

JULY 2023

# NATIONAL OFFICE MONTHLY REPORT

## FROM THE CEO

Despite the federal parliamentary winter break throughout July, our focus continues to be on our industrial relations advocacy efforts to put pressure on the Government to significantly dial down their plans for dramatic change for businesses throughout the industry. Advocacy included our paid advertising campaign, joint campaign efforts with other industry associations, and multiple meetings with Senators and MPs from all parties. It is critical that we continue to put pressure on the Government before the legislation is introduced in September.

We released our Sustainability Goals through an ESG framework to highlight the long-term aspirations

of the organisation for the industry. We wish to concentrate on eight key material issues that we can have a significant role to play in enabling a more viable and sustainable industry, including evidence-based, measured pathways to achieve net zero in the built environment by 2050, industrial relations working hour provisions that are more acceptable to a more diverse workforce, reducing mental health impacts on our workforce, and balanced risk throughout the supply chain. The release of our Goals coincided with an increase in partnerships with Insurance Council, Australian Local Government Association, Planning Institute and ASBEC.

## ADVOCACY

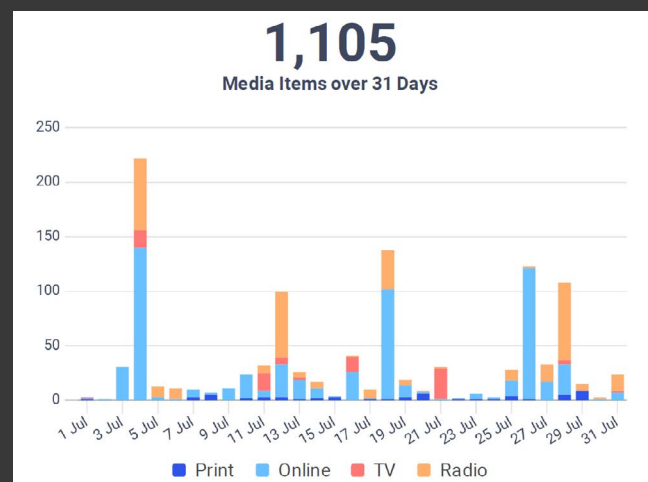
With Parliament breaking for winter over July, the National Office was busy with proactive advocacy around industry sustainability, net zero and industrial relations. Over the month, the National Office responded to over 40 media queries, participated in seven live interviews and distributed seven press releases which contributed to over 1,100 news items, 15 front page rankings and a potential audience read of 45.3 million.

## SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

Master Builders Australia released the Building and Construction Industry Sustainability Goals 2050 on 20 July. These goals outline our commitment to fostering a more robust and sustainable industry in the long term. By addressing critical issues affecting business performance, minimising risks, and maximising opportunities through an Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) framework, we aim to shape a sustainable future for businesses, workers and communities.

Through evidence-based analysis, Master Builders will continue to advocate for changes that promote sustainable and profitable outcomes. Embedding these practices into industry business models can generate more robust businesses, create more jobs, enhance the built environment, and contribute to a stronger economy.

The Building and Construction Industry Sustainability Goals 2050 have been set to be achieved by 2050, with specific milestones set for 2030. Supporting these goals are three-year action plans, ensuring accountability and progress towards a sustainable future.



A copy of the Goals was shared with members of parliament and key stakeholders. You can [download a copy here](#).

## LAND USE PLANNING ROUNDTABLE

In response to the flood emergency of recent years, the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA), Master Builders Australia (MBA) and the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA), supported by the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), convened the inaugural National Industry Roundtable: Land Use Planning and Resilience.

Around 70 experts from government, financial services, property, and community joined the discussion, which called on state and territory governments when thinking about future housing challenges, to urgently rethink planning rules so no more homes are built in high-risk flood-prone locations.

The roundtable heard that all Australians are bearing the costs of worsening extreme weather events, and these costs are increasing because of historic planning decisions.

Attendees agreed that without reform, population pressures and inadequate planning laws will see further development of flood-prone land putting lives at risk, costing taxpayers billions of dollars in recovery and remediation, and adding to an already strained insurance sector.

A press conference was held after the event alongside the release of a communique which was also shared with federal, state and territory planning ministers to incorporate in their work.



