

Question on Notice
No. 286
Asked on Tuesday, 7 March 2006

Mr Knuth asked the Minister for Public Works, Housing and Racing (MR SCHWARTEN) –

QUESTION:

Will he guarantee that housing stock owned or controlled by Queensland Housing in the Pentland area will not be earmarked for sale or removal, but will be retained for rental accommodation purposes?

ANSWER:

The Department of Housing owns 10 detached houses and three blocks of vacant land in Pentland. There is no waitlist at present and tenancy turnover has reduced from 44% in 2002-03 to 11% in 2004-05. Although the tenancy position has stabilised, it is unacceptable that three of the department's 10 houses have been unoccupied for more than two of the last six years. As well the department incurs costs maintaining the dwellings.

Pentland is located approximately 100 kms south-west of Charters Towers and has limited services. Given the location the ongoing upkeep of dwellings, particularly those which are vacant, is expensive.

You would be aware that there is a strong demand for housing in many western and north-western towns. Should there be no improvement in demand by eligible applicants for public housing in Pentland, I will have no alternative but to offer the dwellings for sale so that the housing can remain in Pentland and the funds generated can be reinvested in areas of high demand. If there is low interest I may need to consider removal to areas where there is a need.

I would hope the Honourable member would agree with my policy of ensuring those in greatest need get the greatest level of assistance. As such I am sure the Honourable member would support the sale or removal of Pentland houses where there is no demand in favour of helping other areas of his electorate where a greater demand exists.