

AHURI Limited  
Annual Report 2014–15



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## About us

The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) is a national independent research network with an expert not-for-profit research management company, AHURI Limited, at its centre.

### What is our mission?

AHURI has a public good mission to deliver high-quality research that influences policy development to improve the housing and urban outcomes of all Australians.

### What are our strategic goals?

Through active engagement, AHURI's work informs the policies and practices of governments and the housing and urban development industries, and stimulates debate in the broader Australian community.

AHURI does this by:

- delivering high-quality evidence
- influencing policy development and practice change
- maximising value for stakeholders
- building research capability and national capacity.

### How are we funded?

AHURI receives income as grants from the Australian and state and territory governments, contributions from our university partners and revenue from a diverse range of organisations.

### What do we do?

We undertake evidence-based policy development on a range of issues, including: housing and labour markets, urban growth and renewal, planning and infrastructure development, housing supply and affordability, homelessness, economic productivity and social cohesion and wellbeing.

Research leading to the advancement of knowledge on key policy issues is conducted by our network of expert research partners. Using academically rigorous approaches, our partners undertake a variety of investigative activities, ensuring the flexibility to undertake longer-term projects and also to respond quickly to new strategic policy issues as they arise.

We ensure that our research is made freely available through our publication of research and policy bulletins, positioning papers, final reports, and disseminated via our annual events program, e-newsletters, social media channels, audio and video content and the AHURI website.

### What is our structure?

AHURI Limited leads and manages the work of AHURI. We have three core business areas: Research Services; Communications; and Corporate Services.

AHURI Limited staff are experts in research management, research synthesis, knowledge transfer and research dissemination. We currently:

- manage the National Housing Research Program
- convene and host the biennial National Housing Conference
- provide a range of research consultancy services
- undertake a series of capacity building measures to develop the skills and resources of the housing, homelessness and urban policy research community in Australia
- engage the housing, homelessness and urban research, policy and practice communities in evidence informed forums, conferences, symposia, workshops and other events.

AHURI Limited, through the AHURI Limited Board, is committed to the highest standard of corporate governance, undertaking vigilant internal and external audit processes each year, and to the promotion of transparency in our operations.

## Executive message 2014–15

This year has been very exciting, as AHURI has fully implemented its Policy Development Research Model. This model is expanding the policy development potential of the core National Housing Research Program (NHRP), which AHURI has continued to effectively manage in partnership with the Australian and state and territory governments. Indeed, funding for the NHRP has been assured through to June 2017.

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### Success of the model

Together with our long established and targeted research program, AHURI is well regarded for our acknowledged independence and expertise in connecting research evidence to policy development in housing, homelessness and related urban issues. Our realisation of the Policy Development Research Model is an important progression in AHURI's engagement with all levels of government and our university network partners.

The Policy Development Research Model features a small number of collaborative Evidence-Based Policy Inquiries, with each Inquiry supported by an Inquiry Panel targeted at the discovery of new ideas and the advancement of knowledge that will address the Inquiry's policy issue, leading to policy development.

At 30 June 2015 four Inquiries were underway:

- Providing individualised welfare and reforming housing assistance
- Housing policies, labour force participation and economic growth
- Building the affordable housing industry in Australia
- The funding and delivery of programs to reduce homelessness.

We have been honoured and delighted with the high level of support and trust we have received from the policy and practice communities and their embrace of the AHURI Policy Development Research Model. This is very evident in the high calibre of people who have agreed to participate on the Inquiry Panels.

For example, the 'Providing individualised welfare and reforming housing assistance' Inquiry Panel includes: Mr Patrick McClure AO, who chaired the Australian Government's review of Australia's welfare system; Mr Bruce Bonyhady AM, Chair of the National Disability Insurance Scheme Advisory Group; Mr Steve Bevington, Managing Director of Community Housing Limited; Mr Peter White, Chief Executive, Housing and Disability Reform at the Department of Health and Human Services, Tasmania; and Mr Philip Fagan-Schmidt, Executive Director, Housing SA.

### Policy engagement

During the year, AHURI provided briefings to Australian Government and Shadow ministers responsible for housing and homelessness issues, and provided advice to state and territory governments on matters including affordable housing strategies (such as for the Tasmanian Government on the back of an election commitment) and the potential impacts of the Reform of the Federation on housing and homelessness policy.

We organised the state and territory Housing Chief Executives' Symposium in early 2015 and continued to support the chief executives as they shared and collaborated on evidence informed housing policy matters throughout the year.

### Expanding AHURI's focus

While AHURI has long been a first port of call when it comes to housing and homelessness policy development for the Australian and state and territory governments, and has stimulated debate in the broader Australian community, a key evolution over the last year has seen AHURI engage directly with a more diverse group of organisations, all of whom have a great contribution to make in the key policy areas.

This expanded engagement by AHURI is of primary benefit to our government partners. As the role of many non-government organisations is growing, it is vital that AHURI and its extensive evidence-base honestly informs the housing and homelessness policy directions that those in the wider community may choose to promote.

To this end AHURI worked keenly with a variety of organisations in the course of the year. Our outreach and engagement activities included: a presentation on homelessness for the Lord Mayors of Australia's capital cities; development of a research project on the methodologies for transferring public housing properties for the not-for-profit sector; and on 'round table' programs for the Productivity Commission and the City of Sydney. Dr Ian Winter, AHURI Executive Director, was also invited to speak at the PowerHousing Australia annual Housing Exchange Conference on the potential impacts of the Reform of the Federation White Paper on housing policy.

### Submissions to government

AHURI's knowledge, skills and expertise in drawing out the implications of research for policy development are being sought by an increasing range of government agencies. As a consequence, AHURI was invited to make submissions to a number of government inquiries not just on housing, but on other relevant issues such as tax policy. These submissions included:

- The Senate Inquiry into Affordable Housing in Australia
- The Australian Government's Tax White Paper Task Force
- The Senate Inquiry into Foreign Investment in Residential Real Estate
- The Senate Inquiry into Australia's Innovation System
- The NSW Legislative Assembly Inquiry into Tenancy Management in Social Housing
- The NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Social, Public and Affordable Housing.



