



WEBINAR

Driving maximum benefit: lessons from a quarter century of public housing transfers



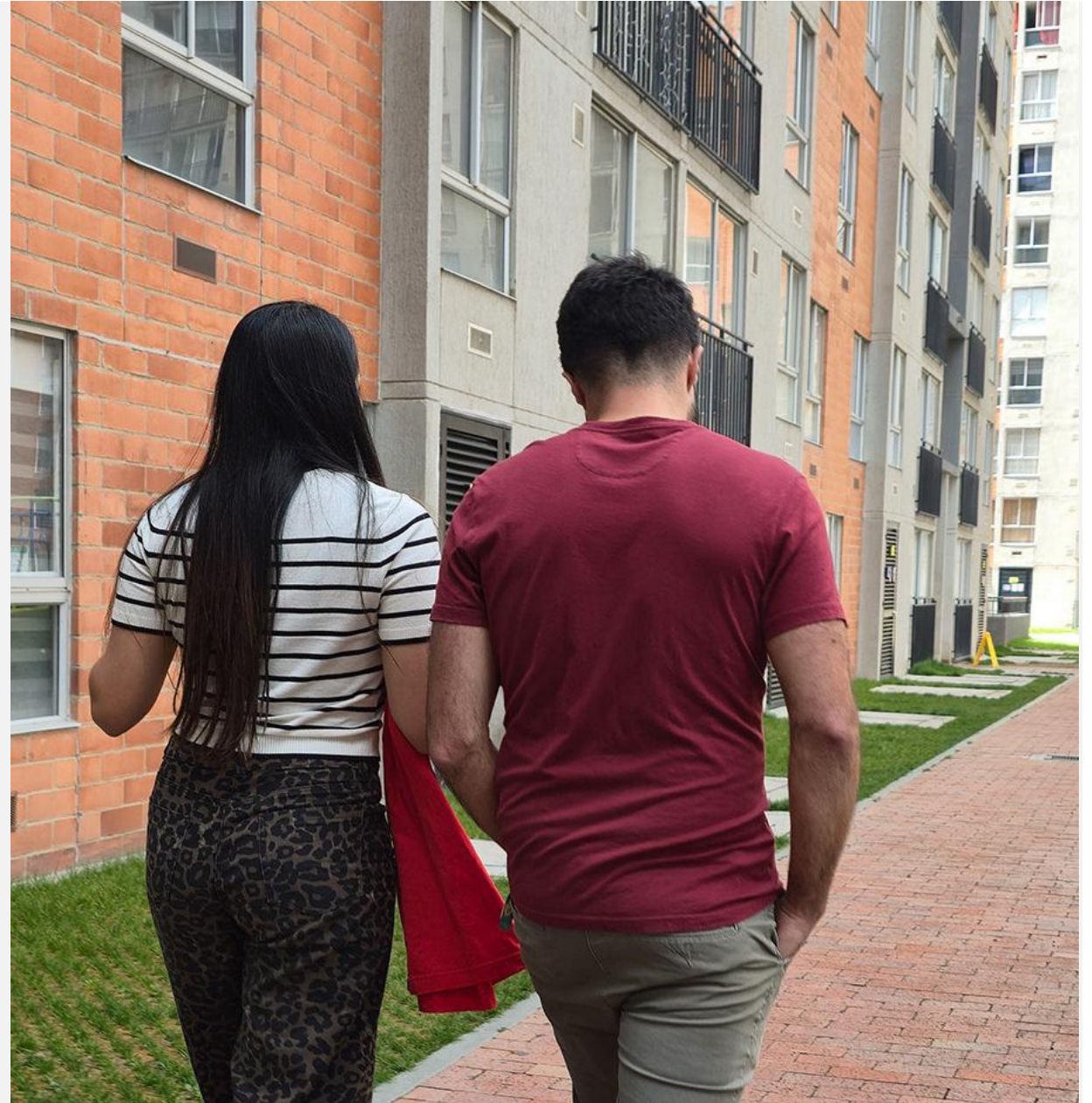
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Acknowledgement of country

AHURI acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout our nation, and we pay our respect to Elders past and present.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connections to land, sea and community, and respect their cultural, spiritual and educational practices.

The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI)

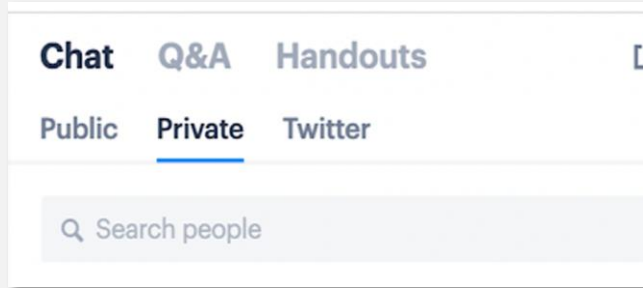
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Our research supports policy development at all levels of government, assists industry and informs the broader community.

