



Australian Government

Australian Government response to the
Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs:
The worsening rental crisis in Australia – Interim and
Final Reports

May 2024

Contents

Introduction.....2

Response to the interim recommendations3

Response to the final recommendations.....9

Chair recommendations10

Coalition Senators’ recommendations.....28

Labor Senators’ recommendations.....31

Appendix A: New housing initiatives since the Government’s election38

Introduction

On 7 December 2023, the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs (the Committee) released its final report for the *Inquiry into the worsening rental crisis in Australia* (the Inquiry).

The Australian Government welcomes the final report and thanks the Committee for its work. The Government also acknowledges the interim report released as part of the Inquiry.

Committee Proceedings

On 22 June 2023 the Senate referred an inquiry into the worsening rental crisis in Australia to the Community Affairs References Committee for inquiry and report.

The Inquiry received 410 written submissions, with over 16,000 simplified submissions from members of the public. The Departments of Treasury and Social Services (DSS) provided a joint submission.

The Committee held four public hearings. Treasury, DSS and the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (now Housing Australia) gave evidence at the public hearing held on 27 September 2023.

The Committee published its interim report on 21 September 2023, and its final report on 7 December 2023.

Recommendations

A total of 43 recommendations were made across the final and interim reports. The final report makes 38 recommendations, and 5 recommendations were made as part of the interim report. This response is to the 43 recommendations made across the interim and final reports.

The Australian Government acknowledges the challenging experience that many renters are facing, and thanks the thousands of Australians who shared their lived experiences with the Committee. The current environment has created pressures for the growing number of Australians who rent. Renters tend to be younger, have lower incomes, less wealth and live in lower-quality housing than owner-occupiers. In recent times, some have been left worse-off with advertised rent growth exceeding inflation and average wage increases. This is likely to be causing hardship for more vulnerable renters and may be pushing some into insecure housing arrangements.

Moderating price pressures in the short term is challenging. The most effective way to sustainably improve rental affordability is to increase housing supply. The Government is pursuing a number of policies to boost supply, address the cost of housing for buyers and renters and make it easier for renters to transition into home ownership. These policies are part of a plan to deliver 1.2 million new homes over five years from 1 July, including 50,000 new rental homes. They also form part of the more than \$25 billion in new investments in housing over the next decade the Government has announced since its election. Further details on these measures are at Appendix A.

In response to the 43 recommendations, the Australian Government supports 12 recommendations, supports in principle 3 recommendations, partially supports 3 recommendations, notes 21 recommendations, and does not support 4 recommendations.

Response to the interim recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government take a coordinating role to implement stronger rental rights.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **supports** this recommendation.

The Australian Government is working collaboratively with states and territories through National Cabinet to strengthen renters' rights. This includes rental reforms agreed by National Cabinet on 16 August 2023 under *A Better Deal for Renters*. States and territories are responsible for implementing tenancy reforms.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government continue to invest in public, social, community and genuinely affordable housing.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **supports** this recommendation.

The Australian Government understands access to secure and affordable housing has social, economic, and personal benefits for all Australians. The Australian Government is working constructively with state, territory, and local governments to continue to invest in social and affordable housing. Significant measures include:

- The National Housing Accord, a landmark agreement that aligns for the first time the efforts of all levels of government, institutional investors, and the construction sector, to unlock quality, affordable housing supply over the medium term. As part of the Accord, the Australian Government will invest \$350 million to deliver 10,000 affordable rental homes over five years from 2024 – matched by the states and territories. This enables delivery of a combined total of up to 20,000 affordable homes under the Accord.
- \$2 billion through the Social Housing Accelerator to permanently increase the stock of social housing across Australia. State implementation plans indicate this investment will deliver around 4,000 new and refurbished dwellings.
- \$3 billion through the New Homes Bonus to help incentivise states and territories to build 1.2 million homes, where people need them, over five years from 1 July 2024.
- \$500 million through the Housing Support Program for initiatives to accelerate housing supply including connecting essential services or building planning capability.

This is in addition to other Australian Government initiatives, including:

- The \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF), which was established on 1 November 2023. Returns from the HAFF will be used to support the delivery of 30,000 new social and affordable rental homes over its first five years, as well as to fund a range of acute housing needs.
- Expanding the National Housing Infrastructure Facility (NHIF), unlocking up to \$575 million available to invest in social and affordable rental homes. The NHIF will also receive an additional \$1 billion in federal funding to support more social housing.
- Increasing the liability cap of Housing Australia by \$2 billion to provide lower cost and longer-term finance to community housing providers through the Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator.

Work on the development of a National Housing and Homelessness Plan is also underway. The Plan will be a 10-year strategy, which will set out a shared vision to inform future housing and homelessness policy in Australia.

Further details on the more than \$25 billion in new investments in housing over the next decade the Government has announced since its election are at Appendix A.

Recommendation 3

The Australian Greens recommend the Australian Government take a coordinating role to guarantee stronger rental rights, including:

- a presumed right to longer leases;
- minimum standards covering ventilation, heating, cooling and insulation, sufficient for a changing climate;
- genuine end to no ground evictions, including at the end of a fixed term lease;
- grounds for eviction to be clearly defined, with a requirement for a landlord to prove to the tribunal that the ground can be established. Grounds should be limited to:
 - sale of the property;
 - landlord or immediate family member moving into the property;
 - demolition of the property; or
 - reconstruction, renovation or repair of the property only where the work cannot be carried out unless the property is vacated, and only after relevant permits have been obtained.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **partially supports** this recommendation.

On 16 August 2023, all states and territories agreed to a range of reforms under National Cabinet's *A Better Deal for Renters*, including to:

- Phase in minimum quality standards for rental properties (e.g. stovetop in good working order, hot and cold running water); and
- Develop a nationally consistent policy to implement a requirement for genuine reasonable grounds for eviction, having consideration to the current actions of some jurisdictions.

States and territories are responsible for implementing these reforms.

Recommendation 4

The Australian Greens recommend the Australian Government urgently commit investment in public, social, community and genuinely affordable housing commensurate with the shortfall.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **supports in principle** this recommendation.