**Planners, builders, insurers unite on flood plain reform**

**Calls for no more homes built in flood-prone zones intensifies**



## 'IT'S YOUR MOVE' CAMPAIGN

On July 4, Master Builders alongside the Regional Australia Institute and other members of the national alliance for regionalisation launched the 'It's Your Move' campaign to promote the job opportunities in regional Australia. We wanted to highlight how moving to regional Australia offers tradies the opportunity to tap into a growing market with high housing and infrastructure development demand. Tradies who move to the regions will play a vital role in building the communities of tomorrow and contribute to the economic growth this country desperately needs. The lower cost of living and a more relaxed lifestyle create a better work-life balance for individuals in the building and construction industry. For more information visit the campaign site.

## ECONOMIC DATA RELEASES

Several ABS data releases occurred over the month which involved a mix of good and bad news for the industry. Annual inflation rate has dropped to 6.0 per cent in the June 2023 quarter, compared with the previous quarter's 7.0 per cent rate. Encouragingly, the cost of newly built homes is continuing to moderate. Over the year to June 2023 quarter, new home prices rose by 7.8 per cent. This has been helped by the slowdown in the cost of key home building materials like timber and some metals. Rents, however, are continuing to accelerate because landlords' mortgage interest costs have risen so substantially over the past 14 months, and we simply aren't building enough new higher-density homes to meet rental demand.

Advocacy supporting the Housing Australia Future Fund continued over the month with legislation expected to be re-introduced in August.

Push on to lure city dwellers to jobs, life in the bush

Adrian Black | AAP  
Thu, 4 July 2023 3:34 AM



**Rising building costs ease for first time in two years**

By David Gannon  
Published 19:10, 4 July 2023 at 5:00pm

**Tenants whacked with biggest rent hike in 35 years**

By AAP Newsdesk  
Thu, 4 July 2023

**Anthony Albanese raises stakes in housing showdown with Greens**

By Geoff Chambers  
LIVE POLITICAL COMMENTARY  
Follow @geoffchambers

UPDATED: 19:00, 4 July 2023  
PUBLISHED: 18:40, 4 July 2023  
16 COMMENTS



## FOUR CORNERS

Following a report on Four Corners on 17 July, Master Builders issued a statement which acknowledged the challenges faced by the industry and strongly condemned actions by businesses who knowingly trade insolvent or bring the industry into disrepute. We emphasised, Master Builders' long advocated measures to improve the industry's resilience:

- **A stable economy and increased productivity:**  
We need to get inflation under control, which requires a focus on the supply side of the economy and a meaningful push to boost industry productivity which has been falling like many areas in the economy.
- **Addressing inefficient and unnecessary business costs:**  
It is essential to relieve businesses of cost and compliance pressures by reducing burdensome regulations and ensuring laws operate effectively. State and territory security of payment laws, for instance, need to be streamlined. Master Builders has long supported greater uniformity and simplicity in security of payment regimes based on principles such as prompt payment rights, a rapid adjudication process, and a simple, informal, and flexible approach.
- **Establishing a fairer approach to risk:**  
We need a better approach to the level of risk involved in construction, so that it is shared more fairly by everyone in the chain and not just loaded up on to the builder.
- **Enhanced enforcement of existing laws:**  
It is crucial to enforce existing laws more effectively, condemning those who break them and ensuring rogue operators face the full force of the law.
- **Building business resilience and education:**  
Support should be provided to businesses, particularly small enterprises, to develop resilience and operate in a sustainable and financially stable manner. Strengthening the skills of businesses benefits both the industry and the wider community.

## INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Our industrial relations campaign continued over July with an industry webinar held on the 4th to provide an opportunity to brief business owners directly on the changes coming up in the next tranche of legislation. Around 500 businesses registered for the event which saw an uptick in campaign actions taken on the website following the briefing. A copy of the webinar has been shared with members and can be viewed on demand via [our website](#).

Following a strong response to correspondence from Master Builders to members of parliament on our concerns to the proposed changes, we held a number of meetings with MPs including Labor, Coalition and key crossbenchers. To stay up to date with the latest on the campaign visit: [www.defendyourrights.com.au](http://www.defendyourrights.com.au)

Media advocacy centred around the changes to casual employment with the Government releasing more detail and confirming their intention to overturn the High Court definition of what constitutes as casual employment. As the industry with the second largest share of full-time employees, there is already a pathway to permanency for casuals that gives both business and workers certainty, so we aren't sure what the problem is the Government is trying to solve. 98 per cent of the building and construction industry is made up of small business and with another layer of complex IR laws, this just leads to less time on the tools and more time in the back office.

