



## The Department of Communities and Justice – Housing

### **Next steps: *Understanding Mobility as a Key Driver of Overcrowding and Other Housing Issues* report**

Mobility is an integral part of Aboriginal life and culture. It requires a flexible approach that is responsive to individual, family and cultural needs.

The Department of Communities and Justice – Housing (DCJ Housing) is taking action to partner with Aboriginal organisations and communities in NSW to transform and strengthen the way we work with Aboriginal clients and families. As our commitment to Priority Reform 3 of the [National Partnership Agreement for Closing the Gap \(the CTG Agreement\): Transforming Government Organisations](#), we will create a formal partnership agreement with the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations (NSW CAPO). We will work with key Aboriginal stakeholders to implement the following client service delivery recommendations from the *Understanding Mobility as a Key Driver of Overcrowding and Other Housing Issues* report.

#### **Recommendation 1:**

Implement and promote person centred policy and practice that is flexible and responsive to the spiritual, cultural and social needs of Aboriginal communities, families and clients and that also support mobility.

#### **Recommendation 2:**

Develop a strategy for building relationships and trust with Aboriginal communities, families and clients, rather than intervening at a point of crisis. This can be done through community engagement, culturally appropriate communications, actively listening to client needs and concerns, considering all client circumstances (not just housing related) and demonstrating positive changes to community.

#### **Recommendation 3:**

Strengthen and formalise (where required) partnerships with Government, non-Government service providers and Aboriginal organisations and communities; and encourage Aboriginal clients to consent for service providers to share information to enable co-ordinated and holistic service delivery for shared clients.

#### **Recommendation 4:**

Pursue opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal voice into DCJ Housing governance and policy design and decision making.

#### **Recommendation 5:**

DCJ to consider developing a mechanism for improving data practice with the broader social housing sector for example through Memorandums of Understanding.

## Project Background

DCJ Housing implemented a dual strategy to contribute towards achieving [Target 9A under the CTG Agreement: increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in appropriately sized \(not overcrowded\) housing to 88 per cent by 2031](#).

The first strategy involves continuing to work with Aboriginal households in DCJ Housing managed tenancies, identified in Closing the Gap data as being overcrowded, to better understand and manage their housing needs. The second strategy was the *Understanding Mobility as a Key Driver of Overcrowding and Other Housing Issues* project, to prove or disprove the hypothesis that mobility is a key driver of overcrowding for Aboriginal households living in social housing in NSW. The report makes evidence-based recommendations for DCJ Housing to better support Aboriginal mobility through client service delivery. These recommendations may also be leveraged by other social housing providers.

The project also made findings in relation to the built environment and how housing design, maintenance and community infrastructure could better support mobility. These findings will be reported to asset owners and relevant stakeholders for consideration.

DCJ Housing engaged Inside Policy, a 100% Aboriginal owned and managed business, to conduct the research and consultation for this project. Inside Policy was selected by the Mobility Project Reference Group (MRG) which comprised key Aboriginal stakeholders from across the state and sector. The MRG co-designed and helped guide the project. The project obtained ethics approval from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS). Inside Policy consulted with Aboriginal people and organisations across the state, and undertook local consultations in nine locations (Blacktown, Bourke, Brewarrina, Dubbo, Illawarra, Lake Macquarie, Orange, Redfern and Walgett).

The project is one of 11 initiatives included in the [2022-2024 NSW Implementation Plan for CtG](#) for Target 9A.