Minister for Housing and Community Development Gerry McCarthy today congratulated The National Congress of Australia’s First Peoples for holding the ‘National Indigenous Housing Peak Workshop’ in Adelaide, to improve housing for Aboriginal people.

Mr McCarthy said Congress’ goal to address significant housing problems that impact Aboriginal people, aligns with the Territory Government’s ten year remote housing program, with a focus on community development and local decision making.

“We believe all Territorians are entitled to control over their life and access to high quality services,” Mr McCarthy said.

“That’s why we are investing a record $1.1 billion to improve thousands of remote houses and thousands of Aboriginal people’s lives right across the Territory.

“We will restore local decision making to deliver remote housing because we know a good home leads to a good education, good health and good community outcomes.”

The Territory Government’s remote housing program, Our Community, Our Future, Our Homes, will be guided by Aboriginal people and representative organisations to determine and drive local solutions.

The 10 year program which commenced on 1 July 2017 will meet each community’s needs and is made up of:

- $500 million for ‘HomeBuild NT’ – to build new homes
- $200 million for ‘Room to Breathe’ – to build additional living spaces onto existing houses
- $200 million for repairs and maintenance of houses
- $200 million for new government employee housing – to include remote local government recruits

Historically, there has been significant confusion regarding remote housing tenancy management, repairs and maintenance and housing allocation.
“We would like to hand over tenancy management to remote communities if local groups are prepared to take it on,” Mr McCarthy said.

“We would also like housing repairs and maintenance to be provided by local people, with local trade workers on site to provide quicker responses.

"Through our investment in remote housing, we will deliver sustainable employment in remote communities, something which previous programs have not widely achieved."

The Territory Government is in discussions with the Australian Government to provide funding for remote housing, once the existing National Partnership on Remote Housing concludes in June 2018.

“We want local people to build homes where they will feel they belong, where they can nurture healthy families and raise children,” Mr McCarthy said.

**Media contact: Emmanuelle Clarke 0428 497 154**