Housing - NPARIH

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NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT

Service Delivery North

- Greater Darwin Region
- Arafura Region
- Arnhem Region

Arnhem Region

» 4 Mainland Communities

  » Yirrkala, Gunyangara, Gapuwiyak and Ramingining

» 5 Island Communities

  » Angurugu, Umbakumba, Milyakburra, Galiwin'ku and Milingimbi

» 2 Townships (Mining Leases)

  » Nhulunbuy and Alyangula

National Partnership Agreements

- **The National Partnership on Remote Indigenous Housing (NPARIH)**
- **The National Partnership Agreement on Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory (SFNT)**

NPARIH

A ten year funding strategy commencing in 2008, targeting 73 Indigenous communities, aimed at:

1. *increasing the supply of new houses and improving the condition of existing houses in remote Indigenous communities;*
2. *significantly reducing severe overcrowding in remote Indigenous communities; and*
3. *ensuring that rental houses are well maintained and managed in remote Indigenous communities.*

National Partnership Agreements Cont'd

SFNT

» The work to improve public housing conditions on remote communities continues as part of a broader agreement to improve a range of Indigenous outcomes in remote communities.

Key Points

- There have been some significant achievements since 2008.
- Implementing housing reform is still a work in progress
- The next phase will involve working more closely with tenants and with other agencies to maintain and improve living conditions.

NPARIH Aim 1

Improving the Condition of Housing

Program Scope
House Design
Safe Secure and Habitable
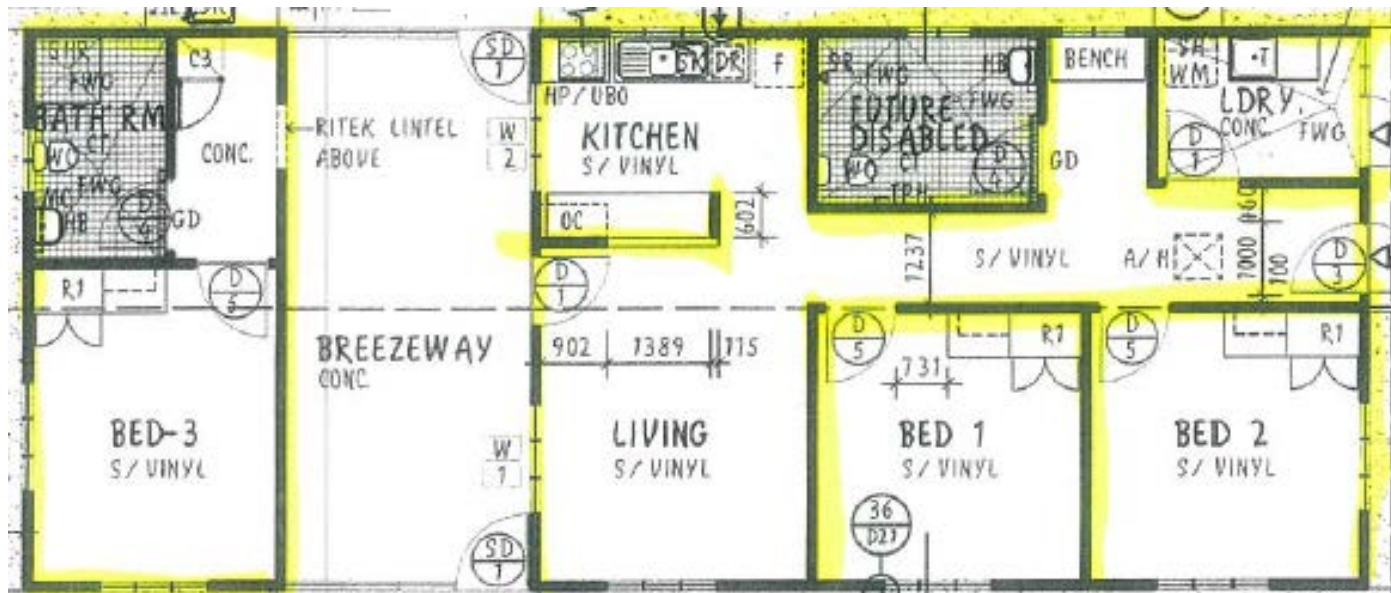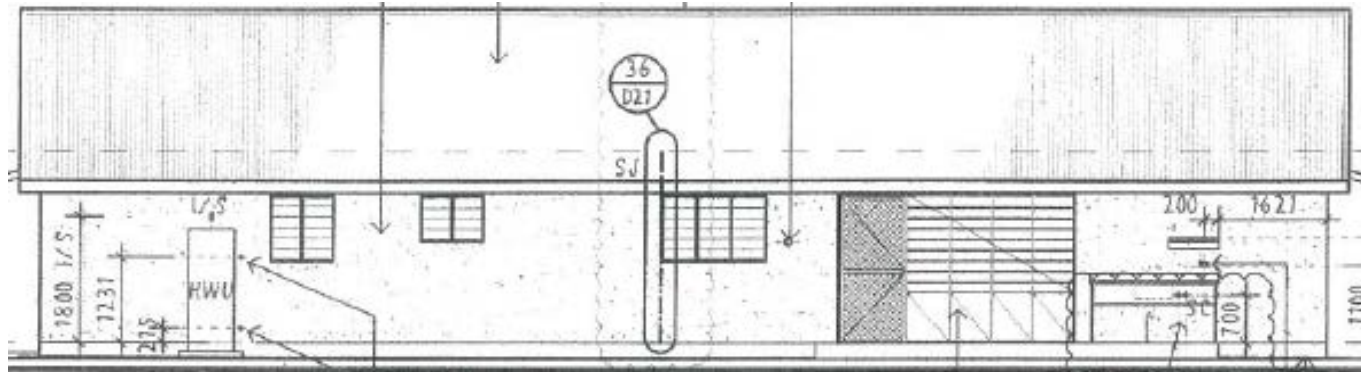**Build Standard**

