



STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND WORKS COMMITTEE

Mr JJ McDonald MP—Chair
Ms JM Bush MP
Mr TA James MP
Mr D Kempton MP
Mr SR King MP
Mr CG Whiting

Staff present:

Ms S Galbraith—Committee Secretary
Ms R Duncan—Assistant Committee Secretary

PUBLIC HEARING—INQUIRY INTO THE QUEENSLAND BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION COMMISSION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2025

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, 24 July 2025

Brisbane

THURSDAY, 24 JULY 2025

The committee met at 8.59 am.

CHAIR: Good morning. I declare open this public hearing for the inquiry into the Queensland Building and Construction Committee and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. I am Jim McDonald, the member for Lockyer and chair of the committee. With me here today are: Ms Jonty Bush, the member for Cooper and deputy chair; Mr Terry James, the member for Mulgrave; Mr David Kempton, the member for Cook; Mr Shane King, the member for Kurwongbah; and Mr Chris Whiting, the member for Bancroft, who is substituting for Mr Bart Mellish, the member for Aspley.

The purpose of today's hearing is to assist the committee with its examination of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This hearing is a proceeding of the Queensland parliament and is subject to the parliament's standing rules and orders. Only the committee and invited witnesses may participate in the proceedings. Witnesses are not required to give evidence under oath or affirmation, but I remind witnesses that intentionally misleading the committee is a serious offence. I also remind members of the public that they may be excluded from the hearing at the discretion of the committee.

These proceedings are being recorded and broadcast live on the parliament's website. Media may be present and are subject to the committee's media rules and the chair's direction at all times. You may be filmed or photographed during the proceedings and images may appear on the parliament's website or social media pages. Please turn your mobile phones off or put them on silent mode. Finally, remember to press your microphone on before you start speaking and off when you are finished.

GARRELS, Mr Michael, Workplace Health and Safety Advocate (via videoconference)

CHAIR: Michael, if you would like to, you may make an opening statement before we start with our questions. I place on the public record my sincere sympathies for the loss of your son.

Mr Garrels: Thank you. I would like to make an opening statement because it is important. It builds on my thoughts on the amendment to do with principal contractors.

I will take you back to the day of Jason's death, which was 27 February 2012. Sometime around 9.30 am I was in my car heading in to town. We live just out of town. I got a phone call from my wife. She said, 'You need to come straight to the hospital. It's Jason and it's bad.' I immediately went to the hospital. On getting there, the ambulance was giving the handover to my wife, who was a nurse educator. She responded because she heard someone had been electrocuted so she went to help. When they were giving that handover I looked at her and I said, 'They have shortcut this, because there's no way he should have got electrocuted doing what he was doing.' Consequently, they attempted to resuscitate Jason for I think over an hour, from memory. I was there the whole time along with my wife, who was taking part. Immediately after they had called it I was left with Jason by myself. His phone dinged; it was in his pocket. I got it out and it had a message from one of his friends, 'What's going on on your site, bro? Are you all right?'

I said my goodbyes to Jason. I then went, found Lee, my wife, and said, 'I need to go get Georgia from school.' She is our youngest and she was 11 at the time. She said, 'Leave her.' I said, 'No, I can't because she'll hear.' Then I needed to contact the other two, who were in Townsville. I immediately went to the school, got Georgia from her class, explained what had happened and took her back to the hospital. I then rang my eldest daughter, who was at university doing her nursing degree in Townsville. Her brother was living with her and going to high school there as well. I said, 'You need to not look at social media, you need to not answer your phone and you need to get Lachlan. If the school has any problem, you get them to ring me. You go somewhere where there are people who you know who can support you because I have bad news for you.' She did that. She rang me. I then informed both of them what had happened to their brother.

Now, while I was doing that the electrician and the PC on that site were tampering. I was to find that out later at the inquest. They had started to take out all the illegal fixtures they had. They tampered with the board. This was all proven at the inquest. Their thoughts were never for Jason or

his family at that time. They demonstrated they knew that what they had done had shortcut all the safety regulations that were in place. They demonstrated that by trying to remove everything that pointed towards that. That was to later lead to the electrician being charged with criminal manslaughter, which was the first time in Australia's history that anyone involved a work death had been charged with that. Following that, once we had the funeral and done everything we needed to do, I then started asking a lot of questions as to why these people were allowed to continue on.

By the time I started asking questions there had been an election. The Campbell Newman government had come into play, so my dealings were with Tim Mander and Jarrod Bleijie. I was told, 'We don't really want to shut down. You don't want those blokes to go out of work.' That was the response I was given when I asked Minister Bleijie to suspend them. Because he was allowed to continue on, he talked the electrician—who was his younger brother-in-law—into continuing on the job. When I went around asking for estimates from other electrical contractors, this bloke was obviously doing it for about \$400,000 cheaper than any of them said they would even entertain doing that project for. He talked him into finishing.

Now, simply because of our involvement they made them finish with generators. They did not allow them to power up the site, thankfully. What was discovered when the electrician signed off saying he was right to power up the site was a circuit so similar to the one that killed Jason it was beyond a joke. Had this PC been suspended at the time, then I have no doubt that electrician would not have continued on on that site. The fact that they finished on the generator side definitely saved lives. You can go to the coronial inquest findings and you will see exactly what I am talking about in there. That is why the precedent of him being suspended is so important. It took, I think, four years for that to happen.

