

## Karel Eringa

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**From:** Karel Eringa [karel@shelterwa.org.au]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 8 December 2005 12:28  
**To:** Karel Eringa  
**Subject:** [SWA Update] Shelter WA Housing News - 8 December 2005  
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### SWA Update: Shelter WA Housing News – 8 December 2005

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#### 1. Launch: *Where Will They Live?* Campaign

Boarding houses are an essential housing option for a range of people, including the aged, people with disabilities and the poor are facing an increased risk of becoming homeless. Pressure from the high cost of housing is increasing the demand for boarding and lodging houses. However, 242 boarding and lodging beds are likely to close by 2007. Some landlords exploit uncertain legal rights to threaten marginalised and vulnerable people.

Shelter WA, the Community Housing Coalition of WA, the Tenants Advice Service and the WA Association for Mental Health are launching the *Where Will They Live?* Campaign. This campaign is an attempt to ensure that government is aware of the issue and will commit to a strategy that increases the number of boarding houses, existing lodgings will be better maintained and that consumer rights of residents are better protected.

In particular, the Campaign calls on the State Government to develop a comprehensive Boarders and Lodgers Strategy to:

- Develop strategies to increase boarding and lodging house stock
- Improve the maintenance of current boarding and lodging houses.
- Provide appropriate consumer protection measures for boarders and lodgers.

The campaign will be launched at RUAH, 33 Shenton St, Northbridge, at 10.00am on Friday 9 December 2005. Please RSVP to Helen Doran-Wu at Shelter WA: [helen@shelterwa.org.au](mailto:helen@shelterwa.org.au) or 08 9325 6660. A briefing paper is available at [www.shelterwa.org.au/housing\\_news.htm](http://www.shelterwa.org.au/housing_news.htm).

#### 2. Final Report: The Boarding House System in Metropolitan Perth

Shelter WA will launch the Final Report of its surveys into boarding and lodging houses in the Perth Metropolitan area at the same time. The report shows that the WA boarding house sector is in a crisis situation, with two critical issues emerging in recent years. Firstly, rising land prices and increasing costs have made operating boarding houses an increasingly unviable operation. As a result, the number of boarding and lodging houses has dwindled: roughly two thirds of the sector has been lost over the last two decades. It would appear that a third of what remains may disappear over the next 18 months.

At the same time, there is a complete absence of any form of consumer protection for boarders and lodgers in Western Australia. Unlike tenants in private rental and social housing, boarders and lodgers are not covered by any comprehensive legislation such as the Residential Tenancies Act. As boarding and lodging houses play a critical role in housing some of our community's most multi-disadvantaged citizens, there is an urgent

need to increase consumer protection for this group.

The report also finds that these two issues are related in a number of different ways. In particular, the issue of consumer protection should be addressed in such a way that it does not further endanger the viability of boarding houses. The recommendation put forward in this paper is therefore that the State Government urgently develop a Boarding and Lodging House Strategy to address simultaneously the issues of consumer protection and supply.

*The Boarding House System in Metropolitan Perth: Shelter WA Occasional Paper 2005-2* will be available from [www.shelterwa.org.au/publications.htm](http://www.shelterwa.org.au/publications.htm) immediately after the launch tomorrow. For further information, contact Karel Eringa ([karel@shelterwa.org.au](mailto:karel@shelterwa.org.au) or 08 9325 6660).

### 3. Consultation Forum: *Housing Strategy WA*

The Department of Housing and Works have recently released a major housing policy initiative, *Housing Strategy WA* (discussion draft). *Housing Strategy WA* will have implications on the capacity of the Western Australian housing system to meet the changing needs of the community over the next 25 years. Therefore it is important that a broad range of organisations and members of the community have the opportunity to influence Housing Strategy WA's policy directions.

To help facilitate public input to housing policy, Shelter WA is collaborating with the Peel Community Legal Services (PCLS) on a series of public forums. The input received from this forum will be incorporated into a report and submitted to the review of Housing Strategy WA. The first forum will held as follows:

Location: Mandurah Senior Citizens Centre, 41 Ormsby Terrace, Mandurah

Time: 9.00am - 11.45am on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2005

Please RSVP to Katie at PCLS between 9 am and 4.30 pm (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Friday) on (08) 9581 4511. A copy of the *Housing Strategy WA* discussion paper is available at [www.dhw.wa.gov.au/housingstrategywa](http://www.dhw.wa.gov.au/housingstrategywa).

### 4. SAAP State Advisory Committee

A new Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) State Advisory Committee is currently being established to provide the Minister for Community Development, the Hon Sheila MCHale MLA with information and advice in SAAP related areas.

Nominations for community representatives are currently being sought from across the SAAP sector, including;

- people working for SAAP service providers,
- people working for non government community service agencies that interact with SAAP service providers, and
- individuals with particular skills, experience or expertise, which could contribute to the Committee's work.

While representatives are committee members in their own right, they also provide a link to their own organisation.

Nominees must be available to attend monthly meetings and will also be expected to participate on sub committees, attend forums and other relevant activities. Costs of travel and accommodation incurred on committee business will be reimbursed. Sitting fees are paid to non-government members. The current rate is \$150 per half day meeting.

For information and a nomination form please contact:

Ms Tina Pritchard (Confidential)  
Executive Officer - Committee Secretariat  
PO Box 6334, East Perth WA 6892

Phone: (08) 9222 2967, Fax: (08) 9221 0178

Email: [Tina.Pritchard@dcd.wa.gov.au](mailto:Tina.Pritchard@dcd.wa.gov.au)

The closing date for nominations is 5:00pm on 21 December 2005. Unsuccessful nominations will be retained and may be used to fill future community representative vacancies on the Committee.

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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](mailto:karel@shelterwa.org.au).

To remove yourself from this list, please send a blank email with Subject "UNSUBSCRIBE" to [listserv@shelterwa.org.au](mailto:listserv@shelterwa.org.au)

Please email [karel@shelterwa.org.au](mailto:karel@shelterwa.org.au) with any other queries.

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