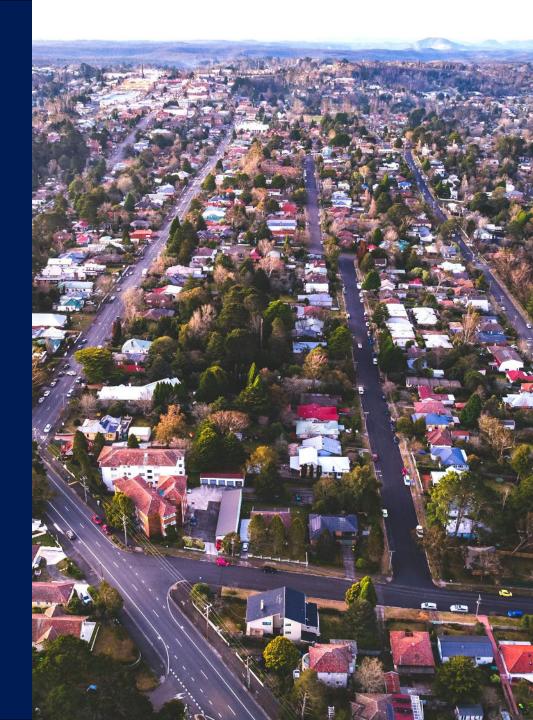


Smarter Incentives, More Homes

Property Council of Australia

MARCH 2025



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Note: All dollar figures are Australian dollars unless indicated otherwise.

Executive summary

Australia's housing affordability challenge continues to deepen, with the time required to save for a house deposit in capital cities increasing to over 10 years. This challenge stems from insufficient housing supply, with Australia having fewer dwellings per capita than the OECD average, and historically low vacancy in existing homes.

The Australian Government has responded by setting an ambitious target of 1.2 million new well-located homes by the end of FY2029, through the National Housing Accord. Currently, Australia is forecast to achieve 60 per cent of the National Housing Accord's target, with an uplift of 462,000 homes needed to reach 1.2 million new homes.

Accelerating housing construction to achieve the 1.2 million target would have large impacts on housing affordability. Rental prices could be reduced by \$90 per week in well-located areas and housing price growth would slow. Further, the construction would contribute \$128 billion in economic activity over the five years and support 368,000 jobs each year.

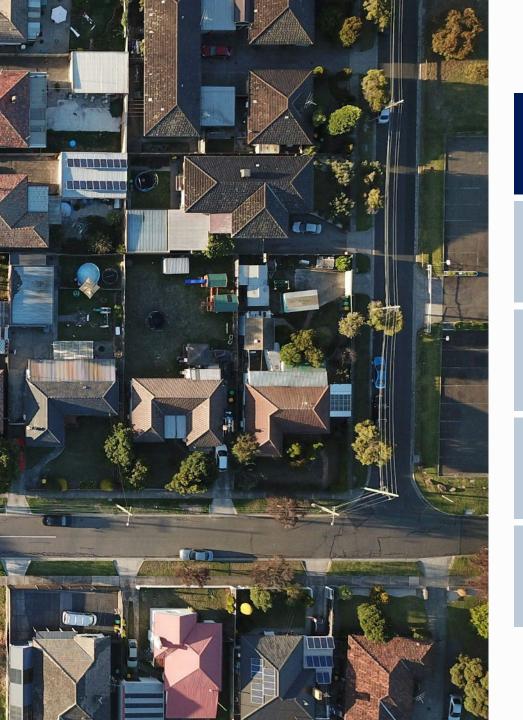
The target is supported by the \$3 billion New Homes Bonus, designed to incentivise more housing construction. However, stakeholder consultation and analysis of previous incentive payment schemes suggest that the New Homes Bonus could be better designed to improve its efficacy. The current retrospective payment structure and high threshold requirements make the scheme challenging for jurisdictions to engage with effectively. With the exception of the ACT, no state or territory is projected to meet the scheme's threshold within its current timeframe, potentially undermining its effectiveness as an incentive for reform.

To optimise the scheme's impact, the Australian Government should consider:

- refining the scheme by bringing forward payments and extending its duration to seven years to enable jurisdictions to undertake longer-term reforms
- 2. increasing the total value to \$6 billion to reflect the scale of the housing challenge and ringfencing any unspent funding for future housing supply initiatives
- 3. strengthening transparency through clear public reporting on progress and establishing forums to share insights between jurisdictions
- 4. enhancing Australian Government leadership through establishing a Housing Sub-Committee of Cabinet and considering all available levers to support housing supply

These changes would help ensure the New Homes Bonus effectively supports the critical goal of improving housing affordability across Australia, while fostering greater coordination between different levels of government in addressing this complex challenge.





Housing affordability is a complex and critical challenge facing Australia, which Governments of all levels are trying to tackle

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Housing costs have grown significantly faster than incomes since 2003

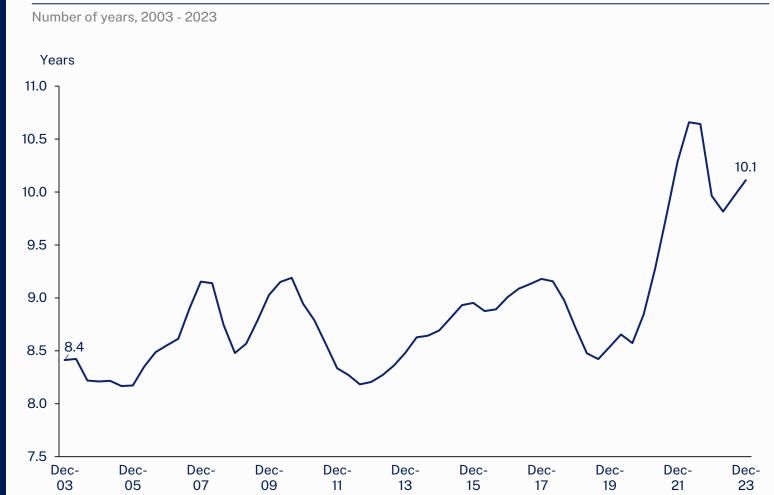
Australia's housing market has experienced unprecedented affordability challenges since 2003, with costs substantially outpacing income growth. The time taken to save for a house deposit in capital cities has increased by 1.7 years, from 8.4 years in December 2003 to 10.1 years in December 2023.

For aspiring homeowners, the path to purchasing a home has become increasingly steep. First-home buyers now face the daunting prospect of spending more than a decade saving for a standard 20 per cent deposit, significantly delaying their entry into the market. The situation is compounded by deteriorating loan serviceability conditions, with the share of income required for mortgage repayments surging to 48.9 per cent in March 2024 from a 10-year average of 36.2 per cent. This dramatic increase puts additional pressure on households' budgets.¹

Both renters and buyers are facing housing stress. Nearly half of all low-income households (45.1 per cent) in capital cities are experiencing rental stress, meaning they spend an unsustainable portion of their income on housing.² This pressure on renters is particularly concerning given Australia is the only country in the world where all major city markets are classified as 'severely unaffordable'. Sydney is ranked the second least affordable city of the 94 global cities surveyed.³

1 ANZ CoreLogic (<u>2024</u>) Housing Affordability Report. 2 AIHW (<u>2024</u>) Housing Affordability. 3 Centre for Demographics and Policy (<u>2024</u>) Demographia International Housing Affordability.

