Building Australia's affordable housing industry capacity

(NRSCH Tier 1/2 (or equivalent) providers)

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking part in our survey on Australia's affordable housing industry capacity. By capacity we mean 'the power, ability, or possibility of doing something' (Macquarie Dictionary) or 'the ability to perform work' (Yu-Lee (2002) 'Essentials of Capacity Management'). This survey has approval from the University of NSW Australia's Built Environment Human Research Ethics Advisory Panel (155112). A Project Information Statement is displayed on the next page for your consideration.

All Tier 1 and Tier 2-registered providers (and the Victorian/Western Australian equivalents) are being invited to complete this survey, which will take about 30 minutes to complete. It is designed to be completed by the CEO (or appropriate senior manager) of your organisation. Your responses to this survey will inform us about the current capacity of the Australian affordable housing industry and help us formulate questions for further in-depth discussions with industry stakeholders. (For your information a separate survey is being undertaken by Tier 3 providers.)

The survey is divided into six sections, each focussing on:

- Your organisation (including all subsidiary entities)
- Your organisation's (recent) past and current capacity building activities
- Your organisation's business growth plan
- Your organisation's capacity building needs under two growth scenarios
- Capacity building needs/priorities for the industry as a whole
- Resourcing capacity building.

If you have any question on how to complete the survey, please contact Dr Edgar Liu (02 9385 4245, edgar.liu@unsw.edu.au). On behalf of the research team, thank you very much for completing the survey. With contributions from you and your peers, we hope the research will be useful to everybody associated with affordable housing.

Associate Professor Vivienne Milligan

Project leader

1. All jurisdictions in which you currently operate social and/or affordable housing services (tick as many as apply):

- o   ACT
- o   NSW
- o   VIC

- o   QLD
- o   SA
- o   WA

- o   TAS
- o   NT
- o   International

2. Operational regions

- o   Metropolitan (capital city) only
- o   Non-metropolitan only

- o   Metropolitan & non-metropolitan

3. Tier/class of registration

- o   NRSCH: Tier 1
- o   NRSCH: Tier 2
- o   NRSCH: Tier 3
- o   Victoria: Housing Association
- o   Victoria: Housing Provider

- o   WA: Growth Provider
- o   WA: Preferred Provider
- o   WA: Registered Provider
- o   Not registered at this time

4. Please complete the following table of key indicators for your organisation as reported in your 2014/15 Annual Report. If 2014/15 Annual report figures are unavailable, please use figures as last reported to the Registrar.

Number of FTE staff:	
Reported total assets ($):	
Reported total liabilities ($):	
Reported annual rent revenue ($):	
Number of subsidiary entities that comprise your organisation/ group:	
Total number of residential dwellings under management:	
Total number of residential dwellings owned/controlled long term (e.g. leases 20 years or longer):	
Total number of residential dwellings with development approval but not yet completed (i.e. all dwellings your organisation is responsible for developing, including dwellings for sale):	

5. How would you rate your organisation's current IT system (in terms of tenancy management, asset management and financial management/planning)?

- o   Fully integrated and readily useable for our purposes
- o   Satisfactory but in need of upgrading to meet current needs
- o   Satisfactory but in need of upgrading to meet projected needs in next 5 years
- o   Upgrade under development / procurement

6. Which of the following services (excluding those that comprised less than 5% of your organisation's total turnover/work effort) did the organisation provide in FY 2014/15 (tick as many as apply):

- o Social / community housing management
- o Affordable housing management (i.e. housing subject to affordability requirements set by government, but not social housing)
- o Market rental housing management
- o Housing development for retention by organisation
- o Housing development for sale
- o Crisis and/or transitional housing services
- o Specialist long term accommodation services (e.g. supported housing)
- o Place management activities (e.g. precinct based services or community support)
- o Other targeted tenant welfare and/or tenant employment initiatives
- o Other housing-related core business functions? (Please specify): _____

