



# Our journey is just beginning

It has been 6 months since we launched Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland (ATSIHQ). The following provides an update on our work between May and December 2021.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander  
**Housing Queensland**

**DECEMBER 2021  
6 MONTH UPDATE**



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander  
**Housing Queensland**

# 6th Month Update No.1

## Communication objective

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland Limited (ATSIHQ) is a registered public company. This report provides a summary of ATSIHQ's activities in the period between May and November 2021.

This update was produced by the ATSIHQ Communications & Partnerships Division of ATSIHQ in November 2021. The responsibility and accuracy for this 6 month update rests with ATSIHQ.

ATSIHQ is committed to transparency. If you have difficulty understanding this annual report, you can contact us on (07) 3012 6349 and we will assist you.

## ATSIHQ Details

Chairperson:	Mary Doctor
Deputy Chairperson:	Angelina Akee
Chief Executive Officer:	Neil Willmet
ATSIHQ ABN:	599 512 220
6 Month Report Period:	1 May 2021 to 31 December 2021
Website:	<a href="http://www.housingqueensland.com.au">www.housingqueensland.com.au</a>

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland (ATSIHQ) acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and future.





## 6 Month Update

Over the last 6 months we have focused on making a difference. Some of our achievements have included:

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## 1. Secured Office Premises

Following a formal request from ATSIHQ for office accommodation, on 17 May 2021, the Queensland Government (Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy) provided ATSIHQ with a 3-year office lease for premises at:

Suite 2, Ground Floor,  
41 George Street,  
Brisbane.



## 2. Official Launch

On 26 May 2021, ATSIHQ was officially launched by Hon Leeanne Enoch (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts), Mary Doctor (ATSIHQ Chairperson) and Angelina Akee (ATSIHQ Deputy Chairperson) at a function on the Parliamentary Green at the Queensland Parliament House, Brisbane. This historic event was attended by approximately 100 people.





### 3. Board Named

During the incorporation of ATSIHQ in May 2021, we were required to provide names of the initial directors at the registration of the company. These initial directors were the Housing Working Group members that were selected by Queensland Indigenous Community Housing Organisations (ICHO's) in 2019 to oversee the establishment of the company. The ATSIHQ Board consists of:



**Mary Doctor**  
Chairperson



**Virginia Mayo**  
Director



**Angelina Akee**  
Deputy Chairperson



**Glenis Grogan**  
Director



**Gary White**  
Director



**Charles Martin**  
Director



**Michelle Hooke**  
Director

### 4. Membership Increased

When we established our company, ATSIHQ had seven members at incorporation. We have now doubled our Membership with more applications being received for membership each month.

### 5. Recruitment Activities

Since launching ATSIHQ in May 2021, we have now doubled our staff from two to four employees. Neil Willmetts (CEO) and John Huggins (General Manager, Communications and Partnerships) were joined by Tania Wilson (Housing Advisor) in September 2021 and Greg Kitson (General Manager, Policy and Research) in November 2021.

## 6. Advocacy Work Undertaken

Between May and November 2021, we started advocating on our 5 priority areas:

### 1. Housing Priorities

Addressing existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing priorities.

### 2. Sector Development

Supporting the ongoing development of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Sector.

### 3. Partnerships

Building strong partnerships that will help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland achieve our Vision.

### 4. Sustainability

Developing strategies to support ongoing sustainability of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Sector and our organisation.

### 5. Research

Undertaking research to obtain quality Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing data and evidence to achieve better outcomes.

In addition to our advocacy work, we developed two “Issues Papers”

- **First Issues Paper Released** – Reducing Government Redtape: ATSIHQ is focused on reducing the regulatory burden on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing providers in Queensland. This issue paper identified the challenges, described the implications if not addressed and provided 10 recommendations that would reduce government red tape in Queensland.
- **Second Issues Paper Released** – NRSCH Reforms: ATSIHQ is focused on removing the complexity and identifying a number of opportunities to modernise and simplify the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH). This issue paper identified the challenges, described the implications if not addressed and provided 15 recommendations that would create National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) reforms in Queensland.







## 7. Collaboration and Support Provided

While the type of collaboration and support delivered by ATSIHQ differs slightly across Queensland from region to region, our work between May and November 2021 was focused on making a difference to both the Members (and potential members) we serve and also our strategic partners.

