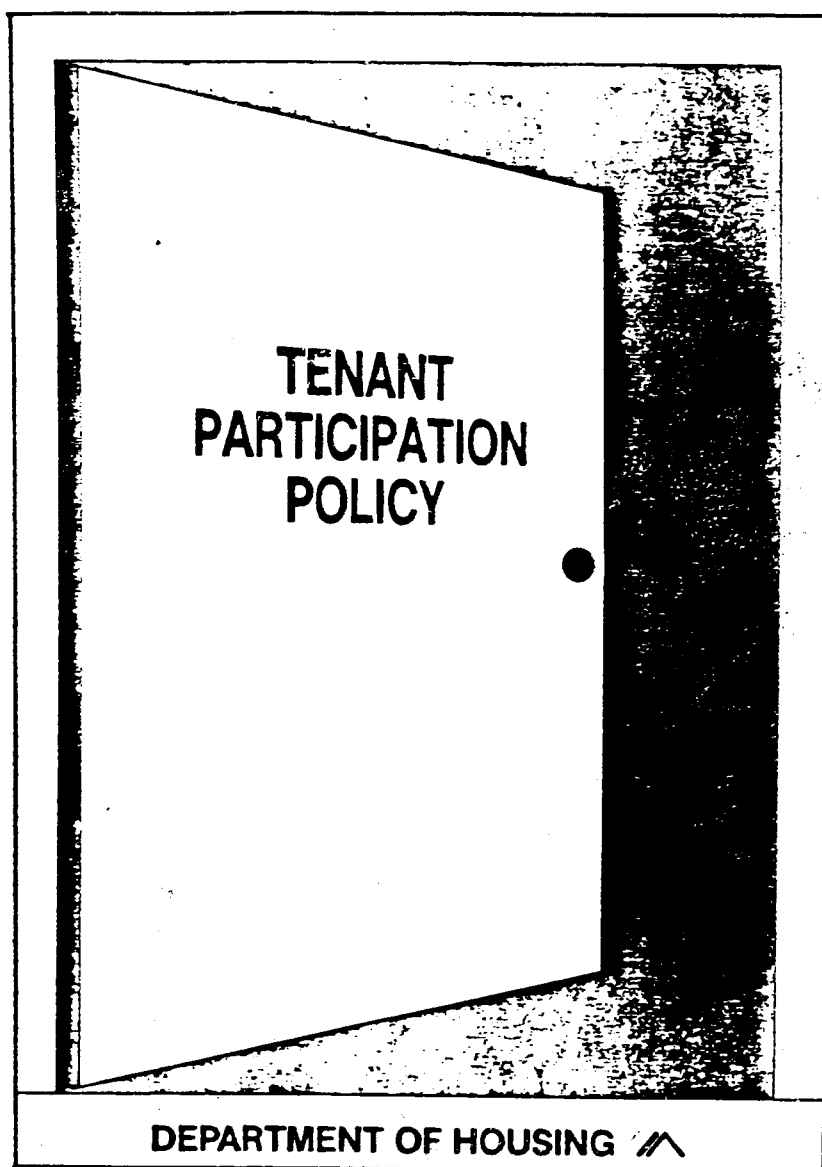




LIVERPOOL REGIONAL OFFICE

HOUSING OFFICER'S TRAINING COURSE - 12th November 1986



● INTRODUCTION

In 1984, the Minister for Housing, Mr Frank Walker, made a commitment to put the principle of tenant participation into practice. A year later he launched the Department of Housing's Tenant Participation Policy which will give public housing tenants in N.S.W. a greater say in the planning and management of their homes and communities.

This move coincided with a strengthening of the tenant participation principle in the renegotiated Commonwealth State Housing Agreement of 1984.

The Minister based the N.S.W. policy on the belief that tenants should be included in the decision making processes which affect their everyday lives . . .



Housing Assistance Act 1984

An Act relating to financial assistance to the States and to the Northern Territory for the purpose of housing

[Assented to 25 October 1984]

An Act relating to financial assistance to the States and to the Northern Territory for the purpose of housing

[Assented to 27 October 1984]

SCHEDULE 1

AN AGREEMENT made at the City of Canberra this 27th day of October 1984

BETWEEN THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA of the first part, THE STATE OF NEW SOUTH WALES of the second part, THE STATE OF VICTORIA of the third part, THE STATE OF QUEENSLAND of the fourth part, THE STATE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA of the fifth part, THE STATE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA of the sixth part, THE STATE OF TASMANIA of the seventh part, THE NORTHERN TERRITORY of the eighth part, and the Commonwealth of the ninth part

