

TEACHERS — WYNDHAM ACCOMMODATION

172. Hon SHELLEY ARCHER to the minister representing the Minister for Housing and Works:

I refer to the Government Regional Officers' Housing mission statement objective to support the government's objectives by providing government employees with quality housing in country areas.

- (1) Is the minister aware that teachers recruited from Perth to work in Wyndham are currently being accommodated in condemned houses and houses that require urgent maintenance and replacement of fixtures and fittings?
- (2) Given the difficulty of attracting staff to regional areas and the Government Regional Officers' Housing mission statement, what safeguards are in place to ensure quality housing and appropriate maintenance is being provided now and into the future to best ensure staff retention?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1)-(2) To improve the quality of Government Regional Officers' Housing and to provide additional housing, the state government in 2006-07 made a commitment to a \$60 million program to deliver 161 houses, including 111 replacement houses and 50 new houses, over three years. These funds are boosting and improving stocks in regional areas, including those areas experiencing the resources boom, and remote Indigenous communities. A further \$2.8 million was provided in 2006-07 towards GROH projects in Halls Creek. In 2007-08, a further \$95.2 million was provided by the state government towards the 161 houses committed to in 2006-07, and to deliver a further 69 houses in areas of high demand over the next two financial years. Since 2004-05, and including this financial year, GROH has completed 241 more housing units with construction of a further 111 units to commence in 2008-09. Additionally, GROH has secured a further 246 private lease properties since 1 July 2007, the majority of which are no more than 10 years old. Both these strategies represent a comprehensive response to government employees moving into country locations. In total, 111 properties have been replaced, and 119 additional properties have been provided.

GROH will also spend \$11 million in 2007-08 to upgrade and refurbish existing GROH housing stock. A budget commitment of \$8 million was made in 2007-08 to address ongoing maintenance requirements. The Department of Housing and Works advises that GROH currently provides 15 properties to the Department of Education and Training in Wyndham. None of these properties has been condemned. Due to the shortage of available vacant serviced land in the town, GROH is working to improve the quality of housing provided in Wyndham by demolishing older properties and redeveloping on the same sites. There are currently two new units being constructed for DET which are due to be completed in April 2008. Government Regional Officers' Housing has also identified other redevelopment opportunities in Wyndham.