Time needed to save for a 20 per cent deposit



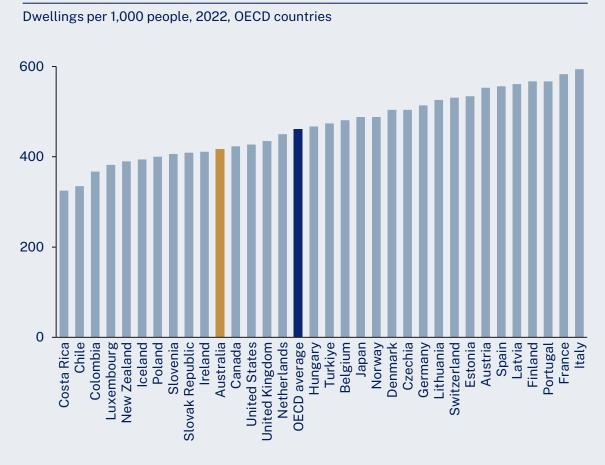
Notes: Measured as the years it would take to save for a 20 per cent deposit, assuming 15 per cent of gross median household income is saved annually.

Source: Australian Government (2024) State of the Housing System 2024.

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International comparison of housing supply

Low affordability is due to insufficient supply of homes ...



Source: Australian Government (2024) Budget Paper No.1; Mandala analysis.

... and a historically low national vacancy rate



Notes: 1. 3-month rolling average;

2. The Commonwealth Treasury has stated that a vacancy rate of 3% reflects

a balanced rental market.

Source: Australian Government (2024) Budget Paper No.1; Mandala analysis.

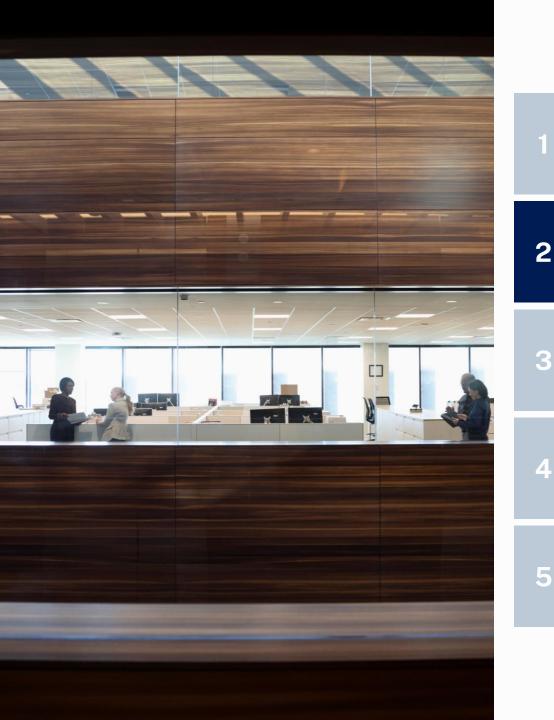
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All levels of Government in Australia hold levers to support housing supply

Level of control: Low

		Control of policy lever		
Policy lever	Role in housing supply	Federal	State	Local
Construction stimulus and development finance	Government programs such as HomeBuilder grants, and Housing Australia's development financing help get new housing projects off the ground. These targeted interventions aim to boost supply by making more projects viable, particularly affordable and social housing developments.			
Infrastructure provision	State and territory governments and councils must provide roads, water, schools, and transport before new housing can proceed in growth areas. The funding and timing of this infrastructure, through mechanisms such as developer contributions in NSW and Victoria, directly impacts where and when new housing supply can be delivered.			
Tax policy	The Australian Government is responsible for tax settings that have significant impacts on the national property market such as capital gains tax discounts and negative gearing, State and local development taxes including land tax and stamp duty which affect development decisions and costs, and vary by jurisdiction. For instance, high stamp duty costs in NSW and Victoria can discourage development by adding significant costs to land acquisition for new housing projects.			
Construction industry regulation	The National Construction Code and state-based building regulations set standards for everything from energy ratings to fire safety in new Australian homes. These essential standards protect consumers, but inconsistent implementation by states adds complexity and cost, and in the case of some reforms, are not supported by positive cost benefit results.			
Planning and land use regulation	State planning schemes and local council controls determine what can be built through zoning rules, floor space ratios and development assessment processes. These rules directly impact housing supply – for example, restrictions on medium density in middle ring suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne significantly limit new housing in high-demand areas.			

High



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If achieved, the Australian Government's target of 1.2 million new homes by FY2029, would support housing affordability and boost economic activity

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The Australian Government has set a target of 1.2 million new well-located homes by FY2029, through the National Housing Accord

Key features of the National Housing Accord

	1.2 million	New well-located homes target over 5 years from FY2025
	\$3 billion	Available through the New Homes Bonus, which provides performance-based funding for jurisdictions that achieve more than their share of the original 1 million homes target
S.	\$500 million	In targeted activation payments under the Housing Support Program for specific initiatives such as connecting essential services
	National Planning Reform Blueprint	An outline of planning, zoning, land release and other measures to improve housing supply and affordability
谷	\$350 million	To support 10,000 affordable homes, with jurisdictions agreeing to build on this to deliver up to an additional 10,000 homes bringing the total to 20,000 affordable homes

To reach the target of 1.2 million new homes, an uplift of 462,000 homes need to be built, above current forecast

To achieve the National Housing Accord's target of 1.2 million welllocated homes by FY2029, an additional 462,000 homes will be required. Current projections show that jurisdictions are on track to build a baseline of 738,000 well-located homes by FY2029.¹ Therefore an additional uplift of an additional 462,000 homes, or approximately 40 per cent of the target, will be required.

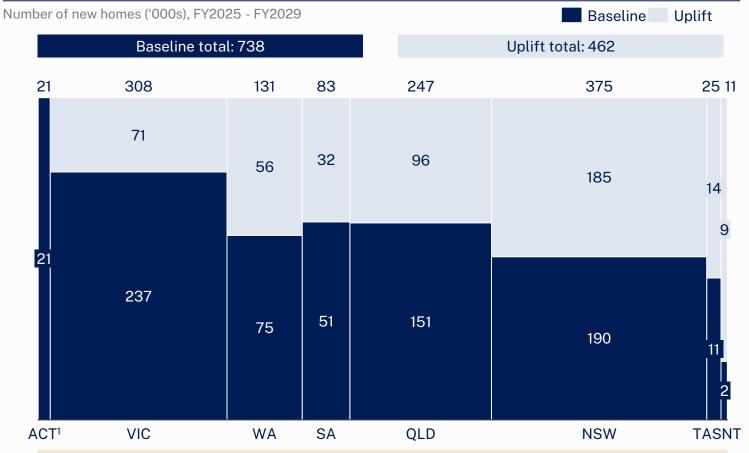
Each state and territory's individual target, or share of the 1.2 million homes, has been calculated based on their population. NSW, as the most populous jurisdiction has the largest target of 375,000 homes, while NT, the least populous jurisdiction has the smallest target of just 11,000 homes.

Progress against targets varies significantly by jurisdiction. The ACT is most advanced, and could meet its target of 21,000 homes by the end of 2028, if building activity keeps up with projections. By FY2029, NSW is expected to have the greatest shortfall in absolute terms with 185,000 homes needed, while the NT will have made the least headway relative to its target achieving only 18 per cent of 11,000 new homes.

New homes are required to be built in "well-located areas" under the Accord to ensure they are in areas where people want to live, with good infrastructure and services nearby.

1 Australian Government (<u>2024</u>) State of the Housing System 2024; Mandala analysis.

Progress on the 1.2 million new homes target by jurisdiction



Victoria is currently projected to reach 237,000 homes by the end of FY2029, or about 77% of its target of 308,000 new homes. NT is on track to achieve about 18% of its 11,000 target, making it the jurisdiction with the greatest proportional uplift required.

Notes: Total target size are rounded to the nearest 1000. Jurisdictional targets in this report have been calculated based on population shares. Some states have released targets that may differ from those assumed in this report (e.g. Victoria's 80,000 annual target). (1) The ACT is forecast to reach its share of the 1.2 million homes by FY2029. Source: Australian Government (2024) National Housing Accord; Australian Government (2024) State of the Housing System 2024; ABS (2025) Building approvals; ABS (2024) Population; NSW Government (2024) Housing targets; Mandala analysis.