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the Commonwealth and the States and Territories have hereunto set their hands and seals at the City of Canberra this 27th day of October 1984

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HOUSING BILL 1985

NEW SOUTH WALES

PART II OBJECTS

Objects

4. (1) The objects of this Act are—

- (a) to maximise the opportunities for all people in New South Wales to have access to secure, appropriate and affordable housing;
- (b) to ensure that housing opportunities and assistance are available to all sections of the community with housing needs;
- (c) to ensure that public housing is developed as a viable and diversified form of housing choice;
- (d) to ensure that public housing reflects general community housing standards and is designed to cater for the ongoing needs of consumers;
- (e) to maximise the opportunities for tenants of public and community housing programmes to participate in the management of their housing and in the development of public and community housing policies;
- (f) to promote orderly and economic urban development and the adequate supply of affordable and suitably located land for housing at the minimum practicable cost to consumers;
- (g) to promote equity between levels of assistance provided to people living in public rental housing, private rental housing and those who own or are purchasing their homes;
- (h) to maintain an efficient housing administration to ensure the effective co-ordination and provision of all housing services;
- (i) to encourage social mix and the integration of different housing forms in existing and new communities;
- (j) to encourage the planning and development of new urban areas as communities with a full range of appropriate services and facilities available in the shortest practicable time;
- (k) to promote a viable and stable building and construction industry in the residential sector;
- (l) to facilitate the provision of an adequate supply of affordable home finance for persons in receipt of low and moderate incomes;
- (m) to encourage the development of flexible and innovative financial arrangements to facilitate access to home ownership for persons in receipt of low and moderate incomes; and
- (n) to ensure appropriate mechanisms and forums are established to allow input into housing policy by representative community organisations and non-government agencies involved in housing policy and provision.

TENANT PARTICIPATION POLICY

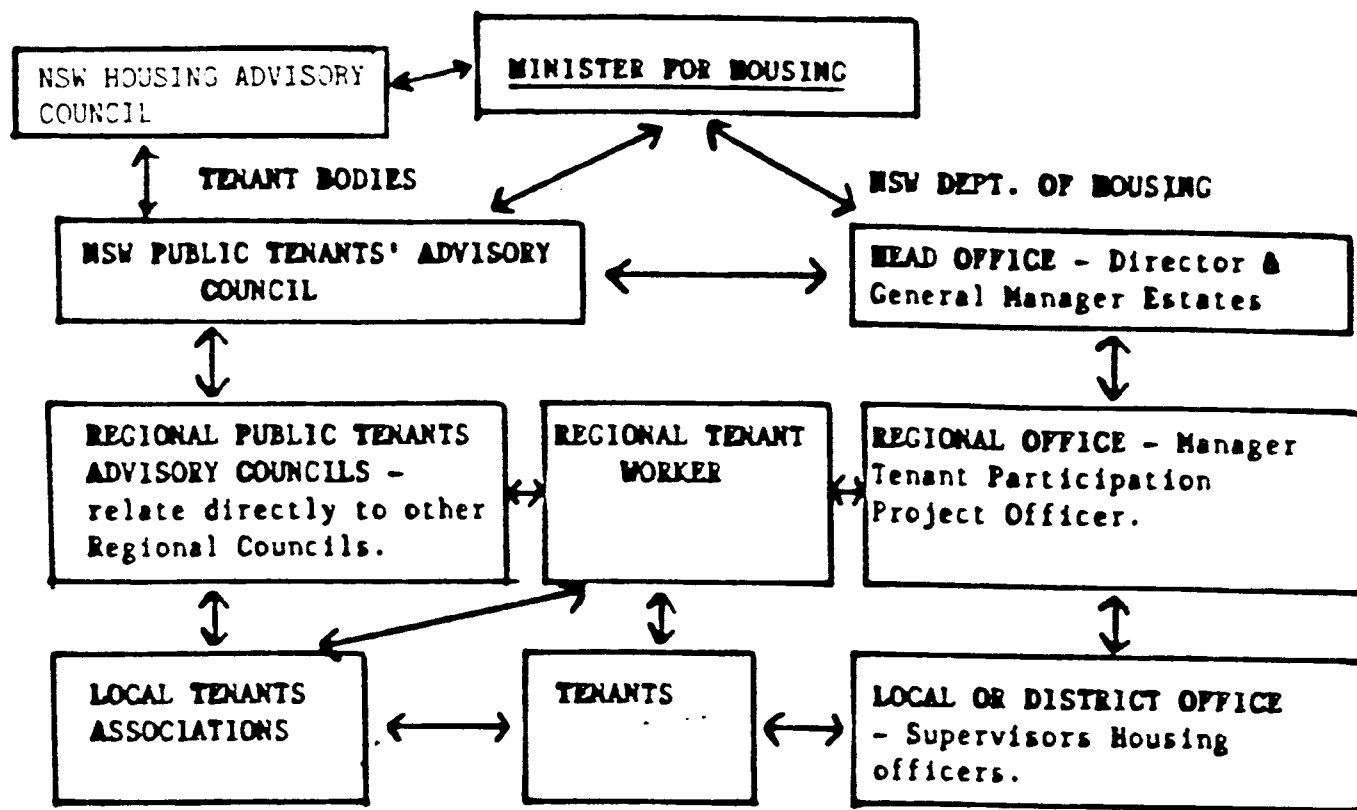
Tenant Participation is a new policy introduced by the Department of Housing in August 1985 to enable public tenants of N.S.W. the opportunity to become involved, and have a greater say, in the planning and management of their homes. It is beleived that tenants should be included in the decision making process which directly affects their everyday life.

