



AHV Board Communique

Aboriginal Housing Victoria Board Meeting

Thursday 29 August 2024

The Board of Directors of Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHV) held their ninth Board meeting for the calendar year on Thursday 29 August 2024.

Community consultation

We have now completed our eight community consultation sessions with renters, Aboriginal communities and ACCOs. The consultations started in Wyndham Vale in June and ended in Bairnsdale in August. In between these, we held consultations in: Ballarat, Doveton, Thornbury, Mildura, Bendigo and Shepparton.

The Board noted that renters and community members have welcomed the opportunity to have a face-to-face yarn with AHV senior management. Feedback from renters, community and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) has been very supportive of the directions outlined in AHV's Draft Strategic Plan, and the updating of the Renter Charter. Maintenance issues remain a key theme, but commitments have been made, and met, to follow up on outstanding requests for repairs, as identified by renters attending the consultations

If you were unable to attend the community consultations but still want to provide feedback to us, we have set up an online 'Have Your Say' portal. Details can be found [here](#).

Home ownership pathways for Aboriginal people

Throughout August, the Homebuyer Program Coordinator conducted several home ownership workshops.

The Board noted that a highlight was a day of workshops held with Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative (GEGAC) in Bairnsdale, on 14 August. GEGAC staff, AHV staff, and guests from Indigenous Business Australia and Bank Australia, yarned about housing and home ownership pathways. The workshop was a great success, and a similar event is planned with Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative in Geelong, on 28 August.

This month the [Aboriginal Home Ownership Hub](#) website was publicly launched. This website has been developed in partnership with the Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Forum (AHHF) and other ACCO stakeholders over the last 12 months. It provides a variety of resources for community to access regarding home ownerships steps, skills and schemes. The Board acknowledged the collaborative effort to design and establish the Hub. AHV will now anchor its home ownership communications and engagement activities to the Hub branding, while continuing to develop the effectiveness of the site. An evaluation will be undertaken 3 months post launch, in October-November 2024.

Aboriginal Private Rental Assistance Program (APRAP)

AHV hosted the joint APRAP & PRAP Seminar on 8 August 2024 at the Koorie Heritage Trust on Wurundjeri Country. 33 APRAP and PRAP workers attended. Homes Victoria presented on the most recent statistics of homelessness and the APRAP and PRAP programs, as well as expert keynote speakers from the private rental sector and a cultural awareness session provided by Will Austin from Yarnbark.

The Board noted that the seminar was well received. According to participants, the highlights included the cultural awareness session, and the opportunity for APRAP & PRAP workers to network and share their knowledge and experience.

The 3rd APRAP Forum will be held on Wathaurong Country Geelong on the 29 August 2024. Guest speakers include Dr Heather Holst, Commissioner for Residential Tenancies and Consumer Affairs Victoria.

End of year reporting

As part of AHV's reporting requirements to the Housing Registrar, AHV is required to submit the following reports to the Housing Registrar by 31 August each year:

- Annual Business Plan; and
- Key Performance Measures Report.

The reports have been approved by the AHV Board and submitted to the Office of the Housing Registrar.

National Housing and Homelessness Bil 2024

The Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Forum (AHHF) submitted a response to the *National Housing and Homelessness Plan Bill 2024 (No. 2)*.

The submission was generally supportive of the proposed Bill, including the objective to formally recognise access to adequate housing as a fundamental human right. The submission included recommendations relating to the need for the legislation to respect the principles of self-determination, by allowing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to have direct input into housing programs that will affect their communities.