In that time I approached Tim Mander about a ministerial direction. He did agree with me in that meeting that it was disgusting—I had the brief of evidence from WorkSafe—and he could understand why I wanted to do it. He said he would ring later in the week. He rang my wife and said that his legal advice from the QBCC was that he could not. Once the Newman government was voted out, I used to ring the director who was in charge of this area in the QBCC—his name eludes me at the moment—every week. I told him that I would ring him about this every week until I died, because I knew that under the act he could have undertaken a suspension or a restriction at least. When I rang sometime after the election that person had retired or been sacked, I am not sure. There was a new director in there. He knew nothing of it. He could find no evidence of any meetings of any kind taking place.

You can imagine the mental state that my family and I were in for this whole period of time. We were just trying to get what would appear to be natural justice or the right thing, I should say. He then was the one who, under fit and proper, suspended the PC, which later led to his licence cancellation. The importance of that precedent in particular cannot be overstated. The one thing I have learned about the law is that precedents are everything. If you are to get rid of this, amend this out, then I think you get rid of the precedent, which then gives the green light to people exactly like this to continue on. To my knowledge, and this comes from the department, there have been over 300 times that things have not been reported and they have only suspended five times, in five cases.

I understand when you say that you would like to streamline systems and whatever else. I understand that, but for this particular thing I can see no benefit and no real streamlining in this at all. It just seems to me to be taking away a precedent that can be very effective when required. I am not about suspending everyone who has a death on a site. I understand people make mistakes, but there is a difference between a mistake and a known action. Unfortunately, because I was chair of a committee to do with work fatalities, it is quite surprising how many are known actions and not just oversights or sheer stupidity, which there definitely is in some cases. That is my opening statement. I am happy to take any questions at all.

CHAIR: Thank you, Michael. Once again, my sympathies on the loss of Jason. You mentioned that 300 times there were things not reported and five suspensions. Do you know what timeframe that was over?

Mr Garrels: That has been since Jason's case. It was first done in 2016, I think, or it might have been 2015. I cannot remember the time line on that exactly, but it is over that period of years.

Ms BUSH: Thank you, Michael. Good morning and welcome. I join with the chair in sharing the opposition's condolences for the loss of Jason. Thank you for your loyal and strong advocacy in Queensland on this issue. That is what brings you to us today, so thank you again for making the time to come here this morning.

Michael, Queensland is at an interesting point in time. We require one million homes in less than two decades. We also have a significant Olympic build occurring in Queensland and we are down about 40,000 construction workers, so there is a lot of pressure being put on that industry at this point in time. How critical is it to you that government retain and protect strong safety measures on construction sites?

Mr Garrels: I am an advocate and have been for years. It definitely is the most important thing because there is no amount of money or anything that makes it okay to shortcut a system and makes it all right for people to be hurt, injured or killed and those who deliberately take those shortcuts—and I am talking about deliberately—get away with it scot-free. We put up fines all the time to stop people speeding. I see this as no different. The fact that people know they can be suspended I think is the biggest thing, because obviously before Jason's death it never happened. That was the first.

Ms BUSH: I think that threat of suspension comes through the direct reporting to the QBCC and elements around the fit and proper test.

Mr Garrels: That is correct. It was done under fit and proper, which again I think is very important. The precedent is everything. Without it, we go back to where a person like me—at a time they should not have to—will be advocating for something to be done. Unless the people in charge have the strength to do it, it will not happen.

Ms BUSH: To sum up, what I am hearing is that a mandatory requirement that serious safety events are reported to the QBCC in a timely manner is critical, and that needs to be mandated.

Mr Garrels: Yes. I think it needs to remain exactly as it is. I do not see it as a great impost because, let's face it, everyone aims not to have a serious incident or to kill anyone on their site. I am very aware of that. I do not see it as a big impost. If it were different and they said that everyone has to be suspended immediately, then I would probably agree with the change because that would be unfair, but it is not. It is only being used in particular cases, as it should have been.

Mr KEMPTON: I think every parent expects that their children will outlive them and I cannot imagine the ordeal you have been through both in the loss of your son and as an advocate. I am interested in what support you did receive and from where in relation to this tragedy?

Mr Garrels: None and none, if I am honest. I was lucky enough to have someone contact me because I was in the media who was going through exactly the same processes for their son's death. Until the consultative committee was put in place there were no real supports. I think there was an ILSO role. He was quite a good guy, but he was so overworked it was ridiculous. There was no real support of any kind in any way.

Mr KING: Thanks. Once again I will echo the sentiments of everyone before me. I cannot imagine what you and your family have been through. As someone who previously worked on construction sites building high-voltage substations and was a workplace health and safety officer, I feel what you are saying. In your mind, does the existence of a statutory obligation help cultural change in the industry? Do you think the industry has changed because of that?

Mr Garrels: I think so. As I stated before, whenever I have looked into any of these things I always look at what happens in the traffic realm and they have it down pat: if you do something wrong, you get a fine. You do not even go to court anymore unless you elect to. If you look at how many people speed nowadays, there are not very many because the deterrence is there and it has stopped people, and I do believe this is a deterrent. The fact that that precedent is there is a deterrent.

Mr KING: In my old industry there were a lot of rules. You sometimes wondered why they were there, but it is a very safe industry despite its inherent danger. Thank you for getting that on the record. I echo that. I appreciate your time.

