

PROJECT OBJECTIVE A:

Recruiting a CEO to assist and guide the establishment of the governance and administration of the organisation

Progress: Complete

PROJECT OBJECTIVE B:

Progressive recruitment of key staff.

Progress: Complete

NATSIHA's has developed key strategic partnerships that allow us to lean in and leverage key specific skills and resources to wrap around and execute on specific projects where appropriate. NATSIHA's has recruited an executive team with diverse skill sets as well deep knowledge and experience in the housing sector, policy, large scale engagement and collaboration, communication and leadership.

NATSIHA Board of Directors



Reports to the Board of Directors



PROJECT OBJECTIVE C:

Leasing of appropriate premises, purchase of appropriate hardware and software for operations

Progress: Complete

Description

NATSIHA currently has two office premises one in Kogarah, NSW and one in Cairns, QLD, these two premises support most of the NATSIHA staff whilst we still have individuals working remotely and are not tied to the two locations for new hires. Two site inspections have taken place at the Kogarah office in 2023 and 2024.

Office locations:

- Suite 3.01 L3, 24 Montgomery street, Kogarah NSW 2217 **(5 staff)**
- 23/25-31 Grafton St, Cairns, QLD 4870 **(3 staff including secondees)**
- Remote working **(1 staff)**

Asset Log

All NATSIHA assets are logged on our asset log through the employment hero portal, this is managed by our Executive Officer.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE D:

Develop strategic and operational plans required to meet the immediate and medium-term needs of the organisation.

Progress: Complete

Description

NATSIHA has launched it's 2024 - 2028 Strategy. This was co-designed with the NATSIHA team, board and strategic partners.

Strategic plans developed by NATSIHA:

- Completed: 2024 - 2028 NATSIHA Strategy

PROJECT OBJECTIVE E:

Development of policies and procedures required for the effective governance and general operations of the organisation.

Progress: Complete

Description

Supporting good governance, NATSIHA works with our strategic Partner King and Wood Malleson's to ensure that policies and commitments are in place to help govern our operations.

Policies and Commitments

- **Board Charter developed**
- **Risk Management Framework**
- **Risk Management Policy**
- **Governance Framework**

Code of conduct for Board Members

NATSIHA Board members recognise their role in maintaining the organisation's reputation for integrity and propriety in all respects and they agree to adhere to the Housing Queensland Code of Conduct for Board Members Policy.

Code of Conduct for Staff

NATSIHA staff have a responsibility to conduct themselves with a high degree of integrity, to strive for excellence in the work they perform and the outcomes they achieve, and to promote the public interest.

Work Health and Safety Policy (WHS)

NATSIHA is committed to providing all its workers with a safe and healthy place to work, and work practices that do not compromise the health or safety of others including contractors, visitors and members of the public.

Outside Work Policy for Staff (Conflict of Interest)

An important aspect of NATSIHA's governance is to ensure that the external activities of our staff avoid conflicts of interest or reputational concerns whilst also supporting their aspirations to participate in the broader community and the value of them doing so. Our staff are required to disclose, and to have approval, to undertake any paid or unpaid external work activities. This is to maintain transparency with our stakeholders and the broader community.

Privacy Policy

NATSIHA respects the privacy of the individuals who interact with it or whose personal information it collects indirectly, and is committed to protecting the privacy of those individuals.

Complaint Policy

This policy outlines the process for handling complaints from customers, employees, or other stakeholders. It is designed to ensure that complaints are addressed promptly, fairly, and consistently, and that all parties are treated with respect.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE E:

Policies and Commitments

Discipline and Termination for NATSIHA Staff

This policy contains guidance on performance and conduct management, and the discipline and termination consequences that may follow. It is strictly for general guidance purposes only and aims to provide employees and management with an understanding of the procedures that may be followed in certain circumstances.

Whistleblower

The policy has been put in place to ensure any concerns raised regarding any misconduct or improper state of affairs or circumstances in relation to the NATSIHA's business are dealt with effectively, securely, appropriately, and in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001.

Leave in Advance

Guidelines for NATSIHA staff to apply for and receive annual leave in advance of their accrued entitlement.

Flexible Working Policy

Flexible Working Policy recognises the importance of achieving a fair balance between work and other responsibilities (such as family responsibilities and care-giving). The Company recognises the benefits of implementing flexible working arrangements such as improved productivity, retention of skilled staff and improved employee satisfaction.

Equal Opportunity, Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy

NATSIHA is committed to providing a safe, flexible and respectful environment for staff and clients free from all forms of discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment and harassment on the ground of sex.

Bullying

NATSIHA seeks to provide a work environment that is safe and enjoyable for all.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE F:

Identification of 'key stakeholders' including the type of relationship they would have with NATSIHA

Progress: Complete

Overview

Our organisation recognises that we have to collaborate with stakeholders to achieve accelerated and improved Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing outcomes.

Our key stakeholder groups include those who are the beneficiaries of housing outcomes, those who play a vital role in service delivery and our strategic partners who support our vision, our work and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Housing Sector development.

1	State and Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Peaks	NATSIHA operates as a federated model and are guided by our state peaks and representatives on our policy positions and strategic direction.
2	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities and Individuals	Every initiative we undertake is designed to ultimately deliver safe, affordable, and culturally respectful housing that empowers First Nation individuals and families to thrive.
3	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Sector	NATSIHA exists to be the unwavering advocate for the First Nations housing sector. This sector embodies a wealth of expertise, experience,
4	National Government and other Statutory and Regulatory Agencies	Provide essential funding, regulations, and policy support.
5	National Peak Advocacy Groups	Housing, homelessness property, real estate, construction, disability, seniors, tenants and other professional groups like the who provide commentary on or influence housing.
6	Researchers	Universities and industry who can undertake independent research and analyse evidence to inform evidence-based decision making.
7	Housing Industry	Private Industry driving construction, economic empowerment, and sustainable development. Industry stakeholders influence policy, and facilitate financing through investments and partnerships.
8	Policy Partnerships	Our other policy partnerships bring vital perspectives to the housing conversation. By collaborating, we can craft a more compelling narrative that acknowledges and amplifies the voices of diverse cohorts, thereby strengthening our collective impact.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE G:

Co-design programs that are culturally safe and appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations

Progress: In-progress

Program One

Governance Uplift program: has been developed with NATSIHA's strategic Partner King & Wood Malleson's and is designed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations who offer housing services.

MILESTONE TIME LINE

APRIL - JUNE 2024	JUNE-AUG 2024	SEP - DEC 2024	FEB - April 2025
Working with Partner organisations to develop a governance uplift program for ATSICCOs	First round of governance uplift QLD, NSW, SA & Youth Cohort.	VIC, WA, TAS, ACT, NT governance uplift delivered.	Review and evaluate the program, scope for targeted second round by demand.

Description of the Governance uplift program

The Governance Uplift workshops is a face to face day long workshop tailored to the state or Territory that it is being delivered in. The aim is to increase the capacity of organisations to respond and navigate complexity through strengthening structures and mechanisms of good governance.

This training is aimed at all levels of the organisation as well as key community members, board members and young emerging leaders. The workshop will be run in all states and territories as well as with the Youth and Elders round table.

The program covers: Directors duties, Related party benefits, Managing conflicts of interest, Managing internal and external disputes, Delegations of the Boards powers, Financial governance, Emerging trends.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE G:

Co-design programs that are culturally safe and appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations

Progress: In-progress

Program Two

NRSCH registration process: Mapping the registration process through sector voice and understanding what the benefits to the organisation are after registration.

MILESTONE TIME LINE



Description of the NRSCH Registration process

NATSIHA is undertaking a review of ATSI CCHOs that have successfully completed the NRSCH registration process. This review seeks to amplify the sector's voice in shaping the registration process, identifying opportunities for improvement, and reducing the time required for registration. The project aims to highlight the challenges and significant hurdles ATSI CCHOs face during their journey to registration. The findings will serve as a valuable resource for other organisations considering NRSCH registration and inform the NRSCH review team.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE H:

Development of a National Indigenous Housing Employment Strategy for Housing encompassing all Jurisdictions

Progress: In development

MILESTONE TIME LINE

APRIL - JUNE 2024	JULY 2024	AUG - SEP 2024	OCT - NOV 2024	JAN - JUNE 2025
Key partners identified	Workshop with NATSIHA, UoA and C&W Identify key questions to explore and set out the 4 month plan.	Research Through a series of interviews with ATSICCHOs conducted by NATSIHA.	Data review Inform the development of the strategy.	Employment strategy developed and tested with the ATSICCHOs.

Overview

NATSIHA is undertaking the development of a National Indigenous Housing Employment Strategy for Housing, which will encompass all states and territories. The project aims to enhance the First Nations housing sector by addressing specific workforce challenges, understanding what sustainability looks like at a community level and developing a view for scale to achieve a strong, sustainable First Nations Housing sector into the future.

Development of the National Workforce Strategy

Building on the insights gained from the research, a National Workforce Strategy will be developed. This strategy will focus on identifying and addressing the workforce needs within the First Nations housing sector, including skills development, training programs, and employment pathways.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE I:

Review and develop a National Indigenous Housing Standard, encompassing all jurisdictions.

Progress: In-development

MILESTONE TIME LINE



Overview

The housing design and delivery document is being developed to outline an approach to community housing that prioritizes local decision-making, self-determination, and environmental considerations. This document will be reviewed in September by the NATSIHA Board and the broader leadership network.

This review will then inform the next steps in refining and finalising the document.

