

JANUARY 2019

**OVERVIEW:
COMMUNITY HOUSING INDUSTRY
ASSOCIATION NSW**

Background

The Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) NSW is the industry peak for community housing providers in NSW. Community housing providers (CHPs) are not-for-profit owners, managers and developers of low-cost (social and affordable) housing for people on very low to moderate incomes.

The organisation was founded in 1993 to represent the interests of professional community housing organisations – then commonly known as ‘housing associations’ – and to provide support and resources for their further development.

Over the past 20 plus years, CHIA NSW has expanded its business to anticipate and respond to the needs of its members and stakeholders, and to support the organisation’s independence and viability. In 2018 CHIA NSW became an associate member of the national community housing peak, CHIA.

CHIA NSW’s annual turnover is approximately \$3 million, drawn from diverse sources:

- around one third of its funding is provided by the NSW Department of Family & Community Services (FACS) for core activities such as representation, policy analysis and research;
- a further third of its funding is through FACS, CHIA NSW member project funding contributions and other key stakeholders for the delivery of industry development projects;
- events, training and membership fees make up the balance.

CHIA NSW is based in Redfern, Sydney and employs 17 staff. As a registered training organisation it also engages contract trainers as required.

CHIA NSW is incorporated as an association.

Purpose

CHIA NSW’s purpose is to support the development of the not-for-profit rental housing industry and to make a difference to the lives of households on very low to moderate incomes.

CHIA NSW aspires to the following values:

- Social justice.
- Leadership.
- Being membership driven.
- Professionalism and quality.
- Excellence.
- Enhancing opportunities.
- Cultural appropriateness and responsiveness.
- The well-being of its staff.
- The ongoing development of the organization.
- Meeting ethical standards in all aspects of its work.

CHIA NSW provides advice to members, government and potential partners on the best ways to expand the industry’s activities and meet the highest standards of service to tenants, applicants and communities.

The organisation provides a wide range of good practice advice, information and resourcing to support members’ Boards of Directors, management and staff.

The organisation seeks to anticipate and support members’ directions and aspirations with effective research, policy development and analysis on key issues affecting the growth of the industry, and strategies to support the changing business of the industry.

Through its Centre for Training in Social Housing, CHIA NSW delivers both accredited training, such as formal qualifications in social housing management, and tailored professional development courses in response to the needs of members and other customers.

Key Stakeholders

Given the diversity of stakeholders in the sector, building effective relationships is vital for CHIA NSW, particularly with State and Local Governments. It works collaboratively with a range of government departments and their Ministers, including zFACS, the Department of Planning and Environment, Landcom, , NSW Treasury and the Greater Sydney Commission. CHIA NSW also works closely with local councils and private sector representative agencies such as the Property Council of Australia and the Sydney Business Chamber. CHIA NSW is also a member of the Housing and Homelessness joint peaks group in NSW.

CHIA NSW is an affiliated member of national CHIA, playing an active role in supporting the national peak body and with a regional representative from the CHIA NSW board acting as the regional representative for NSW on the CHIA national board.

CHIA NSW is a leading member of the network of community housing industry peak bodies across Australia, working collaboratively to enhance services to members and to support the development of the industry.

Strategic Plan

CHIA NSW's 2017-2020 Strategic Plan is subject to annual review by the Board and is structured around three major objectives:

1. Lead the community-based affordable housing industry in NSW.
2. Support members and other clients to achieve their objectives.
3. Build a viable and effective organization.

