



**CIVIL CONTRACTORS
FEDERATION**

Civil Construction

The Missing Link

“You cannot spend a dollar in housing until you have invested a dollar in civil infrastructure.”

Civil infrastructure is the foundation of Australia's progress and prosperity. It plays a critical role in addressing the nation's housing needs, supporting the transition to renewable energy, and enhancing overall productivity. However, it remains the missing link.

Before a government or private housing provider can commence work on a housing project, the civil industry is required to unlock the property with roads, connect the properties to utilities, and lay the foundations for future development. Modern infrastructure ensures the development of sustainable and affordable housing, catering to a growing population and reducing the cost of living.

Infrastructure is vital to major projects, from solar farms in the regions to developing our ports to get goods to international markets or laying the foundations for domestic manufacturing.

Australia's goals in cost of living and net carbon zero are best achieved when civil construction is the first principle for investment particularly in creating housing and low cost living. Without addressing the current approach to civil construction, we will not have the skills, capital, and expertise to meet the Government's ambitious housing and energy targets.

Investing in civil infrastructure is essential for a resilient, sustainable, and prosperous Australia.

Nicholas Proud

Chief Executive Officer
Civil Contractors Federation National

CCF Civil Construction Priorities

**Increased Housing and
Community Enabling Infrastructure
Investment and Funding**

**Transitioning to Net Zero through
Investment in Infrastructure**

Efficient and Competitive Procurement

Building the Civil Workforce

Civil Matters in Australia:



of Australia's GDP
is contributed by
civil construction.



people work in
civil construction.



businesses work across the
construction industry.



invested in civil construction
employs 7.2 workers.



in Housing and Community
Enabling Infrastructure work
commenced in 2023.

Digging into the data

ABS DWELLING COMMENCEMENTS VS POPULATION GROWTH

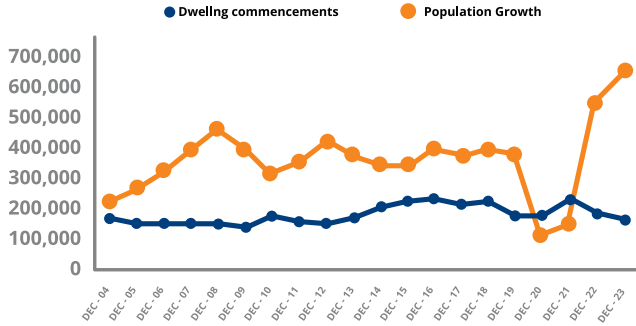


Figure 1

Tracking the reduction in lead times for onshore wind projects since 2001

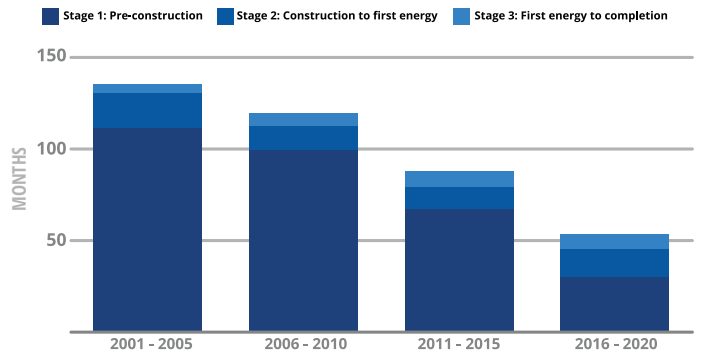


Figure 2

Community Enabling Infrastructure Commenced- ABS Engineering Construction (\$'000)