Description of Housing design and delivery first draft:

Empowering Local Communities in Housing Design and Delivery: A Case for Local Involvement in Setting Minimum Standards" explores the critical role that local communities play in the creation and implementation of housing standards. By examining various case studies and best practices, it underscores the importance of community participation in the housing sector, emphasizing that local knowledge and needs are essential for effective and sustainable housing solutions.

This work advocates for a paradigm shift from top-down approaches to a more inclusive, bottom-up strategy where local voices are heard and integrated into the decision-making process. It highlights how community engagement leads to housing designs that are more culturally relevant, environmentally sustainable, and better suited to the specific needs of the population.

Key themes include the benefits of local involvement in setting minimum housing standards, the impact of community-driven design on housing quality and satisfaction, and the long-term advantages of empowering communities to take an active role in housing delivery. Through detailed analysis and actionable recommendations, it aims to inspire policymakers, housing developers, and community leaders to collaborate more closely, ensuring that housing solutions are not only adequate but truly beneficial for the people they serve.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE J:

Develop culturally appropriate rental, mortgage, and financial literacy advice.

Progress: In progress

Overview

NATSIHA is establishing a national partnership with First Nations Foundation and IBA. This project aims to provide the access and training to the My Money Dream platform for all NRSCH registered Aboriginal Housing Providers through the On Country Hub.

Target Cohorts

1. NRSCH registered Aboriginal Housing providers
2. Individuals and communities (clients of ATSIHCCOs)

Description of the financial literacy program

My Money Dream is for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Learners aged 16-60 to increase good money habits and build financial prosperity. The program can be accessed by community organisations looking to bolster financial literacy in a culturally safe format.

Learners can access the modules for free as many times as they like over a year, through sponsored licences provided by the Aboriginal community housing provider. All of the financial literacy education and resources are created by Mob, for Mob.

Through the On Country program ATSIHCCOs will be able to provide culturally appropriate financial literacy resources for their clients and communities. NATSIHA will support NRSCH registered ATSIHCCOs with connection into the On Country support leads and with licences and resources so that they are able to develop their skills as an organisation and offer financial literacy support and resources.

MILESTONE TIME LINE

APRIL -JUNE 2024	JULY - SEP 2024	OCTOBER 2024	FEBRUARY 2024	MAY 2025
MOU with IBA Meeting to progress partnership together	Conduct research What platforms exist and are working. understand what ATSIHCCOs are offering in this area.	Partnership and First Nations Foundation Meeting with On Country lead to progress partnership and approach.	Alignment and Distribution ATSIHCCOs engaged and offered the access and training sessions on the hub.	Monitoring of uptake and Evaluation

REPORTING

COLLABORATION, ENGAGEMENT, GOVERNANCE AND STAFFING

NATSIHA operates within a federated model, maintaining strong and strategic partnerships with state and territory peaks to effectively address the housing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Our approach ensures local solutions are informed by national strategies, creating a cohesive and responsive housing sector.

Federated Model and Collaboration with State and Territory Peaks:

NATSIHA's federated model enables us to work closely with state and territory peak bodies, ensuring that our strategies and actions are tailored to the unique contexts of each region. Key activities include:

- **Coordination Meetings:** We hold fortnightly meetings with state and territory peaks CEO's, Aboriginal Housing Victoria, Aboriginal Housing NT, ACHIA and ATSIHQ to align our efforts.
- **Joint Policy Development:** Collaborative development of state-specific housing policies that align with national priorities.
- **State and Territory Conferences:** Participation and support for annual housing conferences hosted by state and territory peaks to foster knowledge exchange and community engagement.
- **Mainstream Coordination:** Engaging with peak's, National Shelter, Homelessness Australia, to coordinate responses to housing challenges and share resources.

Engagement with ATSI CCHOs:

We work directly through our state and territory Peak bodies or through state and territory representatives and or interim bodies to work directly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Housing Providers.

Sector Strengthening Training: Offering essential sector strengthening training for ATSI CCHOs, directed through state peaks, and provided free to ATSI CCHOs in each state and territory. These training programs aim to build capacity, improve service delivery, and ensure sustainable operations.

Project one: Governance uplift workshop specifically for community controlled organisations that offer housing services.

Project two: Data development with NRSCH registered ATSI CCHOs

Collaborating with Government:

- **DSS:** NATSIHA CO-Chairs the housing Policy Partnership with DSS and has developed a close working relationship as the HPP support team, with weekly meeting to progress work together and fortnightly meetings between NATSIHA ACEO Zachariah Matysek and Acting Deputy Secretary Troy Sloane.
- **DITRDCA:** Collaborating to progress work on essential community infrastructure, this partnership links with the work of the Housing Policy Partnership.
- **NIAA:** Working in accordance with the current contract.
- **Treasury:** Relationship with treasury to discuss key finding activities and the Housing Australia Future Fund grants process.
- **Deputy sec round table:** Collaborating on the creation of policies that address the intersection of housing and social services, ensuring comprehensive support for community members.

COLLABORATION, ENGAGEMENT, GOVERNANCE AND STAFFING

Collaboration and Partnership with Industry Leaders:

Through the NATSIHA Industry Round Table, we have established significant partnerships with industry leaders, resulting in impactful initiatives. Key activities include:

- Secondments with Industry Leaders: Facilitating secondments with leading firms such as Cushman and Wakefield, PwC, King & Wood Malleson's, and others to enhance our organisational capacity and leverage industry expertise.
- Super Housing Partnerships: Collaborating on innovative housing solutions and funding models through partnerships.

REPORTING

Working with vulnerable people and work health and safety statement of compliance

Working with vulnerable people, including children (WWVP)

Three of our staff have current working with Vulnerable children checks

- Tanaya Edwards, Chief Executive Officer
- Henri Collyer, Administrative Assistant
- Emma Shumack, Executive Director of Communications and Engagement

Key Performance Indicators

#	Key performance Indicator	Target and data
1	MKPI.M1 Indigenous Employment	Staff Indigenous Staff = 5 Indigenous Staff gender breakdown = 4 males, 1 females Note : NATSIHA has an all-Indigenous Board (7 members)
2	MKDI.D1 Employment Numbers	Total Staff = 8 Gender breakdown = 4 Males, 4 Females
3	MKDI.D2 Hours Worked- Indigenous Staff	5 Indigenous Staff Hours – 4800

2023-2024 FINANCIAL REPORTING

Income		
(delete categories in italics if not applicable)	Budgeted Amount (Excl GST) ¹ 2023-24 Financial year	Actual Amount (Excl GST) ¹¹ 2023-24 Financial year
Grant funds received ²	\$ 1,977,350.00	\$2,184,971.75
Unexpended Funds received in previous financial year approved for carryover ³	\$ 2,253,859.97	\$2,253,853.97
Estimated Interest income derived from grant funds ⁴	\$	\$42,604.34
Other activity generated income:	\$	
Fees from service users (grant related only)	\$	
Sale of goods (grant related only)	\$	\$18,982.52
Other ⁵ Add rows to list additional expenditure items		
Total income	\$ 4,231,209.97	\$4,500,412.58
Expenditure		
(delete categories in italics if not applicable)	Budgeted Amount (Excl GST) ¹ 2023-24 Financial year	Actual Amount (Excl GST) ¹¹ 2023-24 Financial year
Category 1: Operational ⁶ Directly related to the Grant		
o Salary and related	\$ 1,155,319	\$1,066,358.77
Operational Administration ⁸ : Only administration costs directly related to the grant		
o Travel and motor vehicle	\$	
o Information technology and minor equipment (non capital) ⁷	\$ 32,500	\$18,729.62
o Consultants and contractors	\$ 276,683	\$113,568.29
o Rental and property (including repairs and maintenance)	\$ 71,406	\$49,900.59
General administration ⁸		
o Professional costs e.g. Practicing Certificates, Professional Indemnity Insurance		
o Accreditation		
o Accounting and audit	\$ 28,500	\$34,300.00
o Conferences & Workshops (incl Travel)	\$ 882,000	\$203,811.87
o Governance	\$ 136,600	\$17,254.54
o Other ⁸ Add rows as needed to list additional expenditure items	\$ 247,500	\$28,061.87
Category 2: Overheads ⁶ Incurred centrally and allocated to this grant		
o Salary and related	\$	
Overheads Administration ⁸		
o Rental and property (including repairs and maintenance)	\$	
o Insurance and utilities	\$	
o Other attributed administration cost ⁸ Add rows as needed to list additional expenditure items	\$	
Category 3: Capital Costs ⁷		
o Vehicles	\$	
o Building purchase and construction	\$	
o Major equipment purchase and installation	\$	
Category 4: Other ⁹		
o List expenditure line items if required	\$	
Total expenditure	\$ 2,830,508	\$1,531,985.55
Grant Underspend/ (Overspend)		
Underspend ¹⁰ /Overspend amount	\$ 1,400,702	\$2,968,427.03
Submit the 2023-24 Budget to your Agreement Manager. The budget must be agreed by the Commonwealth.		
2023-24 FINANCIAL REPORTING¹¹		
When completing the 2023-24 financial report, complete the 'Actual Amount ¹¹ ' column and attach this document to the submitted Financial Reporting.		

