

Construction Productivity Inquiry – comment only submissions

Comment number	Submitted by	Consent to publish	Comment
C-001	Foundation Technologies Australia	Yes	Improve overall understanding and compliance of modular / prefabricated / off site manufactured housing at all levels of government
C-002	Anonymous	Yes	<p>Productivity in the building industry appears to be low. This is in part due to CFMEU and ETU control over most large building projects, with numerous stop works and unethical practices resulting in low productivity and high costs. Research into modern more efficient construction methods (vacuum infusion, 3d printing with concrete etc) is almost non existent and the existing research by QBuild and modern methods of construction primarily relates to modular construction with was perfected during world war 2 with liberty vessels (over 5000 tonne each) and also post world war 2 during reconstruction in central and eastern Europe. Existing big builds by various state governments are competing for limited materials causing delays. Within Qld the rebuilding of QBuild has reduced opportunities for small and medium enterprises, aboriginal and Torres at islander enterprises and social enterprises to grow along with ability to support apprenticeships and potential for higher rates of business failures.</p> <p>High amount of building and construction work procured via QBuild has potential for higher costs due to high amounts of middle management (15% additional cost on top of works) plus questionable ethical process for selection of contracts that may favor certain companies or business that have former QBuild or Project Services staff in management or higher roles.</p>
C-003	Anonymous	Yes	<p>1. The TOR at outset makes the statement that the construction industry is broad in nature. While acknowledging a myriad of overlays/overlaps and influences, it would be more productive if the inquiry focus could be narrow (narrower) and limited to addressing topmost priorities for urgent change or reform. 2. It would be helpful to have a common vernacular and adherence to understanding of key expressions, for example, what is meant by the building industry; the construction industry, domestic construction or is it domestic building; commercial; housing (is it NCC class 1a and 1b); residential (is it NCC class 2, 3, 9c); and so on. This will help to better target feedback and remove use of generalisations in terms of targeting the key issues in focus. 3. (Comment) Industry sectors tend to attract persons and organisations that become</p>

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			their fields and networks of expertise and acceptable risk. Summary: Ultimately to make progress on resolving priorities for change/reform, the inquiry addressing these key issues would be helpful to overall reform.
C-004	Anonymous	Yes	<p>As the owner of a construction equipment rental business, I have observed several issues that significantly impact productivity and safety in the construction sector.</p> <p>1. Shortage of Qualified Truck Drivers A major productivity issue we face is the limited availability of qualified truck drivers. Over the past few years, there have been waiting periods of up to 6–8 weeks to book a truck licence practical test. This delay restricts the pool of labour I can hire from and makes it difficult to recruit new staff and get them licenced in a timely manner. As a result, I frequently have trucks sitting idle in my depot simply because I don't have enough available drivers—particularly when regular staff are off sick or unavailable. This leads to delays in delivering equipment to construction sites, directly affecting site productivity. I recommend that the Department of Main Roads adopt a key performance indicator (KPI) ensuring that the waiting time for a truck licence practical exam never exceeds one week and/or allow appropriately licenced third parties to conduct truck licence practical exams.</p> <p>2. Inadequate Site Safety Controls Across South East Queensland, I regularly observe construction sites where there are visible hazards and no barriers separating the site from public access areas. Under current legislation, it is up to the person in charge of the site to determine whether a barrier is required. In practice, many smaller sites only install fencing after a Workplace Health and Safety breach notice is issued. This ambiguity creates inconsistent safety practices and puts the public at risk. The legislation should be made clearer and more prescriptive. A mandatory requirement for effective barriers/fencing on all construction sites would greatly improve safety outcomes and remove any uncertainty around compliance.</p> <p>3. Overbearing Safety Inductions on Low-Risk Jobs We sometimes encounter excessive and irrelevant safety requirements. For example, when installing a temporary fence in a shopping centre car park, our staff were required to complete a 60+ page safety induction covering high-risk topics like high-voltage work and mechanical ventilation—none of which applied to our task. This wasted time and labour we could not recover. Safety inductions should be proportionate to the risk and scope of the work. Some companies have appropriately tailored induction programs based on work type, which should be encouraged as best practice.</p>

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			<p>4. High Transaction Costs Discourage New Housing</p> <p>I own a site suitable for redevelopment but have held off selling due to the high transaction costs involved in buying another property, particularly stamp duty. These costs discourage landowners from transacting, locking up sites that could contribute to housing supply. To promote land turnover and support housing growth, the Government should revisit its funding model and reduce transaction costs, particularly for long-term owners looking to move or redevelop.</p>
C-005	Peter Cousins	Yes	<p>I have worked with over 10 years in the building industry as concrete trade assistant,,building estimator and new home sales person.</p> <p>Over the past 10 years I have built a small tourist park in the Chinchilla area.</p> <p>I have found that we are severely compromised by margin creep in relation to the QBSA \$3,300 requirement to need a comercial builders license. It has become almost impossible to find QBSA licensed builders to undertake any job economically under \$10,000.</p> <p>This number has not been adjusted by CPI for many years. The current building industry can not provide enough QBSA certified builders to cover the small household jobs.</p> <p>Therefor we have highly qualified trades persons carrying out remedial tasks that can be handled by a huge number of highly experienced labourers and retired carpenters.</p> <p>Raising the QBSA threshold to \$15,000 would allow the small tasks to be taken up by experienced people, owners and business managers with experience.</p> <p>Please note, all building jobs require qualified certifiers to sign off on the competency of all building permits.</p> <p>To summarise,</p> <p>Supply and demand would provide more competition on the smaller jobs and encourage the highly qualified trades people to move to the larger builds.</p>
C-006	Building Products Industry Council	Yes	<p>The Building Products Industry Council (BPIC) observes that one of the primary barriers to Queensland construction productivity is the notion that Queensland is so different to other states and that it requires "special" regulatory arrangements and variations to what is in place nationally. However, every uniquely Queensland piece of building regulation that differs from nationally-agreed arrangements (e.g. those in the National Construction Code), creates a local sub-market that Australian building manufacturers struggle to supply because they cannot maintain economies of scale. This opens the door to non-conforming imported products, while slowly driving local suppliers out of business. As local suppliers disappear, so do local jobs and investment, while industry productivity falls further behind.</p>