# FULL-TIME FURY

## Business fears Labor is killing the casual

Employer and industry groups have unloaded on the government's attacks on casual work, saying that moves to push employees into permanent positions risk productivity, flexibility and jobs growth.

The warning comes amid grow-

ing concern unions will soon be allowed to doorknock small businesses and family farms without notice to examine payroll records.

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry CEO Andrew McKellar said: "Casual employment

is particularly important for small business... (they) need to be able to roster according to demand and the casual's availability. The ACTU is pushing this agenda because they know that casuals are less likely to join unions."

FULL STORY PAGE 6

# NATIONAL ECONOMIC DATA SNAPSHOT

## NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

May 2023

3,174 non-residential building jobs valued at \$8,422.6 million were approved in AUS.

\$2,653,633 average value of non-residential building jobs approved.

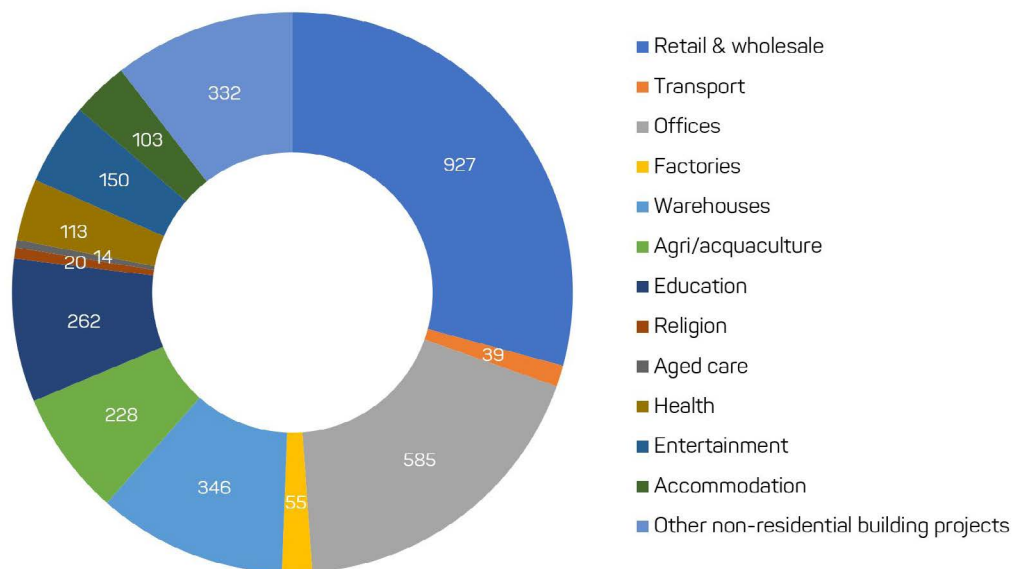
48.7% public sector share of non-residential building jobs approved.

Non-residential building jobs approved

### Building Product Inflation %

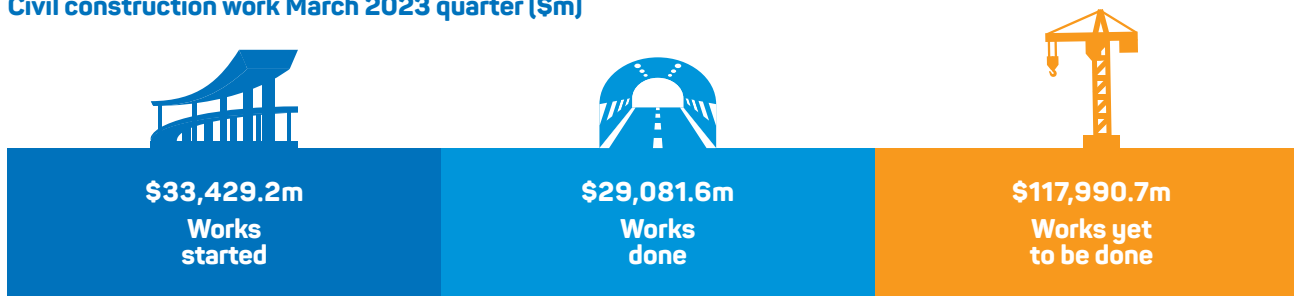


**+11.4%**  
Year to  
March 2023



## CIVIL CONSTRUCTION

Civil construction work March 2023 quarter (\$m)



Civil works by activity, March 2023 quarter (\$m)