2024 -2025 FINANCIAL FORECASTING

Income		
(delete categories in italics if not applicable)	Budgeted Amount (Excl GST) ¹ 2024-25 Financial year	Actual Amount (Excl GST) ¹¹ 2024-25 Financial year
Grant funds received ²		
Unexpended Funds received in previous financial year approved for carryover ³	\$2,968,427.03	
Estimated Interest income derived from grant funds ⁴	\$	
Other activity generated income:	\$	
Fees from service users (grant related only)	\$	
Sale of goods (grant related only)	\$	
Other ⁵ Add rows to list additional expenditure items		
Total income	\$2,968,427.03	
Expenditure		
(delete categories in italics if not applicable)	Budgeted Amount (Excl GST) ¹ 2024-25 Financial year	Actual Amount (Excl GST) ¹¹ 2024-25 Financial year
Category 1: Operational ⁶ Directly related to the Grant		
o Salary and related	\$ 1,352,000	
Operational Administration ⁸ : Only administration costs directly related to the grant		
o Travel and motor vehicle	\$	
o Information technology and minor equipment (non capital) ⁷	\$ 38,427	
o Consultants and contractors	888,000	
o Rental and property (including repairs and maintenance)	\$ 130,000	
General administration ⁸		
o Professional costs e.g. Practicing Certificates, Professional Indemnity Insurance		
o Accreditation		
o Accounting and audit	\$ 40,000	
o Conferences & Workshops (incl Travel)	\$ 400,000	
o Governance	\$ 80,000	
o Other ⁸ Add rows as needed to list additional expenditure items	\$ 40,000	
Category 2: Overheads ⁶ Incurred centrally and allocated to this grant		
o Salary and related	\$	
Overheads Administration ⁸		
o Rental and property (including repairs and maintenance)	\$	
o Insurance and utilities	\$	
o Other attributed administration cost ⁸ Add rows as needed to list additional expenditure items	\$	
Category 3: Capital Costs ⁷		
o Vehicles	\$	
o Building purchase and construction	\$	
o Major equipment purchase and installation	\$	
Category 4: Other ⁹		
o List expenditure line items if required	\$	
Total expenditure	\$2,968,427	
Grant Underspend/ (Overspend)		
Underspend ¹⁰ /Overspend amount	\$	
Submit the 2024-25 Budget to your Agreement Manager. The budget must be agreed by the Commonwealth.		
2024-25 FINANCIAL REPORTING¹¹		
When completing the 2024-25 financial report, complete the 'Actual Amount ¹¹ ' column and attach this document to the submitted Financial Reporting.		



s47F

From: s47F @natsiha.org.au>
Sent: Friday, 25 October 2024 2:25 PM
To: Benjamin Thompson
Subject: Signed document
Attachments: NATSIHA - 4-HBIG4U4 - Audited Reminder Letter 2023-24.pdf

Hi Ben,

Please find attached the signed document from Zac.

s47F



Australian Government
National Indigenous Australians Agency

Activity ID: 4-HBIG4U4

Benjamin (BJ) Thompson
Executive Director
Housing Sector Strengthening
NATSIHA – National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Housing Association
Suite 3.01, L3,
24 Montgomery Street
Kogarah NSW 2217
E: s47F @natsiha.org.au
Cc: s47F @natsiha.org.au

Dear Mr Thompson,

Reminder – Audited Financial Acquittal Report for 2023-24

This is a reminder that your 2023-24 Audited Financial Acquittal Report for NATSIHA Housing Peak Body Capacity Building is due 30 September 2024.

The purpose of the Audited Financial Acquittal Report is to provide assurance that the funding provided under the NIAA Grant Agreement has been used in an efficient, effective, economical and ethical manner and in accordance with the Grant Agreement.

Please ensure you are fully aware of the financial acquittal reporting requirements specified in your Grant Agreement.

Please note that 2023-24 Financial Acquittal Reports will be submitted online. You will be emailed the online lodgement details from noreply.gps@fms.gov.au specific to your activity where you can attach the completed financial report template provided with this letter and any underspend business case. Please note all information to be submitted will need to be provided in a single attachment.

Timing

It is required that your audited financial acquittal report is provided to NIAA by the due date stated above and specified in your Grant Agreement.

Acquittal Documentation

It is recommended that your organisation discuss its financial acquittal reporting requirements with your Auditor if you have not already done so. It is your organisation's responsibility to bring to the attention of your Auditor the Terms and Conditions under which the funding has been provided to the organisation and all of the requirements set out in the Terms and Conditions need to be met. The schedules attached to the Grant Agreement also need to be brought to the attention of the Auditor.

The Agency relies on the independent audit opinion as a third party verification that the financial acquittal report prepared by your organisation is true and fair, is in accordance with the Grant Agreement and in line with the applicable accounting standards.

If your contract specifies an audited financial statement, you will need to:

- Review your organisation's statutory reporting requirements;
- Talk to your Auditor about the financial acquittal requirements under the Grant Agreement;

Attachment A

- Ensure your auditor has copies of the contract, any variations relevant to the agreement and a copy of this letter.
 - Instruct the auditor to prepare a special purpose statement specific to each NIAA grant agreement
- The special statement should include:
- Detailed income (inclusive of approved carryovers and additional income earned) and expenditure for the funded activity.
 - The auditors opinion and basis of accounting statement
 - A declaration or certification by person/s of authority in your organisation, to confirm the grant was used in accordance with the grant agreement.

A template covering these requirements which you may find useful is provided at **Attachment A**. If you have a budget in your agreement you should report against the budget in your agreement instead of using the template at **Attachment A**.

Interest

As specified in your IAS Grant Agreement, a **Grant** (ie NIAA funding) includes any **interest** earned on a Grant. You must therefore also include any interest earned on your NIAA funding as part of the Audited Financial Acquittal Report.

If there is nil interest, an explanation needs to be provided as to why there is nil interest.

Depreciation

Unless the inclusion of depreciation has been specifically included in your Grant Agreement, the NIAA does not consider depreciation to be an allowable expense for Grant Acquittal purposes.

Underspends/offsets

NIAA aims to recover underspends via offsets where possible. Offsetting involves reducing any future Grant payment(s) under that particular IAS Grant Agreement or any other IAS Grant Agreement that you have with the NIAA, up to the amount of the underspend.

You will need to present to the NIAA for approval a business case for any underspends that you wish to retain for use on the activity. The underspend should not be used until the business case is approved.

If you require any further information in relation to the above or any other aspect of the Terms and Conditions of NIAA grant funding, please contact Pamela Jermy on 08 9138 7832 or pamela.jermy@niaa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,

s47F

s47F

Team Leader
Canberra GMU

Attachment A

Audited Financial Acquittal Report

This form, together with the Signed Declaration by Management, Statement of Grant Income and Expenditure and Audit Report, should be provided to NIAA by the Acquittal Due Date.

Grant Recipient:	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Association Limited
Activity Name:	NATSIHA Housing Peak Body Capacity Building
Activity ID Number:	4-HBIG4U4
Grant Agreement Managing Office:	Canberra GMU
Activity Start Date:	01/03/2022
Activity End Date:	30/06/2025
Grant Agreement Acquittal Period Start	01/07/2023
Grant Agreement Acquittal Period End	30/06/2024
Amount of Funding Released for acquittal period (inclusive of SCSO and Indexation, if applicable).	\$2,126,200.16
Unexpended Funds for this activity from Prior Year approved carry forward.	\$2,253,854.31
Unexpended Funds for this activity from Prior Year carried forward and offset:	\$0.00
Total Value of Funds to be Acquitted (grant recipient to add interest):	\$4,380,054.47
Acquittal Due Date:	30 September 2024

Attachment A

DECLARATION BY MANAGEMENT
FOR THE PERIOD 1 JULY 2023 TO 30 JUNE 2024
NATSIHA Housing Peak Body Capacity Building GRANT AGREEMENT

We declare that the financial acquittal report of the **NATSIHA Housing Peak Body Capacity Building GRANT AGREEMENT** is in accordance with the **NATSIHA Housing Peak Body Capacity Building GRANT AGREEMENT**. In particular, the Statement of Grant Income and Expenditure:

- a) Gives a complete and accurate view of the **NATSIHA Housing Peak Body Capacity Building GRANT AGREEMENT** Income and Expenditure and grant interest of (INSERT INTEREST); and
- b) All funding and grant interest was expended for the project and in accordance with the Grant Agreement;

This declaration must be certified on behalf of the grant recipient by one of the following:

- Your Organisation’s Board;
- Chief Executive Officer;
- Chief Financial Officer; or
- An officer with authority to do so.

Explanation if nil interest:	
(If there is nil interest, an explanation needs to be provided as to why there is nil interest)	
SIGNATURE	<div>s47F</div>
NAME	Zachariah Matysek
POSITION	Acting CEO
DATED	25/10/2024

Released under the FOI Act by the
National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)

Attachment A

Audited Statement of Grant Income and Expenditure
for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

