

**Division 59: Child Protection —**

**[Supplementary Information No B49.]**

*Question: Mr A.P. O’Gorman requested a full update on the progress of the new women’s refuge in the northern suburbs, and when it is anticipated that it will be available for use.*

*Answer:* In 2006-07, funding of \$1.5 million over four years was allocated for the operation of a new domestic violence women’s refuge service in the upper North West metropolitan corridor. In February 2007, the Patricia Giles Centre commenced the refuge known as Damara House which currently operates from a rental property in Wanneroo. Damara House provides accommodation and support for two families and provides outreach and counselling services to women experiencing domestic and family violence and in the community.

The Department for Housing is responsible for the construction of a new purpose built facility for Damara House located in Ridgewood. The Department of Housing has advised that currently the architect is finalising the documentation and it is anticipated the project will go to tender on 29 June 2011. Allowing for the tender process, the contract should be let by late July or early August 2011. Working with the latest timeframes, the Department of Housing has estimated date for completion of construction and handover to the Patricia Giles Centre is May 2012.

**[Supplementary Information No B50.]**

*Question: Ms L.L. Baker requested information on the number of calls to Crisis Care about domestic violence—as specific as possible when refuge accommodation has been sought—and information on unmet need that has been provided to the Department for Child Protection by refuge providers.*

*Answer:* Currently data collected from women’s refuge providers measures the availability of vacancies in the women’s refuge system.

In November 2008, the Women’s Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services (WA) developed a State wide database that provides details of bed availability in women’s domestic violence refuges. Women’s refuges are expected to update the database as vacancies occur in order to provide daily information regarding refuge vacancies.

The Department for Child Protection accesses the database twice daily, Monday to Friday, regarding the vacancies available across metropolitan women’s refuges. This information is then averaged for the month to identify the average vacancies available for women and children experiencing domestic violence and seeking accommodation.

This information is below;

**METROPOLITAN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE REFUGES AVERAGE VACANCIES  
FROM 1 JULY 2010 TO 31 MAY 2011**

	JULY 2010	AUG 2010	SEPT 2010	OCT 2010	NOV 2010	DEC 2010	JAN 2011	FEB 2011	MAR 2011	APR 2011	MAY 2011
Single Women (individual vacancies)	0.7	0.9	0.2	1.2	1.3	1.4	2.8	1.1	2.5	3.7	3.6
Women and Children (family vacancies)	5.6	4.5	3.7	3.9	3.3	2.8	2.0	1.4	1.9	2.9	3.8

In addition, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) report: *People turned away from government-funded specialist homelessness accommodation 2009–10*, provides information on people turned away from government-funded specialist homelessness accommodation 2009-10. Unpublished 2009-10 data shows the following information for services for women escaping domestic violence:

On an average day 390 people either requested immediate accommodation or were accommodated in government-funded specialist homelessness accommodation services for women escaping domestic violence. Of this total:

- 11 made a request for immediate accommodation and did not obtain accommodation by the end of the day;
- 17 were ending their accommodation;
- 17 were newly accommodated; and

- 361 were continuing their accommodation from the previous day and into the next day.

On any given day 11 out of 390 people (2.9%), were unable to be accommodated by Western Australian services for women escaping domestic violence.

The Department for Child Protection and the Women’s Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services (WA) are currently working together on developing a project to gain insight into the work currently being done by the domestic violence sector, the demand for new and existing services and where capacity can be enhanced.

**[Supplementary Information No B51.]**

*Question: Mr A.J. Waddell requested the data that indicates some unmet need for financial counsellors to access hardship utility grant scheme funds and that has informed the Department for Child Protection to fund some additional financial counselling positions.*

*Answer:* The Department for Child Protection (the Department) utilises the number of Hardship Utility Grant Scheme (HUGS) grants approved by region to assist with identifying increased demand for additional financial counseling services to access HUGS grants. In addition, the Department reviews progress reports provided by the financial counseling services which provide anecdotal information regarding service delivery.

