

MEDIA RELEASE



17 April 2023

MBA Calls for More Housing, Infrastructure and Workforce Funding in ACT Budget Submission

Master Builders ACT has called on the ACT Government to fund more housing, deliver on last year's promise to build \$6.4 billion of infrastructure over five years, and invest in a local workforce to meet our future needs in its 2023-24 ACT Budget Submission.

Master Builders ACT CEO, Michael Hopkins said, "With property and construction taxes contributing 54.5% of the total tax taken by the ACT Government, it is vital that the next ACT budget support our local construction industry."

'The past three years have provided some of the toughest trading conditions in a generation for the 5,500 local small and family construction businesses that employ around 20,000 workers. The next ACT budget can assist local businesses by boosting dwelling construction, maintaining a strong pipeline of capital works, and properly investing in trade apprenticeships to support the ACT's future economy,' he said.

Mr Hopkins said, "Latest ABS figures indicate that the total value of building and construction work done over the year to December 2022 totalled \$4.02 billion in value, however ABS data shows residential construction has dropped more than 40% in the December quarter."

'The ACT budget should boost investment in public and social housing and accelerate land release, which if coupled with planning reforms to address the lack of missing middle housing, can help address this significant decline,' he said.

Mr Hopkins said, 'The ACT Government has failed to properly fund trade apprenticeships over successive years, with carpentry and plumbing apprenticeships in the ACT currently receiving the lowest level of government subsidy compared with any other State or Territory. Such lack of funding cannot continue if our local industry is to support the Government's urban infill and electrification policies, and infrastructure needs.'

Mr Hopkins explained, 'The building and construction industry plays a vital role in the economy, and we urge the ACT Government to factor this into the 2023-24 ACT Budget by implementing strategies that will support our industry's growth.'

'As we continue to move through a very volatile period, the ACT Government needs to support industries that will help drive strong economic growth,' Mr Hopkins concluded.

ENDS

Authorised by Michael Hopkins on behalf of Master Builders Association of the ACT.