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**Weekly E-Bulletin 18/08 ~ Friday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2008**

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**State Government Concessions ~ Council, Water and Sewerage Rates**

There have been some important **changes to the application process** for **concessions** on Council, Water and Sewerage rates. These changes are aimed at simplifying and streamlining application processes. The principal change is the introduction of a new application form, which replaces the old DFC and SA Water forms as from **1<sup>st</sup> July 2008**.

Under the new arrangements it is no longer necessary to supply a copy of the tenant's Centrelink concession card nor is it necessary to supply a copy of the relevant account. Another significant change is that forms need to be lodged only once even for beneficiaries, who previously had to lodge them quarterly.

It is also planned to introduce an online form.

In order to assist in the transition to the new arrangements, an information session will be held for all Housing Associations and Housing Co-operatives. The information session will be facilitated by David Kilner (OCH Trainer for concessions) and the DFC Concessions Unit.

It will be held from **10am to 12 noon on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2008**. **Booking arrangements and the venue will be advised as soon as possible.**

## **National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) update**

The Commonwealth is gearing up to get the NRAS up and running.

On 27 June 2008, FaHCSIA published the National Mandatory Requirements and Weighted Criteria, which outlines who is eligible to apply for the Scheme and the criteria that will be used to assess applications for the NRAS.

The document can be found on FaHCSIA's website at:

[http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/housing/nras\\_mandatory.htm](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/internet/facsinternet.nsf/housing/nras_mandatory.htm)

The first Call for Applications was delayed from 5 July to 24 July, and will be launched by Federal Housing Minister Tanya Plibersek in Sydney at the same time as a NRAS Prospectus.

## **NSW Community Housing Conference 2008 ~ Call for Expressions of Interest for South Australian Delegates**

The NSW Federation of Housing Associations Inc., in conjunction with the Association to Resource Co-operative Housing (ARCH) and NSW Churches Community Housing are hosting the NSW Community Housing Conference. The Conference will be held on the **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> & Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> of September 2008 in Sydney.**

The **CHCSA Co-operatives' Representative Council** successfully sought funding from the Office for Community Housing to send four (4) delegates from South Australia. The four (4) delegates will consist of two (2) people from two (2) Associations and two (2) people from two (2) Co-operatives.

### **Funding per Delegate is inclusive of:**

1. Return Flights to Sydney plus transfers
2. Three (3) nights Accommodation
3. Registration for the Conference
4. Attendance to the Celebration Dinner and Awards Night.

**Successful delegates will be required to give a one (1) page report on the Conference upon their return.**

Today, the CHCSA are sending out letters to all Community Housing Organisations along with an 'Expression of Interest' Form. Additional Forms will be available for download from the CHCSA Website early next week.

All 'Expressions of Interest' **must** be received by the CHCSA no later than COB Friday 8<sup>th</sup> August 2008.

A Selection Panel will meet shortly after the 8<sup>th</sup> August to assess the 'Expressions of Interest' based on the question set out on the form and will advise the successful delegates by week ending Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August 2008.

### **The Selection Panel will comprise of:**

- A Representative from the Office for Community Housing
- A Representative from the Community Housing Council
- Chairperson of the CHCSA Associations' Forum
- Chairperson of the CHCSA Co-operatives' Representative Council.

On behalf of the CHCSA and Members of the CHCSA Co-operatives' Representative Council, we wish to extend our sincerest gratitude to the Office for Community Housing for acknowledging by its support, the value and participation opportunity for representatives from both Housing Co-operatives and Associations to attend this Conference.

## **Superannuation Changes Fairer for Non-Profit Organisations/Employers ~ from Australian Taxation Office (ATO)**

Changes to the superannuation guarantee late payment offset will provide fairer treatment for non-profit organisations that make late superannuation guarantee contributions.

Previously, non-profit organisations that paid late superannuation guarantee contributions to a fund could elect to offset these contributions against their superannuation guarantee charge, providing these payments were made within one month of the superannuation guarantee charge due date.

If the payment was made more than one month late, non-profit organisations were also liable to pay the superannuation guarantee charge, effectively paying the same amount twice.

