

Media Release **No. 618**

For release 10 February 2015

CLARK STREET DEVELOPMENT PART OF WIDER HOUSING SOLUTION FOR TORRES STRAIT

The staff accommodation currently being built in Clark Street is just one part of a wider housing solution for the region says the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA).

The TSRA Chairperson, Mr Joseph Elu, said reducing the TSRA's reliance on private rental accommodation would relieve pressure on the rental market on Thursday Island.

"Easing the shortage of rental accommodation on the island, which is currently in high demand and maintaining inflated prices, and housing shortages throughout the islands is an issue we recognise as a priority," Mr Elu said.

"The Clark Street Development will be a nine lot subdivision providing 18 units for staff. This will help to ease the rental market on Thursday Island.

"However Clark Street is only a small part of a wider housing solution being provided through federal and state government departments and programmes."

Mr Elu said other housing projects either in planning or under construction include 73 new community houses to be constructed between 2014 and 2016 by the Department of Public Works under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing (NPARIH) and eight new community houses being built by the Torres Strait Island Regional Council under the Rural and Remote programme. There are also 30 lots identified through the Horn Island Affordable Housing Programme(HIAHP). Affordable housing will be offered for sale to Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal People. The TSRA has provided \$3.54 million to the Torres Shire Council to prepare the site works for the HIAHP project. The Queensland Government is also constructing 26 two and three bedroom homes for staff housing. "This is a comprehensive building programme for the region and we have expectations there will be further announcements for additional community housing development in 2016 – 2018."

"All new housing provided through Australian and Queensland government programmes will certainly have a flow-on effect of reducing rents on Thursday Island and increasing community housing throughout the Torres Strait" Mr Elu said.

"The Clark Street development will also aid the TSRA in the recruitment and retention of high calibre staff in order to achieve the best outcomes for the Torres Strait region."

ENDS