

Question on Notice
No. 383
Asked on 24 March 2011

MR SORENSEN asked the Premier and Minister for Reconstruction (MS BLIGH)—

With reference to the federally-funded nation building jobs plan social housing initiative projects being constructed in Queensland—

- (1) Will the Premier advise who is responsible for the upkeep, cleaning, maintenance and general operating costs of projects once they are completed and handed over by the builders and whether or not the department responsible factored this into their budgets this financial year and beyond?
- (2) Who is responsible for any building defects (for example, inoperable TV antennas, plumbing, electrical problems)?

ANSWER:

Responsibility for the upkeep, cleaning, maintenance and general operating costs of social housing depends on ownership and management arrangements. Firstly, for dwellings owned and managed by the Department of Communities (DoC), under the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008*, DoC is responsible for ensuring these properties are clean and fit to live in when a tenancy commences. DoC also provides ongoing maintenance for these premises. The tenant is required to keep their rented premises clean and tidy.

Throughout Queensland, DoC currently manages tenancies for over 54,000 dwellings. Of these, 96 have been newly constructed under the Nation Building and Jobs Plan program (this comprises around two percent of the program). To ensure appropriate maintenance is provided, in its budget planning, DoC considers the maintenance needs of the entire property portfolio and associated costs, including consideration of increases in portfolio numbers, legislative change and building price increases.

Secondly, under lease agreements, DoC leases dwellings it owns to not-for-profit providers. Approximately 63 percent of the total Nation Building and Jobs Plan dwellings fall into this category. Under lease agreements, registered not-for-profit providers are responsible for funding and arranging general maintenance which is funded from rental income. DoC retains responsibility for undertaking and funding major upgrades and refurbishments and for structural repairs. This is budgeted for through DoC's annual maintenance and upgrade budget.

Thirdly, DoC funds capital grants through not-for-profit registered providers to deliver dwellings that are owned and managed by the provider. These comprise approximately 35 per cent of Nation Building and Jobs Plan dwellings in Queensland. As the owner of these particular properties, the registered provider is responsible for all maintenance, upkeep and overall operating costs which are largely funded through rental income. Under the *Housing Regulation 2003*, the provider is required to implement an asset management plan for all funded properties to ensure the long-term viability and value of their properties is maintained. Like all tenancies, tenants are responsible for keeping their property clean.

For a period of time following the completion of constructions—typically one year—the builder is responsible for any construction defects excluding those due to tenant damage and reasonable wear and tear.