WA Trade Shortages Continue. Urgent action required

The latest HIA-Austral Bricks Trades Report highlights that Trades remained in short supply in WA during the final quarter of 2007.

Perth has experienced a slow down in the residential housing sector during 2007 and the easing in the market has resulted in a slight improvement in trade availability during the December quarter.

However, over the whole of 2007 trade availability has remained in decline. Trade prices increased further in the December quarter, and over the whole year there has been 7% growth in trade prices due to trade shortages.

HIA Executive Director, Sheryl Chaffer said, “Housing activity forecasts predict the slow down in building activity will continue in early 2008 but a recovery of the housing market will occur. HIA remains concerned that the pool of tradespeople has not increased and deficiencies in the skill base will resurface and add to housing affordability pressures in WA in the future.”

“Trade shortages are continuing to put upward pressure on the price for construction of new houses and this further emphasises the need for immediate measures to address skill shortages”.

For recent school leavers considering their future careers, shortages in professional building trades provide some exciting and rewarding opportunities. Underlying demand for residential construction continues to outpace supply and therefore employment opportunities in residential construction have never been better.

“The industry certainly has a lot to offer, and desperately needs more entrants. While the rewards are there in the medium to long term, more needs to be done to improve the flexibility and practicality of trades training to appeal to a wider audience and address acute skills shortages,” said Mrs Chaffer.

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