



STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Elizabeth Kikkert MLA (Chair), Michael Pettersson MLA (Deputy Chair),
Andrew Braddock MLA

Inquiry into Auditor-General's Report 4 of 2020: Residential Land Supply and Release

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

27 April 2022

Asked by Mr Cain on 27 April 2022 Dr Brady took on notice the following question(s):

Ref: Hansard Transcript 27 April 2022, page 42.

In relation to: Balloted Land Release registrations

MR CAIN: So the numbers clearly changed since the Auditor-General studied it?

Mr Ponton: But again, I am coming back to the government's policy of 70:30, and whilst there is strong interest—and Dr Brady may wish to talk about this in terms of some analysis that we have done on that interest, I would caution against us saying that because there is x number of registrations for a land ballot, that that same number of people who are all intending to purchase the block sometimes—

MR CAIN: How else do you measure demand, though?

Mr Ponton: If I could finish, Mr Cain? In relation to the registrations, sometimes in terms of the work that we are doing—so you are quoting this high-level figure, we are actually starting to analyse and understand who is making those registrations to help us understand the demand. Because what we sometimes see is that you might have a family where six people all might register in the hope of getting first in the ballot. But in fact it is something like one—

MR CAIN: That would be good to filter—have the filtered down analysis of that. Are you able to provide that when you complete it?

Mr Ponton: Again, if I could just continue to answer the question? We are currently undertaking that analysis. And Dr Brady might talk a bit more about that and can perhaps answer the question in relation to whether it is available to the committee.

MR CAIN: That would be very interesting information to have. Where are you up to with that analysis?

Dr Brady: I am just doing internal work on it at the moment. So if we could take that on notice in terms of advising where that is at and if there is information available. But we look—our main source of information to do demand analysis is population growth. And so we know population growth has been impacted over the last couple of years, particularly with COVID. So we are again looking at what the population projections are in relation to that.

I think Mr Ponton also referred to, we have also done other work around housing choices, where there was significant consultation done to try and understand, while there might be demand for housing, to understand more about what is the typology that people are seeking? Whether it is a single dwelling? Whether it is an apartment? An apartment of a certain size? Whether it is a townhouse.

And through that, that is where we have found—as have many jurisdictions found that missing middle, in terms of the—a typology and a price range. So a lot of townhouse—and that is what we are also finding with people who want to age in place, that they would like to maybe move to a townhouse in the same area that they already live.

So that has been giving us information around demand and understanding what the community demand is at a bit of finer grain as well—

MR CAIN: Sure, but based on—I guess, recent releases over the last 12 months, what is your conclusion about the demand of housing in Canberra?

Mr Gentleman: Well I would refer to the Auditor-General’s report where he said we have—

MR CAIN: Which is nearly two years dated. Two years ago.

Mr Ponton: Well with respect, Mr Cain, the purpose of this hearing is to look at the conclusions and recommendations of the Auditor-General’s report—

MINISTER GENTLEMAN: The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:—

EPSDD receives regular updates from the Suburban Land Agency on ballot registration numbers and is considering these in the context of demand modelling. Further analysis is required to understand if there is a correlation between demand and ballot registration numbers.

The Suburban Land Agency (SLA) ballot sales conditions include that if the SLA’s legal provider deems a registrant to have met the definition of a related party, and the registrant has not provided a statutory declaration declaring that they are not a related party, then they will be removed from the ballot process. The smart form used as part of the ballot process identifies duplicates based on a range of registration information such as ABN, license number, passport number and email address. In addition, the SLA legal providers conduct related party checking on ranked registrants, which includes company directors and shareholders. For the administrative efficiency, based on an allocation of up to 250 sales appointments, the first 400-600 ranked registrants are typically subjected to this process.

As an example of this process, in the most recent Whitlam Ballot (2021-22), there were a total of 12,417 registrations allowed into the final ballot draw. 225 duplicate entries were removed via the smart form process from the ballot prior to the draw being undertaken. Following the ballot draw, 29 related parties were removed from the top 400-600 ranked registrants. The SLA received zero complaints in relation to duplicate registrations being removed prior to the ballot draw.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

Signature:



Date: 19/5/2022

By the Minister for Planning and Land Management, Mick Gentleman MLA