Mr JAMES: Is there a role for more education in the industry?

Mr Garrels: There is always a role for more education in the industry but I do not think that is a fallback to remove other things. I go around speaking to businesses and speaking to apprentices, bosses and whoever else about the importance of this. I am doing my best to educate as much as I possibly can because I think that that is a huge help. Unfortunately, I think those people who are like the principal contractor who employed my son are driven purely by profit and safety is a by-product of what they are doing.

Mr WHITING: In your opinion what are the faults in this bill?

Mr Garrels: I have gone through it. I am not a legal person but the one thing I do know is that there are 'coulds' and there is no real stipulation like immediate fatal consequences or anything like that which it should have. Also the MOU could be torn up at any time. It should be a legislative link so that that pathway has to always be followed. By undoing this and just having an MOU I think it is going to be a flawed system.

Mr WHITING: You talked about how people are doing deliberate things like the shortcuts you mentioned. Do you think they will be able to get away with these things if these dual notification protections are removed?

Mr Garrels: Yes, I think they will be able to continue on in their business. The biggest tick you can hold over people like this is the fact that, 'You will do your business,' because that is what is motivating them if their profit margin is motivating them. I am not talking about the innocent people who are providing employment and a good, secure job for people. I am talking about the people who are just out there to make whatever they can however they can.

Mr WHITING: I really appreciate you talking about your quest for justice for Jason. It is clear from what you said that the system had not functioned properly before and after the incident. Those dual notification protections have really helped build a better system, haven't they?

Mr Garrels: Yes, of course. That is why I am here talking to you about it. Like I said, because they have only used it in five cases over so many years, I do not see it as a real streamlining. There is probably a lot of things you can streamline, but I do not think that is one of them. It is a precedent and a precedent that works, so why would you take that out for something that is unknown?

CHAIR: Thank you, Michael. Time has expired. I want to assure you that the committee's intention is to make sure that we do have safe industries. As we heard in our last briefing with the QBCC, there are stronger penalties for failing to report matters and also there is streamlining and quicker processes between the Office of Industrial Relations and QBCC with under 24 hours. It certainly is our intention.

Mr Garrels: Could I quickly ask a question of the people who may be supporting it?

CHAIR: Sure.

Mr Garrels: When this was all done, obviously figures are thrown at you from the lobby groups or interest groups, peak body groups—however you want to refer to them. When you do your homework, do you look at the cost to the taxpayer, because I can give you a couple of figures just quickly?

CHAIR: Would you like to provide them to us?

Mr WHITING: I would really like to hear this.

CHAIR: Sure.

Mr Garrels: I will just say them and you can check. In the 2012-13 period deaths per annum in Australia—this is just work deaths—cost \$5.1 billion. You can divide that by six states and two territories. When we talk about serious work related injuries and disease, it goes up to \$61.8 billion. That should be drawn into the equation when industry come and talk about the cost. Perhaps we need to talk about the cost to taxpayers and how we need to save money there. The human tragedy wrapped up in this is not captured.

CHAIR: You certainly cannot put a price on life, can you? Thank you, Michael. I appreciate your time today. I can assure you that the committee is very focused on safety in the industry. Thank you, Michael. Unfortunately, the time for your session here has expired. In fact, we have gone five minutes over. Thank you for appearing before the committee today. There were no questions on notice. Thank you, Michael. Enjoy the balance of your day.

Mr Garrels: Thank you very much for your time.

COLLIE, Mr John, Chief Executive Officer, Fire Protection Association Australia (via videoconference)

AUSTIN, Mr Lachlan, Chief Operating Officer, Fire Protection Association Australia (via videoconference)

CHAIR: Good morning, gentlemen. Would you like to make an opening statement before we start our questions?

Mr Collie: Good morning. We would be happy to. Thank you very much for the opportunity to appear. The Fire Protection Association Australia is the national peak body representing the fire protection industry. Our association serves over 1,750 members. These are member companies nationally representing around 30,000 individuals, all tied to the fire protection industry including over 6,000 Queensland-based fire protection contractors, system designers, certifiers and technicians.

At the outset let me state that FPA Australia supports the objectives of the amendment bill. We commend the Queensland government's commitment to modernising particularly the delivery of building services and we support the QBCC in its efforts to operate more effectively through digital transformation. We agree that increasing the use of digital tools such as the online licensing or other communication and document lodgement tools certainly has the potential to improve the experience for both practitioners and regulators. Certainly, that is a worthy ambition—one that we are wholeheartedly in support of. However, as with any reform, the implementation detail really matters here and it is here that we believe some refinements are necessary, with respect, to ensure that the proposed reforms enhance rather than inadvertently hinder the function of vital and safety critical industries such as the fire protection industry.

I will highlight three key areas where we see either amendments or perhaps even just clarification based on feedback from our members across Queensland. One for us is preserving the option of physical licence cards. While we fully support the move towards digital licensing, we strongly urge that the option to retain a physical licence card is preserved in certain circumstances. Practitioners in the fire protection industry, which I can speak for, often work across complex and varied environments. These include building sites or sites of buildings that are maintained through life where the use of digital devices is strictly prohibited—for example, corrections facilities where mobile phones are not permitted, secure medical environments such as operating theatres and some mental health units, and also certain defence and high security infrastructure sites, all of which demand high levels of fire protection.

