



nsw Federation of  
Housing Associations inc

**Housing Associations Meeting**  
**- Report -**

Friday 25th February 2005  
Medina Executive Sydney Central

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## **1. Overview**

The Federations' first housing associations' meeting for the year was held in Sydney at the Medina Executive Sydney Central on the 25<sup>th</sup> February. The meeting, preceded by a meeting of the housing associations directors network, was attended by 33 representatives from 29 housing associations across the state.

There was a full agenda with key sessions on the CHLP review, regulation and affordable housing and, a focus on seeking input and advice from members. To facilitate this and at the suggestion of the sector, there is now a permanent session for members to raise any operation issues or concerns. This input informs the Federations' position, thinking and planning on these issues.

## **2. Federation update**

(Presenter: Adam Farrar, Executive Director, Federation)

A full Federation update was sent to members prior to the meeting. The update outlines work that the Federation has been doing and plan to do in the coming year. It also discusses some sector developments over that period. Adam highlighted a number of key areas of work for the Federation from the report.

### *State Council:*

At the last State Council elections three members stepped down (Debbie Tribe, Christine Robinson, Lindsay Kelley) and four new members were appointed (Barbara Brown, Patrick Yeung, Brian White, Pamela Pryor).

### *Sector coordination*

Adam outlined some of the projects that form this area of work. Ongoing work such as resourcing housing associations meetings, attending and reporting to regional meetings are key sector coordination activities.

The Federation is also facilitating sector seminars to provide an opportunity for the sector to find out more about a particular current issue and share their experience.

Adam drew members attention to a new area of sector coordination – the *Housing Associations Directors Network* through which the Federation now resources sector directors. There are currently 85 sector directors that have registered to be members of the network.

Another new project in this area is the Federation e-bulletins whereby training, directors e-bulletins and other relevant information clearing house e-bulletins are sent to members.

### *Advocacy*

Following an earlier ministerial shuffle, the premier announced Jo Tripodi, member for Fairfield as the new Minister for Housing. The Federation met with the new Minister not long after he was promoted to the office.

The Federation has also been working with the ASU on a staffing conditions campaign and award funding, the ASU has sent out a survey to members about staffing conditions. The session at the meeting is an opportunity to discuss the campaign. The Federation wrote to OCH to push for a meeting with Treasury along with NCOSS around award funding.

As part of developing the training for the registration system the Federation have had extensive discussions with OCH. As a result we've seen some changes to the methodology for assessing organisations but there are a number of aspects that we have made clear that we are concerned about.

Together with sector representatives the Federation has been participating on the CHLP review reference group. The proper costings for non-metro associations, and small associations has been a priority – as has the staffing costs issue. This has led to the activities costing exercise that will show much more of the full staffing costs.

Following advocacy by the Federation, the initial development of a *Strategic Framework for Community Housing* discussion paper for consultation has begun.

#### *Building relationships*

The very intensive work with financial institutions and developers arising from the Bonnyrigg initiative has been the main focus of this work. We continue to work with other peaks on a range of issues.

#### *Research and Sector Development*

The Federation participated in a stock transfer round table to establish the principles for future tenanted transfers.

We have also been involved in consultations and briefings on the further development of affordable housing initiatives such as the debt equity tender, the development of a local government presentation to build support and relationships between the sector and local government.

The Federation continues to push OCH on IT for the sector. We are also putting a proposal to OCH to fund the development of tools for financial modelling of associations business and also to enable associations to assess proposed partnerships with developers etc.

#### *Training by the Good Practice Unit*

Adam outlined the training components for the GPU schedule this year starting with this year's Cert IV training in February.

One of our recent strategic directions was to give better access to training by providing distance delivery, with the Federation now offering distance delivery of the Certificate IV qualification.

This year we plan to again provide the high level governance training workshop, brokered in from the Institute of Company Directors.

The Federation has been working with ARCH to develop training in the Performance Based Registration System.

The Federation and Housing Appeals Committee have been providing training in appeals issues and related policy.

*OCH/ DoH developments:*

Maura Boland was appointed as the new Executive Director for OCH. The main DoH initiative of major interest to the sector is the development of the Cross Provider Regulatory Framework. This will lead to legislation (probably later this year) and will ultimately lead to PMU moving out of OCH.