Activity	Started	Done	To be done
Bridges, railways and harbours	\$5,954.6	\$4,630.1	\$21,769.7
Roads, highways and subdivisions	\$8,255.3	\$7,328.6	\$34,876.8
Water storage and supply, sewerage and drainage	\$2,970.8	\$2,201.5	\$8,797.7
Electricity generation, transmission and distribution incl pipelines	\$7,086.4	\$5,201.0	\$16,188.4
Telecommunications	\$1,977.1	\$1,767.9	\$363.0
Heavy industry	\$5,185.1	\$5,922.2	\$33,784.9
Recreation & other	\$1,999.9	\$2,030.3	\$2,210.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$33,429.2</b>	<b>\$29,081.6</b>	<b>\$117,990.7</b>

## RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

### House prices: year to June 2023



Capital city



Regional markets

### Unit prices: year to June 2023



Capital city



Regional markets

### Rental price changes in Australia

+1.6%  
During Mar  
2023 quarter



+4.9%  
Over year to  
Mar 2023  
quarter

### Building approvals: May 2023



15,032

Total new home  
building approvals  
-9.8%  
change on  
May 2022



8,193

Detached houses  
-15.6%  
change on  
May 2022



6,839

Units/apartments  
-1.7%  
change on  
May 2022



\$1,177.0 million

Home renovations  
+10.1%  
change on  
May 2022

### Residential building work done over year to March 2023

#### COMMENCED NEW HOMES

178,309

All dwellings

113,886

Detached houses

64,423

Apartments/units

#### COMPLETED NEW HOMES

174,285

All dwellings

112,038

Detached houses

62,247

Apartments/units

#### New homes still under construction on 31 March 2023



239,737

All dwellings

103,778

Detached houses

135,959

Apartments/units

#### New homes approved but not yet commenced as at 31 March 2023



32,629

All dwellings

10,337

Detached houses

22,292

Apartments/units

### Lending indicators: May 2023

7,791

Loans to owner occupiers for  
construction of new home  
-40.4% change on May 2022

5,352

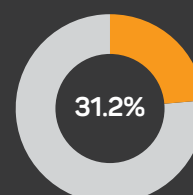
Loans to investors for construction  
of new home  
+3.3% change on May 2022

5,454

Loans to owner occupiers for  
residential land purchase  
-19.7% change on May 2022

3,250

Loans to investors for residential  
land purchase  
+3.9% change on May 2022



First Home Buyers  
share of loans

## LABOUR MARKET

June 2023



## CONSTRUCTION WORKFORCE



**1,329,413**  
People employed in  
construction in Australia

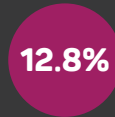
**351,828** Resi/commercial  
builders

**142,942** Civil construction  
builders

**834,643** Resi/commercial  
subcontractors



Of Australian  
jobs are in  
construction



Account for women  
working in Australian  
construction

## CONSTRUCTION BUSINESSES

**445,081**

Construction Businesses  
(at June 2022)

Number of workers



258,272	0
180,814	1-19
5,790	20-199
205	+200

Turnover



**20.5%**  
turnover >\$50,000

**1.4%**  
turnover <\$10m

## CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES

**121,490**

Construction apprentices in-training  
(at September 2022)



**54,824** new starts  
(year to Sept 2022)

**23,837** completions  
(year to Sept 2022)



Female share of construction  
apprentice commencements  
(year to Sept 2022)



