



Homelessness Implementation Plan

AUSTRALIAN AND TASMANIAN GOVERNMENTS WORKING TOGETHER TO REDUCE HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness in Tasmania

On the best available data, 2,507 Tasmanians are homeless every night.

Of these, 385 are sleeping rough. 69 per cent of the homeless population in Tasmania were aged 34 or younger, 31 per cent were aged between 12-18 years and 14 per cent were 12 years or younger. 207 Indigenous people were homeless on Census night.



The Tasmanian and Australian Governments are committed to reducing homelessness.

What we are doing

In December 2008, the Australian Government released the White Paper on Homelessness, *The Road Home*, which called on all levels of government, business, the not-for-profit sector and the community to join together to reduce homelessness.

The Road Home outlined the need for new investment in homelessness and reform of existing services. Homelessness should be prevented wherever possible. People who experience homelessness should be supported to move quickly through the crisis system into long term housing and at the same time get help to reconnect with education, employment and the community. Mainstream services and homelessness services have to work together more effectively to reduce homelessness.

In *The Road Home*, the Australian Government adopted two headline goals to:

- halve overall homelessness by 2020;
- offer supported accommodation to all rough sleepers who seek it by 2020.

The White Paper also included interim targets to 2013 to contribute to these long term goals. These goals will only be achieved if all governments, business, the not-for-profit sector and the community work together to reduce homelessness.

The Tasmanian Government will halve primary homelessness to 193 people by the end of 2010. It will do this within a social inclusion framework of the Tasmanian Homelessness Plan.

Work already under way

In *The Road Home* the Australian Government committed to boost its efforts across all areas of government to achieve the 2020 headline goals and interim targets for reducing homelessness. This is especially important in areas such as social housing, employment, income support and aged care.

Specific Australian Government initiatives include:

- \$148 million allocated to Tasmania to construct new dwellings and refurbish existing social housing dwellings as part of the \$6.4 billion Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan (NBESP). 65 new dwellings have been approved under Stage One. Further approvals are due under Stage Two by 30 August 2009;
- \$9.8 million to Tasmania under the National Partnership Agreement on Social Housing to increase the supply of social housing;
- \$14.6 million over five years for Tasmania to provide new houses and upgrades to existing houses in remote Indigenous communities under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing;
- \$1 billion nationally over the next four years to build 50,000 affordable rental properties under the National Rental Affordability Scheme;
- Improvements to Centrelink's capacity to respond to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness; and
- Additional emergency relief funding, more personal helpers and mentors for people living with severe mental illness, innovative employment services and increased capital and recurrent funding for elderly people who are homeless.

New work through the National Partnership Agreement (NPA) on Homelessness

As part of *The Road Home*, in December 2008, the Council of Australian Governments established a National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness. Under the Agreement the Australian Government will provide additional funding to the States and Territories to reduce homelessness. States and Territories have agreed to match Commonwealth funding and deliver services and capital projects that will contribute to an overall reduction in homelessness.

The Australian and Tasmania Governments will contribute over **\$28 million** over four years to reduce homelessness under the Agreement. Tasmania has developed an Implementation Plan setting out new initiatives and additional services which will make a substantial contribution toward reducing homelessness.

The Implementation Plan

Priorities for Tasmania are to:

- increase the supply of affordable accommodation and expand the range of homelessness services including the provision of targeted specialist support;
- build an integrated services system where support services are linked to ensure tenancies are able to be maintained; and
- achieve seamless pathways to access the range of social housing options.

These priorities are reflected in the six key initiatives identified in the Homelessness Implementation Plan.

Specialist intervention tenancy services

- New specialist intervention tenancy services will be staffed by multi-disciplinary teams aimed at complementing existing tenancy support programs. People targeted by this initiative include young people leaving the care and protection system, youth justice facilities, adults leaving gaol, people who have been chronically homeless and people who are at risk of being evicted. Four teams will be established: one each in the North, North West, South East and South West regions. The specialist intervention teams will provide support to the Same House Different Landlord Program.

Dedicated homelessness facilities

- Five specific purpose facilities will be acquired for homeless people over the next two years. Facilities will provide high level support services including outreach services. Two new facilities will be located in Hobart, two facilities in Launceston and one in Devonport.

Tasmanian Homelessness Plan

- A key tenet of the Plan is that homelessness is a whole of-government and community responsibility. The Plan will have a state wide focus on prevention of homelessness, appropriate service delivery and specify initiatives against specific state priorities, such as halving the benchmark number of 385 rough sleepers to 193 by the end of 2010 and other local and regional initiatives. The Plan will be released in December 2009.

Same House Different Landlord Program

- 100 units of accommodation will be provided to enable people experiencing homelessness to move directly into long term accommodation. Tenants will also receive support which will aim to stabilise and sustain tenancies. The Program is targeted at people who are chronically homeless (rough sleepers); homeless families with children, young people; and people leaving child protection services, correctional or health facilities. In 2009 -10 50 new properties will be rolled out in the North and South East Areas; and a further 50 properties will be rolled out in 2011-12 in the North West and South West Areas.

Improvements in Service Coordination and Provision

- This initiative will focus on improving and integrating homelessness and mainstream services to deliver a seamless pathway into stable accommodation for homeless people. Initiatives include improved service quality and standards, better performance information, common assessment frameworks and the setting of a property register and allocations framework.

Workforce capacity audit and development plan

- A Workforce audit will be conducted to examine the skills and capability requirements of the homelessness sector. The audit will also identify the learning and development requirements to better meet the needs of the sector and to inform a workforce development plan.

For more information on what the Australian Government is doing to reduce homelessness visit www.fahcsia.gov.au. For information on what the Tasmania Government is doing to reduce homelessness or on specific initiatives visit www.dhhs.tas.gov.au