



Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2026–2027 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2026–2027

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Ms Chiaka Barry MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Housing and Homelessness

In relation to: Public housing and Lost applications

Hearing: 30 July 2026

Uncorrected Proof Transcript p 64

Transcript provided: 4 August 2026

Answer Due: 11 August 2026

THE CHAIR: Just on that, what do you do when an application is lost? So when you lose an application, because I have heard several complaints about lost applications.

Ms Shields: If it was lost, in that we had no record of it, but a tenant had a record of it, that they had provided us with that, we would work through that with that tenant, well that applicant on a one-on-one basis. Because of the complexities of the systems that we work in, and because we still have some paper-based files, human error does occur from time to time, like in any system. But we would work with that particular applicant to make it hopefully as easy as possible for us to take them back through the process.

THE CHAIR: Okay. So does the person then, say for example, you lost the application and they were somewhere in the waiting list, do they drop back out of the waiting list and start over again?

Ms Shields: It would depend on whether they were considered to be a priority applicant on the standard waiting list. So it would be on a case-by-case basis that we would work through them. But we would look to backdate any initial application date if they had evidence to support the fact that they had provided the application to us at that particular point in time, if we were at fault.

THE CHAIR: Okay. Do you keep records of how many lost applications you have had over the last five years?

Ms Shields: I can check. But I suspect we do not keep that as an active database.

THE CHAIR: Why?

Ms Shields: Because we have limited opportunity for digital systems to keep that data, but I can check and see how many we have got record of. But we do not have a flag in the system that says this was a lost application.

THE CHAIR: So then what are you doing? That is a significant issue, right? You can imagine that someone has applied gone through the process, I hear it is a very long process, applied, the application has been lost but then you do not have a records.

Ms Shields: Well, I would hope that it was a very small number if any that we have misplaced or do not have a record of but if we do not have a record of it—

THE CHAIR: And they have a record of it.

Ms Shields: —but they have a record of it, then we would go through the process, backdate their application and work through that with them. It would be, I think, quite unusual for that complete breakdown to happen but no, we do not keep necessarily a flag on the system that says it was a lost or misplaced applicant.

THE CHAIR: Okay. Can you take on notice then for each of the list priority and how many lost applications have been on each?

Ms Shields: Yes, I can take on if we have any record of lost applications, yes.

Ms Suzanne Orr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Housing ACT does not maintain a specific record of applications that may have been lost or misplaced as part of normal business operations.

Accordingly, Housing ACT is unable to provide data on the number of applications that have been lost in each of the priority list categories.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2026-2027

Signature:



Minister for Housing and Homelessness, Ms Suzanne Orr MLA

Date: 13/08/26