



Ref: HAF/18/00101

SA Housing Authority
GPO Box 1669
ADELAIDE SA 5001
DX 550

Tel: 131 299
ABN: 17 545 435 789

www.sa.gov.au/housing
HousingFreedomofInformation@sa.gov.au

Ms Nat Cook MP
Member for Hurtle Vale
Shop 9, 760 Grand Boulevard
SEAFORD MEADOWS SA 5169

Sent by email to: hurtlevale@parliament.sa.gov.au

Dear Ms Cook

I refer to your application made under the *Freedom of Information Act 1991* (the FOI Act), in which you requested access to:

"Copies of any and all documents (including but not limited to physical and electronic material) regarding DHS or Ministerial Paper 18MSHO/0520.

Unfortunately, your application was not determined within the 30-day timeframe set out in the FOI Act, resulting in a deemed refusal. However, Section 19(2a) of the FOI Act allows an agency to continue processing an application and make a determination to give access to documents after this time.

The South Australian Housing Authority has undertaken a comprehensive search of records and has identified three documents that fall within the scope of your application. A schedule of the documents is outlined in the table below.

Document	Description	Pages	Determination
Document 1	Briefing Paper 18MSHO/0520	2 pages	Release in full
Document 2	Attachment to briefing paper 18MSHO/520	1 page	Release in full
Document 3	Letter dated 29 June 2018	1 page	Release in full

I have determined to release all three documents to you in full and enclose a copy.

Information relating to the abovementioned Section of the FOI Act is outlined below for your information:

Section 19—Determination of applications

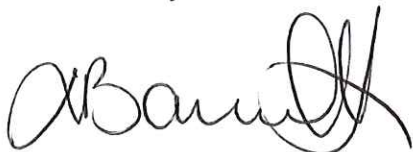
(2a) *However, nothing prevents an agency from making a determination to give access to a document on an application after the period within which it was required to deal with the application (and any such determination is to be taken to have been made under this Act).*

Please note, in accordance with the requirements of Premier and Cabinet circular PC045, details of your FOI application and the documents to which you are given access, may be published on the agency's disclosure log. A copy of PC045 can be found at <http://dpc.sa.gov.au/what-we-do/services-for-government/premier-and-cabinet-circulars>.

If you have any questions in relation to this matter, please contact FOI Officers on telephone 8207 0239 or by email at housingfreedomofinformation@sa.gov.au. If you disagree with publication, you will need to advise me within two weeks of the date of this determination.

The SA Housing Authority's reference number is shown above and you should quote this number in any further correspondence concerning your application.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Barrett', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lisa Barrett
Accredited FOI Officer
Manager, Office of the Chief Executive
SA Housing Authority

12 / 08 / 2019



**Government
of South Australia**

Minister for Human Services

Level 12 South
1 King William Street
Adelaide SA 5000
GPO Box 2832
Adelaide SA 5001
DX 115
Tel 08 8463 6560
Fax 08 8463 4480

18MSHO/0520
Your ref: 3037

Mr Steve Murray MP
Member for Davenport
PO Box 3020
ABERFOYLE PARK SA 5159

Dear Mr Murray *Steve,*

Thank you for your letter regarding concerns about systemic problems within Housing SA.

As part of the Marshall Liberal government's 100-day plan, we committed to establish parameters for a new housing authority, amalgamating the functions of Housing SA and Renewal SA. Established on 1 July 2018, the parameters of the new SA Housing Authority (SAHA) include a new governance structure, a new system-wide focus and a new business model that will drive improved accountability, operational performance and customer outcomes.

Key to the new housing authority's success will be the appointment of a skills-based board, working with industry, not-for-profit organisations and, most importantly, communities, families and individuals, to develop and drive much-needed reform.

SAHA has recently implemented several strategies to more effectively manage customer debt. This has included a review of larger debts to identify amounts to be written off under existing policy for reasons such as property damage due to domestic violence and financial hardship.

I am advised that SAHA may choose not to recover a customer's debt in certain circumstances. These circumstances include death, domestic abuse, situations where the debt is uneconomical to recover or in cases of long term financial hardship or bankruptcy. The circumstances in which SAHA can write off a debt are outlined in policy and must be undertaken in line with financial delegations.

I understand SAHA is also undertaking a large-scale data cleanse activity as part of the transition from its current Mainframe system to a new system, set for implementation in 2020. Due to limitations of the current system and historical policies, debts have not been properly aged in line with modern accounting practices. The data cleanse has identified older charges that are unlikely to be recoverable due to their age which have subsequently been written off.

SAHA takes allegations of property ownership by its tenants very seriously given the high demand for public housing. A person is ineligible to register for public housing if they or a member of their household own or partly own residential property, except in certain situations where they are affected by relationship breakdown, household or temporary need, or domestic abuse.

I am advised that SAHA undertakes a further check immediately before a person is housed to determine whether they own property. Once a person is housed, their conditions of tenancy state that if they or a member of their household acquire an interest in property, SAHA can take steps to end their tenancy.

If your informant has specific information about public housing tenants who have an interest in residential property, I would strongly encourage them to contact Housing SA on 131 299 to allow their concerns to be investigated. Your informant can choose to provide the information anonymously.

I trust that this information will assist you. If you have any further queries, please contact Mr Glen Williams, Ministerial Liaison Officer from my office on 8463 6560.

Yours sincerely



Hon Michelle Lensink MLC
MINISTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES

619 / 2018



STEVE MURRAY MP
MEMBER FOR **DAVENPORT**

Local like you!



Hon Michelle Lensink MLC
Minister for Human Services
GPO Box 2832
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Ref: 3037

Dear Minister,

I write to you with regards to some information that has been brought to my attention, which leads me to believe that there may well be serious systematic problems within Housing SA.

In particular, it is claimed that due to lax internal processes;

- Housing SA tenants debts have been written off, without sufficient justification;
- Numerous instances where it is alleged that tenants own one or more investment properties, while living in their Housing SA property.

I realise that this is by no means a detailed list, but I am satisfied of the bona fides of my informant. This person presents as highly credible, very experienced, and appears well connected in the upper echelons of the Public Service.

I am happy to discuss this matter further should you wish.

Yours sincerely

Steve Murray MP
Member for Davenport

29 /06/2018

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