

PUBLIC HOUSING — TRANSITION BRANCH

767. MR N.W. MORTON to the Minister for Housing:

Before I ask my question, I acknowledge the year 6 students from Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School in the Speaker's gallery this afternoon, along with their principal, Mr Ashley Arnold. I thoroughly enjoyed having lunch with them today.

Could the minister please advise the house what steps the government has taken to ensure that public housing continues to be delivered to those most in need?

Mr W.R. MARMION replied:

I acknowledge the member for Forrestfield for a very good question. He is a very strong supporter of the housing affordability strategy and, in particular, the philosophy of transitioning people out of social housing and into their own homes. As people know, the Department of Housing manages 40 000 houses right across Western Australia. The Department of Housing's transition branch has two units specifically devoted to transitioning people out of social housing and supporting them into other forms of affordable housing. The tenancy compliance unit, which was established —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Armadale! Member for Armadale, I formally call you to order for the first time. Member for Girrawheen, do not talk when I am on my feet, please.

Mr W.R. MARMION: The housing transition branch, as I said, has two units that are devoted to transitioning people out of social housing into their own affordable houses. The tenancy compliance unit has made 1 664 properties available for people on our waiting list since the unit was established by the Liberal–National government in October 2009. What does that mean? In September 2010, our waiting list had reached 24 136 and as at September this year it had been cut down to 21 040. Therefore, the tenancy compliance unit is doing a really good job. It is supported by the housing pathways unit, which was established in February this year. This is one of the issues that came out of our affordable housing strategy. This unit helps to ensure that public housing is not a destination and that people transition through public housing. The destination is someone's own house. It works for those people who might have the ability to pay for a house in the private sector and can transition out. Since February this year we have moved 26 people into homeownership, 45 people into community housing, 43 people into private rental properties, 18 people into our rental pathways scheme and two people into National Rental Affordability Scheme housing. The third unit in the housing transition branch is the bond assistance unit. This unit has provided 34 639 interest-free loans for people who want a private rental. These interest-free loans provide the up-front bond and two weeks' rent. Since 2010, 34 639 people have been assisted.

These three units combined help the Liberal–National government deliver on its promise to produce 20 000 affordable homes for the people of Western Australia by 2020.