.

8. The department assessed the ongoing delivery of all housing services to remote communities while COVID-19 travel restrictions are in place. Approaches to delivering essential services were agreed with each individual Council given variations in travel restrictions and each community's specific needs and with reduced or no physical contact between departmental staff and clients.

9. The department worked closely with peak and industry bodies, funded and regulated providers on a weekly basis to coordinate the COVID-19 response to supporting Queenslanders with housing assistance across the housing continuum.

10. On 25 March 2020, the $24.7 million Housing and Homelessness COVID-19 Immediate Response Fund (IRF) was announced to enhance existing housing and homelessness service offerings, including: additional brokerage funds for support services and accommodation; outreach to people rough sleeping; emergency accommodation; expanded Home Assist Secure services to assist older people and people with disability to remain safely in their homes; and supports for frontline service providers including funding and provision of PPE and cleaning.

11. The IRF included fast tracking Round 5 of the $2.5 million Dignity First Fund, to fund initiatives to assist with immediate COVID-19 responses. https://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/about/initiatives/dignity-first

12. Initiated on 3 April 2020, the Emergency Housing Assistance Response (EHAR) matched available short-term accommodation with individuals and families requiring an immediate solution, including those experiencing domestic and family violence (DFV). In total, 3,288 people have been assisted. This included use of modest hotels and motels, allowing them to keep local jobs while they experienced a downturn in their usual occupancy.

13. The EHAR was enacted by the department and funded providers around Queensland and leveraged off the Coordinated Housing and Homelessness Response – Integrating Services initiative, established in 2019 with a total $1.93 million investment under Partnering for Impact to reduce homelessness, in nine locations – Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Sunshine Coast, Moreton Bay, Brisbane, Redland, Logan and the Gold Coast.

14. In inner-Brisbane, a Rapid Housing Response was enacted involving a partnership with apartment operator Scape and four existing funded service providers to relocate up to 300 at-risk Queenslanders. The focus has been on moving people from sleeping rough or living in congregate homelessness shelters, with shared facilities and little space for social distancing, into self-contained accommodation with around-the-clock support and security. This move has supported the retention of local jobs at the Scape building while international student numbers are low.

15. The department continues to work with funded providers to transition people from temporary accommodation to medium or longer-term social, community and private housing. This includes working with funded community housing providers to grow their portfolios and increase housing under Partnering for Growth, through increases in headleasing within existing funding and mixed finance construction projects. See https://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/about/initiatives/partnering-growth

16. The department implemented a range of hardship measures on 26 March 2020 to support vulnerable social housing tenants to have financial and housing stability through the COVID-19 pandemic; including an evictions moratorium, pausing rent arrears recovery and debt management activity and supporting households to manage financial concerns regarding rent payments on a case by case basis.

17. Tenants and customers were made aware of these hardship measures, as well as additional support and health-related services available and any changes to servicing through regular communications.

18. The department has been working closely with Community Housing Providers (CHPs) in responding to the impacts of COVID-19. CHPs have been encouraged to take action to implement hardship responses, that exceed the legislated requirements, in a way that recognises the unique circumstances of each household and accords with their organisation's mission within the social housing system.

19. All announced Commonwealth COVID-19 stimulus payments are considered as non-assessable income for the purposes of determining social housing eligibility, private housing eligibility and rent calculation for Public Housing and Community Housing rent policies.

20. Tenants who find themselves experiencing health or financial hardship as a result of COVID-19, either as a result of lost employment or reduced hours, are encouraged to contact their local Housing Service Centres or their CHP to discuss their specific circumstances.

21. As social housing tenants are covered under the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008*, the protections under the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020 are available to them.

Information and support for rental tenants in financial hardship as a result of COVID-19, and for their property manager and owners (including support for negotiating arrangements for COVID-19 tenancy variations to residential tenancy agreements)

Measures to support residential tenancies during COVID-19 emergency period

22. On 1 April 2020, the COVID-19 Rental Grant was announced to assist Queenslanders who had lost their job due to the impacts of COVID-19 and who did not have access to other financial assistance. The COVID-19 Rental Grant was a time-limited grant supporting households to cover the gap until tenants, who had lost their jobs as a result of COVID-19, started receiving their Centrelink payments and while other legislative measures to protect tenants were approved.

