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Weekly E-Bulletin 20/08 ~ Friday 8th August 2008

- **National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) ~ Launch Outcomes ~ from Community Housing Federation of Australia (CHFA)**
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National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) ~ Launch Outcomes ~ from Community Housing Federation of Australia (CHFA)

After the official launch of the **National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS)** last fortnight there have been some key developments.

CHFA have been chosen as one of the **National Partnership Facilitators** for the NRAS. Under this agreement CHFA will take on a variety of consultative and facilitative roles to co-ordinate potential partnership or consortium arrangements between organisations that are interested in participating in the Scheme. These include promoting opportunities for the community housing sector under NRAS, encouraging development proposals through the community housing sector and other stakeholders, and engaging with other FaHCSIA appointed organisations.

The other National Partnership Facilitator is Aged Care Services Australia (ACSA). CHFA and ACSA are working together with the State and Territory Partnership Facilitators, who will have a more 'hands on' role. In South Australia and the Northern Territory this is being conducted by the South Australian Government's Department of Families and Communities (DFC). In all other jurisdictions, a company called MacroPlan will be the local partnership facilitator.

FaHCSIA are in the process of holding open information sessions on the Scheme at a series of locations across the country. For further information, please refer to the Article below.

National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) ~ Information Sessions

On Thursday 24 July, the Treasurer the Hon Wayne Swan MP and the Minister for Housing the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP launched the National Rental Affordability Scheme ("The Scheme") and announced the first Call for Applications.

The Scheme will help increase the supply of affordable rental dwellings by up to 50,000 by 2012, with a further 50,000 to be made available post July 2012, subject to demand. Rent for these properties will be charged at 20 per cent below the market rate for eligible tenants.

Calls for Applications

Establishment Phase (1 July 2008-30 June 2010)

There will be two Calls for Applications for incentives in the Establishment Phase. The first Call for Applications, Round 1, is now open until 4 September 2008.

Round 1 focuses on proposals that can deliver completed dwellings, which will be available for rent during the 2008-09 and 2009-10 financial years.

* [National Rental Affordability Scheme - Round 1 Call for Applications](#)

To be eligible for incentives under the Scheme, applicants will need to meet national mandatory requirements and weighted criteria.

* [National Mandatory Requirements and Weighted Criteria](#)

As it is not expected that the full 11,000 incentives will be allocated in Round 1, a second Call for Applications (Round 2), will be issued in October 2008.

Note that proposals received in Round 1 and Round 2, which also seek an allocation of incentives for projects in the Expansion Phase, will be accepted and assessed at this time.

Information Sessions

The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) will be holding information sessions for interested parties such as financial institutions, developers and land holders, local governments, not for profit groups, property managers and housing groups.

Registration is not required to attend a session.

**Thursday 14 August 2008 from 10 am – 11.30 am at the Stamford Plaza
150 North Terrace, Adelaide.**

Bus Tour of the Inner City of Adelaide Visiting Social Housing, Community Housing and Homelessness Services ~ Australasian Housing Institute (AHI)

The Australasian Housing Institute in South Australia presents:

A Bus Tour of the inner city of Adelaide visiting Social Housing, Community Housing and Homelessness Services on Wednesday 20 August 2008 from 9.00am-12 noon.

The tour will provide the opportunity to visit a number of services in the inner city and join discussion about the services, strategies and solutions to meet housing needs.

The morning will include:

- A tour of some Housing SA and Community Housing places
- A tour of some of the homelessness services, with commentary on the connectedness of services
- Morning Tea
- Discussion about services and what the Government is trying to achieve in reducing homelessness

Where: Meet at Riverside Centre, North Terrace, Adelaide (next to the Hyatt)

When: Wednesday 20 August 9.00am – 12 noon

Catering: Light morning tea

COST: FREE for AHI members / \$20 non-members

To RSVP: EMAIL admin @ housinginstitute.org, or [register online](#) or

fax back the registration form to FAX (02) 6494 7588 by Monday 18 August 2008

"Carer's Virtual 2020" ~ Carer's online Summit

During the month of August, there will be an online *Carers Summit*, to find a 'big new idea' for Carer and Family issues, along the lines of the Rudd Government's 2020 Summit in April.

Please participate in this event. Go to <http://www.carers2020.com.au/index.html> to get there. You'll see that comments are invited on each section.

Senator Helen Coonan also has written a very good introduction on 'consumer-directed care' in her welcome on the Website

This is a good opportunity to get some national debate going. So please contribute and push the debate along.

The Carbon Solution Reduction Scheme

The Government is committed to assisting all households, and particularly low-income households, adjust to the introduction of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme.

Household impacts

The Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme will change the relative prices of the goods and services that all households use. Goods that are relatively emissions intensive to produce will generally become relatively more expensive.

Managing household impacts

The overall cost to households of reducing carbon pollution can be managed by good scheme design. Broad coverage of the scheme will enable Australia to reduce carbon pollution across all sectors at the lowest possible overall cost to households and business.

In addition, every cent raised from the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme will be used to help Australians – households and business – adjust to the scheme and to invest in clean energy options.

The Government has made a number of specific commitments to households. The Government has committed to:

- Cut fuel taxes on a cent for cent basis to offset the initial price impact on fuel associated with the introduction of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme. The Government will periodically assess the adequacy of this for three years and adjust this offset accordingly. At the end of this three-year period, the Government will review this adjustment mechanism.
- Increase payments, above automatic indexation, to people in receipt of pensioner, carer, senior and allowance benefits. Other assistance measures to meet the overall increase in the cost of living flowing from the scheme will also be provided to this group.
- Increase assistance to other low-income households through the tax and payment system to meet the overall increase in the cost of living flowing from the scheme.
- Provide assistance to middle-income households to help them meet any overall increase in the cost of living flowing from the scheme.
- Review annually, in the Budget context, the adequacy of payments to beneficiaries and recipients of family assistance to assist households with the overall impacts of the scheme.
- Provide additional support through the introduction of energy efficiency measures and consumer information to help households take practical action to reduce energy use and save on energy bills.

The Government has also indicated in the terms of reference for the review into Australia's Future Tax System that it is to consider the interrelationships between the tax and payment systems and the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme.

State Government Concessions ~ Council, Water and Sewerage Rates ~ repeated item

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 **1st 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 14th August 2008**. Bookings are essential, please contact Learning & Development at Office for Community Housing on (08) 8207 0171. Venue will be advised upon booking.

<u>STAFF</u> 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	<u>CASUAL TRAINERS AND VOLUNTEERS</u> Casual Trainers – Liz McCarthy, Graeme Gow, Philip Studt, Kate Reynolds
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DIARY DATES

Saturday 9th August	CHCSA Spanish Speaking Housing Association
Monday 11th August	CHCSA Hills & Southern Forum
Wednesday 13th August	CHCSA Central Forum

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