

## Social Housing Management Transfer (SHMT) one year on...

### Background

On 6 October 2016, the NSW Government announced it would transfer up to 35 per cent of NSW public housing services to private community housing providers. The move threatened the loss of 180 public sector jobs and the transfer of 18,000 public properties into private hands across four NSW districts - the Shoalhaven, Northern Sydney, Mid-North Coast and in the New England area.

**Of the 180 employees, 92 have so far been placed in ongoing public sector roles in Housing through the Vacancy Management Strategy. The PSA has worked hard to monitor this process through representation at Social Housing Management Transfer (SHMT) working group monthly meetings and to keep the department accountable for publishing and offering current housing vacancies first to the affected employees as a matter of priority.**

We know the Social Housing Management Transfer is only the beginning of the Government's broader plan for social housing privatization over the next decade. The *'Future Directions for Social Housing'* discussion paper reveals the Government's intention to collaborate with the private sector at all levels. The Government continues to promote the unfounded claim that the private sector will deliver better outcomes for the most vulnerable people in our community, including those living in social housing.

When the announcement was first made, the PSA immediately asserted in correspondence to assert our position that the provision of affordable public housing and the associated integrated support services to improve the quality of life for socially disadvantaged people is a fundamental public service, best provided and coordinated by the NSW Government and its highly skilled and experienced public sector workforce. No opportunity should be afforded for private operators to generate profit from delivering these services to the most disadvantaged members of our community. NSW Government funds should be prioritised for this function and for the proper maintenance of public housing stock and equity.

It is the PSA's continuing position that there is no evidence to support claims that the new system of service provision will make a substantial impact on unmet demand for public, social and affordable housing demand now and in the future.

We have also noted the inequity of Reg 25A which the NSW Baird Government passed to deny otherwise eligible employees their severance and redundancy entitlements for the loss of their public sector jobs as the services are transferred.

Despite this landscape of threats to public sector jobs and entitlements in Housing, the PSA has remained on the front foot defending the interests of our members. We have engaged in proactive consultations with the department over the past year to navigate the best outcomes for members in "affected" districts and will continue to do so.



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### The announcement - 17 October 2017

As you would know, Minister Pru Goward announced the successful Community Housing Providers one year on from the original transfer announcement.

### CHPs by locations, the providers are:

Hume Community Housing Association Ltd  
[Maitland and Port Stephens]

Compass Housing Services Co Ltd [Singleton, Cessnock, Dungog, Mid-Coast, Muswellbrook]

Homes North Community Housing Company Ltd  
[Gunnedah, Tamworth, Walcha, Liverpool Plains, Armidale-Dumaresq, Glen Innes, Gwydir, Guyra, Inverell, Moree Plains, Narrabri, Tenterfield, Uralla]

Southern Cross Community Housing Ltd  
[Shoalhaven]

Mission Australia Housing [Coffs Harbour, Bellingen]

Community Housing Ltd [Nambucca, Kempsey, Port Macquarie, Hastings]

Link Housing Ltd [Ryde, Hornsby, Ku-ring-gai]

Bridge Housing Ltd [Northern Beaches and Mosman]

St George Community Housing Ltd [Northern Sydney, Hunters Hill, Lane Cove, Willoughby]

### What's next?

As SHMT affected employees, you would have received individual notification on the day of the Minister's announcement outlining what will happen next and the timeframes.

The PSA has been assured by FACS that every individual staff member will have a one-on-one interview with HR to clarify your current duties and transferable skills and your circumstances matched with 'comparable roles.' The department has warranted to the PSA that whilst an indication of the number of 'comparable roles' has been given, this will not be finalized until after the interview process is complete. Once comparable roles have been identified, affected staff will be notified to put in an EOI for the particular role.

### Obligations

If you are identified as having a 'comparable role' with the relevant Community Housing Provider (CHP) you are obligated to put in an Expression of Interest. If you are not identified or not successful in obtaining that role, you will be placed on the mobility pathway and assisted to find another public sector role.

### Opportunities

The FACS training funding for SHMT 'affected' employees is still available throughout the transition period. The PSA would encourage you to take this up opportunity for 'funding to completion' of a course you are interested in doing or a certification you are interested in obtaining. FACS has warranted to the PSA that they will be providing workshops on CV preparation and interviewing skills in affected districts. Please let us know if there is other training and support that you believe would assist you in successfully gaining ongoing employment.



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### PSA commitment to you

The PSA remains committed to the following objectives on behalf of our Housing members:

1. To maximize the preservation of housing placement, tenancy services and corporate knowledge within the public sector to service the most disadvantaged and high needs clients;
2. Ensure wherever possible that all 'affected' PSA Housing members secure ongoing employment in the public sector
3. Ensure 'comparable employment' is truly realized and the new regulation (25A) is not used to disadvantage PSA Housing members;
4. For PSA members who transfer to private sector providers, to ensure a fair and equitable transfer package, including the retention of all current terms and conditions of employment, and an enforceable guarantee of both their employment and these terms and conditions for the longest possible time, (minimum two years);

### PSA Staff

**Kris Cruden** - Industrial Manager

**Siobhan Callinan** - Senior Organiser

**Katy Ambler** - Industrial Officer

You can support the work of the PSA and your local delegates by asking your colleagues to [JOIN](#) their union.

If you have any questions about this bulletin please email: [FACSOrganising@psa.asn.au](mailto:FACSOrganising@psa.asn.au)

Update and Pay with the PSA: If you have moved home or work location, or you have changed your contacts, please update your membership details [HERE](#).

