



Media Release

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Master builders urge continuing commitment on capital expenditure

Statement by Executive Director of the MBA-ACT, John Miller

Canberra's peak building and construction industry organisation, Master Builders ACT has pointed to the latest Deloitte Access Economics Business Outlook research as reinforcing the importance of maintaining adequate capital works activity in the national capital.

The executive director of the MBA-ACT, John Miller said the Deloitte Access Economics research had accurately assessed the challenges confronting the Canberra economy but had perhaps underplayed the mid-to-long-term impact of cutbacks to the public sector.

"The research has very accurately picked up on the degree to which activity levels with respect to housing and construction have tapered off over the past 18 months and there can be no denying this has tested the resilience of the local industry," he said.

Mr Miller said that in circumstances where the Federal Budget had provided only minimal stimulus in terms of capital works in Canberra and where the ACT Budget had been necessarily constrained, it was important that no unnecessary hurdles were placed in the way of investment in the territory.

"While the Deloitte Access Economics research suggests Canberra has 'shrugged off' the public sector lay-offs, we believe it is early days and that the jobs cuts will have some medium-term impacts on activity levels," he said.

Mr Miller said that confronted by such realities, the MBA-ACT was continuing to work with the Government with a view to ensuring the underlying regulatory environment did not act as a brake on activity in the building and construction sector.

As well, he said the MBA-ACT continued to urge a stable interest rate environment in circumstances where recent rate cuts and a more certain environment had generated a mild up-tick in recent Australian Bureau of Statistics data.

"These remain very challenging times for our industry and the broader Canberra economy," Mr Miller said.

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