

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL CHILD HEALTH SURVEY

5953. Hon Shelley Archer to the Minister for Local Government representing the Minister for Housing and Works

I refer the Minister to the Report on the Western Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey, carried out by the Kulunga Research Network at the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research. I draw the Minister's attention to Recommendation 20 of the Report, namely, 'Implement and report the results of independent audits of public housing quality', and I ask —

Will the Minister advise the House what progress has been made in respect of this recommendation?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH replied:

The Department of Housing and Works advises in terms of public housing rental stock, the Department carries out physical inspections annually with a further home visit once per year. In addition the Department is preparing to conduct Building Assessments on 19,000 public housing dwellings, constructed prior to 1990.

Indigenous community housing, in remote and town based communities, was generally administered by the Commonwealth, through ATSIC and FACSIA (now FAHCSIA) on Aboriginal Lands Trust land. Since 2004 under an arrangement with the Commonwealth, the Department of Housing and Works has provided grant funding to some communities and Aboriginal housing organisations to manage the housing.

New governance arrangements are currently being introduced to provide a far more accountable framework which includes a more rigorous housing management service and is aimed at improving indigenous housing. Underpinning this approach and future negotiations with the Commonwealth, the Department of Housing and Works is undertaking a thorough audit to comprehensively document the nature of current housing; to identify and rectify safety issues; to identify and cost required maintenance, to develop a schedule of works and to ascertain current and future housing needs.