

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## Strengthening apprentice support will strengthen economy: HIA

“Today’s announcement from the Australian Government to extend the Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements subsidy by injecting a further \$1.2 billion is a welcome response to HIA’s call to ensure the class of 2020 are not left behind in these difficult times,” said Kristin Brookfield, HIA Chief Executive Industry Policy.

“The first tranche of the Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements wage subsidy program is fully subscribed, helping to create 100,000 apprenticeships in less than five months. This is a commendable outcome and should be recognised.

“Updating the program to remove the cap and be demand driven and to expand the payments to cover a full 12 months for new apprentices and trainees signed up prior to 30 September 2021 will see these early benefits grow and jobs created.

“It is estimated that this extension will support hundreds of thousands of small businesses across Australia take on new apprentices and trainees over the next six months.

“The \$2.8 billion already provided for this wage subsidy has made a significant difference for the housing industry and supported many new apprentices since October start their study and training.

“In under five months, the target of 100,000 new starters has been realised. Taken together with the support for existing apprentices and trainees already in a job before COVID-19, this means over 222,000 apprentices and trainees are being supported by the wage subsidy programs.

“This will keep a pipeline of skilled workers in place as the housing industry navigates its way through the economic recovery.

“As JobKeeper and other business supports reach an end in March there is a risk to keeping existing trainees and apprentices in a job. Ensuring apprentices who were in training before COVID-19 also continue to be supported throughout 2021 is also critical.

“The extension of this vital assistance will mean not only are apprentices kept in the jobs they have today, but that new apprentices can find work, businesses can continue to build and Australia can maintain a healthy level of skilled tradespeople into the future,” concluded Ms Brookfield.

For further information please contact

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