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Policy: Heating and Cooling

Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC)

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1 Purpose of policy

1.1 Purpose

The NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) Heating and Cooling Policy outlines the process to improve the thermal comfort within LAHC owned properties through the provision of passive measures, and heating and cooling devices.

1.2 Background and policy links

Through the *Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW* strategy, the NSW Government is reforming social housing to deliver better outcomes for our residents and the communities in which they live. As part of Future Directions, LAHC will deliver improved social housing tenants outcomes through the provision of passive energy-saving design features, and heating and cooling devices through LAHC's available annual funding envelope.

The provision of thermal comfort is important in housing as it is strongly linked to the health and wellbeing of the occupants. Thermal comfort can be provided through passive measures such as insulation, draught proofing, window shading, etc. and by active measures via heating and/or cooling devices such as heaters, ceiling fans and air conditioners.

The suite of LAHC Asset Standards outline thermal comfort requirements for new properties. The Asset Performance Standards ensure the heating and cooling measures and devices are appropriately maintained. LAHC's Disability Modifications Policy stipulates the provision of heating and cooling devices in all climate zones on medical grounds.

In the development of this Policy, LAHC was guided by specialist consultants and has worked with a range of internal and external stakeholders to identify and assess options to improve thermal comfort in properties across all climatic zones in NSW. The stakeholders included the Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO), the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) and LAHC Divisions.

As the use of heating and cooling devices impacts household energy bills, they are to be used only where passive measures are not able to provide the required thermal comfort.

This Policy encapsulates the practices and processes adopted by LAHC in the past decades in the provision of adequate heating and cooling in LAHC owned and managed properties.

The development of the policy considers the operational safety of heating and cooling devices, running costs, energy efficiency, and climate change adaptation, particularly the prevalence of hot weather and heat waves.

2 Definitions

The table below is a list of terms, keywords and/or abbreviations used throughout this document.

Term	Definition
AHO	Aboriginal Housing Office
BASIX	Building Sustainability Index
CHP	Community Housing Provider
DCJ	The Department of Communities and Justice
LAHC	Land and Housing Corporation
NCC	National Construction Code

3 Scope and application

This policy applies to LAHC owned properties managed by DCJ Housing Services.

This policy does not apply to headleased properties or LAHC owned properties managed by Community Housing Providers (CHP).

4 Legislation & Policies

The development of the LAHC Heating and Cooling Policy has taken into consideration the following legislation, policies, codes, standards and agreements:

- *Housing Act 2001*
- *Residential Tenancies Act and Regulations 2010*
- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Building Sustainability Index: BASIX) 2004 (the BASIX SEPP)
- National Construction Code (NCC)
- LAHC Disability Modifications Policy
- LAHC Design Standards
- LAHC Asset Performance Standards
- Terms of the residential tenancy agreement.

5 Policy statement

Tenants can expect LAHC to ensure that all properties are in a reasonable state of cleanliness and fit for habitation.

LAHC will ensure that construction of all new residential properties complies with the National Construction Code (NCC) and BASIX requirements for thermal comfort and energy efficiency.

5.1 Air Conditioners and Solar Systems

LAHC will provide energy efficient reverse cycle air conditioning units and solar photovoltaic (PV) systems to new and existing properties in NCC climate zones 7 (cool temperate) and 8 (alpine).

LAHC will prioritise the retrofitting of energy efficient reverse cycle air conditioners and solar PV systems to existing properties in other climate zones. Prioritisation of communities will be to those most affected by climatic conditions, based on average maximum summer temperatures sourced from the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM), and subject to availability of funding.

When reverse cycle air conditioners are retrofitted, the following existing heating and cooling devices in living areas will be removed - electric heaters, flued gas heaters, solid fuel wood fire heaters and old inefficient air conditioners.

LAHC will consider retrofitting a reverse cycle air conditioner and solar system to properties where an existing flued gas space heater is beyond economic repair or based on a risk assessment.

LAHC will retrofit solar systems to properties that are two stories or less in height, with adequate roof areas to accommodate solar panels, and subject to availability of funding.

The retrofitting of solar systems will assist social housing households offset electricity costs from the operation of reverse cycle air conditioners during daytime hours.

5.2 Removal of Solid Fuel Wood Fire Heaters

Due to the safety risks associated with solid fuel wood fire heaters, LAHC will not permit the installation of any new solid fuel wood space heaters and will prioritise the removal of existing solid fuel wood space heaters where alternative heating devices are available. LAHC will retrofit a reverse cycle air conditioner and solar system to

properties when a solid fuel wood space heater is removed in climate zones 4, 6, 7 and 8.

5.3 Ceiling Insulation and Draught Proofing

LAHC will retrofit ceiling insulation and draught proofing to existing properties, subject to availability of funding.

5.4 Ceiling Fans

LAHC will provide ceiling fans in all new social housing properties.

LAHC will retrofit ceiling fans into existing properties subject to suitable ceiling height, and availability of funding.

5.5 Heating and Cooling Provisions for Medical Grounds

LAHC will provide additional heating and cooling measures on medical grounds in all climate zones in accordance with LAHC's Disability Modifications Policy.

6 Roles and responsibilities

The main roles and responsibilities for the implementation of this policy are as follows:

1. The Chief Executive LAHC will approve the policy following endorsement by the LAHC Executive Committee.
2. The Executive Director Head of Portfolio Management (Assets) will endorse and approve all related documents necessary to implement the policy.
3. The Director Operational Policy and Standards will review the policy periodically.
4. LAHC staff will ensure the policy is effectively implemented.
5. DCJ Housing Services, Community Housing Providers and the AHO should be aware of the policy.

7 Monitoring, evaluation and review

It is the responsibility of LAHC Assets Division to monitor and update this policy as required. This policy will be reviewed in line with any significant new information or legislative changes.

8 Support and advice

You can get advice and support about this policy from:

- LAHC Portfolio Management (Assets) Division.

If you are reviewing a printed version of this document, please refer to the LAHC intranet to confirm it is the most recent version of the policy. Following any subsequent reviews and approval, this policy will be uploaded to the internet/and/or intranet and all previous versions removed.