

MEDIA RELEASE

New workforce blueprint reveals significant 1,100 worker shortfall for ACT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canberra, ACT | Tuesday, 8 September 2026

Master Builders Australia has released its [Future Workforce Blueprint](#), with state-level data revealing that the ACT is on track to fall more than 1,100 workers short of industry demand by 2035 without urgent intervention, placing the territory's housing and infrastructure ambitions at serious risk.

The analysis finds the ACT will need 1,770 additional construction workers by 2035 to keep pace with projected demand, but current projections show the territory will fall significantly short of this target by 1,110 workers.

'We need homes and infrastructure built. Our question is, without a strong future workforce pipeline, who will build them?' said Anna Neelagama, CEO of Master Builders ACT.

'Every single construction trade in the ACT continues to be in shortage. Without urgent intervention and serious investment, we will have nowhere near the number of workers required to deliver our National Housing Accord targets or the infrastructure our growing community needs.'

The Blueprint combines public data sources to model Australia's capability to produce more skilled workers, identifying the policy levers and pathways needed to achieve targets.

'The gap is structural, not cyclical, and the turnaround will take time. Governments at all levels must act now to start closing the gap. The longer action is delayed, the harder and more expensive this challenge will become,' Ms Neelagama said.

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Master Builders ACT is renewing its calls for major investment in skills, drawing on recommendations from its [2026-27 Budget Submission](#) which urged the ACT Government to diversify access to 'fee-free' training for industry-aligned, reputable Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). This measure would directly address persistent skills shortages by improving training throughput, completion rates and job-readiness outcomes.

Master Builders ACT's 2025-26 Budget Submission also recommended the ACT Government invest in a careers campaign, delivered by Master Builders ACT, to encourage students to consider construction careers.

The Blueprint also highlights the role of skilled migration in addressing workforce constraints. In the ACT, existing migration settings represent an additional lever already designed to respond to skill shortages.

'Migration remains an essential part of the solution, but it cannot replace the need to rebuild Australia's domestic skills pipeline,' Ms Neelagama said.

'Equally, attracting apprentices means little if we continue losing more than 50 per cent before they complete their training.

'The sooner governments act on these recommendations, the better placed the ACT will be to meet our housing, infrastructure and economic ambitions,' Ms Neelagama said.

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