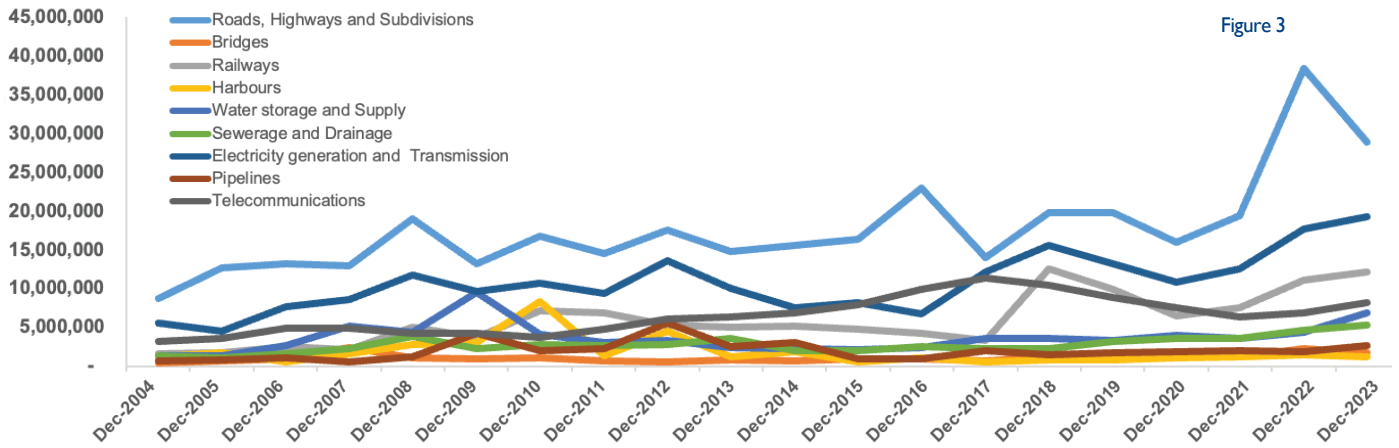


Figure 3

2023-24 Commonwealth investment in State Infrastructure by Sector

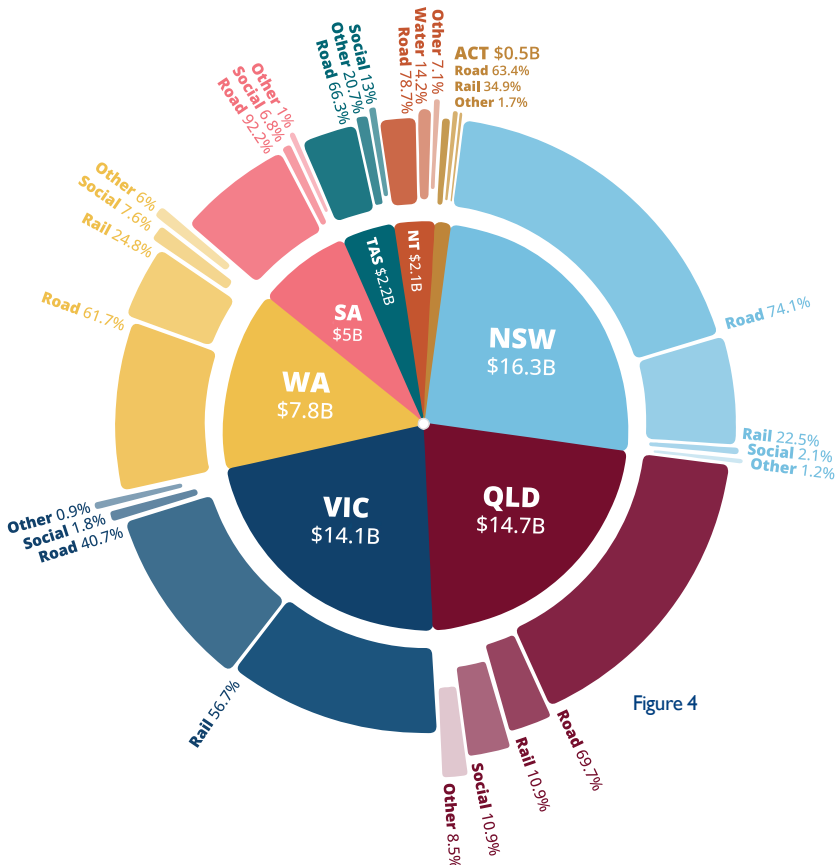


Figure 4

Shortage by occupation group within capital city areas vs outer regions

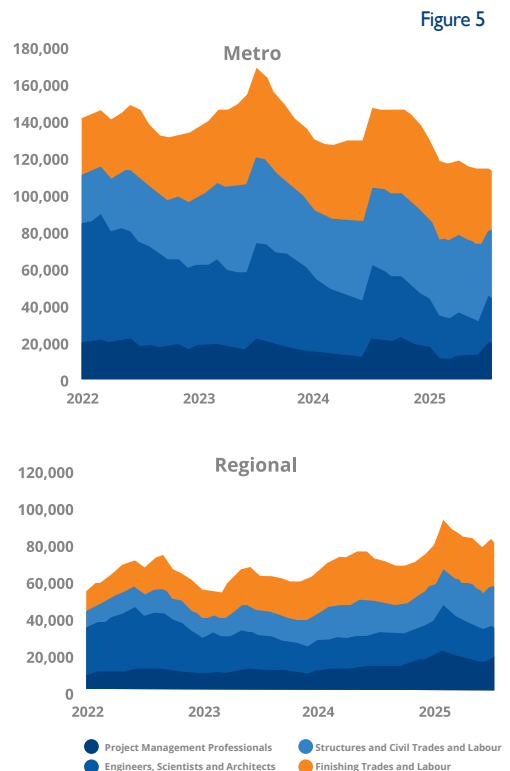


Figure 5

Civil Solutions



Increased Housing and Community Enabling Infrastructure Investment

Modern infrastructure is vital to support a sustainable, liveable, and productive Australia. Without investment in roads, utilities, and civil infrastructure, it will be impossible to meet our national and state housing targets. Currently, over 90% of Australian civil contractors have additional capacity, according to the 2023 CCF Civil Infrastructure Market Capacity Survey, showing that the industry can deliver more to unlock greenfield and brownfield developments. Sustained infrastructure investment over the long term is vital to meet Australia's housing, climate, and productivity targets.

Solution: The Commonwealth can plan for a 20-year plan for sustained infrastructure investment with housing delivery and energy transition at its foundations.

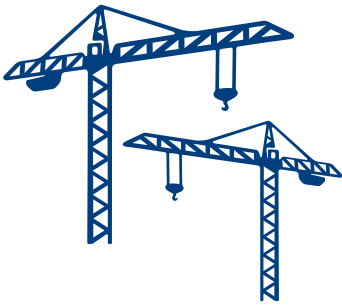
Energy Transition: Transitioning to a Green Economy through Investment and Infrastructure

We know the destination in 2050 is net carbon zero for Australia. We also know the road to this destination requires civil infrastructure to be the bedrock, and we can't reach this destination without a concrete roadmap. It has taken up to a decade to get approvals for a wind farm in regional NSW, yet less than a year to complete the civil works for 10-15 wind turbines powered into the grid. Times are improving and we look to the procurement and workforce to build the energy transition.



Solution: The CCF will work with Australian Governments to ensure procurement and workforce reforms will mobilise the workforce required to deliver energy transition. CCF will also drive a detailed long-term plan that aligns civil investment with sectoral transformation goals and provides clear guidelines and timelines for industry stakeholders

Efficient and Competitive Procurement



Infrastructure delivery can tend to focus on the largest tier 1 firms due to the nature of the pipeline and a risk mitigation mindset from procurers that fails to reach communities and accumulates larger multi-billion blow outs in the national infrastructure delivery pipeline. The promotion of smaller projects under \$500m does promote a 'Made in Australia' agenda and sees skills development and project delivery span to every community in Australia. This ensures local content boosting local employment, appropriate risk allocation, upskilling of the local workforce and higher economic growth in local communities from all Commonwealth government contracts.

