

## **Opening Statement – Mr Scott Langford, Housing Australia**

Good evening Chair, Senators and Colleagues.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee.

I would like to outline to the committee the contribution that Housing Australia has made to improve housing outcomes and also briefly address the status of the first funding round of the Housing Australia Future Fund Facility and the National Housing Accord Facility.

Housing Australia has two main streams of work.

Firstly, we support the development of housing through various financing, investment and grant mechanisms by partnering with the private sector, Community Housing Providers and all levels of government.

To date, Housing Australia has:

- through the Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator, approved finance to support approximately 18,800 homes; and
- provided funding approvals to unlock 11,700 homes through the National Housing Infrastructure Facility.

This includes supporting approximately 3,800 homes in construction through those programs.

In addition, on 16 September 2024 Housing Australia announced an initial pipeline of 185 projects that would deliver more than 13,742 social and affordable homes across the country under the first funding round of the Housing Australia Future Fund Facility and the National Housing Accord Facility.

We are now working with Preferred Applicants to finalise and enter into funding contracts in relation to preferred applications.

For this to occur, Applicants may also need to finalise their own contractual arrangements with land holders, developers, builders, planning authorities, capital providers and in some cases other grant finders such as states or territories. Details of successful applications will be released in due course, in line with the reporting requirements under our Investment Mandate.

Our second stream of work is helping people access homeownership.

We currently support this through the delivery of the Home Guarantee Scheme, enabling those home buyers to provide a smaller deposit than the lender would typically require.

To date, Housing Australia has supported over 184,000 people to achieve home ownership, with over 58,000 home buyers last financial year, including around 1 in 3 first home buyers who purchased a home last year.

I would like to acknowledge the significant work of the Housing Australia Board and team – past and current – in delivering these outcomes. I also want to thank colleagues in Treasury, Finance and other departments that support the work of Housing Australia.

Since joining as CEO, I have been working with the Board and team to reach contract close for preferred applications under Funding Round 1 of the Housing Australia Future Fund Facility in an expeditious manner and focusing on ways in which we can use all the levers available to us to support more homes.

When I see someone who has slept rough, or when I see lines of people waiting for a rental inspection, or aspiring homeowners who are searching for a home, I am reminded of the privilege and responsibility of working at Housing Australia to play a part in supporting more Australians to access affordable, safe and secure housing.

Thank you and I look forward to your questions.