**6,212**  
apprentice carpenters  
in training



**3,913**  
apprentice plumbers  
in training

## PRIORITY POLICY ISSUES

POLICY AREA	KEY ACTIONS	ISSUES PROGRESSING
<b>Building Regulation</b>	<p><b>Standards Australia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waterproofing</li> <li>Bushfire</li> </ul> <p><b>Office of the ABCB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plumbing Codes Committee Meeting</li> <li>Technical Reference Group Condensation</li> <li>Technical Reference Group - Improved Robustness of Performance Solutions (Structural)</li> <li>Proposal for Change submitted for Evidence of Suitability on behalf of the Product Coalition</li> </ul> <p><b>CSR Meeting</b></p> <p>MBA met with CSR to discuss product testing requirements – specifically insulation and gyprock products.</p> <p><b>DCCEEW consultation</b></p> <p>MBA participated in federal government workshops of future work on energy performance in the built environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NatHERS Strategic Planning Workshop</li> <li>REEDI Governance Forum</li> </ul> <p><b>BRC meeting held</b></p> <p>A face to face meeting was held with the Committee (Sydney) with the focus of discussion on energy transformation in the sector, with a presentation from the Federal department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and water (DCCEEW) on what's next.</p> <p><b>Resilience Roundtable</b></p> <p>On 27 July 2023 a round table was held by MBA, the Insurance Council, and the Planning institute to discuss flood resilliance. More info including a Communique is here: <a href="#">Planners, builders and insurers unite to call for urgent planning reform - Master Builders Australia</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Future BRC meetings to feature presentations and enable discussion on NatHERS, NABERS and supply of windows (AGWA).</li> <li>Building Ministers Meeting September 2023.</li> <li>Parliamentary Inquiry into residential electrification – submission due 29 September. More information: <a href="#">Residential Electrification – Parliament of Australia</a> (aph.gov.au)</li> <li>Australian Building Codes Board engagement.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Energy Efficiency for commercial buildings is the focus for 2025 NCC. This will include class 3 to 9 buildings and public areas in class 2 buildings. This will focus on services, distributed energy resources and electric vehicle charging.</li> <li>Condensation mitigation</li> <li>Weather and Waterproofing is another focus.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Standards Australia – The following key standards are currently under review.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bushfire Standard</li> <li>Tiling Standard</li> <li>Pool Barrier Standard</li> <li>Demolition Standard</li> <li>External above ground waterproofing(expected)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### **ASBEC Council Meeting**

MBA attended the ASBEC Council meeting in Adelaide with a packed agenda on the following: ASBEC work plans - decarbonised communities, existing buildings, and codes/standards; future of NABERS, digitisation of emissions monitoring systems, National Energy Performance Scheme update; Government's Urban Policy Taskforce work, indigenous housing APY lands case study, Net Zero Homes Training modules for NCC 2022 free until end of year at: [Net Zero Energy Builder - Welcome](#), Access to windows from AGWA. Decarbonisation transition for products – MECLA, Steel verification processes – ASI, Insulation Handbook – ICANZ. SA Circular Economy initiatives.

### **Contracts**

#### **Standards Australia – General Conditions of Contract Review**

- On the 5th July, the National Office again attended another all-day meeting as a member of the technical committee tasked with the review of AS 4000.
- As part of a heavy agenda, this month also saw detailed consideration of a raft of proposed changes to the dispute resolution provisions, with a view to providing alternative mechanisms to those (relatively limited) options currently provided for under the contract.
- Once an updated draft of the contract has been settled by the Committee, the document will be released for public consultation period in the latter part of 2023.

#### **National Contracts Advisory Committee**

- On 6th July a full-day fact to face meeting of the NCAC took place in Canberra, chaired by National Board member Steve Margetic.
- It was fantastic to have a substantial proportion of the committee come together in person to discuss a raft of pressing issues. These included contractual ramifications arising from the Government's proposed IR changes, the AS 4000 update, and a review of NCAC's national policy positions.
- In light of the ongoing spotlight on payment times and terms, a key item on the agenda was a discussion on the NCAC's current national position on Security of Payment and related matters.
- The meeting provided an opportunity for the Committee to re-affirm a number of established national policy positions, as well as to discuss a number of emerging issues.
- Once settled by the Committee, a revised and updated NCAC national policy position document will be presented to the National Board for endorsement.



## Economy & Productivity

### Housing discussion with Treasury

- Earlier in July, Master Builder met with federal Treasury's Housing Division. The purpose of the meeting was to provide government with an update on latest conditions in residential building. Treasury updated us on the progress of the federal government's extensive portfolio of housing initiatives. Regrettably, the legislation required to give effect to the \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund has been pushed back to October. Going forward, it was agreed that Master Builders and Treasury's Housing Division would meet on a regular basis.

### Economic productivity project

- Master Builders Australia is close to finalising an agreement with a leading economic consultancy to complete detailed economic modelling around key productivity issues in the industry. The research agreement will include two annual updates to the research to take place in 2024 and 2025.

### Submission on worsening rental crisis

- Master Builders Australia is currently preparing our submission to the current Senate Inquiry into Australia's rental crisis.
- Our submission will emphasise how rental pressures can only be eased by building much greater volumes of higher density dwelling stock.
- We will also outline how incentives must be strong enough to attract investors to supply accommodation to the rental market.

### Next meeting set for Thursday, 24th August 2023

- The next meeting of our National Economics & Productivity Committee will take place by Zoom at 12pm (AEST) on Thursday, 24th August. An Agenda is due for circulation soon.