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Delivering the 462,000 homes needed to reach the national target could reduce rents by \$90 per week

If the National Housing Accord's target of 1.2 million new, welllocated homes is achieved, rental prices in well-located areas are expected to be \$90 per week less than they otherwise would in FY2029, on average. The additional 462,000 homes, would drive down prices by reducing competition in the rental market.

Rental prices in well-located areas are expected to fall most sharply in jurisdictions needing the biggest percentage increase in construction.¹ The Northern Territory faces the most dramatic adjustment, needing to increase its current building rate five-fold to meet its target, as the state is on course to deliver just 18 per cent of required homes. Following the Northern Territory, the jurisdictions expected to see the greatest reductions are, NSW (\$130 per week), WA (\$100 per week), and TAS (\$90 per week). If residential building activity keeps up with projections, no additional uplift will be required in the ACT to meet its target, which means rental prices would not be impacted.

The distribution of rental relief by the New Homes Bonus is well targeted. NSW, Tasmania and Queensland are the lowest performing states in rental affordability (when considering rental prices and income together).²

1 Price impacts within jurisdictions is limited to 'well-located' LGAs. See appendix for list of well-located LGAs. 2 Proptrack (<u>2024</u>) *Rental Affordability Report*.

Potential impact on rental prices in well-located areas if the national housing target is achieved

Reduction in median rental prices in well-located areas (\$ per week), FY2029

A



Notes: Rounded to nearest 1% and \$10 increments. Price impact within jurisdictions is limited to 'well-located' LGAs. See appendix for list of well-located LGAs. 1. The ACT is forecast to reach its share of the 1.2 million homes by FY2029, so there is no uplift required, and therefore no impact on rental prices.

Source: Australian Government (2024) National Housing Accord; Australian Government (2024) State of the Housing System 2024; NSW Government (2024) Housing targets; RBA (2019) A model of the Australian Housing Market; Own Home (2024) Average rent in Australia; Mandala analysis.

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Reaching the target would slow house price increases

Achieving the 1.2 million homes target through an uplift of 462,000 homes would slow house price growth. Currently, achieving the 1.2 million target is aspirational, given on current projections, the nation is almost half a million homes short of the target. Almost an additional 100,000 homes would need to be completed per year, beyond what is currently forecast.

However, if the target is reached, housing prices in well-located areas on average, could decrease by 0.2 per cent annually between FY2025 and FY2029. These are areas – primarily capital cities where house prices have been under significant pressure for years.

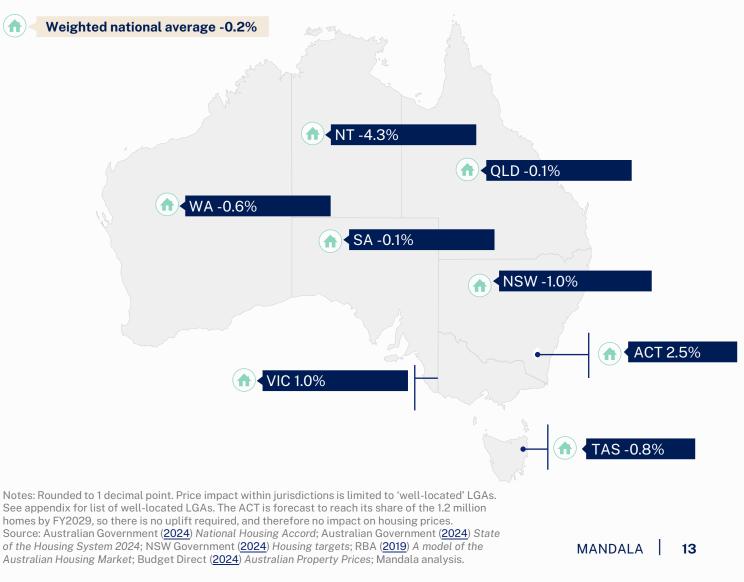
The slowing in housing price growth will vary across jurisdictions.¹ The Northern Territory (-4.3 per cent), NSW (-1.0 per cent) and Tasmania (-0.8 per cent) will see the most significant slow-downs.

Victoria and the ACT will see moderate housing price increases. Prices in Victoria slow to 1.0 per cent average annual growth. In the ACT, if construction activity keeps pace with projections, prices will not impacted through a required uplift, and therefore prices are assumed to only increase with inflation.

Price impacts within jurisdictions is limited to 'well-located' LGAs.
 See appendix for list of well-located LGAs.
 ABS (2022) Owning a home has decreased over successive generations.

Potential impact on housing prices in well-located areas if the national housing target is achieved

Average compound annual growth in well-located areas (%), FY2025 - FY2029



The construction of the additional 462,000 homes would contribute \$128 billion in economic activity

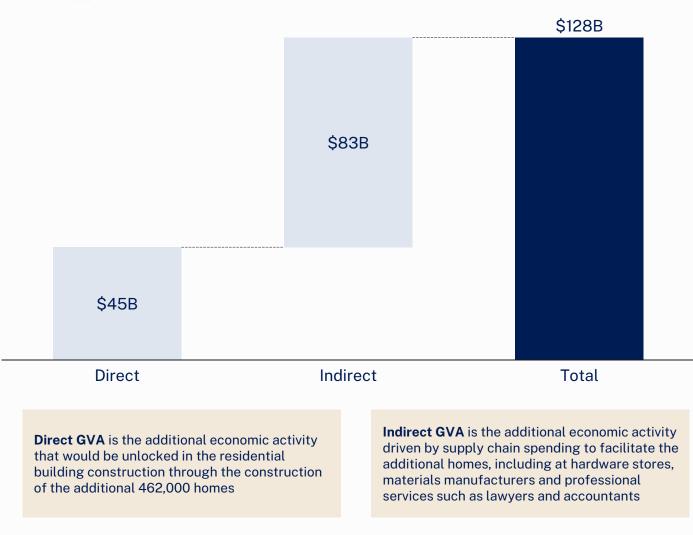
The construction of 462,000 additional homes is expected to contribute \$128 billion in gross value added (GVA) across the five years of the National Housing Accord. The economic contribution is made up of \$45 billion in direct and \$83 billion in indirect contributions.

The direct contribution of \$45 billion represents the additional value added to the economy from increased building activity in the additional homes constructed. This includes the value created through construction workers' labor, the transformation of materials into finished homes, and the immediate profits generated by construction companies during the building process.

The indirect contribution of \$83 billion is driven by spending in other industries, due to the additional construction activity. This ripple effect represents value created throughout the supply chain, from suppliers providing materials to professional services supporting the construction industry, and the broader economic activity generated when construction workers and related professionals spend their wages in the economy.

Impact on the economy

Cumulative GVA (\$), FY2025 - FY2029



Delivering the homes target could support 368,000 direct and indirect jobs each year to FY2029

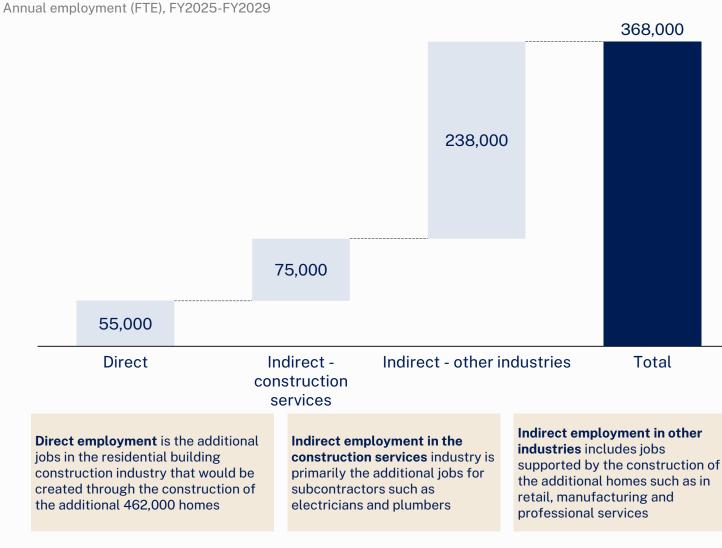
Achieving the national goal of 1.2 million new homes, through building 462,000 additional homes could support 368,000 full time equivalent (FTE) jobs across the country each year of the scheme.