CHIA NSW delivers the strategic plan through its four business areas:

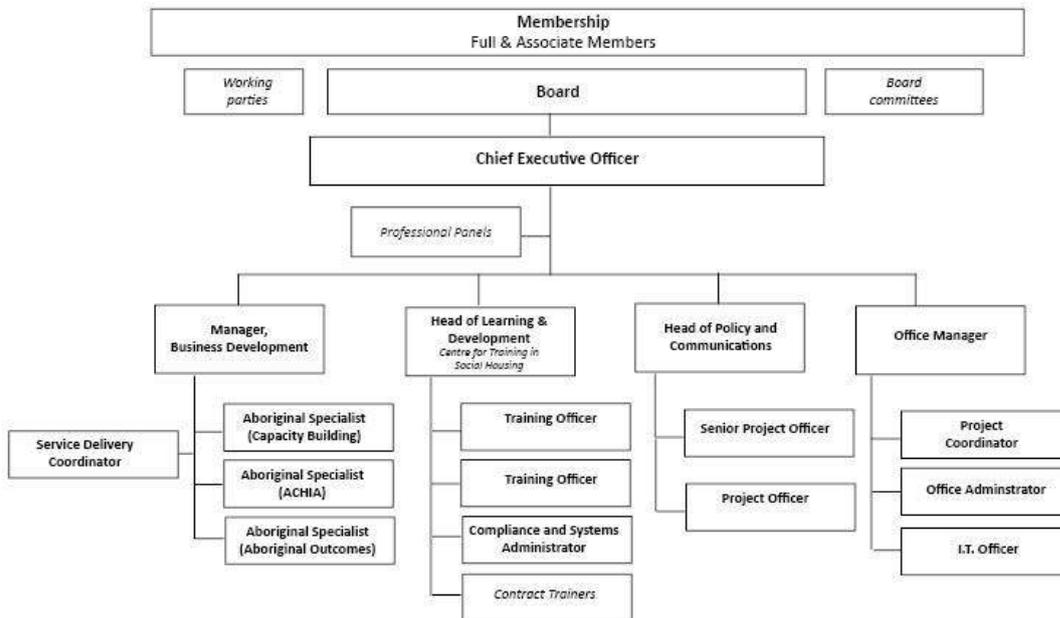
The Policy Team carries out the core representation, advocacy, industry coordination and policy functions of CHIA NSW. This includes working closely with a range of stakeholders to promote the interests of members, anticipating and supporting members' directions and aspirations with effective research and policy development, and development of strategies to support growth and diversification. CHIA NSW

The Member Services Team provides practice advice, information and resources to support the Boards, management and staff of individual member organisations, with the aim of building providers' capacity to improve and expand their businesses. This includes distributing good practice information, brokering relationships with expert service providers, and providing practical resourcing such as the tenant satisfaction survey service. This business area also includes the Aboriginal services team

The Training Team, known as the Centre for Training in Social Housing, develops and delivers training, with a focus on accredited training, primarily the Certificate IV and Diploma in Social Housing and on delivering professional development courses tailored to meet community housing provider needs. The business area is predominantly funded by contracts with employers or individual training participants. CHIA NSW is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), and the only industry-based RTO for social housing in Australia.

The Office Services Team ensures that CHIA NSW is resourced and positioned to undertake the rest of its work effectively. Its work includes internal compliance, human resources, marketing and communications activities, as well as engagement with the national industry body.

CHIA NSW - Organisational Structure



Governance

CHIA NSW’s Board of Directors provides leadership on behalf of members, and is responsible for all aspects of corporate governance. Directors are elected for three year terms with one third of positions falling vacant at each Annual General Meeting in November.

Current Board members are:

- John McKenna, Chief Executive Officer North Coast Community Housing, Chair CHIA NSW
- Leonie King, Chief Executive Officer City West Housing, Vice Chair, CHIA NSW
- Scott Langford, Group Chief Executive Officer, SGCH
- Vivienne Milligan, housing expert and academic
- Lyndall Robertshaw, Group Chief Corporate Services Officer Compass Housing Services
- Dr Lucy Burgmann, State Manager NSW Community Housing Limited
- Stephen McIntyre, Chief Executive Officer Wentworth Community Housing
- Michele Adair, Chief Executive Officer Housing Trust
- Charles Trindall, Operations Manager MLAHMC LTD

Between them, the Directors represent a wide cross-section of the diverse community housing industry in New South Wales, and bring to their work a very wide range of personal and professional experiences and a high level of qualifications for their role on the Board.