### Updated Master Builders forecasts

- The production has commenced on Master Builders Australia's updated set of forecasts which are due for publication in September. A separate report is being prepared for each of the eight states and territories covering both residential and non-residential building as well as engineering construction. The forecasts will cover the period up to 2028.

## Industrial Relations

### MBA continues its campaign in response to Government's IR agenda

- This month MBA continued rolling out its [Defend Your Rights](#) campaign, briefing members and engaging with a variety of stakeholders and media.
- As part of the campaign, MBA hosted a webinar where over 300 members dialled in and asked a range of questions about the potential implications of the government's proposed changes.

### Member Fact Sheet circulated outlining recent changes to IR legislation

- Meanwhile, following passage last month of the [Fair Work Legislation Amendment \(Protecting Worker Entitlements\) Bill 2023](#), the National Office prepared a fact sheet which provided an overview of the latest changes to the Fair Work Act with respect to unpaid parental leave, payroll deductions, and protections around super and for migrant workers.

- We remain extremely concerned about the Government's proposal and, despite our repeated requests, the lack of associated detail provided.
- The National Office will continue to meet with Government and relevant stakeholders to advocate on behalf of our members of this extremely important issue.

- The fact sheet is one of a number of documents developed in recent times by the National Office to be circulated amongst the State/Territory Associations for the benefit of their members.

### **Annual Wage Review Decision now in effect**

- Members may recall that on 1 June, the FWC handed down its [Annual Wage Review decision](#) which delivered an increase of 5.75 per cent to the National Minimum Wage.
- Final determinations and updated awards have now been [published](#) and took effect on the start of an employee's first full pay period on or after 1 July 2023.
- To reflect the changes, a new [Fair Work Information Statement](#) ('FWIS') was also gazetted.

### **MBA presents at Small Business Ombudsman Forum**

- On 18th July National Director of IR, Shaun Schmitke, provided an overview of MBA's concerns with respect to the Government's proposed 'employee-like' changes.
- The forum was convened by the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman ('ASBFEO') and attended by a wide range of industry associations and small business stakeholders.
- Forums such as these are key in connecting with government agencies and their stakeholders alike on live issues affecting our members.

### **ACCI Workplace Policy Committee**

- With IR remaining high on the Government's agenda, MBA continues to work closely with the ACCI network in anticipation of the next tranche of IR changes soon to be introduced to the Parliament.
- Working with ACCI's WPC continues to be important in facilitating a co-ordinated response across industry to such significant legislative changes.

### **FWC website update + associated materials**

- Following the passage of the 'Secure Jobs, Better Pay' Act in March this year, the Fair Work Commission recently made significant changes to its website and online processes. These include:
  - An expansion of its [Online Lodgement Service \(OLS\)](#);
  - An update of the forms used to apply for an [employer's declaration to vary an agreement](#);
  - A new tool to help [Select the correct Form F23A](#) for individual circumstances; and
  - A redesigned [Registered organisations section](#) of its website, which reflects the transfer of the registered organisation functions to the Commission's General Manager.
- As a member of the Commission's EBA & Small Business Reference Groups, we will continue to provide direct feedback as it rolls out relevant changes to its various guidance materials.

### **National Industrial Relations Advisory Committee**

- NIRAC met twice this month which provided an opportunity for the National Office to give an update on progress of our IR campaign, as well as for a State/Territory “round-the-grounds”.
- Ongoing consultation with the Committee, as well as the members they represent, will continue to be key as the Spring parliamentary sitting period looms large.

### **Senator Pocock IR roundtable**

- Master Builders attended a roundtable at Parliament House on 26 July to discuss upcoming IR changes. Convened by Independent Senator David Pocock, the roundtable was an important opportunity to express concerns about the impact of the proposed changes on building and construction.
- This roundtable was one of over 20 meetings we’ve had this month with a range of MPs and Senators from all sides of politics, with dozens more scheduled over the coming period.

## **Jobs & Skills**

### **ANZSCO Review**

- The ABS is taking a staged approach to reviewing all occupation classifications.
- The current consultation round opened this month and is seeking feedback on occupations in our industry including trades, labouring, design, and engineering.
- This month Master Builders met with the ABS to discuss the review, its parameters, and preliminary thoughts for our submission to the review.
- Master Builders is liaising across industry to ensure a coordinated and informed submission is lodged that will improve classifications. This will enhance our ability to analyse labour force data and identify workforce and skills needs.

