

Policy name	Asset Inspections
Policy date	August 2020
Authorisation	General Manager, Operations
Policy owner	National Manager, Maintenance Services
Policy type	Mission Australia Housing Operational Policy
Policy setting	

1 Purpose

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 This policy sets out the principles to be followed in carrying out Asset Inspections for housing managed by Mission Australia Housing (MAH). We aim to ensure a process that:

- Protects the assets owned and/or managed by MAH; and
- Complies with the specific legal and contractual obligations placed upon MAH by government, funders, and other housing partners.

1.2 Coverage

1.2.1 This document is a national policy and covers both Mission Australia Housing (MAH) and Mission Australia Housing Victoria (MAHV). All references to Mission Australia Housing, MAH and Housing include both MAH and MAHV unless specifically stated otherwise. Where state based variations exist in policies and procedures, these will be identified in the document.

1.2.2 This policy applies to all forms of housing provided by MAH including social, affordable, and transitional housing.

1.3 Information on procedures and other related policies

1.3.1 This policy focuses on why certain things need to be done. It is supported by procedures that provide more detail on what to do and the steps involved in completing Asset Inspections.

1.3.2 This policy is one of a number of interlinked policies that support MAH's delivery of housing services. To assist you, these are identified where relevant in this policy and the supporting procedures.

2 Scope

2.1 Parts of Mission Australia that this policy covers

2.1.1 This policy applies to MAH staff responsible for working with MAH clients, tenants, and properties.

2.2 Definitions

2.2.1 Key terms used in this policy are defined in the following table.

Term	Definition
Notice	Notification given to the tenants advising them of the property visit, in line with legislation and policy.
Tenant	Under state-based residential tenancy and rooming accommodation legislation, a tenant is a person who has entered explicitly into a lease agreement. The term is used more broadly in this policy to refer to tenants and residents under rooming accommodation agreements, unless explicitly distinguished.

3 Policy

3.1 Guiding principles

- 3.1.1 The MAH tenancy establishment process protects the assets entrusted to MAH
- Asset inspections are a way to ensure the properties are safe and habitable and to identify future works required to maintain the asset.
 - MAH will ensure that tenants understand their responsibilities as well as their rights regarding the maintenance and care of their property.
- 3.1.2 The MAH tenancy establishment process complies with relevant laws and procedures:
- MAH fully complies with the jurisdictional requirements of the states and territories in which it operates.

3.2 Overview

3.2.1 The process followed providing Asset Inspections lays the base for successful inspections and for the management of any problems that might arise with the property. It also complies with legal requirements, including residential tenancy and rooming accommodation requirements in each jurisdiction in which MAH operates.

- 3.2.2 MAH staff carry out several different property inspections throughout the tenancy and asset lifecycle, and these are an essential part of what we do. Asset inspections allow staff to check on the condition of a property, identify and manage property issues early and ensure property and safety compliance.
- 3.2.3 The Housing Officer completes ingoing condition inspections, routine inspections and pre-vacate inspections. For details about these inspections, see the **Inspections Policy**.
- 3.2.4 This policy focuses on the Asset Inspections carried out by the Asset Officer. The Asset Team will carry out the following types of inspections:
- Asset Fire Safety inspection
 - Quality Assurance (QA) inspection
 - Property Assessment Surveys (PAS) inspection
 - Technical Inspections

Inspection	Purpose	Frequency	Notice Required
Fire Safety Inspection	This is an inspection to check that the smoke alarm and any fire safety equipment is working and up to Australian standards.	Once per year/as required	National: Two (2) days' notice each time
Quality Assurance Inspection	This inspection takes place after maintenance work has been completed to make sure all work has been completed to the best standard.	As required	NSW: 48 Hours TAS: 24 Hours QLD: 48 Hours
Property Assessment Surveys	This is a detailed property condition report used to determine property component lifecycle and cyclical property upgrades, replacements, and modifications.	Once every 1 -3 years	NSW: 7 days written Notice each time. TAS: 24 Hours QLD: 48 Hours
Technical Inspection	If work is required to a property and MAH is unable to identify the detail of work before placing a work order, then a Technical Inspection will be arranged.	As required	NSW: 48 Hours TAS: 24 Hours QLD: 48 Hours

Note: tenants have the right to expect advance notice of inspections according to the above table, however such notice is not absolutely required if a tenant is happy to permit entry within that period.

3.3 Informing Tenants

- 3.3.1 To limit the amount of inspections tenants have at their property, where possible, the Asset Officer will arrange and conduct inspections in coordination with the Housing Officer.
- 3.3.2 For all inspections, the tenant must be given written notifications and where possible, verbal notice conforming to the legislative timeframes of operating jurisdictions.
- 3.3.3 Tenants are required to facilitate access to their property for Asset Inspections as per tenancy legislation in each jurisdiction. Where tenants do not provide access, MAH may issue a breach of tenancy notice and apply to state-based authorities for an order for access.

3.4 Post Inspection

- 3.4.1 Once the inspection has been completed, the Asset Officer is to upload the completed forms and photos to the IT system.
- 3.4.2 Any significant tenancy or property concerns that are noticed during the visit should be reported to their direct manager and the Housing Officer responsible for the property, these include:
 - Illegal activity
 - Hoarding and/or squalor
 - Tenant damage
 - Unauthorised occupants
 - Concerns about children
- 3.4.3 Throughout the process, staff must ensure that proper records are kept including photos of the property where appropriate. These records will be used to facilitate follow-up action with the tenants including subsequent corrective action.

3.5 Access Issues

- 3.5.1 MAH must gain access to all properties to carry out inspections, especially where we have regulatory and legislative responsibility such as PAS and Fire Safety. The Asset Team should work with the Housing Officers, where no access is an issue. The Housing Officer and/or Asset Officer will follow the steps below:
 - Seek permission from the tenant to use keys
 - For urgent inspections, may seek to bring a locksmith to gain entry
 - Seek an order from Tribunal or Court to gain access.

- 3.5.2 If MAH agrees an appointment date and time with the tenant for an external contractor to carry out a Fire Assessment or Property Survey Inspection and the tenant is not at home to allow access at the agreed time, if the contractor then charges MAH a no access fee, then MAH may charge the tenant this no-access fee.

3.6 Complaints and appeals

- 3.6.1 Tenants will be informed of their right to complain about services of MAH and to appeal organisational decisions as per the Appeals & Complaints Policy.

4 Responsibilities

Housing staff, including Housing Officers and Client Service Officers, are responsible for:

- Work with the Asset Team to coordinate inspections
- Work with the Asset Team to assist in gaining access to the properties.
- Recommending improvements to this policy and associated procedures.

Asset Officers are responsible for:

- Maintaining a schedule of all PAS and Cyclical Inspections required each year
- Work with the Housing Officer to coordinate inspections where possible
- Provide Notice to the tenants of the visit in line with the required notice period.
- Upload all information and photos to the IT system.
- Recommending improvements to this policy and associated procedures.

Asset Managers are responsible for:

- Incorporating this policy and associated procedures into staff induction and training.
- Ensuring staff are aware of and have access to this policy and associated procedures.
- Escalating feedback about this policy to the policy owner and/or policy writer.

The National Manager, Maintenance Services is responsible for:

- Ensuring that MAH complies with this policy and associated procedures.
- Recommending any changes to this policy and associated procedures.