



Media release – 2 October 2017

Decline in Victorian rentals increases urgency for Federal investment in public and community housing

The latest [DHHS Rental Report](#) reveals a sharp decline in the number of new tenancies let in Victoria, making it even harder for the state's most vulnerable to find homes, says the peak body for homelessness.

The total number of available leases fell 5.9 per cent in June compared to the same period in 2016. That's a decline of more than 3,000 new lettings from 52,081 in 2016's June quarter to 49,008 in June 2017.

All nine metropolitan regions recorded an annual decrease in new lettings, ranging from a drop of 10.1 per cent in North Western Melbourne to a decrease of 0.2 per cent in South Eastern Melbourne.

The Rental Report also reveals that the median weekly rent in Melbourne has increased by 4.2 per cent over a year to reach \$400 in June 2017.

Council to Homeless Persons chief executive Jenny Smith said less homes available to rent means more competition for the few homes on the market, with those on the lowest incomes most likely to miss out and to be forced into homelessness.

"This data confirms that just four in 1,000 private rentals in Melbourne are affordable to a person on Newstart," Ms Smith said.

"With less properties on the market there will be an increase in prospective tenants missing out. This means more homelessness and extra pressure on the public and community housing that already includes 35,000 Victorian households.

"The only way to prevent this increase in homelessness is to deliver more rental housing that low income households can afford."

The Federal and State Governments are currently negotiating a new National Housing and Homelessness Agreement, but the Federal Government has indicated that no extra resources will be made available.

"The Federal Government needs to significantly increase its investment in social housing to deliver at least 100,000 new rental homes over the next five years," said Ms Smith.

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