Program Scope- Arnhem Region

- 335 new builds* and 535 rebuilds and refurbishments under NPARIH
- 137 upgrades under SFNT

*Includes replacement of houses demolished as "Beyond Economical Repair" and excluding cyclone works at Galiwin'ku

House Designs

The need to undertake a high volume of work quickly and efficiently limited the ability to experiment with different housing designs but there were some modest attempts to increase the flexibility of housing stock to support different ways of living.

Adaptability

There was a need to construct housing that is adaptable for a large demographic of tenants. This includes catering for persons with disabilities and mobility issues.

House Designs

Durability of New Construction: The different methods used to construct new dwellings were assessed as capable of delivering an acceptable life-span for the dwelling.

Design Features to improve functionality of dwellings. For example, the installation of stainless steel benches in kitchens, the installation of welded vinyl flooring, upgrading at least one bathroom in each dwelling to better support people with disabilities.

Refurbishments

Safe   For example, upgrading of electrical systems, including upgrading and relocating switchboards, installing RCD's and Smoke Alarms

Secure   For example, replacing doors and locks and missing security screens.

Habitable   For example, a focus in refurbishments on upgrading kitchens, bathrooms and wet areas in order to support healthy living practices such as washing people, storing and preparing food, removal of waste water.

NPARIH Aim 2
Overcrowding

- Overcrowding is an issue for all communities. In 2008 the major communities were experiencing severe overcrowding, and reducing the problem in these communities was the focus of work under NPARIH.

- Under NPARIH, there has been a significant net increase in the number of dwellings in major communities. For example, the 125 new dwellings constructed at Maningrida include 100 additional dwellings, and 25 replacement dwellings.

- The majority of new dwellings have three bedrooms. These houses are economical to build and can adequately accommodate a range of family sizes.

- While work under SFNT is continuing to upgrade housing, the number of additional dwellings, and hence the existing level of overcrowding, is will not change much in the medium term.

Composition of Households

- Most houses are multi-generational, and frequently there are people staying at the dwelling in addition to those on the tenancy agreement. To some extent this is by choice, and in other cases it is due to a combination of limited housing options and the need to meet family and cultural obligations.

- In larger communities household composition tends to be more dynamic than in smaller communities, with a greater level of movement in and out of houses.

- Population mobility between communities and Homelands (Outstations) affects household numbers.

NPARIH Aim 3
Maintenance and Management

Approach to Repairs and Maintenance

Responsive R&M   Addressing all health and safety issues and other urgent issues.

Scheduled Work   Grouping work to improve efficiency and to lower costs, and undertaking major work that involves significant expenditure.

Tenant Responsibility   Work to be undertaken at tenant expense.

Repairs and Maintenance Challenges

Residual maintenance issues

- The process of using R&M funds to continue to upgrade the standard of dwellings.

- The legacy of a huge number of large mahogany trees throughout communities threaten the integrity of buildings and damage services such as plumbing.

- Harsh water conditions on communities continue to pose issues for the functionality of hot water systems and plumbing fixtures such as taps. Work is ongoing to find solutions to these issues.

- Rectification of design or construction faults in Legacy dwellings.

Repairs and Maintenance Challenges

Tenant Behaviour

There is considerable variation between households, and between communities, but common issues include:

- Damage to windows and fly screens or loss of louvre blades. In many cases the damage is caused by tenants attempting to gain entry after losing their house keys. There is also continual damage to door locks due to forced entry into rooms and houses.
- Damage to Smoke Alarms when continual beeping occurs, either because the batteries are flat or because of a build-up of dust or dirt.
- Damage to electrical meters in an attempt to obtain free electricity.
- Blockages of toilets and sewer lines caused by the tenants using brown paper shopping bags instead of toilet paper.
- Damage by vermin such as rats and mice are getting into the houses and chewing pipes and electrical wires, aggravated in some cases by tenants not keeping their houses clean.

Tenancy Management Challenges

- Overcrowding complicates relationships and organisation within a household and can present difficulties for head tenants in getting help from household members to meet tenancy requirements.

- Households where members are in poor health or are dealing with significant social issues need support from a range of services in addition to those provided by tenancy officers.