The uplift of 462,000 additional new homes could support an estimated 55,000 direct jobs in the residential building construction industry. These include the workers directly involved in the construction, organisation, or management of building homes such as carpenters and labourers.

Building new homes will also support jobs in industries that the residential construction industry relies on (indirect jobs). 75,000 jobs in construction services are expected to be supported each year. These jobs are in work that is usually subcontracted out such as roofing, plumbing, and painting.

238,000 FTEs are expected to be supported annually in other industries through supply chain spending. These are broad-ranging, including manufacturing jobs, retail jobs in hardware stores, real estate agents, conveyancers, insurers and lawyers.

Impact on annual employment





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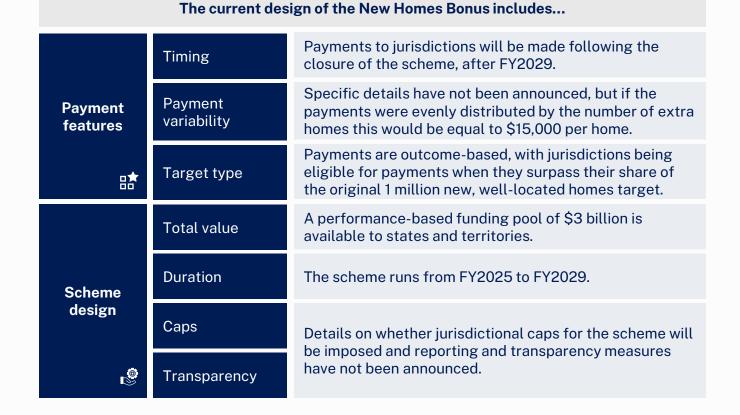
The New Homes Bonus is an incentive scheme announced as part of the National Housing Accord

To support the 1.2 million homes target under the National Housing Accord, which adds 200,000 homes to the original target, the Australian Government has introduced the New Homes Bonus.

The New Homes Bonus is a performance-based incentive scheme which rewards jurisdictions that exceed their share of the original 1 million homes target. Jurisdictions that exceed their target will be eligible for a share of the \$3 billion funding pool, with payments set to begin after FY2029.

The Australian Government is still in negotiation with state and territory governments regarding details of the scheme.

Overview of the New Homes Bonus



Notes: A framework for understanding the success of an incentive payment including its policy context and payment design is included in the appendix. Source: Australian Government (<u>2024</u>) *National Housing Accord;* Mandala analysis.

The Australian Government's New Homes Bonus is intended to support existing measures and indirectly impact state and local government policies

Policy lever	Level of federal @ control	Role of the Australian Government	Announcements and role of New Homes Bonus
Construction stimulus and development finance		The Australian government drives housing supply through national stimulus programs and targeted financing, for examples the \$2.1 billion HomeBuilder scheme.	 Housing Australia Future Fund provides financing for social/affordable housing \$2 billion Social Housing Accelerator payments
Infrastructure provision		Federal funding for major infrastructure such as the Urban Congestion Fund, the Housing Support Program and the City and Regional Deals helps to enable new housing development.	 \$1.6 billion National Housing Infrastructure Facility \$1.5 billion Housing Support Program \$150 million Urban Precincts and Partnerships Program
Tax policy		The Australian Government shapes tax settings such as capital gains tax discounts, negative gearing, and GST on new housing. These change the incentives for developing new housing.	 Improved tax settings for Build-to-Rent projects New Homes Bonus incentivises changes in state and local government taxes such as stamp duty, development charges, and land taxes
Construction industry regulation		Australian Government oversight of construction focuses on the National Construction Code through the Australian Building Codes Board, setting minimum standards for safety, accessibility, and sustainability.	 No significant announcements New Homes Bonus incentivises states to streamline approvals, and reduce building regulations that increase costs
Planning and land use regulation		The Australian Government has limited direct planning power but influences outcomes through national policy frameworks and funding agreements.	 National Planning Reform Blueprint improves housing supply through planning reform New Homes Bonus incentivises state and local governments to reduce planning restrictions

Notes: Differences between state and local government relations may vary some of the control of the policy level between states.

Source: Productivity Commission (2022) In need of repair: The National Housing and Homelessness Agreement; Australian Government (2024) Delivering the National Housing Accord; Australian Government (accessed 2025) Housing Support Program; Mandala analysis.

Stakeholders have raised concerns about key components of the design of the New Homes Bonus

POLICY DESIGN		ANNOUNCED	STAKEHOLDER VIEWS AND RATIONALE	Importance to stakeholders: Low	High
	Timing	Payable after FY2029	 Strong preference from stakeholders for upfront payments. This would hel and the funding required to implement initiatives to support additional supp Stakeholders also acknowledge that there must be a means for the Australit targets not be met, such as a clawback mechanism 	bly	
Payment features	Payment variability	Details not announced	 Mixed views from stakeholders regarding payment variability and no clear of payment variability on Payment variability was not a major point of contention for any stakeholder 		
	Target type	Outcome- based	 Stakeholders hold mixed views regarding the type of target that the schem An outcome-based target is generally preferred, but some stakeholders no within the timeframe as reforms will take some years to convert into comple Some stakeholders therefore advocate for input-based targets to help drive 	oted that they are at risk of not meeting the threshold etions	
Total value		\$3 billion	 An increase in funding value to \$6 billion is generally supported. This is due with building homes, increasing difficulty of market conditions and the com 		
(des)	Duration	From FY2025 to FY2029	 Many stakeholders flagged that the bonus scheme was out of reach, given the five-year time frame, rendering the scheme redundant Stakeholders have expressed support for extending the duration of the scheme completion to 2031 to 2034 		
Scheme design	Caps	Details not	 Payment distribution with set caps for each State and Territory using the sagenerally preferred. However, stakeholders noted that they do not expect that states and territor 		
	Transparency	announced	 Transparency from the Australian Government is generally preferred, with r states and territories clarity over progress tracking and certainty of paymer Stakeholders would prefer more regular reporting on progress such as a put 	nts	

Learnings from previous incentive payment schemes reinforce stakeholder concerns

Key learnings from analysis of previous incentive payments



The highly successful National Competition Policy was driven by a favourable economic and political context as well as a large scheme total value

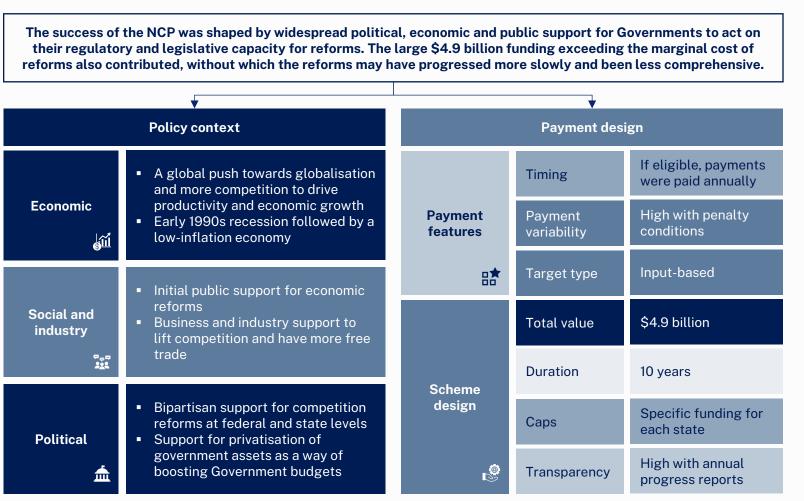
Overview of the NCP (1995-2005)

Australia's National Competition Policy (NCP) reforms aimed to boost economic efficiency through promoting competition across various sectors, including utilities and government services, through a range of legislative and regulatory reforms.

