



15 July 2024

Committee Secretary
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
Parliament House
PO BOX 6021
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

**SUBMISSION - DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE — SUBMARINE ROTATIONAL
FORCE—WEST, PRIORITY WORKS, HMAS STIRLING, WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Thank you for the opportunity to present a submission to the Committee.

Imagined Futures partnership

The Imagined Futures partnership brings together commonwealth, state and local government departments, not-for profit agencies, businesses, philanthropists, and community members across the local government areas of Cockburn, Fremantle, and Melville. Imagined Futures is recognised by the State Government as the District Leadership Group for the South West Metropolitan region of Perth, Western Australia.

We are auspiced by St Patrick's Community Support Centre Ltd (St Pat's), a leading community housing and homelessness service provider in the South Metropolitan region. St Pat's kindly supported the development of this submission.

Imagined Futures also works in partnership across the South Metropolitan region including with District Leadership Groups (DLG's) for Rockingham-Kwinana and Peel. DLG's involve representatives from State and Commonwealth governments, local government, the community services sector, Aboriginal community-controlled



organisations and industry. Several Imagined Futures members also deliver services across the South Metropolitan region.

We appreciate that tackling complex social issues is beyond the capacity of any single organisation to resolve, and that the only way to effect large-scale change is through working together, pooling, and mobilising available resources to achieve shared goals. Our collective impact approach delivers our track record for working in a way that goes beyond information exchange, to deeply understanding our community, developing shared strategies and delivering a range of impactful collaborative projects.

Housing supply and homelessness challenges exacerbated by the Submarine Rotational Force - West

Housing supply and homelessness challenges are an ongoing concern for Imagined Futures and communities in the South Metropolitan Region. The Region is experiencing challenges compounded by factors including increasing inflation, cost of living, population growth, inadequate housing supply and record low private rental vacancy rates. These pressures are disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable people in our community.

In our view, it is critical that a comprehensive housing plan be created, developed and implemented in partnership with local communities and responsible authorities, to mitigate the potential adverse housing impacts of the Submarine Rotational Force – West (“SRF-W”) from increased numbers of Defence personnel who will locate to the region. Without proactive initiatives, the increased numbers of Defence personnel will have significant housing supply and cost-effectiveness implications. These include exacerbating the significant levels of housing stress and risk of homelessness already being experienced in local communities in the region.

Through a whole-of-community partnership approach, there are opportunities to deliver outcomes including the provision of housing for SRF-W-related personnel, as well as enhance housing outcome for local communities. Such strategies may include



partnership with local registered community housing providers to jointly develop housing. Such a strategy may support more effective and efficient use of resources including land and construction capacity and deliver a dual benefit in growing social and affordable housing stock in the region.

Regional homelessness and housing snapshot, plan and actions

In 2022/23 Imagined Futures, in partnership with the Western Australian Department of Communities South Metropolitan Region, and the Rockingham/ Kwinana and Bindjareb (Peel) District Leadership Groups, developed a *Snapshot on homelessness and housing in the South Metropolitan region* (attached) and a *South Metropolitan Regional Homelessness and Housing Plan* (attached). These tools help build an understanding of the context impacting homelessness and housing in our region and strengthen our collective efforts to identify and implement homelessness and housing solutions.

The Regional Plan guides a whole-of-community approach toward improving outcomes for people experiencing, or at-risk of experiencing homelessness in the South Metropolitan Region and is aligned with the State government *All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020-2030* ("*All Paths Lead to a Home*"). *All Paths Lead to a Home*, and the *WA Housing Strategy 2020-2030*, form the Housing and Homelessness Strategy and priorities that will contribute to reducing homelessness in Western Australia under the current National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness Bilateral Schedule.

Proactive, collective solutions to housing and homelessness challenges are a continuing priority for Imagined Futures and our partners. A working group of the District Leadership Groups in the South Metropolitan region have been meeting regularly to progress Housing and Homelessness actions across the region. Current actions include:



- Working with Local Government partners to identify 'lazy' land parcels that may be used to increase social and affordable housing supply, particularly in partnership with registered community housing providers.
- Monitoring new community housing commitments and timeframes.
- Monitoring the Western Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (WAAEH) project to identify and map demand types for supported housing.
- Identifying new opportunities to increase social housing supply.
- Working with People WA and the WAAEH to maximise the use of data sets on housing needs and homelessness, including local, real-time, by name list data on people experiencing homelessness and their needs to underpin collaborative efforts for identifying system-level barriers to people securing long-term homes and new ways of working to address them.
- Advocacy to improve outcomes for people experiencing and at risk of homelessness, including housing supply measures.

Recommendations

We recommend a whole of community approach to SRF-W implementation, and the mitigation of adverse community impacts to ensure overall cost-effectiveness and positive outcomes for the region and all community members as well as the implementation project itself.

We also recommend that:

- SRF-W cost effectiveness and socio-economic assessment considerations include whole of community impacts on housing and homelessness and effective mitigation measures.
- A whole of government plan and supporting agreements be developed to ensure all impacts on local communities in the region of SRF-W development and operations are coordinated, resourced and mitigated from the outset.



- SRF-W development and operational planning extend to Federal Government investment in housing to mitigate impacts of SRF-W on the local housing market and to provide whole of community benefits by creating a mix of accommodation for SRF-W-related activity as well as social housing, operated by community housing organisations.
- Other initiatives to contribute to expanded housing solutions such as identifying Commonwealth land holdings within the South Metropolitan region that could be made available for social housing purposes.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet and share more on our concerns and recommendations and explore ways we may assist and work together with relevant stakeholders to ensure SRF-W delivers positive outcomes for the region and all community members.

Yours sincerely

Michael Piu
Chair, **Imagined Futures**

