

Housing and Homelessness Jargon (What does that mean?)

Like any sector, the housing and homelessness sectors have their own acronyms and jargon. This fact sheet explains some of the jargon.

A

Aboriginal Land Rights Act - A large portion of the Northern Territory (NT) is Aboriginal land as determined by the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act with most of the remaining mass subject to native title rights and interests. In December 2009, the NT Government instructed that all new and existing infrastructure on Aboriginal land in 73 previously prescribed remote communities must be secured through long term leases appropriate to the economic life of the asset.

Affordable Housing – Housing is considered to be ‘affordable’ if the household members are not in housing stress (see below) after they have paid for their housing. That is, no more than 30% of the household’s income is required to pay the rent/mortgage.

Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator – a scheme operated by the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation to provide cheaper, longer term finance to community housing providers.

C

Closing the Gap – A Federal Government initiative, focused on measuring and improving the outcomes for Aboriginal people in areas such as health, education, economic participation and early childhood development.

Community Housing – rental housing managed by non-profit, non-government organisations, and rented at below market rents to low to moderate income and special needs households.

Couch surfer – Someone who moves from household to household intermittently, who is not regarded as being a member of those households, and who does not have any form of lease over any accommodation.

Crisis accommodation/crisis housing – short term accommodation provided for people experiencing homelessness.

H

Homebuild NT – an NT Government program to construct new public housing across the NT.

Homelessness – a person is considered homeless if their current living arrangement:

- Is in a dwelling that is inadequate; or
- Has no tenure, or their initial tenure is short and not extendable; or
- Does not allow them to have control of, and access to, space for social relations.

Housing First – a model of providing long-term housing to people experiencing homelessness, rather than crisis accommodation, along with supports to help that person maintain their housing and address other issues that lead to them becoming or staying homeless.

Housing stress – a household is considered to be in housing stress if its income is in the bottom 40% of incomes, and it is paying more than 30% of that income on their housing needs.

I

Inclusionary zoning - a land use planning intervention by government that either mandates, or creates incentives for, the inclusion of affordable housing dwelling targets within residential developments.

Indigenous community housing - Housing that Indigenous communities own and/or manage for the provision of housing services to Indigenous Australians.

Indigenous community housing organisation - Any Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisation that is responsible for managing housing for Indigenous people. This includes community organisations such as resource agencies and land councils, which have a range of functions, provided that they manage housing for Indigenous people. It may also include tenancies managed by a state/territory housing authority.

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K

Key worker housing – an NT government initiative providing affordable private rentals for workers in key service industries under a head-lease arrangement.

N

National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHVIC) – A Federal Government-owned corporation with the mission to improve housing outcomes for all Australians. Operates the National Housing Infrastructure Facility (see below) and the Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator (see above).

National Housing Infrastructure Facility – operated by the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation to provide loans, investment and grants for enabling infrastructure to support new housing.

O

Our Community. Our Future. Our Homes – an NT Government program to build extensions and upgrades on existing public housing properties in remote communities.

P

Primary homelessness – refers to people without conventional accommodation (for example sleeping rough, or sleeping in improvised accommodation)

Public Housing – social housing owned and provided by a state or territory housing department, and rented to low income tenants.

R

Remote Community Housing Lease – a lease of community housing lots allowing Federal and NT Governments to maintain

and build new housing in remote communities. Minimum lease terms are 40 years.

S

Secondary homelessness – refers to people who frequently move from one temporary shelter to another (for example between crisis accommodation facilities, couch-surfing or other insecure accommodation types).

Shared equity – An arrangement where ownership of a dwelling is shared between its occupier and another party, for example a government housing provider, community housing association or private sector company. Shared equity is a means of assisting lower income households to move into home ownership, and usually includes a provision for the occupier to purchase the remaining share of the property at a later date.

Social Housing – A broad term covering a range of affordable housing targeted to low income households. Includes public housing and community housing.

Social Housing Head Leasing – an NT government scheme to head lease residential properties from the private sector, in order to grow the stock of available public housing.

Specialist Disability Accommodation – Accommodation for people with high needs disabilities who need specialist housing solutions.

Specialist Homelessness Service(s) - Specialist homelessness service(s) is assistance provided by a specialist homelessness agency to a client aimed at responding to or preventing homelessness.

Stock Transfer – A mechanism by which governments can transfer management of housing stock to the community housing sector. This can occur in the following ways:

- Management outsourcing: where property management is contracted/outsourced to a community housing provider for continued use as public housing; or

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- **Asset transfer:** where ownership of public housing properties is transferred to community housing providers for use as social housing.

Supported accommodation – a form of housing with linked supports, typically provided to people who are exiting homelessness, or people with disabilities or chronic health issues, or to older people with low-level support needs.

T_____

Tertiary homelessness – refers to people staying in accommodation that does not meet minimum community standards (for example caravan parks or boarding houses).

Town Camp – also known as Indigenous/Community Living Areas. Areas set aside where Aboriginal people live, in and around towns and cities. In Alice Springs and Tennant Creek the houses in the 25 town camps come under regularised public housing arrangements with the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities. In the other NT town camps there are no public housing arrangements and the landowner or lease holder has responsibility for the assets on that land. Government provide a financial contribution to assist with repairs and maintenance with residents and service providers also contributing to the upkeep of town camps.

Transitional accommodation – accommodation provided on a short to medium term basis for people exiting or at risk of homelessness, while they wait for more permanent housing to become available.

V_____

Visitor accommodation – Short term accommodation facilities provided primarily for Aboriginal people from remote communities visiting major centres.

W_____

Whole of Township Leases - long-term leases (between 40 – 99 years) held by the Office of Township Leasing over communities on Aboriginal land under section 19A of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act, and which assist with the

management and maintenance of government and community facilities.