The Australian Government understands access to secure and affordable housing has social, economic, and personal benefits for all Australians. The Australian Government is working constructively with state, territory, and local governments to continue to invest in social and affordable housing. Significant measures to address the shortfall of housing include:

- The National Housing Accord, a landmark agreement that aligns for the first time the efforts of all levels of government, institutional investors, and the construction sector, to unlock quality, affordable housing supply over the medium term. As part of the Accord, the Australian Government will invest \$350 million in additional federal funding to deliver 10,000 affordable rental homes over five years from 2024 – matched by the states and territories. This enables the delivery of a combined total of up to 20,000 affordable homes under the Accord.
- \$2 billion through the Social Housing Accelerator to permanently increase the stock of social housing across Australia. State implementation plans indicate this investment will deliver around 4,000 new and refurbished dwellings.
- \$3 billion through the New Homes Bonus to help incentivise states and territories to build 1.2 million homes where people need them over five years from 1 July 2024.
- \$500 million through the Housing Support Program for initiatives to accelerate housing supply including connecting essential services or building planning capability.

This is in addition to other Australian Government initiatives, including:

- The \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF), which was established on 1 November 2023. Returns from the HAFF will be used to support the delivery of 30,000 new social and affordable rental homes over its first five years, as well as to fund a range of acute housing needs.
- Expanding the National Housing Infrastructure Facility (NHIF), unlocking up to \$575 million available to invest in social and affordable rental homes. The NHIF will also receive an additional \$1 billion in federal funding to support more social housing.
- Increasing the liability cap of Housing Australia by \$2 billion to provide lower cost and longer-term finance to community housing providers through the Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator.

Work on the development of a National Housing and Homelessness Plan is also underway. The Plan will be a 10-year strategy, which will set out a shared vision to inform future housing and homelessness policy in Australia.

Further details on the more than \$25 billion in new investments in housing over the next decade the Government has announced since its election are at Appendix A.

Recommendation 5

The Australian Greens recommend the Australian Government coordinate with the states and territories to freeze rental increases for two years, followed by a limit on rental increases of 2 per cent every 2 years. Both the freeze and the ongoing limits should be attached to the property, not the specific tenancy or lease. The reference date for the freeze on rental increases should be backdated to avoid rents being increased in anticipation of the restrictions. The freeze and ongoing cap should apply to new properties where starting rents are set at the median rent for the area and property type.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **does not support** this recommendation.

The Australian Government acknowledges that renters are facing significant challenges.

The regulation of residential tenancies, including rental agreements and pricing, is the responsibility of state and territory governments. On 16 August 2023, National Cabinet agreed to A Better Deal for Renters, which includes developing a nationally consistent policy to require genuine reasonable grounds for eviction, moving towards limiting rental increases to once a year and phasing in minimum rental standards.

There is strong consensus in academic literature on the negative impacts of rent freezes as they reduce both the quantity and quality of housing available in the market, making it harder for tenants to secure housing that meets their needs. In a similar vein, evidence from academic literature on rent caps suggests unintended consequences for renters.

Achieving the policy objectives of rental price intervention is difficult as it limits labour market mobility, is inequitable, imposes negative externalities, negatively affects the quality of rental stock, imposes costs on future renters and leads to a reduction in rental supply and increases in rental costs, leaving many renters worse off in the long term. For example, San Francisco's rent caps were found to have resulted in a number of landlords either moving into the properties themselves or selling them. This reduced the supply of available rental stock by 15 per cent and led to a 5.1 per cent increase in overall rent prices over the next twenty years - creating an overall rise in rents of \$2.9 billion that was paid for by current and future tenants.

The most effective way to sustainably improve rental affordability is to increase housing supply and the Australian Government has committed to several measures aimed at boosting supply as part of its housing reform agenda. Further information is at Appendix A.

Response to the final recommendations

Chair recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Chair recommends the Australian Government commit to substantial further investment in public, social and genuinely affordable housing in the 2024-25 Federal Budget, including specific funding for youth and First Nations housing.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

The Australian Government understands access to secure and affordable housing has social, economic, and personal benefits for all Australians. The Australian Government is working constructively with state, territory, and local governments to continue to invest in social and affordable housing. Significant measures include:

- The National Housing Accord, a landmark agreement that aligns for the first time the efforts of all levels of government, institutional investors, and the construction sector, to unlock quality, affordable housing supply over the medium term. As part of the Accord, the Australian Government will invest \$350 million in additional federal funding to deliver 10,000 affordable rental homes over five years from 2024 – matched by the state and territories. This enables the delivery of a combined total of up to 20,000 affordable homes under the Accord.
- \$2 billion through the Social Housing Accelerator to permanently increase the stock of social housing across Australia. State implementation plans indicate this investment will deliver around 4,000 new and refurbished dwellings.
- \$3 billion through the New Homes Bonus to help incentivise states and territories to build 1.2 million homes where people need them over five years from 1 July 2024.
- \$500 million through the Housing Support Program for initiatives to accelerate housing supply including connecting essential services or building planning capability.

This is in addition to other Australian Government initiatives, including:

- The \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF), which was established on 1 November 2023. Returns from the HAFF will be used to support the delivery of 30,000 new social and affordable rental homes over its first five years, as well as to fund a range of acute housing needs.
- Expanding the National Housing Infrastructure Facility (NHIF), making up to \$575 million available to invest in social and affordable rental homes. The NHIF will also receive an additional \$1 billion in federal funding to support more social housing.
- Increasing the liability cap of Housing Australia by \$2 billion to provide lower cost and longer-term finance to community housing providers through the Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator.

The National Housing and Homelessness Plan, which is being developed and is expected to be released in 2024, will set out a vision for housing and homelessness policy in Australia, and consider public, social, and affordable housing.

Future funding arrangements between the Commonwealth and states and territories are also under negotiation. The Australian Government has agreed to a one-year extension to the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) which will provide approximately \$1.7 billion in 2023-24 to the states and territories. The extension provides further time to work with states to develop and negotiate new funding arrangements to replace the NHHA.

The Government has increased the maximum rates of Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) by 15 per cent at a cost of around \$0.7 billion per year. This is the largest increase to CRA maximum rates in more than 30 years.