In such settings, practitioners must be able to present their licence for verification without relying on a digital device. To remove that option we think would risk compliance breaches for circumstances entirely outside of the practitioner's control. We recommend that the legislation or at least the regulation be amended to enable a practitioner to opt in for a physical licence in circumstances where their work environment reasonably necessitates it, and some qualifications might be required for that.

Two for us is the clarification on digital licensing photographs. We also seek some clarity regarding the requirements for updating photographs on digital licences. Members have raised some concerns about whether there will be a prescribed frequency or perhaps an age limit, some automation or some automated enforcement around image updates. These concerns stem not from any resistance but really from a desire to clarify. The kinds of questions we are getting are, 'What constitutes a compliant photograph?', 'Will face recognition be introduced at some point down the track?' and, 'How often will practitioners be required to update their photo?' These may seem like minor issues in the totality of the bill, but for an industry with thousands of independently licensed workers, any uncertainty creates the opportunity for some significant administrative burdens and the risk of unintentional noncompliance. We would recommend this be addressed through some detailed guidance from the QBCC or the appropriate authority or potentially omitted within the regulation supporting the legislation.

Finally for us is streamlining safety incident reporting. We do not note it in our report, but some feedback has come in where—and we certainly acknowledge and welcome the bill's efforts to streamline safety reporting obligations by removing the duplication across the QBCC environment, WHSQ and Electrical Safety Office. However, we would urge that there is some caution to ensure that no critical fire safety incident slips through the cracks due to either miscommunication or inconsistent thresholds between those regulators. For example, a technician working on a sprinkler system that fails under a pressure test through the life of the building may not clearly fall within WHS

or ESO obligations, yet such an incident could have serious consequences for life safety. The FPA encourages the committee to recommend clarity around who retains data sharing responsibility and ensures that fire safety incidents remain visible to the QBCC even if the point of first report is elsewhere.

In terms of some broader reflections, fire protection is a life safety industry. The systems our members install and maintain are not optional, they are mandated by building codes and essential for protecting Queenslanders. We support the reforms that improve how our industry interacts with government, but the reforms must not inadvertently create new obstacles for practitioners who work in sensitive and high-risk environments, nor should it diminish the regulatory focus on life safety systems in particular. Digital by default is a good principle that we support, but digital only can create some problems, in our view. We believe the bill, with some minor adjustments or interpretive clarifications, can meet its intended goal without compromising practitioner accessibility and public safety outcomes.

In closing, Chair, committee members, thank you for the opportunity to contribute today. We appreciate the consultative approach taken throughout the reform process and we look forward to working with the government and the QBCC and others to ensure that these legislative changes deliver practical, fair and safe outcomes for Queenslanders, buildings and the fire protection industry at large. I welcome your questions.

CHAIR: Thank you, John, and thank you, Lachlan. Certainly the issues that you have raised have been reported to the department. The committee considered the department's response yesterday and published that. You may have received that overnight. The points are well made and we might have to have a look at the bill because if you are not interpreting it clearly then we might have to look at improving that. With regard to the licence, going to the digital platform is entirely voluntary for, similar to that which DTMR rolled out. Also, the requirement for photos is all about the DTMR processes and those separate processes within this department. That is for your clarity. We will have to have a look at the bill to make sure that the interpretation is right. Thank you for your guidance in that regard. I will go to the deputy chair.

Ms BUSH: Thank you, gentlemen, for coming along and for your submission. Safety is our paramount concern. I know my colleagues will speak to you about that so I might just pick up on the digital licences. You have given some examples of where that might not be operationally convenient, but I was keen to get you to unpack a little more for me the types of environments that make a pure digital licence unworkable and why you would prefer to see the option of a physical licence retained?

Mr Collie: That is a good question and I thank you for it. Where we see the need for the physical licence is largely operationally onsite. As you know, some of these secure buildings throughout Queensland can have multiple checkpoints and multiple zones within them, so the initial entrance to the building can result in the confiscation of any digital devices, but then to move freely throughout the building, even in a sensitive construction site that does not allow these kinds of devices, we are finding that either shop stewards or supervisors maintaining different sections of the building through the building process or maintaining the building as the custodian of the building, are looking to check details as people move throughout the building. To solve this problem for us is the option for an opt-in approach to the physical licence rather than a digital-only approach. We are fully supportive of the digital licence. We think it is a good move. It will help and support streamlining efforts across construction and the ongoing maintenance of critical buildings. It is just I would hate to add an additional burden. Fire protection is required in almost very sensitive buildings, whether they be defence, critical infrastructure or otherwise, and I would not want to add additional burden to our practitioners and technicians.

Ms BUSH: This circumstance really comes up for you in custodial or forensic settings or high-security settings, is that what you are saying—those types of workplaces?

Mr Collie: Yes. I think there would be some fairly specific guidelines on what would constitute an appropriate reason for a physical card, but I would recommend that that be an option where the situation calls for it.

CHAIR: With regard to that third point that you made that was outside of your report, can you take us through that again with regard to the streamlining of safety reporting and the necessity for fire safety reporting.

Mr Collie: We noted that there was a move to consolidate the safety incident reporting. We were just interested in how that was likely to take place and what kinds of safeguards would be put in place to ensure that safety incidents were not lost in the connection between regulators, largely because safety is also our main priority—not only the safety of the people who occupy the buildings

within Queensland but also the safety of our Queensland practitioners. We are quite interested in ensuring that those reports make their way to the right places and do not get lost in interconnected issues between bureaucratic steps or between authorities and regulators.