The NCP arose as a product of the recommendations from the Hilmer Report. This was an independent inquiry into national competition policy in Australia, which highlighted that competitive markets would benefit Australia economically and a national approach would be beneficial, garnering widespread political support.

Under three agreements, which were signed in 1995, performance-based incentives were paid annually from the Australian government to state and territory governments when they achieved satisfactory progress.

The reforms were highly successful with estimates that the NCP led to an increase of 2.5 per cent in Australia's GDP, or \$20 billion.



Impact on success: Low

Source: National Competition Council (2007) NCP; Productivity Commission (2005) Review of NCP Reforms; Hilmer et al. (1993) NCP Review; Griffin et al. (1999) Competition and Competitiveness: The Changing Nature of Australian Competition Policy; Paul Kelly (2000) The Politics of Economic Change in Australia in the 1980s and 1990s; stakeholder interviews; Mandala analysis.

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High

The success of the Universal Access to Early Childhood Education NPA, was driven by a national focus on ECEC and clear targets of preschool participation

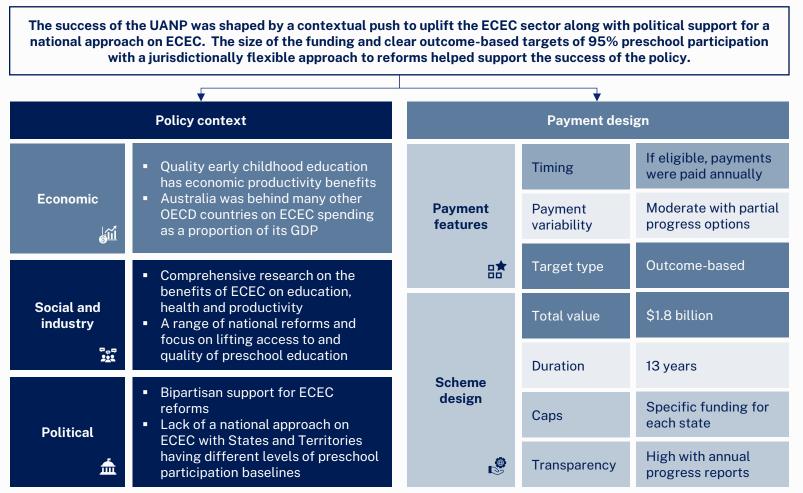
Overview of the UANP (2008-2021)

The Universal Access to Early Childhood Education National Partnership (UANP) aimed to lift access to and improve the participation of all children in affordable, quality early childhood education programs through funding for States and Territories.

This occurred as there was clear evidence on the positive impacts of early childhood education and care (ECEC) such as greater productivity and better health. There was strong political support and a push for more national policies and Australian Government leadership on ECEC.

Under the agreement signed in 2008, performance-based incentives were paid annually from the Australian government to state and territory governments, who had jurisdictional flexibility in how to achieve the targets of lifting preschool participation.

The reforms were highly successful with more children in the year before school being enrolled. The proportion enrolled for the target of 600 hours increased from 12 per cent in 2008 to 96 per cent in 2018.



Impact on success: Low

Source: Federal Financial Relations (2021) UANP; Nous (2020) UANP Review; Brennan and Adamson (2014) Financing the future: An Equitable and Sustainable Approach to ECEC; Centre for Policy Development (2023) A brief history of Commonwealth Government involvement in ECEC in Australia; Alison Elliott (2006) Early Childhood Education; stakeholder interviews; Mandala analysis.

High

The success of the NPA on Skills Reform in lifting VET qualifications was driven by economic necessity and a jurisdictionally flexible approach on reforms

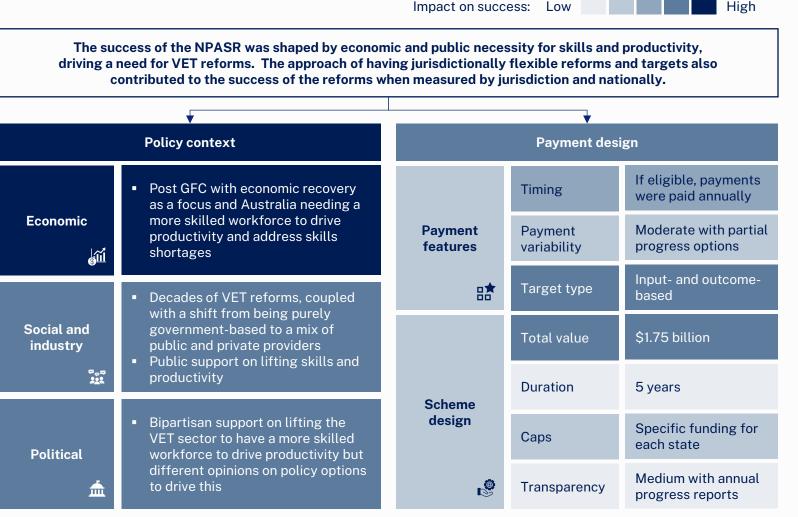
Overview of the NPASR (2012-2017)

The National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform (NPASR) aimed to reform the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system through expanding access to training, improving transparency across VET and the quality and efficiency of the system.

The NPASR came alongside national reforms such as the National Agreement on Skills and Workforce Development centred on lifting Australia's productivity through training and skills, with political support on lifting the VET sector.

Under the agreement signed in 2012, a combination of upfront, progress and outcome-based payments were paid annually from the Australian government to state and territory governments. A key feature of the agreement was the provision of jurisdictionally flexible reforms and targets recognising that each state and territory had a different view with different VET circumstances.

The reforms were successful in that all targets were achieved and noted on the Government's public reporting dashboard. The national target of 375,000 VET qualification completions by 2016 was completed well ahead of schedule in 2013.



Source: Federal Financial Relations (2017) NPASR; Acil Allen (2015) Review of The NPASR; Australian Government (2024) Skills Reform Performance Reporting Dashboard; stakeholder interviews; Mandala analysis.

The success of the NPA on Asset Recycling was driven by political alignment with asset divestment as well as a large scheme total value

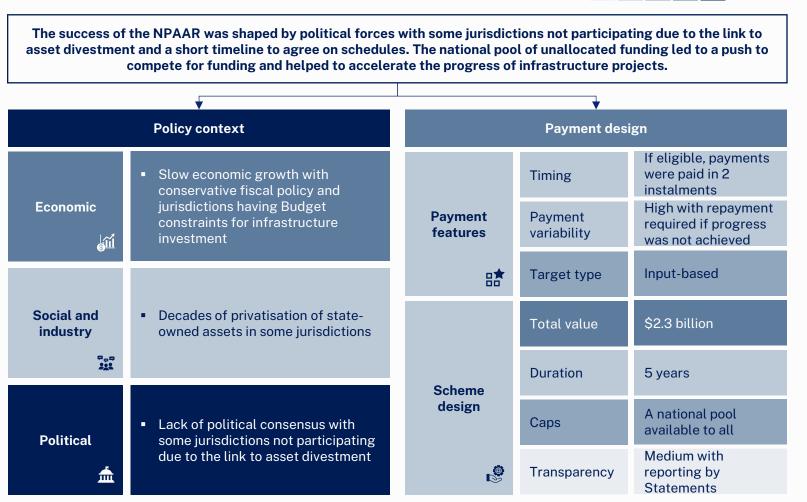
Overview of the NPAAR (2014-2019)

The National Partnership Agreement on Asset Recycling (NPAAR) aimed to encourage increased investment in productivity-enhancing infrastructure through the sale of public assets to unlock funding and recycling the capital into additional infrastructure.

