

For immediate release
Thursday 17 December

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Regional caravan parks, last resort for desperate renters

Figures released by the Real Estate Institute of Victoria showing regional Victoria's lack of rental properties means many renters will be forced into insecure accommodation such as caravan parks. The data indicates a rental vacancy rate of only 0.8 per cent across regional Victoria. Three per cent is the accepted measure of a balanced market.

"These figures spell doom for regional Victorian renters. We are seeing a boom in the number of renters being forced into insecure and inappropriate accommodation in caravan parks because they simply cannot secure a rental property. In the country, if you can't get a rental property the only option is renting a caravan in a caravan park" said Toby Archer, Policy and Liaison Worker.

The Tenants Union of Victoria marked release of the data by calling on the Victorian Government to protect vulnerable caravan park residents. Under the Residential Tenancies Act caravan park residents have inferior security of tenure in comparison to other tenure types due to the 60 day rule which means they can be evicted without notice or recourse in the first 60 days of their tenure. There is no protection from retaliatory eviction.

"Renters forced into caravan parks are vulnerable to exploitation and retaliation if they seek to enforce their rights. Despite the caravan they rent being their primary place of residence, they are second class renters because the law allows park operators to evict them without recourse in the first sixty days of their tenure. We regularly see people who have been evicted on the fifty ninth day or because they have complained about poor treatment" said Mr Archer.

"Where individuals and families have no option than to live in caravan parks the law should protect them by providing them with the same protections all other renters enjoy. We believe the Victorian Government needs to act immediately to provide a fairer environment for all permanent caravan park residents by striking out the 60 day rule" said Mr Archer.