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FULL FUNDING FOR WESTERN DISTRIBUTOR BRINGS CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE ONE STEP CLOSER

“Master Builders welcomes today’s announcement of \$1.4 billion funding to build the Western Distributor project, which takes another step toward addressing the alarming shortage of infrastructure projects continuing to face Victoria,” Master Builders Association of Victoria CEO Radley de Silva said.

“In *Master Builders Priorities 2016-17: Building for Growth* we called for government to prioritise investment in engineering construction projects, so we are pleased the government has committed funding regardless of federal support,” he said.

“We welcome funding commitment to infrastructure projects like the Western Distributor which will bring 5600 jobs and support the building and construction industry, which is Victoria’s second-largest full-time employer.

“But we are concerned that the timeline for commencement has been pushed back from 2016 to late 2017, and completion has been moved from 2020 to 2022. We cannot afford further delay before construction begins,” Mr de Silva said.

“Timing is critical not only for the utility these projects bring to residents of Victoria, but for the fact that investment in engineering construction has been in steady decline for the past six years. Victoria’s unrivalled population growth puts engineering construction projects like roads, schools and hospitals at the top of the list.”

“We urge the Andrews government to prioritise commencement of construction which will provide a much needed alternative river crossing to the West Gate Bridge and reduce congestion on the roads,” Mr de Silva said.

“We eagerly await details on the tender process and timeliness of this project,” Mr de Silva said.

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