

# Aborigines 'face discrimination' from landlords

Aborigines seeking rented accommodation in Sydney faced blatant racial discrimination from real-estate agents and landlords, a Senate committee was told yesterday.

A social worker said Aborigines telephoned real-estate agents and were told vacancies existed, but when the agent realised the prospective tenant was black, the vacancy was suddenly "taken".

"It doesn't matter what sort of a record that person might have", Mr Robert Mowbray, a social worker for South Sydney Community Aid, told the Senate Standing Committee on the Social Environment. "If they're Aborigines they are knocked back".

Mr Mowbray documented 19 detailed cases, mostly in South Sydney, of "probable racial discrimination" against a prospective tenant.

He presented at least three lots of written submissions to the committee and was supported in oral evidence by two Aboriginal

including members of the Real Estate Institute of NSW.

"The institute states that it 'represents the highest standards in real estate practice' and aims to be 'a profession respected and trusted by all,' he said.

But there was no clause in the institute's code of ethics which barred discrimination.

members of South Sydney Community Aid.

Mr Mowbray named Atlas Real Estate of Regent Street, Redfern, and Advance Real Estate of Parramatta Road, Stanmore, as discriminatory. He did not specify how they were discriminatory or to what extent.

"Many Aborigines face racial discrimination when seeking to rent housing, especially in and around Redfern", Mr Mowbray said in a written submission.

"Many landlords are convinced that Aborigines are poor tenants and therefore will not let premises to Aborigines if they can let them to other groups".

Many real-estate agents in the South Sydney area practiced racial discrimination, including members of the Real Estate Institute of