

# **States and Territories Ministers' Meeting on Remote Housing Issues**

**19 May 2017**

## **COMMUNIQUE**

Today, as part of the Housing and Homelessness Ministers' meeting in Adelaide, Housing Ministers from Queensland, Northern Territory, Western Australia and South Australia met to discuss remote housing issues, including the funding provided through the National Partnership on Remote Housing (NPRH), due to expire on 30 June 2018.

Ministers are united in a call to the Australian Government for funding certainty beyond June 2018 to support better housing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The Federal Budget confirmed no funding for remote Indigenous housing from 2018-19. It is critical that Australian Government funding under NPRH must be continued and have allowances for cost increases and a growth in demand.

The National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing (NPARIH) and NPRH have delivered 3,272 new dwellings and significant upgrades to 7,350 dwellings nationally (as at 31 October 2015). However, more needs to be done to address housing pressures due to population growth and continued overcrowding.

Our priorities are to protect the achievements made under the NPARIH and NPRH, meet future need, and continue to respond to overcrowding. The employment outcomes delivered under the agreements are a vital contribution to communities through skills development and real jobs.

There is a need for sustained investment from all levels of government to build upon the strong foundations built through current agreements. Ministers made this clear in their contributions to the review commissioned by the Australian Government to provide advice on future arrangements.

Despite assurances that the report would be released in March this year, it has not been released.

We know that without ongoing investment and the dedication of a joint, long term agreement, we will not make in-roads into initial Closing the Gap targets for improved employment, education and health.

The current uncertainty around future funding arrangements to address housing need in remote Indigenous communities is unacceptable and jeopardising the future economic and social growth of our communities.

We ask the Australian Government to respond swiftly to our call for certainty and action to ensure the critical pipeline of construction and jobs is maintained and important work can commence to prepare land and infrastructure.

**ENDS**