The NPAAR came about as an Australian Government budget push to incentivise states and territories to reinvest in productivity gains from infrastructure among budget constraints.

Under the agreement agreed in 2014, state and territory governments could opt to participate and agree on schedules of asset divestment (sale, lease or partial options) with the Australian government. Incentive payments were designated as 15 per cent of the sale price multiplied by the proportion invested by the state. NSW, ACT and NT came to agreements with the Australian Government by the 2016 deadline.

The agreement was moderately successful in leading to increased economic activity for participating jurisdictions. The funding encouraged prompt decision making on asset divestments and helped to accelerate new and ongoing projects.



Impact on success: Low

Source: Federal Financial Relations (2014) NPAAR; Treasury (2019) Review of the NPAAR; EY (2018) Review of the NPAAR; Allens (2014) National Partnership Agreement on Asset Recycling; RBA (2014) Economic Outlook; stakeholder interviews; Mandala analysis.

High



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The Government should consider four key actions to support additional housing supply

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The Australian Government should consider four key actions to optimise the New Homes Bonus

Recommendations to optimise the design of the New Homes Bonus

Refine the scheme for maximum engagement

- Bring forward payments with an upfront payment to enable reforms and ongoing payments at appropriate milestones to provide resourcing required by states
 and territories, coupled with a clawback mechanism to ensure that the Australian Government has appropriate safeguards on funding
- Extend the scheme to seven years, with an accompanying increase to the the target, to encourage jurisdictions to implement long-term reforms, that may take more time to yield results

Increase the value of the scheme

- Double the scheme to \$6 billion to reflect the size of the challenge facing states and territories
- Ringfence any unspent New Homes Bonus funding to support future housing supply initiatives, such as the Housing Support Program

Strengthen transparency and governance

- Increase transparency of progress on targets with public and timely data available in a central location to ensure ease of access and comparability
- Ensure continued good governance with regular reporting and forums to share insights between jurisdictions

Enhance Australian Government leadership of nation-wide efforts to increase housing supply

- Consider all means and levers available to the Australian Government to support the delivery of new homes
- Commit housing supply and affordability as a key government priority by establishing a Housing Sub-Committee of Cabinet

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To maximise engagement with the New Homes Bonus, payments should be brought forward and its duration should be lengthened

Refine the scheme for maximum engagement

Context	 The New Homes Bonus is currently seen as unattainable by state and territory governments, undermining its effectiveness as an incentive payment for two critical reasons. First, the incentive's retrospective payment structure poses significant challenges. With money not flowing to states and territories until the end of FY2029, jurisdictions face both perceived uncertainty around whether the funding will be paid and immediate constraints on implementing necessary housing reforms. This timing mismatch hinders jurisdictions' ability to increase housing supply and meet established targets, as many require upfront funding to enact these crucial changes. Second, the scheme's threshold requirement of 1 million well-located homes is unreachable (based on current forecasts) for most jurisdictions. With the exception of the ACT, no state or territory is projected to meet this threshold in the duration of the scheme. Victoria is not expected to reach its share of the 1 million threshold until 2032, while Queensland, Western Australia, and South Australia are forecast to achieve their targets in 2033. Other jurisdictions lag even further behind these timelines. These key issues render the incentive payment ineffective in its current form, preventing it from achieving its intended policy objectives. 					
Recommendations	1 Bring forward payments with appropriate trigger mechanisms coupled with a clawback mechanism	 The Australian Government should work with state and territory governments to develop individual implementation plans that include a timeline for staged payments. These plans should provide upfront funding to initiate reforms, followed by ongoing payments tied to housing delivery milestones relating to the homes target. To protect the Australian Government and ensure accountability, it should establish a clawback mechanism, such as adjustments to GST distribution, that safeguards the appropriate use of allocated funds, to be agreed with by the states and territories. 				
	2 Increase the duration of the scheme	 The Australian Government should increase the duration of the scheme to seven years. A longer duration would both increase its attainability and therefore jurisdictions' engagement with the scheme, and also encourage states and territories to undertake more challenging reforms which may take longer to yield results. The Government should consider increasing the target accordingly to reflect the extended timeline. 				

Funding for the scheme should be increased, in recognition of the severity of the housing affordability challenge Australia faces

Increase the value of the scheme

Context	Australia's housing affordability crisis continues to deepen, with Australians facing unprecedented barriers to home ownership and escalating housing and rental prices. Younger generations in particular are finding home ownership increasingly out of reach. State and territory governments are currently falling well short of their housing targets under the National Housing Accord. The New Homes Bonus presents a vital opportunity to address these pressing challenges. Substantial funding is needed to address the scale of the housing affordability challenge, requiring both strong focus and concerted effort to tackle its complexity. The scheme is not a panacea to solving the housing affordability crisis, and given the ambitious target of 1.2 million homes, there may be unspent funds from the scheme which should be committed to these issues.				
Recommendations	 Lifting the scheme to \$6 billion will help highlight the sheer size of the challenge facing governments and provide a much-needed boost in accelerating current efforts. The annual additional cost to the Australian Government is equivalent to 0.1 per cent of the 2024-25 budget. 				
	 To maintain commitment and momentum of housing reform efforts, the Australian Government should commit any unspent New Homes Bonus funding is ringfenced to support future housing affordability initiatives, such as those initiatives under the National Housing Accord and the Housing Support Program which provides funding to state and local governments for enabling infrastructure. This arrangement could be similar to the arrangements in many states where speeding fine revenue is used for road safety initiatives. 				

Stronger transparency and governance will drive better outcomes for housing affordability

Strengthen transparency and governance

Context	It is critical that progress towards the national housing target is measured accurately and reported frequently. Headway is currently difficult to measure because there is no centralised system to track progress. States and territories are unable to effectively track their own progress or compare their performance with other jurisdictions. Without a unified approach, it is challenging to accurately assess how each state and territory is performing and identify areas of weakness. Currently, there is some ambiguity regarding features of the New Homes Bonus. It is unclear how the national target of 1.2 million new homes is allocated between states and territories. "Well-located" is also not defined. This could lead to different interpretations across jurisdictions potentially leading to adverse outcomes and inequitable access to the scheme. Overall progress slows as the effectiveness of policy discussions is reduced. Strong governance procedures are needed to address these gaps and to support the success of the reforms.				
Recommendations	 The Australian Government should implement measures to report on progress using recent, relevant and public data (e.g. centrally held, publicly available dashboards), to boost understanding of jurisdictional needs and progress. This would enhance accountability and provide valuable data to inform future policy development and research such as work by the National Housing Supply and Affordability Council. 				
	 Maintain and uplift good governance procedures and move towards best practices with regular reporting and forums to share insights between jurisdictions (e.g. Ministers' meetings, open dialogue between government departments). 				