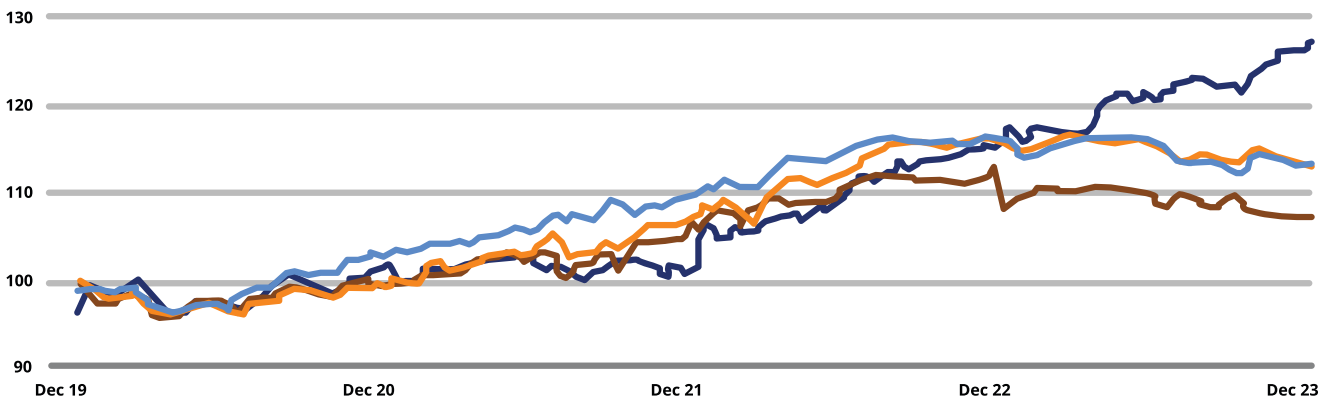
Solution: Major projects should be disaggregated where possible to encourage expressions of interest from tier 2 and tier 3 companies, and project allocation should be spread across all jurisdictions to ensure widespread community benefits while enabling the full civil workforce to deliver the infrastructure of the next generation.

HEAVY AND CIVIL SECTOR POWERING ON

Weekly payroll jobs index Australia

● Builders ● Consultants
● Subcontractors ● Civil contractors

Figure 6



Building the Civil Workforce

With the existing workforce at 177,000 employees, civil construction is a key driver of economic activity, particularly in regional Australia. Infrastructure Australia projects a shortage of 229,000 full-time infrastructure workers is predicted as of October 2023, with shortages expected.

Shortage since 2021: Bulldozer Operator, Excavator Operator, Road Roller, Linemarkers, Earthmoving Plant Operator

Shortage since 2022: Civil Engineer, Quantity Surveyor, Civil Engineering Technician, Crane Operator, Mobile Plant Operator, Driller, Truck Driver, Construction Rigger, Crane Chaser

Each of the trades require prioritisation to ensure we have the skills on the ground to provide the Community Enabling Infrastructure and build the energy transition.



Solution: The inclusion of civil trades on the Australian Apprentice Priority List 2025 will allow the industry to compete with other options such as university. The Commonwealth Migration and Skills paths must depart from assessment via outdated and rigid ANZSCO classifications and support the skills and workforce the construction industry requires.



About the Civil Contractors Federation

The Civil Contractors Federation is the registered organization for the civil infrastructure industry nationally, representing 1,800 businesses ranging from smaller businesses to tier 1 builders with over 1,000 employees each. CCF has branches in each state and territory to support Contractor and Associate Members across every city, town, and region who build community enabling infrastructure.

The Civil Contractors Federation is the only Nationally Registered Construction Organisation recognised as the peak body representing the industry nationally for:

- Housing and Community Enabling Infrastructure Policy totaling \$86.3b commenced in 2023 which includes:
 - Construction of all major roads, rail, bridges, ports, water, sewerage, utilities and civil subdivision.
- Energy Transition
- Efficient and Competitive Procurement and Infrastructure Delivery (Including Productivity)
- Training, Workforce Development, Culture and Diversity
- Industrial Relations

Civil construction refers to the design, construction, and maintenance of the physical and naturally built environment, including public works such as roads, bridges, dams, airports, ports, drainage, energy, water, sewerage systems, pipelines, and railways. This is truly National Community Enabling Infrastructure that builds Australia.

Across Australia, infrastructure projects have been and remain the cornerstone of Australia's communities and cities. The infrastructure sector is delivering a major public infrastructure pipeline valued at \$230 billion over five years, supporting our everyday way of life and every business. Civil construction is its foundation industry; without the civil industry, nothing is built.



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References

- Figure 1: ABS Population Growth Dec 2023 and ABS 8572 Building Activity Australia Dec 2023
- Figure 2: Renewable projects are getting built faster – but there's even more need for speed, Thomas Longden ANU Institute for Climate, Energy & Disaster Solutions
- Figure 3: ABS Engineering Construction Activity Dec 2023
- Figure 4: Australian Infrastructure Budget Monitor 2023-24 Infrastructure Partnerships Australia
- Figure 5: Infrastructure Market Capacity Report 2023, Infrastructure Australia
- Figure 6: Build Skills Australia, 2024