Income		
(delete categories in italics if not applicable)	Budgeted Amount (Excl GST) ¹ 2023-24 Financial year	Actual Amount (Excl GST) ¹¹ 2023-24 Financial year
Grant funds received ²	\$ 1,977,350.00	\$2,126,200.16
Unexpended Funds received in previous financial year approved for carryover ³	\$ 2,253,859.97	\$2,105,553.06
Estimated Interest income derived from grant funds ⁴	\$	
Approved 2022-23 Supplement for Community sector Organisation (SCSO) payment carried forward.		\$148,301.25
Other activity generated income:	\$	
<i>Fees from service users (grant related only)</i>	\$	
<i>Sale of goods (grant related only)</i>	\$	
<i>Other⁵ Add rows to list additional expenditure items</i>		
Total income	\$ 4,231,209.97	
Expenditure		
(delete categories in italics if not applicable)	Budgeted Amount (Excl GST) ¹ 2023-24 Financial year	Actual Amount (Excl GST) ¹¹ 2023-24 Financial year
Category 1: Operational⁶ Directly related to the Grant		
o <i>Salary and related</i>	\$ 1,155,319	
Operational Administration ⁸ : <i>Only administration costs directly related to the grant</i>		
o <i>Travel and motor vehicle</i>	\$	
o <i>Information technology and minor equipment (non capital)⁷</i>	\$ 32,500	
o <i>Consultants and contractors</i>	\$ 276,683	
o <i>Rental and property (including repairs and maintenance)</i>	\$ 71,406	
General administration ⁸		
o <i>Professional costs e.g. Practicing Certificates, Professional Indemnity Insurance</i>		
o <i>Accreditation</i>		
o <i>Accounting and audit</i>	\$ 28,500	
o <i>Conferences & Workshops</i>	\$ 882,000	
o <i>Governance</i>	\$ 136,600	
o <i>Other Add rows as needed to list additional expenditure items</i>	\$ 247,500	
Category 2: Overheads ⁶ Incurred centrally and allocated to this grant		
o <i>Salary and related</i>	\$	
Overheads Administration ⁸		
o <i>Rental and property (including repairs and maintenance)</i>	\$	
o <i>Insurance and utilities</i>	\$	
o <i>Other attributed administration cost ⁸ Add rows as needed to list additional expenditure items</i>	\$	
Category 3: Capital Costs⁷		
o <i>Vehicles</i>	\$	
o <i>Building purchase and construction</i>	\$	
o <i>Major equipment purchase and installation</i>	\$	
Category 4: Other⁹		
o <i>List expenditure line items if required</i>	\$	
Total expenditure	\$ 2,830,508	\$
Grant Underspend/ (Overspend)		
Underspend¹⁰/Overspend amount	\$ 1,400,702	\$
Reason for underspend		
(enter reason for underspend here)		
Requested underspend to be returned to NIAA		\$
Requested carry over funding into next period (if applicable)		\$
Business case on proposed use of carry over funds, including costings MUST BE PROVIDED AS PART OF THIS ATTACHMENT		

Attachment A

Guidance to complete the Statement of Grant Income and Expenditure.

Failure to comply with this request for a Statement of Grant Income and Expenditure may result in non-compliance with the conditions of your grant agreement. The Statement of Grant Income and Expenditure must be prepared from the financial records and information of your organisation.

Please refer to the following footnotes when completing this template:

1. The amounts presented in this column should agree to the grant agreement. Some schedules (or Additional Conditions) contain approved budgets for grants.
2. This amount should be the amount of all payments received from the Agency during the financial acquittal period.
3. This amount must be the amount approved as an underspend for carryover from the previous financial grant acquittal reporting period. If you are uncertain if you have an underspend that was carried over or the amount of this carryover, please contact your Agreement Manager to confirm if an underspend must be reported here.
4. Interest income reported should only be interest derived from the grant funding. If there is nil interest, an explanation needs to be provided as to why there is nil interest.
5. Income generated from performing activities relating to this grant must be reported, such as event/ticket income, cost recovery income or rent received from letting properties leased or purchased using grant funds.
6. "Operational" costs are those that relate directly to the grant, e.g. salaries for staff working 100% on the funded activity. Costs that are incurred centrally and allocated to the grant activity should be reported under the "overheads" heading.
7. Capital costs are for purchases of large assets such as a vehicle, building or large piece of equipment and are acquitted separate to the other expenses, under the "capital" heading. The cost of these assets can only be acquitted if they are specifically included in your grant agreement. Note that you must contact the Agency in writing prior to purchasing, leasing or acquiring an Asset that has a value of more than \$5,000.00 (excluding GST). Depreciation is generally not referred to in the terms and conditions of the grant agreement and is not a claimable expense item against IAS Grant funding. There are only exceptional circumstances that approval may be obtained for claiming depreciation against a Grant. Depreciation can only be claimed if specified in the grant agreement. Purchases of minor pieces equipment can be acquitted under the "Operational" heading.
8. Only administration costs directly related to the grant should be reported under the "operational" heading. Where the administration costs are incurred centrally and allocated to the grant activity they should be reported under the "overheads" heading. Your grant agreement may also set a limit to the value of administration costs that can be allocated to the funding you have received.
9. Please list the nature of expenditure if your grant expenditure does not align to an expenditure line item already listed.
10. This amount is calculated as the grant underspend/(overspend) less any funds that have been committed (e.g. signed contract, goods ordered but not yet delivered) but not paid at the time of reporting
11. The amount entered here is the value of funds you wish to carry forward for use in future periods.

Your Agreement Manager will advise you on the treatment of this underspend.

ATTACH AUDIT REPORT PROVIDED BY YOUR AUDITOR TO THE END OF YOUR STATEMENT.

2023-2024 FINANCIAL REPORTING

Income		
(delete categories in italics if not applicable)	Budgeted Amount (Excl GST) ¹ 2023-24 Financial year	Actual Amount (Excl GST) ¹¹ 2023-24 Financial year
Grant funds received ²	\$ 1,977,350.00	\$2,184,971.75
Unexpended Funds received in previous financial year approved for carryover ³	\$ 2,253,859.97	\$2,253,853.97
Estimated Interest income derived from grant funds ⁴	\$	\$42,604.34
Other activity generated income:	\$	
Fees from service users (grant related only)	\$	
Sale of goods (grant related only)	\$	\$18,982.52
Other ⁵ Add rows to list additional expenditure items		
Total income	\$ 4,231,209.97	\$4,500,412.58
Expenditure		
(delete categories in italics if not applicable)	Budgeted Amount (Excl GST) ¹ 2023-24 Financial year	Actual Amount (Excl GST) ¹¹ 2023-24 Financial year
Category 1: Operational ⁶ Directly related to the Grant		
o Salary and related	\$ 1,155,319	\$1,066,358.77
Operational Administration ⁸ : Only administration costs directly related to the grant		
o Travel and motor vehicle	\$	
o Information technology and minor equipment (non capital) ⁷	\$ 32,500	\$18,729.62
o Consultants and contractors	\$ 276,683	\$113,568.29
o Rental and property (including repairs and maintenance)	\$ 71,406	\$49,900.59
General administration ⁸		
o Professional costs e.g. Practicing Certificates, Professional Indemnity Insurance		
o Accreditation		
o Accounting and audit	\$ 28,500	\$34,300.00
o Conferences & Workshops (incl Travel)	\$ 882,000	\$203,811.87
o Governance	\$ 136,600	\$17,254.54
o Other ⁸ Add rows as needed to list additional expenditure items	\$ 247,500	\$28,061.87
Category 2: Overheads ⁶ Incurred centrally and allocated to this grant		
o Salary and related	\$	
Overheads Administration ⁸		
o Rental and property (including repairs and maintenance)	\$	
o Insurance and utilities	\$	
o Other attributed administration cost ⁸ Add rows as needed to list additional expenditure items	\$	
Category 3: Capital Costs ⁷		
o Vehicles	\$	
o Building purchase and construction	\$	
o Major equipment purchase and installation	\$	
Category 4: Other ⁹		
o List expenditure line items if required	\$	
Total expenditure	\$ 2,830,508	\$1,531,985.55
Grant Underspend/ (Overspend)		
Underspend ¹⁰ /Overspend amount	\$ 1,400,702	\$2,968,427.03
Submit the 2023-24 Budget to your Agreement Manager. The budget must be agreed by the Commonwealth.		
2023-24 FINANCIAL REPORTING¹¹		
When completing the 2023-24 financial report, complete the 'Actual Amount ¹¹ ' column and attach this document to the submitted Financial Reporting.		

2024 -2025 FINANCIAL FORECASTING

Income		
(delete categories in italics if not applicable)	Budgeted Amount (Excl GST) ¹ 2024-25 Financial year	Actual Amount (Excl GST) ¹¹ 2024-25 Financial year
Grant funds received ²		
Unexpended Funds received in previous financial year approved for carryover ³	\$2,968,427.03	
Estimated Interest income derived from grant funds ⁴	\$	
Other activity generated income:	\$	
Fees from service users (grant related only)	\$	
Sale of goods (grant related only)	\$	
Other ⁵ Add rows to list additional expenditure items		
Total income	\$2,968,427.03	
Expenditure		
(delete categories in italics if not applicable)	Budgeted Amount (Excl GST) ¹ 2024-25 Financial year	Actual Amount (Excl GST) ¹¹ 2024-25 Financial year
Category 1: Operational ⁶ Directly related to the Grant		
o Salary and related	\$ 1,352,000	
Operational Administration ⁸ : Only administration costs directly related to the grant		
o Travel and motor vehicle	\$	
o Information technology and minor equipment (non capital) ⁷	\$ 38,427	
o Consultants and contractors	888,000	
o Rental and property (including repairs and maintenance)	\$ 130,000	
General administration ⁸		
o Professional costs e.g. Practicing Certificates, Professional Indemnity Insurance		
o Accreditation		
o Accounting and audit	\$ 40,000	
o Conferences & Workshops (incl Travel)	\$ 400,000	
o Governance	\$ 80,000	
o Other Add rows as needed to list additional expenditure items	\$ 40,000	
Category 2: Overheads ⁶ Incurred centrally and allocated to this grant		
o Salary and related	\$	
Overheads Administration ⁸		
o Rental and property (including repairs and maintenance)	\$	
o Insurance and utilities	\$	
o Other attributed administration cost ⁸ Add rows as needed to list additional expenditure items	\$	
Category 3: Capital Costs ⁷		
o Vehicles	\$	
o Building purchase and construction	\$	
o Major equipment purchase and installation	\$	
Category 4: Other ⁹		
o List expenditure line items if required	\$	
Total expenditure	\$2,968,427	
Grant Underspend/ (Overspend)		
Underspend ¹⁰ /Overspend amount	\$	
Submit the 2024-25 Budget to your Agreement Manager. The budget must be agreed by the Commonwealth.		
2024-25 FINANCIAL REPORTING¹¹		
When completing the 2024-25 financial report, complete the 'Actual Amount ¹¹ ' column and attach this document to the submitted Financial Reporting.		