## Executive message 2014–15 continued

Dr Ian Winter was invited to speak to the Senate Inquiry into Affordable Housing to elaborate on issues raised by the submission. AHURI also coordinated a panel of academic experts in affordable housing to speak to the Inquiry.

The impact of AHURI's research and policy engagement can be seen in the final report of the Senate Inquiry into Affordable Housing, which clearly singled out AHURI research—citing the findings of eight AHURI research projects. In particular, the report recommended that AHURI's research be the starting point for consideration by the Australian Government in establishing a cross-sectoral high level industry and government Housing Supply Financing Task Force and for the introduction of housing supply bonds.

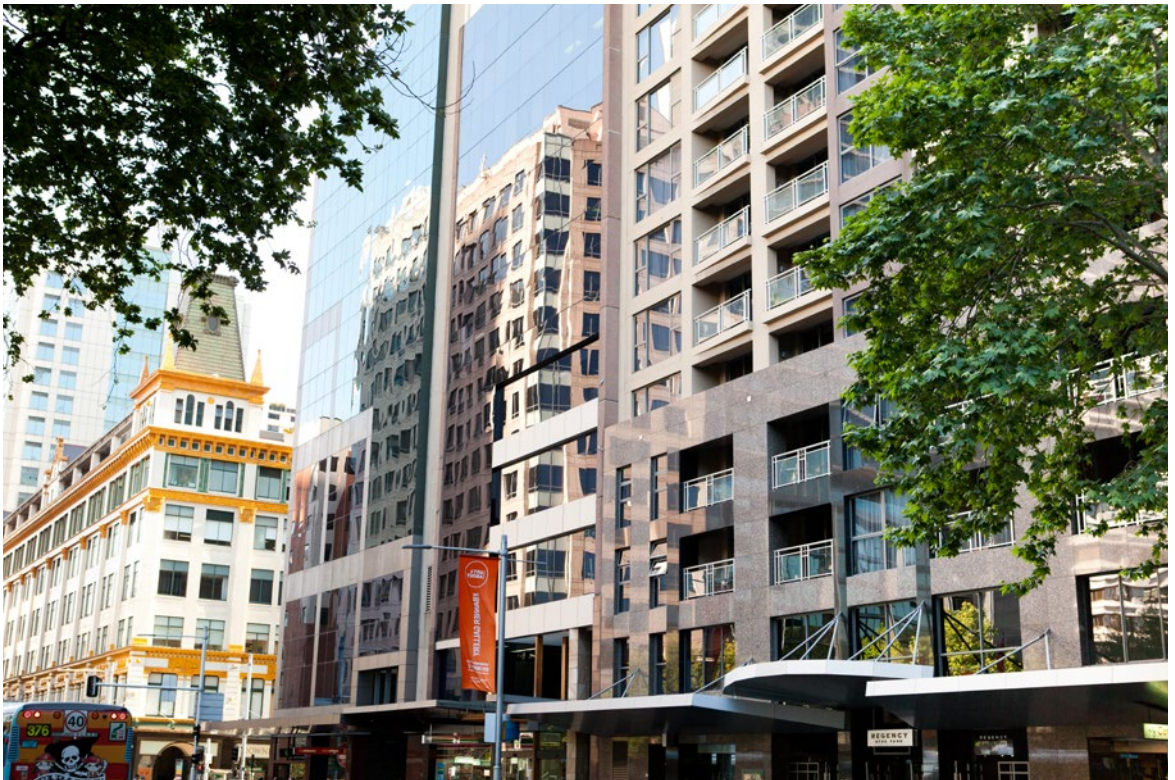
In addition, 16 AHURI research reports were cited in the Australian Government's Reform of the Federation White Paper *Issues Paper 2 – Roles and responsibilities in housing and homelessness*.

At AHURI Limited we see this is as very appropriate recognition of some of the vital work done by researchers in the AHURI university network.

### Cost-effective investment

AHURI's high-quality, policy focused research worked together with our greater level of engagement with a growing number of non-government organisations to maximise the value of the investment made by our contributing stakeholders.

Central to the success of the model is the notion of a pooled investment fund that supports the research program. No one party bears the costs of undertaking national research, and all are constructively engaged in the process of establishing research investment priorities. The partners currently comprise the Australian, state and territory governments and our university partners; however, we are keen to extend the opportunity and benefits of the model to other sectors.



### Active engagement and dissemination

AHURI is a high-volume publisher of academic research reports, with 20 Final Reports, 7 Positioning Papers and 10 Research Papers and Discussion Papers published during the year.

In addition to the published research reports, AHURI delivers an events program that promotes and expands upon its research findings. This program is central to engaging with the policy community and practitioners and to informing evidence-based policy development.

In the 2014–15 year AHURI presented eight events in capital cities across Australia with topics including: 'Housing the secret to urban productivity growth'; 'Ageing well: housing solutions for older Australians'; and 'Housing affordability: keeping a home on a low-income'.

The AHURI event, 'From here to uncertainty: the quiet revolution in Australian housing', held at Parliament House, Canberra in early December, attracted significant interest with over 20 senators and members of Parliament attending, including the Chair of the Senate Economics References Committee into Affordable Housing. The event furthered the discussion on government welfare reform and housing assistance, which was the subject of the Committee's subsequent report.

### Work towards the National Housing Conference 2015

AHURI made a huge commitment throughout the year in its preparations towards convening the October 2015 National Housing Conference in Perth in partnership with the WA Department of Housing. By the end of June 2015, all targets such as sponsorships, speakers and delegate numbers were on track to be achieved. There is still much more to be done but all expectations are that the 2015 conference will be as successful and essential for policy-makers, practitioners and researchers as previous National Housing Conferences.

### Thanks to our outgoing Chair

The AHURI Limited Board would like to thank our outgoing Chair, Mr Rodney Fehring, for his substantial contribution. Rod has served as Chair of the Board since March 2008 and has been a dedicated and insightful Chairperson, making a hugely important contribution to the success of our organisation through his strategic vision and business foresight.

As Chair, Rod was very generous in applying the valuable knowledge and skills he brought from his professional experiences at the very highest level of large business corporations. He was very strong in advocating for and leading AHURI's ongoing development, for example in encouraging the diversification of revenue, and in supporting AHURI's senior executives to undertake advanced management training and development.

