

For immediate release

RENTAL EVICTION MORATORIUMS SHOULD BE REVISITED BY NATIONAL CABINET

22 January, 2021

Real Estate Institute of Australia (REIA) President, Adrian Kelly has said with rental evictions ending in some states and unemployment at 6.6% it is time for all the Covid-19 rental eviction moratoriums to be removed so that some normality for both tenants and property owners can resume in 2021.

Mr Kelly said that National Cabinet agreed to a moratorium on evictions in late March 2020 which was intended to last six months for commercial and residential tenancies in financial stress due to the impact of coronavirus.

“The rental eviction moratorium was the absolute right decision at the time by our nation’s leaders and played a critical role in Australia’s initial COVID-19 line of defence.

“However, issues around tenants being impacted by Covid-19 and their ability to pay rent has not been anywhere near what was expected in early 2020,” he said.

“Despite this, almost all jurisdictions except for Queensland and the Northern Territory continue to extend the moratorium period far beyond 6 months with most extending until the end of March.

Mr Kelly said the percentage of impacted tenants is less than 5% in major cities and less than 1% in regional parts of the country.

“Queensland felt minimal impact when their eviction moratorium was removed and with economies now opening up, it is now time for all the states to do the same.

“Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales have had tenant support extended until the end of March while the ACT has the eviction moratoriums in place until the end of April.

“This has the potential to cause hardship on many landlords who may already be struggling.

“Funding of sorts remains available in most jurisdictions for both tenants and property owners who remain impacted and we call on all State Governments to provide that targeted support to landlords and spend these funds,” he said.

Mr Kelly added that with paused mortgages set to be restarted, property owners are reliant upon rental payments resuming to pre-pandemic levels and it was sensible for moratoriums to be equally re-examined on a national basis.

National Cabinet will meet again on Friday 5 February, 2021.

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