

FAIR FUNDING FOR QUEENSLAND

Remote Housing

1 February 2018

COMMUNIQUE

The Commonwealth Government must urgently confirm its ongoing commitment to long-term funding for remote housing outcomes for Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, if it is serious about Closing the Gap in Indigenous disadvantage.

That is the united call of the Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport, Mayors of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Councils, the [Local Government Association of Queensland](#) and [Q Shelter](#).

Housing is a critical building block and input to Closing the Gap. The Commonwealth's apparent decision to cease funding for the National Partnership on Remote Housing (NPRH) will see housing standards in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities deteriorate, and overcrowding and homelessness skyrocket. It will have lasting impacts on Indigenous health, education and community safety outcomes. This decision will remove up to 850 local jobs and apprenticeships and be a loss to supplier businesses in regional urban centres. It will devastate Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The Commonwealth Government's own [independent report on the review of NPRH](#) highlights Queensland's achievements and recommends continued long-term Commonwealth funding to maintain houses and respond to overcrowding and growth.

Over the past 10 years, Queensland has reduced overcrowding in remote communities by almost half. We have delivered almost 1,150 homes, almost 1,500 refurbishments and supported maintenance for almost 4,300 houses. This program has helped build the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Councils, who with Indigenous businesses now deliver over 80 percent of housing construction and repairs.

However, we are still playing catch up – these communities have not yet reached parity. We must protect the achievements already made, and continue to respond to overcrowding and future growth.

Queensland is committed to continuing our efforts. We have agreed to establish an oversight committee for future program delivery, to ensure full transparency and accountability, demonstrating our commitment to partnership and collaboration between the Queensland Government and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Councils.

We demand the Commonwealth Government urgently commit to upholding its remote housing responsibilities, providing fair funding for Queensland and supporting the ongoing protection and advancement of some of Queensland's most disadvantaged communities.

Closing the Gap is a responsibility of all levels of government. Queensland seeks a ten-year continuation of Commonwealth funding – in real terms, and at the same level as provided over the past ten years.

ENDS