The Australian Government should enhance its leadership role to more effectively address the multifaceted nature of the housing affordability challenge

Enhance Australian Government leadership of nation-wide efforts to increase housing supply

Context	While the New Homes Bonus is one important initiative in addressing the housing affordability crisis, it cannot solve this complex challenge in isolation. Industry experts and state and territory governments have highlighted the multifaceted nature of the issue, pointing to challenges spanning infrastructure development, planning reforms, and skills shortages that extend beyond the scope of the incentive payment. The Productivity Commission recently recommended that governments at every level need to reduce regulatory burden, streamline and speed up approval processes, support innovation and improve workforce flexibility. Improving housing affordability and supply requires a whole-of-government approach. Progress towards achieving the National Housing Accord targets will depend on a strong, nationally coordinated strategy that efficiently allocates time, effort, and resources across all levels of government. The Australian Government has a crucial role to play in leading this coordinated response and ensuring that reforms deliver meaningful progress on housing affordability.				
Recommendations	lev	nsider all means and ers available to support e delivery of new homes	 The Australian Government should take more ownership in addressing the housing affordability challenge as one that requires a multipronged approach with cooperation between all levels of government. Other means and policy levers under federal control should be considered to support the delivery of new homes in tandem with state efforts supported by the New Homes Bonus. The Productivity Commission has identified options to improve housing supply across all levels of government. 		
æ		tablish a Housing Sub- mmittee of Cabinet	 The Australian Government should consider committing housing supply and affordability as a key government priority through establishing a Housing Sub-Committee of Cabinet to coordinate national efforts and strengthen the focus on an organised effort. 		



Housing affordability is a complex and critical challenge facing Australia, which Governments of all levels are trying to tackle

If achieved, the Australian Government's target of 1.2 million new homes by FY2029, would support housing affordability and boost economic activity

However, the New Homes Bonus is not currently optimised to incentivise states and territories to increase residential construction activity sufficiently to meet the target

The Government should consider four key actions to support additional housing supply

Appendix

APPENDIX

1

State and territory deep dives

2 Incentive payment framework

3 Well-located local government areas

4 Methodology

Australia



Under the National Housing Accord, the nation has a...



Notes: Price impacts within jurisdictions is a weighted average across 'well-located' areas. Source: ABS (2024) Household and Family Projections; Mandala analysis.

New South Wales



Under the National Housing Accord, New South Wales has a...



each year of the scheme

Value Added to the state economy across the five-year period

Notes: Price impacts within jurisdictions is limited to 'well-located' LGAs. Source: ABS (<u>2024</u>) *Household and Family Projections*; Mandala analysis.



Northern Territory



Under the National Housing Accord, the Northern Territory has a...



Support **\$910 million** in direct Gross Value Added to the state economy across the five-year period

Notes: Price impacts within jurisdictions is limited to 'well-located' LGAs. Source: ABS (2024) Household and Family Projections; Mandala analysis.



Support 1,100 direct jobs

each year of the scheme

Queensland



Under the National Housing Accord, Queensland has a...



Support 11,000 direct jobs

each year of the scheme

Support **\$9.3 billion** in direct Gross Value Added to the state economy across the five-year period

Notes: Price impacts within jurisdictions is limited to 'well-located' LGAs. Source: ABS (2024) Household and Family Projections; Mandala analysis.

South Australia



Under the National Housing Accord, South Australia has a...



Notes: Price impacts within jurisdictions is limited to 'well-located' LGAs. Source: ABS (2024) Household and Family Projections; Mandala analysis.



Tasmania



Under the National Housing Accord, Tasmania has a...



Notes: Price impacts within jurisdictions is limited to 'well-located' LGAs. Source: ABS (2024) Household and Family Projections; Mandala analysis.

Victoria



Under the National Housing Accord, Victoria has a...



Reduce rental price by \$50 per week

period



Reduce forecast housing price growth to +1% per year on average between FY2025 and FY2029

Support 8,000 direct jobs

each year of the scheme



Notes: Price impacts within jurisdictions is limited to 'well-located' LGAs. Source: ABS (2024) Household and Family Projections; Mandala analysis.

Value Added to the state economy across the five-year

Support **\$6.9 billion** in direct Gross

Western Australia



Under the National Housing Accord, Western Australia has a...



Reduce rental price by **\$100 per week**



Support **\$5.4 billion** in direct Gross Value Added to the state economy across the five-year period

Notes: Price impacts within jurisdictions is limited to 'well-located' LGAs. Source: ABS (2024) Household and Family Projections; Mandala analysis.



Support 7,000 direct jobs

each year of the scheme





Australian Capital Territory

If the ACT increased its residential construction activity to exceed its target by 50%, it would ... if the ACT increased its residential construction activity to exceed its target by 50%, it would ... if the ACT increased its residential construction activity to exceed its target by 50%, it would ... if the ACT increased its residential construction activity to exceed its target by 50%, it would ... if the ACT increased its residential construction activity to exceed its target by 50%, it would ... if the ACT increased its residential construction activity to exceed its target by 50%, it would ... if the ACT increased its residential construction activity to exceed its target by 50%, it would ...



Building the additional homes in the ACT would....

Reduce rental price by **\$40 per week**



Support **\$0.6 billion** in direct Gross Value Added to the state economy across the five-year period

Notes: Price impacts within jurisdictions is limited to 'well-located' LGAs. Source: ABS (2024) Household and Family Projections; Mandala analysis.











APPENDIX

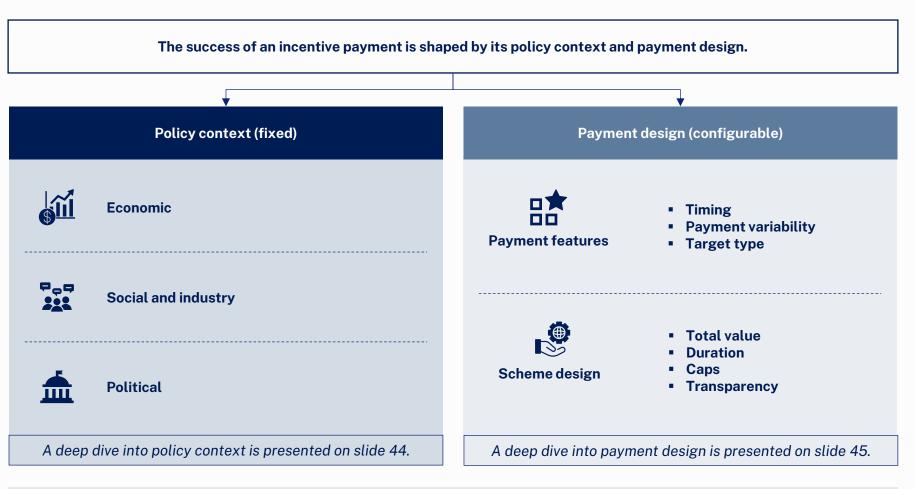
3

State and territory deep dives

2 Incentive payment framework

Well-located government areas

The success of incentive payments in driving reforms is both driven by the external context that the reform is occurring in and the payment design features



This framework is applied to four recent incentive case studies on slides 21 to 24.

There are three key contextual factors to consider when examining incentive payments

Framework of policy context				
FACTOR	ELEMENTS	WHY IT IS IMPORTANT		
Economic	 Economic growth and inflation Distribution of income and labor markets Fiscal policy Global shifts and pressures 	The national economic environment and global trends in economic policy can have significant impact on the size and feasibility of reforms		
Social and industry	 Public attitudes and interest Industry practices and stakeholders Research Other policy interventions 	Social attitudes, and the inherent complexity of industry types can have significant influence on the appetite for and ability to create change		
Political	 Government of the day Political history Political will and capacity to act Governments' relative fiscal positions 	Political support for policy priorities and monetary flexibility have significant effects on the size and impact of reforms		

There are seven key design choices regarding incentive payments available to the Australian Government

Framework of payment design choices

FACTOR		KEY QUESTION	WHY IT IS IMPORTANT
Payment features	Timing	When are incentive payments paid? i.e. Paid on completion, upfront, or a mix?	The timing of when an incentive is paid impacts when reforms can take place and the speed of progress.
	Payment variability	Is the value of the payment fixed or does it depend on circumstances (e.g. marginal cost to States and Territories, quality of dwelling)?	The relative value of payments determine whether funding can be used to support progress of reforms.
	Target type	Are payments evaluated based on inputs, outcomes, or a combination?	The types of targets used to measure progress influences how jurisdictions plan to achieve targets.
Scheme design	Total value	What is the total value of the payments?	The total value of payments influences the amount of budget available for reforms.
	Duration	How long is the scheme in place for?	The duration of the scheme influences the feasibility of reforms and progress.
	Caps	Are payments allocated to each state and territory with funding caps, or is it a non-allocated pool of funding, or a combination?	The distribution of payments affects the planning and cooperation between states and territories with funding caps or competition for payments imposed.
	Transparency	Are the targets and timelines for progress clear with reporting measures in place?	The transparency of targets and timelines affects progress measures and impacts planning for reforms.