7. Does your organisation undertake any fee for service activities?

- o No
- o Yes (Please specify): _____

CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCING

8. Can you indicate which of the following strategies your organisation has:

    i.   Given corporate priority to in the last 3 years (FY 2012/13-2014/15); and/or
    ii.   Formally committed resources to in the next 3 years (FY 2015/16-2017)
    iii. Did not prioritise in last 3 years and will not commit in next 3 years

(Tick both i. and ii. categories if appropriate)

	i. Conducted last 3 years	ii. Underway/ committed next 3 years	iii. No major action in specified time-frame
(a) A reform of organisational ethos, values, mission or culture to align with changed business directions	○	○	○
(b) A reform of governance (e.g. Board structure and membership, legal status of entity) and/or senior management arrangements to support planned business directions	○	○	○
(c) Review/reform of client service policies/directions (e.g. policy review, tenant engagement strategies, tenant well-being initiatives)	○	○	○
(d) A major overhaul of asset management planning and/or delivery arrangements	○	○	○
(e) An assessment of resource needs for business growth (e.g. workforce needs/planning, business/IT systems, corporate services, procurement policies and practices, marketing and communications)	○	○	○
(f) Development of the organisation's cultural competency (e.g. hiring Indigenous or minority group staff, cultural training of staff)	○	○	○
(g) An enhancement to external partnership arrangements (e.g. new partnerships and alliances, joint venturing)	○	○	○
(h) An enhancement to tenant engagement strategies	○	○	○
(j) Enhancement of internal housing development/project management capacity	○	○	○

9. Under your current business plan, how will the following functions be provided over the life of the plan?

	Largely provided internally	Mix of internal and external provision	Largely provided externally (e.g. via service agreements, partnerships, contractors/ consultants, shared service arrangements)	No resources earmarked
Legal services				
Maintenance services – responsive				
Maintenance services – planned				
Individual tenant support services				
Tenant and/or community engagement services				
Marketing and communication services				
Staff recruitment				
Executive recruitment				
Board recruitment				
Staff training				
Employment and training programs for residents				
Neighbourhood renewal activities – e.g. neighbourhood planning, specialist coordinators				
Strategic and business planning				
Tendering and EOI document preparation				
Housing procurement functions – e.g. development/modernisation project management				
Strategic asset management planning				
Treasury and financial/accounting				
Operational policy development				
Engagement with political processes				

BUSINESS GROWTH PLANS

10. What scale of growth in your organisation's housing operations (e.g. as reflected by annual rent revenue) are you planning for in the next 3 years (2015/16 -2017/18)?

- o Very low growth: 0 - <5% expansion (of housing operations) over next three years → GO TO QUESTION 12
- o Low growth: 5 - 10% expansion
- o Modest growth: 11 - 20% expansion
- o High growth: > 20% expansion

11. What are the main strategies that will enable the level of planned growth nominated (tick as many as apply):

- o Organisational merger(s) or takeover(s)
- o Partnership/alliance/joint venture with another (private or NFP) organisation
- o Transfer of public housing to the organisation
- o Expansion of current core service area(s) within one jurisdiction (i.e. into new towns or suburbs)
- o Expansion of current core service area(s) interstate or internationally
- o Introduction of one or more new housing services
  - ➢ Please specify what kind of new housing services your organisation will be introducing: _____
- o Current supply pipeline (e.g. NRAS)
- o New funding sources (e.g. NDIS)
- o Changing tenant mix
  - ➢ Please specify how your organisation will change your tenant mix: _____
- o Additional revenue generating activity
  - ➢ Please specify what additional revenue generating activity(s) your organisation will introduce: _____
- o Other (Please specify): _____

ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING NEEDS UNDER TWO GROWTH SCENARIOS

12. If your organisation was to increase the number of social housing tenancies under management by around 50% in the next 3-5 years (within your current jurisdiction(s)), in which of the following areas would you need to build your organisation's capacity the most (Maximum of 5)