All at AHURI wish Rod great success with his future and we thank him for the magnificent work he has done on our behalf over the years.

Finally we would like to thank all our staff at AHURI. Their professionalism, skill and enthusiasm has made it possible for us to deliver a high-quality, policy-focused evidence-base and associated activities, which is helping to provide better housing outcomes for all Australians.

**Dr Ian Winter, Executive Director**

**Mr Tony De Domenico, Chairperson**



## Corporate governance 2014–15

AHURI Limited is a management company that leads and manages the work of the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, ensuring the overall success of its operations.

The AHURI Limited Board is ultimately responsible for making sure that AHURI Limited is governed in an effective and ethical manner and in accordance with its legal obligations. It is committed to the highest standards of corporate governance and the promotion of transparency in its operations.

The AHURI Limited Board determines the strategic direction of the company and supports the goals set out in the AHURI Limited Strategic Plan. The Board operates under the AHURI Limited Corporate Governance Charter, the AHURI Limited Constitution and Australian Corporations Law.

The AHURI Limited Board is responsible for:

- establishing and determining the powers and functions of the committees of the Board, including the Audit, Finance and Risk Management Committee
- determining the strategic direction of the company
- determining policies governing the operations of the company
- ensuring statutory compliance
- ensuring compliance with the terms and conditions of the Institute's Funding Agreement and Participants Agreement for the National Housing Research Program
- ensuring sound financial operations and solvency
- approving an annual budget and monitoring financial performance
- identifying significant risks and reviewing how these are managed
- monitoring the adequacy, appropriateness and operation of internal controls
- tracking all major policy issues and quality assurance in respect to research outputs
- ensuring compliance with all matters as prescribed by law, including, but not limited to, occupational health and safety and the environment

- appointing the Executive Director and undertaking their performance reviews
- appointing the Company Secretary.

Board Directors are required to disclose any potential conflict of interest. Where a potential conflict exists, a Director must abstain from voting on the matter and may be required also to abstain from deliberation on the matter.

### New Chair of AHURI Limited Board

The Board are very pleased to welcome Mr Tony De Domenico as the new Chair of the AHURI Limited Board. Tony was appointed by the Federal Minister for Social Services, the Hon. Scott Morrison MP, and brings a wealth of experience to the position.

Tony has a distinguished career in housing, higher education and government. He is a former MP of the ACT Legislative Assembly with ministerial responsibilities for Urban Service and Industrial Relations and served as Trade Commissioner to Italy. Other appointments include: Executive Director, Urban Development Institute of Australia, Victoria; Chair, Places Victoria; President, Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry; and Deputy Chancellor, La Trobe University. He is currently a Director of Common Equity Housing Victoria, a registered housing association that provides rental properties for lower-income households.

Tony brings a unique and valuable mix of experience to the position. His knowledge of the affordable housing industry, higher education and government policy is a perfect fit with AHURI's public good mission to fund, conduct, synthesise and disseminate high-quality policy-relevant research for better housing, homelessness and urban outcomes.



### New Directors

The Board welcomed Ms Anne Bradford, Ms Georgina Harrison, Ms Marion Bennett (alternate director to Ms Georgina Harrison), Ms Anne Campbell (alternate director to Ms Georgina Harrison), Mr Iain Scott, Professor Patrick Nixon and Professor Andrew Wells as new Directors during the year.

### Retiring Directors

The following Directors completed their term during 2014–15: Mr Rodney Fehring, Mr Peter White, Ms Anne Bradford, Dr Campbell Thomson, Mr Mike Allen, Ms Serena Wilson, Mr Paul McBride (alternate director to Ms Serena Wilson), Ms Marion Bennett (alternate director to Ms Georgina Harrison) and Professor Patrick Nixon. AHURI thanks them for their valued contributions.

The AHURI Limited Board Directors at 30 June 2015 are as follows:

Director	Category	Appointed
<b>Mr Tony De Domenico</b> (Chair)	Independent	11 December 2014
<b>Ms Anne Campbell</b> (alternate director to Ms Georgina Harrison)	State and territory governments	1 April 2015
<b>Dr Jeffrey Harmer AO</b>	Independent	11 December 2011
<b>Ms Georgina Harrison</b>	State and territory governments	10 September 2014
<b>Mr Iain Scott</b>	Australian Government	30 March 2015
<b>Professor Jennie Shaw</b>	University	6 January 2014
<b>Ms Meredith Sussex AM</b>	Independent	14 December 2010
<b>Professor Andrew Wells</b>	University	9 June 2015
<b>Dr Ian Winter</b>	Executive Director	4 July 2003

### Board meetings held during the year:

24 September 2014  
10 December 2014  
1 April 2015  
10 June 2015

### Audit, Finance and Risk Management Committee

The Board has delegated specific authorities to the Audit, Finance and Risk Management Committee. The Committee acts as an advisory body to the Board ensuring that the principles of good corporate governance are implemented and maintained. The Committee assists the Board in fulfilling its corporate governance responsibilities, and is responsible for overseeing the company's risk management and internal control systems, accounting policies and practices, internal and external audit functions and financial reporting.

### Chair

Dr Jeffrey Harmer AO

### Members

Mr Tony De Domenico  
Ms Meredith Sussex AM

### Audit, Finance and Risk Management Committee Meetings held during the year:

27 August 2014  
5 November 2014  
4 March 2015  
20 May 2015

## The year in review 2014–15

### Informing policy development

Research funded through AHURI on housing, homelessness and related urban issues contributes actively to national policy development. We understand the importance of effective dissemination of our research findings, including robust engagement with Australia's housing policy and practice communities.

AHURI research findings are disseminated actively through a variety of platforms, with the aim of making our research accessible to a range of communities, audiences and stakeholders. All research findings are available for download via the AHURI website, and promoted through a weekly subscription based e-update and monthly report summary, a fortnightly Evidence Review, a range of social media platforms, a national events and conference program as well as audio and video recordings from events.

