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How salary sacrifice and FIFO restrictions could resolve housing crisis

SALARY-SACRIFICED homes for the dwindling armed forces and restrictions on FIFO mining could resolve the housing crisis in regional Queensland, Kennedy MP Bob Katter says.

In a recent media report, housing body Q Shelter said about 1500 people were homeless in Townsville and 1660 were on the social housing register¹. And, a PropTrack report stated in regional Queensland the number of rentals available below \$400 had fallen from 49.5 per cent at the start of the pandemic to 21.9 per cent in September 2022.

Mr Katter said without the State Government's "ridiculous bureaucratic" processes in sub-dividing, 1000 low-cost blocks of land just kilometres outside of Townsville could be opened for army families. He proposed the development on the Townsville side of the Lansdown Industrial Precinct.

"We've got a dual-lane highway which we'd have to raise to 110km/h for that 30km and you should be able to get to work in 20 minutes or less from that area," Mr Katter said.

"If the Government takes up 2000 acres of land, they should be able to get 1000 houses on to that land. The land might be worth \$400,000, so for 1000 houses, we're talking \$400 of land per allotment.

"Then you've got services, you might be talking \$20,000 a block. You try and buy a block of land in Townsville under \$150,000, I wish you well. I challenge you to buy a block at all, I wish you well."

Mr Katter further added the solution should include a salary sacrificing option for army personnel to own the homes, similar to how miners were encouraged to take up work in remote mining towns prior to FIFO work.

"It's also a solution to the dwindling numbers in the army. There is a huge problem, they cannot keep their army numbers up, it just keeps going down, down, down.

"Now if you do what the famous Jim Foots did in Mount Isa, I think it was 2000 blocks of land, he turned it into a housing allotment for virtually no cost at all. So, he offered those blocks of land, in

¹ [QLD housing body warns of 'rental emergency' in Townsville - realestate.com.au](https://www.realestate.com.au/news/news/queensland-housing-body-warns-of-rental-emergency-in-townsville)

BOB KATTER

Katter's Australian Party

Federal Member for Kennedy

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terms of today's money it was about \$100 in salary sacrifice a week and the mines put in \$200 a week, and Jim suddenly had himself 3000 workers.

“So instead of overcrowding in Townsville with FIFO, we had boom times in the mining towns because the workforce resided in those towns - the Charters Towers, the Emeralds, the Black Waters,” Mr Katter said.

For more information or a comment from Bob Katter,
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