*Discussion:*

Affordable housing – There was general discussion about affordable housing starting to emerge as the main growth opportunity for providers. One member expressed dismay that some councils are looking interstate for organisations to deliver their affordable housing. Another member suggested that if we don't promote ourselves as the provider of choice then we will miss out on some of the opportunities in this area. Noting also that the sector is too busy fulfilling obligations under the PBR to have time to promote itself. A discussion of the varied capacity of organisations to take up some of these opportunities ensued. Adam asked whether members thought that a sector wide approach to this issue was needed. One member thought that it may be appropriate for some organisations to employ different approaches rather than develop a sector wide approach. Another member suggested that developing a brochure suitable for taking to council to promote providers would be useful. Adam conveyed that there are some tools that the Centre for Affordable Housing are developing along these lines such as a presentation for councils. Others conveyed a need to develop models and financial tools for providers. Adam indicated that the Federation has put in a proposal to OCH for funding to develop models to approach councils with.

Stock transfers and tenanted transfers – Adam indicated that there is a major tenanted transfer under way in Mudgee with all public housing stock being transferred to Central Tablelands Housing Association. Mimi O'Reilly from Central Tablelands HA gave a brief report of how that was proceeding. She conveyed that there are a number of problems that they are working through such as tenants not believing that they would receive rent assistance and issues around the Departments' transfer policy. Mimi reported that there were some concerns among tenants about being forced to transfer, that there was no call centre for repairs and, about paying for water. Overall, the process undertaken by the Department was not good in that they have no way of forcing tenants to transfer. The transfers were presented to them as a fate accompli.

### **3. Operational issues/concerns – sector discussion**

*Stock transfers and asset management:*

One member raised the issue of standards for public housing stock and those of the sector in relation to stock transfers and asset management. The member expressed concern that if the sector accepted the standards for public housing then there would be serious implications for our viability. The suggestion was that the sector should develop its' own standards. This would involve it engaging in a discussion to develop broad principals. In short, we as

a sector should not use public housing standards as they are inappropriate. The member also suggested that we need to develop proper structures for tenant participation and the standards so that tenants can feed back into community housing planning and scoping. She reported that while OCH had no community housing standards their organisation had had success at negotiating standards with public housing. Adding that the designs of the redevelopment sites are terrible and have required work by community housing once transferred.

Another member suggested that a transferred property should be serviceable for at least 5 years. Further discussion about the need for a sector position on how much the sector charges for scoping ensued with one comment that asset management could be an opportunity for the sector with a fee for service arrangement which could benefit the sector if we came up with a common position. Another member reiterated that to do this the sector needs solidarity around this point, with another suggesting that we develop a standard contract. Two final points were made in relation to stock transfers and asset management – that there are additional costs for rural organisations and that it would be useful to have a break down of what Resitec is paid.

#### *Corporations Act issue:*

One member reported that there was an issue with directors agreeing to maintenance plans that may be to the detriment of the association due to viability and sustainability issues. Specifically, that the Corporations Act states that you can only act for the benefit of the company. That is, directors have committed an offence if they do something to the detriment of the company. This can also result in difficulties in being insured. Another continued that the sector needs further clarity about what plan you need to submit to OCH indicating that their organisation operates on a different plan from that submitted. It was suggested that the sector could use the asset management plan as a tool to say that the sector cannot meet its' responsibilities under the current funding formula.

## **4. CHLP Review**

(Lauvena Wong, Senior Policy Officer OCH, David Symmonds, Senior Finance Officer OCH)

Lauvena was invited to provide an update on the CHLP review and outline what OCH are currently looking at as part of the review.

She noted that the key part of the review is the methodology. A reference group was established in November last year and while she was hoping to finalise the review by June, it is now unlikely to be finished by then but the Office will backdate funding to the 1st of July.

Lauvena then outlined the issues that the Project Reference Group (PRG) have looked at including the theory behind sliding scale; costs, particularly staff costs and unpaid hours; non-scaleable costs; smaller organisations being unable to attend training; capital contributions; and the top up of bond issue.

Lauvena indicated that David Symmonds has been compiling data from the survey. They are looking for commonalities such as with size of organizations to see what emerges. They are still looking at the sliding scale to see if they can alter and fix it but they will need to test this with the sector. If that approach doesn't work then they will have to look at replacing it but will put this to the sub-committee.

