

HOMELESSNESS, STRATEGY AND TASK FORCE

**436. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Minister for Housing and Works:**

I refer to my question without notice yesterday, on the state homelessness strategy. The minister indicated in his answer that costs were shared between his department and the Department for Community Development, and that the cost to his department alone was about \$180 000. I assume the total cost is about \$360 000.

- (1) Have these departments received supplementary funding from the consolidated fund for the state homelessness strategy?
- (2) If not, what programs or services have been cut or altered in order to fund the state homelessness strategy and task force.

**Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:**

(1)-(2) I indicated to the member yesterday that I would take the opportunity of writing to him directly, but now he has given me the opportunity to give a more precise figure. The total cost of the operation of the task force is in the order of \$180 000.

Hon Barry House: That is not what you said yesterday.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: I said that I thought that the contribution of my department was \$180 000, but in fact it is just over half that - \$95 000 will come from my department. That is not the only response that my department is making to homelessness. No additional funds have been allocated for the work of the task force. In the case of my department, the task force requires only a re-allocation of existing resources into this area of priority. I will find out whether personnel have come from any other areas.

Hon Barry House: What has been slashed, and who has been sacked?

Hon TOM STEPHENS: No one has been sacked. One of the good initiatives that the previous Government left was the Office of Housing Policy.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich: That would be the only one.

Hon TOM STEPHENS: There have been a couple of others. The Office of Housing Policy has personnel whose work on this task force is an appropriate response, and additional duties have been assigned to the staff in support of the homelessness task force. It fits into the responsibilities of the Office of Housing Policy, which now collaborates with its counterparts in the Department for Community Development.