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MEDIA RELEASE

Building the Recovery: investment in social housing will create thousands of jobs and improve social outcomes

New modelling released today by the Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) and National Shelter demonstrates how investing in a **four-year social house building program of 30,000 homes will create on average up to 18,000 full-time equivalent** jobs each year.

Wendy Hayhurst, CEO at CHIA said, “The Social Housing Acceleration and Renovation Program (SHARP) will not just deliver great quality homes to those in need but also secure great jobs for thousands of Australians. SHARP’s main benefit will fall where the job losses have been greatest in Sydney and Melbourne but will also create jobs all over Australia in regions and towns.

“With the period 2021-22 earmarked as an anticipated economic weak point, SHARP will create up to 24,500 jobs both on-site and in the wider building services industry. The Federal Government has stated that we have to maintain a laser-like focus on jobs to get Australia moving and this new modelling shows that SHARP does just that,” says Ms Hayhurst.

Adrian Pisarski, CEO at National Shelter says, “The construction industry employs around 1.2 million people, which is over 9 per cent of Australia’s 13 million jobs. Because of Covid-19, there has been a 40 per cent reduction in forward contracts and SHARP is exactly the medicine the sector needs that will start to correct our social housing shortfall.”

The Program should raise output in Australia by at least \$15.7 billion in total, over the four years of construction and increase GDP by anywhere between \$5.8 billion to \$6.7 billion.

Terry Rawnsley, Principal and Partner at SGS Economics and Planning who led the modelling says, “Building homes has wide reaching impact beyond on site jobs, it makes a call on a host of services from equipment hire to waste removal. All this activity will have positive multiplier effects through local and regional economies, as construction and local supplier employees spend their newfound wages at local cafes, stores and even a weekend away.”

John Nicolades, CEO at Bridge Housing says, “We have social housing upgrading programs ready to go now. We can also bolster economic benefits even further by improving the energy efficiency of their homes, which would cut our tenants’ energy bills, leaving them with more money to spend.”

Nicola Lemon, CEO at Hume Housing says, “Community housing organisations are ready to respond now. We are experienced developers, with a proven track record of creating jobs through previous economic stimulus initiatives. We have strong relationships with local builders and councils, in both metro and regional areas and, through the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHFIC), have access to low cost finance to make the government dollar go even further.”

Fiona Caniglia, CEO at Q Shelter says, “Investing government funds will create jobs while meeting social needs. There are 1.3 million Australians living in poverty simply because they are paying too much on housing. The new national cabinet sub-committee on housing can start making inroads to address this problem if Federal, State and Territory Governments collectively invest in SHARP which is a win-win for all.”

The Social Housing Acceleration and Renovation Program (SHARP) involves:

1. Wave 1 – social housing maintenance and upgrading
2. Wave 2 – acquisition of sites and properties requiring renovation / completion which are suitable for social housing
3. Wave 3 – shovel ready development projects
4. Wave 4 – longer term new development projects

The Program calls for total government investment of \$7.7 billion; \$7.2 billion for new build/acquisition and \$500 million for renovation of existing homes. Commonwealth contributions should be complemented by state/territory governments in the form of land and/or capital and local governments may also make a valuable contribution.

[See the full report here](#)

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