*Discussion/questions:*

One member asked how the survey accounts for annual leave and being on call on the weekend. Kate Lee from the ASU indicated that under the award there are 2 payments, one for being on call and one for being called out. Another member suggested that the survey won't be accurate as OCH don't know the local context in which that organisation operates. Lauvena indicated that the survey is only a starting point, with David adding that even knowing how many staff and their rates of pay will be useful to the review process. One member asked how OCH would account for vacancies. Lauvena conveyed that they were hoping the manager could estimate them. Another acknowledged that OCH has to start somewhere but suggested that the data from the survey should be used with caution. One member asked if a fee for service model had ever been considered, with Adam replying that it had a long time ago when funding models were being considered. Another asked whether OCH would look at what resources and equipment are being used by organizations (such as outdated equipment) and how that might be accounted for.

Finally, a member conveyed that the last time funding was reviewed in 2000, the sector was unanimous in choosing the funding model that it thought could work, but it wasn't implemented. The member asked what assurances the sector had that this wouldn't happen again.

Lynne Ready gave an assurance that OCH wanted to involve the sector and work with them to get the right result.

## **5. Staffing conditions campaign**

(Kate Lee, Australian Services Union)

Kate was invited to give an update on the staffing conditions campaign.

Kate conveyed that the ASU covers people in the NGO services industry. She conveyed that wages parity with the government sector and conditions are big issues for the entire community sector. The ASU has recently sent out a survey related to staff conditions and OHS issues. The surveys were for everyone in organizations to fill in not just union members.

Preliminary results are very serious with some respondents indicating that they are unable to perform their job properly due to unacceptable conditions. Others have reported significant workload pressures resulting in stress, burnout and an inability to sleep. Many reported that unrealistic expectations from the funding body and clients often leads to unpaid work (which was common) of up to 15 hours a week with relief staff rarely used. There was a

high degree of stress linked to accreditation and registration with less time to meet the needs of a complex client base. Bully and harassment issues, linked to management committee members was also reported. Kate informed members that the ASU are open to discussions around how to progress the campaign and related that funding never comes easy in terms of campaigning. As a starting point, the ASU with the sector could look at building a stronger sense of community sector identity.

*Discussion:*

One member asked what the ASU position would be once the sector and the union have a full understanding of conditions across the sector and work out what is needed to address them but its not funded by OCH. Kate suggested that it is important to link OHS to the issue but in terms of a campaign to Treasury for example the Union and the sector would have to coordinate a response. Another member asked if consideration had been given to a sub award to better recognize the work that community housing workers do. Kate responded that it's on the agenda and the ASU would welcome any thoughts on that. She also commented that the award is too generalist and needs reform but there is a difficulty in creating a sub award in that if we have different sub awards some sectors could become extremely underpaid.

One member congratulated the union for doing the survey and asked what coverage the union has in the sector and how that might affect a campaign. Kate encouraged everyone to join and mobilize support and conveyed that previous campaign was localized and successful. She also reported that the ASU don't know exact figures of membership in the sector but it is around 20% with some organisation not having any members. By comparison nurses and the police union have around 80% union membership and have been very successful at negotiating wages and conditions.

Another question was asked about the role of the union and the Federation in a campaign on this issue. Adam responded that if membership wanted us to, the Federation could begin a political campaign, seek support from NCOSS, seek direct representation with members of parliament and if need be with cross benchers in parliament. Kate added that the ASU can draw on networks of members across other sectors and start a grass roots campaign.

## **6. State Council composition and elections**

(Adam Farrar, NSW FHA)

Adam conveyed that this session followed on from the last meeting. At that meeting Karen Andrew (representing State Council) discussed the need to ensure that the Federations' governance structure continues to meet the needs of the organisation. She discussed what those needs were and suggested that one way of addressing them was to change the Federations' constitution in relation to electing State Council members. The sector asked that State Council investigate and present options to the sector of how that might best be done.

Adam reported on the outcomes of State Council discussions and their proposed constitutional changes to the election process.

In relation to *representation* State Council were in favour of continuing to rely on the elections and nominations process to produce a balanced representation of the sector. SC felt that It should be easier for members to nominate. One way of doing this is by not directly electing executive positions except for the President.

State Council also discussed the need for *expertise*. They felt that: SC should try to broaden the pool of expertise available by encouraging directors of associations to stand – especially through the Directors Network. They felt that each year State Council should identify areas of expertise required for the next term and require all candidates to address these areas of expertise in the nominations. SC thought that all candidates should be expected to meet some *general core criteria* and at least one of some *particular* areas of expertise. A panel of members would assess which criteria candidates met. This information would go to members to inform their vote.