## 8. Strategic Partnerships Formed

Between May and November 2021, our organisation was fortunate to work with a number of leadership organisations, peak bodies as well as some very special individuals who are committed to improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing outcomes in Queensland.

### Our strategic partnerships have included:

- Queensland Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy (DHCDE);
- Queensland Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DSDSATSIP);
- Queensland Department of Department of Youth Justice (YJ);
- Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC);
- The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Association (NATSIHA);
- Indigenous Business Australia (IBA);
- QShelter;
- Community Housing Industry Association Queensland (CHIA QLD); and
- Queensland Council of Social Service (QCOSS)

We will continue to partner with leadership organisations, peak bodies and individuals to achieve mutual benefits for the Sector.

## 9. Sector Development

During May and November 2021 our work with our Members focused on individual tailored support/assistance and also activities that would strengthen the Queensland ICHO Sector. This work has included:

**We listened** to the Sector so that we could speak on their behalf, with our influence and persistence making sure that their voices got heard.

**We consulted** with Sector and included your ideas in our policy and strategy development.

**We worked** with the Sector to identify the challenges to achieving business success and then used our advocacy work at the state and federal levels to bring awareness to these challenges that prevented the best possible business environment for them.

**We supported** Members through a variety of ways including letters of support, reviewing documentation, direct lobbying and advocating for greater investment to be placed in the Sector. We also followed up the progress of funding decisions on behalf of Members.

**We advocated** on behalf of the Sector for greater business and workforce support, redirected and increased funding, capital works funding, and public housing stock transfers. In addition, we continued to pressure changes to policy, improved NRSCH legislation and advocated for reduction in red tape at all levels of government so that the Sector could concentrate on housing.

**We have consulted** with Members to develop a draft Queensland ICHO Sector Workforce Strategy. The strategy aims to develop a skilled and dynamic workforce across Queensland that will be focused on high performance and excellence.

**We continued to represent** the Sectors interest at a number of state and federal events and on a number of influential committees.

**We provided professional advice and guidance** to the Sector and Indigenous Councils in Queensland on a range of housing matters. We also assisted the Sector to better understand NRSCH Registration.

**We have engaged** multiple times with the Sector since May 2021. These consultations informed our work and included general consultations, phone calls, site visits and the 3rd Queensland ICHO Forum.

**We developed** over 50 model policy and procedures for the Sector and Indigenous Councils in Queensland to use. We also developed a model website template; a model strategic plan template; and a model local government rates letter for the Sector to use to seek rate reductions or rate waivers.

**We have successfully lobbied** the Queensland Government for greater Sector involvement in local housing decisions. This will have a benefit the Sector locally.

**We spent time understanding the Sector** and its challenges so that we could develop targeted strategies to stabilise the Sector in preparation for future property growth.





## 10. Member Site Visits

Between May and November 2021, our ATSIHQ CEO conducted a number of site visits with Members (and potential Members) across Queensland in the following 10 locations to learn first-hand about their success and challenges.

- Bowen
- Brisbane
- Cairns
- Gold Coast
- Innisfail
- Jumbun
- Kuranda
- Maryborough
- Sunshine Coast
- Townsville





## 11. HOME Magazine Developed

During the very first HWG meeting in January 2021, it was decided that an official ATSIHQ magazine would be developed to provide stakeholders with monthly updates on the establishment of ATSIHQ. This monthly magazine is called HOME magazine and it started in January 2021. Between May and November 2021, ATSIHQ produced 7 issues of HOME magazine (May, June, July, August, September, October and November 2021).



## 12. First Annual Report

In November 2021, we published our first annual report. This annual report provides information about ATSIHQ's financial and non-financial performance for 2020-21. The intent of this annual report is to tell the story of what we do, why we do it, and how our work provides support and assistance to our Members who work tirelessly to improve the housing outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland. This year's annual report predominantly outlines the establishment and achievements of ATSIHQ.



## 13. First AGM

On 17 November 2021, we held our first AGM which was attended by the majority of our Members. While this year was not an election year, it allowed ATSIHQ to provide a report to Members on our progress.

## Thank you

ATSIHQ acknowledges all of the hardwork undertaken by Queensland Indigenous Community Housing Organisations (ICHO's) and their founding members and also wishes to thank them and the many organisations and individuals who have supported ATSIHQ during this period.

Our next update will be in 6 months.





Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander  
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