

OFFICIAL**Joint Communiqué: Northern Australia Ministerial Forum #5
Friday 17 October 2025, Online****Publication date: 17 October 2025**

The Northern Australia Ministerial Forum met virtually today to discuss the unique housing challenges facing northern Australia and opportunities to address supply. Ministers also discussed the excellent work happening in their jurisdictions, and collectively, to develop the north.

Ministers discussed the Northern Australia Housing Working Group findings to address housing supply and practical actions to deliver northern Australia's housing needs, including for First Nations communities. Ministers acknowledged work underway to harmonise regulations and building codes and to address financing issues required to accelerate the adoption of modern methods of construction to address housing supply.

Ministers agreed to progress the recommendations of the working group to address housing challenges facing northern Australia to the Hon Claire O'Neil, Minister for Housing, Minister for Homelessness, and Minister for Cities ahead of joint discussions with the Housing and Homelessness Ministerial Council and Building Ministers' Meeting.

Ministers tasked the working group to develop options on the next deep dive, following the excellent work undertaken on housing, with issues such as insurance and common user infrastructure discussed as high priority areas for the north.

Ministers also heard from President of the Australian Local Government Association, Mayor Matt Burnett on the diverse needs and perspectives of northern local governments particularly in the housing sector. Mr Burnett highlighted the action being taken by councils to address supply.

All governments pledged their continued support for developing northern Australia, noting the Forum remains the primary mechanism for collaboration and leadership on priority issues to drive sustainable action and economic development in the region.

Forum details

The Federal Minister for Northern Australia, the Hon Madeleine King MP, chaired the forum, and was joined by:

- Senator the Hon Malarndirri McCarthy, Minister for Indigenous Australians (Australian Government)
- Hon Dale Last MP, Minister for Natural Resources and Mines; Manufacturing; Regional and Rural Development (Queensland)
- Hon Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister for Regional Development; Ports; Science and Innovation; Medical Research; Kimberley (Western Australia)
- Mrs Oly Carlson MLA, Assistant Minister for Treasury and Finance (Northern Territory)
- Mr Luke Gosling OAM, MP, Special Envoy for Defence, Veterans Affairs and Northern Australia (Australian Government)

Forum members welcomed the invitation for the Northern Australia Ministerial Forum to meet in the Northern Territory in the first half of 2026.