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Media Release

Affordable accommodation for vulnerable Tasmanians

A Tasmanian initiative with national implications is now a reality (today, Monday July 23) with the completion of the first module of uniquely designed accommodation for people with a disability who need support to live independently. The project has national implications and interstate interest is already high.

Developed by the Supported Affordable Accommodation Trust (SAA Trust) the initiative aims to address a fundamental issue facing families of people who require support - the growing shortage of affordable accommodation for vulnerable Australians.

It's a private sector initiative which grew out of the experience of Tasmanian businessman Bob Gordon who found it very difficult to secure suitable supported accommodation for one of his sons in a reasonable time frame.

Together with former CEO of Mosaic Support Services, Ralph Doedens, Mr Gordon established the SAA Trust to attract investors to both acquire suitable sites and to build affordable, specifically designed, modular accommodation for people requiring supported accommodation.

The first group of 3 two bedroom modules will be constructed in Glenorchy and have been leased by Mosaic Support Services. Further projects, utilising the same design model, are in planning for other disability service providers in the Launceston and Devonport regions; and strong interest has also been sparked in NSW and South Australia.

The first two bedroom module being launched today is the first of a 3 x 2 bedroom purpose built structure which will provide support to six compatible Mosaic clients living with a disability. All of these clients have all been waiting a long time to live in suitable supported accommodation. The design incorporates bedrooms, a shared living space and accommodation for support workers. It's a design which can also translate to affordable aged care accommodation.

The SAA Trust relies on attracting institutional investors to invest in this initiative to overcome the growing shortage of affordable accommodation for vulnerable Australians. This shortage is occurring at a time when accommodation costs generally are increasing across the nation and people with a disability who require supported accommodation are even more at risk of being pushed to the margins.

"This initiative does more than simply ease the distressing lack of appropriate supported accommodation for people requiring such assistance," says Bob Gordon. "It also gives hope to ageing parents who can see the day approaching when they can't support their loved ones.

"In addition it helps to ease the pressure on state-owned low income general housing needs by potentially freeing up state housing stock currently used for disability accommodation. Such housing



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stock is often inappropriate for the special needs of people requiring support while the modular SAA Trust design is purpose built and can also be easily modified for affordable aged care as well.”

There are also significant positive job benefits in the building industry and carer sectors.

“National interest is high but we need to secure more institutional support – and possibly also government support – if our vision for a major, national program is to be achieved,” said Mr Gordon. “This is an initiative we believe should generate positive and bipartisan support across the board. It offers real and affordable solutions to real problems.”

The public can find more information at www.saatas.com.au

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For further information, Mr Gordon 0400 980 297 or Ralph Doedens 0407 018 175.