

# Annual Report 2023-24

## Community Housing Registrar NT



## Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands and waters and pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present, and emerging. Our department is committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

Throughout this report, we will use 'Aboriginal' to refer to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and First Nations peoples and communities of the Northern Territory. We recognise the diversity and complexity of these communities.

## Message from the Registrar

I am pleased to present the Northern Territory Registrar of Community Housing's Annual Report for 2023-24 under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH). This is the first NT Community Housing Registrar's annual report.

The role of the Community Housing Registrar is to ensure a well-governed, well-managed and viable community housing sector in line with the objects of the *Community Housing Providers (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012 (NSW)* (National Law).

The Registrar's position is a statutory appointment under section 10 of the National Law. The Registrar reports directly to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Community Development. The Registrar administers the NRSCH. The National Regulatory Code (NRC), a Schedule to the National Law, sets out the performance outcomes that registered Community Housing Providers (CHPs) demonstrate compliance against.

This report presents insights into the community housing sector in the NT. For the past few years, the NT community housing sector has been experiencing a period of growth both in numbers of registered providers as well as the numbers of properties being managed.

The NT's Office of the Registrar, brokers support from the Office of the Registrar of Community Housing, Homes NSW to conduct our registration and compliance work. Our office works closely with the NSW office to ensure the NSW team understand the context that community housing organisations in the NT are working within.

Throughout the year, we continued to engage with key stakeholders to provide information as well as supporting capacity building of the community housing sector. This has included working closely with Aboriginal Housing NT to provide information to Aboriginal controlled organisations in remote regions relating to NRSCH registration and compliance.

We work closely with the NRSCH office and all jurisdictions to foster information sharing and work together to maintain a strong regulatory system. Registrars meet monthly online and meet in-person biannually.

We anticipate the Housing Australia funding opportunities will increase the number of purpose-built community housing properties and registered providers operating in the NT, as well as necessitating the creation of Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) to attract non-government investment and to ring fence the risk for specific projects.

I would like to thank all our registered providers, peak bodies and the team at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development (DHLGCD) for their contributions throughout the year. I acknowledge and thank the team from the NSW office for their work and commitment to the NT. Thank you to the National NRSCH Office and Registrars from other jurisdictions for being willing to share and provide support. Lastly, I want to thank and acknowledge the contribution of Yvonne Goedemondt, former Community Housing Registrar Secretariat for her work over several years to support the development of the Office of the Community Housing Registrar NT.



**Wendy Morton**

NT Community Housing Registrar

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## Highlights

The Registrar worked with Aboriginal Housing NT (AHNT), Community Housing Industry Association NT (CHIA NT), Housing Queensland, Aboriginal Community Housing Industry Association (ACHIA) NSW and the Queensland Community Housing Registrar to run a 2-day forum in Darwin for 21 Aboriginal controlled organisations on NRSCH. The forum addressed the registration requirements and provided an opportunity for organisations to better understand NRSCH to enable decision making about whether pursuing NRSCH was the right option for their organisation.

Two providers achieved NRSCH registration. Seven providers successfully completed their compliance assessment.

The Registrar attended the 3-day AHNT conference in Alice Springs and was a panel member for a session about NRSCH registration. This was a great opportunity to connect with current providers and organisations who were interested in finding out more information about NRSCH.

The Registrar worked with CHIA NT and other stakeholders to provide information about NRSCH and management of complaints to electorate office staff.

The complaints process was updated to make it easier for complainants to navigate. This included the introduction of an NT phone number (8936 4000) for those wanting to make complaints and a fact sheet now available on the [Community Housing Registrar NT](#) website.

