

Remember the feeling when you received the keys to your first home?

25 March 2010 -- Remember the feeling when you received the keys to your first home? This was the question posed by QBE LMI to an audience of lenders and key business stakeholders at a recent breakfast held at the Museum of Contemporary Arts in Sydney.

Ian Graham, CEO of QBE LMI and Jo Brennan CEO of Habitat for Humanity Australia (HFHA), a not for profit organisation, raised critical issues relevant to all Australians, that is, the importance of shelter.

In the midst of significant property price growth and increasing home buyer activity, QBE LMI brought attention to the fact everyone should have the right to secure housing.

Mr Graham said, "QBE LMI is always looking at new ways to address the concern of housing affordability and enable more Australians to gain home ownership. This breakfast was not only an opportunity for QBE LMI to focus on all the great work that HFHA has done, but also raise awareness of the significance of volunteers and how every bit will count in the future".

"With interest rates on the rise for 2010, many low to medium income households will not have the opportunity to enter the housing market. HFHA will work to support these households. HFHA not only needs monetary support to assist the community but they also need physical help to build these homes" said Mr Graham.

Jo Brennan, CEO of HFHA said, "There are many families throughout Australia who dream of owning their own home, but due to the difficulties surrounding housing affordability, they will never see that dream become a reality. HFHA exists to help these people".

"Our partnership with QBE LMI allows us to assist more individuals and families who are struggling to attain the security of home ownership. By coming together today we are able to celebrate the efforts of our volunteers and also examine some of the underlying issues associated with housing affordability" said Ms Brennan.

Sue Webeck, a recent recipient of a HFHA home gave the audience an emotional insight into how her future has been changed with the generosity of HFHA, QBE LMI and volunteers.

Ms Webeck, a hard working Australian has tried for years to afford a home for herself and her teenage son, Michael. Working at the local primary school, Sue has always been able to meet her family's expenses, however, has been unable to borrow enough on her income to purchase a home. In November last year, after partnering with HFHA she was able to realise her dream of home ownership.

Ms Webeck said, "I never thought as a mum at 52 years, I would have something to leave my son".

Mr Graham said "We are extremely grateful to our business partners who have expressed an interest in HFHA and are able to support HFHA in their plans moving forward. By partnering with HFHA and local communities we are helping families achieve their dream and complementing our broader role as a mortgage insurer in extending housing affordability".

For further information, please contact:

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Background on QBE LMI

QBE Lenders' Mortgage Insurance Limited (QBE LMI) is a leading mortgage insurer, credit enhancer and residential property market specialist with over 45 years experience in the Australian market and over 20 years in the New Zealand market. Through our proactive approach, innovative products and services, and longstanding knowledge and expertise, QBE LMI has helped its customers to manage and reduce risk.

Background on Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity is a not-for-profit home ownership organisation that builds and renovates safe, decent, affordable homes in partnership with low-income families in need. Every 24 minutes a family somewhere in the world has a better home thanks to Habitat for Humanity, its volunteers and partners.

Habitat for Humanity was founded in the US in 1976 and it is now a global home-building mission comprised of more than 2,100 local affiliates and thousands of volunteers in over 85 countries including Australia.

In the 12 months to June 30, 2008 Habitat helped nearly 25,000 families in the Asia-Pacific region alone.

If you're interested in finding out more, or would like to volunteer on a build, contact Habitat for Humanity Australia Inc. on 1800 88 55 99, via email at info@habitat.org.au or visit habitat.org.au.