

Media Release

Support the building sector for economic recovery

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The Housing Industry Forecasting Group has released a new report revealing a sharp decline in residential dwelling commencements for Western Australia, with the number predicted to be at the lowest levels since 1982.

Master Builders WA Executive Director John Gelavis said the figures showed the grim effects of COVID-19.

“These latest forecast numbers for 2019/20 are 12,500, which is well below the previous prediction of 15,500 commencements and should be of great concern to the WA Government,” he said.

“Positive changes come in today, allowing up to 20 people to attend display homes along with the easing of other restrictions so this is the perfect time to back the building industry in to assist with recovery efforts.

“The commercial building sector has also been impacted, with Master Builders’ updated forecasts reflecting a downward shift of 16.8 per cent in 20/21 and 15.6 per cent in 21/22 from original projections. This highlights the need to fast track asset-creating commercial building activity, such as aged care, health care and education projects.

“We feel very privileged to have been operating over the last few months. We thank the Premier for his support, which has saved many jobs and the livelihoods of so many of the 39,970 small to medium businesses in the building industry as well as creating economic benefits for the state.

“As the \$25 billion building and construction industry is one of the state’s largest industries and has been fully operational during the pandemic, it is best positioned of all sectors to lead the recovery and create a multiplier effect across many other sectors, including retail and hospitality.

“Now is the time to act, State and Federal Governments cannot delay, as restrictions have been eased, they must implement stimulus measures that will inject immediate activity into the building and construction industry to ensure the state can get back on its feet, saving and creating many jobs.

“Our industry is the second largest provider of full-time jobs employing 120,000 West Australians. If governments do not act now then the battle against the COVID-19 economic emergency could be lost just as the battle against the health emergency is starting to be won.

“We want the building and construction industry to be in shape to rebuild Western Australia, protecting the viability of tens of thousands of small businesses and the jobs of thousands of West Australians, so we must act now,” Mr Gelavis concluded.

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