

MEDIA RELEASE

Relocating East Perth concrete plants will push up costs, worsen traffic problems and increase emissions, industry warns

January 28, 2020

The peak body representing Western Australia's heavy construction materials industry has called on the State Government to reconsider its decision to relocate the East Perth concrete batching plants, warning that such a move would result in higher construction costs and an increase in traffic on local roads.

The Chief Executive Officer of Cement Concrete and Aggregates Australia, Ken Slattery, said the decision by the Government to move the plants from their current location by 2024 was short-sighted and could have serious consequences for the WA economy, including the possible loss of jobs.

"These concrete plants have been part of the community for over 40 years and over that time, they have employed hundreds of staff in the area," Mr Slattery said.

"In fact, these plants have been integral to the growth of Perth, which is why the industry is calling on governments at both State and local levels to recognise the important role that construction materials such as concrete, play in building our cities, creating long term jobs and growing our economy.

"Two years after the Government announced it was looking at moving the plants, no appropriate alternative sites have been identified, placing our members in a difficult position – and creating uncertainty at a time when we need to encourage greater investment in the WA economy."

Mr Slattery said moving the plants away from East Perth would not only increase transport costs and traffic congestion, but greenhouse gas emissions could worsen because trucks would be forced to travel further to deliver the materials to the building sites.

He said the industry wanted to work collaboratively with the Government and with local councils and authorities to find a suitable compromise.

Because these plants are located within five kilometres of the Perth CBD, relocating them could also have a serious impact on major strategic projects, such as the Inner City College, the Perth City Link, Elizabeth Quay and a broad range of commercial developments and government infrastructure.

"Having these plants located close to their markets isn't just about cost and convenience, it's critical for product quality," he added. "There is a strict 'use by' time on delivered concrete, calculated from the moment water is added to the mix in the batching plant to the time the mix is poured on site."

"There's a reason these plants have been in East Perth for a long time – they have provided the materials to construct and maintain much of the infrastructure that Perth takes for granted today. And as the city grows and renews, the cost-effective supply of concrete will be more important than ever."

Media inquiries: William Roberts (Cannings Strategic Communications) 0431 318 893