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Via email: communityconsultation@treasury.tas.gov.au

2025-25 Budget Community Consultation Submission

Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia is the voice of the heavy construction materials industry in Australia. CCAA members produce the majority of Australia's cement, concrete, and aggregates, which are crucial to Australia's building and construction sectors.

These materials support the development of our nation's transport, energy, water, housing, defence, and social infrastructure.

The industry generates approximately \$15 Billion in annual revenues and employs approximately 30,000 Australians directly and a further 80,000 indirectly.

Executive Summary

To address the growing supply risk of critical concrete sand and hard-rock (particularly in the south-east) this submissions calls on government to fund in the 2025-26 budget:

- A **Heavy Construction Materials Plan** for Tasmania (HCMP)
- **Model the supply / demand imbalance** for heavy construction materials to identify greatest supply risk
- **Streamline approvals** to bring new resource to market urgently
- Introduce a **Quarry Approvals Coordinator** function in government to attract investment and support approvals
- **Planning protection** for future resources
- **Communicating to community** the need for these resources and action to support affordable housing, infrastructure and renewable energy transition

The Issue

The infrastructure and construction sectors are currently in a phase of strong growth. The government has strong targets around building new homes, critical infrastructure and driving the renewable energy transformation across the state.

Conversely the supply of materials from quarries is struggling to meet demand and in some cases supply is likely to reduce unless urgent action is taken. This is particularly the case for concrete sand in south-east Tasmania. This supply trend has been confirmed by Mineral Resources Tasmania (MRT), who employed a sand geologist to work on further understanding sand supply risk.

There are already shortfalls of concrete sand in southern Tasmania and this represents a key risk to meeting the demand for the state's critical housing targets, major projects, infrastructure and roading programs.

What is needed

At present it is currently taking around 4 years for a new greenfield quarry to obtain the necessary approvals through the outdated 1994 Resource Management and Planning System (RMPS)¹

In other words, even if industry puts in new applications now it will be at least 4 years before they are producing material.

The complex RMPS legislation and regulations covers multiple planning, environmental and mining acts across three tiers of government. The complexity and uncertainty of the approvals process is such that existing operators are not investing in expansion, and no new operators are entering the state; indeed some businesses are closing due to unviable operating conditions.

What is needed is a coordinated and integrated suite of measures to future proof industry to ensure a sustainable supply of heavy construction materials close to markets (sand and hard-rock). CCAA believes an integrated **Heavy Construction Materials Plan (HCMP)** is needed for the state to ensure supply can readily match demand.

Response measures:

The Tasmanian **Heavy Construction Materials Plan (HCMP)** should include key elements that have been successfully used in other jurisdictions:

Understanding Supply and Demand

A new major project can represent a step change in demand at a regional or state level. There are currently a number of major projects being proposed that will need significant construction materials supplied by quarries to meet stringent performance specifications.

A detailed supply/demand analysis is critical so that future demand can be understood and suppliers (quarries) can have time to respond. This is particularly the case where many quarries have existing production caps or other constraints that limit their capacity to quickly respond to changes in demand.

Cost estimate: \$150,000

Streamlining approvals to bring new resource to market

The government needs to actively review the outdated Resource Management and Planning System (RMPS) and specifically the *Environment Management and Pollution Control Act (EMPCA)*² and the assessment processes to simplify and streamline it to actively bring material to market.

¹ Resource Management and Planning System (RMPS) <https://epa.tas.gov.au/about-the-epa/policy-legislation-cooperative-arrangements/about-policy-and-legislation/the-rmps>

² [Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994 \(EMPCA\) | EPA Tasmania](#)

While there is potential sand resource in the south, much of it is in the coastal zone where there may be constraints or complexities to access/extract. The multiple acts and layers of government are creating excessive approval delays, costing industry and government millions of dollars and often forcing companies to abandon capital investment.

Introducing a Quarry Approvals Coordinator function in government

As called out in Infrastructure Australia's 2023 Market Capacity Report:

With major public infrastructure playing a key role in Australia's economic ambitions, the 2023 Infrastructure Market Capacity report explains that a sustained focus on improving the productivity of the construction sector, increasing material and labour supply while continuing to actively manage demand, are crucial to the future success of the industry.³

An initiative that has been identified to fast-track approvals is the **Quarry Approvals Coordinator** function in Victoria⁴. This one-stop-shop acts as the front-door to the quarry industry and works across government to actively manage a timely delivery of new resources across the state.

CCAA submits that a function such as this is established within a central agency to replicate the success seen in other jurisdictions.

Cost estimate: \$500,000 over the forward estimates

Protecting our future resource

Protection of future sand and hard rock resources is vital to ensure we can supply major projects into the future. Significant areas of future southern sand resource have already been sterilised and there are emerging risks to hard rock operations.

The MRT sand mapping project has assisted in identifying potential future sand resource.

Appropriate planning protection is needed through urgently implementing the **Tasmanian Planning Policies**⁵ that specifically call out the economic value of quarries and require incompatible development proposals to be referred to Mineral Resources Tasmania (MRT).

This buffer protection and referral is critical to ensure valuable sand and hard-rock resources are not permanently sterilised by housing or other developments that limit access to the resource in the future. Again this is fettering supply of critical materials to build the housing and infrastructure needed because of poor strategic land use planning processes and decisions.

³ <https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/infrastructure-market-capacity-program>

⁴ <https://resources.vic.gov.au/about-us/our-role/resources-victoria-approvals-coordination>

⁵ [About the Tasmanian planning policies | Planning in Tasmania](#)

Communicating the need for action

There is a disconnect within parts of the community with regards to wanting the materials for the buildings in which they live and work, and the roads on which they drive, without accepting that that these materials come from working quarries.

Furthermore, there does not appear to be much community knowledge of the southern sand resource shortfall and some of the flow on challenges that will likely create (for example challenges in sourcing materials and significant cost increases).

Communications will assist with the level of knowledge within the community about the issue and should help with the overall acceptance within the community of the need for action.

Cost estimate: \$150,000

CCAA has raised these issues previously in our **2024 State Election Agenda; Building a Sustainable Tasmania Together**⁶.

To discuss this submission further, please contact Brian Hauser brian.hauser@ccaa.com.au.

Yours sincerely

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⁶ https://www.ccaa.com.au/common/Uploaded%20files/CCAA/Policy/Policy%20Priorities/23088_CCAA_Tas_Election_Agenda_D5.pdf