The Government is also providing \$4 billion over ten years, through a joint investment with the Northern Territory Government to improve housing outcomes and reduce overcrowding in remote NT communities. This investment builds on the one-year Northern Territory Remote Housing Agreement which accelerated housing delivery in 2023-24. The Government has invested \$111.7 million through the agreement, which is matched by the Northern Territory Government to deliver a minimum of 157 houses.

In addition, the Government has committed \$120 million over three years to extend funding for repairs and maintenance on housing and essential infrastructure on Northern Territory Homelands. This investment matches the NT Government's existing program of \$40 million per annum and builds on progress made through the Government's \$100 million election commitment to restore funding for homelands.

Further information on the more than \$25 billion in new investments in housing over the next decade the Government has announced since its election is at Appendix A.

Recommendation 2

The Chair recommends the Australian Government quantify the yearly investment that will be required from the Federal Government to meet the shortfall in public and community housing.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

The Australian Government understands safe and affordable housing is central to the security and dignity of all Australians. That is why the Australian Government is working with state and territory governments and industry to deliver 50,000 new social and affordable homes in the five years from July 2024. This is part of the more than \$25 billion in new investments in housing over the next decade the Government has announced since its election. Further information on this is at Appendix A.

The Australian Government has established the National Housing Supply and Affordability Council (the Council) to provide expert advice and an evidence base on how Government can improve housing supply and affordability. The Council is developing a model on housing supply and demand, to provide a comprehensive view of how construction activity, housing stock, rental prices and housing prices are influenced by economic factors.

The Council will also produce a State of the Nation's Housing Report each year that will, among other things, outline the number of households in housing need.

Recommendation 3

The Chair recommends the Australian Government redirect foregone revenue from negative gearing and capital gains tax discounts to increase supply of public and community housing.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **does not support** this recommendation.

The Australian Government notes that negative gearing and the capital gains tax discount apply more broadly than housing and have been long standing.

The Australian Government recognises the need for more social and affordable housing. That is why it is working with state and territory governments and industry to deliver 50,000 social and affordable homes in the 5 years from July 2024. This is part of the more than \$25 billion in new investments in housing over the next decade announced since its election. Further information on this is at Appendix A.

Recommendation 4

The Chair recommends the Australian Government coordinate with state and territory governments to implement mandatory inclusionary zoning for all new developments.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

The Government is working closely with states and territories to implement planning and zoning reforms, including those outlined the National Planning Reform Blueprint (the Blueprint) as agreed to at National Cabinet.

As part of the Blueprint, First Ministers agreed to consider the phased introduction of inclusionary zoning and planning to support permanent affordable, social and specialist housing in ways that do not add to construction costs.

States and territories are responsible for the implementation of these reforms.

Recommendation 5

The Chair recommends the Australian Government coordinate with state, territory, and local governments to improve its data collection regarding short-term rental accommodation, including advancing the development of registers for monitoring and compliance purposes.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

State and territory governments are responsible for the regulation of short-term rental accommodation, with some states providing local government with some decision-making powers in this area. As such, states and territories are best placed to undertake any data collection work for short-term rental accommodation.

On 16 August 2023, as part of reforms agreed under National Cabinet's *A Better Deal for Renters*, all states and territories agreed to consider options for better regulation of short-stay residential accommodation.

Recommendation 6

The Chair recommends the Australian Government coordinate with state, territory, and local governments to make it easier for local governments to implement policies and compliance mechanisms regarding short-term rental accommodation, including applying local caps on the number of days a short-term rental property can be rented.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

State and territory governments are responsible for the regulation of short-term rental accommodation, with some states providing local government with some decision-making powers in this area.

On 16 August 2023, as part of reforms agreed under National Cabinet's *A Better Deal for Renters*, all states and territories agreed to consider options for better regulation of short-stay residential accommodation.

Recommendation 7

The Chair recommends the Australian Government immediately review the adequacy of all income support payments, including whether eligibility rules for these payments effectively target those most in need.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

The Government has committed to consider the rates of income support payments at every Budget update and has established the Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee to provide advice ahead of every Federal Budget on economic inclusion, including policy settings, systems and structures, and the adequacy, effectiveness, and sustainability of income support payments.

Since 20 September 2023, around 1.1 million recipients of JobSeeker Payment and other working age and student payments have been receiving at least a \$40 increase a fortnight as a result of the Australian Government's 2023-24 Budget measures.

Regular indexation of certain payment rates, such as JobSeeker Payment and Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA), also occurred on this date, meaning eligible recipients received both increases at the same time.

This means that from 20 September 2023, the JobSeeker Payment rate for single recipients without a dependent child increased by \$69.60 to \$762.70 a fortnight (inclusive of indexation increases on 20 September 2023 and 20 March 2024).

This is part of a broader social security package including an additional \$2.7 billion over five years from 2022-23 to increase CRA maximum rates and \$1.9 billion over five years from 2022-23 to extend eligibility to Parenting Payment (Single) to single principal carers with a youngest child under 14 years of age.

Recommendation 8

The Chair recommends the Australian Government undertake a review of the Commonwealth Rent Assistance program, including eligibility criteria to determine whether it is the most effective mechanism to improve rental affordability or whether across-the-board increases in income support may be more appropriate.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

The Australian Government increased the maximum rates of Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) by 15 per cent at a cost of around \$0.7 billion per year. This is the largest increase to CRA maximum rates in more than 30 years. From September 2023, maximum rates for CRA recipients have increased by up to \$41.16 per fortnight, depending on the household type (including both the 15 per cent increase and indexation on 20 September 2023 and 20 March 2024).

CRA is a non-taxable income supplement payable with income support payments, Family Tax Benefit Part A, and veteran's service pensions or income support supplements to eligible Australian individuals and families liable to pay private rent for their principal home. The Government has committed to consider the rates of income support payments at every Budget update and has established the Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee to provide advice ahead of every Federal Budget on economic inclusion, including policy settings, systems and structures, and the adequacy, effectiveness, and sustainability of income support payments.

An across-the board increase to income support payments would not provide a targeted way of increasing rental affordability.

CRA is targeted to income recipients in the private rental market. As at September 2023 the majority of income support recipients (60.5 per cent) do not pay rent, with a further 7 per cent supported with public housing.