### **BuildSkills Australia (BSA)**

- BSA is the Jobs and Skills Council for the built environment. Master Builders is a foundation member and was the industry lead in its establishment.
- The BSA Board has met, and an offer of employment made to the preferred CEO candidate.
- It is anticipated BSA will commence operations in August 2023.

### **Data**

- Labour Force – there are 1.33m people in Australia’s construction workforce, up nearly 8,000 over the quarter and over 130,000 in the year to May 2023. 89% work in residential and commercial building and 11% in civil construction. 12.8% are female, down from 13.3% last quarter.
- Job advertisements – online job ads rose 2% in May 2023 to 290,544. In the last year online job ads have increased for plasterers (+14.5%), glaziers (+13.8%), and floor finishers (+12.5%).
- Apprentices – 121,479 apprentices in training on 30 Sept 2022 are employed in construction. Construction is the top industry for apprentice employment. 54,810 apprentices commenced in the year to 30 September 2022.

## Work Health & Safety

### RIA developments + proposed changes to Silica WES

- MBA continues to hold significant concerns around a decision of National Cabinet which could have serious implications for a raft of WHS issues, including the regulation of respirable crystalline silica ('RCS') and its associated workplace exposure standard.
- Members may recall that the decision effectively removed the requirement for SWA (and other agencies that are subject to directions of COAG-like forums) to conduct regulatory impact assessments prior to making recommendations for regulatory change.
- We are extremely concerned that the decision of National Cabinet will provide SWA Members (and other government agencies) unfettered ability to make recommendations to State/Territory Ministers (either in or out of session) without the need to consult both Industry and Regulators alike as to their impact/s.
- While we await further developments with respect to silica, including a proposed reduction of the WES for RCS, we will continue to raise this issue with the Government to ensure appropriate rigour is applied to all proposed regulatory changes.

### STILL no progress on other Silica-related issues

- Meanwhile, in terms of other related developments, we are still awaiting updates from the Government on further progress of the following:
  - Proposed prohibition on the use of engineered stone;
  - Changes to the Model WHS Regulations - uncontrolled processing of engineered stone; and
  - Further regulation of high-risk crystalline silica processes (option 5a).
- The National Office will continue to be heavily engaged in all aspects of SWA's silica work and will continue to do so as options for reform are considered and progressed.

### MBA attends roundtable on regulation of non-threshold genotoxic carcinogens

- This month the National Office attended a meeting with SWA to contemplate regulatory options for non-threshold genotoxic carcinogens ('NTGCs'), including Chromium (VI).
- Members will no doubt be aware that Chromium is used extensively throughout the building and construction industry for its anti-corrosive and preservative qualities including in paints, sealants, stainless and galvanised steel, as well as a raft of other materials.
- While the discussions remain preliminary, it is important that MBA remains engaged in the NTGC review process to ensure regulatory settings are practical, whilst prioritising the safety of workers.

### Proposed WES for Diesel Particulate matter

- Members may recall that SWA consulted on a proposal to introduce for the first time a workplace exposure standard ('WES') for Diesel Particulate Matter ('DPM'). The WES that has been proposed for DPM is an 8-hour TWA of 15 µg REC/m<sup>3</sup>.
- While there have been no further developments to date, we will continue to highlight that further research and exposure monitoring is urgently needed to understand the potential impacts of such a significant change to the WHS framework.

### **SWA SIG-WHS Meeting – 28th July**

- The National Office provided feedback on a number of items to be considered at this month's SWA SIG-WHS meeting (both in and out of session) including on:
  - A potential review of the application of the primary duty of care under WHS laws;
  - Changes to the Model Plant Code of Practice;
  - Draft construction case studies as part of SWA's guidance on WHS principles; and
  - Changes to SWA's Model Sexual Harassment Code of Practice.
- MBA providing ongoing and direct feedback, as it relates to the membership, is extremely important in light of SWA's ever-increasing work program.

### **Development of interactive SWMS tool**

- The National Office this month was provided with a one-on-one demonstration of an early version of SWA's Safe Work Method Statement online tool. We provided feedback that focussed on the need to ensure users developed SWMS that were practical, useable and 'real-world' while avoiding lengthy or generic content. SWMS are a crucial element to improve site safety outcomes, so its important that SWA gets it right.
- Members may recall that following a review of the Model WHS laws, WHS Ministers agreed that an interactive tool should be developed to provide greater clarity and simplicity around the development of SWMS.
- In our submissions to the Model Laws Review, MBA raised concerns around the content of SWMS, including that they were becoming overly legalistic and complex in nature.
- MBA supports the development of the tool, which we hope will provide simple and clear guidance for those responsible for preparing and using SWMS.