State Council also discussed the need to maintain *essential standards*. That is, SC members should exemplify the general standards that the membership collectively want to project to the public and the sector. Only candidates nominated by members who have adopted the Code of Practice should be eligible to stand. Also, once all associations have had a chance to be accredited, only candidates nominated by accredited associations should be eligible. SC members should be required to declare if their organisation is investigated by any regulator (esp ICAC) while they are on SC.

The other rule changes discussed by SC were to allow SC members and other sector experts to deliver Federation services to members. To do this the Federation should remove the requirement that SC members can't receive any payments.

*Discussion:*

One member asked what happens if you get a full committee and no-one nominates for the executive, there is a potential for a problem there. Another commented that the role of the treasurer is the hardest to fill and that the Federation needs to know that there will be someone who can fulfil this role. It was suggested that perhaps the way forward is to look for expertise for the role of the treasurer and president and leave ordinary positions to be elected under the current rules. Another member suggested that sometimes boards will sit down after they are elected and work out where the skills are in order to fill certain positions. One member suggested that the two main issues were expertise and making it easy for people to nominate and suggested that part of the goal should be to align SC elections with sector practice around recruiting expertise.

Adam asked members if they wanted the SC to further consider the changes in light of the discussion. Members voted that SC further consider the issues.

## **7. OCH Executive Director – priorities for the sector**

(Maura Boland, Executive Director OCH)

Maura was invited as the new Executive Director of OCH to discuss the Offices' priorities and her vision for the sector.

Maura summarised some of the findings from the Inquiry into Community Housing indicating that overall it had given the sector a tick and pointed to the way forward for the sector. Of particular interest were the recommendations around sustainability. Maura reported that the sector's potential for attracting private funding was an issue that she was promoting in the Department. The Inquiry found that community housing was a flexible, innovative model for the provision of social housing with the key recommendations being: to develop a 5-year strategic policy framework; to strengthen the sustainability of the sector; to enhance the performance management and regulation (including legislation); to facilitate further development in the sector, including tenant participation, private rental interface and specific target group needs and; to review title in the context of partnerships and private financing.

Maura then discussed some of the Offices' priorities for the sector.

*Growing the sector* by reviewing title arrangements; pursuing CAH projects such as the Debt Equity project; looking at other housing models using personal equity; and investigating what role community housing could have in public private partnerships.

*Ensuring the sectors viability* by reviewing CHLP and funding methodology; recognising the value of diversity in size; exploring alternative rent models; developing IT infrastructure and systems (particularly reporting and housing management systems); recovering property management costs from other Government users, eg DoCS and CAP/SAAP properties; facilitating voluntary amalgamation of Community Housing providers and; promoting community housing management of affordable housing projects.

*Regulation and sector capacity building* through legislation to permit formal regulation of the sector; monitoring governance through the Performance Management System; continued focus on governance and management; strengthening asset management and planning and; creating project management capability within the sector.

*Facilitating tailored responses* by using housing markets data to inform planning; through stock transfers in estates; refocussing social housing resources eg Mudgee; providing housing in a range of sizes; capitalising on strengths of providers of different sizes; through tenant participation framework for housing providers; building on existing strengths, eg in supported housing, HASI, My Place; through tenancy guarantees.

Maura then outlined what OCH hoped would be the outcome of the above priorities - more homes for members of target groups; improved service

quality; continuity of providers; greater access to community housing and; more participation.

*Discussion/questions:*

One member asked what the sector can get involved in - in terms of income streams. Maura conveyed that OCH was thinking broadly – some associations are getting into consulting but good outcomes for clients will guide what OCH is prepared to consider. Another asked what regulation might look like if it was taken out of OCH. Maura conveyed that it must have strong links with OCH as they understand the sector better and they would also want to ensure that the capacity building element is not taken away.

Adam conveyed that the Federation argued that the PBR system is the sectors part of the Regulation Framework. Another member asked about the decline in funding and how organisations can be expected to continue in this climate. Maura indicated that funding is a priority of OCH. Another member mentioned that community housing had always been able to provide a good standard of housing and asked what capacity there is to enshrine that standard, suggesting that tenant participation should also be enshrined into OCH processes. Maura conveyed that OCH could take that on board.

## **8. Regulation**

### ***Cross Provider Regulatory Framework***

(Lynne Beven, Deb Evans, DoH Business Strategy and Improvement Unit)

Lynne and Deb were invited to discuss the work the Department is doing on the Cross Provider Regulatory framework for public and community housing.