Recommendation 9

The Chair recommends the Australian Government immediately increase all income support to ensure no income support recipient lives in poverty.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

The Government has committed to consider the rates of income support payments at every Budget update and has established the Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee to provide advice ahead of every Federal Budget on economic inclusion, including policy settings, systems and structures, and the adequacy, effectiveness, and sustainability of income support payments.

In the 2023-24 Budget, the Australian Government announced a range of measures to help with cost-of-living pressures for around 2 million Australians, through increases to working-age and student payments and Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA).

These measures, which came into effect on 20 September 2023, included:

- \$4.9 billion over 5 years from 2022-23 and \$1.3 billion per year ongoing to increase the base rate of working age and student payments by \$40 per fortnight and reduce the qualifying age to 55 years (down from 60 years) for the higher rate of JobSeeker Payment for single recipients who have been on payment for nine continuous months.
- \$2.7 billion over 5 years from 2022-23 to increase the maximum rates of CRA by 15 per cent.
- \$1.9 billion over 5 years from 2022-23 and \$0.5 billion per year ongoing to extend Parenting Payment (Single) to single parents until their youngest child is 14 years.

Between May 2022 and March 2024, including indexation increases and the 2023-24 Budget measures, the base rate of:

- JobSeeker Payment for a single recipient without a dependent child has increased by 18.7 per cent in nominal terms.
 - Youth Allowance for a single recipient living away from home has had a nominal increase of 20.5 per cent.
-

Recommendation 10

The Chair recommends the Australian Government coordinate with the states and territories to freeze rental increases for two years, followed by a limit on rental increases of two per cent every two years. Both freeze and the ongoing limits should be attached to the property, not the specific tenancy or lease. The reference date for the freeze on rental increases should be backdated to avoid rents being increased in anticipation of the restrictions. The freeze and ongoing cap should apply to new properties where starting rents are set at the median rent for the area and property type.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **does not support** this recommendation.

The Australian Government acknowledges that renters are facing significant challenges.

The regulation of residential tenancies, including rental agreements and pricing, is the responsibility of state and territory governments. On 16 August 2023, National Cabinet agreed to A Better Deal for Renters, which includes developing a nationally consistent policy to require genuine reasonable grounds for eviction, moving towards limiting rental increases to once a year and phasing in minimum rental standards.

There is strong consensus in academic literature on the negative impacts of rent freezes as they reduce both the quantity and quality of housing available in the market, making it harder for tenants to secure housing that meets their needs. In a similar vein, evidence from academic literature on rent caps suggests unintended consequences for renters.

Achieving the policy objectives of rental price intervention is difficult as it limits labour market mobility, is inequitable, imposes negative externalities, negatively affects the quality of rental stock, imposes costs on future renters and leads to a reduction in rental supply and increases in rental costs, leaving many renters worse off in the long term. For example, San Francisco's rent caps were found to have resulted in a number of landlords either moving into the properties themselves or selling them. This reduced the supply of available rental stock by 15 per cent and led to a 5.1 per cent increase in overall rent prices over the next twenty years - creating an overall rise in rents of \$2.9 billion that was paid for by current and future tenants.

The most effective way to sustainably increase rental affordability is to increase housing supply and the Australian Government has committed to several measures aimed at boosting supply as part of its housing reform agenda. Further information is at Appendix A.

Recommendation 11

The Chair recommends the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to amend tenancy laws to strengthen the prohibition on rent bidding, including ensuring that the advertised rent for a property matches the actual rent agreed in the lease.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **partially supports** this recommendation.

On 16 August 2023, all states and territories agreed to implement a ban on soliciting rent bidding as part of reforms agreed under National Cabinet's *A Better Deal for Renters*. States and territories are responsible for implementing this reform.

Recommendation 12

The Chair recommends the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to develop standardised rental application forms that contain clear and specific limits on the types of information that can be requested of renters.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **supports** this recommendation.

On 16 August 2023, as part of reforms agreed under National Cabinet's *A Better Deal for Renters*, all states and territories agreed to prescribe a rental application form in each jurisdiction and specify information not allowed to be collected from a tenant or more generally. States and territories are responsible for implementing these reforms.

Recommendation 13

The Chair recommends the Australian Government expand the application of the Privacy Act to all real estate agencies and RentTech businesses as part of the Government's ongoing Privacy Act reforms.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **supports in principle** this recommendation.

The Australian Government is committed to uplifting Australia's privacy protections, and ensuring the Privacy Act is fit-for-purpose for the digital age. Currently, the Privacy Act applies to all organisations with an annual turnover of over \$3 million, including real estate agencies and RentTech businesses. In its response to the Privacy Act Review Report, the Australian Government agreed-in-principle to remove the small business exemption, subject to further consultation with small businesses and their representatives on the impact of removing the small business exemption. This would inform consideration of what privacy obligations should be modified for small businesses to ease regulatory burden and what supports small businesses will need to comply with new privacy obligations. The Australian Government also agreed in-principle that in the shorter term, small businesses which engage in activities that pose a significant privacy risk should no longer be able to rely on the small business exemption. The Australian Government is committed to developing privacy reform legislation in this term of government.

Separate to the Australian Government's ongoing Privacy Act Reforms, on 16 August 2023, as part of reforms agreed under National Cabinet's *A Better Deal for Renters*, all states and territories agreed to make rental applications easier and protect renters' personal information, including to:

- Prescribe a rental application form in each jurisdiction, with required documents limited to two in each of the following categories: identity, financial ability to pay rent, suitability;
- Require the destruction of renters' personal information three years after a tenancy ends and three months after a tenancy begins for an unsuccessful applicant;
- Require tenants' personal information to be provided and corrected within 30 days of a request by a tenant or prospective tenant; and
- Specify information not allowed to be collected from a tenant or more generally (e.g. disputes with landlords).

States and territories are responsible for implementing these reforms.

Recommendation 14

The Chair recommends the Australian Government coordinate with state and territory governments to strengthen regulation of RentTech to ensure that renters' rights are adequately protected.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

On 16 August 2023, as part of reforms agreed under National Cabinet's *A Better Deal for Renters*, all states and territories agreed to prescribe a rental application form in each jurisdiction and specify information not allowed to be collected from a tenant or more generally. States and territories are responsible for implementing these reforms.

