

DTARAWARRA ABORIGINAL RESOURCE UNIT

**Providing resources to the NSW Aboriginal
Tenant Advice and Advocacy Services
(ATAAS)**

THE ATAAS PROGRAM IS FUNDED BY NSW FAIR TRADING AND THERE ARE 4 ABORIGINAL SPECIFIC SERVICES THAT COVER NSW THAT INCLUDE;

- Greater Sydney Aboriginal Tenancy Services (GSATS)– based in St Mary's
- Western Aboriginal Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service (WATAAS)– based in Dubbo
- Murra Mia Advice and Advocacy Service (MMTAAS)– based in Batemans bay
- Northern NSW Aboriginal Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service (NATAAS)– based in Crafton with an outreach office in Newcastle

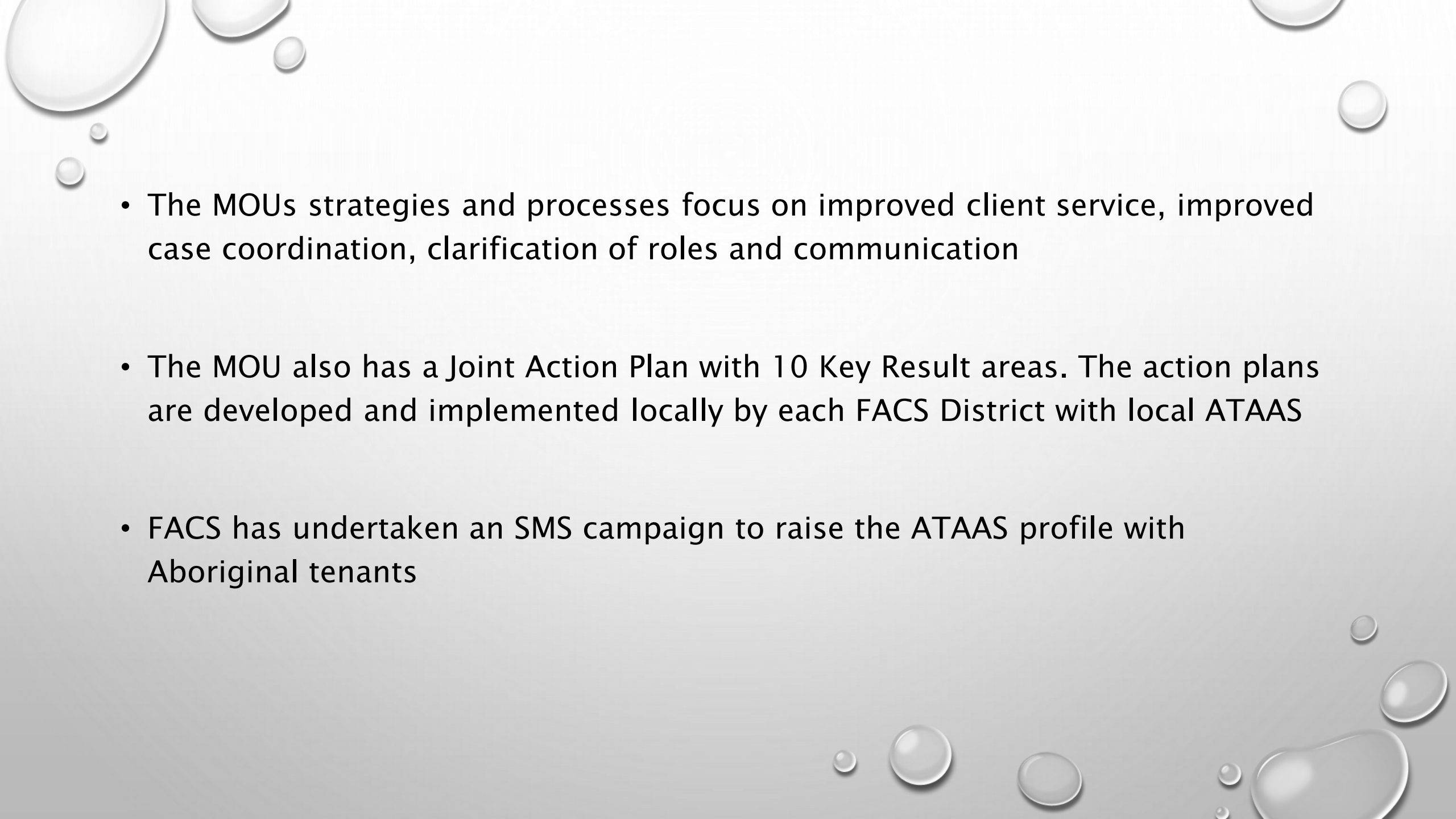
- Purpose of the service is to provide advocacy and advice to Aboriginal tenants who are faced with difficulties with their tenancy and the relationship with landlords (private rental housing) and social housing providers.
- Services also advocate and mediate with and on behalf of clients as the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) and provide community education to Aboriginal people and communities regarding their rights and responsibilities under the Residential Tenancies Act
- Services are committed to working in a non-adversarial manner with all landlords and management agencies to ensure that the most appropriate support can be provided to mutual/shared clients

CHALLENGES

- At times ATAAS and Dtarawarra are required to provide services and or support to 'complex needs' clients way over and above the normal course of duties and with which funds and resources allow.
- ATAAS services aren't funded for Case Coordination. Although there are existing services that provide case management for complex clients, linking the client to take up other supports has been problematic.
- Post the client's tenancy matter being resolved, there is limited capacity for follow up by ATAAS to ensure that the clients are maintaining their responsibilities for regular payment of rents and agreements to repay arrears etc.

SUSTAINING TENANCIES IN THE SOCIAL HOUSING SECTOR

- December 2017– Memorandum of Understanding Between The Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) Housing & The Aboriginal Tenant Advice and Advocacy Services across NSW
- The purpose of the agreement is to promote and protect the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander shared clients of FACS (including those residing in properties owned by the Aboriginal Housing Office) and ATAAS
- The agreement is consistent with the strategies and guidelines identified within FACS “Foundations for Success”– A guide for social housing providers working with Aboriginal people and communities
- In addition to Foundations for Success, one of FACS’ Strategic Objectives is that Aboriginal people, families and communities have better outcomes

- 
- The MOUs strategies and processes focus on improved client service, improved case coordination, clarification of roles and communication
 - The MOU also has a Joint Action Plan with 10 Key Result areas. The action plans are developed and implemented locally by each FACS District with local ATAAS
 - FACS has undertaken an SMS campaign to raise the ATAAS profile with Aboriginal tenants

- Meeting held between Dtarawarra and the Federation of Housing to commence discussions regarding the development of a similar MOU with Community Housing Providers
- Some of the Challenges
 - Independence of mainstream Community Housing Providers.
 - Policies and Procedures (Cultural Sensitivity).
 - Complexities with differing strategies, programs and service delivery.
 - Property Management Transfer Program.
 - Self Determination aspirations of Aboriginal CHP's and all current reform agenda's.
- Some of the Opportunities
 - Develop and/or strengthen the partnership between the mainstream and Aboriginal CHP's.
 - Provide more housing options for Aboriginal people.
 - Maximise opportunities that exist with reform agenda's where ACHP's that exist in certain locations have and may not meet current criteria for funding and support.
 - Employment, Training and Economic Development opportunities for Aboriginal

QUESTIONS