



Communique

Aboriginal Housing Victoria Board Meeting

Wednesday, 1 August 2018

The Board of Directors of Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHV) held their fifth Board meeting for the calendar year on Wednesday 1 August, 2018 in Melbourne.

Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework

The Board received an update on the development of a Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework.

The Board was advised that the first meeting of the Steering Committee was held on Friday 27 July 2018.

The Steering Committee is chaired by Prof Kerry, Arabena, Director of the Indigenous Health Equity Unit at the University of Melbourne.

Other members of the Steering Committee include:

- Chair of Aboriginal Housing Victoria;
- One current AHV tenant;
- Two representatives from the Department of Premier and Cabinet;
- One representative from the Department of Health and Human Services;
- Two representatives from Aboriginal Community Housing Organisations;
- One representative from Ngwala Willimbong; and
- the Executive Officer and Board Secretary of the Victorian Public Tenants Association.

NAIDOC Collingwood Children's Farm Event and Title Transfer Celebrations

The Board noted the success of this year's special AHV's NAIDOC event. While celebrating the NAIDOC theme of 'Because of her, we can!' we also celebrated the third and final transfer of properties from the Victorian Government to AHV – a momentous and significant milestone for AHV and the Victorian Aboriginal community, and a major step towards self determination.

The event was held at the Collingwood Children's Farm on Wednesday 11 July, and we received lots of positive feedback from the large number of individuals and families who shared in the celebrations on the day. Approximately 2000 people, including a large number of AHV tenants and supporters attended the event, making it the largest yet.

AHV's video, *Self-determination* was launched at the event, and was received very well by the crowd. You can view the video at:

<https://www.facebook.com/AboriginalHousingVictoria/videos/1699775130141746/>

AHV is now looking forward to next year's event, which marks the 20th anniversary of our NAIDOC celebrations at the Collinwood Children's Farm. We are keen to ensure that the event remains culturally appropriate and enjoyable for all attendees, but particularly our tenants and their families.

We therefore welcome any feedback on ways that we can continue to improve the event. Please contact us on email: info@ahvic.org.au if you would like to share your ideas for next year's event.

Victorian Housing Register

The Board received an update on the progress of AHV's proposed transition to the Victorian Housing Register (VHR).

The VHR is a Victorian Government initiative to provide a single point of entry to public and community housing in Victoria, for all applicants. Applicants can opt to be considered for community housing, including AHV housing only, or public housing. Applications will be assessed through one of two categories:

- *Priority Access* – for people who have an urgent housing need and meet low income and asset eligibility limits.
- *Register of Interest* – for people who do not have an urgent housing need but may benefit from social housing and meet higher income and eligibility limits.

Further information is available on the Department of Health and Human Services website:

<http://housing.vic.gov.au/victorian-housing-register-makes-applying-housing-easy>

Recent discussions between the Director of Housing and the CEOs of Housing Associations suggest that implementation of the VHR will proceed shortly.

End of financial year reporting

The Board received quarterly reports on organisational performance and progress against the business plan and the dashboard report. The Board noted the progress achieved in 2017-18 and the actions underway to continue to improve performance.

Pyrox gas heaters

AHV received advice from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) on 29 March 2018, regarding the Department's response to the decision by the Australian Gas Association and Energy Safe Victoria, to suspend the certification for Pyrox Vulcan 48 series space heaters until further notice. Certification was suspended on the basis of tests indicating that these heaters can produce unsafe levels of carbon monoxide under certain conditions.

The Board approved the immediate replacement of Pyrox Vulcan 48 series space heaters in properties owned and managed by AHV, and contractors were engaged in May 2018 to complete the heater replacements.

The replacement program has been completed. In the meantime, 35 additional properties were identified by DHHS as requiring replacement; of these, 33 have been released to contractors and are due to be completed by mid-August 2018.

We believe that we have now identified all Pyrox Vulcan 48 series space heaters in AHV properties. However, if you have a gas heater installed in your AHV property and you have any concerns that it may be a *Pyrox Vulcan 48* model, please refer to AHV's website or contact us on maintenance@ahvic.org.au for further information and advice.