

1 Context

- 1.1 The Joint Steering Committee (the Committee) will oversee the National Partnership for Remote Housing Northern Territory (the Agreement) and monitor the delivery of Australian Government's Restoring Funding for NT Homelands program (Homelands program) and co-design of the long-term vision for NT homelands
- 1.2 The Committee recognises successful remote housing policy requires consideration of the broader cultural, social, policy and investment environments in the Northern Territory.
- 1.3 All members acknowledge:
- the unacceptable levels of overcrowding in remote and regional housing in the Northern Territory;
 - that Aboriginal people and organisations have a particular and deeply personal interest in housing matters in their communities;
 - the unique challenges and circumstances to delivering housing programs in remote and regional areas;
 - that each Committee member has an equitably valuable role to fulfil on the Committee through providing senior representation for their organisation or agency.
 - The Agreement is in its final year with a new agreement to be negotiated.
 - The Agreement is between the Commonwealth of Australia and the Northern Territory.
 - The Agreement is delivering up to \$550 million in Australian Government funding over five years where that funding is matched by the Northern Territory, bringing the total investment in remote housing for that period to \$1.1 billion.



2 Shared Commitment

- 2.1 The Committee recognises effective and culturally appropriate housing programs and services need to be designed, developed and implemented in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their representative organisations. This includes facilitating place-based design, local decision making and community voices through local reference groups and regional Aboriginal community housing organisations.
- 2.2 Committee members are committed to working together collaboratively and transparently in equal partnership to achieve the purpose of the Committee.

3 Purpose

- 3.1 The Committee will inform and monitor the Agreement, and the Homelands Program and Co-design. ensuring:
- a. a reduction in overcrowding;
 - b. a role for the Land Councils in the Agreement's governance;
 - c. transparency about how money is spent;
 - d. the delivery of urgent upgrades to housing and essential infrastructure in homelands communities;
 - e. a co-design approach is taken for the long-term vision for NT homelands; and
 - f. ensuring, to the maximum extent possible, works are delivered by local Indigenous Territorians and Businesses.
- 3.2 The Committee will make decisions on matters of policy and strategy to ensure effective delivery under the Agreement.
- 3.3 The Committee will oversee and monitor efforts to achieve the social and economic wellbeing targets relating to remote housing and priority reforms under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and report progress to the NT Executive Council on Closing the Gap. Including:
- a. Outcome 9: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people secure appropriate, affordable housing that is aligned with their priorities and need.



- 3.4 The Committee may also consider broader policies relating to remote housing at the request of governments or Land Councils.
- 3.5 A key function of the Committee is to ensure accountability and transparency over housing outcomes and investment, including the progress of capital works. The Committee will monitor the achievement of milestones and benchmarks under the Agreement. This includes identifying and mitigating risks to milestones being achieved.
- 3.6 The Committee will monitor delivery in accordance with the Reporting Framework and work to identify strategy and operational risks early ensure delivery stays on track.
- 3.7 The Committee may establish sub-committees and working groups as required, with membership to include non-Committee members, such as experts and stakeholders

4 Membership

- 4.1 The Committee will have eleven representatives from the following members:
- a. **Australian Government:** three senior executive representatives, from the National Indigenous Australians Agency with responsibility for Indigenous Housing;
 - b. **Northern Territory Government:** three senior executive representatives, one each from:
 - i. Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities;
 - ii. Department of Infrastructure, Planning & Logistics; and
 - iii. Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet.
 - c. **Northern Territory Land Councils:** the Chief Executive Officer or other nominated senior representative with the delegated authority of the Chief Executive Officer from the:
 - i. Anindilyakwa Land Council;
 - ii. Central Land Council;
 - iii. Northern Land Council; and
 - iv. Tiwi Land Council.



- d. **Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory:** the Chief Executive Officer or other nominated senior representative with the delegated authority of the Chief Executive Officer from Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory.

4.2 All representatives must be authorised to make decisions and act on behalf of the member organisation they are representing.

4.3 Appointments of representatives will have due regard to ensuring continuity and stability of participation in the Committee.

5 Observers and Subject Matter Experts

5.1 Members may nominate observers to attend Committee meetings. There will be no more than 9 observers allowed at any meeting. The entitlement for each member is:

- a. Australian Government: 2 observers
- b. Northern Territory Government: 2 observers
- c. Northern Territory Land Councils: 1 observer for each Land Council with up to 4 total
- d. Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory: 1 observer

5.2 The Committee may agree to invite subject matter experts to attend meetings to provide expert advice regarding specific agenda items or on relevant issues to the Committee.

5.3 Proposed subject matter experts should be agreed at the preceding meeting and included in the relevant meeting agenda. Where a subject matter expert is proposed on short notice, all Committee members should be consulted out of session prior to issuing an invitation.

6 Quorum

6.1 A quorum for a formal Committee meeting will consist of at least 5 representatives including:

- a. one representative from the Australian Government;
- b. one representative from the Northern Territory Government;
- c. one representative from at least two Land Councils; and
- d. one representative from Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory



- 6.2 Observer members do not count towards the quorum unless they are attending as a delegated representative.