The Chief Executive Officer reports to the Board and manages the staff team to achieve the strategic plan approved by the Board.

Membership

CHIA NSW is a membership-based body, with 108 current members in the following categories:

- 92 Full members – community housing organisations operating in NSW whose core activity is the direct provision of long-term social housing. These members manage over 95 percent of community housing dwellings in NSW.
- 9 Affiliate members – community organisations which provide housing but not as the core activity of the organisation; or provide housing but not in NSW.
- 7 Associate members – organisations or individuals with an interest in community housing.

The members are a diverse mix of organisations, operating in all parts of the State and ranging from small bodies managing or owning relatively few dwellings to large organisations with managing more than 5,000 properties. By the end of 2019 the community housing industry in NSW will manage over 50,000 properties.

CHIA NSW has a strong commitment to working with Aboriginal communities, providing support and assistance to Aboriginal community housing providers. CHIA NSW currently receives funding from the Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO) to support the development of a new representative body for Aboriginal community housing providers, ACHIA, and to help Aboriginal community housing providers prepare for registration under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing.

The NSW Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) has also provided funding for CHIA NSW to support mainstream community housing providers to improve their services for Aboriginal applicants and tenants and to deliver better outcomes for Aboriginal tenants.

The community housing industry

Community housing providers have been part of the NSW social and affordable housing system for over 30 years. From small-scale local beginnings, community housing providers have become professionally managed and governed social enterprises. They offer a diverse range of much needed services which include:

- Delivering high quality housing management services to very low, low and moderate income tenants.
- Managing property portfolios for long term outcomes.
- Partnering with commercial businesses, government agencies and other not-for-profit organisations to expand housing outcomes and improve services to tenants and communities.
- Building and procuring new dwellings to increase the supply of affordable housing.

The community housing industry is growing and diversifying. In 2017 the industry managed over 35,000 properties in NSW and a further 4,200 properties in other jurisdictions. This is set to grow to almost 50,000 properties by the end of 2019 as a result of the NSW Government's Social Housing Management Transfer Program, which is transferring public housing dwellings to the long term management of community housing providers.

The industry currently manages an asset portfolio of around \$6.8 billion, owning over \$3 billion of that portfolio. Its rental income is over \$342 million per year. As social enterprises with significant amounts of property under management, community housing providers make a long term investment in their communities.

By 2020 community housing providers will have built or bought almost 2,700 properties, in addition to those properties that they manage on behalf of Government and others. This makes community housing the only part of the social housing system which is growing to meet rising demand.

Providers are also diversifying their businesses by moving into new property types and serving new

target groups, including people with disabilities. Across its 30 year history, the community housing industry has demonstrated its capacity to grow to meet new challenges.

The industry takes seriously its accountability to stakeholders, whether tenants, government, or community and commercial partners. Community housing providers are governed by skilled Boards of Directors, with strong financial, legal, community services and property expertise. Community housing providers in NSW are also regulated under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing.

In order to offer subsidised rents to low and moderate income households, community housing providers receive funding and other support from all three levels of government. This may include grant funding, transfer of public housing property management and/or ownership, concessions on taxes and levies, and other forms of subsidy.

Community housing providers are sustainable businesses, with income sources including rent, subsidies and fees for service. Other features of the industry include:

- Capacity to leverage its asset base to attract private finance.
- Development of affordable housing to deliver new dwellings for very low to moderate income earners.
- Ability to access Commonwealth Rent Assistance which averages \$3,000 per tenant per year.
- Capacity to develop flexible policies to meet local needs and tenants' individual, changing circumstances.
- Charitable tax status, which includes exemptions on GST, land tax and stamp duty.
- Capacity to work with developers and local government to deliver affordable housing through the planning system.

There is also a distinct Aboriginal housing sector, with a significant number of Aboriginal community housing providers managing over 4,800 properties across NSW. A number of these providers are CHIA NSW members and are helping to establish the Aboriginal Community Housing Industry Association.

Further information

More information on CHIA NSW can be found at www.communityhousing.org.au