23. The COVID-19 Rental Grants closed at 5:00p.m on Monday 27 April 2020 with a total of 8,545 applications received. All applications have been assessed and processed with over 2,670 rental grants paid directly to property owners (lessors) to date at a total value of $4.39M and over 340 further payments being transferred to lessors on confirmation of bank transfer details to the value of $0.56M (as at 12 June 2020). Customers who did not meet the eligibility requirements continue to be referred to the RTA Residential Rental Hub for support with their private rental tenancies or provided with information and referral for other housing assistance products and services that may assist them.

24. A Residential Rental Hub was established as a central point for information about COVID-19 changes affecting renting in Queensland. Between 8 April and 5 June the Rental Hub had over 346,834 views.

25. Special protections were introduced through the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020* (the Regulation) to implement the Queensland Government response to COVID-19 impacts on residential leases including the National Cabinet agreed moratorium on evictions for rent arrears, additional limited grounds for owners to end tenancies such as sale of rental premises, and preventing tenancy database listings for rent arrears caused by COVID-19 impacts.

26. These measures are the result of extensive consultation with the residential rental sector. The Queensland Government has listened to stakeholders' concerns and worked closely with groups such as the Real Estate Institute of Queensland, Tenants Queensland, QShelter and Queensland Council of Social Services.

27. Tenants are suffering excessive hardship due to COVID-19 under s.6 of the Regulation if:
    - they or someone they care for suffers from COVID-19;
    - their place of employment, trade or business is closed or restricted by public health directions;
    - they are self-isolating because they are a vulnerable person, or live with or are a primary carer of a vulnerable person;
    - a travel restriction imposed by a public health direction or other law prevents them working or returning home, or
    - the COVID-19 emergency has prevented them leaving or returning to Australia AND
    - their household has lost 25% or more of their income or the rent payable is 30% or more of their reduced income.

28. Other measures in the Regulation include:
    - allowing tenants to refuse entry for non-essential reasons, including routine repairs and inspections, if they or a member of their household has a higher risk profile
    - preventing property owners from ending tenancies unless the tenant has seriously breached the tenancy agreement, including malicious damage to the rental property or anti-social behaviour
    - limiting break lease fees for tenants in excessive financial hardship who need to end a fixed term tenancy early due to the financial, health or personal safety impacts of COVID-19

- preventing tenancy database listings of tenants in rent arrears due to the impacts of COVID-19
- providing further protections for tenants experiencing domestic and family violence
- requiring parties to undertake conciliation to resolve disputes and enable the Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA) to enforce conciliated agreements through penalty units.

29. Support for property owners include:
    - removing obligations for property owners for routine repairs and inspections
    - requiring tenants to undertake virtual inspections if they refuse physical entry
    - additional grounds to end a tenancy, including sale of premises and owner occupation if they or their immediate family need to move into the property
    - requesting tenants to prove financial hardship, with an obligation of tenants to inform them of any changes to their financial status which make them no longer COVID-19 affected
    - the government has not established any rule which requires a property owner to agree to a rent reduction, and tenants and property owners should work together to reach agreement about whether rent should be varied and the period for which any agreed reduced rent applies
    - as part of the terms of any agreed rent variation, tenants may be required to repay rent arrears at the end of the emergency period.

30. To ensure a fair outcome, the circumstances of both parties should be considered, including those of the property owner and any hardship they may be experiencing. If agreement cannot be reached, parties are required to undertake conciliation to resolve disputes with the RTA.

31. A Residential Tenancies Practice Guide to help tenants, property owners and agents navigate the COVID-19 response package and agree ways to manage impacts and sustain tenancies was developed. The Guide provides practical advice about the Regulation and other support available to tenants and property owners. It helps parties determine if a residential tenancy is in financial distress due to COVID-19, negotiate workable rents and repayment arrangements, and provide clarity as to approved reasons for ending a tenancy during the pandemic. As at 5 June 2020, the Guide had been downloaded 12,848 times.

32. Tenants unable to pay their usual rent due to income loss associated with COVID-19 are encouraged to discuss their situation with their property owner or manager and provide their property owner or manager with documentation which supports that they are experiencing hardship. As at 5 June 2020, 8,784 self-assessment forms had been downloaded from the Rental Hub, and 4,088 self-assessment forms started.

33. Mandatory conciliation with the RTA is required if parties are unable to reach an agreement. As at 5 June 2020, the RTA had received 1,766 requests for conciliation of COVID-19 pandemic related disputes, and had conciliated 1,425 matters. Of these, 1,102 were resolved, 323 unresolved, 111 parties were unavailable and 56 were withdrawn. Overall, 77% of finalised conciliation requests were successfully resolved and finalised within 6.4 days of receiving the application.