This statement pertains to the 2023-24 Financial Reporting and specifically addresses the NIAA contract requirements for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Association (NATSIHA).

I have conducted a financial audit of NATSIHA for the 2023-24 period in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. The audit included an examination of financial statements, internal controls, and compliance with applicable accounting standards and regulatory requirements. Based on the audit procedures performed, I can confirm that the financial reporting for 2023-24 is in compliance with the relevant reporting standards and requirements and accurately reflects NATSIHA's financial position and performance for the specified period.

Name: s47F

Date: 19/11/2024

Signature: s47F



Mr Zachariah Matysek
Ag Chief Executive Officer
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Association
Address: Suite 3.01, L3, 24 Montgomery Street, Kogarah NSW 2217
Ph: 0400 691 425

11 December 2024

Ms Jody Broun
Chief Executive Officer
National Indigenous Australians Agency
Via Email: **s47F** @niaa.gov.au
Cc: senator.mccarthy@aph.gov.au

RE: NATSIHA response to NIAA letter dated 27 November 2024.

Dear Jody,

I trust this letter finds you well. I refer to your letter dated 27 November 2024.

In your letter, you pose seven questions to NATSIHA. Please see our responses enclosed with this letter.

NATSIHA remains committed to maintaining a strong and harmonious relationship with the Commonwealth Government consistent with the Priority Reforms in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap ("**National Agreement**").

A mutually supportive and partnership-based approach along with systems reform is the only pathway to solving the profound and long-standing challenges in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing in this country including meeting the Target Outcomes in the National Agreement.

We hope the substance and spirit of the NIAA/NATSIHA relationship remains fully aligned to the National Agreement in particular, the principles embodied in Priority Reforms One, Two and Three and provisions such as Section 19(c) ("*government agencies need to transfer power and resources to communities*") – see Section 19(c)) noting:

- NIAA's Vision, Purpose and Responsibilities (<https://www.niaa.gov.au/about-niaa/who-we-are>) and
- the Productivity Commission's Review of the National Agreement in January this year [Study Report - Closing the Gap review - Productivity Commission](#).

NATSIHA unequivocally disagrees with the NIAA's perspective that NATSIHA should not be seeking or relying on Commonwealth Government funding. NATSIHA was established to unify

and advocate for the housing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at a national level, and we serve as an active collaborative partner with the Commonwealth.

Redirecting our efforts toward fragmented funding opportunities across State and Territory Governments is highly inefficient and directly undermines the principles of the National Agreement—principles such as the Partnership Actions at Clause 55(a) and 55(b).

Based on this detailed response, we hope the concerns raised in your letter are resolved, enabling us to focus on our objectives including successfully delivering the final component of our agreement with NIAA by 30 June 2025.

Going forward, we hope to have the opportunity to discuss any issues that may arise so that any misunderstandings can be resolved at an early stage. In our view a conversation between CEOs is an appropriate escalation point.

I would welcome a meeting with you to discuss these matters in more detail to ensure mutual agreement on a way forward between our two organisations.

Kind Regards,

Zachariah Matysek

s47F

Acting Chief Executive Officer
NATSIHA – National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Housing Association
Suite 3.01 | 3-24 Montgomery Street, Kogarah NSW 2217
M s47F | E s47F @natsiha.org.au

1. NIAA Question 1: Recent travel to Geneva

On 29 August 2024, Ms Simone Persson of the NIAA emailed you about NATSIHA staff travel to Geneva. On 29 August 2024 you responded to Ms Persson's email and the NIAA did not find this response adequate. Ms Persson emailed you again on 27 September 2024 reminding you of your obligations under the Grant Agreement and requesting information in relation to this travel. I note that no response to Ms Persson's email of 27 September 2024 has been received. As the NIAA has not received the information it requested, NATSIHA has not complied with its obligations under the Grant Agreement. The NIAA reserves the right to issue a formal breach notice for any breach.

Alternatively, I request you provide the below information within 10 business days of the date of this letter:

- how many NATSIHA staff travelled to Geneva to participate and attend the United Nations Human Rights Council in July 2024.*
- what was the purpose of this travel*
- who from NATSIHA approved this travel, and*
- who funded the cost of this travel.*

As Ms Persson advised you on 27 September 2024, the NIAA considers it reasonable to request this information. This is because the Grant Agreement funds the salaries of NATSIHA's CEO and staff. NATSIHA's sustainability is also a key component of the Grant Agreement, and there is a requirement that NATSIHA obtains, and documents to the Commonwealth's satisfaction, additional funding contributions as outlined in clauses 2.9, 2.10 and 2.11 of the Project Schedule.

NATSIHA's response:

The cost of travel to Geneva was not funded by the NIAA as previously indicated to NIAA.

Responses to your specific questions are below.

1.1 Q1. *How many NATSIHA staff travelled to Geneva to participate and attend the United Nations Human Rights Council in July 2024?*

Answer: Two (2) NATSIHA staff travelled to Geneva.

1.2 Q2. *What was the purpose of this travel?*

Answer: The purpose of the travel was multi-faceted.

- Its core purpose was to provide capacity building for NATSIHA as peak housing body for First Nations people, as described in the Head Agreement for Indigenous Grants. NATSIHA increased its knowledge of the work of indigenous peoples in other nations in relation to housing and created relationships with people and entities in other countries and with international organisations, related to first nations housing. One such example was speaking with Canada about the journey of achieving their housing reform for their Indigenous peoples and the process they undertook to achieve success. We are also currently in conversations with the office of the Hon Clare O'Neil about an opportunity with an international investor (the largest building materials manufacturer in the world) which was only achieved because of a relationship we made during our time in Geneva.

- NATSIHA also had the privilege of being the only Australian representative to present at the inaugural, and the first of only two, intersessional meetings of the United Nations Human Rights Council. This meeting focused on developing a new mechanism within the United Nations for Indigenous Peoples to participate in the UN's work, ensuring that all member states, including Australia, uphold their obligations under international frameworks such as:
 - the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP),
 - the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and
 - the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

This is a critical piece of work as, despite international recognition of the right to housing, this right is not enshrined in the Australian Constitution.

- This trip also served to help NATSIHA identify how its national role can support the development of economic opportunities for First Nations people given the unique place that housing across Australia can play in this context. This aspect of NATSIHA's work aligns with recommendations 19 - 21 very recently made by the Senate Inquiry into economic self-determination and opportunities for First Nations Australians, which are extracted below:¹

Recommendation 19:

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government facilitate knowledge exchanges between First Nations Australians and international First Nations communities to share experiences and lessons on economic empowerment and trade.

Recommendation 20:

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government accelerate its work with the First Nations Economic Partnership and consider the experiences of international jurisdictions and their fiscal management powers and frameworks (for example, Canada).

Recommendation 21:

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government ratify the United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and explore opportunities for UNDRIP to guide commonwealth, state, and territory policy development and its relevance to good government in Australia.

- The trip aligns with Pillars 1 and 2 (First Nations Housing Excellence & Empowering Communities) of the NATSIHA Strategy 2024 – 2028 ([Attachment C](#)) presented to NIAA on 15 January 2024 and accepted by the NIAA via email on 7 February 2024. ([Attachment E. Performance Report & Strategy Acceptance](#)).
- It also forms part of our partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander International Engagement Organisation (ATSIIEO), in which we are working to establish partnerships with international investors to achieve self-determination, autonomy and economic independence within Indigenous peoples across the country, and to address housing supply and affordability.
- NATSIHA engaged with the Global Indigenous Caucus on Human Rights, and attended a full-day session with them. This provided a previously unexplored opportunity to share learnings

¹ [Inquiry into economic self-determination and opportunities for First Nations Australians – Parliament of Australia](#)

and speak through the process of policy and legislative reform in each respective country. We forged strong alliances with Pacific nations around shared priorities and caucused to discuss how we would support each other now and into the future – including the advancement of the next Global Indigenous Housing Conference.

- We were invited to and attended the Australian Permanent Residence in Geneva, where we held discussions with the Australian Ambassador to Switzerland and the Australian First Nations Ambassador, reinforcing the need for coordinated efforts to advance accessibility of Indigenous Australians in the United Nations' work.
- Finally, we met with and developed strong ongoing relationships with key partners, including leading Australian constitutional lawyer Professor Asmi Wood, and Professor Anne Martin, Director of the Tjabal Indigenous Higher Education Centre at the Australian National University.

1.3 Q3. Who from NATSIHA approved this travel?

Answer: The NATSIHA Chairperson approved this trip. The directors were informed and there was endorsement from the Board.

1.4 Q4. Who funded the cost of this travel?

Answer: The trip was funded by the ATSIIEO.

In relation to the previous correspondence and meetings between NIAA and NATSIHA on this, we have set out a chronology below.

On 6 August 2024, Ms Persson met with NATSIHA employee Mr Benjamin Thompson, and asked whether the Geneva trip was attached to NIAA Grant funds. Mr Thompson informed Ms Persson that it was not.

On 29 August 2024, Ms Persson emailed Mr Zachariah Matysek seeking further information. Mr Matysek re-iterated to Ms Persson that expenditure related to the Geneva trip did not come out of NIAA grant funds.

