

MEDIA RELEASE

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Construction Industry calls for urgent re-introduction of JobKeeper

Urban Taskforce backs the calls from Treasurer Hon Dominic Perrottet, the ACTU and Unions NSW for the urgent re-introduction of JobKeeper in areas affected by lockdown and restrictions.

The Commonwealth Treasury got a massive bonus last year when less than half of their provisions for JobKeeper were used. Now is the time to allocate those funds.

The real risk is the breaking of the nexus of employment between the employer and the employee. Once broken, plans change. The employment relationship is often never re-established. With the closedown of the construction industry, we have seen staff laid off in massive numbers and the current levels of support are simply inadequate. They will not deliver the same bounce back in the economy we saw last year.

JobKeeper was well designed and well executed.

JobKeeper supported permanent staff, casual staff, sole traders, small businesses and large businesses.

JobKeeper was the reason why the economy kicked back into growth so fast in the final quarter of last year and into 2021. The re-introduction of JobKeeper is needed now, more than ever.

An alliance between the Liberal Party Treasurer, the business sector and the union movement is rare – but that is what we have here. A genuinely tri-partite call for Commonwealth action.

JobKeeper was the pinnacle of Commonwealth action last year.

We now have the rampaging Delta variant of COVID-19 locking down the twin engine rooms of the Australian economy (Sydney and Melbourne) and we need the Prime Minister, the Treasurer and the Commonwealth to step up, re-introduce the full JobKeeper package, and to do so quickly.

The Commonwealth budget had a windfall bonus last year when things went better than expected. Now is not the time to “penny pinch”. It is time to step up.

End.

The comments above can be attributed to Tom Forrest, CEO, Urban Taskforce.

*The **Urban Taskforce Australia** is a property development industry group, representing Australia's most prominent property developers and equity financiers.*

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