



NSW Community Housing Conference

Wednesday 10th September 11:00-11:55

Partnership Opportunities for Aboriginal Housing providers

South Eastern Aboriginal
Regional Management
Services

S.E.A.R.M.S





SEARMS is a Co-operative that consists of the following six Aboriginal Housing provider partners:

1. Ulladulla Local Aboriginal Land Council
2. Batemans Bay Local Aboriginal Land Council
3. Budawang Aboriginal Corporation (Batemans Bay)
4. Mogo Local Aboriginal Land Council
5. Cobowra Local Aboriginal Land Council (Moruya)
6. Bodalla Local Aboriginal Land Council



How did we get to SEARMS

- The Regional Management Models concept was a pilot initiative of NSW Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO).
- The partners & communities mentioned recognised the advantages of such a pilot and set about the challenge to create and established our model SEARMS.
- The process was community driven with the commitment of support from the AHO.



Common Goal

- To ensure that as social housing providers they were able to face the challenges ahead with the escalating costs of maintaining of existing stock and provide new homes in our communities, now and in the future.
- This common goal became the key engagement point in the encouragement of the community to form a new organisation.



Incorporation & Constitution had to take into account.

- Compliance concerns and requirements of various legislations including but not limited to;
- NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act
- Australian Securities Investment Commission (ASIC)
- NSW Corporations Act
- NSW Office of Fair Trading Co-operatives Act



Establishment Processes

- Staff Recruitment
- Office Setup and location
- Software selection
- Financial Management Systems
- Trust account responsibilities
- Compliance with the various acts

Compliant Policies for the management of:

- Rental Arrears, Repairs and Maintenance, Rent collection etc
- Community and tenant awareness and education programs



Organisation Structure

- Initially there were 7 Organisations and 5 Communities represented.
- Some Communities had 2 Organisations within its boundaries (Bateman's Bay & Bodalla)
- Some organisation had 40 houses and some only had 4.

SEARMS BOARD = 9 Directors
Cobowra LALC (1), Batemans Bay LALC (1), Budawang Aboriginal Corp (1), Ulladulla LALC (1),
Bodalla LALC (1), Mogo LALC (1), Moruya Community (1), Ulladulla Community (1), Mogo
Community (1)

GENERAL MANAGER

SENIOR HOUSING/FINANCE OFFICER

Administration Support Officer

CDEP/Trainee

Housing Officer

Housing Officer



Lessons Learned.

- Final commitment from the partner organisation.
- Limitations of the Pilot program.
- Complexity of SEARMS as an organisation.
- Rental Arrears.
- Repairs and Maintenance.
- No transition period.
- Work load placed on staff.



Strengths

- Business Plan, Policies and Procedures & Assets Management Plan.
- Clearly defined roles of the staff the management and the board.
- Support and understanding of AHO.
- Knowledgeable staff, with desire and commitment to make SEARMS the best program in the State.