On 30 August 2024, Mr Zachariah Matysek met via teams with NIAA Deputy CEO Ms Julie-Ann Guivarra. During this meeting Ms Guivarra advised Mr Matysek that all the NIAA requires is written confirmation that the Geneva trip is not attached to NIAA grant money. Mr Matysek informed Ms Guivarra that he would provide confirmation in writing again.

On 30 August 2024, Mr Matysek emailed Ms Persson again and reconfirmed that the Geneva trip is not attached to NIAA grant monies and apologised for any confusion.

Accordingly, we do not agree with the assertion in your letter that *"As the NIAA has not received the information it requested, NATSIHA has not complied with its obligations under the Grant Agreement."*

I trust that the above explanation now addresses any concerns which NIAA may have.

2. NIAA Question 2: NATSHIA expenditure

The NIAA acknowledges NATSIHA has submitted reports on expenditure and financial forecasting for the 2024-2025 period, however the NIAA has not accepted these reports.

The NIAA is concerned with the amount of travel NATSIHA staff are undertaking, and the associated costs. From 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, NATSIHA spent almost \$225,000 in travel and associated costs, and is expected to spend \$400,000 in the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

The NIAA is concerned about the amount of travel undertaken by NATSIHA staff, and its impact on NATSIHA's ability to deliver Objectives under the Grant Agreement. While I note some travel relates to the Project Objectives and deliverables, the NIAA is of the view the reported figures are excessive.

NATSIHA's Response:

NATSIHA is incorporated as a National Peak Body and our remit spans the entirety of Australia, necessitating significant travel to effectively support the rollout of critical national programs and engagements. These activities are fundamental to building capacity, fostering local leadership, and driving outcomes that reflect the unique needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities nationwide.

One such example is the **Governance Training initiative**, which has been successfully delivered by NATSIHA across Brisbane, Sydney, Darwin, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Thursday Island in 2024. A material amount of the overall travel and associated budget was incurred from the travel and accommodation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander board members of local community-controlled organisations from various locations, who attend the training sessions at the hub where they take place. This is critical training for our sector. Without covering travel costs these board members will not be able to attend. Feedback from the sessions has been very positive and affirms the approach we have taken.²

Regarding the anticipated travel expenditure for 2025, detailed information was provided to the NIAA via email on 18 October 2024 (**Attachment a. Travel Expenditure 2025**) with all supporting material. The email enclosed an Excel spreadsheet containing a breakdown of the projected costs against the last remaining deliverables under the NIAA contract which includes:

- Continuation of the Governance Training rollout.
- Ongoing engagements to finalise the National Housing Standards.
- Ongoing engagements to finalise the National Workforce Strategy.
- Travel costs associated with delivering Financial Literacy training for National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH)-registered providers.
- Support for day-to-day operations and sector engagement.

The projected increase in travel expenditure compared to 2024 reflects NATSIHA's intensified focus on achieving tangible results and advancing our strategic objectives. This approach has already yielded significant and well-documented outcomes, as outlined in the "Ability to Deliver on Project Objectives and Deliverables" section of our response.

NATSIHA conducts meetings via electronic video link (such as meetings of the Board) wherever possible. NATSIHA assesses whether travel is necessary to advance and achieve its strategic objectives in each instance.

² A short video from the Sydney-run Governance Training can be found here:
<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7234002818104221696>

3. NIAA Question 3: *Payments to Board of Directors*

The financial information provided by NATSIHA on 18 October 2024 identifies that Grant Agreement funding was used to reimburse NATSIHA Board of Directors' travel and out of pocket expenses.

The Additional Conditions in the Grant Agreement stipulate funds cannot be used to pay sitting fees, allowances, travel expenses or similar payments to Directors (Part 3, Additional Conditions, 11. Restrictions on expenditure), unless prior written approval is obtained. The NIAA has no record of providing prior written approval, and advises these payments breach the Grant Agreement. The NIAA under clause 57 of the Head Agreement, seeks information from NATSIHA on all payments to the Board of Directors since the Grant Agreement commenced, within 10 business days of the date of this letter.

NATSIHA's response:

Please find a financial overview of payments to the Board of Directors attached ([Attachment A. Financial Overview Out of Pocket Expenses](#)). Currently, Directors may receive an annual remuneration at a flat rate of \$5,000 and the Chairperson may receive annual remuneration as Chair at a flat rate of \$10,000. The NATSIHA Chairperson has opted not to take remuneration. The Grant Agreement does not require NIAA written approval for this board remuneration.

Over the 23/24 financial year NATSIHA did in fact reimburse a director for travel in the amount of \$633.54 from then NIAA contract. NATSIHA apologises for the administrative oversight in not seeking prior approval for this expense. To the extent NIAA consider it necessary, seeks NIAA's retrospective approval of this reimbursement. We would like to discuss an appropriate process for approval of the reimbursement of reasonable travel expenses (in accordance with NATSIHA's constitution) going forward considering the administrative burden for both parties.

Clause 8.7 of the constitution, 'payment to directors' states that each director is entitled to:

- (i) the reasonable remuneration out of the funds of the company as the directors determine, but if the company in general meeting has fixed a limit on the amount of remuneration payable to the directors, the aggregate remuneration of directors must not exceed that limit;*
- (ii) be reimbursed for all reasonable authorised travelling and other expenses properly incurred by them in connection with the affairs of the company, including attending and returning from general meetings of the company, meetings of the directors and meetings of committees; and*
- (iii) receive payment for any goods supplied or services rendered to the company, as long as the amount is proper and reasonable in the circumstances.*

The NATSIHA Board comprises either the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Chairperson of established State and/or Territory Housing Peak Bodies, as well as Community Leaders from Jurisdictions where a Peak Body has not yet been established. NATSIHA Board members fulfill multiple roles across various organisations. Sometimes they are engaged (and incur expenses covered by NATSIHA) in substantive roles as leaders or experts outside of their role as a director of NATSIHA.

Please also note that all NATSIHA Board meetings in 2024, including the NATSIHA Annual General Meeting, and the Quarterly Finance, Audit and Risk Committee meetings, were conducted virtually, thus avoiding the need to incur associated travel expenses.

4. NIAA Question 4: *Status of Chief Executive Officer*

The NIAA seeks information on the substantive Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mr Robert Macfarlane's employment status. Information received indicates Mr Macfarlane is on long term leave. If so, the NIAA seeks the details surrounding his departure and his leave status. Further, the NIAA seeks information on how NATSIHA's approach to management and governance enables it to deliver its obligation under the Grant Agreement and any identified risks (financial or otherwise) that his employment status has on the organisation. The NIAA considers it is within its rights to seek this information as the recruitment of a CEO to assist and guide the establishment of the governance and administration of NATSIHA is a key component under the Grant Agreement.

Further, the NIAA is concerned:

- *there has been no substantive CEO leading the organisation for some time, and*
- *current administrative arrangements are impacting NATSIHA's ability to establish and build its capacity to become a successful national peak body for First Nations people.*

NATSIHA's Response:

Thank you for your feedback regarding the status of the CEO position.

I confirm that the CEO role at NATSIHA has never been left vacant. It has consistently been filled, whether by an interim CEO, a permanent CEO, or an Acting CEO (which role I currently hold).

I also highlight that NATSIHA's productivity, and the quality of our work has continued to grow from all reports across Government, private industry, academic institutions, Mainstream Peaks and service providers. For a comprehensive overview of our achievements, particularly those accomplished in the last six months since acting arrangements have been in place, I refer you to the detailed response provided under Question 5, the **"Ability to Deliver on Project Objectives and Deliverables"** section below.

s22

There is no evidence to suggest NATSIHA's performance has suffered as a result of the changes. To the contrary we are proud of our significant achievements over the past six (6) months (as outlined under in our response to Question 5 below) particularly in the context of the external challenges we have faced.

If you require any further information regarding my role as Acting CEO or the previous CEO, please direct those inquiries to the Chairperson of NATSIHA.

5. NIAA Question 5: *Ability to deliver on Project Objectives and Deliverables*

On 16 August 2024, the NIAA advised NATSIHA that the reporting it provided in June 2024 was rated as 'Needs to Improve' and several issues were identified. The NIAA asked NATSIHA to resubmit this reporting and has since worked closely with NATSIHA to provide it the greatest opportunity to successfully deliver the project deliverables. While I understand there has been progress against some

deliverables, the NIAA remains concerned NATSIHA will not meet all of its objectives and deliverables under the Grant Agreement. In particular:

- *Co-design programs that are culturally safe and appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Housing Organisations;*
- *Development of a National Indigenous Housing Employment Strategy for housing, encompassing all jurisdictions;*
- *Review and develop a National Indigenous Housing standard, encompassing all jurisdictions;*
- *Develop culturally appropriate rental, mortgage, and financial literacy advice;*
- *Obtain and allocate additional funding contributions from State and Territory Governments, the private sector, non-government organisation and donations, to support the operations of the NATSIHA.*

The performance report NATSIHA submitted for the period 1 January 2024 to 30 June 2024 requires additional information. Further, the Annual Workplan for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 requires significant work and is not accepted. The NIAA's comments against these documents were provided to NATSIHA separately on 23 September 2024, 23 October 2024 and 28 October 2024.

Given these concerns, I give you notice that under Clause 70 of the Head Agreement, the Commonwealth is considering taking risk management and/or performance action against NATSIHA. This is because the NIAA considers NATSIHA's performance is less than satisfactory.

Further, under Clause 71 of the Head Agreement, I give notice that the NIAA requires NATSIHA to work with us to improve its capacity to deliver funded Projects to the Commonwealth's satisfaction by addressing its governance, financial and service delivery issues. NIAA officials will contact you shortly about what is required.

