



Australian Government



ABORIGINAL  
HOSTELS LIMITED

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee  
2024-25 Additional Estimates – 28 February 2025

**Opening Statement**

**Dave Chalmers AO, CSC, Chief Executive Officer**

I would like to begin by acknowledging the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people and pay my respects to their Elders past and present. I thank the Committee for the request for Aboriginal Hostels Limited (AHL) to appear at today's hearing.

For more than 50 years, AHL has stayed true to our purpose of providing culturally safe and affordable accommodation for First Nations people who need to be away from home to access services and economic opportunities.

AHL's recently released [Social and Economic Impact Report](#), conducted by Nous Group, highlights how far-reaching our impact is. The report shows that for every \$1 invested, AHL creates \$5.19 in value, delivering a \$356.7 million benefit in 2023-24 alone.

The report reinforces our critical role in Closing the Gap, showing that AHL's accommodation services enhance life expectancy, increase employment and education opportunities, and provide secure housing for those in need. By offering a home away from home, AHL not only supports almost 19,000 First Nations residents annually, but it also reduces pressures on healthcare, social services and emergency housing systems across Australia.

Other key findings in the report show that in 2023-24 AHL:

- helped approximately 3,300 First Nations mothers to access antenatal care
- supported more than 300 students by providing them with culturally safe accommodation
- directly employed 139 First Nations employees (44 per cent of our workforce)
- provided more than 430,000 bed nights for First Nations people.

Beyond the numbers, AHL's hostels make a real difference in people's lives and we remain deeply committed to ensuring that First Nations people have access to safe, affordable, and culturally safe accommodation for future generations to come.

I thank the Committee and welcome your questions.