Research partners:



Chat function



- The chat function can be found on the right-hand side of the presentation
 - Use Chat to share your thoughts with other participants
 - Use Q&A to post any questions
- Test it out by letting us know in the Chat what Lands you are joining us from today

Australian Homelessness Conference 2026

Darwin Convention Centre
7-8 October, 2026

www.aushomelessness.org.au

Early Bird registration now open
Early Bird ends 30 June



Public housing transfers: longer-term impacts on investment, tenant experience and sector outcomes

View the research in the handouts.

Authors

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- Fatemah Aminpour, University of New South Wales
- Liam Davies, RMIT University
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What the research investigated

Aim

To understand how large-scale transfers of public housing stock have influenced CHP operations, finances, housing outcomes and tenant services in the longer-term (≤ 5 years)

Approach

Survey of 14 CHPs that participated in large-scale transfers 2013-2019 ($n=13$)

3 x case studies (transfer document & financial statement analysis, asset management analysis, tenant satisfaction outcome analysis, interviews with senior exec, govt and sector representatives)

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What the research investigated

Table 1: Number of PH properties transferred from state/territory housing authorities to CHPs, 2015–16 to 2023–24

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
2015–16					1,087	BPSC		17	1,104
2016–17				122				22	144
2017–18				90	4,003	ROSAS		3	4,096
2018–19	SHMT 8,869	458			12	70		39	9,448
2019–20	4,549		1			103			4,653
2020–21	47				250	24			321
2021–22	558		1			2,027		12	2,598
2022–23	1,056		32			54		60	1,202
2023–24	83					20		251	354
Total	15,162	458	34	212	5,352	2,298	0	404	23,920
As % of all CH in jurisdiction	28%	3%	0%	3%	43%	24%	0%	55%	21%

Note: Includes PH properties that were transferred as part of redevelopment and renewal programs.

Source: PC (2021: Table 18A.2; 2025: Table 18A.2).

Case studies

NSW: Large transfer program to multiple CHPs

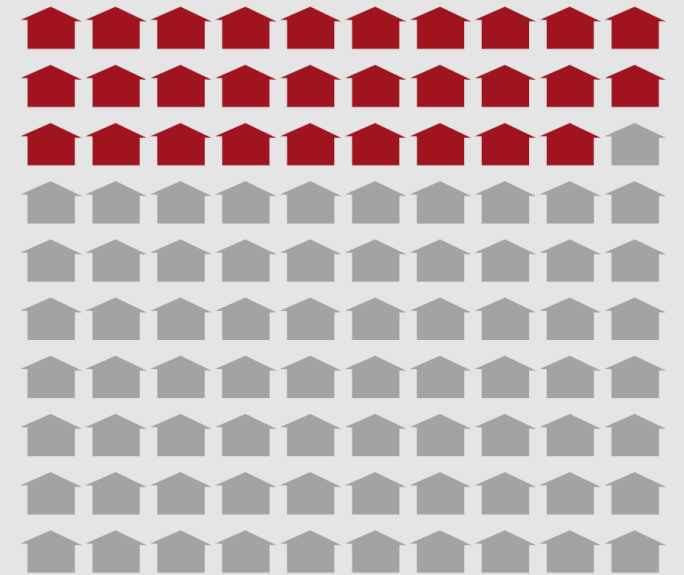
VIC: Targeted & staged title transfer to a single provider

SA: Successive phases of transfers, with adjustments made between phases

Key findings

- Transfers of ex-PH stock (~130K) enabled CH to now comprise 29% of all social housing in Australia.
- In contrast to international convention, transfer of tenancy and property management responsibilities (i.e. management transfer) remain the predominant model in Australia.
- From sectoral survey: recipient CHPs understood investments into property maintenance and repairs and improved tenant services as the primary objectives of transfer programs.

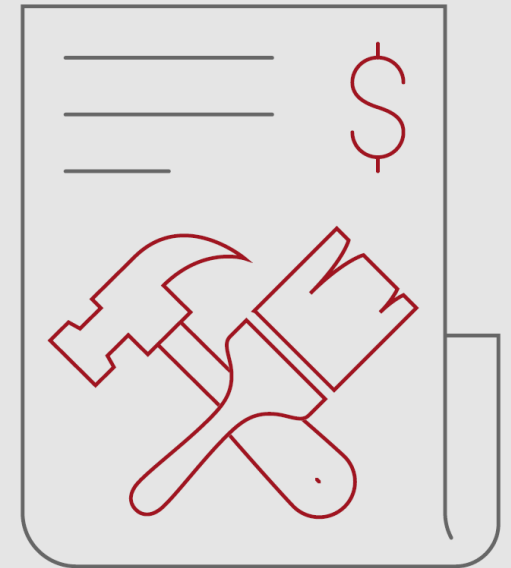
By 2024, 29% of Australia's social housing was under community housing provider (CHP) management.