CHAIR: Thank you. Those three points are very well made.

Mr KING: Thank you for coming in. Your last statement was along the lines of my question so it was very well timed. The reporting at the moment to two agencies is proposed to be streamlined as well as making reporting electronic. If I want to send an email to two people I put it to both of them and push send and it goes to two at once rather than one. I am wondering if you could go further into that. Do you see that as onerous, sending two emails rather than one, to report an incident that potentially we could be saving lives with?

Mr Collie: No, I do not see in the grand scheme of safety, and fire and life safety in particular, it being overly burdensome to add a cc to an email—absolutely not. I am more interested in making sure that there is the central location and central reporting which is accessible and available, not just across government. I have some concern to make sure that all regulators that touch safety across Queensland have access to that data. Going one step further, also that that consolidated data is easily accessible and then shareable back to third-party industry associations such as ourselves so that we can then get some trend data and some analysis on what kinds of safety issues are being reported so that we can then communicate back and educate our membership.

Mr JAMES: How often are your members asked to physically produce a card or show their licence?

Mr Collie: That is a good question. I would have to take that on notice. I would not be able to answer that with enough accuracy for the committee.

Mr WHITING: Lachlan, you said that you want no critical fire incidents to slip through the cracks in terms of reporting, but you pointed out that some fire safety incidents do not fit neatly under either regulatory body. Could the slipping through the crack scenario happen if these dual notification protections are removed?

Mr Austin: I think the issue there is the spreading around of accountability on particular issues. When many parties are seen to preside over a particular incident then who is the owner, where does the accountability lie? There might be some ambiguity that arises through that point. There is also, to John's point previously, the accessibility of a single source of truth. If we are looking back into the history of incidents, where do we go for the comprehensive dataset that says this is what has happened in the past? There may be some potential questions around ownership and rights and privacy to that data, but that is a little bit more fringe.

Mr WHITING: You said there is some ambiguity around to which body these incidents should initially flow?

Mr Austin: That is the thrust of it: where they flow and who is accountable for what in dealing with the issue as raised.

CHAIR: Thank you very much for your time. The time for this session has now expired. Enjoy the rest of your day.

LONG, Mr Damian, Chief Executive Officer, Civil Contractors Federation Queensland

CHAIR: Would you like to make an opening statement before the committee will have questions for you?

Mr Long: The Civil Contractors Federation is part of the nationally registered industrial organisation to represent the industry across Australia and my patch is Queensland. Our members and the industry are in a messy situation around licensing. As a whole, we are not regulated by the QBCC, but there are some anomalies that appear. As an example, we can build a bridge across the M1 without a licence, but if we do it on private land we need a licence. There is probably a whole different conversation around tidying that up. That also flows into issues around security of payment. We have issues around that. We do have a lot of situations where we engage appropriate licensed people to do building work.

Our philosophy is actually to try to streamline information that is current at any particular time and backing it by digital information is paramount. If there is a condition to be put on a licence or there is a change of licence or the actual entity, to make sure that is an actual licensed entity, that can be changed in real-time under a digital system and we can then have that verification straightforward. We have had situations where there have been similar names but not the right licensee has been engaged and it has created problems. For us it is to make sure that it is underpinned, I suppose from a compliance point of view, to make sure that it is right. The digital system works really well. Just as an overall position, we are moving into the digital age and I think that the quicker we get there and we do not have two systems running the better. I think it gets rid of confusion and it will make the industry and the state more productive.

From a safety point of view, and I note the committee's questions to the previous witness around duplication, cc-ing on emails, we are a firm believer in not confusing the industry. There are a lot of players within the industry with varying degrees of engagement and ability to work systems and processes. It must be very direct, very easy, so that we actually get that information. The other thing too around safety is we consider safety paramount in everything we do. One of the biggest problems we have around the reporting of safety is it is generally a lag indicator instead of a lead indicator. We really need to encourage systems and processes, whether it is through regulation and training or education, that are able to grab that data as it is becoming available. We need to swap over and say it is not a bad thing to report a safety incident. I think there is discussion with OIR, the Office of Industrial Relations, around what the department actually collects and how they collect more information and then how the different regulatory departments, whether it is Transport and Main Roads or the QBCC, can actually plug into that data, industry as well, and start to understand what is happening and put things in place prior to incidents happening and try to lift the standing processes.

We are lucky enough that we are living in an age where digital platforms enable us to do that. We can handle far more data more accurately, quicker and faster and it allows way more stakeholders to plug into it. I think you need to let the experts who deal with these issues, deal with the issues, and then allow the stakeholders who need to feed off that, feed off it, and do not blur the lines. That is effectively where we sit on the situation. I am happy to take questions.

Ms BUSH: I have a few questions. I am not quite sure where to start. Thank you very much for coming here today and for your submission. It seems to me that you know the industry well and you know your reporting requirements well. Does it strike you as interesting that, in the pursuit of efficiencies, the department has decided to pursue dual reporting? We heard from Michael there have only been five dual reports. The department has not done any modelling on efficiencies. Would there not be other efficiencies that could be gained? I am sure you could think of a thousand other things the QBCC could be doing to become more efficient.

