



# NATIONAL BULLETIN

An eBulletin from CHFA - your national community housing peak organisation

## Edition 51 – March 7, 2008

### **NRAS scheme doubled**

This week Prime Minister Kevin Rudd announced that if the National Rental Affordability Scheme is successful, it will be extended for another five years, doubling the number of affordable rental dwellings built to 100,000.

CHFA understands that, whilst institutional investors and developers will be able to finance and construct many of the new dwellings, it is the Australian Government's intention that the community housing sector will have a major role in providing tenancy management for these properties. This represents a huge opportunity for many of our organisations to partner with the private sector to manage NRAS funded dwellings.

Additionally, there are opportunities for a number of our larger organisations to become directly involved in the financing and/or development of NRAS funded properties. This would leave the ownership in the community sector at the end of the 10 year period of

the NRAS payments. We are hoping to see an expansion in the capacity of the community housing sector to deliver its own housing.

We are working with the Australian Government and the Housing Minister, Tanya Plibersek, to ensure that our sector gets a good slice of the housing pie, and is suitably skilled and enabled to participate fully in the baking of same. To continue the food analogy, we want to see our sector grow and cook really good cuisine, not just do a great job with someone else's ingredients.

A transcript of the Prime Minister's speech can be found at [www.pm.gov.au/media/Speech/2008/speech\\_0113.cfm](http://www.pm.gov.au/media/Speech/2008/speech_0113.cfm). The ABC's *Lateline* program recorded an excellent interview with the Housing Minister, Tanya Plibersek. Please see [www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2007/s2178777.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2007/s2178777.htm).

## Cooperative housing on Radio National's Breakfast program

Also this week, there was a great segment about cooperative housing, and the benefits it can offer in the current housing climate on Radio National's Breakfast show. The audio is available to stream at [www.abc.net.au/rn/breakfast/stories/2008/2181494.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/rn/breakfast/stories/2008/2181494.htm).

## ACOSS Social Inclusion conference

ACOSS will be holding a conference examining policies and processes that will reduce social exclusion and find ways to improve the lives of people affected by poverty and inequality. Held over two days, the first day will include a series of plenary and keynote sessions examining the roles of the community sector, governments, the private sector, and philanthropic organisations in responding to social inclusion. The second day of the conference will include a number of concurrent practical workshops focusing on different areas, and will include workshops on both homelessness and housing.

Please note that this conference will replace ACOSS' usual Congress, normally held at the end of each year. The conference will be held in Melbourne on 9-10 April. For more information, please see [www.acoss.org.au/Events.aspx?displayID=1](http://www.acoss.org.au/Events.aspx?displayID=1) or email [conference@acoss.org.au](mailto:conference@acoss.org.au).

## Speech by Ursula Stephens

Ursula Stephens, the Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, delivered a

speech on 25 February in Perth about the contribution that the not-for-profit sector can play in Australia. In it she notes that the Government is developing a new compact around the not-for-profit sector, and that the "Government intends to ask the Productivity Commission to construct a new tool to measure the direct and indirect contributions of third-sector organisations to our economy. This is the starting point for maximising the sector's contribution to our society, in terms of social inclusion, environmental and social health, employment and economic growth." A transcript of the speech can be found at [www.ursulastephens.com/RunScript.asp?page=171&Article\\_ID=546&AR=AR&p=ASP~Pg171.asp](http://www.ursulastephens.com/RunScript.asp?page=171&Article_ID=546&AR=AR&p=ASP~Pg171.asp).

## And don't forget...

...the CHFA newsfeed is live on our website (and being automatically updated, after a teething problem caused by human error!). If the NB and Garry Mallard's email streams aren't enough, head to [www.chfa.org.au](http://www.chfa.org.au) for your daily dose of housing news.

And whilst on the subject of Garry Mallard, if anyone has evidence (preferably photographic) that he's actually attending some sort of 'training', and not just skylarking around when he should be back in Bovine Nirvana (Bega) slaving away at the Tenant Support Network, please send this through to us. If he doesn't come back soon enough, we may begin to publish a regular *Where's Mallard?* section in the NB.

## **Acknowledgements**

Information for our eBulletin comes from many sources. We would particularly like to thank State and Territory community housing peaks for their contributions, and also Garry Mallard of the Tenant Support Network for his National Notify bulletins.

The Community Housing Federation of Australia is funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

## **Contributions**

If you have news or resources that you think would be interesting or helpful to others in your State/Territory or colleagues interstate, contact CHFA and we can plug your news into NB. Email your news to: [chfa@chfa.com.au](mailto:chfa@chfa.com.au)