

Media Release

Master Builders welcomes State Government workforce support

April 30, 2023

Master Builders Association of Western Australia welcomes the State Government’s announcement today with the State Government delivering a \$47.6 million boost to WA’s building and construction workforce in the 2023-24 Budget.

Master Builders welcomes support by the State Government aimed at encouraging more young people to take up apprenticeships and promoting the building industry in WA. The reforms include a \$26.9 million increase in the Base Employer Grant for third and fourth-year apprentices, a one-off \$2,000 completion payment to encourage more apprentices to finish their training, and the expansion of the Group Training Organisation Wage Subsidy program to include apprentices and trainees in the residential and commercial construction industry.

In addition, the government has allocated \$2.7 million to expedite occupational licensing approvals and \$11 million for targeted visa subsidies of up to \$10,000 to attract skilled migrants to the building and construction sector. There will also be temporary changes to the state sponsored visa scheme to make it easier for skilled migrants to connect with job vacancies in WA.

Master Builders WA Executive Director, John Gelavis says while the announcement is a step in the right direction, Master Builders estimates that WA will need to attract around 55,000 workers to our industry between February 2023 and November 2026.

“In April 2023, Master Builders Australia released its blueprint for future-proofing the building and construction industry’s workforce in wake of a shortage of half a million workers nationally. Construction is the backbone of the Australian economy, employing approximately 1.3 million people, providing infrastructure, commercial and community buildings, and homes for the growing population.

“As seen in the table below, there is a state-by-state breakdown, WA will need almost 55,000 workers by 2026 and around 26,000 of those are in the trades. The blueprint aims to address this by attracting new workers into the industry, retaining current and emerging workers, ensuring training and education is provided as well as creating a more diverse industry”, Mr Gelavis says.

	Managers	Professionals	Technicians & Trades	Admin	Machinery	Labourers	Total*
AUS	64,557	31,850	229,053	46,571	31,558	78,029	481,618
NSW	22,455	10,232	69,272	14,765	7,574	26,574	150,872
VIC	17,117	9,134	63,161	11,256	7,453	18,338	126,459
QLD	12,180	5,933	45,390	9,685	8,128	16,439	97,755
SA	3,506	1,543	14,685	3,212	2,231	5,972	31,149
WA	5,823	3,601	26,451	4,716	5,104	8,337	54,033
TAS	1,461	551	5,110	961	545	1,349	9,979
ACT	1,390	605	2,918	1,334	284	451	6,982
NT	625	234	2,065	643	239	568	4,374

Overview of recommendations

Attracting workers	Recruiting workers	Train workers	Retain workers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing the bias and improving careers education • Improving gender diversity • Reframing the apprenticeship story • The role of migration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the options and testing the waters • Entering the industry • Nurturing success in the early stages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving quality by improving information • Work-integrated learning pathways • Enhancing education integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupational licensing • Embracing a culture of life-long learning • Improving business acumen

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Executive Director John Gelavis will be available today for media inquiries, comments, and television appearances.

For more information, please contact:

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