Lynne conveyed that the Cross provider Regulatory Framework is a way for the Department of Housing to assess a housing provider's effectiveness, quality of services to clients and, viability.

The Framework will set out obligations and standards; monitor compliance; provide assistance to improve performance; identify strategies for supporting providers which are not performing satisfactorily and; collect and share good practice. In doing so it will encompass principles, standards, collecting and sharing good practice, a regulatory response, intervention where necessary (statutory and non-statutory) and registration.

It will be supported by the regulatory process (methodology); links with current reporting formats; guidance to the standards; a Code of Practice for the Regulators; appeals; and legislation. A number of basic principals will guide the process - accountability; transparency; targeting; consistency; proportionality; governance and management; ethical practice; assessment and allocation; property management; tenancy management; partnerships; and asset holding.

In terms of assessment, the framework is likely to consist of a “desk-based” review (always), face-to-face meetings (sometimes), and on-site inspection (sometimes). This will lead to the development of a Performance Profile (ie

how the housing provider is doing) and a tailored Regulatory Response (ie what needs to be done for improvement).

The Framework will be recognised in Legislation which will require changes to the Housing Act 2001 and include requirements of the administration of the regulatory system. It will also spell out the categories for registration and the intervention powers.

The next steps will be to conduct an internal (DoH) briefing. A consultation paper will then be developed. Consultation with the non-government sector by OCH will then feed into the paper to inform the drafting of legislation.

*Discussion:*

Deb conveyed that any response by the Department will be proportional to level of risk. A member asked how Accreditation fits in with the Framework. Deb noted that there are a range of different systems in place already and that they don't want to duplicate them. Another member asked the purpose of increasing regulation. Deb conveyed that it was an essential component of any Legislation. It ensures that the boundaries are clear and hard to change, roles are clear and that there is certainty. She also noted that the regulatory process' of DoH are very different to community housing but the Department needs evidence for allocation of resources between the two sectors. The framework should also provide more information about how well public housing is working. One member asked if the current registration system for community housing provides all information required for the framework. Deb said that they were currently looking at examples from assessments. A member then asked what the timeframe was for completion. Deb indicated that they were hoping to put legislation to parliament by September so they would need to conclude consultation by July.

***Performance Based Registration Update***

(Unis Goh, Director Performance Management and Review)

Unis was invited to discuss the implementation of the PBR system. She firstly took the opportunity to apologise for the PBR time frames and the stress the sector has gone through as a result of them. She acknowledged that she didn't consult the sector properly and it wasn't intended to cause the distress that people have gone through.

One member asked about retrospective evidence and how that will be used in the assessment as there was a need for clarity on this issue particularly around how it might influence the assessment. Unis replied that in the assessment, the PBR Unit will take the most positive information rather than the worst. Another member asked for clarity around the use of accreditation for example if it was over 2 years old. Unis responded that providers can decide what evidence they feel is appropriate. Others conveyed that the Unit says that old accreditation assessments won't be accepted. Unis gave an undertaking that the Unit would now accept these.

## **9. Concrete steps in affordable housing**

(Vivienne Milligan, Director AHURI Sydney Research Centre, Helen O'Loughlan, Director Centre for Affordable Housing)

Vivienne was invited to discuss practical ways that housing associations can play a key role in the delivery of affordable housing. Her presentation was based on findings in Milligan, V; Phibbs, P Fagan, K and Gurrán, N (2004) *A Practical Framework for Expanding Affordable Housing Services in Australia: Learning from Experience*. Melbourne: AHURI

### ***AHURI Research***

Vivienne outlined the research project that she had recently been a part of at AHURI. It involved the seven largest NGOs actively developing social/affordable housing projects in Australia currently. It encompassed both government and independently initiated organisations/projects. The project identified about 1200 dwellings for long term affordable rental that have been developed under more innovative arrangements. The project concluded that there are only a small number of (mostly) place based innovative affordable housing projects currently operating and the largest single completed development program so far is 365 units (CWH).

### ***Findings: Leverage***

The main sources of leverage in pursuing affordable housing that emerged from the research were savings on developer margins, GST free supply, revenue from tenant mix, new rent setting policies, developer contributions and development profits. These were underutilised but there was some good potential demonstrated. To date there has been very little private finance secured due to a lack of asset base and no strategic engagement of private players. Asset control, subsidy support and government guarantees remain as outstanding issues.

