

MEDIA RELEASE



27 June 2023

Booming Population, Declining Building Approvals and No Support for Workforce of the Future

Today's 2023/24 ACT Budget is under-pinned on hopes that Gross State Product, Employment and Population Growth will all perform closer to the upside scenario than the downside scenario in order to sustain the Territory's economic growth. Delivery of new private housing, infrastructure and workforce capacity are key risks to the economy and detail is scarce in the budget released today.

Master Builders ACT CEO Michael Hopkins said, "The 2023/24 ACT Budget has missed a major opportunity to boost support for local apprentices and trainees to create the ACT's workforce of the future."

"With no increase in apprentice subsidies, and the removal of programs to attract more women into the construction industry, the ACT budget fails to explain where the skilled workforce will come from to deliver more housing and infrastructure to support the ACT's growth", he said.

Mr Hopkins said, "While the social and affordable housing package is a welcome announcement, the budget is relying heavily on the private sector to deliver the majority of the ACT's future housing needs without increasing land release."

"With the Territory Plan still to be finalised and the updated ACT Infrastructure Plan at least 12 months away, there is very little detail in this budget to explain to the ACT community how our housing needs will be met", he said.

Mr Hopkins explained, "The 20,000 people working in the local building and construction industry will be relying heavily on the delivery of the \$8.2 billion infrastructure program while further details about housing delivery and apprenticeship funding is finalised."

"Every dollar invested in the construction industry generates a three-dollar multiplier throughout the broader economy, meaning a strong building industry equals a strong ACT economy," he said.

"As we continue to move through a very volatile economic 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.

For further information contact:

Michael Hopkins, Master Builders ACT CEO, 0418 984 594