



# Policy Statement

## Commonwealth rights and interests in Indigenous grant funded property

### Introduction

The Commonwealth is committed to supporting Indigenous self-determination by maximising the autonomy and economic independence of Indigenous organisations.

In February 2018, the Commonwealth held caveats over more than 2800 Indigenous owned properties purchased with grants made by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and its predecessor organisations. Former ATSIC legislation stopped the Commonwealth from removing its interests in these properties unless they were being sold, transferred or mortgaged. This has prevented Indigenous organisations from leveraging the equity in these properties.

In February 2018, legislation was passed to allow the Commonwealth to give notice to Indigenous organisations that its consent is no longer required for a property disposal. This means that Indigenous organisations can now apply at any time to have a caveat on their property removed.

## Policy Statement

The Commonwealth is striving to stimulate Indigenous entrepreneurship and business development, providing First Nations people with more opportunities to participate in the economy.

The Commonwealth recognises removing Commonwealth caveats may unlock economic development opportunities for Indigenous organisations and communities.

The provision of a streamlined, flexible application process and transparent assessment criteria for caveat removal balances the need to provide greater autonomy and economic empowerment with the need to protect service continuity and significant assets in the Indigenous estate.

## Further information

For information on how to apply for caveat removal, please refer to the CRIIP Guidelines or email [CthRightsandInterests@niaa.gov.au](mailto:CthRightsandInterests@niaa.gov.au).