



MEDIA RELEASE

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A Line in the Sand on Housing Outcomes for First Australians

In a first for homeless and housing policy in Australia, the Victorian Government and Victoria's Aboriginal community has released a comprehensive, warts and all, Report Card on housing outcomes experienced by Aboriginal Victorians.

The report brings together 20 key measures of housing security and compares outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians with outcomes for the mainstream population and First Nations people across Australia. The report provides benchmark data at the commencement of the Government's \$5.3B *Big Housing Build* as a basis for measuring progress in rebuilding housing security in Victoria's Aboriginal community.

Many of the outcomes are shocking, with one in six Aboriginal Victorians presenting to homeless services in Victoria last year, the highest rate in Australia.

Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHV) CEO Darren Smith said the data contained in the Report Card vindicates the Government's decision to invest 10% of the resources assigned to the biggest social housing investment in Victoria's history to assist more Aboriginal families achieve housing security. Mr Smith praised the Government's transparency in agreeing to release the report and their commitment to work with the community to turn the numbers around and report annually against the evaluation framework provided by the Report Card.

A continuation of *Mana-na woorn-tyeen maar-takoort*, Victoria's Aboriginal community led housing policy framework, the report also describes actions completed in the first year of implementing the Framework in active partnership with the Andrews Government.

"Year 1 has been about securing the resources to implement the framework but now the Aboriginal community is intent on delivering more houses, reducing waiting times and helping more people who present to homeless services into secure long-term housing", Mr Smith said.

"Our housing outcomes are the result of generations of exclusion and dispossession, and it will take concerted effort, partnership and investment over at least a generation to rebuild the platform of secure housing for our people. The change we need will not be built in a single budget cycle."

The importance of the Report Card is echoed by both AHV Chairperson Tim Chatfield and Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency CEO Muriel Bamblett.

"The Annual Report Card is another plank in the platform to confirm Government adoption of the Framework as Government policy and not just community policy. It has also committed through a new partnership with Victoria's Aboriginal leadership to do this on a basis of Aboriginal self-determination", Mr Chatfield said.

"The annual release of the Report Card will provide the intelligence required to measure whether or not we are making a difference, ultimately increasing the collective accountability for Aboriginal housing and homelessness outcomes", said Ms Bamblett, who is also a member of the Framework's Implementation Working Group and Elected Representative of the Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Forum.

"By improving community access to housing and homelessness data it enables us to paint the true picture of the lives and wellbeing of our people."

AHV is a not-for-profit registered Housing Association whose vision is that Aboriginal Victorians are able to secure appropriate, affordable housing as a pathway to better lives and stronger communities.

Download a copy of the Report Card at: www.vahhf.org.au

For media inquiries please contact: Reece Marks | Ph: 0438 915 225 | Email: communications@ahvic.org.au

ABORIGINAL HOUSING VICTORIA

Narrandjeri House, 125-127 Scotchmer Street, Fitzroy North, VIC 3068 | ABN 38 006 210 546

Phone: (03) 9403 2100 | Free call: 1800 248 842 | Email: clientservices@ahvic.org.au | Website: www.ahvic.org.au