34. The COVID-19 Housing Security Sub-Committee of the Ministerial Housing Council was formed in April 2020 to oversee implementation of the response and advise on impacts and/or unintended consequences of the regulatory measures. The group comprises the RTA, Real Estate Institute Queensland, Tenants Queensland, QShelter and Queensland Council of Social Services. It has met four times (30 April, 6 May, 13 May and 28 May 2020).

35. The Subcommittee monitors the implementation of the COVID-19 Regulation through the weekly collection of key volume data and statistics. Refer **Attachment 1** for overview of monitoring data as at 5 June 2020.

The provision of information and advice to owners and managers of manufactured homes and residential parks, owners and operators of retirement villages, and residential service providers

36. Approximately 80,000 Queenslanders live in regulated accommodation in the three sectors:
    - manufactured homes/residential parks (at 30 May 2020 in 201 registered parks with nearly 20,000 homes)
    - retirement villages (at 30 May 2020, 326 villages and in excess of 30,000 homes). It should be noted that almost half (141) of these retirement villages are co-located with Commonwealth regulated aged residential services commonly known as nursing homes
    - residential services (at 30 May 2020, 275 registered services with approximately 8,000 residents).

37. Commencing mid-March 2020 the department met weekly with peak industry and resident groups from these three sectors, after seven weeks, from 8 May 2020 onward, these meetings were adjusted to occur fortnightly in recognition that the "crisis" period had passed.

38. These meetings were supplemented by specific meetings with key industry peaks. Specific requests were responded to:
    - manufactured homes sector sought relief from market rent reviews during COVID-19
    - retirement village operators sought relief from the need to pay exit entitlements 18 months after they have permanently left the village This has not been supported to proceed at this time, noting that there is an existing mechanism in the legislation through which impacted providers can apply to QCAT for an extension of time if the payment of exit entitlements would cause them undue financial hardship. The department will continue to monitor impacts through the regular engagement mechanisms with stakeholders.
    - residential services operators sought a reliable source of supply for PPE and materials to deep clean premises. This was organised and access arrangements established, noting that no service has had recourse to utilise this.

39. The department's Regulatory Services received 122 calls related to COVID-19. The majority of concerned issues with business continuity (51 calls), while a smaller number related to specific enquiries about quarantine (5 calls) or involved reporting issues related to a diagnosis (7 calls).

40. Regulatory Services made 980 welfare calls to regulated services, primarily targeted to those services identified as at greater risk.

41. The department initiated regular email communications with the regulated industries from 13 March 2020 with the email out of a COVID-19 factsheet. On 24 March 2020, a broadcast email was sent to providers in each industry which included a suggestion they should review and update as necessary their business continuity plan to ensure they were prepared in the event of an outbreak in or near their service. Multiple communications have been provided to the sectors generally mirroring those of the Chief Health Officer directives and in many instances providing supplementary information to assist providers operationalise these.

42. From 11 May 2020 Regulated Services switched communications from broadcast emails to website updates, and on that date communicated that it would do so to all providers. Website and links follow:

    Retirement village Business Queensland webpage (operator facing)
    https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/service-industries-professionals/housing-accommodation/operating-retirement-village/covid-19-advice

Retirement village franchise webpage (resident facing)
https://www.qld.gov.au/housing/buying-owning-home/housing-options-in-retirement/

Manufactured home parks Business Queensland webpage
https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/service-industries-professionals/housing-accommodation/managing-manufactured-homes/covid-19-advice

Residential services Business Queensland webpage
https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/service-industries-professionals/housing-accommodation/residential-service/covid-19-advice

Procurement initiatives to support the engagement of small businesses in government public works and service provision.

