

Report

Date: 4 October 2021

Security Level: IN CONFIDENCE

To: Hon Dr Megan Woods, Minister of Housing
Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Social Development and Employment
Hon Poto Williams, Associate Minister of Housing (Public Housing)
Hon Peeni Henare, Associate Minister of Housing (Māori Housing)
Hon Marama Davidson, Associate Minister of Housing (Homelessness)

Emergency Housing System Review: Assessment of the current emergency housing system and areas for improvement

Purpose of the report

- 1 This report and the attached slide set is the first of three planned report backs in the Emergency Housing System Review (the Review). It provides an assessment of how the system currently operates and sets out areas for improvement.

Executive summary

- 2 In June 2021, Cabinet agreed to officials undertaking a fundamental review of the emergency housing system, culminating in advice on the role and purpose of emergency housing and a plan to get to an 'ideal state' [CAB-21-MIN-231.01 refers].
- 3 This report back is the first of three on the Review and focuses on Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants (EH SNGs).
- 4 The Government is making good progress in increasing housing supply and delivering additional supports in New Zealand. However, we are seeing growing demand for EH SNGs and people staying in emergency accommodation for longer. There are increasing concerns that the provision of emergency housing via EH SNGs is unable to consistently ensure safe, adequate, and suitable housing for all those who need it. This is particularly the case for Māori, who are disproportionately represented in the population experiencing homelessness.

The current emergency housing system is not delivering the desired outcomes

- 5 The original intent of EH SNGs were as a last resort in areas where no contracted emergency housing places (Transitional Housing) were available (slide 5 refers). Due to wider housing market pressures, increasing numbers of people in need, and the way the system operates and is funded, EH SNGs have become our main response to urgent housing need.
- 6 While EH SNGs provide an important backstop for people in urgent housing need, the system is not effectively providing a pathway to permanent housing, supporting people at the right time, addressing housing disparities, or improving the housing and wellbeing outcomes of individuals, families and whānau (slides 6-18 refer). Māori are significantly overrepresented, making up 59 percent of EH SNG recipients.

- 7 Some of the data has been previously provided in the report “Demand for the Public Housing Register and Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants in 2021” (REP/21/9/992 refers).
- 8 The system is not aligned fully to our aims and guiding principles of the Aotearoa/New Zealand Homelessness Action Plan and Te Maihi o Te Whare Māori: Māori and Iwi Housing Innovation (MAIHI) Framework (slide 19 refers).

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**Associate Minister of Housing
(Homelessness)**

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Authors:

s9(2)(a) Graduate Policy Analyst, Housing Policy, MSD

s9(2)(a) Policy Advisor, Housing Needs and Responses, HUD

Responsible managers:

Alex McKenzie, Policy Manager, Housing Policy, MSD

Jeremy Steele, Policy Manager, Housing Needs and Responses, HUD