### **Federal Safety Commissioner Review**

- Members may also recall that Marie Boland has been engaged to review the functions of the Federal Safety Commissioner and that MBA has been appointed to the Reviewer's Advisory Panel.
- The National Office is in the process of finalising submissions in response to a discussion paper as part of the FSC review, with submissions due by the 7th August.
- As a member of the Advisory Panel, MBA will provide ongoing feedback during the course of the Review, which will culminate in a final Report being handed to government sometime during the latter part of 2023.

### **National Work Health and Safety Committee**

- While no meeting was convened this month of the NWHSC, we continue to engage with the Committee on a raft of WHS-related matters out of session.
- The NWHSC's ongoing support is key in ensuring the most practicable and appropriate policy settings are advocated on behalf of our members.

## WOMEN BUILDING AUSTRALIA

At Women Building Australia (WBA), our dedication to advocating, promoting career opportunities and fostering inclusivity for women in the construction industry remains unwavering. Here are some exciting updates from the past month.

### WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION EVENTS

**Female Leaders Breakfast:** WBA and Master Builders Tasmania hosted a remarkable Female Leaders Breakfast with Denita Wawn, CEO of Master Builders Australia. The event showcased the impactful initiatives of the Women Building Australia program, breaking barriers and fostering diversity in the construction industry. We connected with extraordinary women who are driving change and making their mark in this traditionally male-dominated field, building a stronger future together.



**Master Builders ACT Women in Construction Dinner:** As a proud sponsor of this event, WBA had an incredible evening where we showcased our initiatives that support and advocate for women in the industry. The event also featured Tamika Smith, who shared her insights on succeeding in the male-dominated construction sector, inspiring future generations, and breaking gender barriers.

### CAREER EXPOS

**Perth Skills West Careers & Employment Expo and Townsville Careers Expo:** In line with our mission, WBA actively participated in these two career expos to showcase promising career prospects available to young women in the construction industry. We emphasised examples of successful women thriving in the field, encouraging young female school leavers to consider a career in construction.

### WOMEN BUILDING AUSTRALIA BUSINESS RESILIENCE TRAINING

**Collaboration with MYOB:** On June 1st, we proudly launched the Women Building Australia Business Resilience Training in partnership with MYOB. Over 91 women from the industry have already signed up for this comprehensive 7-part self-paced training designed to enhance business skills and knowledge in the building and construction sector. The training's flexibility allows participants to attend at their convenience and learn at their own pace. Registration is open on our website.

**Exceptional Social Media Engagement:** Our social media promotions for the Women Building Australia Business Resilience Training have yielded outstanding results. We generated over 2773 clicks onto the program through various platforms. Notably, on Facebook and Instagram, we garnered 532,856 impressions, reaching 182,696 individuals, resulting in 2,255 clicks. Additionally, on LinkedIn, we achieved 67,621 impressions, reaching 50,716 individuals, with 518 clicks. These metrics demonstrate a strong demand for professional development opportunities among women in the industry.

### MENTORING ON DEMAND PROGRAM

**Thriving Mentoring Experience:** Our Mentoring on Demand Program continues to thrive, offering a unique self-matching and on-demand mentoring experience. This program allows mentees to seek guidance for specific acute business issues they may be facing. We encourage experienced members of the construction industry, regardless of gender, to join us as mentors and support women in building robust businesses. Becoming a mentor not only enriches mentoring and leadership skills but also provides intellectual challenges, new perspectives, emotional intelligence exercises, and networking opportunities with industry practitioners.

### LOOKING AHEAD

As we move forward, we are preparing for a busy quarter with more expos, training programs, and initiatives aimed at empowering women in the construction industry. Our commitment to breaking gender barriers and forging a more inclusive future remains steadfast.

Be sure to follow us on our social media handles for timely updates on all WBA Activities at the below links:



@WomenBuildingAustralia



@womenbuildingaustralia



@women-building-australia

# KEY DATES IN AUGUST

**THURS, AUG 10** Finance Committee Meeting

**WED, AUG 30** Fortnightly Executive Directors Zoom