

SOCIAL HOUSING — GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

75. Mr Y. MUBARAKAI to the Minister for Housing:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to boost social housing stock across Western Australia.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on the delivery of new social housing properties across Western Australia, despite the challenges faced in the construction industry?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house of the benefits of this government's record investment in social housing?

Mr J.N. CAREY replied:

I want to thank the member for his question.

- (1)–(2) As we know, right now across Australia, there is incredible demand for housing. All states face a similar challenge, and we have responded to that challenge by making a record investment of \$2.4 billion in social housing and homelessness programs. We have driven that through a series of reforms. It has not just been a massive investment—the biggest investment in our state's history—it also has been backed in by a large number of reforms. We have created the modular program and the timber frame program that knocks out homes in 25 weeks from the concrete pour. We have cut red tape for smaller housing builds. We have created a new small and medium builders panel, again to cut red tape. We are creating the housing diversity pipeline to use lazy land. The Minister for Planning and I are aggressively identifying land that is surplus to government needs for housing. We are bringing in a bill to do with a rent tax incentive. We brought in the stamp duty rebate for affordable apartments. We have raised the property price cap on the Keystart loan. We have created a new urban infill product for Keystart. We have reviewed existing Government Regional Officers' Housing stock and brought across surplus stock from that for social housing. Today, we announced further planning reform to streamline approvals for the critical infill development that we need. We have also announced the creation of an \$80 million infrastructure fund that will fund both regional workers' accommodation and infill development around train stations, close to public transport, to create liveable communities.

All those reforms mean that despite the toughest construction market ever since our program started, we have delivered an additional 1 000 social homes, with another 1 051 under contract. This is a major achievement, particularly given the market and the constraints we face. Compare all those policy reforms and changes, including the ones we have announced today, with the record of the opposition, which is zero announcements—a policy vacuum for nearly six years. Hon Steve Martin is the “Where's Wally of politics”—we do not see him anywhere; he is missing in action. In fact, that is the feedback I get from stakeholders. He does not turn up to events, the most recent being the Urban Development Institute of Australia event. In fact, the only thing he has said to date about a policy solution is, “I think we need maintenance.” That is it from the opposition. Across there, this disorganised mess has not one policy announcement on housing. On our side, we have a very clear series of reforms that have delivered social housing for Western Australia.