



2 September 2016

Office of the Chief Executive  
Attorney-General's Department  
GPO Box 464  
Adelaide SA 5000

To Whom It May Concern

Shelter SA is the peak body for housing in South Australia. Our vision is for every South Australian to have a safe, affordable place to call home. Shelter SA welcomes the State Government's Domestic Violence Discussion Paper (the Discussion Paper) and any policies and strategies that seek to reduce the number of people experiencing domestic violence. We know that domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness.

Clearly, people escaping domestic violence need shelter and we have a number of crisis responses across the State. Shelter SA consultations in metropolitan and regional areas provide evidence that more crisis accommodation is needed for people escaping domestic violence. Shelter SA is interested in the use of motels to accommodate women and children escaping domestic violence and has asked State Government to consider how the cost of using motels is compared to providing additional shelter options, particularly in regional South Australia.

Re-establishing a home after a stay in crisis accommodation is extremely difficult due to the lack of public housing options and affordable private rentals, especially when there is only one income available to the household. The numbers of people seeking services from Housing SA are high and attest to the critical need for affordable housing for vulnerable individuals and families who are escaping domestic violence. The Discussion Paper provides a number of over 23,000 people seeking to become Housing SA tenants or accessing the private rental assistance scheme.

The Current Initiatives section of the Discussion Paper shows that the majority of services focus on people after acts of domestic violence have occurred. Of course, as stated above, crisis accommodation is critical for people escaping domestic violence however, South Australia must move towards a focus on preventative education and support for children and families if we are to reduce the incidence of domestic violence.

Shelter SA acknowledges the initiative of the Multi-Agency Protection Service as an evidence-based model to address domestic violence. We were very pleased to note that additional funding has been made available to include community services in the MAPS team to ensure that services can work collaboratively to address the needs of MAPS clients.

The work of Specialist Homelessness Service providers and specialist domestic and Aboriginal family violence service providers is acknowledged as critical to support individuals and families who experience domestic violence. Again, service providers report that they need additional shelter accommodation to meet the demand for their services and struggle to exit their clients to affordable housing. The Homelessness Gateways are essentially a demand management system. There is a poor level of awareness of the Gateways within the community and access barriers for people who need information and services if their calls are not answered or their needs are not met. Shelter SA has already suggested to State Government that the way the Gateways are marketed to the public can be improved.

The Court intervention programs for men must be expanded if South Australia is serious about preventing domestic violence. It is not enough to provide shelter after domestic violence has occurred. Given the thousands of intervention orders that are issued, the mens' programs are inadequate as the Discussion Paper states that the Courts Administration Authority currently funds programs that serve only 300 men per year.

Shelter SA has circulated information about the Discussion Paper through our networks, encouraging service providers and community members to respond. We would be pleased to provide any further information you require.

Yours faithfully,

**Dr. Alice Clark**  
**Executive Director**  
**Shelter SA**  
**The South Australian peak body for housing**



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We acknowledge and respect the Kurna people as the traditional custodians of the ancestral lands we live and work on and their deep feelings of attachment and relationship to country

