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Sent: Thursday, 11 August 2005 13:05
To: Karel Eringa
Subject: [SWA Update] Shelter WA Housing News: 11 August 2005
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SWA Update: Shelter WA Housing News - 11 August 2005

1. Report: Shelter WA Homelessness Survey #6
2. Subsidies to attend the National Housing Conference
3. Update: *Housing Strategy WA*

1. Report: Shelter WA Homelessness Survey #6

In March 2005, Shelter WA conducted a follow up survey to its *No Place Like Home* report on homelessness in Western Australia. The findings of Survey 6 was released in August 2005, and by and large confirmed the findings reported in *No Place Like Home*. In particular, the survey found that young people and Indigenous people continued to be represented disproportionately among the homeless people of this State. Affordability issues continued to feature prominently as a barrier to homeless households accessing rental housing.

However, Survey 6 also identified some new developments. For instance, the survey identified a significant decrease in the proportion of households that required both housing and support, reducing from over two thirds in Survey 5 to less than one third in Survey 6. There was a corresponding increase in housing only requests, up from 1 in 4 in Survey 5 to greater than 1 in every 2 households in Survey 6.

In addition, in the previous five surveys around two thirds of households fell in the category 'secondary homeless' [people who move frequently from one form of temporary shelter to another]. In Survey 6, there was a disturbing divergence from this trend with nearly half of the respondents registering as 'primary homeless' [people without conventional accommodation].

These developments may be partly explained by the relatively small size of the sample. However, these findings do cast doubt on the effectiveness of current strategies to make real inroads into homelessness. Significant increases in Government funding for both affordable accommodation and support would be required to achieve this.

Go to www.shelterwa.org.au/housing_news.htm to download the report.

2. Subsidies to attend the National Housing Conference

Earlier this year, Shelter WA applied to Lotterywest for funds to assist 30 people associated with community organisations in Western Australia to attend the National Housing Conference in Perth from 26-28 October. Lotterywest have now informed us that it will support the proposal.

The subsidies are aimed primarily at smaller organisations that would like to go to the Conference but find the cost prohibitive. There are subcategories for metropolitan, rural and remote organisations.

A registration form will be available from www.shelterwa.org.au shortly. If you would like to put your name down to receive notification when the form goes online, or to receive a copy by mail, please contact Karel Eringa or Corinne Mercer on 9325 6660 or shelterwa@shelterwa.org.au.

3. Update: *Housing Strategy WA*

In the previous edition of SWA Update, Shelter WA reported that it had been five years since the then Office of Housing Policy started work on developing a housing strategy for Western Australia. While a great deal of background research had been completed, no strategy had emerged. Shelter WA called for the Minister and

Department of Housing and Works to act on a key message of the *Housing Strategy WA* website, that it "is now time to ask the community for their input and ideas about housing in WA."

We are pleased to report that on 5 August, following a national meeting of Housing, Planning and Local Government Ministers on affordable housing, WA Housing Minister Fran Logan released a media statement. In this statement the Minister recognised housing affordability for low income earners as a national issue and announced that Western Australia "is working with Federal and other State Governments to create a framework for resolving affordability issues with sustainable solutions." In addition, he announced that a draft of *Housing Strategy WA* "is expected to be released within a month ... A full consultation with the community will take place later this year."

Shelter WA congratulates the Minister on moving the strategy forward and looks forward to taking part in the community consultations.

SWA Update is Shelter WA's housing email list. SWA Update is available to associate and full members of Shelter WA and appears roughly fortnightly. Go to www.shelterwa.org.au/subscribe.htm to become an associate member (currently free of charge).

Shelter WA also has an Urgent Response Network, which is restricted to financial members. If you are a financial member of Shelter WA and wish to join the Urgent Response Network, please email karel@shelterwa.org.au.

To remove yourself from this list, please send a blank email with Subject "UNSUBSCRIBE" to listserv@shelterwa.org.au

Please email karel@shelterwa.org.au with any other queries.

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