

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON AUSTRALIA'S IMMIGRATION DETENTION NETWORK

Q279

Question:

I would be very interested to know in what sort of range they are looking for with respect to property, given what you said about them trying to avoid the cheaper rentals. I would be very interested to know the range, where they are looking for property and in what numbers.

Answer:

The Australian Red Cross is responsible for the sourcing and leasing of suitable accommodation (generally a house, townhouse or apartment) for use by family groups, unaccompanied minors and adult clients in community detention.

The department requires that properties sourced and leased by Red Cross should:

- be sustainable and appropriate for potentially long term occupancy,
- be a reasonable cost as determined by market rent,
- range in size appropriate for small to large family groups,
- be clean and in good condition with no safety concerns,
- meet health and safety standards,
- be located as near as possible to schools, public transport, shops and any other culturally appropriate networks, and
- not be of a substantially higher standard than a low income earner in Australia would be able to afford.

Additionally, Red Cross must consider clients' health and other such requirements when sourcing client accommodation.

While Red Cross is required to source properties that are not substantially of a higher standard than a low income earner in Australia, the Department is also mindful of not "crowding out" the availability of affordable accommodation for lower income Australians.

In addition, there is a significant number of large properties used in community detention to accommodate large family groups, groups of unaccompanied minors and as share-houses for individual adult males. These larger properties incur a higher rental cost, and as such increase the average rental costs for the program. Where possible the Department avoids using single dwelling apartments as these also have a higher rental cost.

The average cost of rent per week for leasing properties for community detention across Australia is listed in the table below.

For comparison, the table also includes data published by the Real Estate Institute of Australia (REIA) for the average weekly market rent in the major capital cities of Brisbane, Sydney, Perth, Adelaide and Melbourne. This data is available at:

http://blog.realestateview.com.au/2011/11/australian-renters-still-feeling-the-squeeze/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+ExpertView+%28Expert+View%29

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Average Rental Cost for Community Detention Properties*

State	CD average per week	REIA published average
QLD	\$383	\$350 (Brisbane)
NSW	\$416	\$400 (Sydney)
ACT	\$458	\$450
VIC	\$343	\$350 (Melbourne)
TAS	\$272	\$360
SA	\$341	\$320 (Adelaide)
WA	\$358	\$390 (Perth)

* Average rental cost for community detention properties is dependant on a range of factors including the number of leased properties, number and permutation of client groupings, and market rate. Average number of occupants per property is 3 clients.