

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## HIA push to ease slab down pressure in light of WA building grants

HIA has asked the WA government to provide more assurance for consumers looking to capitalise on the state's building grants by extending the current commencement framework, said HIA WA Executive Director Cath Hart today.

Ms Hart said HIA was not pushing for an extension to the timeframe to sign a contract on a new home build, but rather looking to ease the current pressure felt by both consumers and builders when trying to commence construction.

"The way the scheme is structured, the consumer can't apply for the grants until they get their slab down," Ms Hart said.

"By that stage, they've entered into a building contract and so they're in a long-term relationship with a builder, but they don't know if they will receive the grants or not until that time, so our objective is to ensure that consumers don't miss out on being eligible for the grants.

"Consumers are signing contracts on untitled land, but there's more than just moving some dirt around when it comes to getting a block titled.

"We'd like to see land developers given until 30 June 2021 to title lots, and once that's done we'd like builders to be given six months to commence after lots are titled."

Ms Hart's comments follow recent meetings facilitated by HIA with state government involving key builders, developers and contractors, in a collective push for the commencement timeframe to be eased as the industry manages the surge in demand.

"Housing starts were at a 20-year low before the grants were announced and we saw a 211 per cent increase in sales basically overnight which is unheard of - if we can get the commencement timeframe extended, it will give consumers and builders more certainty and relieve a lot of pressure in the system," she said.

"The other important aspect to consider is the safety of workers on site. Some people are coming back into the industry after a lengthy absence due to previous low levels of activity, and we want to make sure they don't have the added pressure of working against an unreasonable timeframe to get structures such as retaining walls built."

*For more information please contact:*

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