Housing system needs to address structural and generational disadvantage for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Population
Around 34,000 or 2% of South Australians identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI). The SA ATSI population is significantly younger with the median age of 23 years compared to 41 years for other South Australians.

Main locations for residency

Adelaide (54%%)
Far North (1.1%)
Yorke Peninsula (1.9%)
Port Lincoln (2.1%)
West Coast (2.2%)
Riverland (2.5%)
Pt Augusta (4.6%)
APY Lands (5.6%)
Other SA locations (26.1%)

Renting and home ownership

SA households renting
60% ATSI
30% All South Australians

Home ownership
35% ATSI
65% All South Australians

What is the problem we want to fix?

The current and historical housing system, structures and practices have contributed to generational disadvantage and welfare dependence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

While housing is only one element, it is fundamental in underpinning a range of health and social outcomes needed to contribute to Closing the Gap in disadvantage and deliver improvements in individual, family and community health and wellbeing.
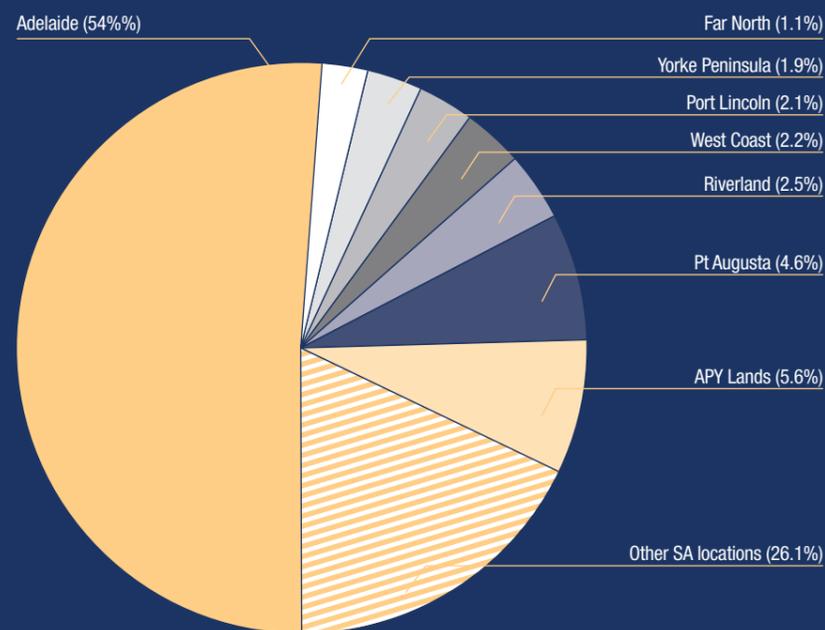
While the Strategy will encompass all people, we recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to overcome greater disadvantage, paired with cultural and family obligations that influence housing need.

Members of the Taskforce and key leaders within the Aboriginal community have highlighted the importance of identifying and calling out racism and discrimination and the significant impact that it has on access to suitable and affordable housing.
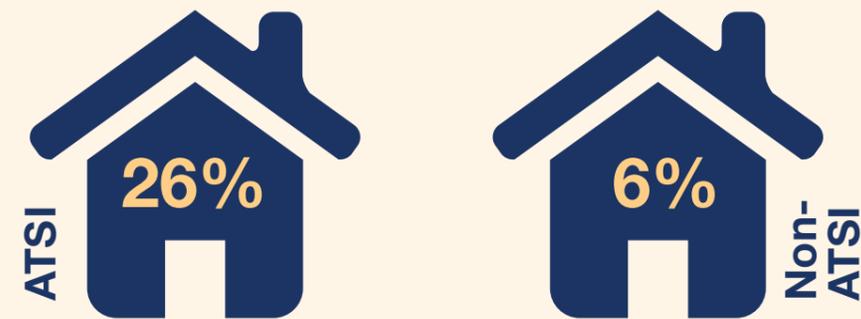
Why is it important?
Reform to housing and services for Aboriginal people across the housing and homelessness system is critical for delivering improvements across a range of health and social outcomes. In order to reform how we work with Aboriginal people and how we design and provide services, we need to not only re-think the housing system and structures, but to reshape how we partner with leaders, stakeholders and communities.

Who is impacted?
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders across South Australia, particularly those residing in discrete Aboriginal communities, people who are mobile across the housing system, people who are homeless or in crisis and people who are seeking to obtain an alternative housing solution that provides security for future generations.

ATSI   Non-ATSI

Homelessness - 9.5 times more presentations to homeless services compared to non-Aboriginal.[1]

ATSI 26%   Non-ATSI 6%

Social Housing - 26% compared to 6% of non-Aboriginal population.[2]

Discrimination in private rental [3]

80%
experienced racial discrimination

16.4%
reported to commissioner

[1] 2016 Census data | [2] 2016 Census data
[3] 2019 Shelter survey "Racial Discrimination in the Private Rental Market"