



# Housing **South Australians**

HIA Election Imperatives



# Message from the Executive Director

## The South Australian housing industry stands at a critical point.

Despite growing national demand for new homes, South Australia faces rising costs, a shrinking skilled workforce, and ongoing land supply bottlenecks.

A strong housing industry underpins a strong South Australian economy. Home building supports tens of thousands of local jobs, drives regional growth, and ensures that more South Australians have the opportunity to own a home.

This election, HIA calls on all political parties to back practical, achievable reforms that unlock land, rebuild the workforce, reduce red tape and taxation, and invest in the future of housing supply and affordability. These are the key ingredients to restoring confidence, creating jobs, and ensuring that home ownership remains within reach for South Australian families.



**Stephen Knight**  
HIA Executive Director - SA



## Economic Backdrop

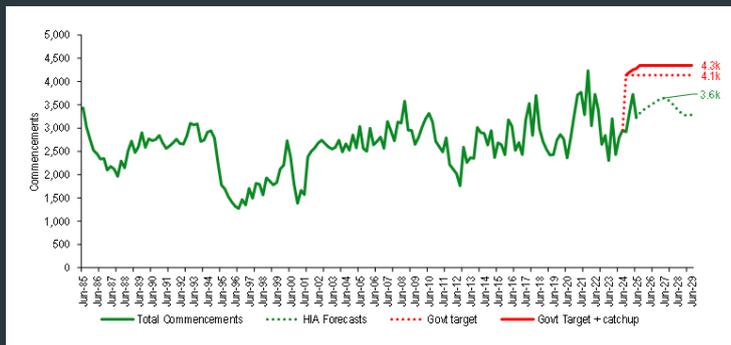
The housing industry remains one of South Australia's largest economic drivers, contributing around \$9 billion annually to Gross State Product and directly employing more than 65,000 South Australians.

Over 90% of new homes and renovation work are delivered by South Australian-owned builders, trade contractors and suppliers, meaning every home built supports local families, local jobs, and local businesses.

But persistent planning delays, high taxes, skill shortages, and slow infrastructure delivery are driving up the cost of housing and threatening our state's competitiveness.

To restore balance, government must make housing policy a central plank of South Australia's economic strategy.

### 1.2 million homes: SA's share per quarter



## HIA's 2026 Election Imperatives



Dramatically Increase Workforce Capacity



Secure Supply Chains & Invest in Manufacturing



Cut Red Tape



Modern Methods of Construction



Tax Reform & Housing Affordability



Social & Affordable Housing



Unlock Land Supply



Regional Housing Investment

## Dramatically Increase Workforce Capacity



### HIA calls for:

- Expansion of apprenticeship and training programs targeting construction trades.
- Removal of payroll tax for apprentices and trainees to incentivise employment.
- Stronger support for Group Training Organisations (GTOs) to lift apprentice completion rates.
- Targeted skilled migration programs that prioritise essential construction roles.

The construction industry is experiencing one of its most severe skills shortages in decades. With an ageing workforce and declining apprenticeship numbers, the ability to deliver the state's housing targets is under real threat. South Australia must act now to rebuild the pipeline of skilled tradespeople from entry-level apprentices to qualified builders and supplement domestic training with targeted migration where gaps cannot be filled locally.

## Unlocking Land Supply



### HIA calls for:

- Doubling investment in enabling infrastructure to open up new housing precincts and regional hubs.
- Increasing the number of Tier 1 and Tier 2 civil contractors approved to undertake SA Water infrastructure work, which will accelerate land development.
- Introducing private certification pathways for SA Water approvals to remove infrastructure bottlenecks.
- Further fast-tracking re-zonings and planning approvals for both greenfield and infill developments.

A reliable supply of affordable, developable land is the foundation of housing affordability. While infill development has progressed, delays in infrastructure delivery and approvals for fringe developments have restricted the flow of new land to market. Without urgent reform, South Australia risks falling short of national housing targets and pushing prices further out of reach.