Mr Long: It is two different things. I do not think you can confuse compliance with the process and the actual process itself. I think you have to put it into that bucket. Either processes are changed to get that reporting to happen, but if people are deliberately going around the outside of the process then I think the penalties around that need to be stronger and there has to be more oversight. We are a big advocate for the department of workplace health and safety to have a far bigger role on construction sites. They are the experts in that field. They can add a hell of a lot of value. If they can get more presence, they will start to pick up situations where they will be able to see where things should be reported and are not being reported. We are not seeing that.

The problem is that we are picking it up when it is too late. After an incident has happened, then we go back and say that what should have been reported was not reported. There was always an obligation there to report it, but someone has taken it upon themselves, for whatever reason—maybe it is a commercial reason, they do not know, or it is an embarrassing situation, who knows—

but they have not done it, and that has to be changed. The previous government introduced industrial manslaughter, so in that space there are some pretty big sticks to do things. Maybe a linkage between that outcome and the little nuts and bolts that go along the way is not being made clear enough and maybe there could be some improvements around there, yes.

Mr KEMPTON: To support the customer experience and perhaps as a deterrent, would you support flagging licences with previous compliance issues and previous bankruptcies to put people on notice?

Mr Long: That is a difficult question to answer because at the end of the day if there have been previous compliance issues, whether it is financial or other, if those issues have been addressed and remedied I think we need to take that into account and to never punish a person—I am talking about 'person' in the legal sense—for past discretions, however they became about. I think that everything we do has to be around improvement. If it is around delinquency that is a totally different thing. We have to pick up delinquency versus continuous improvement and the changes there. I hope that answers the question.

Mr WHITING: One of the things we have heard about is the relationship between particular agencies. Do you believe the QBCC and the workplace health and safety regulators currently have a strong working relationship? Do you think there are some improvements that could be made?

Mr Long: Unfortunately, I do not have a great insight into the relationship between the QBCC and the department of workplace health and safety, but I do see it in other capital agencies. I would say that in some areas it is strong. I do not think it is driven by a framework as such. I think it is driven by relationships. I think there is a good linkage between certain relationships, and I think there is probably a desire to plug into that connection more. Generally, as a rule there is an absolute disconnect between the department of workplace health and safety and other stakeholders, and I think that needs to be pulled together a lot stronger.

I will go back to my previous point. I think that relying on someone to report to multiple areas is flawed, because if one of the receivers of that information does not get it they will have a false sense of security. For example, if the department of workplace health and safety receives certain information and the QBCC does not receive that information, the QBCC could be left with a false sense of security. I think that data sharing must happen to make sure we close those gaps. Then, going back to my previous point, we need to look at what data is being collected. I think there is an argument to say there is probably not enough.

Mr WHITING: It is interesting that you said those connections are only as strong as the relationships. If someone moves, those relationships are not there—

Mr Long: Absolutely.

Mr WHITING:—and therefore data cannot be shared, and that is what Mr Garrels talked about. When there was a change of personnel, things happened very differently. Do you think that, if there is no relationship, making sure that information is received and those incidents are shared overcomes that?

Mr Long: I do not think it matters whether it is Labor or the LNP: we are starting to see government as an active client more often now, particularly around safety. There is an absolute buy-in about wanting to be involved to make sure worksites and any worker, it does not matter what industry they are in, is in a safer place. I think the system is lagging the 'want' and being able to have direct, ready information that people can access very quickly and pick up trends and just get a sense of what is happening at any particular time. If we look at the enforcement side of it as well, there are a lot of things that hang off performance around safety. Prequalification is another one where that data needs to be available. I think decision-makers who can plug into a single source of truth would make a big difference.

Mr JAMES: Following on from that, can you give us some examples of where coordination between regulatory bodies in the past did not work?

Mr Long: As an example of trying to fix a situation, under the current—soon to be changed—state procurement policy, the previous government, and rightly so, was looking at the type of businesses that they wanted to contract and purchase with. There was a whole system designed around the duplication of collecting data to see if people were nonconforming in a range of areas. To me, that was just an absolute repetition of things that should never have happened. That data was being collected elsewhere, and I think the result of doing that shows the flaw in the whole system. If you wanted to see if there were issues around security of payment issues, it was there through the QBCC and that dataset. You did not need to duplicate it. It is the same with workplace health and

safety. If there were repetitive behaviours and noncompliance in workplace health and safety, the department had it. We did not need to duplicate that. It is a bit of a Chinese whispers thing. I think these things get watered down and I think they lose their intent where we start to duplicate. Each person who looks at that dataset is going to want to pull out what they need for their own particular needs. Do not dirty the waters. Let the source be pure and then let people pull from it what they need.

Mr KING: I have a question along those lines too. It seems to me that the obligation was on the principal contractor to do that dual reporting and now the obligation will be on a regulatory body to do that reporting. Previously the principal contractor's obligation would be lighter. How onerous is it for your members to do that dual reporting, considering it will be electronic?

Mr Long: They live in the world of reporting. They report on a range of metrics. The KRAs in what we do is insane. This is utopia, by the way. If only all of those metrics could be inputted into one system, one central database. We talk about BIM in our space. I think there is a role for a sole governance set of data that everyone is plugging into, whether it is our contractors or builders or whoever who are doing it—it is all being plugged in there. If you are talking about safety specifically, because of the obligations on contractors they are producing their own datasets as well which are far more granular than what is required by the department of workplace health and safety. For them to share that data is not a big stretch, so there is a lot of data there that could be used for the benefit of safety outcomes. I keep stressing lead indicators. It is absolutely the one thing we do not do very well. If we can start picking up trends around safety and then make regulatory changes or the process of change, hopefully we can stop people from being hurt.

