

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

SIHIP Program – Willowra Community Housing

Mr Giles to Minister for Public and Affordable Housing;

In relation to houses being built and upgraded in the Willowra Community under the SIHIP program:

- 1. As of 9 April 2010, how many houses are planned to be constructed and how many houses will receive upgrades (refurbishments) and how many will receive repairs and maintenance?**

Through SIHIP \$2.6 million will be spent refurbishing 35 houses in Willowra. A refurbishment constitutes an investment of more than \$20,000 and less than \$100,000 per house with the average cost of a refurbishment around \$75,000 per house.

Refurbishment work will focus on making houses safe and restoring functionality, with a focus on improving the 'critical healthy living practices' from the National Indigenous Housing Guidelines. This means that homes will have a place to wash and bathe, facilities to wash clothes and bedding, the ability to remove waste safely from the house and the ability to store, prepare and cook food.

All work is inspected by Department Asset Management Officers who ensure the agreed scope of work for each property has been carried out to an appropriate standard.

- 2. How many houses are currently under construction?**

Willowra is a refurbishment only community, no new house construction will occur under SIHIP.

- 3. What is the current occupancy rate of each house at Willowra?**

As houses are handed over following refurbishments, Tenancy Agreements or Occupancy Agreements will provide up to date occupancy data. It is expected that this information will be available by the end of the year. Generally, the Remote Housing

Management Framework will allow for an average of 9 people per house.

4. When will the remaining houses commence construction and when will they be completed?

Willowra is a refurbishment only community, no new house construction will occur under SIHIP.

5. Under the SIHIP program, what is the estimated and actual cost of construction of a house, upgrade (refurbishment) of a house and repairs and maintenance of a house in Willowra?

Willowra is a refurbishment only community, no new house construction will occur under SIHIP. SIHIP refurbishments commenced in Willowra on 19 April 2010. A refurbishment constitutes an investment of more than \$20,000 and less than \$100,000 per house with the average cost of a refurbishment around \$75,000 per house. The refurbishment means that homes will have a place to wash and bathe, facilities to wash clothes and bedding, the ability to remove waste safely from the house and the ability to store, prepare and cook food.

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services provides all Shires with approximately \$7,500 annually for repairs and maintenance for each house.

6. As of 9 April 2010, how many houses have had upgrades or refurbishments or repairs and maintenance completed, how many have commenced and when will the remaining be commenced and when will they be completed?

SIHIP commenced work in Willowra on 19 April 2010 with staff inductions completed and one refurbishment is underway. Completion of all refurbishments in Willowra is scheduled for mid June.

Approximately \$7,500 is available annually for repairs and maintenance on each community house. Exact work on any particular home is undertaken with the need across the community in mind.

7. What is the average length of time for the construction of a house and the upgrade (refurbishment) of a house in Willowra?

The average length of time for the refurbishment of a house is two weeks. No new houses will be constructed as Willowra is a refurbishment community only.

8. As of 9 April 2010, how much under SIHIP or other funding that was directed to housing for the express purposes of upgrade (refurbishment) or repairs and maintenance has been expended on all activities at Willowra including:

(a) how much has been spent with the local Shire through either engagement or sub-contracting. Please break this down by purpose including ongoing management and repairs and maintenance of housing stock as well as extra works including upgrades and extra-ordinary repairs and maintenance;

The local Shire has not subcontracted to SIHIP in Willowra. SIHIP commenced in Willowra on 19 April and repairs and maintenance will be ongoing by the Shires. Funding of \$314,000 has been provided for the 2009-2010 year to the Shire to conduct repairs and maintenance in Willowra.

(b) How much has been spent on project management;

SIHIP commenced in Willowra on 19 April 2010, hence no costs incurred to 9 April 2010. A breakdown of project management costs for repairs and maintenance by the Shire by community are not yet available.

(c) How much has been spent on materials;

SIHIP commenced in Willowra on 19 April 2010, hence no costs incurred to 9 April 2010. A breakdown of material costs for repairs and maintenance by the Shire by community are not yet available.

