



**Family &
Community Services**
Aboriginal Housing Office



NSW Aboriginal Housing Office

Corporate Plan

2014-15 to 2016-17

A Message from the AHO A/Chief Executive

Developing safe, affordable and culturally appropriate housing for Aboriginal people is the key focus of the AHO. Increasing secure, affordable housing is an important way of reducing the gap in disadvantage.

Poor housing conditions and overcrowding have detrimental impacts on the health of residents and communities and can impact on education and employment opportunities.

To achieve better housing outcomes for Aboriginal people in NSW, the AHO is focusing on providing integrated and sustainable housing options.

We are moving into a new, exciting phase seeking to strengthen the Aboriginal community housing sector and enhance our role and contribution within the FACS cluster.

This Corporate Plan sets out what we intend to achieve over the next three years. It focuses our future direction, sets out key objectives and represents a commitment to the community on what we will deliver.

To deliver on our plan we will need to work effectively with the Aboriginal community housing sector, with our partners in the broader FACS family and across the whole of government.

I look forward to working together to achieve improved housing outcomes for Aboriginal people in NSW.

Mandy Young
A/Chief Executive

About us

The Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) is a statutory body established under the *Aboriginal Housing Act 1998 (NSW)* to assist Aboriginal people living in NSW in meeting their housing needs.

The AHO:

- plans, develops and delivers housing programs and services to assist Aboriginal people
- works in partnership with Aboriginal Community Housing Providers (ACHP) and Aboriginal communities to deliver housing programs and develop housing policy and standards, and
- owns an asset base for Aboriginal housing consisting of 5,639 (dwellings and land) worth around \$138 billion as at 30 June 2014.

We are grounded in the principles of self-determination and self-management for Aboriginal people.

We are guided by the AHO Board which is comprised of highly skilled Aboriginal people from a variety of backgrounds and expertise. The AHO Board plays an important role in determining the policies of the AHO and highlighting matters which impact on Aboriginal people's access to affordable and quality housing in NSW.

The AHO sits within the NSW Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) cluster. The work of the AHO is aligned to the FACS Strategic Statement and is informed by the *NSW 2021* goals.

More about FACS

For further information about FACS activities, please visit the FACS website at:

www.facs.nsw.gov.au

Our vision

All Aboriginal people living in NSW will have access to appropriate, affordable, quality housing.

Our purpose

Our aim is to break the cycle of disadvantage for Aboriginal social housing tenants by delivering fit-for-purpose, client focused services in places where they are needed, when they are needed.

The AHO works with Aboriginal organisations and communities to deliver housing programs, policies and standards that provide:

- a strengthened Aboriginal community housing sector
- better housing outcomes for eligible Aboriginal people
- enhanced skills and greater opportunities for Aboriginal people
- connection to other services to enhance the wellbeing of Aboriginal people, and
- strong governance and a professional, flexible, and highly skilled AHO workforce.

Our context

The AHO faces a number of challenges and opportunities in providing support for Aboriginal people's housing needs. Major societal factors impacting on current and future demands on social housing for Aboriginal people include:

- an increasing number of homeless Aboriginal people and people at risk of homelessness
- unexpressed/hidden demand not captured in census data
- overcrowding, and
- an increasing number of clients with complex needs.

To address these challenges, the AHO needs to deliver services in a different and more efficient way to achieve better outcomes for Aboriginal families and communities. This includes ensuring that the AHO workforce is appropriately structured to address changing skill requirements.

At the same time, a raft of reforms and initiatives are underway. These provide significant opportunities to support the Aboriginal community housing sector and help to address the underlying causes of Aboriginal disadvantage, including:

- FACS reforms to out-of-home care, and the disability sector

- FACS localisation
- OneFACS, which unites a number of service delivery agencies over the next few years to provide an integrated, holistic approach to policy and services
- OCHRE and other Aboriginal specific plans, especially concerning Aboriginal employment and building of Aboriginal organisations' capacity
- 'Going Home Staying Home' reform to tackle the causes of homelessness.

