

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT

POLICY STATEMENT NO. 17

HOUSING POLICY

FEBRUARY 1987

BACKGROUND

The Department has a substantial housing estate which devolved from the three former agencies amalgamated in March 1985.

The Forests Department had 436 houses which passed to the new Department, the National Parks Authority had 52 and the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife had 2. (The housing needs for most country-based staff in the latter agency were met through the Government Employees Housing Authority).

A review of the new Department's housing assets at the time of its formation indicated a need for a rationalisation of the former Forests Department estate. At that time approximately 90 houses were either vacant or let to persons who were not employed in the Department. Many were located in areas (eg. within pine plantations) where it was now not desirable for them to remain.

Late in 1985 State Cabinet endorsed a proposal to dispose of up to 200 houses which had been identified as surplus. (In this context, "surplus" meant those houses not essential to meet the housing needs of staff liable to transfer and/or to meet fire suppression commitments).

More recently, a review of departmental activities has again drawn attention to the Department's practice of maintaining a substantial housing estate and acquiring further houses. That review was undertaken to identify activities which were not essential to the Department's central role as a land management agency.


BASIC OBJECTIVES

The basic objectives of the policy are to:

- (1) Reduce the Department's housing estate as quickly as possible, by disposing of those houses identified as surplus; and
- (2) Withdraw from the function of managing a housing estate.

STRATEGIES

- 1 In accordance with the scheme endorsed by State Cabinet, houses identified as surplus be disposed of as quickly as possible.
- 2 Concurrent with strategy 1., negotiations be commenced with the Government Employees Housing Authority with the objective to transferring to the control of the Authority those houses still required to meet departmental operational commitments.
- 3 The Department continue to rationalise its housing needs:
 - 3.1 By utilising GEHA housing wherever possible.
 - 3.2 In the absence of sufficient GEHA housing and/or houses privately owned by employees, by continuing to provide the minimum number of units of housing required to accommodate:
 - 3.2.1 personnel liable for transfer, and
 - 3.2.2 personnel engaged in essential operations, especially fire suppression activities.
- 4 While the abovementioned programs are being undertaken:
 - 4.1 Rents for all departmental accommodation be adjusted from time to time in accordance with Government policy and directives.
 - 4.2 Departmental accommodation continue to be maintained in a reasonable state of repair.
- 5 When vacancies are advertised, the advertisement is to indicate whether housing is available and whether occupancy of the house is required of the successful applicant.



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