

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2016-17 Supplementary Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 4.1 Housing and Homelessness

Question No: SQ16-000443

Topic: Housing & Analysis

Hansard page: 93-94

Senator Doug Cameron asked:

1. How many times has the Housing Affordability Working Group met formally?
2. Can you give me details of who has attended [these meetings] from the department?
3. Also when the meetings have been held and what outcomes have been achieved from the department's involvement in those meetings?

Answer:

1. The Affordable Housing Working Group (Working Group) was established on 7 January 2016 to investigate innovative ways to improve the availability of affordable housing. Membership of the Working Group included the Commonwealth Treasury and Department of Social Services as well as representatives from the New South Wales, Victorian and West Australian governments. Since being established the Working Group has met formally on 24 occasions.
2. Attendees from the Department of Social Services have included Mr Paul McBride – Group Manager, Welfare and Housing Reform Group, Mr Cameron Gifford – Branch Manager, Housing Policy Branch, Mrs Jill Mills – Director, Housing Policy, Mr Iain Scott – former Group Manager, Housing, Homelessness and Assurance Group, Mr Stewart Thomas – former Branch Manager, Housing and Homelessness Branch, as well as several other officers from the Department's Housing Policy Branch.
3. The meetings of the Working Group have allowed the Department to put forward its views in respect of:
 - the Terms of Reference for the Working Group;
 - the design and content of the Working Group's initial Issues Paper;
 - the content and relevance of the 78 submissions received as part of the public consultation process undertaken by the Working Group;
 - the merits of the models put forward to improve the supply of affordable rental housing; and
 - the content and recommendations included in the Working Group's final report back to Heads of Treasuries.