

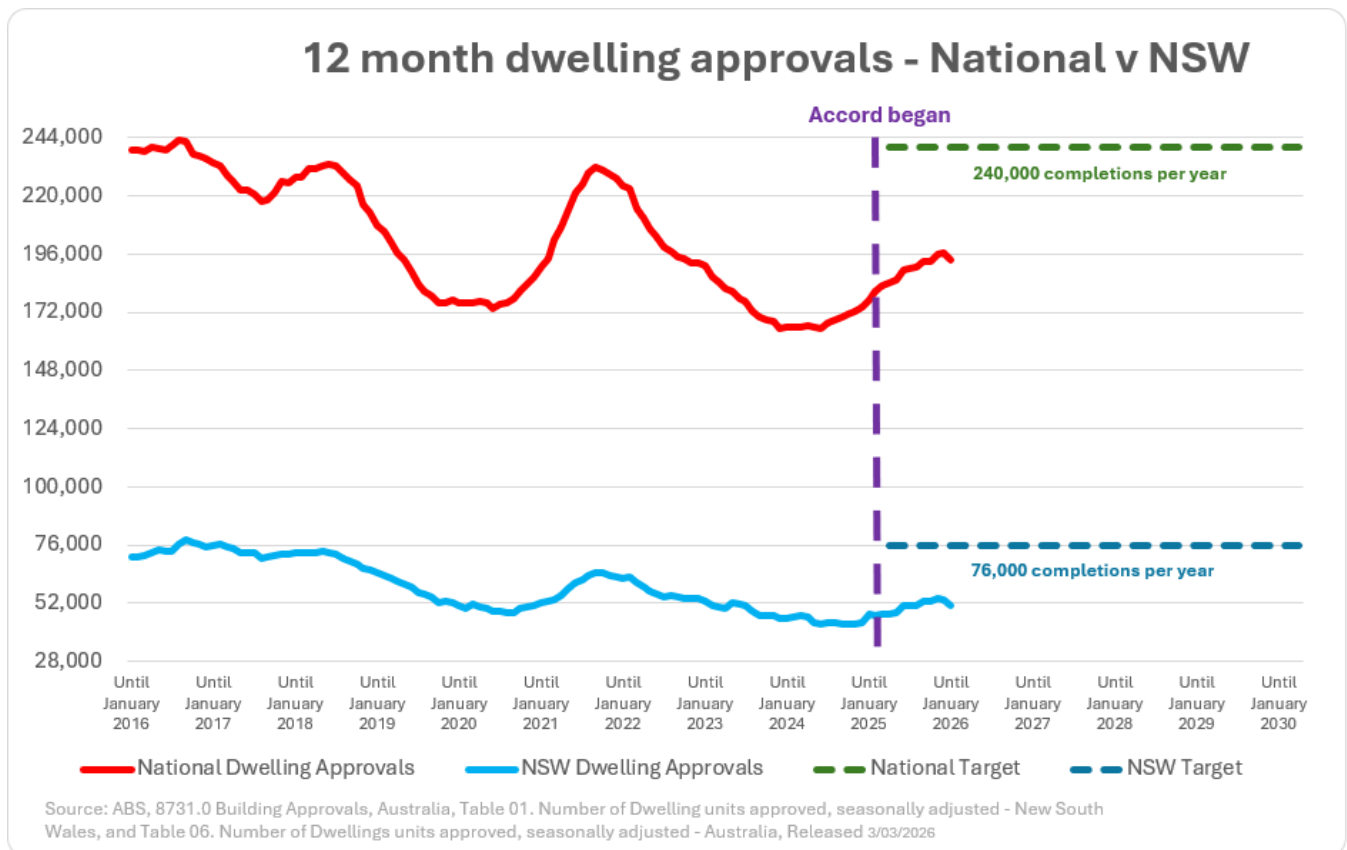
MEDIA RELEASE

3 March 2026

ABS Housing Approvals data shows the worst National monthly result since the Housing Accord began

Tom Forrest, CEO of the Urban Taskforce, said that today's housing data for approvals in January 2026 showed a drop off in approvals in the two big states of Australia (NSW and Victoria) and this has resulted in a national downturn in approval numbers.

While it's not sensible to draw long term conclusions from a single month's data, today's figures are a timely reminder that all governments must be ever vigilant and look to implement new measures to speed up planning approvals and give greater certainty to applicants.



The growing challenge is the threat of project feasibility.

The approval rates are already well below the Housing Accord's completion targets. But there is an emerging risk arising from high fees, taxes and charges along with ongoing skills shortages and high construction labour costs, that many of these approvals will not be converted into new houses because they just aren't feasible.

