QTON No. 22

Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory
Select Committee on the Fiscal Sustainability of the ACT

Inquiry into the Fiscal Sustainability of the ACT

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Mr Ed Cocks MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Homes, Homelessness and New Suburbs

In relation to: Number of vacant properties and rent foregone

Hearing: 19 May 2026
Proof Transcript p 141
Transcript provided: 27 May 2026
Answer Due: 4 June 2026

MR COCKS: I know that there are 500 or so that are vacant, but I really want to understand how many are actually vacant for more than that short turnover period. Perhaps if you can take that on—

Ms Shields: For three months? Over three months?

MR COCKS: Three months, unless you want to suggest a more reasonable timeframe. That is what seemed reasonable to me.

Ms Shields: We can have a look and see what we can provide on notice, yes.

MR COCKS: Thank you. Do you have any data on how much rental income has been forgone on those properties?

Ms Shields: For those that pay the rebated—

MR COCKS: Those that are vacant.

Ms Shields: I do not have that data with me. But, again, it might be quite difficult to calculate. If you think we can have 500 properties in and out, calculating a day or two weeks or a month on each of those properties might be challenging.

Ms Arthy: We may need to heavily caveat the estimates that we provide you. We will outline the assumptions that we have made.

Ms Yvette Berry MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

On 25 May 2026, there were 588 vacant public housing properties.

Of these, 397 properties had been vacant for more than 3 months. This includes:

- 17 properties identified for sale;
- 24 properties identified for redevelopment;
- 32 properties subject to insurance claims;
- 108 properties being offered for allocations as appropriate; and
- 216 properties currently undergoing repairs and maintenance.

Rent has not been calculated for the sale and redevelopment properties as there is no reasonable expectation of rental income from these assets as they are no longer intended to be tenanted.

Rent may be recoverable depending on the nature of an insurable event. As such, no calculation of rent has been undertaken for the properties subject to insurance claims.

The total combined weekly market rent for the 108 properties being offered for allocation is $40,830; however, this does not equate to rent forgone. Rent payable on each property is based on the income of the household, not the market rental value. As 91% of public housing tenancies receive a rental rebate, using the market rent to estimate rent forgone would significantly overstate potential revenue.

The total combined weekly market rent for the 216 properties undergoing repairs and maintenance is $88,035. This also does not equate to rent forgone as these properties are not in a lettable condition and are therefore unsuitable for tenancy. As a result, they cannot generate income while they are being brought up to a lettable standard.

The ACT Government continues to prioritise the return of vacant properties to the public housing portfolio as quickly as possible, while ensuring homes are safe, compliant and fit for tenancy.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on the Fiscal Sustainability of the ACT

Signature: Date: 05/06/26

Minister for Homes, Homelessness and New Suburbs, Ms Yvette Berry MLA