Recommendation 15

The Chair recommends the Australian Government coordinate with state and territory governments to remove no-grounds evictions, including at the end of a fixed term agreement. Grounds should be limited to:

- sale of the property;
- landlord or immediate family member moving into the property;
- demolition of the property; or
- reconstruction, renovation, or repair of the property only where the work cannot be carried out unless the property is vacated, and only after relevant permits have been obtained.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **partially supports** this recommendation.

On 16 August 2023, as part of reforms agreed under National Cabinet's *A Better Deal for Renters*, all states and territories agreed to develop a nationally consistent policy to implement a requirement for genuine reasonable grounds for eviction, having consideration to the current actions of some jurisdictions. States and territories are responsible for implementing this reform.

Recommendation 16

The Chair recommends the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to develop and legislate a set of minimum standards for energy efficiency, thermal comfort, and accessibility in all rental homes, including social housing.

Australian Government response

The Government **notes** this recommendation. On 16 August 2023, all states and territories agreed to phase in minimum quality standards for rental properties (e.g. stovetop in good working order, hot and cold running water) as part of reforms agreed under National Cabinet's *A Better Deal for Renters*. States and territories are responsible for implementing this reform.

Victoria is leading development of a National Framework for Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards in Rented Homes to provide guidance for Australian state and territory governments which are considering developing their own minimum energy efficiency standards in rented homes, including for renters in social housing. Development has involved contributions from stakeholders including tenant advocacy groups, rental provider representatives and property managers as well as environmental and social advocacy groups.

The National Construction Code (NCC) applies to the design and construction of new buildings or larger scale renovations in existing buildings. The liveable (accessible) housing provisions in the NCC helps to increase the overall supply of accessible homes and apartments in Australia. Should state and territories wish to pursue legislation as per the recommendation, the NCC's liveable housing provisions may be a helpful resource to draw upon.

To help drive down household energy bills, the Australian Government announced a Household Energy Upgrades Fund (HEUF) in the 2023–24 budget.

This includes \$300 million to support energy upgrades to social housing, co-funded and designed in partnership with states and territories. Co-funding will target a range of high value energy upgrades to deliver energy and cost saving benefits for up to 60,000 households in both public and community social housing.

It is expected to deliver a range of upgrades targeted to the needs of social housing stock in each jurisdiction, including solar PV, appliances, and insulation. This will benefit tenants through sustained savings on their energy bills, and improvements to their comfort and health.

The Initiative will roll out during 2024 with funding available over 4 years.

Recommendation 17

The Chair recommends the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to increase substantially investment in repairing and maintaining existing social housing stock.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **supports** this recommendation.

The Australian Government is working collaboratively with states and territories to improve housing stock. This includes, the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA), which is a national funding agreement between the Australian Government and the states and territories. NHHA general funding can be used to maintain existing social housing stock noting states have the responsibility and flexibility of determining how funding is allocated.

The Australian Government has agreed a one-year extension of the NHHA which will provide approximately \$1.7 billion in 2023-24 to the states and territories for social housing and homelessness services. The one-year extension of the NHHA provides further time to work with states and key stakeholders to develop a new housing and homelessness funding arrangement, the details of which are subject to ongoing negotiations.

The Australian Government also paid \$2 billion to state and territory governments in June 2023 through the Social Housing Accelerator to deliver thousands of new and refurbished social homes across Australia. States and territories have some flexibility in how they spend their share of the Social Housing Accelerator payment, including refurbishing currently uninhabitable social housing stock.

The Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) can also support projects that renovate existing residential dwellings that would otherwise be uninhabitable to support an increase of available social and affordable housing stock.

Recommendation 18

The Chair recommends the Australian Government coordinate with state and territory governments to require the disclosure of properties' compliance with minimum standards in rental advertisements.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

Rental regulation and tenancy matters are the responsibility of state and territory governments.

The Australian Government is working with state and territory governments through the Energy and Climate Change Ministerial Council (ECCMC), and with key industry stakeholders, to establish a Home Energy Ratings Disclosure Framework (the Disclosure Framework).

The Disclosure Framework sets out the overarching parameters for home energy rating disclosure schemes, for state and territory governments to implement their own disclosure schemes of energy ratings for existing homes at the point of sale and lease. The Framework also supports a market environment that encourages disclosure and energy performance upgrades in the residential sector, including for rental properties.

Recommendation 19

The Chair recommends the Australian Government coordinate with state and territory governments to implement measures to make it easier for renters to make minor modifications that would improve the safety, liveability, and energy efficiency of the property.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

On 16 August 2023, as part of reforms agreed under National Cabinet's *A Better Deal for Renters*, all states and territories agreed to allow tenants experiencing domestic or family violence to change the locks and make security improvements without the landlord's permission. States and territories are responsible for implementing this reform. Rental regulation and tenancy matters are the responsibility of state and territory governments.

Recommendation 20

The Chair recommends the Australian Government coordinate with state and territory governments to develop clear and nationally consistent definitions and timeframes for urgent and non-urgent repairs to rental properties.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

Rental regulation and tenancy matters are the responsibility of state and territory governments.

Recommendation 21

The Chair recommends the Australian Government coordinate with state and territory governments to ensure appropriate funding allocation for crisis support services and crisis accommodation.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

The National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) is a national funding agreement between the Australian Government and the states and territories. NHHA funds can be used for crisis support services and crisis accommodation, noting states have the responsibility and flexibility of determining how funding is allocated. The Australian Government has agreed a one-year extension of the NHHA which will provide approximately \$1.7 billion in 2023-24 to the states and territories for housing and homelessness services. The one-year extension of the NHHA provides further time to work with states and key stakeholders to develop a new housing and homelessness funding arrangement, the details of which are subject to ongoing negotiations.

The Australian Government invested \$72.6 million over 2020-21 to 2024-25 in the Safe Places Emergency Accommodation Program (Safe Places) which provides capital grants to fund the building, renovation, or purchase of new emergency accommodation for women and children experiencing violence. Safe Places is funding 40 projects to deliver up to 779 new safe places, assisting up to 6,047 women and children experiencing family and domestic violence each year.

