

MEDIA RELEASE

ACT needs boost to home approvals and commencements to achieve Accord target

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Latest ABS data shows that new home building approvals and commencements across Australia dipped in July 2026, with figures further revealing the ACT needs a significant boost to approvals and commencements to stay on track for its National Housing Accord target.

The ACT recorded 257 new home approvals in July 2026, marking a 33.6 per cent drop on the previous month and making it the weakest month for approvals in the Territory since April 2026. However, this still represented a 17.4 per cent increase on July 2025.

Over the year to July 2026, a total of 4,166 new homes were approved in the ACT, 39.4 per cent more than in the 12 months to July 2025. Over the last two years, 7,225 new homes were approved against a target of 8,763, while new home commencements tell a similar story, with 6,455 homes commenced against a target of 7,361 over the same period.

'Under the National Housing Accord, the ACT building industry has been tasked with delivering 21,030 new homes over five years. This is an annual average of 4,206 homes, or 351 homes per month. July's figures show we're still falling short of the required pace,' said Anna Neelagama, CEO of Master Builders ACT.

Ms Neelagama said the monthly volatility in approvals figures underscores the need for sustained policy action.

'While the ACT has made genuine progress over the past year, with approvals up nearly 40 per cent, July's result is a timely reminder that momentum can quickly slip away,' Ms Neelagama said.

'We cannot afford month-to-month fluctuations if we are serious about meeting our National Housing Accord obligations.'

'The gap between what has been approved and what we need is significant - a 36.5 per cent uplift in approvals and a 21.6 per cent uplift in commencements. Closing that gap requires action on planning reform, workforce supply, and reducing the cost and complexity of delivering new homes in the ACT,' she said.

Ms Neelagama added that turning approvals into actual commencements must be a priority.

'It is one thing to approve homes on paper. It is another to see them underway on the ground. Governments at all levels must work with industry to ensure approved projects can progress to construction without unnecessary delay,' Ms Neelagama said.

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