### ***Findings: Policy and Innovation***

The lack of strategic policy framework and confidence in new players is inhibiting innovation. However, innovations in delivery have been promising but very limited. Key innovations that emerged from the research were: the mixed tenure developments – Inkerman Oasis, City Edge; rent setting – Brisbane Housing Co - <75% market rent; allocations & use of income mix targets, tenants with local connections – CWH.

### ***Findings: Financial***

The financial data is very limited at this early stage of affordable housing sector development. Currently there are no established performance benchmarks. Development of these would assist a strategic rather than operational focus on risk management. Analysis of one well established large provider (CWH in Sydney) were positive showing that: they achieved estimated development costs 25%, there was a saving on market purchase and, there was an annual surplus for 283 properties.

### ***Findings: Organisational capacity and performance***

In terms of capacity and performance both existing CHOs and new government shareholder companies were performing well. The development

projects have been successful. Many of the projects involved skilled participants that are very results oriented however the key risk is ongoing stability. Overall government support for agencies is limited and largely ad hoc, with local players helping to improve community acceptance of affordable housing projects. Some government trends that emerged from the research were corporatisation and the appointment of high profile Directors with development and finance experience. Significant for policy makers in government was that new government founded arms length agencies have complex governance arrangements and have been costly to set up. The research found that the potential of existing community housing sector could be given much greater recognition, linked to investment in skills development and alliance building.

***Findings: Growth and replicability***

The scale and innovation so far is very limited but it has had important demonstration value and early learning benefit to government agencies (e.g. Treasuries) and providers. There has been no venture capital in most jurisdictions and no ongoing investment strategy. Therefore most agencies are not able to plan for or achieve growth. There is insufficient annual scale of investment to underwrite housing development function. The awareness and support for affordable housing models across local government, business sectors and wider community is limited to a few localities. Other difficulties in growth and replicability have been that the development approval process is often difficult; business and performance management systems for expanding affordable housing are completely lacking; development of national/state policy framework has been painfully slow and stop/start and; revenue streams suggest only modest borrowing may be possible.

***What's needed to progress the delivery of affordable housing in Australia?***

The paper found that the following factors are needed to progress and grow affordable housing projects in Australia:

- National leadership, policy clarity and certainty, champions and know how in government at all levels;
- An explicit growth strategy and targets;
- Organised access to private finance, linked to a prudential and regulatory framework to manage risk;
- Capital subsidies for development;
- Access to government sites;
- Affordable housing developments mandated by planning policies;
- Systematic engagement of local government;
- Scale, improved revenue streams and a larger asset base in the community housing sector to increase efficiency and leverage potential;
- Capacity building for CHOs, especially in finance, development and project management;
- Mobilising potential brokers – local government, government land agencies and;
- More focus on benchmarking, performance monitoring and evaluation.

### **Centre for Affordable Housing update**

(Helen O'Loughlan, Director, Centre for Affordable Housing)

Helen O'Loughlan, Director Centre for Affordable Housing was asked to report back on the initiatives the Centre for Affordable Housing has undertaken over the past year. There was limited time for a full discussion of the Centres' initiatives so Helen provided a brief overview of the Debt Equity project as this was particularly topical.

The project received around 10 applications from a mix of rural, regional and metropolitan organisations. It involved the Centre and a provider contributing \$500 000 each to a project and borrowing 25% of that. A 40yr second mortgage is taken out after which time title is transferred to the provider. It will involve two small pilots which will be a 'toe in the water' for the Centre. They are hoping for a second round next year.

### **10. Items postponed – OCH interventions, Code of Practice review**

These two agenda items were postponed on the day of the meeting due to time constraints resulting from the key sessions running longer than anticipated.

#### ***OCH interventions***

A full brief was sent out prior to the meeting on this issue. The purpose of the session was to let members identify issues and principles they want to have taken into account as OCH develops a framework for its investigations and intervention into associations.

*Update* - the Federation along with ARCH met with DoH Business Assurance Unit and OCH in early April to discuss interventions. The approach for handling ICAC inquiries and the review that the Department is currently undertaking of the approach to community housing were both discussed. Also discussed with the Performance Management Unit were the steps involved in identifying issues, investigating, working with organisations to overcome problems and if necessary intervene.