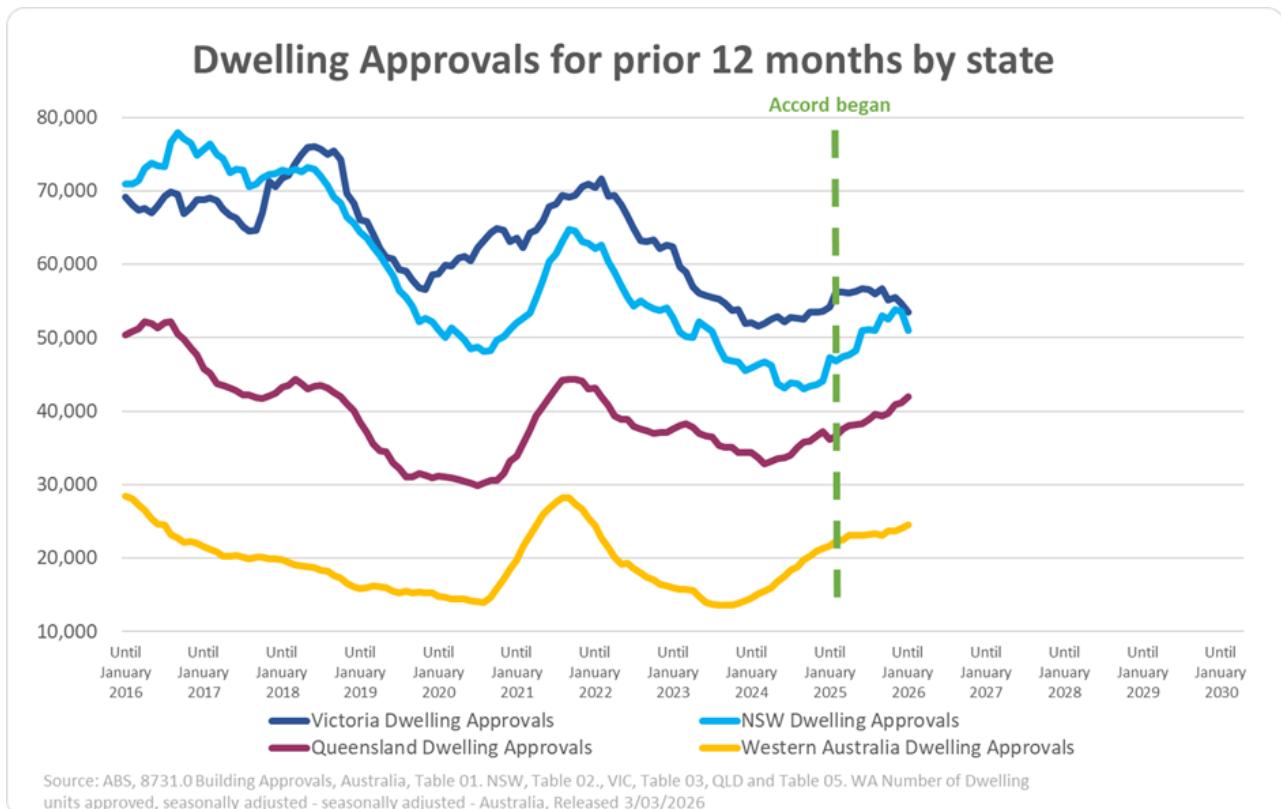
The month by month data for all of Australia paints a pretty grim picture for the Albanese Government. The January 2026 approval result was the lowest monthly result since June 2024 – the month before the National Housing Accord began.

National dwelling approvals - previous 13 months - ABS Release: 03/03/2026

	Multi Unit Dwellings	Houses	Total
January 2026	4,665	9,899	14,564
December 2025	5,908	9,785	15,693
November 2025	8,782	9,653	18,435
October 2025	6,331	9,570	15,901
September 2025	7,509	9,605	17,114
August 2025	5,914	9,343	15,257
July 2025	6,442	9,508	15,950
June 2025	8,270	9,338	17,608
May 2025	5,976	9,467	15,443
April 2025	5,407	9,569	14,977
March 2025	6,562	9,227	15,788
February 2025	7,361	9,387	16,748
January 2025	7,974	9,294	17,268

ABS, 87310 Building Approvals, Australia, Table 06. Number of dwelling units approved, by sector, all series - Australia, - Released: 03/03/2026

The chart below shows the results in Victoria are particularly concerning, showing a distinct trend of decline.



NSW needs at least 7,500+ approvals each month to start getting close to its housing completion targets under the National Housing Accord. But with the challenges of project feasibility, the reality is becoming clear: the approvals number needs to be even greater. This is not the time to be going backwards.

The Low and Medium rise housing reforms need to be broadened to apply to the areas surrounding all transport nodes.

Today's data also sounds a warning bell for the NSW HDA. If State Significant Development planning assessors don't push through council efforts to frustrate proposed density and new housing yield, the entire exercise will have been a false dawn for housing supply.

NSW dwelling approvals - previous 13 months - ABS Release: 03/03/2026




	Multi Unit Dwellings	Houses	Total
January 2026	1,998	1,909	3,907
December 2025	2,232	1,887	4,119
November 2025	2,852	2,003	4,855
October 2025	1,821	1,932	3,753
September 2025	2,854	1,922	4,776
August 2025	1,864	1,760	3,624
July 2025	2,224	1,907	4,131
June 2025	4,021	1,852	5,873
May 2025	2,426	1,877	4,303
April 2025	1,931	1,986	3,917
March 2025	2,319	1,955	4,274
February 2025	1,488	1,964	3,452
January 2025	4,709	1,821	6,530

ABS, 87310 Building Approvals, Australia, Table 01 Number of dwelling units approved, by sector, all series - New South Wales, - Released: 03/03/2026

End

The comments and analysis above can be attributed to Tom Forrest, CEO, Urban Taskforce Australia

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