COVID-19 Response

43. The Government's procurement response to COVID-19 includes the recently released small and medium enterprises (SME) procurement target and associated measures, as announced by the Minister for Employment, Small Business and Training. From 1 July 2020:
    - all agencies subject to the Queensland Procurement Policy (QPP) will be required to collectively meet a target of 25 per cent of the State's procurement spend by value from Queensland SMEs, increasing to 30 per cent by 30 June 2022. This will be achieved across the six procurement categories by :
        - incorporating Queensland SME spend targets for the category and subcategories in annual plans;
        - reserving certain government procurement contracts for Queensland SMEs only ('set-asides')
        - inviting at least one Queensland SME to quote or tender for new procurement valued at $250,000 or less
        - marketing development initiatives for SMEs to grow their capabilities and competitiveness.
    - the Government will reduce the standard invoice payment timeframe from 30 calendar days to 20 days, as part of the On-time Payment Policy
    - payment terms for all agencies, subject to the QPP, have been reduced to expedite supplier payment to help support businesses during COVID-19. This means correctly rendered, valid invoices from all suppliers regardless of size will be paid as soon as they are received and processed. Payment should be made within 20 calendar days from the time of receipt. Given their reliance on cashflow, this is particularly beneficial for SMEs.

44. Additionally, the Department of Housing and Public Works has established a COVID-19 Procurement Taskforce, made up of representatives from key agencies across the Queensland public sector, which has guided the following initiatives to help government suppliers, including small businesses:
    - established COVID-19 Procurement as a dedicated communication channel for businesses to get in contact to progress offers to supply or regarding any procurement-related issues they may be experiencing. It can also receive offers from businesses to supply goods or services. Business can access this channel by calling 1300 FOR COVID (1300 367 268) or emailing covid19procurement@hpw.qld.gov.au
    - conducted a series of online Buy Queensland engagement sessions to provide information about government procurement during COVID-19. For suppliers, to date, this has included a webinar, posting a video regarding capability statement development, and a series of regionally based engagement sessions. Further information is available at: https://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/about/strategy/buy-qld/engage/roadshows-and-events/supplier-events

- developed the COVID-19 Supplier Portal to support Queensland during the COVID-19 recovery, by providing access to details of suppliers of a variety of products and services. Suppliers can register their ability to supply a selection of 'in demand' goods and services, and both Queensland Government and private industry buyers can access their details to find what they need. The portal can be accessed at : https://covid19procurement.hpw.qld.gov.au/
- issued a range of Procurement Advisory Notices to assist government buyers and suppliers to navigate COVID-19 procurement. These can be accessed at https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/procurement-policy

General support for Government procurement from SME

45. The Government's *Buy Queensland* approach supports small businesses by requiring that small businesses are given a full, fair and reasonable opportunity to supply to government. Implementation is supported by the application of a weighting of up to 30% to a local benefits test, in significant tender processes, and by ensuring that at least one regional and one Queensland supplier, where possible, is invited to submit a tender or quote (noting that SMEs make up a large percentage of Queensland businesses).

46. The ICT Small and Medium Enterprise Scheme enables SMEs to gain greater access to Queensland Government procurement by ensuring that market assessments have been undertaken to identify appropriate SMEs and obtain offers; and in tenders, allocating 10% of the total 100% evaluation criteria for the purpose of weighting SMEs vs large businesses. Government entities are also able to directly engage SMEs for the provision of solutions up to $500,000 that demonstrate value for Queensland in addressing government priorities.

47. Support has also been provided to suppliers, including small businesses in particular, to help them understand government requirements, is available in a series of videos on the Business Queensland website at www.business.qld.gov.au.

48. Food and beverage suppliers, who are often also SMEs, can apply to be listed on the Queensland Government Food and Beverage Supplier Directory, also available at www.business.qld.gov.au. Over 500 businesses are currently listed on the Directory.

Stakeholder Engagement

49. The Procurement Industry Advisory Group provides coordinated, strategic level industry input to the Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport and to the Director-General, Department of Housing and Public Works, regarding procurement. In addition to industry peak bodies which also represent the interests of small business, there are three positions on this group dedicated to representing and advocating the interests of small business:
    a. Small Business Champion (recently appointed as the Small Business Commissioner)
    b. Regional Procurement Champion
    c. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Champion

Other financial help and concessions for homeowners (eg mortgage relief or housing loans)

50. The Department of Housing and Public Works currently provides a range of home lending products to assist eligible clients to access and maintain home ownership.

51. Mortgage Relief is available to eligible home purchasers who have suffered an unexpected change in their circumstances and are having difficulty meeting their mortgage repayments. Mortgage Relief offers short-term assistance by way of an interest-free loan of up to $20,000. The loan is then repaid over 10 years with no repayments in the first 12 months.

52. Although Mortgage Relief assistance is available to homeowners that have experienced a loss of income as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and are in danger of losing their home, to date, the department has not received any applications for Mortgage Relief assistance for home buyers impacted by the pandemic.