Impacts on CHPs' asset management

- Survey reported that earlier transfer programs often involved stock in better condition, in which any necessary remedial work could be addressed easily or quickly.
- *Previous transfers have had less maintenance needs and also some came with a dowry to assist in upgrades. [survey participant]*
- *The gov. agency responsible for the transfer had inadequate condition assessments, partially due to the wide distribution of the stock. [survey participant]*

Most CHPs taking on ex-public housing struggle due to larger-than-anticipated repair and maintenance costs.



Impacts on CHPs' financial viability

- Housing providers receiving transferred tenancies report benefiting from an expanded income base (rent, CRA) and improved economy of scale.
- The poorer-than-anticipated condition of transferred assets, lack of upfront capital funding and unfunded service responsibilities led to rising liabilities, operational deficits and long-term financial strain.
- Most CHPs taking on ex-PH stock experienced significantly impaired financial viability that were reported to take years to stabilise and, for some, remain a challenge.

Impacts on CHPs' operational strategies

- Bidding for transfers is part of a broader strategy to grow the CHP sector's operations and influence.
- *The transfers have enabled us to grow our scale, influence, presence—reduce single person risk, and be [in] a fantastic position to tender for and win new work.* [survey participant]
- CHPs were able to learn lessons and become more strategic when bidding for other/later phases of PH transfers, de-risking their operations.

Impacts on CHPs' workforce

- Substantial portfolio growth in absorbing ex-PH stock required urgent recruitment, onboarding and system expansion. Although operations were scaled up, high turnover, recruitment difficulties and emotional burnout created workforce instability. This especially disadvantaged smaller, regional, and more specialised CHPs.
- PH transfers brought about the expansion of the CHP workforce and system upgrades, accompanied by the professionalisation and specialisation of specific roles, enabled by economies of scale for recipient providers.

Impacts of tenant services and outcomes

- Transfers generally improved tenant satisfaction and service quality over time, with higher levels of satisfaction reported compared to tenants remaining in public housing.
- Expanded income base and improved economy of scale enabled investments in critical infrastructure (e.g. IT), staffing and programs that have led to better management and tenant outcomes.
- Improved outcomes are not necessarily captured in reporting, which often focused more on operational compliance.

Table 6: Impacts of transfer programs on CHPs' organisational growth and adaptation

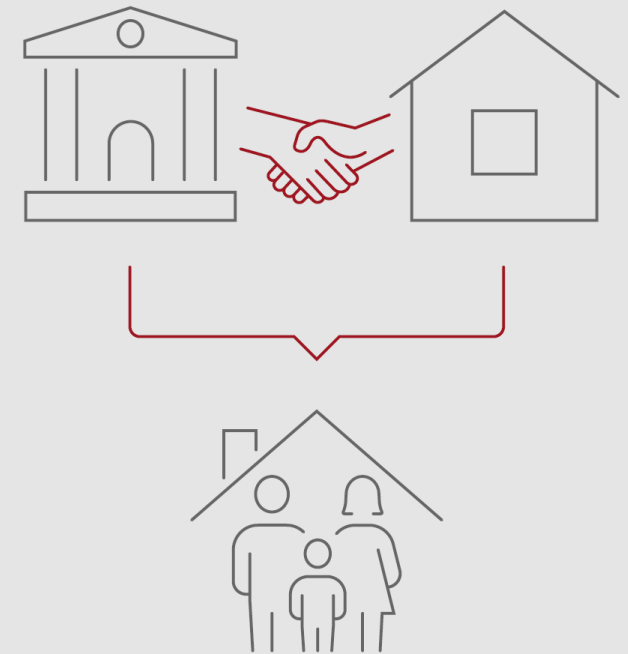
	Marked negative effect	Modest negative effect	No effect	Modest positive effect	Marked positive effect
Community development activity	0%	0%	23%	31%	46%
Lifecycle asset planning	15%	0%	31%	23%	31%
Consistency of approach to planned maintenance	15%	0%	31%	38%	15%
Reactive maintenance	8%	15%	31%	23%	23%

Source: Authors

Policy development options

- **Enable title transfer**, to allow CHPs to plan long term and unlock financial tools to support reinvestment.
- **Build flexibility into program implementation**, to incentivise innovation, ease transitions and improve tenant support.
- **Consider a staged approach**, to avoid administration confusion and implement learnings.
- **Resource scope expansion appropriately**, to ensure programs meet objectives, maintain service quality and avoid undermining financial viability.
- **Focus on program outcomes**, to reflect a fuller picture of program effectiveness and enhance accountability.

Governments working flexibly with the CHP sector on the transfer process can strengthen outcomes.



Thank you