



Australian Government
Indigenous Business Australia

22 October 2014

MEDIA RELEASE

Home ownership on Indigenous land now a reality in Yarrabah

Home ownership through the sale of social housing on communally-held Indigenous land in Queensland is now a reality with the settlement of proud Gunggandji woman, Ailsa Lively's first home loan in Yarrabah on 22 October 2014.

Ms Lively, a resident of the Yarrabah community, and a mother of three, has paved the way for other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in social housing in Far North Queensland to purchase their own home.

"The Yarrabah community has waited a long time for this, and owning a home is now a reality.

"I am pleased to lead the way for the people in my community and all other Indigenous peoples living on traditional lands in Queensland, and I encourage other Yarrabah community members to pursue the dream of owning their home.

"Being able to provide security for my family's future is really important to me, and owning a home on my traditional country gives me peace knowing that my children and future generations will always have connection to their traditional home", Ms Lively said.

Early October, a 99 year lease was signed in Yarrabah enabling the first sale of social housing in a remote Queensland community - facilitated by support from Indigenous Business Australia (IBA), the Queensland and Australian Governments, the Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council, the Yarrabah land trustees and Traditional Owners.

Providing Indigenous people and their families with the opportunity to buy a home in Yarrabah, follows from IBA providing similar opportunities for 13 remote communities including across Australia in Hope Vale, Palm Island, Angurugu, Tiwi Islands, Walgett and Coonamble.

First Australian's seeking loans for homes in remote communities are given priority by IBA under its Indigenous Home Ownership (IHO) program, and are assisted with advice and financial support from IBA officers working with the community.

So far, 25 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families now occupy their homes on traditional lands in remote communities using IHO loans to buy their own home in Queensland, the Northern Territory, and in NSW through the NSW Remote Aboriginal Home Ownership Scheme.

IBA CEO Chris Fry said that the IHO program is very successful because it provides flexible, affordable housing finance and post-settlement support.

"Our program is unique as it assists first home buyers who cannot get home loans from banks due to barriers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples often face with buying their home such as low incomes, minimal savings and land tenure on community titles land.

"The IHO program has achieved some fantastic outcomes with over 16,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families having purchased their own home.



“For the 2013-14 financial year, IBA approved 556 home loans to the value of \$140 million which has in turn generated wealth for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples through the equity created in buying their own homes”, Mr Fry said.

Photos and interviews with IBA staff and home loan customers are available on request.

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