During the 2014–15 year we published 20 peer-reviewed Final Reports, 18 papers in our Research & Policy Bulletin series, 7 Positioning Papers, 10 Research Papers and Discussion Papers and 18 online articles in the *Evidence Review* series. A total of 90,359 reports were downloaded from the AHURI website, including 44,786 Final Reports, 17,905 Positioning Papers, 18,844 Research & Policy Bulletins and 8,824 other research papers. In addition, the *Evidence Review* series received 20,827 website page views.

In the course of the year, an average of 4,068 AHURI e-newsletter were sent out weekly to our subscribers. The weekly e-newsletter keep subscribers informed of what is happening at AHURI, from the release of our latest research through to AHURI submissions to government and forthcoming events.

In the previous 12 months we convened eight AHURI events in six states and territories with a total of 591 delegates. Of these delegates, 34 per cent were from the Australian or state and territory governments and 42 per cent from the community housing and private sectors.

Surveys of those who attended these events showed that the vast majority found them to be 'Very or somewhat useful' in respect to their work role. Indeed, 100 per cent of those surveyed at two events found the event to be 'Very or somewhat useful', an excellent outcome.

Audio and video recordings of event presentations feature on the AHURI website. These resources are a great way for people who were unable to attend the event to engage with the research and to understand the findings.

#### AHURI in the media

The findings of AHURI research are cited regularly in the print and digital media. Over 240 stories and articles referenced AHURI research during the year.

These stories appeared in newspapers such as the *Australian Financial Review* and *The Australian*, and included Dr Ian Winter appearing in a story for television station Channel Nine.

#### National Housing Conference 2015

The National Housing Conference is an integral part of AHURI's communications strategy and the single largest cross-sectoral gathering of housing professionals in Australia. The conference functions as a key vehicle for knowledge transfer informing the development of evidence-based policy and practice.

This year has seen an intensity of work by AHURI staff to deliver the 2015 Conference, which is being convened by AHURI in partnership with the WA Department of Housing in Perth in late October. The success of the work to date has seen all delegate, sponsorship and program targets being met or exceeded by the end of June 2015.

### **New AHURI website**

With the implementation of the Policy Development Research Model, AHURI is redesigning its website so as to communicate fully the issues, context, practices and previous research findings of important policy questions that have been determined by the Australian and state and territory governments. Consequently, the focus of the website is changing from a research management interface to a policy development and engagement interface.

AHURI staffing resources were redirected to the new website in early 2015 and by the end of June 2015 an external website design company had been engaged to create the site.



## The year in review 2014–15 continued

### National Housing Research Program

AHURI Limited invested around \$4.6 million during the year in high-quality, policy-oriented housing research and associated activities through the National Housing Research Program.

The National Housing Research Program is managed by AHURI Limited on behalf of the Australian Government and state and territory governments. It is a collective enterprise which receives funding from its government and university partners. The National Housing Research Program's mandate is to deliver high-quality, policy-relevant research that is purposeful and contributes actively to national housing, homelessness and related urban policy development and practice change.

AHURI Limited is pleased to acknowledge the active participation and commitment of its partner universities in the National Housing Research Program network. Their dedication and specialist research skill enables AHURI Limited to draw on the best research expertise available in Australia. The continued support of these universities is appreciated.



#### Implementing the Policy Development Research Model

The National Housing Research Program 2015 Funding Round was the first to implement the Policy Development Research Model in full. The model features a small number of collaborative Evidence-Based Policy Inquiries, with each Inquiry supported by an Inquiry Panel charged with the advancement of knowledge in response to the Inquiry's policy issue, leading to policy development.

The 2015 National Housing Research Program Research Agenda was developed in consultation with government, industry and community stakeholders and approved by the AHURI Limited Board.

Three new Inquiry topics were funded and are now being investigated:

- Housing policies, labour force participation and economic growth
- Building the affordable housing industry in Australia
- The funding and delivery of programs to reduce homelessness.

One standalone project was also funded:

- The housing careers of Disability Support Pension recipients.

The Policy Development Research Model has already proven to be very successful and has received strong endorsement by key stakeholders. This is reflected in the expertise and standing of people who have contributed either to the rigorous selection process or agreed to participate on the Inquiry Panels.

## Publication of AHURI research

During the 2014–15 year, AHURI published 20 peer-reviewed Final Reports, 7 Positioning Papers, and 10 Research Papers and Discussion Papers as part of the ongoing National Housing Research Program.

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### AHURI Final Reports: 2014–15:

No. 223: Progressing tenancy management reform on remote Indigenous communities

No. 224: Refugees, housing, and neighbourhoods in Australia

No. 225: Disadvantaged places in urban Australia: analysing socio-economic diversity and housing market performance

No. 226: Wellbeing outcomes of lower income renters: a multilevel analysis of area effects

No. 227: The spatial dynamics of homelessness in Australia 2001–11

No. 228: Living with place disadvantage: community, practice and policy

No. 229: Social housing exits: incidence, motivations and consequences

No. 230: Underemployment and housing insecurity: an empirical analysis of HILDA data

No. 231: Thirty years of public housing supply and consumption: 1981–2011

No. 232: Generational change in home purchase opportunity in Australia

No. 233: Housing affordability dynamics: new insights from the last decade

No. 234: Understanding the spatial impacts of direct and indirect government housing expenditure

No. 235: Changes in the supply of affordable housing in the private rental sector for lower income households, 2006–11

No. 236: Processes for developing affordable and sustainable medium-density housing models for greyfield precincts

No. 237: Strategies of Australia's leading not-for-profit housing providers: a national study and international comparison

No. 238: The structural drivers of homelessness in Australia 2001–11

No. 239: Community Land Trusts and Indigenous communities: from strategies to outcomes

No. 240: Supportive housing to address homelessness

No. 241: Supply shortages and affordability outcomes in the private rental sector: short and longer term trends

No. 242: Housing priorities of people with dementia: security, continuity and support

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## The year in review 2014–15

### National Housing Research Program continued

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#### AHURI Positioning Papers: 2014–15

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- No. 160: Assessing management costs and tenant outcomes in social housing: developing a framework

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  - No. 161: Examining the relationship between structural factors, individual characteristics, and homelessness

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  - No. 162: The role of private rental support programs in housing outcomes for vulnerable Australians