Mr KING: That is the thing. As you said, if your members are reporting lead indicators and other things, it also builds trust and confidence in the industry as a whole.

CHAIR: KRA, is that key result area?

Mr Long: Key result area, yes.

CHAIR: Is that like KPIs?

Mr Long: KPA is the measurement of the KRA, yes.

CHAIR: You might know that this committee also has the portfolio areas of the Deputy Premier, who has taken a great deal of interest in strengthening the role of workplace health and safety in the workplace, which we welcome. With regard to the nuts and bolts you talked about, do you think increased funds for nonreporting will help bring some of those bad actors towards reporting?

Mr Long: If you look at our industry as a whole, absolutely. I talked about recidivist behaviour. You do not get to that space accidentally. It becomes a deliberate action. The analogy of speeding was mentioned. If you get caught speeding over and over again, you get your licence taken away from you. I think it is not a bad analogy. If it is repetitive, deliberate behaviour, yes, I think the penalties need to increase. By the same token, on the other side of it, I think you have to be careful that you do not discourage participation and improvement as well. You have to get that balance right.

CHAIR: With regard to the single point of reporting, do you think there will be improved data collection and improved accountability?

Mr Long: I think the data collection side of it, absolutely, because the industry changes. People come and people go. If you are running a business these days, the amount of information and places you need to report to is insane, and it changes, particularly around data. If everyone knows that is the one portal you go to, it is easy to educate and people start to learn it. For my sins, I sit in a lot of areas where data is collected and I see this duplication. I will use an example around a pipeline of projects. QLeave collects data, and that data is relied on for a range of other forecasting, but when you look at where these datasets come from, they come from a weird range of different areas. Would it not be lovely if it just went to the department of state development and infrastructure and everyone pulled from it.

CHAIR: This is the third tranche and there will be a fourth tranche, but the first order of business for the Productivity Commission is a review of the building industry and we look forward to the outcome of that report in about a month's time. The time for this session has finished. Thank you for your appearance and sharing your wisdom with the committee today.

BOS, Ms Laura, General Manager, Strata Community Association Queensland

MARLOW, Mr Kristian, Officer, Policy and Stakeholder Engagement, Strata Community Association Queensland

CHAIR: Would you like to make an opening statement before the committee asks you some questions?

Ms Bos: Thank you for the opportunity to appear today. The Strata Community Association Queensland, or SCAQ, is the peak body for professional strata management in this state. Our 1,200-plus members help manage and advise on more than \$280 billion of property assets across 53,000 community title schemes in Queensland. We welcome this bill and the government's ongoing commitment to reforming Queensland's building laws. The procedural amendments in the bill are sensible, pragmatic and will help reduce red tape and improve safety oversight outcomes that we strongly support. However, the lived experience of our sector tells us that more substantial reform will be needed.

Where the construction industry gives birth to a building, it is strata managers, bodies corporate and lot owners who raise it through its entire lifecycle. When something goes wrong during the construction, particularly in high and medium density developments, the burden is too often left to the community to carry and that is neither their fault nor sustainable. This is not about targeting all developers. Many do the right thing and take pride in delivering quality projects. However, the current system provides insufficient protection when things do go wrong. We need stronger safeguards, clearer lines of accountability and reforms that instil confidence in both the market and the public.

We support enhanced regulation of building certifiers, licensing for high-risk trades such as waterproofing and more robust enforcement mechanisms, including mandatory site inspections and stricter penalties for noncompliance with rectification orders. We believe there are lessons to be drawn from the oversight frameworks used in other professions, including auditors under the Corporations Act. These are not theoretical concerns. Defects in strata buildings are real, costly and growing, with research showing that 85 per cent of buildings studied across three states had at least one defect. That is not a margin for error; that is a systemic problem. As Queensland continues to grow, strata housing will be critical to our future. However, its success depends on trust in the construction process, in the oversight systems and in the professionals who manage these communities every day.

We thank the committee for its work and we remain committed to contributing to reforms that ensure our buildings are safe, our communities are protected and confidence in this sector is restored. We welcome your questions.

CHAIR: Thank you, Laura.

Ms BUSH: Laura and Kristian, I saw a lot of you when I was on the legal affairs community. It is lovely to see you back here. You have raised a couple of broader concerns, Laura. Has the Strata Community Association raised those concerns directly with the Minister for Public Works or with the department?

Ms Bos: Indeed we have. We have raised these concerns over a number of years with the department and specifically in relation to items such as the Home Warranty Scheme for over three storeys. It has become an issue not just with building and construction. It is rolled on with insurance and the impacts on insurance and where that sits in terms of the community. It has been raised a number of times.

Ms BUSH: Has the current minister or department given you a response on whether they are going to pick up some of those recommendations?

Mr Marlow: We are cautiously optimistic that there will be significant changes around this. It has been a concern that we have raised with both the former government and the current government. We are certainly hopeful that Queensland's large population growth and push for densification mean that this issue is taken very seriously.

Mr KEMPTON: If defects are seen to be emerging at an increasing rate, what more could be done to prevent the defects in the first instance? That would seem to be far more economic than trying to chase them afterwards.

