

## **QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

### **SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES: 17 OCTOBER 2011**

#### **IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO**

#### **(SE11/0396) Program 5.1: Settlement Services for Migrants and Refugees**

Senator Cash (L&CA 117) asked:

In relation to EQON750 from Budget Estimates, four properties were identified as not being acceptable for the clients. Provide reasons for this in each case.

*Answer:*

#### **Sydney Property**

The kitchen cupboards had some missing doors. The bathrooms on the ground, first and second floors had missing tiles and one shower had a missing shower head. There was no lighting in the hallways, which was considered to be a fire hazard. The heating in the property was inadequate.

All clients were moved from this property and the service provider withdrew the property from its pool of properties used for the Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) program.

#### **Melbourne Property**

The house was leaking in several places because of storm damage. The ceiling in the living room was leaking and there was wet carpet in three bedrooms, which had a strong odour of mould and damp. The house included five bedrooms. The family occupying the premises did not use the three rooms affected by damp.

The service provider was investigating repairs to the property but the owner advised it would take some months to repair the property. Therefore it was agreed that it was best to move the clients to a new property, which was done quickly and at no cost to the client. The property was withdrawn by the service provider from the pool of properties used for the HSS program in Victoria.

#### **Launceston Property**

The property in Launceston was vacant at the time of inspection. The department advised the service provider that several items in the kitchen and bathroom needed to be repaired or cleaned, and the carpets needed cleaning. The department informed the service provider that the property could not be occupied until the work was completed.

The kitchen cupboards were badly damaged and falling apart, one cupboard door did not close, there were pot burns on benches and linoleum and carpet in the lounge. Exhaust fans in the kitchen and bathroom needed cleaning and a blind in the kitchen needed to be re-sprung. The washbasin needed re-sealing and the cabinets in the bathroom were water damaged. The window sills needed washing, some curtains

were torn, dirty or dusty and others had mould, some of the curtains had insufficient hooks. One of the bedroom doors was difficult to close and a built-in wardrobe had a door which was dislodged from the runner.

The service provider advised the department on 5 September 2011 that repairs to the property had been completed. Clients are now residing in the property.

### **Townsville Property**

The entrance to the property was insecure. The property was unclean and poorly maintained.

The service provider responded immediately to the department's advice that the accommodation was of an unacceptable standard. The client has since signed a lease and was assisted to move from the property to more appropriate accommodation.

The service provider has withdrawn the property from the pool of properties used for the HSS program in Queensland.