As part of the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032*, the Australian Government committed \$100 million over 5 years from 2022-23 to continue funding under Safe Places through the Safe Places Inclusion Round (Inclusion Round). The Inclusion Round will focus on increasing access to appropriate emergency accommodation for First Nations women and children, women and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and women and children with disability.

The Inclusion Round will deliver around 720 new safe places for women and children across Australia. Once completed, this will bring the total number of safe places to around 1,500 (including the first round of projects).

The Inclusion Round grant opportunity closed on 14 November 2023 with successful projects expected to be announced early-mid 2024.

The Australian Government has also committed to provide \$100 million of Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) disbursements over 5 years for crisis and transitional housing options for women and children experiencing family and domestic violence, and older women at risk of homelessness.

Recommendation 22

The Chair recommends the Australian Government coordinate with state and territory governments to improve temporary visa holders' access to domestic violence provisions, services, and accommodation.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

The Australian Government has zero tolerance for domestic and family violence against anyone, including permanent and temporary visa holders. The Government acknowledges the specific challenges facing migrants experiencing domestic and family violence, including those on temporary visas, as highlighted in the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032*.

The specialised visa support service within the Department of Home Affairs provides a centralised point of contact for domestic and family violence victim support services. It also assists temporary visa holders who are domestic and family violence victim-survivors to regularise their visa status under the migration law framework, including through provision of tailored case management support.

The Family Violence Provisions in migration legislation allow certain, mainly Partner, visa applicants to be granted a permanent visa if their relationship has broken down and they have suffered domestic and family violence perpetrated by the sponsoring partner or primary applicant. As part of the 2023-24 Budget, the Australian Government agreed to expand the Family Violence Provisions to most permanent visas and additional cohorts of Partner visa applicants. Work on implementing these amendments has commenced.

In response to the particular needs of temporary visa holders experiencing family and domestic violence, the Australian Government committed \$42.1 million over five years from 2020-21 to 2024-25 to deliver the Temporary Visa Holders Experiencing Violence Pilot (TVP).

The TVP provides eligible temporary visa holders experiencing family and domestic violence with financial assistance packages of up to \$5,000 for goods and services through the Australian Red Cross, and access to legal support for migration and family law through nine Women's and Community Legal Centres across Australia. The amount available through the financial assistance packages was increased from \$3,000 to \$5,000 as part of the 2023-24 MYEFO to align with the amount available under the Escaping Violence Payment trial for eligible Australian citizens. From April 2021 to August 2023, 3,395 temporary visa holders experiencing family and domestic violence were supported with over \$9.6 million in financial assistance, and 2,284 victim-survivors on temporary visas were supported with legal advice and support.

Recommendation 23

The Chair recommends the Australian Government coordinate with state and territory governments to establish rental commissioners in every jurisdiction and facilitate their national cooperation on rental matters.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

Rental regulation and tenancy matters are the responsibility of state and territory governments.

Recommendation 24

The Chair recommends the Australian Government coordinate with state and territory governments to ensure that tenancy support services are fully funded, including to help tenants navigate the appeals system.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

While rental regulation and tenancy matters are the responsibility of state and territory governments, the National Legal Assistance Partnership (NLAP) between the Commonwealth and all states and territories is a five-year agreement to fund vital legal assistance services for the most vulnerable Australians.

The current NLAP expires on 30 June 2025, and an independent review of the NLAP has been conducted by Dr Warren Mundy. The terms of reference for the review required Dr Mundy undertake a holistic assessment of legal need and all Commonwealth legal assistance funding, including the quantum, prioritisation and allocation of funding provided under the NLAP and outside the NLAP. The report's recommendations, along with ongoing dialogue and consultation with states, territories and the legal assistance sector will form the basis for developing future funding arrangements for the sector.

Recommendation 25

The Chair recommends the Australian Government coordinate with state and territory governments to review legislation governing the rights and protections for occupants of marginal and less common housing types, including but not limited to:

- caravan and manufactured home parks;
- boarding houses; and
- student accommodation,

to ensure residents are adequately protected from exploitation and have sufficient recourse to dispute resolution.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

Rental regulation and tenancy matters are the responsibility of state and territory governments.

Recommendation 26

The Chair recommends the Australian Government coordinate with state and territory governments to consider implementing legislation to protect co-renters and landlords in situations where there is a dispute between co-renters, as is currently in place in the ACT.

Australian Government response

The Government **notes** this recommendation.

Rental regulation and tenancy matters are the responsibility of state and territory governments.

Coalition Senators' recommendations

Recommendation 1

Australian Governments work constructively to increase housing supply as a matter of urgency.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **supports** this recommendation.

The Australian Government understands safe and affordable housing is central to the security and dignity of all Australians.

The Australian Government is working constructively with state, territory, and local governments to increase housing supply. Significant measures include:

- The National Housing Accord, a landmark agreement that aligns for the first time the efforts of all levels of government, institutional investors, and the construction sector, to unlock quality, affordable housing supply over the medium term. As part of the Accord the Australian Government will invest \$350 million to deliver 10,000 affordable rental homes over five years from 2024 – matched by the state and territories. This enables the delivery of a combined total of up to 20,000 affordable homes under the Accord.
- \$2 billion through the Social Housing Accelerator to permanently increase the stock of social housing across Australia. State implementation plans indicate this investment will deliver around 4,000 new and refurbished dwellings.
- \$3 billion through the New Homes Bonus to help incentivise states and territories to build 1.2 million homes, where people need them, over five years from 1 July 2024.
- \$500 million through the Housing Support Program for initiatives to accelerate housing supply including connecting essential services or building planning capability.

This in addition to other Government initiatives, including:

- The \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF), which was established on 1 November 2023. Returns from the HAFF will be used to support the delivery of 30,000 new social and affordable rental homes over its first five years, as well as to fund a range of acute housing needs.
- Expanding the National Housing Infrastructure Facility (NHIF), making up to \$575 million available to invest in social and affordable rental homes. The NHIF will also receive an additional \$1 billion in federal funding to support more social housing.
- Increasing the liability cap of Housing Australia by \$2 billion to provide lower cost and longer-term finance to community housing providers through the Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator.

