Australian Capital Territory

Housing Assistance Rental Bonds Housing Assistance Program 2010 (No 1)

Disallowable instrument DI2010-60

made under the

***Housing Assistance Act, 2007*, s 19 (1) (housing assistance programs)**

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Housing assistance programs reflect the policy framework for the provision of public housing in the ACT.

The Housing Assistance Act 2007 (*the Act*) provides for the Minister to approve housing assistance programs. An approved housing assistance program is a disallowable instrument.

Such programs are required to include the kind of assistance that may be provided, the eligibility criteria, and how decisions of the commissioner for social housing (the housing commissioner) under the program may be reviewed.

The *Housing Assistance Rental Bonds Housing Assistance Program 2010 (No 1)* replaces the *Housing Assistance Rental Bonds Housing Assistance Program 2007 (No 1)(D12007 –266*.

The objective of this program is to provide rental bonds assistance to eligible applicants who wish to access private rental accommodation in the ACT but who are experiencing financial difficulty in financing the required rental bond.

While this program has been reasonably successful in assisting people on moderate incomes to access private rental housing, it is considered that the program needs to be broadened to more effectively meet the needs of the client group.

Following is an outline of the modifications to the former program:

Clause	Provision
4	Default "liquid asset eligibility limit" increased from $7 500 to $10 000; new definitions provided for *dependent child* and *PRHAP (public rental housing assistance program).*
7(2)	Limit on total amounts outstanding on loans to an applicant under this program increased from 80% to 90% of the required rental bond.
9(1)	Paragraphs (h), (i) and (j) varied to increase income barriers applying to

	specified household types; new paragraph (ja) included to provide for greater equity for sole parent applicants so that such applicants with one or more dependent children will now be subject to the same income eligibility criteria as applicant couples with the same number of children.
9(3A)	New definition provided for *total weekly income* to support the variation for sole parent applicants.
9(6)	Period in which to enter into a tenancy agreement in accordance with clause 9(1)(k) increased from 28 days to 90 days.
15	*Note* included about internally reviewable decisions.
16	Subclauses (6) and (7) varied to recognise the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT) and a Regulation relating to ACAT.
17	Clause varied to refer to ACAT.
19	Specifies that the former program is repealed; and seeks to provide for the continuity of actions, things or instruments made under the former program.