

Media Release

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TIME TO ACT ON PRODUCTIVITY REPORT

The Productivity Commission's report into state and federal planning systems has been warmly welcomed by the UDIA, who have called upon state and federal governments to implement its recommendations and make housing more affordable for West Australians.

The Commission's report, *Performance Benchmarking of Australian Business Regulation: Planning, Zoning and Development Assessments* was released on Wednesday and made a broad range of criticisms of state and federal planning systems.

It found that while planning systems varied across the states and territories all of them suffered increasingly from "objectives overload".

The report says that local councils' successful delivery of timely, consistent decisions depends on their resources and processes and is influenced by state governments' regulatory environments.

It also calls for earlier community engagement in decision making and clear guidance and targets in strategic plans.

It says broad and simple land use controls will reduce red tape, enhance competition, help free up urban land for a range of uses and give the market a greater role in determining what these uses should be.

"It's time that state and federal governments got serious about housing affordability and started modernising and streamlining development assessments and planning systems," UDIA CEO Debra Goostrey said.

"While a lot of media attention has focussed on the threat to housing affordability from rising interest rates, Western Australia's planning process continues to slow the development of housing for homebuyers, and that's adding thousands to the cost of their new home," she said.

"Unfortunately we're not making nearly enough progress on planning reform."

"The State Government's recent budget measure to end funding for the Electronic Land Development Program, an initiative which takes land development processing into the 21st Century, will do nothing to speed-up the approvals process and ultimately increase costs for buyers."

"It's a measure that flies in the face of its recently announced housing affordability strategy which emphasised the need to increase efficiencies in the land approval system."

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For further comment:	General Media Enquiries:
Debra Goostrey CEO UDIA(WA) Office Hours: 08 9321 1101 After Hours: 0439 380 266	Mark Schneider Communications Manager UDIA (WA) P: 08 9321 1101 0439 187 651 E: mschneider@udiawa.com.au