APPENDIX

3

State and territory deep dives

2 Incentive payment framework

Well-located government areas

List of well-located LGAs by jurisdiction (1/2)

ACT

Unincorporated ACT

NSW

- Bayside (NSW)
- Blacktown
- Blue Mountains
- Burwood
- Camden
- Campbelltown (NSW)
- Canada Bay
- Canterbury-Bankstown
- Central Coast (NSW)
- Cessnock
- Cumberland
- Fairfield
- Georges River
- Hawkesbury
- Hornsby
- Hunters Hill
- Inner West
- Kiama
- Ku-ring-gai
- Lake Macquarie
- Lane Cove

- Liverpool
- Maitland
- Mosman
- Newcastle
- North Sydney
- Northern Beaches
- Parramatta
- Penrith
- Port Stephens
- Randwick
- Ryde
- Shellharbour
- Shoalhaven
- Strathfield
- Sutherland
- Sydney
- The Hills
- Waverley
- Willoughby
- Wollondilly
- Wollongong
 - Woollahra
- NT
- Alice Springs*

- Coomalie
- Darwin
- Darwin Waterfront Precinct
- Litchfield
- Palmerston
- Wagait
- Unincorporated NT*

QLD

- Brisbane
- Cairns*
- Gladstone*
- Gold Coast*
- Ipswich
- Logan
- Mackay*
- Moreton Bay
- Redland
- Rockhampton*
- Sunshine Coast*
- Townsville*

- Burnside
- Campbelltown (SA)
- Charles Sturt
- Gawler
- Holdfast Bay
- Marion
- Mitcham
- Mount Barker*
- Murray Bay*
- Norwood Payneham and St Peters
- Onkaparinga
- Playford
- Port Adelaide Enfield
- Prospect
- Salisbury
- Tea Tree Gully
- Unley
- Victor Harbour*
- Walkerville
- West Torrens

Notes: In NSW, the list defined by the NSW Department of Planning was used (NSW Government (2024) Housing targets). In other jurisdictions, well-located LGAs were defined as LGAs in the greater capital city region of the state or territory e.g. the LGAs in Greater Melbourne.

*LGAs marked with an asterisk fall outside the greater capital city or region but have been included due to significant housing construction activity indicating strong demand within the area.

- - SA
 - Adelaide
 - Adelaide Hills

List of well-located LGAs by jurisdiction (2/2)

TAS

- Brighton
- Central Coast*
- Clarence
- Devonport*
- Glenorchy
- Hobart
- Huon Vallev*
- Kingborough
- Latrobe*
- Launceston*
- Meander Valley*
- Northern Midlands*
- Sorell
- West Tamar*

VIC

- Banvule
- Bayside (Vic.)
- Boroondara
- Brimbank
- Cardinia
- Casey
- Darebin

- Frankston
- Glen Eira
- Greater Dandenong
- Greater Geelong*
- Hobsons Bav
- Hume
- Kingston (Vic.)
- Knox
- Manningham
- Maribyrnong
- Maroondah
- Melbourne
- Melton
- Merri-bek
- Monash
- Moonee Vallev
- Mornington Peninsula
- Nillumbik
- Port Phillip
- Stonnington
- Whitehorse
- Whittlesea
- Wyndham
- Yarra

Yarra Ranges

WA

- Armadale
- Bassendean
- Bayswater
- Belmont
- Cambridge
- Canning
- Claremont
- Cockburn
- Cottesloe
- East Fremantle

- Kwinana

- Peppermint Grove
- Perth

- Rockingham
- Serpentine-Jarrahdale
- South Perth
- Stirling
- Subiaco
- Swan
- Victoria Park
- Vincent
- Wanneroo*

Notes: In NSW, the list defined by the NSW Department of Planning was used (NSW Government (2024) Housing targets). In other jurisdictions, well-located LGAs were defined as LGAs in the greater capital city region of the state or territory e.g. the LGAs in Greater Melbourne.

*LGAs marked with an asterisk fall outside the greater capital city or region but have been included due to significant housing approvals activity indicating strong demand within the area.

- Fremantle
- Gosnells
- Joondalup
- Kalamunda
- - Melville
 - Mosman Park
 - Mundaring
 - Nedlands

APPENDIX

3

State and territory deep dives

2 Incentive payment framework

Well-located government areas

Component	Method summary	Assumptions
Target	 Calculated by proportioning the 1.2 million homes target in line with population distribution (ABS (2024) Population). 	
Baseline	 Number of net new market completions taken from the National Housing Supply and Affordability Council's State of the Housing System report (Australian Government (2024) State of the Housing System 2024). Well-located completions at each state was estimated based on the proportion of well-located approvals in each state in FY2024 (ABS (2025) Building approvals). Yearly net new market completions by financial year are added to the number of well-located dwellings in each state in 2021 to estimate the total number of dwellings by year. 	 In NSW, the list defined by the NSW Department of Planning was used (NSW Government (2024) Housing targets). In other jurisdictions, well-located LGAs were defined as LGAs in the greater capital city region of the state or territory e.g. the LGAs in Greater Melbourne. Some LGAs which fall outside of the greater capital city or region have been included due to significant housing construction activity indicating strong demand within the area.
Uplift	 Using the method to create the baseline estimate the number of well-located gross market completions in each state by year is determined. Uplift in gross homes is the difference between the target and baseline number of homes completed. Uplift in net homes is estimated using historical ratios between net and gross dwelling completions. 	
Rental affordability impact	 Calculated by the impact of the uplift in supply on the cost of rental prices. The cost of homes has been calculated as the average of the type of dwelling weighted by the relative number of well-located approvals in each state. The number of renters has been calculated by combining the number of dwellings rented and average household size. 	 Rental prices at a state level are assumed to be representative of prices in well-located areas. Baseline rental prices are assumed to grow by 2.5% inflation every year. The change in price value is assumed to be entirely driven by supply; every 1% increase in the number of homes completed lowers rental prices by 2.5% (RBA (2019) A model of the Australian Housing Market).
Housing affordability impact	 Calculated by the impact of the uplift in supply on the housing prices, and the annual average impact. The cost of homes has been calculated as the average of the type of dwelling weighted by the relative number of well-located approvals in each state. 	 Housing prices at a state level are assumed to be representative of prices in well-located areas. Baseline housing prices are assumed to grow by 2.5% inflation every year. The change in price value is assumed to be entirely driven by supply; every 1% increase in the number of homes completed lowers housing prices by 2.5% (RBA (2019) A model of the Australian Housing Market).
GVA and employment	 Calculated through calculating the value added per home based on ABS data (ABS (2024) Building Activity) multiplied by the uplift. Based on the use of input-output tables, and the use of GVA and employer multipliers for impact calculations. 	 Direct impacts of the uplift are based on the benefits to the residential building construction industry only. Indirect impacts are assumed to relate to the benefits generated in other industries including construction services.



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