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  - No. 163: The relationship between intergenerational transfers, housing and economic outcomes

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  - No. 164: Australian demographic trends and their implications for housing subsidies

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  - No. 165: Identifying effective arrangements for tenancy management service delivery to remote Indigenous communities

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  - No. 166: The opportunity of residential property investment vehicles in enhancing affordable rental housing supply

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#### AHURI Research Papers and Discussion Papers: 2014–15

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- Research Paper: Addressing concentrations of disadvantage—Auburn case study report

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  - Research Paper: Addressing concentrations of disadvantage—Emerton/Mount Druitt case study report

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  - Research Paper: Addressing concentrations of disadvantage—Logan Central/Logan City case study report

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  - Research Paper: Addressing concentrations of disadvantage—Russell Island case study report

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  - Research Paper: Processes for developing affordable and sustainable medium-density housing models for greyfield precincts: Appendix 1

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  - Research Paper: Processes for developing affordable and sustainable medium-density housing models for greyfield precincts: Appendix 2

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  - Research Paper: Spatial disadvantage: why is Australia different?

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  - Research Paper: Housing markets and socio-spatial disadvantage: an Australian perspective

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  - Discussion Paper: Rooming house futures: governing for growth, transparency and fairness: Victorian Discussion Paper

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  - Discussion Paper: Rooming house futures: governing for growth, transparency and fairness: New South Wales Discussion Paper

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#### AHURI submissions to Government

Based on the findings acquired through the National Housing Research Program, AHURI was invited to make submissions to a number of government inquiries in the 2014–15 year. These included:

- Senate Inquiry into Affordable Housing in Australia
- Australian Government Tax White Paper Task Force
- Senate Inquiry into Foreign Investment in Residential Real Estate
- Senate Inquiry into Australia's Innovation System
- NSW Legislative Assembly Inquiry into Tenancy Management in Social Housing;
- NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into Social, Public and Affordable Housing.

The impact of AHURI's research and policy engagement, achieved through the National Housing Research Program, can be seen in the final report of the Senate Inquiry into Affordable Housing, which cited eight AHURI research projects.

## Dr Dallas Rogers

Winner of the 2015 Federal Minister's Award for Early Career Housing Researcher



The prestigious Federal Minister's Award for Early Career Housing Researcher recognises excellence among academic researchers beginning their careers in housing and urban research. The prize, which includes a cash prize of \$500 and trophy, is sponsored by AHURI and is awarded at the annual Australasian Housing Researchers Conference.

This year the award celebrates the work of Dr Dallas Rogers from the University of Western Sydney.

Dr Rogers won the award for his research paper, *Enabling individual foreign investment in residential real estate: on becoming a foreign real estate investor*.

The research funded by two University of Western Sydney Early Career Researcher grants, focused on the global real estate industry and was conducted in Singapore, China and Australia. It reported on five important dimensions of foreign real estate investment in Australia: the brokerage role and tools of the global real estate industries; the different types of foreign real estate investors; the different motivations for investing in foreign real estate; the complicated cultural identities of foreign investors and sales agents; and the regulatory failures of managing foreign real estate investment.

Dallas lectures in urban studies within the School of Social Sciences and Psychology. His interests lie in the relationships between globalising urban space, discourse and technology networks, and housing poverty and wealth. His AHURI supported PhD and postdoctoral studies included a critical analysis of Australian urbanism through fine-grained empirical research with public housing communities and a study on housing policy in Australia. The latter led to his current research focus on super-rich transnational property investors and their agents.

Dallas is interested also in using digital media techniques to communicate research findings to non-academic audiences. His published findings have received extensive media coverage and he has written opinion editorials for *The Guardian*, *The Conversation* and *The Drum (ABC)*. His views have been sought in interviews by *The Australian*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *Financial Review*, ABC Radio and other media news outlets.

AHURI is proud to sponsor the Early Career Housing Researcher award and to encourage the development of researchers who will expand the evidence-base of important housing and homelessness issues into the future.

## The year in review 2014–15 continued

### AHURI Research Centre activities

The University of Western Sydney withdrew from the AHURI research centre network on 31 December 2014.

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#### AHURI Research Centre

##### Curtin University

Director, Associate Professor Steven Rowley

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##### Research projects

- Subsidising the supply of affordable rental housing: an international comparison
- Modelling housing need in Australia to 2025
- An investigation into the drivers of housing supply responsiveness in Australia

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##### Postgraduate Scholars

**Christine Eon** Low cost low carbon housing: what makes the most difference?

**Jemma Green** What are the challenges and synergies to delivering low cost and low carbon housing in Perth and how can this be mainstreamed?

**Johanna Mitchell** Exploring the role of mobility, poverty and labour market attachment in explaining the relationship between structural factors and aggregate rates of homelessness in Australia

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#### AHURI Research Centre

##### RMIT University

Director, Professor Robin Goodman (resigned 3 September 2014)

Professor Jago Dodson

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##### Research projects

- Wellbeing outcomes of lower income renters: a multilevel analysis of area effects
- The spatial dynamics of homelessness in Australia 2001–11

- Underemployment and housing insecurity: an empirical analysis of HILDA data
- Housing affordability dynamics: new insights from the last decade
- The structural drivers of homelessness in Australia 2001–11
- Rooming house futures: governing for growth, fairness and transparency
- Making connections: housing, productivity and economic development
- Australian demographic trends and their implications for housing subsidies
- The inter-relationship between structural factors and individual risk factors in explaining homelessness
- A new look at housing and employment decisions
- Harnessing housing policy for economic productivity
- Public housing transfers and affordable housing system development in a federal context
- Creating capacities for supporting the transition of public housing to third sector control
- Evaluating housing and health outcomes at Lakewood

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##### Postgraduate Scholars

**Simon Colman** Energy efficient urban forms: an exploration of the relationship between city shape and energy demand

**Christian Roggenbuck** Community as 'learnt capacity' amongst residents with culturally diverse backgrounds in masterplanned estates