NATSIHA's Response:

In response to your advice that the NIAA has rejected our most recent performance report, it is essential first to address the acceptance and details of the performance report for the reporting period ending December 2023, as well as the subsequent discrepancies outlined below.

I have provided an example of such a discrepancy below; however, there are many more which are set out at **Attachments B, E and G**.

Since launching our Strategy in December 2023, NATSIHA has made progress on all activity covered in the inaugural strategy and we attach to this letter (**Attachment F. NATSIHA AGM Strategy Update**) as an update.

On 15 January 2024, NATSIHA presented the performance report (**Attachment B. NATSIHA annual workplan 2023**) covering the period of 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023 where we closed off 7 deliverables, marked 2 deliverables as ongoing and acknowledged the remaining products. As part of this report, we also presented NATSIHA's inaugural strategy and year in review (**Attachment C. NATSIHA Strategy**) (**Attachment D. NATSIHA 2023 Year in Review**).

On 7 February 2024, the NIAA confirmed via email (**Attachment E. Performance Report & Strategy Acceptance**) its acceptance of NATSIHA's performance report. This acceptance included the closure of seven deliverables, recognition of two as ongoing, an acknowledgment of all comments included in the report, and the acceptance of the NATSIHA Strategy. It is important to also note, following this approval, the NIAA released the final installment of our grant agreement to NATSIHA.

Since the February 2024 confirmation from NIAA, the advice received from the NIAA regarding reporting and performance requirements has varied significantly ([Attachment G. Performance Report Comments](#)). This has created confusion and additional challenges in meeting the agency's evolving expectations. The level of acquittal required has increased significantly without explanation. Nevertheless, NATSIHA remains committed to adapting and has consistently provided all requested information to the NIAA.

On 1 May 2024, the NATSIHA hosted an in-person meeting with the NIAA at our Sydney office. The meeting served as a site visit and provided an opportunity for both organisations to review the outstanding deliverables outlined in the Contract between NATSIHA and NIAA. During this meeting, NATSIHA presented a supplementary document ([Attachment I - HSSP Workplan Overview Attachment](#)), which itemises all project objectives specified in the Contract. The document includes a detailed explanation of the deliverables already agreed to as completed and outlines our approach for achieving the remaining project objectives.

On 18 October 2024, NATSIHA provided the advice regarding deliverables which have been agreed by both NIAA and NATSIHA as closed in the 2023 Workplan, and that NATSIHA would not be seeking to re-open items which have been agreed by both parties as closed. NATSIHA recommended that the NIAA consult internally with the relevant delegate who approved our 2023 Workplan to resolve any internal misunderstanding within the NIAA.

On 23 October 2024, the NIAA responded via email that *"Any previous approval was a point in time however I cannot find any reference that the NIAA has previously agreed that this was complete."*

On 1 November 2024, NATSIHA forwarded the approvals to the NIAA, which NATSIHA received from the NIAA on 7 February 2024.

For noting, the NIAA's position as recent as 10 December 2024, in a public statement made by Ms Simone Persson, was that *"NATSIHA is doing incredible work."*

A chronological summary of the correspondence between NATSIHA and the NIAA can be found at ([Attachment H. Chronological Email Correspondence](#)), which demonstrates the efforts by NATSIHA to land on a shared understanding with the NIAA.

NATSIHA feels strongly that it has gone above and beyond to meet its contractual obligations, and we again note the significant effort which has been made by us to provide the NIAA with all information both requested and required.

The NIAA now seeks to reopen deliverables which have previously been agreed by both parties as closed in previous performance report. See [Attachment B, E & G – Performance Report Comments](#).

In [Attachment G](#), for example, under Project Description, Part 3, item 2.5, the NIAA seeks to reopen three (3) deliverables that were agreed to as closed on 7 February 2024 via email. In [Attachment G](#), the NIAA wrote:

- *"It is our understanding as per the activity report that this is ongoing. Given this is ongoing please update and provide details", and*
- *"The previous report submitted states this is ongoing and that a number of strategies are in progress. Please update"*

Contrary to the above, the exact words the NIAA used upon approval of said deliverables on 7 February 2024 ([Attachment E](#)) was, *"In regard to the performance reporting you have provided, our GMU has notified us that this has been accepted."*

Updates on Final Deliverables under the NIAA Contract (due 30 June 2025):

The final two remaining products, which NATSIHA is required to deliver to the NIAA, are due on 30 June 2025. An update on these two products is attached:

- **National Housing Standards**
 - ([Attachment J. National Housing Standards Update](#))
- **National Workforce Strategy**
 - ([Attachment K. National Workforce Strategy Update](#))

In addition to the two remaining deliverables NATSIHA is scheduled to provide to the NIAA by 30 June 2025, we are making substantial progress across a range of other critical areas. This includes:

- **Governance Training Program:** The Governance Program is designed to future proof our sector for changes in government regulation, the training uses real life case studies so that participants can explore the approaches they could take and what practices could be put in place to mitigate risks for their organisation and directors in the future.
- **Spoken Project**
Spoken is a data sovereignty project that is owned and delivered by NATSIHA and the Sector ([Attachment L. Spoken overview](#))
- **Financial Literacy Program:** This project, in partnership with the First Nations Foundation, makes the My Money My Dream platform accessible to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Housing organisations (ATSICCHOs) registered under the NRSCH. The platform provides tools and resources designed to support financial empowerment for tenants and clients.
- **Foyer Foundation Partnership:** Advancing transitional housing models tailored to the needs of Indigenous youth. This Memorandum of Understanding created between NATSIHA, and the Foyer Foundation has four focus areas:
 - **Strategic Alignment** Collaborating on the development and refinement of the Foyer Foundation's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy, ensuring it is underpinned by cultural competency and community-led principles.
 - **Community Engagement** Working together at a community level to identify and engage with ATSICCHOs regarding the development of future Foyers and the potential roles these organisations could play.
 - **Youth Housing Advocacy** Strengthening connections through NATSIHA's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Youth Housing Roundtable to ensure initiatives align with the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth.
 - **Youth Foyer Conference** NATSIHA's Youth Round Table will work with the Foyer team to inform and design the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth element of their 2025 Conference.

- **Private Industry Roundtables:** Driving collaboration and fostering partnerships across the Private Industry to support Indigenous housing initiatives.³
- **\$200M Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) Proposal:** Working directly with the Federal Minister for Housing and Homelessness to design a new and innovative approach to facilitate partnerships between community organisations, private industry, and government to increase supply, create real jobs and build industry locally in our communities. (Attachment M. 200m proposal)
- **\$25M Targeted Initiative:** Working directly with the Federal Minister for Housing on a \$20 million-dollar targeted grants initiative to restore 100–150 uninhabitable homes managed by ATSICCHOs through critical repairs and upgrades. These homes, currently uninhabitable due to disrepair, represent an untapped resource that can be quickly reactivated to provide much-needed housing for families. (Attachment N. November Proposal)
- **Centre of Research Excellence for Housing**
 - Collaborating with Adelaide University to establish a Housing Innovation Hub.
 - This proposal is currently under review by the Australian Research Council, with initial feedback indicating favorable prospects.
- **Toolkit for Housing Australia**
 - We are currently developing a practical resource for ATSICCHOs to navigate the Housing Australia Expression of Interest process effectively.
- **Indigenous Research Group Leadership**
 - Chairing a collaborative effort with Adelaide University to develop a National Sustainability and Governance Framework, scheduled for publication in early 2025.
- **Housing Australia Partnership**
 - NATSIHA is a member of Housing Australia's Strategic Advisory Group who are working on the design of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy aimed at increasing access to capital through the various facilities under Housing Australia.
- **Crisis and Transitional Accommodation Program (CTAP)**
 - The Commonwealth is implementing CTAP, which will allocate \$100 million over five years for capital works addressing crisis and transitional accommodation needs.
 - NATSIHA is actively participating as a member of the Selection Advisory Panel, evaluating applications and providing recommendations to the Minister for Housing and Homelessness.
- **South Australian First Nations Peak Establishment**
 - NATSIHA partnered with the South Australian Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Network (SAACCON) to advocate directly to the South Australian Housing Minister and Department for the establishment of a dedicated Indigenous Housing and Homelessness Peak. Through this collaboration, NATSIHA successfully secured a commitment from the South Australian Government to fund the creation of this Peak body.
 - Additionally, NATSIHA authored the 5-year implementation plan on behalf of SAACCON for the South Australian Peak, which has now been formally committed to by the South Australian Government.

³ https://www.linkedin.com/posts/zachariah-matysek-6b579b235_cushwake-natsiha-advisory-activity-7194200326638342145-TFgH utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop

- **National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness (NASHH)**
 - NATSIHA worked in partnership with the Commonwealth to co-author the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander component of the NASHH, which came into effect on 1 July 2024. This component has been endorsed by all Housing Ministers across Australia.
 - Attachment O outlines the key achievements that NATSIHA successfully incorporated into the NASHH, ensuring the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices in the design, delivery, and evaluation of housing programs and services across all states and territories. (Attachment O. NASHH Brief)
- **Partnership with the Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS)**
 - Collaborating on the development of a 2025 Heat Survey.
 - This project aims to influence policies to improve the energy performance of low-income housing to improve outcomes for people on low-incomes, who are more likely to live in poor energy- performing homes, spend disproportionately more of their income on energy and are at greater risk of illness and death in hot weather.

NATSIHA has consistently met all its obligations under the Grant Agreement to date and has a strong commitment to delivering high-quality outcomes. We have exceeded the requirements outlined in our agreement, providing additional products, updates, and deliverables beyond what was initially agreed. This includes implementing innovative programs, fostering critical partnerships, and submitting comprehensive progress reports well ahead of deadlines. Importantly, we remain on track to deliver the final two remaining products to the NIAA by 30 June 2025, as evidenced by our detailed operational plan and updated work plan.

