



NATIONAL BULLETIN

An eBulletin from CHFA - your national community housing peak organisation

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Check CHFA's web site for a continuous news feed of housing articles:
www.chfa.com.au

National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) launched

The NRAS was officially launched in Sydney on 24 July by Treasurer Wayne Swan and Housing Minister Tanya Plibersek. Carol and Ciaran Synnott, CHFA's Chairperson, were there to wave the flag for CHFA. CHFA, and Carol in particular, received a special mention in Plibersek's speech for the assistance we have provided to Government throughout the policy development stage of the NRAS. CHFA issued a press release to coincide with the launch, which can be viewed at www.chfa.com.au/Docs/Downloads/Community_Housing_Federation_of_Australia_Press_Release_NRAS_launch_24July08.pdf.

Applications for the first round of National Rental Incentives—the payments issued to participants in the Scheme who offer rental housing at below market rent—are now open, and close on 4 September 2008.

The business prospectus for the NRAS can be downloaded at [www.facsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/via/housing/\\$file/nras_prospectus.pdf](http://www.facsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/via/housing/$file/nras_prospectus.pdf).

Detailed information on applying for the NRAS, including documentation on NRAS guidelines, application guidelines, and the national mandatory requirements and weighted criteria can be found at [https://appregistration.fahcsia.gov.au/Webforms/start.swe?SWECmd=GotoView&SWEView=FaCS+Application+Round+Details+View+\(AW\)&SWERF=1&SWEPostnApplet=FaCS+Application+Round+Form+Applet+\(AW\)&SWEPostnRowId=1-28UJN](https://appregistration.fahcsia.gov.au/Webforms/start.swe?SWECmd=GotoView&SWEView=FaCS+Application+Round+Details+View+(AW)&SWERF=1&SWEPostnApplet=FaCS+Application+Round+Form+Applet+(AW)&SWEPostnRowId=1-28UJN).

A second call for applications will be issued in October.

Charities inquiry

The Senate Economics Committee has released a background paper for the charities inquiry. The inquiry is investigating the disclosure regimes for charities and not-for-profit organisations, and will examine:

- the relevance and appropriateness of current

disclosure regimes for charities and all other not-for-profit organisations;

- models of regulation and legal forms that would improve governance and management of charities and not-for-profit organisations and cater for emerging social enterprises; and
- other measures that can be taken by government and the not-for-profit sector to assist the sector to improve governance, standards, accountability and transparency in its use of public and government funds.

The paper is intended to provide guidance to individuals and organisations who are considering making submissions to the inquiry. CHFA will be working with the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS), other national peak bodies, and our members to ensure that issues of concern to the community housing sector are advocated for in this process.

The background paper can be downloaded at www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/economics_ctte/charities_08/backgroundpaper.pdf.

Consultation on national compact for the community sector

A related area of the Commonwealth's reform agenda is the development of a national compact between the not-for-profit sector and the Australian Government. ACOSS describes a compact as "an agreement between the Government and the not-for-

profit Sector that outlines how the two will work together to improve and strengthen their relationship, now and into the future. A compact sets the ground rules for a respectful partnership."

ACOSS also notes that the Government sees an Australian compact as an important vehicle for advancing its Social Inclusion Agenda. ACOSS is currently undertaking consultations about the development of a national compact, and CHFA will be participating in the Canberra meeting next week.

Ursula Stephens is the Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, and spoke about the development of the compact at a recent forum in Melbourne organised by ACOSS. A copy of her speech can be viewed at www.ursulastephens.com/RunScript.asp?page=171&Article_ID=652&AR=AR&p=ASP~Pg171.asp.

AHURI report on planning for affordable housing

Another stellar report from AHURI has been released. *New Directions in Planning for Affordable Housing: Australian and International Evidence and Implications* examines the international practice in planning for housing affordability in general and affordable housing in particular.

The report reviews examples from the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as Ireland, Canada and the Netherlands.

The research emphasis is on understanding the ways in which the planning system is used to support

affordable housing objectives in each of these nations, and on the potential to learn from and transfer this experience to the Australian context.

The report is authored by Nicole Gurrán, Vivienne Milligan, Douglas Baker, Laura Beth Bugg and Sharon Christensen, and can be downloaded at

http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/download.asp?ContentID=60322_fr.

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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.