(d) How much has been spent on construction and refurbishment labour.

SIHIP commenced in Willowra on 19 April 2010, hence no refurbishment costs were spent to 9 April 2010

- 9. How many people including public servants, consultants, Alliance employees, auditors, designers and assessors have worked on SIHIP activities or housing upgrade and repair and maintenance activities in Willowra, broken down by Commonwealth, Territory and Alliance employer groups and contractors.**

The Australian Government Business Manager (GBM) is involved in SIHIP activities, the Northern Territory Government Alliance Director, and the NFA leadership team are involved in management activities. Various members of the SIHIP program team and local regional housing staff have input into Willowra activities from time to time.

The New Future Alliance has 1.5 dedicated employees and 1 sub-contractor with 3 employees currently working at Willowra.

- 10. How many residents of Willowra have been employed on SIHIP, or through outsourced SIHIP funding through another body.**

SIHIP commenced in Willowra on 19 April and Central Desert Shire is the CDEP provider. Central Desert Shire has delivered training for white card and acid washing and New Future Alliance pre-employment packs to start the recruitment process.

Four residents expressed interest in being employed through CDEP. There is capacity for SIHIP to offer placements for 10-12 people.

- 11. How long were they employed and how much were they paid per hour and what was the long service leave, and superannuation arrangements? Were these people on CDEP, did they remain on CDEP?**

SIHIP commenced in Willowra on 19 April and the Alliance pays all employees under the appropriate award for their employment type.

For members of the Willowra community who decided to remain on CDEP payments (as opposed to having short term employment which requires coming off payments), CDEP provides work experience with the Alliance. This experience develops participants' skills and employability in order to assist their move into employment outside CDEP.

12. How many residents of Willowra have been engaged as trainees and apprentices?

Apprenticeships will be offered to local Indigenous residents who are willing to travel with New Future Alliance to other communities. The timeframe for refurbishments in Willowra does not allow for long term training to be undertaken however, opportunities for employment and shorter training courses are available.

Central Desert Shire in conjunction with New Future Alliance and contractors are working on site to engage local people and put on apprentices who are interested in travelling with New Future Alliance to other communities.

13. When will they complete their trade or apprenticeship and if the completion date is after works are completed at Willowra what are the plans for those employees to ensure they do not end up back on the unemployment line?

SIHIP commenced in Willowra on 19 April. Apprenticeships will be offered to local Indigenous residents who are willing to travel with New Future Alliance to other communities. The timeframe for refurbishments in Willowra does not allow for long term training to be undertaken however, opportunities for employment are available.

Central Desert Shire in conjunction with New Future Alliance and contractors are working on site to engage local people and put on apprentices who are interested in travelling with New Future Alliance to other communities.

14. What schedule of pay rates has been established for the employment of workers in Willowra?

The Alliance pays all employees under the appropriate award for their employment type.

15. Who are the contractors and sub-contractors that have completed work in Willowra and was the total amount paid to these contractors for SIHIP works. Please breakdown the costs per house worked on as at 9 April 2010 and the amount of hours worked to undertake these activities.

SIHIP commenced in Willowra on 19 April.

- 16. For each contractor, how many people have been employed in Willowra?**

SIHIP commenced in Willowra on 19 April.

- 17. What infrastructure, including power and water and sewer, has been identified as necessary for the construction or upgrade (refurbishment) of the planned houses and what is the estimated cost of that infrastructure.**

Willowra is a refurbishment only community and does not include major infrastructure upgrades.

- 18. Which roads will be upgraded as part of the SIHIP program Willowra? Please detail the amount (length and width), costs and timelines for construction of curbing, guttering and sealing works.**

Willowra is a refurbishment only community and does not include major infrastructure upgrades.

- 19. Please detail the power, sewer and water schedule of works that will be completed at Willowra as part of SIHIP. Please detail the costs and timelines for construction of all such works.**

Willowra is a refurbishment only community and does not include major infrastructure upgrades.