

FACT SHEET

Homes Amendment Bill 2016

- The *Homes Amendment Bill 2016* amends the *Homes Act 1935* and *Residential Tenancy Act 1997* to modernise how housing assistance and homelessness services are provided by the Director of Housing.
- The *Homes Act 1935* was developed to assist people to purchase homes and land for the purpose of building a home. The Act needs to be modernised to reflect the broadening needs of vulnerable Tasmanians who seek housing assistance and Government's increased engagement with the non-government sector to deliver services.
- Examples that demonstrate the contemporary ways that the Director of Housing has provided housing assistance include Nation Building Economic Stimulus Package, the National Rental Affordability Scheme, Better Housing Futures, Housing Connect, Home Share, Streets Ahead, Supported Accommodation Facilities and crisis shelters.
- The Bill updates the Act so that it is gender-neutral. Without these amendments, the Act assumes that the Director of Housing is male. Language and terminology, such as 'servants', have been updated.
- The Bill establishes the capacity of the Director to
 - lease, transfer or sell homes and land
 - provide grant fundingthat are subject to terms and conditions to housing providers and housing support providers for the purpose of providing housing assistance or support services to eligible persons.
- The Bill requires the Director of Housing to have the Minister's approval before land and/or dwelling-houses can be leased, transferred or sold to housing providers or housing support providers.
- The Bill enables the transfer or sale of land and or dwelling houses to housing providers and housing support providers subject to terms and conditions for a period of up to 30 years after the land and/or dwelling houses are transferred or sold as contemplated by the *Tasmania's Affordable Housing Action Plan 2015-19*.
- This is to ensure that land and/or dwelling-houses that are transferred or sold to housing providers or housing support providers continue to be used to benefit eligible people in need of housing assistance.
- The Bill makes a number of amendments to the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997* (RTA) to enable social housing providers who are not in occupation of lease premises to sub-lease those premises to tenants.
- This will enable Tasmanians escaping from family violence to have the full protection of the RTA while being rapidly assisted into furnished private rental homes with the support they need as proposed under the Tasmanian Government's Family Violence Rapid Rehousing Initiative that was released in 2015 as part of the Government's *Safe Homes, Safe Families: Tasmania's Violence Action Plan 2015 – 2020*.