A Steering Committee, comprising mainly of tenants from each of the 8 housing regions in N.S.W. was established in 1984 to advise the Minister and the Department on the development of a Tenant Participation Policy and the recommendations put forward by this Committee form the basis of the policy.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- * To increase tenants' knowledge of the Department of Housing's policies and practices to enable better use on their part of an intricate bureaucratic system.
- * To inform tenants of the ways public housing resources are utilised and of the financial constraints placed upon the Department when making its decisions. This knowledge will help minimise tenants' misunderstandings and dissatisfaction with some decisions which has resulted through lack of consultation.
- * To give tenants' associations an advocacy role, to assist tenants who are unable or unwilling to request necessary assistance, or act on behalf of many tenants requesting the same service or facility.
- * To open and expand lines of communications between tenants and Departmental staff with a view to improving management's knowledge of problems and why they occur.
- * To foster more effective management techniques in preventing and dealing with tenants' problems
- * To promote the use of existing and potential neighbourhood support networks as an alternative to seeking costly often inappropriate state welfare assistance
- * To help tenants groups organise social activities to reduce the isolation and boredom many tenants experience on estates.
- * To involve tenants in planning and providing essential neighbourhood facilities to ensure their appropriateness.
- * To recognise tenants' rights as housing consumers by giving them a say in broad public housing issues and more specifically in decisions affecting their homes and enviroment.

REPRESENTATIVE STRUCTURE



A three-tiered structure of tenant bodies has been established to develop formal links with the Department of Housing and the Minister for Housing.

At the local level tenant associations are being formed.

At the regional level tenant associations are in the process of being formed from memberships of affiliate local tenant associations.

Currently there is a State Steering Committee comprised of 2 tenant representatives from each of the 8 Department of Housing regions.

Once the 8 regional tenant associations are formed and have become incorporated, there will be a NSW Public Tenants Advisory Council comprising 2 tenant representatives elected by each of the regional associations.

In addition to the three tier structure established as part of the Tenant Participation Policy, the Minister has recently established the NSW Housing Advisory Council. This advisory body has representatives from industry, finance, labour, consumer and community organisations.

The State Steering Committee has 1 tenant representative on the NSW Housing Advisory Council.

LOCAL TENANTS' ASSOCIATIONS

1. planning for and/or running their own community facilities;
2. meeting with Department of Housing officers to discuss remedies for maintenance problems, car security and the need for open space and common area improvement;
3. taking up lawn mowing or similar maintenance contracts;
4. hosting social activities and developing self help programmes.

REGIONAL PUBLIC TENANTS' ADVISORY COUNCILS

1. provide information forums through regular meetings with senior regional Housing staff regarding eg. Departmental policies, new building projects and tenant participation policy implementation;
2. give advice and recommendations to the Department and to the State Advisory Council on issues such as maintenance, estate improvement, provision of family facilities etc;
3. develop strategies to assist in the organisation and consolidation of local tenants' associations;
4. communicate with other regional councils;
5. encourage information flow between local groups through newsletters, social events.

N.S.W. PUBLIC TENANTS' ADVISORY COUNCIL

1. to provide a forum for tenants on a wide range of public housing issues common to the regions;
 2. to develop public housing policy recommendations for consideration by the Department of Housing and the Minister;
 3. to liaise with senior officers of the Department;
 4. to monitor the development of regional councils and local tenants' associations and to implement the Tenant Participation Policy.
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