The changes that will take effect from 24 June 2008, will generally give relief to non-profit organisations from this double payment situation. After this time, contributions can be offset against the superannuation guarantee charge, even if paid more than one month late.

Non-profit organisations can only use late contributions to offset the nominal interest and superannuation guarantee shortfall components of the superannuation guarantee charge.

The superannuation guarantee charge and any late contributions used to offset the charge continue to be non-tax deductible. Penalties and interest will still apply to non-profit organisations that don't pay superannuation contributions for their employees on time.

The easiest and cheapest way for non-profit organisations to meet their obligations is to pay superannuation contributions to an employee's nominated fund by the quarterly cut-off dates (28 October, 28 January, 28 April and 28 July).

Further information is available for the ATO Website, please click [here](#).

## **Call for Submissions: Department for Families and Communities (DFC) Funding Available, closes 15 August**

**Department for Families and Communities (DFC)** funding is available for services able to provide early intervention and intensive family support. There is \$15 million over 4 years to support families when first identified as being at risk of family breakdown; and \$13.2 million over 4 years for Intensive Placement Prevention and Reunification Services.

### **Non Government Organisations are invited to apply for funding in the following categories:**

- Children in Care: Targeted Early Intervention Family Support Services
- Children in Care: Intensive Placement Prevention
- Children in Care: Reunification Support Services.

Aboriginal families are a focus area for these services therefore organisations will be required to provide services that reflect the social and cultural dimensions of good practice work with Aboriginal families.

This funding and these important new programs are aimed directly at the most vulnerable families, children, young people and those who care for them. Closing dates for submissions is 15 August. Information on the submission process is available at [www.dfc.sa.gov.au/opensubmissions](http://www.dfc.sa.gov.au/opensubmissions)

## **The Cost-effectiveness of Homelessness Programs: A First Assessment ~ Report Available**

This study, from the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, provides a first assessment of the cost-effectiveness of homelessness programs operating in Australia. Homelessness prevention and support programs provide support to those who are homeless, those escaping domestic violence and those who are at risk of becoming homeless.

For more information go to: [http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/download/80306\\_fr](http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/download/80306_fr)

**Common Equity Housing (Victoria) ~ Training Video ~ repeated item**

CHCSA has been loaned a training video that was produced for the **Victorian Common Equity Housing Program** about ten years ago. Although a little dated in some respects, the video provides a good introduction to the Victorian Program.

There will be a showing of the video in the CHCSA Boardroom for interested members of Housing Associations and Housing Co-operatives and other interested people.

The showing will be at **10.30am on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> July**, following the meeting of the Common Equity Working Party. The video lasts approximately 20 minutes.

**Please note** it cannot be assumed that South Australia will develop a Common Equity Program as this is subject to Government and sector processes and agreement. Nor can it be assumed that a South Australian Common Equity Program would be identical to the Victorian model. However, the video illustrates one approach to the Common Equity model and will be useful to South Australians as an example.

**Booking to attend the showing is essential due to limited space in our Boardroom. Please book by telephoning (08) 8362 1022 by Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2008.**

<b><u>STAFF</u></b> Executive Officer - Ciarán Synnott Manager, Admin/Finance/Communications - Maria Demasi Administration Officer - Ante Gajic Senior Policy Officers - Matt Fisher & David Kilner Sector Resource Worker - Philip Studt Spanish Speaking Worker - Domingo Garcia	<b><u>CASUAL TRAINERS AND VOLUNTEERS</u></b> Casual Trainers – Liz McCarthy, Graeme Gow, Philip Studt, Kate Reynolds
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**DIARY DATES**

<b>Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> July</b>	<b>Common Equity Model in SA Working Party and showing of Victoria Common Equity Program Video</b>
<b>Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August</b>	<b>CHCSA Associations' Forum</b>
<b>Friday 8<sup>th</sup> August</b>	<b>CHCSA Co-operatives' Representative Council</b>
<b>Friday 8<sup>th</sup> August</b>	<b>CHCSA Policy Committee</b>

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