

## **HOUSING FIRST HOMELESSNESS ADVISORY GROUP**

### *Statement by Minister for Homelessness*

**MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Minister for Homelessness)** [12.19 pm]: Our government is committed to reducing homelessness across Western Australia. I am very proud to outline to the house that we have announced the opening of expressions of interest for the establishment of the Housing First Homelessness Advisory Group. The Housing First approach is evidence-based and, through the state government's Housing First homelessness initiative, a key initiative under the state's *All paths lead to a home: Western Australia's 10-year strategy on homelessness 2020–2023*, a significant level of support has been provided to vulnerable people experiencing homelessness in our community. Across WA, the Housing First Homelessness Initiative has seen 170 people receiving support from a case manager, 51 people supported in transitional accommodation and 58 people assisted into long-term housing. This is one part of a broader program of support and housing for rough sleepers, consistent with the Housing First approach, such as Boorloo Bidee Mia, Koort Boodja, HEART and many others. This demonstrates that we are investing in what we know works, and it is having a tangible impact and result.

To strengthen our focus on the Housing First approach, I am establishing the Housing First advisory group, which will consolidate existing advisory groups and other parties in the homelessness system to provide a refreshed focus on the approach. As part of its key functions, the group will progress implementation of the strategy, identify key reforms and work towards removing barriers to a Housing First approach in the homelessness system. This is part of a broader package of reforms that our government is pursuing in both housing and homelessness, including better coordination, more effective outreach services and boosting social housing. We are seeking a diverse range of representation for the group, which will consist of up to 12 members and be chaired by me, as the Minister for Homelessness. Expressions of interest are now being run jointly by the state government through the Department of Communities and Shelter WA, with membership of the group expected to be announced by the end of the year. I encourage all interested people and organisations from across Western Australia to engage with the EOI process, and I am looking forward to getting started as we continue to drive reform in this space.