

MEDIA RELEASE

WA STATE GOVERNMENT HOUSING FUNDING A WELCOMED FIRST STEP; FURTHER STIMULUS NEEDED, SAYS INDUSTRY BODY

May 21, 2020

Cement, Concrete & Aggregates Australia (CCA), the peak industry body for the heavy construction materials industry, has welcomed a decision by the WA State Government to bring forward a \$150 million social and affordable housing investment package as a welcomed first step to help the post pandemic economic recovery.

But the industry has warned that the private housing construction market will need a stronger financial stimulus package, following new figures which confirm the number of new housing starts in WA this year will be the lowest since 1982.

Our industry relies on an efficient and sustainable supply chain, which requires sustained activity across housing construction, commercial construction, and major infrastructure projects.

The Western Australian housing industry is the second largest provider of full-time jobs in the State, employing 120,000 West Australians

The Chief Executive Officer of CCA, Ken Slattery, said:

“On behalf of the heavy construction materials industry we welcome this first move by the State Government to help accelerate funding for the building of social and affordable housing and in the process, create much-needed new jobs.

“The Government’s announcement recognises the key economic role played by the heavy construction materials industry, which produces the cement, concrete and quarry products that are essential for building homes, offices, schools, roads, and bridges.

“Given the serious difficulties being experienced by the housing industry and broader construction sector, we are calling on the Government to take a bolder approach in helping ensure the construction industry not only survives the impacts of the pandemic but grows and creates even more jobs in WA.”

The CCA’s WA State Director, Harry Backes said: “We call on the Government to also consider as a matter of urgency a number of other specific measures, including time-limited grants, further investment in Keystart, and a review of stamp duty policies, while at the same time increasing infrastructure spending, and fast tracking of the approvals process.

“A recent Master Builders WA survey found that over 70 per cent of their members reported a 40 per cent decline in their pipeline of work – at a time when home building starts for 2020 are predicted to be the lowest in four decades.”

“The construction industry desperately needs a comprehensive housing stimulus package and fast tracking of essential infrastructure.”