The Registrar was able to visit and see the work of CHPs across the NT including Arnhem Land and Central Australia. The work of registered providers varies across the NT, particularly those who are working in remote and regional areas. The regulatory response needs to acknowledge the unique NT context and how that impacts their ability to meet performance standards. For example, some regional and remote NT organisations are working to build local capacity and skills to provide repairs and maintenance, to counter the financial cost and wait times of contracting trades people from Darwin. Recruiting and retaining skilled staff can be difficult in the NT, particularly for organisations working outside of the greater Darwin region. It has been interesting to hear the work that many of our providers are doing to develop creative ways to build and strengthen their workforce.

## Regular Meetings

The Registrar attends a number of regularly scheduled meetings to foster collaboration, share insights, and address key issues within the community housing sector. These meetings include:

- Community Housing Sector Partnership Meetings: Bringing together representatives from the NT Government, CHPs, and peak bodies to strengthen partnerships and support sector development.
- NT Government /NGO Homelessness Meetings: Facilitating dialogue and collaboration between the NT Government, non-government organisations (NGOs), and peak bodies to address homelessness challenges.
- NT Government / Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence and Housing NGO Meetings: Coordinating efforts among the NT Government, NGOs, and peak bodies to support housing and services for those affected by domestic, family, and sexual violence.
- CHIA NT Members' Meetings: Engaging with members to support sector.
- AHNT NRSCH Working Group: Collaborating on regulatory and compliance matters within the community housing sector.

## NT 2024 Performance Report

The online [NT 2024 Performance Report](#) provides a visual summary of key metrics related to housing performance in the Northern Territory, offering insights into the effectiveness of service delivery by various providers. Through the interactive graphs and data visualizations, the report highlights performance outcomes in areas such as tenancy management, asset maintenance, and service responsiveness. This comprehensive snapshot supports transparency and enables stakeholders to assess progress and identify opportunities for improvement in meeting the housing needs of Territorians.

## The NT Community Housing Sector

In 2023-24, there were two new NRSCH registrations in the NT: one that works primarily in Darwin and the other, an Aboriginal controlled provider working in remote Central Australia. One Aboriginal controlled provider made the decision to cancel their registration to enable them to focus on other parts of their organisation. The community housing sector is active in Greater Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Groote Eylandt, and Alice Springs and to a smaller extent, in more remote regions.

The NT sector consists of:

- **Tier 1:** 4 providers
- **Tier 2:** 6 providers
- **Tier 3:** 5 providers

The NT has 15 registered community housing providers able to operate in the NT community housing sector. Twelve are NT based organisations and do not currently operate in any other jurisdiction. Five are NT based Aboriginal controlled organisations. Three providers are multi-jurisdictional and have their primary registration in another jurisdiction.

In 2023-24, the NT Community Housing sector had a total income of \$123.82 million and assets totalling \$181.43 million.

There has been a growth in the number of properties owned or managed in the sector in the past 12 months and this is primarily due to the management transfer of social housing dwellings from the NT Government to the community housing sector. As of 30 June 2024, the NT community housing sector managed a total of 1288 properties and owned 227 properties. As of 30 June 2024, one large transfer of social housing was completed and a second was in the transfer planning phase. It is difficult to compare the number of properties owned or managed by the CHP sector to previous years as some CHP's reclassified the dwelling type as opposed to the dwellings being removed from the overall sector.

The sector has performed well and has met key compliance requirements in metrics including the time taken to re-tenant a property, respond to maintenance issues, urgent repairs and tenant satisfaction. One complaint about a registered CHP was received and investigated by the Registrar and subsequently closed.

In line with the proportionality principle of the NRSCH, Tier 3 providers undergo fewer assessments compared to Tier 1 and 2 providers. Tier 1 and 2 providers are assessed annually, and Tier 3 providers generally undertake a compliance assessment every two years. The extent of regulatory engagement with Tier 3 providers is dependent on the outcome of their previous assessment and, if any significant changes have occurred for such a provider, this will result in a targeted assessment being undertaken. Seven providers had a compliance assessment in the past year. The compliance for providers operating in multi-jurisdictions was undertaken by the registrar in their primary jurisdiction.