53. In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic many private sector lenders have offered financial assistance to borrowers, including short-term repayment reductions and interest-only arrangements.

54. Under the *National Consumer Credit Protection Act 2009*, home buyers are entitled to request financial hardship assistance from their lender if they are experiencing difficulties in making home loan repayments due to a reasonable cause, such as illness or unemployment. Under section 72 of the Code a borrower can ask their lender for a repayment arrangement on the grounds of financial hardship. This is called a hardship variation. The lender is required to respond to the borrower's request for assistance within 21 days.

The impact of health restrictions on Queensland's sport, recreation and fitness sector, arts sector and tourism sector.

55. Sport, recreation and fitness sectors as well as the arts sector and tourism sector involve mass movement, mass gathering, and close and physical contact. As such, health restrictions had immediate and significant impact across the industry and stadia operations including sport, concert and event offerings. Stadiums Queensland contributed $300M in economic benefit in 2018-19 from its regular season fixture events alone and provided 47,000 casual jobs at venues. The restrictions on events and gatherings has had a significant impact on economic and employment outcomes. Impacts to community sport and recreation include:
    - Cancellation of structured competitions, events and activities.
    - Financial implications including lost revenue from membership/participation fees and associated activities including canteens, bars and sponsorship.
    - Increased responsibility on volunteer organisations in complying with directions.
    - Limitations imposed on recreational options of individuals and groups.

56. Impacts to elite and high performance sport (with application to the tourism and events sector) include:
    - Suspension or cancellation of elite fixtures, events and competitions.
    - Disruption to athlete training with athletes transitioning to individual training.
    - Psychological impacts of uncertainty and social isolation.
    - Postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games to 2021.

57. Queensland's Roadmap to easing restrictions outlined a pathway forward to return to activity with structured community sport able to return to non-contact training under Stage 2 from 1 June 2020.

58. Progression through the Roadmap and following any Queensland Health advice, will allow competition to return in Stage 3.

59. Some high performance activities have returned (or are about to return) with strict health measures in place such as the NRL and AFL.

The development of COVID Safe Industry Plans for the sport, recreation and fitness sector, and associated checklists and advice.

60. The Department of Housing and Public Works have consulted with various industry peak bodies to develop Industry COVID Safe Plans for specific industry sub-sectors as follows:
    - Field Team Sport, Aquatic Sport, Outdoor Sport, Indoor Sport - *QSport*
    - Outdoor Recreation Activity Providers, Outdoor Education Providers - *Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation*
    - Fitness Facilities - *Fitness Australia*
    - Swimming Pool and Aquatic Centre - *Queensland Aquatic Industry Alliance*
    - Site specific plans for all Stadiums Queensland venues - *Stadiums Queensland*

61. Approved Industry COVID Safe Plans are publicly available for all businesses or organisations within that industry to access (regardless of membership to an industry body).

62. These plans provide guidance to over 7,000 sport and recreation community organisations as well as 1,000 gyms and the facilities these activities operate within across Queensland.

63. To ensure the safety of all participants, coaches, officials, support staff, parents and spectators, the Industry COVID Safe Plans outline mitigation measures so sport is able to return in a safe and controlled manner. The industry has collaborated to eliminate any confusion and provide a seamless and consistent participation experience for all Queenslanders including through:
    - vigilance with hygiene and sanitisation measures
    - precise scheduling to ensure there is no co-mingling between participation groups
    - booking or sign-in systems put in place to track and trace participants
    - changes to arrival and exit points of sport and fitness to allow for safe and separate passages for entry and exit.

64. Where there are multiple activities being undertaken at a venue (for example - dining, sports, fitness or recreational), several approved Industry Plans may apply, information as to how this is to be managed is detailed in the plans.

65. The department is providing on the ground support to sport and recreation organisations in Returning to Play through Sport and Recreation Service delivery staff.

Financial assistance for community sport, recreation and fitness organisations across Queensland to re-start and continue their operations post COVID-19.