Our values

Our values are expressed in the work we do, in the people we serve, through non-government partnerships and with each other. Our values are:

Innovation—we continually seek to identify and implement better integrated housing solutions for Aboriginal people

Working together—we value each other and create better outcomes by working collaboratively.

Accountability—we are transparent with all stakeholders and take responsibility for outcomes

Service—we provide the best possible service

Culture—all our work is delivered with consideration of Aboriginal culture and perspective

Respect—we are considerate and open in working with one another.

Our Goals

This Corporate Plan outlines six major goals, which will guide our activities over the next three years as the AHO meets challenges and maximises opportunities.

We aim to:

1. Support a diversified and sustainable ACHP sector
2. Ensure AHO engagement in key whole-of-government initiatives
3. Deliver integrated housing options
4. Enhance Aboriginal service delivery throughout FACS
5. Support sustainability of the AHO service provision
6. Develop and maintain quality relationships with key stakeholders.

Our goals

1. A diversified and sustainable ACHP sector

The Aboriginal community housing sector reaches a position of financial sustainability with housing matched and prioritised to the needs of Aboriginal people.

2. AHO engagement in whole-of-government initiatives

FACS and government initiatives concerning Aboriginal people are considered through an Aboriginal perspective, including:

- Homelessness
- Affordable housing
- Home ownership
- Overcrowding

3. Integrated housing options

Housing options are fit for purpose, client focused, located where they are needed and connected to other services that enhance wellbeing.

Our strategies

- Develop a Sector Strategy that provides advice on the current and future needs of Aboriginal community housing.
- Develop an Industry Development Framework that outlines actions to support the Sector.
- Consider the establishment of a Peak Body to support and advocate on behalf of the Aboriginal community housing sector.
- Develop the skills of the Aboriginal community housing sector.
- Support the development of a strong Aboriginal building industry which provides business and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people.
- Increase the supply of new housing owned and managed by ACHPs.
- Continue to develop the performance-based registration system for ACHPs.
- Implement strategies to improve contracting and performance monitoring of ACHP services.
- Identify and implement strategies to address barriers to ACHP financial capability.
- Monitor ACHP service delivery outcomes.

- Contribute to government initiatives for early intervention and prevention of homelessness.
- Ensure affordable housing is recognised and planned for across FACS and government.
- Contribute to the government goal to increase home ownership for Aboriginal people.
- Contribute to government initiatives that address overcrowding.

- Maximise opportunities for ACHPs to provide integrated housing delivery.
- Identify opportunities within FACS reforms for the Aboriginal community housing sector to expand service delivery.
- Ensure more NSW Aboriginal people benefit from the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing (NPARIH).
- Deliver an Asset Management Strategy providing increased opportunities for ACHPs.

Our goals

4. Enhanced Aboriginal service delivery throughout FACS

AHO takes on the role of advisor within the FACS cluster to inform the delivery of specific, tailored and culturally appropriate approaches in all aspects of Aboriginal social housing.

5. Sustainability of the AHO service provision

Sustainable, accountable and flexible business practices to ensure the AHO:

- delivers services in the most effective and responsible manner
- is a recognised leader in Aboriginal service delivery and
- is an employer of choice.

6. Quality relationships with key stakeholders

Enhanced partnership arrangements with key stakeholders including government, ACHPs and the Aboriginal community to assist in delivering effective programs.

Our strategies

- AHO membership of FACS strategic committees to ensure the needs of Aboriginal people are considered.
- Shared research agenda with key stakeholders to ensure the needs of Aboriginal people are reflected in FACS initiatives.
- Investigate and introduce arrangements for workforce sharing to strengthen skills and cultural understanding across FACS.

- Ensure the AHO workforce is matched to business need.
- Strengthen risk management and ensure cost-effective procurement and fraud control.
- Provide quality human resource management.
- Align AHO asset portfolio growth with need.
- Ensure AHO assets are utilised to meet strategic outcomes.
- Continuous improvement of AHO service provision.
- Responsible financial management.

- Strengthen communication with stakeholders through a new communications strategy.
- Engage stakeholders in the development of programs and policies.
- Engage with the sector on asset program delivery.