

***Queensland Building and Construction Commission Bill  
2025***

***Sandy Bolton, MP for Noosa***

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

This is a pretty short bill making a handful of changes to the operation of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) which plays an important role in the Queensland economy and overall regulatory system. With oversight of the building and construction industry it has the dual role of contributing to the efficient operation of this industry and well as providing consumer protection for those using builders.

With the Queensland Productivity Commission (QPC) reporting that since 2018 construction industry productivity has declined by around 9 per cent<sup>1</sup>, reform to the QBCC and its regulatory processes are needed to improve its operations to protect consumers.

We have numerous examples of Noosa residents whom have gone through unnecessary trauma including the loss of their physical and mental health, as well their homes, from the failings of the QBCC.

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<sup>1</sup> QPC, Opportunities to Improve Productivity of the Construction Industry, [Interim Report - Summary](#), p 6.

One particular case I will never forget, was where residents were successful in proving that the QBCC had failed in every way, however what it cost them should never befall anyone else.

This bill has two main components with the first to streamline the reporting of workplace safety incidents. In 2017 amendments were made so that businesses who incur a serious safety incident must notify both WorkSafe as well as the QBCC. Apparently, this was because WorkSafe was not informing the QBCC of these incidents. Finally, eight years later, there are information sharing systems in place that make the notifications to both entities obsolete, hence is being repealed in this Bill.

At the public hearing , Michael Garrels, whose son sadly died from electrocution on a building site a decade ago, gave evidence on the impact to his family, and said that while he supports reductions in cost and red tape for license holders, the Bill does not ensure that the relevant entities under the Work Health and Safety Act or the Electrical Safety Act report notifiable incidents to the QBCC, neither does it establish mandatory timeframes for reporting<sup>2</sup>.

One would have thought that statutory information sharing requirements, with timeframes, would be compulsory for all agencies as a standard.

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<sup>2</sup> Public Hearing—Inquiry into the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, Brisbane, Thursday, 24 July 2025, p 5.

Government could produce a unified government portal for business, so notifications of all types are automated to all appropriate agencies, integrating with taxes, licensing and other interactions rather than each department having its own portal. The Queensland digital ID and licence app are step in the right direction, however there is much more to be done, and I look forward to an era where we are not constantly battling against outdated systems that do not have the capacity to deal with our current issues and needs.

The second part addresses digital building licenses, so that the QBCC can move to operating predominantly online.

These are worthwhile changes, however I wonder how this will impact our older Queenslanders who are already struggling with this era of paperless notifications for renewals.

There were a number of requests in submissions, with the Design Institute of Australia seeking a QBCC licence for interior design work, which the department noted could occur in future reforms. The QPC noted that licensing is failing to keep pace with industry needs, and that current rules require all pest controllers in Queensland to hold a QBCC occupational licence—even if their work has nothing to do with building or construction<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> QPC, Opportunities to Improve Productivity of the Construction Industry, [Interim Report - Summary](#), p 11.

Our own pest controller seconded this view, pointing out that there may be a role for QBCC for regulating the installation of pest barriers during construction of a building, however pest inspection and control seem unnecessary to be regulated by QBCC.

The current licencing scheme also creates problems for consumers, with protections being related to the types of licences and yet no clarity is provided around these. For example, one resident relayed the confusion where a trades person has a QBCC licence number, yet they are not covered by the QBCC for some tasks such as laying asphalt and building retaining walls under 1.2 metres. How is a consumer meant to know what is covered?

If you look up the licence on the QBCC website it provides little information other than the “80 available licences for working in the building and construction industry”. This is not practicable for consumers trying to understand how licences are expected to protect them.

There must be improvements to the licensing system so that it is better for all, business and consumers, and should be a focus for the QBCC, the department, and the QPC.

It should also be part of broader reforms so that when problems do occur there is effective and timely rectification of faults, as from reports there are no consequences for builders who do not comply with QBCC rulings, and that failures to remedy are covered by the QBCC insurance, driving up everyone’s costs.

However as we have heard, there are those that are doing the wrong thing without consequences, continue to reoffend, and if they do face consequences from other realms, they can declare bankruptcy, and then start another business with the cycle continuing. At what point will this be addressed for Queenslanders?

Thank you to the committee, the secretariat and those that participated in the consultation process for this bill inquiry.

And thank you the Noosa residents who over the years have brought forward your traumatic experiences, which you should never have to go through. Even though this Bill does not address what you experienced, may this be the start of real reform, versus what could be seen as 'tinkering around the edges'.

(990 words)