



31 March 2020



Joint Industry Statement

Master Builders Tasmania and CFMEU Vic/Tas Construction Division

Matthew Pollock – Master Builders Tasmania and Kevin Harkins, CFMEU Vic/Tas Construction Division

The Master Builders and the CFMEU Vic/Tas Construction Division are united in keeping the construction industry going to help support the Tasmanian economy and continue to provide jobs and important stimulus through the coronavirus crisis.

The principle union and employer groups in the construction industry are working cooperatively to keep people safe at work, to keep the community safe and to keep the industry going. We are calling on the government to support the industry through the uncertainty we will face in the months ahead.

The construction industry is a crucial driver of the Tasmanian economy and supports more than 3,000 business and their 20,000 workers. In the years ahead the industry will account for a growing share of the Tasmanian economy, but to do so we must keep the industry going.

If coronavirus forces a shutdown of the industry it will have a devastating impact on the economy and on the livelihoods of the business and workers who depend on it to support their families.

We know that to keep the industry going and to keep sites open, we must keep sites safe. In the face of the coronavirus pandemic, we have a duty to create and maintain a safe work environment, to keep our workers and our community safe. The health and wellbeing of everyone in the building and construction industry is our priority.

Building and construction businesses and their workers are committed to protecting the community under the current health guidelines, social distancing is being taken seriously and hygiene procedures are being put in place to stop the possible spread of the virus on construction sites. The industry has the capacity to implement and enforce strict measures to ensure proper procedures are abided by and maintained.

We thank the government for their support so far to keep the industry open. It will be increasingly important that future stimulus measures underpin building activity, and to ensure the industry can continue to help drive the economy now and through the recovery. It is critical that measures are put in place to keeping people in jobs.

If worksites are shut down and workers forced off the job due to the virus, there must be an appropriate safety net in place. We welcome the announcement this week from the Federal government to provide a significant wage subsidy for stood down workers. For the construction industry this will help keep

people in jobs, but it will only so for a period of time and there is an important role for the State government to play to ensure that projects are not delayed for a moment longer than they need to be.

A shut-down of building and construction would devastate not only the livelihoods of more than 20,000 Tasmanians but would be a disaster for the living standards of the whole community. The government, the industry, unions, clients and the building supply chain must all take proactive steps now to ensure building and construction remains safe and the industry remains strong to help our whole community through this crisis.

Signed



Kevin Harkins – Sub-branch President



Matthew Pollock CEO