*Next steps* – another meeting to finalise a draft intervention and investigation procedure for consideration of the PBR implementation group is anticipated. Input will also be provided into the DoH Business Assurance Units' work on community housing.

#### ***Code of Practice Review***

The Code of Practice Committee (a sub-committee of State Council) has been asked by State Council to undertake a full review of the Code of Practice for Housing Associations ('the Code'). A briefing paper outlining the key issues to consider as part of the review was sent to members prior to the meeting. The purpose of the HAM session was to seek input from members on the ongoing role of the Code.

*Next steps* – the Federation will now survey members views on the role of the Code. Enclosed with this report is a short survey (and attachment brief) to seek members input into the review.

Please complete the survey and return it to the Federation by Friday 6<sup>th</sup> May.

## 11. Evaluation

Twenty-seven members returned their evaluation forms at the end of the day. These provide an indication of what members thought of the meeting and will feed into the planning process for the next meeting.

Twenty-one of these rated their overall satisfaction with the meeting as either good or excellent with the remainder rating it as 'ok'. Twenty-five rated the presentations and twenty-one rated the discussions to be either 'useful' or 'very useful'. The favourite session for members was 'sector issues/concerns' followed by 'regulation'.

From the forms that had answered the question 'what topics you would like covered in the future?' (N=5), future meeting topics included private public partnerships and the role of the sector, OH&S staffing conditions campaign, growth and the regulatory framework, OCH intervention and, interaction with State Council and their vision for the sector.

## 12. HAM agenda topics

The agenda for the HAM is driven by two main imperatives – issues important to the sector and, the need for the Federation to consult or seek advice (sector wide) on a particular issue. Occasionally, OCH or the Department will also ask if they can speak to the sector at the HAM to consult with it or discuss a particular issue.

The Federation seeks members' input for the agenda through a number of ways: emailing all members prior to each HAM, reviewing evaluation forms from the previous HAM and through feedback from members at regional meetings. Issues are also identified through seminars, training days, discussions with members and through participation on committees where issues with implications for the sector are raised.

While it is not always possible to include every topic of interest (feedback from the last meeting was that the agenda was too full), members input, suggestions and feedback is an essential component of putting together the agenda for each meeting.

To provide input into the agenda for the next housing associations meeting, please contact Andrew Meehan: [andrew@communityhousing.org.au](mailto:andrew@communityhousing.org.au) phone: 9281 7144 (ext 203).

## 13. Attendance

NAME	ORGANISATION
Anne Grice	Coastal CTS
Barbara Brown	Western Plains Housing
Bev Wiggins	Lithgow CTS

Bobbie Townsend	Women's Housing Company
Charles Deligianas	Burwood Area Community Housing
Chris Robinson	Wellington CTS
Fran Vartuli	Broken Hill CTS
Geoff Mann	Homes Out West
Greg Budworth	Newmacq
Jackie Hudson	Tamworth Community Housing
Jason Emmins	South West Community Housing
Jenny Stewart	The Housing Trust
John Grice	Coastal CTS
John Musumeci	Upper Hunter Tenancy Scheme
Julie Harrison	MACH
Karen Power	Albury Community Housing Inc
Kathy Wight	SWISH
Lesley Bennett	Coastal CTS
Lesley Oatly	Argyle Community Housing
Lesley Wyatt	Hume Community Housing Association
Liz Breden	Ryde-Hunters Hill CH
Luciana Upstill	Pacific Link Community Housing Association
Margaret Robinson	Parkes Forbes Community Housing Inc
Marie Musumeci	Upper Hunter Tenancy Scheme
Marg Bicskos	Shoalhaven Community Housing Scheme
Mimi O'Reilly	Central Tablelands Housing Association
Mohamed Ibrahim	Cumberland Housing Co-op
Nick Sabel	Wentworth Area Community Housing
Patrick Yeung	St George Community Housing Co-op
Renee Tierny	Pacific Link Community Housing Association
Robin Eisman	Monaro Tenancy Scheme
Shelagh Keith	Queanbeyan Community Housing
Sue Olgier	Shoalhaven CTS

Adam Farrar	NSW Federation of Housing Associations
Andrew Meehan	NSW Federation of Housing Associations
Sheryl DeVries	NSW Federation of Housing Associations
Apologies:	
Darlene Bromage	
Kirston Pike	
Kerry Preo	

#### **14. Next Housing Associations Meeting**

The next housing associations meeting will be held on Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> August. Members will be informed of the venue closer to the date.