7 Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1 All Members and their representatives agree to:

- a. participate in good faith and contribute in a constructive and timely manner;
- b. share relevant and necessary information and data in a timely, accountable and transparent manner for the purpose of informing the work of the Committee;
- c. ensure that representatives have the required level of delegated authority to fully participate in Forum business including making commitments on behalf of the Member; and
- d. fulfil their roles and responsibilities under the Agreement and Homelands Program, as relevant.

- 7.2 The Australian Government shall:

- a. inform the Committee of relevant Australian Government investments and programs in the Northern Territory which may impact on those occurring under the Agreement;
- b. resource Land Councils for their role on the Committee through section 64(1) of the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976;

- 7.3 The Northern Territory shall:

- a. report on agreed performance benchmarks and milestones;
- b. identify and present delivery risks, including options for mitigation and ongoing risk management;
- c. inform the Committee of other Northern Territory Government investments and programs that may impact on those occurring under the Agreements;

- 7.4 The Northern Territory Land Councils shall:



- a. consult with and represent communities (including homelands, outstations and satellite communities) within their jurisdictions with respect to housing policies and outcomes arising from the Agreement and Homelands Program, as appropriate;
- b. inform the Committee of other Land Council policies and programs in the Northern Territory that may impact on investments and programs occurring under the Agreement;
- c. work with the Northern Territory Government through the Committee on land matters necessary for the delivery of housing outcomes consistent with their statutory function under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*; and
- d. ensure operational requirements relating to land matters, including land tenure consultations, are in place to effectively implement the Agreement.

7.5 Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory shall:

- a. consult with and represent Aboriginal community-controlled organisations which provide housing and housing related services in the Northern Territory;

7.6 The role of the Committee does not include decision-making on operational program issues or procurement.

8 Decision Making

- 8.1 The Committee will make decisions by consensus. The Committee members will make genuine efforts to reach consensus on all matters that are within the decision-making remit of the Committee.

9 Chairperson

- 9.1 Each meeting of the Committee will be co-chaired by a government Committee representative (Australian Government or Northern Territory Government) and a Land Council Committee representative, on a rotating basis.

10 Secretariat

- 10.1 The Northern Territory and Australian Governments will provide the Committee Secretariat. The Secretariat is responsible for:



- a. organising and coordinating Committee meetings;
- a. coordinating the preparation and circulation of papers for the Committee;
- b. preparing minutes recording the deliberations and actions of Committee meetings;
- c. preparing a communique following each meeting which will be published following endorsement by all members;
- d. maintaining a strategic risk register and reporting on the status of risks and mitigations at each Committee meeting;
- e. maintaining the register of declared interests; and
- f. supporting members in the operation of the Committee.

10.2 The Secretariat and contributing members will endeavour to meet the following timeframes in relation to each meeting:

- a. circulate a draft agenda and request agenda items from Committee members at least 15 full working days before each meeting;
- b. circulate the final agenda and papers at least 5 full working days before each meeting;
- c. circulate the communique for endorsement no later than 5 working days after a meeting; and
- d. circulate meeting minutes no later than 10 working days after a meeting.

11 Conflicts of Interests

11.1 Representatives and observers must declare any actual or perceived private interests of which they are aware. This can include pecuniary interests, held by them or by members of their immediate family, which may give rise to a conflict with their duties as a Committee member or due to their attendance at a Committee meeting.

11.2 Representatives and observers should complete a declaration of interests each year and the Secretariat will maintain a register of declared interests. It is the responsibility of representatives and observers to notify the Committee and Secretariat of private interests as they arise.



- 11.3 Where a potential, perceived or actual conflict of interest exists, the Committee will determine whether a member should withdraw from discussion or decision-making on the relevant matter. The Committee may decide an interest is immaterial and permit the member to participate.

12 Confidentiality

- 12.1 Materials provided to the Committee will be clearly marked as *Joint Steering Committee in Confidence* if they contain confidential or proprietary information.
- 12.2 With the exception of authorised communications with their member, representatives and observers will not reveal any confidential or proprietary information entrusted in the course of their involvement with the Committee, and may not use or attempt to use any such information, documents or data, other than for the fulfilment of their work with the Committee.
- 12.3 Participation in the Committee does not impinge on the rights of representatives and observers as employees of other organisations and members of the public from taking action that they would otherwise have taken.
- 12.4 Upon cessation of participation and thereafter, representatives and observers shall not reveal any confidential or proprietary information which they obtained while participating on the Committee, and may not use or retain, or attempt to use or retain, any such information, documents or data.

13 Meetings

- 13.1 The Committee will meet at least four times each year. The Committee can agree to call additional meetings as required.
- 13.2 The location of meetings should rotate between member locations where practical.
- 13.3 Out of session consultations may be undertaken as required with key partners and stakeholders.

14 Review of these Terms of Reference

- 14.1 These Terms of Reference will be reviewed every 12 months by the Committee, or earlier if agreed by the Committee. The Committee can amend these Terms of Reference as it deems appropriate.