**Kristen Bell** Elements of public transport service quality

**Cael Leskovec** The historical development of certainty in Melbourne metropolitan planning



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## AHURI Research Centre

Swinburne University of Technology

Director, Dr Wendy Stone

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### Research projects

- Thirty years of public housing supply and consumption: 1981–2011
- Generational change in home purchase opportunity in Australia
- Changes in the supply of affordable housing in the private rental sector for lower income households, 2006–11
- Supply shortages and affordability outcomes in the private rental sector: short and longer term trends
- Sustaining private rental tenancies: targeted tenant support across life events and housing transitions
- Housing assistance demand, dynamics and provision Australia: a household-based policy analysis
- The funding and delivery of homelessness services: case study evidence
- The impact of mixed funding sources on homelessness support for Indigenous Australians

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### Postgraduate Scholars

**Deb Batterham** Exploring innovative public land and finance arrangements that have promise for increasing the supply of affordable, urban housing in Australia

**Mandy Brent-Houghton** The invisible descent into poverty? The housing of older single women in Australia

**Shae Hunter** How do structures and practices in the Australian private rental sector contribute to the livability and environmental performance of properties?

**Sarah Greenlees** The impact of social environments and housing tenure on spatial disadvantage

**Mark Singer** Sustaining social housing: resilience in a public housing system

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### Postdoctoral Research Fellow

**Dr Lucy Groenhardt**

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## AHURI Research Centre

The University of Adelaide

Director, Dr Emma Baker (resigned 29 January 2015)

Professor Andrew Beer

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### Research projects

- Housing and Indigenous disability: lived experiences of housing and community infrastructure
- The role of private rental support programs in housing outcomes for vulnerable Australians

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### Postgraduate Scholars

**Annette Bardsley** Demographic change, biodiversity conservation and bushfires: planning for sustainable futures within peri-urban regions of Mediterranean Australia and France

**Rachel Bills** Healthy housing for an ageing population: examining thermal comfort and affordability from the inside out

**Jasmine Palmer** Unlocking the 'black-box' of medium-density housing provision in Australian urban regeneration

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### Postdoctoral Research Fellow

**Dr Victoria Cornell**

## The year in review 2014–15

### AHURI Research Centre activities continued

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#### AHURI Research Centre

The University of New South Wales

Director, Professor Hal Pawson

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##### Research projects

- Disadvantaged places in urban Australia: analysing socio-economic diversity and housing market performance
- Living with place disadvantage: community, practice and policy
- Social housing exits: incidence, motivations and consequences
- Understanding the spatial impacts of direct and indirect government housing expenditure
- Changes in the supply of affordable housing in the private rental sector for lower income households, 2006–11
- Strategies of Australia's leading not-for-profit housing providers: a national study and international comparison
- Supportive housing to address homelessness
- Cost effectiveness and tenant outcomes in social housing
- Housing affordability, central city economic productivity and the lower income labour market
- Accommodating NDIS: maximising housing choice in a reformed disability sector
- NDIS, housing assistance and choice and control for people with disability
- Recent public housing transfer experience in Australia: implications for industry development
- Building Australia's affordable housing industry capacity

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##### Postgraduate Scholars

**Elizabeth Whittaker** Exploring the associations between homelessness, housing and substance use

**Phillippa Carnemolla** Enabling built environments: home modifications and waged care substitution

**Melanie Andersen** Housing and its relationship to health for Aboriginal people in urban NSW

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#### AHURI Research Centre

The University of Sydney

Director, Professor Nicole Gurrán

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##### Research projects

- The relationship between intergenerational transfers, housing and economic outcomes
- Housing markets, economic productivity, and risk: international evidence and policy implications for Australia
- House prices, mortgage debt and labour supply: evidence from Australian households
- Housing tenure, mobility and the labour market
- House prices, household debt and the macroeconomy: evidence from Australia after the GFC

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##### Postgraduate Scholars

**Catherine Gilbert** Planning systems, policy change and housing market outcomes

**Mike Harris** Authenticity in the competitive city precincts

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## AHURI Research Centre

### University of Tasmania

Director, Dr Daphne Habibis

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#### Research projects

- Progressing tenancy management reform on remote Indigenous communities
- Housing priorities of people with dementia: security, continuity and support
- Individualised forms of welfare provision and reform of Australia's housing assistance system
- Identifying effective arrangements for managing remote Aboriginal tenancies
- An individualised welfare approach to housing assistance: conceptual foundations and international experience
- The housing careers of disability support pension recipients

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#### Postgraduate Scholars

**Tamlin Gorter** Risky business: can Australians afford the house and the kids?

**Salvin Gounder** An exploration of the financial problems faced by state housing authorities in managing their stock and the strategies to address these problems, including stock transfer to the community-housing sector

**Fiona Proudfoot** Understanding cultural differences at the frontline of social housing

**Gina Zappia** Housing in the private rental sector: a site for investment or a place to live? Investigating the interplay between landlords, tenants, and the structures that inform the experience of secure occupancy

**Kathleen Flanagan** New public management and government services provision

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## AHURI Research Centre

### The University of Western Australia

Director, Winthrop Professor Paul Flatau

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#### Research projects

- Refugees, housing, and neighbourhoods in Australia
- The cost effectiveness of sustaining tenancies of formerly homeless clients with high needs
- Who supports the homeless? An exploration of the funding of Australian homelessness services

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#### Postgraduate Scholars

**Katia Defendi** Temporary settlements, natural resources, and human health: searching for balance through urban metabolism

**Francesca Perugia** Targeting appropriate design in affordable housing for culturally and linguistically diverse migrant groups

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## AHURI Research Centre

### University of Western Sydney

(withdrew from the network on 31 December 2014)

Director, Associate Professor Michael Darcy

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#### Research projects

- Community Land Trusts and Indigenous communities: from strategies to outcomes
- The opportunity of residential property investment vehicles in enhancing affordable rental housing supply

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#### Postgraduate Scholars

**Gordon Bijen** Designing 'community': the significance of place and urban design in public housing renewal

**Martin Nichols** Australian infrastructure costs associated with compact and dispersed cities

**Nicole Moore** The engagement of Indigenous epistemology and institutions in policy making: a case study of Aboriginal housing policy in NSW and the implications for an Aboriginal housing research agenda

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#### Postdoctoral Research Fellow

**Dr Dallas Rogers**

## Associate Professor Rachel Ong

Curtin University



*'AHURI and I go back a long way. After I completed my PhD, my first job was as a research officer on the first AHURI National Research Venture. The job lasted three years, and gave me the space to really cement my research skills.'*

Born in Malaysia, Rachel Ong came to Australia to do an undergraduate degree in economics and finance at Murdoch University. During that time she found she was drawn to understanding the interactions between economics and social policy. This led to her undertaking a PhD on housing and labour market issues that affect older Australians.