The table below outlines the number of applications by region from the inception of HUGS in August 2008 to April 2011:

Period	Region	Number of Grants Paid	% of Total Grants Paid
August 2008 – June 2009	Gascoyne	10	0.38%
	Goldfields/Esperance	56	2.09%
	Great Southern	139	5.17%
	Kimberley	66	2.46%
	Metropolitan	1680	62.52%
	Midwest	121	4.50%
	Peel	182	6.77%
	Pilbara	48	1.79%
	Southwest	257	9.56%
	Wheatbelt	128	4.76%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2687</b>	<b>100%</b>
July 2009 – June 2010	Gascoyne	59	0.88%
	Goldfields/Esperance	141	2.10%
	Great Southern	268	4.00%
	Kimberley	223	3.33%
	Metropolitan	4401	65.68%
	Midwest	193	2.88%
	Peel	484	7.22%
	Pilbara	211	3.15%
	Southwest	528	7.88%
	Wheatbelt	193	2.88%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6701</b>	<b>100%</b>
July 2010 – April 2011	Gascoyne	52	0.55%
	Goldfields/Esperance	190	1.99%
	Great Southern	273	2.88%
	Kimberley	369	3.89%
	Metropolitan	5998	63.20%
	Midwest	355	3.74%
	Peel	778	8.20%
	Pilbara	301	3.17%
	Southwest	875	9.22%
	Wheatbelt	300	3.16%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9491</b>	<b>100%</b>

In 2009-10, the Department provided 4.5 new financial counsellors, in Fitzroy Crossing, Merredin/Moora, Bunbury, Mandurah/Peel, Armadale/Byford.

In April 2010 financial counselling services were further expanded with an additional six recurrent and two non-recurrent financial counsellors within the Metropolitan area in Stirling, Belmont, Balga, Wanneroo, Midland, Port Kennedy, Rockingham, Kwinana, Cockburn, Coolbellup and Atwell. One of the six recurrent financial counsellors was provided to the Financial Counsellors’ Associations of Western Australia (FCAWA) Hotline to provide telephone financial counselling and process HUGS applications for clients across the State.

In December 2010 to further assist with the increasing demand, the Department provided additional funding for six non-recurrent financial counselling services to assist clients in the following areas: Mandurah, Mirrabooka, Balga, Girrawheen, Fremantle, Rockingham, Kwinana, Merriwa, Clarkson, Quinns Rock, Gosnells, Cannington, Foothills and Midland.

In April 2011, The FCAWA Hotline was provided with a recurrent funding increase to employ an additional full time financial counsellor and additional non-recurrent funding to employ two full time financial counsellors. These increases are to provide additional telephone financial counselling services to process HUGS applications and assist clients and HUGS applicants from other financial counselling services.

In summary, since 2009-10 an additional 19.5 financial counsellors have been funded to assist with HUGS and financial counselling.

Information from a cross section of financial counsellors in the metropolitan area has indicated the waitlist to see a financial counsellor is currently one to two weeks. If people are experiencing delays in accessing a HUGS grant they can contact the FCAWA Hotline on 1800 007 007.

A range of improvements to HUGS have been implemented aimed at better supporting those people experiencing financial hardship such as expansion of the exceptional circumstances criteria and provision of an addition grant within a 12 month period. The Department will be further reviewing HUGS to streamline the application process and determine how to deliver the service to ensure maximum take-up of the HUGS.

**DIVISION 60: COMMUNITIES —**

**[Supplementary Information No B52.]**

*Question: Ms J.M. Freeman requested a breakdown of the figures regarding the stage of Redress WA applications as of 2 June.*

*Answer:* Because running a retrospective report is likely to cause data inaccuracies and slow the speed of processing, data has been provided as of 7 June.

The answer is as follows:

Finalised Applications	3977
Waiting for Documents from Applicant	465
Applications Currently Being Approved	890
Applications Currently Being Assessed	251
Applications Waiting for Assessment	335
Total	5918

**[Supplementary Information No B53.]**

*Question: Ms L.L. Baker requested the current number of full-time equivalents in the Office for Women’s Policy.*

*Answer:* The Women’s Interests portfolio involves 6.7 FTE.

**[Supplementary Information No B54.]**

*Question: Ms J.M. Freeman asked about the number of full-time equivalents in the youth portfolio; how many FTEs are involved in running the cadets; and whether any FTEs work with culturally and linguistically diverse youth.*

*Answer:* Work across the youth portfolio is inclusive of culturally and linguistically diverse young people and does not fall within the domain of any one officer.