

# Media Release

## Hit the go button on WA infrastructure

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Master Builders Western Australia wants to see governments do more to fast track infrastructure projects to accelerate growth in the state economy.

We commend the McGowan Government for its efforts to date in rolling out congestion-busting transport infrastructure and the Morrison Government for its commitment to fund urban infrastructure and transport infrastructure, but more needs to be done to get projects out the door and construction commenced.

“With construction being such an important industry, Master Builders is encouraged to see government-led infrastructure work visibly rolling out across the state increasing activity in the sector and delivering much-needed jobs and economic growth,” Executive Director John Gelavis said.

“Positive news around the GST, Infrastructure WA, major projects such as Metronet and the many roads announcements by the Premier and Transport Minister in recent days is a great start as the State Government is aiming to embark on 30 major road projects in Perth alone in 2019. With these projects either underway now or set to start construction shortly.

“Additionally, major capital works projects in conjunction with civil/engineering and social infrastructure such as education and health facilities will make a big difference to economic confidence and prosperity in WA.

“But new Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show the volume of civil/engineering construction work in Western Australia fell during the March 2019 quarter by 19.5 per cent and 24.9 per cent on a year earlier. Total building and construction activity was down 19.3 per cent compared with the first quarter of 2018.

“The solution is more shovel-ready infrastructure projects emerging from the pipeline to spur growth, create jobs and get the economy moving. The State and Federal Governments must work together to make this happen.

“Important microeconomic measures such as cutting red and green tape is just one example of where this can happen and we are fortunate to have one of Western Australia’s own, Ben Morton MP, Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister and Cabinet taking the lead on removing regulatory bottlenecks.

“Master Builders welcomed the interest rate cut by the Reserve Bank but as the Reserve Bank Governor has noted in recent days, monetary policy cannot be solely relied upon to spark economic growth and infrastructure work gives a great bang for its buck.

“As well as providing visible, confidence-boosting work in the immediate term, it also expands capacity and flexibility in the building industry.

“Unlike other forms of expenditure, the bulk of the money spent on infrastructure is retained and recycled within the WA economy and assists recovery.

“Our industry is one of the largest providers of full-time jobs in the state, employing around 119,000 people. The WA building and construction sector encompasses more than 40,000 small businesses and is responsible for around 10 per cent of full-time employment.

“Local businesses such as builders, subbies, suppliers and manufacturers are the lifeblood of the WA economy and they need work and they need it fast.

“Let’s hit the go button on these projects and raise confidence, jobs and apprenticeships across the state.

“A strong building industry means a strong economy.”

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