Work on the development of a National Housing and Homelessness Plan is also underway. The Plan will be a 10-year strategy, which will set out a shared vision to inform future housing and homelessness policy in Australia.

Further details on the more than \$25 billion in new investments in housing over the next decade the Government has announced since its election are at Appendix A.

Recommendation 2

Rent caps and freezes should not be considered.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **supports** this recommendation.

The Australian Government acknowledges that renters are facing significant challenges.

The regulation of residential tenancies, including rental agreements and pricing, is a matter for state and territory governments. On 16 August 2023, National Cabinet agreed to A Better Deal for Renters, which includes developing a nationally consistent policy to require genuine reasonable grounds for eviction, moving towards limiting rental increases to once a year and phasing in minimum rental standards.

There is strong consensus in academic literature on the negative impacts of rent freezes as they reduce both the quantity and quality of housing available in the market, making it harder for tenants to secure housing that meets their needs. In a similar vein, evidence from academic literature on rent caps suggests unintended consequences for renters. Achieving the policy objectives of rental price intervention is difficult as it limits labour market mobility, is inequitable, imposes negative externalities, negatively affects the quality of rental stock, imposes costs on future renters and leads to a reduction in rental supply and increase to rental costs, making many renters worse off in the long term.

The most effective way to sustainably increase rental affordability is to increase housing supply and the Australian Government has committed to several measures aimed at boosting supply as part of its housing reform agenda. Further information is at Appendix A.

Recommendation 3

Work with state and territory governments to implement stamp duty reform.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **supports in principle** this recommendation.

While the Australian Government cannot take the lead on stamp duty on conveyancing reforms, the Australian Government encourages state and territory governments to examine opportunities for more efficient tax bases and can work with them on reform efforts.

Recommendation 4

The Federal Government should implement the Coalition's super home buyer scheme.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **does not support** this recommendation. The most effective way of sustainably increasing rental affordability is to increase housing supply and the Australian Government has committed to several measures aimed at boosting supply as part of its housing reform agenda.

The Australian Government is committed to providing greater stability and confidence in the superannuation system, to ensure Australians can enjoy a dignified retirement. The Australian Government has introduced legislation that would establish the objective of superannuation as follows: to preserve savings to deliver income for a dignified retirement, alongside government support, in an equitable and sustainable way.

Labor Senators' recommendations

Recommendation 1

Labor Senators recommend the Australian Government continue to support investment in social and affordable housing.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **supports** this recommendation.

The Australian Government understands access to secure and affordable housing has social, economic, and personal benefits for all Australians. The Australian Government is investing significantly in social and affordable housing. The Australian Government is working constructively with state, territory, and local governments to continue to invest in social and affordable housing. Significant measures include:

- The National Housing Accord, a landmark agreement that aligns for the first time the efforts of all levels of government, institutional investors, and the construction sector, to unlock quality, affordable housing supply over the medium term. As part of the Accord, the Australian Government will invest \$350 million in additional federal funding to deliver 10,000 affordable rental homes over five years from 2024 – matched by the state and territories. This enables delivery of a combined total of up to 20,000 affordable homes under the Accord.
- \$2 billion through the Social Housing Accelerator to permanently increase the stock of social housing across Australia. State implementation plans indicate this investment will deliver around 4,000 new and refurbished dwellings.
- \$3 billion through the New Homes Bonus to help incentivise states and territories to build 1.2 million homes where people need them over five years from 1 July 2024.
- \$500 million through the Housing Support Program for initiatives to accelerate housing supply including connecting essential services or building planning capability.

This in addition to other Australian Government initiatives, including:

- The \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF), which was established on 1 November 2023. Returns from the HAFF Fund will be used to support the delivery of 30,000 new social and affordable rental homes over its first five years, as well as to fund a range of acute housing needs.
- Expanding the National Housing Infrastructure Facility (NHIF), making up to \$575 million available to invest in social and affordable rental homes. The NHIF will also receive an additional \$1 billion in federal funding to support more social housing.
- Increasing the liability cap of Housing Australia by \$2 billion to provide lower cost and longer-term finance to community housing providers through the Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator.

Work on the development of a National Housing and Homelessness Plan is also underway. The Plan will be a 10-year strategy, which will set out a shared vision to inform future housing and homelessness policy in Australia.

Further details on the more than \$25 billion in new investments in housing over the next decade the Government has announced since its election are at Appendix A.

Recommendation 2

Labor Senators recommend the Australian Government continue to work with the state and territory governments to implement planning and zoning reforms, including those outlined in the National Planning Reform Blueprint.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **supports** this recommendation.

The Australian Government is working closely with states and territories to implement planning and zoning reforms, including those outlined the National Planning Reform Blueprint (the Blueprint) as agreed to at National Cabinet.

The Blueprint includes, updating state, regional, and local strategic plans to reflect housing supply targets; promoting medium and high-density housing in well-located areas close to existing public transport connections, amenities and employment; and streamlining approval pathways.

Work on the Blueprint will progress throughout 2024.

Recommendation 3

Labor Senators recommend the Australian Government continue to work with the state and territory governments for them to implement a ban on soliciting rent bidding.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **supports** this recommendation.

On 16 August 2023, as part of reforms agreed under National Cabinet's *A Better Deal for Renters*, all states and territories agreed to implement a ban on soliciting rent bidding. States and territories are responsible for implementing this reform.

Recommendation 4

Labor Senators recommend the Australian Government continue to work with the state and territory governments on implementing the agreement to make rental applications easier and protect renters' personal information.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **supports** this recommendation.

On 16 August 2023, as part of reforms agreed under National Cabinet's *A Better Deal for Renters*, all states and territories agreed to make rental applications easier and protect renters' personal information, including to:

- Prescribe a rental application form in each jurisdiction, with required documents limited to two in each of the following categories: identity, financial ability to pay rent, suitability;
- Require the destruction of renters' personal information three years after a tenancy ends and three months after tenancy begins for an unsuccessful applicant;
- Require tenants' personal information to be provided and corrected within 30 days of a request by a tenant or prospective tenant; and
- Specify information not allowed to be collected from a tenant or more generally (e.g. disputes with landlords).

States and territories are responsible for implementing these reforms.