*'I had Professor Gavin Wood as my supervisor. He had a strong influence on my interest in housing and how its economic aspects affect our everyday lives.'*

Rachel was awarded a Postdoctoral Fellowship from Curtin University before being appointed as a senior lecturer and, is now Deputy Director at the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre. Much of her work is on the economics of housing, and she has a strong interest in the intersection of housing and ageing issues.

She was a key researcher in influential AHURI work on the impacts of the Henry Tax Review (with Gavin Wood); on modelling the interactions between housing assistance and labour market participation; and on housing equity withdrawals by older homeowners. Findings from the

equity withdrawal research were cited in an OECD report on pensions, and have led to Rachel being invited to national policy round tables and discussions on the issue.

Currently, Rachel is leading the AHURI Evidence-Based Policy Inquiry, 'Housing policies, labour force participation and economic growth'. The Inquiry is supporting housing policy by shedding light on the significance of causal mechanisms that link housing and economic growth (including employment participation, mobility, housing supply and wealth effects).

*'Many view housing as social issue. There isn't a wide appreciation of the role of housing in the wider economy. For example, problems with the housing economy in the USA were a major cause of the global financial crisis in 2007. And even when people understand that housing is important to the economy, in Australia we don't have sufficient empirical evidence to support our intuitive understanding and to guide housing policy that supports economic growth.'*

Besides being leader of the Inquiry, which involves co-ordinating 18 team members across five projects in three different universities, Rachel is also project leader on one research project as well as a team member on two other projects under the Inquiry.

*'The advantage is that I will be familiar across all the projects, which will help with linking the findings together. Part of the role of the Inquiry leader is to bring the thoughts from the projects together to generate a coherent evidence base.'*

Rachel believes that the AHURI Evidence-Based Policy Inquiry model has great benefit for policy-makers.

*'There is a challenge in linking the findings together, but ultimately we will have a critical mass of evidence to aid policy-makers. Because we're working with the AHURI model, which has a solid reputation, our research is much more likely to find its way onto the desks of the key people involved in policy development. In this case, I do hope the evidence about the links between housing and the economy is picked up by housing policy-makers as well as Treasury and the Reserve Bank.'*

## The year in review 2014–15 continued

### Research Services

AHURI Research Services provides direct and practical information for clients in the not-for-profit, government and private sectors to use in shaping policy and practice in a constantly changing environment.

Throughout 2014–15, AHURI's Research Services team has continued to build an impressive reputation as leaders in high-quality research synthesis and knowledge transfer to stimulate fresh thinking around key policy issues. When clients partner with AHURI they also engage with AHURI's extensive network of university partners. The eight AHURI University Research Centres draw on a large talented pool of researchers in a wide range of disciplines, such as urban planning and architecture, the social and political sciences and economics to investigate and resolve each client's unique needs.

Key projects in 2014–15 included:

- evaluation of the Springboard program for the Department of Health and Human Services, Victoria. The evaluation contributed to the Springboard program receiving \$21.3 million continuation funding
- review of the impact of demand-side housing subsidies on the housing market for the Ministry of Social Development, New Zealand. The report is published on the Ministry of Social Development and AHURI websites
- a 12-month policy development program developing evidence-based options for housing policy reform through a series of workshops, consultations and research outputs for the Community Services Directorate, ACT. Research Services convened two policy workshops in 2014–15 with a third scheduled for 2015–16
- report on institutional investment in affordable housing for the TOGA group, a developer of residential apartments and a leading hotel operator across Australia, NZ and Europe
- report on housing interventions for priority groups for the Department of Health and Human Services, Victoria.



## The year in review 2014–15 continued

### The inaugural ‘Berry’ Award

In 2015 Housing Choices Australia (HCA) and AHURI jointly created the Professor Mike Berry Award for Excellence in Housing Research. The award, known as ‘The Berry’, honours the outstanding contribution made by Professor Mike Berry to the affordable housing sector in Australia, and to HCA and AHURI in particular. In its application, it recognises housing research that is not only innovative and original but which has the potential to impact on housing policy and practice change.

The inaugural ‘Berry’ winners were Dr Rebecca Bentley of the Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, The University of Melbourne, and Associate Professor Emma Baker of the School of Architecture and Built Environment, The University of Adelaide, for their work into the impacts of housing affordability and tenure on mental health changes over time.

Using longitudinal data from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, the study found that the experience of being in housing that becomes unaffordable has a negative impact on people’s mental health if they are in the lower end of the income distribution. However, this relationship is modified by tenure. Hence, homeowners whose housing becomes unaffordable may be protected from the mental health effects of unaffordable housing in Australia, whereas private renters may be less protected. The research paper also discussed the implications of this finding for policy, practice and research.

The award, which includes a cash prize of \$1000, was presented at the Australasian Housing Researchers Conference dinner in Hobart in February 2015. In her acceptance of the award Dr Bentley observed:

*‘Housing shapes people’s lives: their health, employment, educational opportunities and more. We are pleased to have received this award inspired by the important work of Professor Mike Berry. It challenges us to continue to move the field of housing and health forward in innovative ways.’*

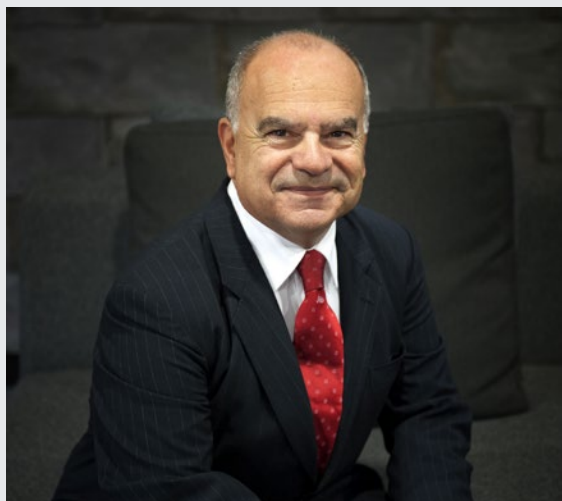
As he presented the award, Dr Ian Winter, AHURI Executive Director noted:

*‘AHURI is committed to developing the skills and resources of the housing research community in Australia, and this award goes some way to achieving this by recognising excellence amongst those just beginning their careers.’*



## Mr Tony De Domenico

### New Chair of AHURI Limited Board



As a child in the cosmopolitan city of Alexandria, Egypt, Tony grew up in a household that spoke a wealth of languages: Italian, English, French and Arabic. With the upheavals in Egypt in the 1950s his Sicilian parents decided their future lay elsewhere. On Valentine's Day 1955 the family landed at Station Pier in Port Melbourne, and soon moved to Reservoir, in the northern suburbs of Melbourne.

*'When we arrived, the white Australia Policy was still around. As a child I remember asking my mother to speak English when we were on the tram so we didn't stand out. But I do feel that it made me stronger. I took up things like football and cricket because that's what other kids did, and I found that I liked doing them, and that I was good at them.'*

After graduating from the University of Melbourne, Tony worked for Australian Customs looking for contraband at Melbourne Airport and the docks. During this time he stood unsuccessfully as an independent candidate at a council election, where his skills were recognised by the Liberal Party.

He was asked to stand for the Liberal Party in the 1976 Victorian State election, in spite of him not being a member of the party at that time. While he failed to win a seat in that election, he later became Chief of Staff for a State minister.

Tony's career expanded when he moved to Canberra after accepting an appointment with the Insurance Council of Australia. He became President of the ACT Chamber of Commerce and, in 1992, was elected as a Liberal member to the ACT Legislative Assembly.

In 1995 the Liberal party won government, with Tony as Deputy Chief Minister of the ACT.

*'It was a minority government and reinforced for me that in both politics and business, compromise and cooperation are vital if people are to work together and get things done as efficiently as possible. My motto is if it makes good sense, it makes good politics, and it usually makes good business too.'*

In 1997 Tony resigned from politics and worked as a political consultant. His interest in business development led to his appointment as Trade Commissioner to Italy. There he learned how European countries thought and went about doing business. One of his successes was in facilitating the sale of wines from the King Valley in Victoria to a wine distributor in Tuscany, a proud Italian wine producing region.

On his return to Australia Tony became Executive Director of the Victorian division of the Urban Development Institute of Australia and then Chair of Places Victoria. His appointment as Chair of the AHURI Limited Board was announced by The Hon. Scott Morrison MP in March 2015. It is a role Tony has taken on with great enthusiasm.

*'I think I am a "hands on, can do (if you need me)" type of person. I have an inclusive management style. I think it is important to delegate what needs to be done to the people with the best experience and skills. My role is to mould the team, so that we have the best people on the team, all working for the right outcome.'*

*'For AHURI, I want it to be the go-to research organisation for the Australian and state and territory governments. I want AHURI, industry and all levels of government to work cooperatively on policy and practice for affordable housing, including taxation and planning policy. I'm glad government is starting to really see housing as an infrastructure policy issue. We have to adjust our thinking along these lines, and I think we are.'*

## Financial report 2014–15

### Summary of revenue and expenditure

	2015 (\$)	2014 (\$)
<b>Revenue</b>		
National Housing Research Program	\$2,645,488	\$3,247,296
Participants fee	\$1,008,907	\$1,069,031
Dissemination recoveries	\$425,000	\$630,175
National Housing Conference	\$0	\$963,150
Other research services	\$317,325	\$672,995
Interest from banks	\$283,466	\$294,887
Other	\$2,276	\$192,208
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>\$4,682,462</b>	<b>\$7,069,742</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Research inquiries paid to AHURI Research Centres	\$2,376,080	\$3,121,968
Dissemination and research management	\$1,243,299	\$829,382
National Housing Conference	\$0	\$817,029
Other research services	\$245,077	\$607,073
Administrative and corporate governance	\$797,552	\$1,015,791
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>\$4,662,008</b>	<b>\$6,391,243</b>
<b>Net operating surplus (deficit)</b>	<b>\$20,454</b>	<b>\$678,499</b>



2014–15 AHURI Revenue (%)



- 56** National Housing Research Program
- 22** Participants fee
- 9** Dissemination recoveries
- 7** Other research services
- 6** Interest from banks

2014–15 AHURI Expenditure (%)



- 51** Research inquiries paid to AHURI Research Centres
- 27** Dissemination and research management
- 5** Other research services
- 17** Administrative and corporate governance

## Staff list at 30 June 2015

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<b>Dr Anne Badenhorst</b>	Housing Research Director
<b>Dr Nicola Brackertz</b>	Research Consultancy Manager
<b>Ms Suzie Chan</b>	Conference and Events Coordinator
<b>Mr Peter Cocks</b>	Business Manager and Head of Corporate Services Group
<b>Mr Damien Coup</b>	Digital Projects Manager
<b>Mr Jim Davison</b>	Assistant Director, Research
<b>Ms Jackie De Vries</b>	Research Program Manager
<b>Ms Jessica Dennis</b>	Digital Communications Coordinator
<b>Ms Kerry Fewings</b>	Administrative Officer
<b>Dr Michael Fotheringham</b>	Deputy Executive Director and Head of Research Services Group
<b>Ms Cathy Hammond</b>	Administrative Officer, National Housing Conference 2015
<b>Ms Karen Ho</b>	Finance Officer
<b>Ms Juan Li</b>	Research Communications Coordinator
<b>Mr Matthew Lovering</b>	Writer/Analyst
<b>Ms Jessie Pomeroy</b>	Research Administrator
<b>Mr Anthony Smeaton</b>	Deputy Communications Director
<b>Ms Caroline Thompson</b>	Communications Director and Head of Communications Group
<b>Dr Ian Winter</b>	Executive Director

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## Contact details

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