

Karel Eringa

From: Listserv [listserv@shelterwa.org.au]
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SWA Update: Shelter WA Housing News - 22 June 2005

1. **Position Vacant: Project Officer**
2. **Update: Housing Advisory Committee**
3. **Shelter WA Information Sheet #26: Keystart**

1. Position Vacant: Project Officer

Shelter WA requires a Project Officer to:

- develop and implement research strategies, eg:
 - conduct community consultations,
 - organise public forums,
 - design and conduct questionnaires,
 - design and conduct surveys, and / or
 - conduct statistical and literature research
- consult with staff and key stakeholders to draft policy materials; and
- write articles for the Shelter WA Newsletter and Information Sheets as required.

The position will be temporary at 0.5 FTE for a period of 3 months. The salary and conditions are aligned to level 5 / 6 of the SACS Award (\$39,951 - \$45,288 pa pro rata) and are in accordance with Shelter WA's Enterprise Bargaining Agreement. A written application addressing the selection criteria and marked 'confidential' to be received by no later than 4.00pm Friday 1 July 2005.

For a copy of the application kit, including selection criteria, please visit www.shelterwa.org.au/jobs.htm, email us at shelterwa@shelterwa.org.au or phone 08 9325 6660.

2. Update: Housing Advisory Committee

The Housing Advisory Committee (HAC) is an advisory body to the Minister for Housing and Works. Its role is to advise the Minister on State government housing policy, to participate in the development of Department of Housing and Works policy and program initiatives, to advise on research and the development of new policies and to assist in identifying housing needs in the community. HAC is chaired by the Minister for Housing and Works and its membership includes representation from industry, community bodies, relevant State and Commonwealth Government Departments and local government.

After six months of inactivity around the elections, HAC met for the first time under the new Minister, Fran Logan, on Wednesday 8 June. At this meeting, HAC decided formally to:

- Abolish the Community, Affordable and Sustainable Housing Committee (CASHC),
- Abolish the Access and Equity Standing Committee,
- Establish a new standing committee on regional housing issues. This is to come into effect if and when

parliament approves the *Machinery of Government Miscellaneous Amendments Bill 2003*, which proposes to merge the Country Housing Authority, Government Employees Housing Authority and State Housing Commission into a single Housing Authority, and

- Provide a resource in the Office of Policy and Planning, as well as secretariat support, to support the work of HAC.

In addition, the Minister and HAC agreed to call for nominations for Indigenous and CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) representatives for the Homeswest Operational Standing Committee. A selection process for these representatives was conducted 18 months ago, but the selected representatives were never approved by the previous Minister.

Shelter WA views the renewal of HAC and its Standing Committee structure as positive. In particular, some of the standing committees were in urgent need of revitalisation. We expect that the new structure will give us an improved platform to raise issues affecting housing consumers with the Minister and the Department. More information is available from Karel Eringa (karel@shelterwa.org.au).

3. Shelter WA Information Sheet #26: Keystart

Keystart is a section of the Department of Housing and Works that assists people into affordable home ownership. Keystart provides low deposit, low cost loans to all West Australians wanting to buy a home to live in and who meet certain criteria. So far, more than 56,000 homes around the state have been purchased using a Keystart loan. Over 70% of Keystart's customers are first homebuyers. The loan is not limited to first homebuyers; it can assist all homebuyers whether it is a second home purchase or subsequent home purchase.

Shelter WA Information Sheet #26 gives an overview of Keystart, including eligibility criteria, loan sizes, Safety Net and other features. It also gives an indication of five schemes run by Keystart that are aimed at specific groups, being:

- **Aboriginal Home Ownership Scheme:** Helping Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders make the transition from renting to home ownership.
- **Restart Home Loans:** Helping families with short term income loss through temporary unemployment or retrenchment.
- **Access Home Loans:** Helping people with disabilities to buy their own home or modify an existing private home so as to maintain independence.
- **GoodStart Shared Equity Loan Scheme:** Shared equity loan scheme for Homeswest tenants and applicants.
- **Sole Parent Family Home Loan Assistance:** Helps sole parents and their kids stay in the family home following a relationship breakdown or a partner dies.

Shelter WA Information Sheet #26, along with previous information sheets, is available at www.shelterwa.org.au/info_sheets.htm.