NATSIHA's ability to fulfill and surpass expectations underscores our capacity to deliver meaningful outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, despite the challenges posed by evolving expectations and varying advice from the NIAA.

6. NIAA Question 6: Financial Sustainability – Clauses 2.10 and 2.11 of the Project Schedule

The Grant Agreement requires NATSIHA to obtain and allocate additional funding contributions from State and Territory Governments, the private sector, non-government organisations and donations, to support its operations. However, NATSIHA has not reported any additional funding contributions. I understand NATSIHA is focused on securing Commonwealth funding, but this is not what the Grant Agreement requires, and the NIAA considers this as less than satisfactory.

NATSIHA's Response:

Despite our view that the Commonwealth should be funding NATSIHA's operations, and as previously discussed with your agency, NATSIHA has been actively pursuing opportunities to secure other sources of funding and support. We are actively developing a comprehensive 10-year philanthropic funding proposal. The concept of NATSIHA partnering with large philanthropic organisations is being strategically socialised with potential funders and supported by our mainstream and private industry partners. This aims to ensure that when we do formally submit a funding proposal, we have the best possible chance that it will be approved, as they will already be aware of who we are, what we stand for, and on where they can fund our organisation.

NATSIHA is also already strategically partnering with Private Industry and has been the recipient of significant Pro-Bono and "Low-Bono" support which averages approximately \$4 in value for every dollar outlay.

The obligations of the Commonwealth under the National Agreement and related commitments are unequivocal. Priority Reform One specifically calls for **formal partnerships and shared decision-making**, which necessitate the Commonwealth's direct investment in Indigenous-led National governance bodies such as NATSIHA.

Paragraph 33 of the National Agreement (in Priority Reform One) provides:

"The Parties recognise that adequate funding is needed to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parties to be partners with governments in formal partnerships. This includes agreed funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parties to:

- a. engage independent policy advice*
- b. meet independently of governments to determine their own policy positions*
- c. support strengthened governance between and across Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and parties*
- d. engage with and seek advice from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from all relevant groups within affected communities, including but not limited to Elders, Traditional Owners and Native Title Holders."*

Moreover, the Commonwealth has recognised its central role in ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have an equal voice in determining policy and solutions through the establishment and sustained funding of community controlled organisations through both the Joint Council and Joint Working Group on Closing the Gap.

While clauses 2.10 and 2.11 of the Project Schedule suggest a need for NATSIHA to explore complementary funding sources, this must be contextualised within the broader Closing the Gap framework. Securing additional funding from State and Territory Governments, the private sector, and non-government organisations is a valid supplementary goal. However,

- We remain of the view that the Commonwealth has a responsibility to ensure NATSIHA's financial sustainability as a national peak body and delivery partner to the Commonwealth.
- We need to be mindful of competing for funding with our Jurisdictional Peaks from their State or Territory Governments – but we are seeking investment from Jurisdictional Governments into the sector in their own jurisdiction which goes to one of NATSIHA's priorities around Sector Sustainability. In that regard NATSIHA has been successful last month working with Indigenous Leaders in South Australia to secure a five (5) year funding commitment to stand up a distinct Housing Peak for South Australia.
- Requiring NATSIHA to seek funding from disparate sources risks undermining the very purpose of its establishment. NATSIHA was created to unify and advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing needs nationally. Diverting its capacity to chase fragmented funding opportunities creates inefficiencies and contradicts the Closing the Gap ethos of equality and self-determination.

- Ultimately a decision to provide funding to support NATSIHA sits with the relevant funding body, not NATISHA, so our success under the contractual provisions is ultimately outside NATSIHA's control.
- Support from the NIAA (by advocating on behalf of NATSIHA to, and engaging with, other agencies at the Commonwealth level and at a jurisdictional level) will go a long way in supporting our respective objectives.

NATSIHA has been exploring different types of partnerships with Commonwealth departments and will continue to do so. We have presented a range of opportunities to drive innovation and collaboration as a delivery partner in an effort to meet our objectives, including as outlined in our Strategic Plan (including the relevant Target Outcomes in the National Agreement). We hope you appreciate that without support in various forms from these other agencies and from the NIAA our collective efforts to meet the needs and aspirations of our peoples will be fruitless.

Key initiatives include:

- Working with the largest Private Industry partners in Australia, and the Minister for Housing and Homelessness to lead the establishment of a new and innovative Special Purpose Vehicle (SPVs) between our sector, private industry, and government.⁴
- Working with the Minister for Housing and Homelessness on a program focused on restoring underutilised housing stock and maximising land realisation (Attachment O).
- Collaborating with the Department of Infrastructure to advance the implementation of Target 9B.⁵
- Partnering with Indigenous Business Australia to explore initiatives aimed at increasing home ownership opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and informing their next strategic focus areas.
- Ensuring the Housing Policy Partnership is embedded in National Partnership Agreements such as the National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness to ensure sustainability of the HPP, which also secures NATSIHA sustainability to be funded as the Co-chair and Secretariat.
- Putting in applications through Housing Australia in partnership with private industry and other peaks.
- Seeking investment to deliver the Joint Council Agreed Housing Sector Strengthening Plan by which we;
 - Met with most Housing Ministers across the Country to lobby funding and commitment for the Sector Strengthening Plan.
 - Organised and led three (3) Deputy Secretary Round Tables across the Commonwealth, bringing together the Department of Social Services, Department of Infrastructure, National Indigenous Australians Agency, and Commonwealth Treasury.
 - Created project plans for, and costed out all the deliverables of the plan, and provided this to the Commonwealth. NATSIHA also included the funding for the plan in our 2024 pre-budget submission.

⁴ <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7257668843257372672/>

⁵ <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7163327507830624256/>

- As requested by the Commonwealth NATSIHA created a revised version of the plan iterated over three (3) Federal Budgets which we provided to all relevant Agencies and Ministers Offices.

This demonstrates NATSIHA's ongoing leadership in leveraging innovation, creativity, and strategic partnerships to achieve exceptional outcomes in the most cost-effective manner.

NATSIHA's focus on securing Commonwealth funding is not only justified but also aligned with:

1. **Priority Reform Area 2: Building the community-controlled sector**, which underscores the necessity of predictable and adequate funding to strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led organisations.
2. **Priority Reform Area 3: Transforming government organisations**, which obligates the Commonwealth to align its policies and funding decisions with Closing the Gap commitments.

To label NATSIHA's efforts to secure appropriate Commonwealth funding as "less than satisfactory" is disappointing and surprising. It overlooks the national level at which NATSIHA operates and the reality that, without a stable financial foundation, NATSIHA cannot fulfill its mandate to drive housing reforms that will meet the unique needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and be a partner to the Commonwealth across many portfolio areas. It also goes against the ethos of the National Agreements on Closing the Gap.

NATSIHA's success in partnering with Government, Private Industry and our communities to Close the Gap hinges on stable and sufficient core funding from the Commonwealth, supplemented—not replaced—by contributions from other sources.

7. NIAA Question 7: *Staff Behaviour*

Finally, I advise of issues raised directly with me about recent behaviour by NATSIHA staff toward Commonwealth employees, including NIAA staff. I know this has been raised directly with you in various forums, but the NIAA has seen this behaviour continue, which is unacceptable.

Concerns have been raised around NATSIHA staff's behaviour and public statements, including those made by yourself. The NIAA has seen firsthand, and been subject to, inappropriate behaviour directed towards Commonwealth staff. The NIAA values its relationship with NATSIHA and has sought to work in partnership on many occasions. We seek your support to address this behaviour, and your commitment for us to go forward and work in true partnership.

NATSIHA's Response:

Thank you for raising this to my attention. NATSIHA holds itself and its staff to high standards and I take the concerns you raise seriously. NATSIHA values its relationship with the NIAA greatly. Such concerns as you raise have not been raised with me previously, either by NIAA or otherwise. I have investigated and can find no record of the NIAA raising an issue with NATSIHA staff. I request that you provide me with further information so that I may respond appropriately.

My investigations have to date identified only one formal complaint raised in relation to behaviour between NATSIHA and NIAA, but this complaint pertained to the behaviour of a NIAA staff member

towards NATSIHA staff on 15 February 2024 via teams, and we have since sought to address this matter constructively with the NIAA.

NATSIHA values its partnership with the Commonwealth and remains committed to fostering a professional and respectful relationship. In this spirit, we request that any future complaint regarding behaviour be raised in accordance with our complaints policy (Attachment P) with an allowance for procedural fairness. This will ensure a fair and transparent process for both parties and allow us to resolve any complaints collaboratively.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment a. Additional Information 2025 travel
- Attachment A. financial overview Out of Pocket Expenses of Board
- Attachment B. NATSIHA Annual Workplan
- Attachment C. NATSIHA Strategy
- Attachment D. NATSIHA 2023 Year in Review
- Attachment E. Performance Report Acceptance
- Attachment F. NATSIHA AGM Strategy Update
- Attachment G. Performance Report Comments
- Attachment H. Chronological Email Correspondence
- Attachment I. NIAA Reporting Workplan overview
- Attachment J. Agreed deliverables release of funds.
- Attachment J. National Housing Standards Update
- Attachment K. National Workforce Strategy Update
- Attachment L. Spoken overview
- Attachment M. 200m proposal
- Attachment N. November Proposal
- Attachment O. NASHH Brief
- Attachment P. Complaints Policy