

MEDIA RELEASE



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MBA ACT Calls on New Coordinator General for Housing to have Control Over Planning and Land Release

Master Builders ACT welcomes the announcement to establish a new Office of the Coordinator General for Housing. However, the ACT Government should go further to address the ACT's housing crisis.

Master Builders ACT CEO Michael Hopkins said, "The ACT's lack of suitable housing to meet the needs of current and future Canberrans has become a social and economic crisis which requires urgent attention by the ACT Government."

Mr Hopkins said, "The ABS December building approvals showed the ACT performed the worst of any State or Territory in Australia, with new home approvals declining by 42.2% from December 2021 to December 2022."

"We welcome the Chief Minister's establishment of a new Coordinator General for Housing, however unless the Coordinator General has responsibility for planning controls and delivery of land release it will be setup to fail," Mr Hopkins continued.

Mr Hopkins said, "The ACT's Draft Territory Plan is based on outdated population projections for Canberra and doesn't plan for sufficient housing to serve the City's needs into the future."

"The Coordinator General should be given power to approve new medium density housing in established suburbs, and to approve high density housing along future light rail and other transport corridors. The Coordinator General should accelerate new land releases so that families are not forced to move across the ACT border to find suitable housing," Mr Hopkins explained.

Mr Hopkins said, "Canberra, like many cities across Australia, is currently in a fierce competition to attract skilled workers to meet the needs of local employers. Lack of suitable and affordable housing is cited as one of the major reasons by MBA members why they can't attract skilled workers to Canberra to live and work on local construction projects."

"If the new Coordinator General for Housing is given the right tools, the opportunity exists for the ACT to turn around our declining residential building approvals and deliver housing to meet the needs of current and future Canberrans," Mr Hopkins concluded.

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