66. On 24 May 2020, the Queensland Government announced the Sport and Recreation COVID SAFE Restart Plan.

67. $51.3 million is being committed to assist sport, recreation and fitness organisations to restart activities to ensure we keep everyone safe, healthy and moving. The Package includes:

- $14 million COVID SAFE Active Clubs Kickstart program is providing grants of $2,000 to clubs to purchase hygiene supplies, products, training or equipment, as well as for operational costs such as utilities and bills.
- Kickstart opened on 25 May and closes 17 June 2020. 2557 (as at Monday 8 June) applications have been received. The application process has been simplified to make this as easy as possible for Queenslanders to apply on behalf of their club.
- $11 million has been committed to FairPlay vouchers. Vouchers of up to $150 will help around 73,000 young Queenslanders get back into their chosen sport or recreation activity and support families experiencing hardship due to COVID-19.
- $15.5 million is committed for the Active Restart infrastructure Recovery Fund. Grants for minor works. It will support up to 3,000 clubs to purchase revenue generating equipment and undertake minor upgrades to their facilities to help them return to play. Applications for the Active Restart infrastructure Recovery Fund will open in July 2020.
- $10.8 million Active Industry Fund will provide funding for 77 state level sporting organisations and industry peak bodies through existing arrangements

The establishment of FairPlay vouchers to subsidise children's sport and active recreation memberships, registrations or participation fees.

68. The Get Started Vouchers (GSV) program commenced in January 2013. There were 13 rounds under the program up until the final round which opened in January 2019. The GSV program opened biannually in January and July and provided vouchers valued up to $150 to assist children and young people who could least afford to join a sport or active recreation clubs.

69. With the release of the Activate! Queensland 2019-2029 Strategy, the GSV program transitioned to FairPlay. FairPlay is a $25.5 million commitment over three years as part of Activate! Queensland 2019-2029.

70. Under FairPlay Activity, Providers were expanded to include not-for-profit community organisations who provide physical activity as part of their programs, for example community gyms and Army, Naval and Air Force Cadets. As with GSV, FairPlay opens biannually in January and July. Parents, carers or guardians can apply for a voucher valued up to $150 for their child, which can be used towards sport and active recreation membership, registration or participation fees with registered activity providers.

71. Round 1 of FairPlay opened for applications on 31 July 2019 and closed on 6 November 2019. In round 1 9,329 vouchers were redeemed by activity providers throughout Queensland to the value of over $1.36 million. Round 2 of FairPlay opened on 22 January 2020 and closed on 10 March 2020, with over 55,000 vouchers issued, over 24,424 have been redeemed in this round. Round 2 vouchers were affected by COVID-19 with many families unable to present vouchers to activity providers due to activities not commencing and similarly, activity providers were not able to redeem all vouchers received due to the cancellation of activities.

72. On 24 May 2020, the Premier announced $11 million in FairPlay vouchers as part of the Queensland Government Sport and Recreation COVID SAFE Restart Plan. Part of the announcement was the extension of round 2, enabling parents to present vouchers to activity providers by 11 November 2020. The activity provider redemption date was also extended to 25 November 2020.

73. To further support families affected financially by COVID-19, eligibility for round 3 will be expanded to include individuals on JobKeeper and JobSeeker payments.

ATTACHMENT 1 - Rental Dashboard – All data as at 5 June 2020

Department of Housing and Public Works correspondence: 46 (from 25 April 2020)

RTA correspondence: 44 (from 25 April 2020)

RTA COVID Hotline calls to date: 29,026 (from 30 March 2020)

RTA Total website pageviews (from 2 May 2020)

- RTA Website front page: 97,141
- RTA COVID-19 response page: 10,138
- Dispute resolution web service: 5,396

RTA conciliation outcome breakdown (from 2 May 2020)

- Resolved: 1,102
- Unresolved: 323
- Parties unavailable: 111
- Withdrawn: 56

RTA total conciliated applications: 1,425 (from 2 May 2020)

RTA total conciliations by LGA (From 2 May 2020)**:**

1. Brisbane – 533	6. Cairns – 32
2. Gold Coast – 436	7. Ipswich – 31
3. Sunshine Coast – 78	8. Noosa – 28
4. Moreton Bay – 70	9. Redlands – 27
5. Logan – 53	10. Townsville – 19

Rental Hub total views: 346,834 (from 8 April 2020)

Rental Hub Top 3 rental hub pages total views (from 8 April 2020)

- Renters: 83,109
- Owners: 54,186
- Agents/managers: 20,583

Rental Hub Total conciliation self-assessment forms downloads: 8,784 (from 18 April 2020)

Rental Hub total self-assessment forms started: 4,088 (from 18 April 2020)

Rental Hub total downloads of practice guide: 12,848 (from 18 April 2020)

Rental Hub total through to RTA dispute resolution forms: 1,915 (from 18 April 2020)