

TASMANIAN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS HELP DRIVE BOOM IN NATIONAL CONCRETE INDUSTRY

The boom in public infrastructure projects have contributed to a record production year for Australia's concrete, cement and aggregates industry, new figures reveal.

The industry's peak representative body, Cement Concrete and Aggregates Australia (CCAA), calculate that more than 30 million cubic metres of pre-mixed concrete were produced across Australia in the 2017 calendar year.

This compares to 27 million cubic metres in 2015, climbing again from 28.5 million cubic metres in 2016, according to the figures, which were commissioned from Macromonitor.

The industry boom was partly the result of major infrastructure projects across the nation, including Tasmania's Bridgewater Bridge replacement and Midland Highway project.

The association also confirms that:

- More than 30,000 people are employed directly by the industry nationally, with another 80,000 estimated to be employed in work related to the industry.
- The industry contributes over \$15 billion to the national economy every year.

The chief executive of the CCAA, Ken Slattery, said major infrastructure projects, such as Tasmania's Bridgewater Bridge project and Midland Highway project, were driving unprecedented growth in the sector.

"The boom in infrastructure projects - such as Tasmania's \$576 million Bridgewater Bridge replacement and the \$500m Midland Highway project - is good news for the heavy construction materials industry and for the more than 110,000 Australians who are employed directly or indirectly nationally in the sector," Mr Slattery said.

"But it is also great news for the Australian economy, with the industry contributing more than \$15 billion to the national accounts."

Mr Slattery said a recent report by consulting firm Deloitte had concluded that infrastructure projects worth at least \$324 billion were in the pipeline nationally, an increase of almost \$50 billion over the past two years.

"Demand for concrete is increasing rapidly at a time when more and more planners realise what architects and builders have known for a long time: no other material is as versatile, sustainable and cost effective," Mr Slattery added.

"Whether we are talking about a building as emblematic as the MONA in Hobart or pre-cast concrete single storey homes in our suburbs, concrete is also the safest of all building materials - it is non-combustible, does not emit toxic fumes, does not produce smoke, or drip molten particles when exposed to fire."

According to the figures released by CCAA, Tasmania's concrete consumption is expected to increase 10 per cent in 2018 from last year.

Construction projects are expected to consume an average of 422,100 cubic metres of pre-mixed concrete a year between 2018 and 2022, which is equivalent to filling 168 Olympic sized swimming pools each year.

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