

# Core and Cluster

Roundtable

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Investment aligned with  
State and Commonwealth  
policy



- Safe accommodation is vital.
- The expansion of core and cluster refuges supports NSW and Commonwealth Government policy commitments.
- The project aligns with the NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023, providing targeted housing options to prevent homelessness or chronic homelessness for high risk groups.
- Supports commitments in the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform 2016-2021: Safer Lives for Women, Men and Children.

## Transitioning to the Core and Cluster model

- One of the recommendations made by the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence.
- Model benefits women and children, providing improved accessibility, privacy, and connection with community.
- Expansion in NSW follows on from a number of trial projects including two Core and Cluster refuges now completed in Griffith and Orange and another underway in Armidale.
- We are learning lessons from these trial sites to inform the new Core and Cluster refuges. We will also draw on the the Domestic Violence Crisis Accommodation Functional Design Brief, developed by the NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC).
- LAHC is also leading work on eight refurbishment projects as part of the Core and Cluster model expansion.

## Where Core and Cluster refuges are needed

- Robust data analysis and engagement with local communities informing decisions.
- Refuge locations will be targeted to areas where there is high unmet demand for crisis accommodation, including regional and rural areas.
- Analysis undertaken using NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research BOCSAR data to identify LGAs and DCJ Districts with high demand for DFV refuge services.
- Data considered includes incidences of domestic violence and figures for those turned away from SHS accommodation.
- Demand for both general refuges and Aboriginal refuges has been analysed.

Indicative locations for new Core and Cluster refuges



Table 1. Anticipated distribution of new refuge locations by DCJ District

District	General Refuges	Aboriginal Refuges*	Total Refuges
Murrumbidgee District	2	1	3
New England District	2	2	4
Northern NSW District	2	2	4
Far West District	1	1	2
Western NSW District	3	3	6
South Eastern Sydney District	6	1	7
Southern NSW District	2	1	3
Mid North Coast District	2	1	3
Western Sydney District	10	1	11
Nepean Blue Mountains District	3	1	4
Sydney District	2	0	2
South Western Sydney District	10	2	12
Central Coast District	2	1	3
Hunter District	4	3	7
Northern Sydney District	2	0	2
Illawarra Shoalhaven District	2	1	3

\*Aboriginal Refuges will be targeted to Aboriginal women and children, but will also be accessible to the general population.

## Core and Cluster procurement approach

- Procurement through an Expression of Interest process, over four years, under three tranches.
- NSW Government initial financing with procurement of providers for provision of the land; delivery of the asset; ongoing asset maintenance and service provision.
- Integration with the NSW Government's Specialist Homelessness Services Program.
- Project to be supported through a locally led implementation approach.

## Tranche 1 process

- Organisations invited to submit proposals, up until 11 am on 30 June 2022, for ‘ready to go’ and refurbishment Core and Cluster projects that can be operationalised between July and December 2022, with commencement of service provision by early 2023.
- Community Housing Providers, Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) and Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) specialist services and their industry partners are invited to respond.
- Approach responds to advice from sector peaks and organisations, suggesting there are a range of proposals being developed and considered across NSW that could align with the Core and Cluster project.

## Expression of Interest – Tranche 1 requirements

- The Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) is seeking Expressions of Interest (EOI) for:
  - The provision of land: securing long-term land tenure for refuge sites, leveraging existing government owned land where suitable
  - The delivery of the asset: a procurement process is needed to contract a non-government party to deliver and maintain the asset over an agreed period
  - Ongoing maintenance of the asset: a non-government party designs and delivers the asset, and then remains responsible for the maintenance of the asset
  - Service provision: a non-government specialist homelessness service delivers homelessness and DFV services in line with the SHS program guidelines and Core and Cluster service model
- Eoi assists in quickly identifying opportunities to provide support, safety and safe accommodation, to more women and children, as soon as possible.



## Procurement for Tranches two and three

- Tranche two – focus on pipeline projects suitable for implementation or further development from July 2023. Will include sites for targeted Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) delivery.
- Tranche Three - focus on pipeline projects suitable for implementation or further development from December 2023, also including sites for targeted ACCO delivery.
- Assessment of Eols will use criteria as published on the e-tendering website with shortlisted applicants invited to participate in a select tender.
- Eols – open to developers and service providers of any size.
- Three stage procurement process designed to allow time for the development of partnerships and innovative solutions.
- Encouraging partnerships to bring together compatible strengths.

## Aboriginal-led Core and Cluster refuges

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are at greater risk of homelessness and over three times more likely to be victims of DFV.
- DCJ intends to increase the number of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO) delivering SHS in NSW.
- Targeted and culturally sensitive procurement approach will apply to support Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.
- Tranches two and three - procurement designed with Aboriginal stakeholders.
- Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations may choose to participate in the Tranche One process.

## Probity and fairness

- DCJ is ensuring the procurement process is conducted in a framework of probity and fairness.
- Probity advisor engaged to ensure this project is undertaken in an impartial and fair manner, with no party given advantage over another or unfairly discriminated against.
- Today's session will be published on DCJ website.



## Stakeholder engagement

- The first of a series of stakeholder engagement sessions to inform more detailed specifications and related project planning and design, for Tranches two and three, occurring today.
- DCJ will speak with a broad range of stakeholders, including women with lived experience of DFV, peak organisations, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal providers of Specialist Homelessness and DFV services, community housing providers, local government, landowners and developers, and NSW government agencies.
- Discussions will focus on factors, including design and delivery requirements, key specifications, considerations for Aboriginal communities and for Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.
- This engagement will also inform related Core and Cluster work.
- You will be made aware of stakeholder engagement opportunities, as details are finalised.



## Stay connected

- Connect into updates about the project via the DCJ website.
- Any questions about the Eol or the Core and Cluster project, can be forwarded to the Specialist Homelessness Programs email address [SHSProgram@facns.nsw.gov.au](mailto:SHSProgram@facns.nsw.gov.au)
- DCJ will issue Q&As via the e-tendering portal for the Tranche 1 Eol, as needed.