Recommendation 5

Labor Senators recommend the Australian Government continue to work with the state and territory governments to develop a nationally consistent policy to implement a requirement for genuine reasonable grounds for eviction, having consideration to the current actions of some jurisdictions.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **supports** this recommendation.

On 16 August 2023, as part of reforms agreed under National Cabinet's *A Better Deal for Renters*, all states and territories agreed to develop a nationally consistent policy to implement a requirement for genuine reasonable grounds for eviction, having consideration to the current actions of some jurisdictions. States and territories are responsible for implementing this reform.

Recommendation 6

Labor Senators recommend the Australian Government continue to work with the state and territory governments on phasing in minimum quality standards for rental properties.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **supports** this recommendation.

On 16 August 2023, as part of reforms agreed under National Cabinet's *A Better Deal for Renters*, all states and territories agreed to phase in minimum quality standards for rental properties (e.g. stovetop in good working order, hot and cold running water). States and territories are responsible for implementing this reform.

Recommendation 7

Labor Senators recommend the Australian Government continue to work with the state and territory governments on considering options for better regulation of short-stay residential accommodation, which may include better data collection.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

State and territory governments are responsible for the regulation of short-term rental accommodation, with some states providing local government with some decision-making powers in this area.

On 16 August 2023, as part of reforms agreed under National Cabinet's *A Better Deal for Renters*, all states and territories agreed to consider options for better regulation of short-stay residential accommodation.

Recommendation 8

Labor Senators recommend the Australian Government continue to work with the state and territory governments following the implementation of *A Better Deal for Renters* to identify further reforms to strengthen renters' rights and provide greater national consistency for renters.

Australian Government response

The Australian Government **notes** this recommendation.

The Australian Government acknowledges the growing number of renters in Australia, and their experiences in the rental market.

While rental regulation and tenancy matters are the responsibility of state and territory governments, the Government will continue to work to deliver better outcomes for housing, including for those who rent.

Appendix A: New housing initiatives since the Government's election

Measure	Description
National Housing Accord	10,000 affordable homes over five years from 2024 – states and territories will support the delivery of up to an additional 10,000 affordable homes.
New Homes Bonus	A performance-based payment for states and territories that exceed their share of the original one million well-located homes target agreed under the National Housing Accord.
Housing Support Program	Competitive funding program for local and state governments for initiatives such as connecting essential services, amenities to support new housing development, or building planning capability.
National Housing Infrastructure Facility (NHIF)	Through the NHIF, Housing Australia provides support in the form of concessional loans and grants to help housing-enabling critical infrastructure needed to unlock and accelerate new supply. Since November 2022, support has been available to directly support new social or affordable housing projects. In September 2023, the Government announced the NHIF would receive an additional \$1 billion in federal funding to support more social housing.
Social Housing Accelerator	A one-off payment to states and territories to permanently increase the stock of social housing across the country.
Housing Australia Future Fund	Support to build 30,000 new social and affordable rental homes over 5 years through an ongoing funding stream to increase social and affordable housing, as well as address other acute housing needs.
Help to Buy	Help to Buy will assist people on low to moderate incomes to purchase a home with an equity contribution from the Government of up to 40% for new homes and 30% for existing homes. 40,000 places will be available over four years with 10,000 places available per year.
Home Guarantee Scheme	As part of the Home Guarantee Scheme, the Government has introduced the Regional First Home Buyer Guarantee to support eligible citizens and permanent residents to purchase their first home, or their first property in Australia for at least 10 years, in an eligible regional area. The Government also expanded eligibility for the Home Guarantee Scheme as part of the 2023-24 Budget.

Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator	The cap on the Government guarantee of Housing Australia’s liabilities has been increased by \$2 billion to provide lower cost and longer-term finance to community housing providers through the Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator (AHBA). AHBA loans can be used to acquire, construct, or maintain social and affordable housing, as well as to refinance existing debt.
Commonwealth Rent Assistance	The Government has increased the maximum rates of Commonwealth Rent Assistance by 15 per cent.
NT Remote Housing	A one-year partnership over 2023-24 with the Northern Territory Government to accelerate building of new remote housing to reduce overcrowding.
Restoring funding for Homelands	A two-year investment for housing and essential infrastructure in the Northern Territory Homelands, delivered through a new federal financial agreement with the Northern Territory Government.
Multiyear Funding for Northern Territory Remote Housing	A ten-year partnership with the Northern Territory Government from 2024-25, to support delivery of housing to remote NT communities to reduce overcrowding and improve housing outcomes. The investment is matched by the NT Government and will also deliver repairs and maintenance.
Northern Territory Homelands	A three-year investment to extend funding for repairs and maintenance on housing and essential infrastructure on NT homelands.
Development of a Sustainable Community-Controlled Housing Model	Will support Aboriginal Housing NT to develop a sustainable community-controlled housing organisation to enable an increase in housing supply.
National Housing and Homelessness Agreement Transitional Funding	The one-year extension to the <i>National Housing and Homelessness Agreement</i> provides around \$1.7 billion to states and territories to 30 June 2024. This includes additional funding of \$67.5 million in 2023-24 to support the provision of homelessness services. The extension provides time for negotiations currently underway with states and territories.
National Housing and Homelessness Plan	The Government has committed funding for the development, monitoring and evaluation of a National Housing and Homelessness Plan. The National Housing and Homelessness Plan is being developed in association with states and territories, industry bodies and not-for-profit organisations to identify short, medium, and long-term reforms to improve housing and homelessness outcomes.
National Housing Supply and Affordability Council	The National Housing Supply and Affordability Council (the Council) has been established to provide independent, evidence-based expert advice to the Government on housing supply and affordability matters.

Build-to-rent tax incentives	Tax incentives to encourage more build to-rent developments. Includes halving the managed investment trust withholding tax rate from 30 per cent to 15 per cent and increasing the capital works tax deduction (depreciation) rate from 2.5 to 4 per cent per year for newly constructed build-to-rent properties.
National Planning Reform Blueprint	National Cabinet agreed to a National Planning Reform Blueprint with planning, zoning, land release and other measures to improve housing supply and affordability.
A Better Deal for Renters	National Cabinet agreed to A Better Deal for Renters to harmonise and strengthen renters' rights across Australia.