



NEWS RELEASE

CHRA Urban and Rural Indigenous Housing Survey Reveals Key Challenges for Indigenous Housing in Canada

(May 23, 2017, OTTAWA) – The Canadian Housing and Renewal Association (CHRA) today released the results of a benchmarking survey conducted of 51 urban and rural Indigenous housing providers across Canada. The survey, carried out by James Burr and Steve Pomeroy, is a first of its kind initiative to examine the employment, financial, and operational characteristics of urban and rural Indigenous housing providers.

Some of the highlights of the survey results included the following:

- Almost half of the respondents had already experienced the end of their Operating Agreements. Roughly half of the Indigenous housing providers whose Operating Agreement had expired stated the impact was negative. Amongst respondents, the number of units that were designated Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) units declined by 1100, and new higher minimum rents are being established.
- Some organizations reported that up to 25% of their housing stock is not habitable due to inability to perform necessary repairs.
- Over the next 5 years, almost all respondents will experience the End of their Operating Agreements, with 22 respondents not yet having a diversification plan in place.
- Respondents indicated that employment in the urban and rural Indigenous housing sector has remained stable, although smaller providers indicated that hiring and training qualified staff, particularly Indigenous staff, remains a challenge. The majority of employees working in Indigenous housing are Indigenous; additional growth in the sector would permit additional employment opportunities for Indigenous employees.

“The findings of this survey reinforce the need for a distinct urban and rural Indigenous housing strategy in conjunction with the National Housing Strategy to be released this fall,” stated Robert Byers, Chair of the CHRA Indigenous Caucus. “Although some housing providers are better positioned than others, it is clear that the impact of End of Operating Agreements on Indigenous housing providers and their tenants will be disastrous unless policies and programs are put in place to address the situation”.

A copy of the Benchmarking study can be downloaded from the CHRA website at www.chra-achru.ca. Funding for this survey was made possible through Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada.

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For more information, please contact:
Jeff Morrison, Executive Director
jmorrison@chra-achru.ca; (613) 594-3007, ext.11

chra-achru.ca @CHRA_ACHRU