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			<p>A second break on productivity in Queensland is the continued failure of small to medium sized builders and tradespeople to adopt digitisation. By not using widely available and industry-proven digital technologies, easy and immediate productivity gains are missed.</p> <p>A third break on productivity in Queensland is an industry-wide failure to pro-actively and mandatorially upskill builders and tradespeople so they fully understand scheduled NCC changes. Unlike all the other building professions (engineers, architects, certifiers, etc) that do actively upskill their practitioners, this cohort seems to regularly argue for a watering down of regulatory requirements, presumably in the hope that they will organically come up to speed with NCC changes and compliance requirements over time.</p> <p>Whilst there are undoubtedly other activities that would lead to an improvement of Queensland construction productivity, BPIC believes that a focus on these three areas: 1. Abandonment of all Queensland-specific regulations and requirements that create product sub-markets; 2. Wide-spread adoption of digitisation technologies; 3. Upskilling of of the builder and tradesperson cohort - will net the biggest gains.</p>
C-007	Liz Woollard	Yes	<p>I am a Building Certifier with over 20 years experience working in South East Queensland. In past years my projects were mainly new dwellings and additions to dwellings, however currently my main projects are garages, sheds , carports and dwellings to a lesser extent.</p> <p>In this submission my focus is on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • state and local government legislation and regulation affecting construction productivity • state and local government urban planning and land use regulation <p>For a few years I ran my own company in the Redcliffe area. I specialised in Owner – Builder work and tried to keep the jobs I worked on within a 20km radius of my base. This was for several reasons – to reduce travel time to jobs when inspecting; to reduce my environmental footprint; to be able to “keep an eye” on the progress of jobs by personally inspecting the stages of construction; and to gain a good working knowledge of the local council Planning Schemes. However this business model was not economically viable and I moved on to other roles working for other companies. The company I currently work for has clients with jobs all over SEQ, from North Burnett and Fraser Coast, south to Gold Coast and west to Toowoomba. This requires knowledge of 16 different Planning Schemes.</p>

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			<p>It simply isn't possible to be up with all the nuances of each Planning scheme, amendments and Temporary Local Planning Instruments, so I often have to contact Council with a query. Most of the time this is answered within a week, however occasionally I will have to ring Council and badger them several times, so it can take up to a month for a simple query to be answered. WAAAY TOO LONG!!!! Please note that each call to Council involves an average of 30min wait before a customer service officer answers, then another 5mins for the details of the query to be relayed. Then I wait days or weeks for a response from the planning team. Meanwhile the builder sits back and waits for me to process their application. There has to be a better way!</p> <p>There is a Department that oversees the drafting of new Planning Schemes. I feel they have lost their way! At one time they were advocating that these be similar in structure. This would help Building Certifiers immensely.</p> <p>To be able to assess an application, Council and State Govt information is extracted. This can be extremely difficult to obtain. For example, Moreton Bay 'My Property' often has a note – under Advisories and Constraints" for which you must phone Council to obtain. Finding the Plan of Development in older Masterplanned areas are even worse!</p> <p>When a proposal does not comply with the acceptable outcomes of Planning Schemes, TLPI, QDC, or Amenity and Aesthetics there are a plethora of types of applications possible. This is confusing.</p> <p>Lastly, the transfer of Building Certifiers from other States to QLD is difficult because it takes about 3 years to learn all the differences.</p>
C-008	Intellichoice	Yes	<p>Our company has been involved with funding of kits, modular, development & construction funding for past 20 years. Having been a part of the Peak Body in Australia-PrefabAus, has given keen insight into potential exponential growth of industry. Dealing with a number of similar peak bodies GMs and CEO's globally has given a view on where growth has been enabled from offshore experiences. And how the funding models needed to enable scalability of industry is a necessity. Four weeks for enabling a submission given the amount of data and inputs has been too short a time frame.</p>
C-009	Irrigation Australia Ltd	Yes	<p>Very briefly, we consulted the state earlier in the calendar year about current requirements for restricted plumbing licences - irrigation and a number of other topics. We were advised by the department that this inquiry would provide the opportunity to formally raise the key issues.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A need to review current training requirements for the licence to make sure they are fit for purpose and include relevant training from the appropriate national training package (irrigation specialisations) 2. The strong desire by our Association's members to establish Irrigation Technology as a recognised apprenticeship and trade. Currently the core

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			qualification (Cert III in Irrigation Technology) attracts a traineeship which is highly valued, but falls significantly short of the financial support offered in other states. We have submitted separately on this. The bigger need is to establish a recognised and regulated trade to ensure that appropriately qualified people are designing, installing and operating irrigation systems to counter the current poor quality work driven by lowest cost objectives in the construction sector. Irrigation is clearly a major water user but is an essential service to support food and fibre production as well as the public urban green spaces we all enjoy. As water scarcity grows through climate change, it is essential to elevate the profile of the industry to support water efficiency and see more carefully planned, sustainable infrastructure constructed and operated.