



AHV Board Communique

Aboriginal Housing Victoria Board Meeting

Thursday 29 February 2024

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

Review of AHV's Strategic Plan

A review of AHV's Strategic Plan commenced in 2022-23, given the significant changes in the social and affordable housing environment at a national and state level that have occurred since our current Strategic Plan was developed. Also, many of the key objectives of the existing Strategic Plan have been met.

Following a tender process, AHV engaged Deb Martindale of SentientCo, to support the development of a revised, high level draft AHV Strategic Plan, that more appropriately reflects current and medium-term (~5 year) organisational roles, objectives, and challenges.

Ms Martindale's brief included the production of a draft revised Strategic Plan that will be suitable for consultation with AHV's key stakeholders, including renters and Aboriginal communities.

The Board considered the final draft of AHV Strategic Plan at today's meeting.

AHV will now develop a community consultation and engagement plan for presentation to the Board. Renter and community consultation on the draft Strategic Plan will proceed during 2024.

Quarterly performance reporting

As part of AHV's reporting requirements to the Board, the following performance reports were presented to the Board for the second quarter of 2023-24:

- Dashboard report on key performance data; and
- progress of Business Plan actions.

Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Forum (AHHF)

The Victorian Aboriginal Housing Investment Opportunities Forum was held on 15 February 2024, and was attended by more than 50 people from 20 AHHF member organisations. Attendees had the opportunity to ask state and federal government representatives about accessing funding for Aboriginal-specific social housing through the Housing Australia Future Fund (Federal) and the Regional Housing Fund (State).

Discussions focussed on how best to collaborate on shared visions for creating an Aboriginal-specific housing and homelessness system in Victoria. Housing Australia (Commonwealth) and Homes Victoria (State) committed to continuing discussions in this space, to support the journey

towards self-determined Aboriginal housing. AHHF members asked both state and federal agencies to make investment information more accessible, and to provide detailed examples of how each proposed investment option will operate, so that AHHF members can make informed decisions.

Supporting housing registration for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs)

In January 2024, Dominic Alosio commenced with AHV in the role of Aboriginal Navigator - Housing Registration. Dominic is based one day a week in the Office of the Victorian Housing Registrar (OHR). Her role focuses on supporting ACCOs and Traditional Owner (TO) groups, with housing portfolios who are interested in housing registration by:

- Engaging with the OHR to facilitate improved understanding of barriers to registration faced by Aboriginal organisations, and to identify improved systems and processes that support future registration of ACCOs;
- Strengthening understanding of the critical role of governance in meeting housing regulatory requirements;
- Strengthening ACCO senior management and Board director understanding of regulatory requirements, in advance of commencing the registration application process;
- Building a shared understanding of the governance systems and resourcing requirements; the importance of housing program financial viability; and the business capabilities required to manage a social housing portfolio; and
- Strengthening understanding of the requirements outlined in the housing performance standards and the expected level of performance required for specific ACCOs/TOs with a housing portfolio of a certain scale and growth expectations.

Aboriginal Private Rental Assistance Program (APRAP)

Throughout December and January, the APRAP Statewide Coordinator, Sue D’Amico has been supporting the following ACCOs who have been funded as APRAP “expansion” sites:

- VACCA Brimbank Melton;
- Ngwala Willumbong Aboriginal Corporation;
- Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative limited;
- Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative; and
- Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative.

Monthly meetings with all APRAP Managers have continued and provide a vital communication channel, for sharing and learning opportunities. Planning has progressed for the upcoming Statewide APRAP Forum, to be held at the Koorie Heritage Trust on 28 February 2024. The Forum will include presentations from Kylie Smith, Head of Education and Consultancy, Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission; Dr Heather Holst, Commissioner for Residential Tenancies; a real estate agent who has worked positively with APRAP; and a client of the APRAP program who shared their lived experience with the program. All APRAP sites were represented at the Forum, with 21 APRAP workers in attendance.