

# 4. Support for Indigenous Communities.

In Queensland **17 out of 77** councils are discrete indigenous communities.

The LGAQ welcomes the December 2018 COAG Closing the Gap statement recognising that in order to effect real change, governments must work collaboratively and in a genuine and formal partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Local government plays a primary service delivery role essential to fostering well-being and prosperity within these communities.

## No Housing Disadvantage

A minimum of \$5.5 billion over the next decade to redress disadvantage in discrete indigenous communities particularly in the areas of overcrowding, homelessness, poor housing conditions, and a severe shortage of housing in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia.\*

Initiatives aimed at closing the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians in the areas of housing, health, early childhood development, education, economic participation and remote service delivery are vital if our nation is to overcome the economic and social costs of entrenched disadvantage in our indigenous communities.



Benefits of infrastructure investment in indigenous communities can be multiplied by linking investment spending to skills acquisition/transfer and job creation for indigenous workers.

## Use of Local Services and Resources

Renew the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing, and acknowledge the need for increased local engagement and use of local services and resources.\*



Investment in indigenous housing in remote and discrete indigenous communities in Queensland has significantly contributed to closing the gaps in several key areas.



Further investment will escalate these gains at a more rapid pace, while withdrawal will see a wind-back in gains and benefits.



The LGAQ is closely following the negotiations between the Federal Government and Queensland Government regarding extension of the current program arrangements but is seeking a longer-term solution.



The anticipated investment will not address the housing needed as recognised by the Federal Government's own report.

## Consultation with Councils on Community Needs

Commit to consult and work with elected Indigenous councils on policies and programs aimed at meeting the needs of local communities including, where necessary, the removal of barriers on land tenure for councils so they are better placed to provide services and maintain facilities and infrastructure in Indigenous communities.\*

## Review of Funding Arrangements

Urgent action to develop new arrangements for funding in Indigenous communities to ensure that services are meeting the needs of communities, including in cities and towns, and that there has not been a shifting of responsibilities and costs on to local government.\*



Mayors and councillors who live and work in indigenous communities are ideally positioned to provide expert and credible input into what will and what will not work in their communities.



These elected representatives share many policy outcomes with the Federal Government but are better positioned than other stakeholders to advise on how to best achieve those outcomes.



The recent Queensland Productivity Commission Inquiry into service delivery in remote communities highlighted the benefits from alternative funding arrangements.



The inquiry report provides a creditable blueprint for forging alternative arrangements.

\* Priority aligned to the Australian Local Government Association's 2019 Federal Election Plan