- o Tenancy services staff recruitment and training
- o Property services staff recruitment and training
- o Delivery of quality maintenance services
- o Life cycle/strategic asset management planning
- o Treasury management and financial planning
- o Management of clients with complex needs
- o Management of multi-unit housing complexes or estates
- o IT infrastructure and business systems
- o Governance and senior management leadership/structure/processes
- o Human resources management capacity
- o Back office administrative services capacity (e.g. record keeping, compliance, contract management, budgeting)
- o Partnering arrangements with support service providers
- o Capacity to engage tenants meaningfully in the organisation's planning and service delivery
- o Other capacity building need areas (Please specify): _____

13. If your organisation was to have a pipeline of at least one new multi-dwelling residential development project each year over the next five years, in which of the following areas would you need to build your organisation's capacity the most (Maximum of 5)

- o Working capital for development
- o Access to development sites
- o In-house project management capability
- o In-house Treasury and financial capability
- o Contract negotiation and administration
- o Audit control and risk management systems
- o Sourcing external specialist advice/technical support (e.g. planning, architecture, contract management)
- o Lack of suitable development partner(s)
- o Community opposition to development
- o Cash flows to support private financing
- o Board capacity (e.g. commercial experience) and risk appetite
- o Senior management capacity (e.g. commercial acumen)
- o Information on local housing needs
- o Other capacity building need areas (Please specify): _____

AFFORDABLE HOUSING INDUSTRY CAPACITY

14. Outside of your own organisation, which of the following factors do you consider to be the greatest barriers to the growth of the Australian affordable housing industry in the next three years (Maximum of 5)

- o Lack of an integrated national / state housing policy
- o Lack of a coherent legislative framework for the affordable housing industry
- o Lack of an industry-wide strategic plan and affordable housing targets (state or national)
- o Lack of specialist industry knowledge within relevant government agencies
- o Inadequate administrative capacity within relevant government agencies (state or national)
- o Current industry regulation requirements and methods (i.e. under the NRSCH or state equivalent)
- o Lack of durable public subsidy
- o Inadequate levels of funding and other resourcing for industry capacity building and supporting infrastructure
- o Access to private finance on acceptable terms
- o Insufficient funding for tenant support and community engagement services
- o Lack of low income home ownership products (e.g. shared equity)
- o Inadequate planning policy in support of affordable housing development
- o Current rent setting arrangements
- o Current workforce training arrangements
- o Other (Please specify): _____

15. In your own words, please elaborate on what you think should be the key priorities for strengthening the institutions that support the affordable housing industry (e.g. professional associations, financial intermediaries)? _____

_____

16. In the last FY (2014/15) did your organisation receive financial or non-financial support (e.g. in kind assistance, free services, to the equivalent value of $5,000 or more) for any type of capacity building activity from the following agencies? If so, what was the support directed to? Please describe.

Federal Government	
State Government	
Local Government	
Private sector organisation (e.g. pro bono services)	
Peak industry body	
Industry peer (e.g. another CHP)	
Professional association	
Philanthropic source (e.g. foundations/charities/ individual benefactor)	

For each of the following questions about capacity building (Q17-Q20) please indicate your position along the scale given.

17. For my organisation to grow there needs to be a significant enhancement to the training budget.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable

18. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about the overall capacity building resources and tools that are currently available to the industry. Capacity building resources and tools currently available…

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
a. Meet the needs of my organisation	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. Are regularly accessed and used by my organisation	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. Are of a high quality	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. Need to be adapted to be useful for my organisation	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. Are kept up-to-date	○	○	○	○	○	○

f. Have been largely wasted or poorly targeted in my jurisdiction	○	○	○	○	○	○

19. Industry peak bodies and peer networks are effective in assisting my organisation to build capacity.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable

20. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about the impacts of community housing regulation in your organisation. In my organisation regulation has been an important driver of improvements in…

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
a. Client service delivery	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. Property and asset management	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. Organisational governance	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. Risk management	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. Business systems and processes	○	○	○	○	○	○
f. Financial management and reporting	○	○	○	○	○	○

21a. Name of person who completed this survey: _____

21b. Organisational name: _____

This is the end of the survey. Thank you for participating.