## Cut Red Tape



### HIA calls for:

- A moratorium on new regulations that increase the cost of construction or administration.
- A full review of existing red tape affecting planning, building, and environmental approvals.
- A commitment that any new regulation must demonstrate a net economic and housing affordability benefit before implementation.

Excessive and overlapping regulation continues to add unnecessary cost and delay to housing projects. From planning approvals to environmental compliance and certification, builders are spending more time on paperwork than building homes. Streamlining processes and applying a “cost-benefit” lens to new rules will help reduce construction costs and speed up housing delivery.

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## Tax Reform & Housing Affordability



### HIA calls for:

- A long-term commitment to overhaul stamp duty, including:
  - Progressive reforms to remove stamp duty for downsizers; &
  - Reducing transaction costs for all new home buyers.
- Removing foreign buyer surcharges on new housing and residential land to encourage investment.
- Raising the payroll tax threshold and exempting apprentices and trainees from payroll tax.

Taxation is one of the biggest drivers of housing costs. Stamp duty, payroll tax, and levies on new development act as disincentives to building and buying homes.

Structural reform is essential to ensure South Australia remains competitive with other states and to make home ownership more achievable for first-time buyers and downsizers alike.

## Secure Supply Chains & Invest in Manufacturing



### HIA calls for:

- Incentives for building product manufacturers to establish or expand in South Australia.
- A coordinated state housing and supply chain security plan to reduce reliance on interstate and imported materials.
- Support for innovation and modern methods of construction (MMC) to improve productivity and reduce waste.

The pandemic and recent global supply disruptions exposed the fragility of Australia's construction supply chains. Builders continue to face long delays and high material costs. South Australia has the opportunity to strengthen its manufacturing base and become a national leader in construction materials, housing components, and new technology production, securing jobs and resilience for the future.

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## Regional Housing Investment



### HIA calls for:

- A comprehensive Regional Housing Plan to identify workforce, land, and infrastructure needs.
- An implementation plan to deliver new housing supply across key regional centres.
- Joint investment by state and local governments to coordinate housing, services, and infrastructure delivery.

Regional towns and communities across South Australia are facing acute housing shortages, limiting their ability to attract and retain essential workers. Without affordable homes for teachers, healthcare workers, and tradespeople, regional economies cannot grow. A dedicated housing plan for the regions is essential to ensure balanced population growth across the state.

## Modern Methods of Construction



### HIA calls for:

- State investment and pilot programs in modular and prefabricated housing.
- Updating building standards and procurement frameworks to accommodate MMC.
- Partnerships between industry, government and education providers to train a modern construction workforce.

Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) such as off-site manufacturing, modular homes, and prefabrication offer a way to deliver housing faster, with greater precision and less waste. To realise this potential, South Australia needs a regulatory environment and investment strategy that encourages innovation rather than treating new techniques as exceptions.

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## Social & Affordable Housing



### HIA calls for:

- Increasing investment in social and affordable housing supply across metropolitan and regional areas.
- Expanding rent-to-buy schemes to help low to middle-income households move towards ownership.
- Raising the affordable housing threshold to \$750,000, with annual indexation in line with median house price growth.

A balanced housing market must include pathways for all South Australians from renters to first home buyers.

Targeted government investment in affordable and social housing helps reduce pressure on the private market, supports construction activity, and provides a stepping stone into ownership for those locked out of the market.



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The Housing Industry Association (HIA) is Australia's only national industry association representing the interests of the residential building and construction industry.

As the voice of the residential building industry, HIA represents a membership of 60,000 across Australia.

Our members are involved in delivering more than 170,000 new homes each year through the construction of new housing estates, detached homes, low and medium-density housing developments, apartment buildings and completing renovations on Australia's 9 million existing homes.

**You're in**  
**good hands**

Document authorised by Jocelyn Martin, HIA Managing Director  
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