Mr Marlow: We believe that a number of things could be done. Obviously, changes to how certifiers operate would be a big one and more rigorous licensing for trades, particularly waterproofing. A New South Wales study that was conducted in 2023 said that about four in 10 new

strata properties had waterproofing defects, which obviously is an enormous rate and a very specific issue. In addition, currently there is no defect insurance above three storeys. Given how often developers or builders will use a special purpose vehicle to complete a project, in the absence of defect insurance it is very hard to get a direction to rectify or anything of that nature. It is a concern that is lessening but obviously there was a lot of insolvency in the construction sector over the past couple of years. It is obviously bad for a number of reasons, but for consumers it means that they have been unable to get defects rectified in their properties because the builder has gone bust. There are a host of things that could be done: certification, insurance and better training. There is no one silver bullet, but in our opinion all three of those policy levers should be pulled in order to deliver better outcomes for strata owners.

Mr KING: Based on your submission and the things you have been saying today regarding building defects, the need for greater oversight and further licensing of people such as waterproofers, do you think that these issues are being addressed currently through the reform agenda of the government or could it go further?

Mr Marlow: We are cautiously optimistic that the government is committed to really focusing on what matters in the building industry. They have repealed a bit of red tape around payment, which we hope will take time away from doing paperwork and put it into doing productive good quality trade work. We are given to understand that they are examining productivity in the construction sector at the moment and they are; there is an inquiry. Ourselves and another group of organisations have put in a submission around the fact that we believe that defects are a significant drag on productivity. We are hopeful that, in response to that inquiry, there will be some action around ensuring that building quality and getting things right the first time becomes a key priority, which in turn will increase productivity because there will be less time spent going back to rectify defects, in litigation and so on. We want tradesmen out there doing high-quality work, not doing paperwork and not engaged in litigation.

Mr KING: I agree with the member for Cook about stopping the defects in the first place and the licensing that you are asking for to provide quality tradespeople.

Ms Bos: Certainly. We support our colleagues who are managing the trades and the peak bodies with their thinking around what this licensing could look like. Certainly, having licensing that moves in between states so it is not an additional burden and all of those kinds of things to make it easier to keep track of it all would make sense.

Mr KING: As long as the same laws apply in every state.

Ms Bos: We can only hope, can't we?

Mr KING: Yes, a perfect world.

CHAIR: Harmonisation.

Mr JAMES: In your submission you state that the QBBC should be empowered to deliver harsher penalties for a failure to comply with such directions. Do you have feedback from your members about their dealings with the QBBC now? Are they doing their job sufficiently as opposed to requesting even further harsher penalties?

Mr Marlow: The QBBC do their best with the laws and powers that they operate within. They can only enforce or use the powers that they have. We think that legislative change to improve quality is the way to go.

Ms Bos: We have been engaging a lot more actively with the QBBC, particularly over the past 18 months. Certainly for our sector, that has created some good dialogue, particularly around collecting information. Data is always key. While we have some reports on defects that support what else they could do, collecting more is always critical.

Mr JAMES: Following on from that, do you find you are getting sufficient support from the building certifiers themselves?

Ms Bos: The certifier organisation, their peak body, is certainly in concert with us on some of these issues around ensuring that impartiality is key. That has been raised a number of times where we have a particular certifier who is doing all the work for a particular developer. Like other professions, sometimes those lines can get blurred. Impartiality is really important and independence is very important in terms of ensuring that when it can be fixed it should be fixed and it is not just ticked off and left for another time.

Mr JAMES: Do you have any suggestions on how that impartiality should be policed?

Mr Marlow: We would like to see certifiers regulated in a similar manner to the way auditors are regulated under the Corporations Act so that within a certain time period they cannot audit the same business again. I have put the specific language in our submission. It would really be a cut and paste to put that in construction legislation, in particular. It adds no red tape, it increases competition and it ensures independence.

Mr WHITING: Mr Marlow, you talked about the need for legislative change to improve quality. Can you expand on that and the quality of relationships between the QBBC and other bodies?

Mr Marlow: We have mentioned legislative change in terms of certifiers and in terms of the licensing regime for waterproofing and also legislative change to extend the Home Warranty Scheme above three storeys. It is all about getting things right the first time so better trained people executing the work, insurance for defects on that work and ensuring that certifiers have legal obligations to encourage their independence.

CHAIR: Kristian, you mentioned that you had consulted with this government and the former government. How long have you been consulting about those changes?

Mr Marlow: We have been working very diligently for years. Since at least 2021 we have been very proactive in this regard. The former government conducted a review into the Home Warranty Scheme and we made a submission then. The former government conducted a review into property developers and we made a similar submission then. There was an examination of what to do, for example, about combustible cladding by the former government and that is obviously a building defect with a very specific lane. We have been relentless in terms of pushing for better quality. We will continue to be relentless. This problem is not going away. It will likely get worse without significant policy intervention. It is time for action. We cannot expect people to live in apartments, as we increasingly are, without ensuring that those apartments are constructed with high degrees of quality and ensuring that there is definitely consumer confidence to move in.

CHAIR: The committee published the response from the Department of Housing and Public Works yesterday. Did you get a chance to see that response in regards to your submission?

Mr Marlow: No, sorry, we have not.

CHAIR: That is okay. In regards to the waterproofing, they mentioned that the QBCC licensing framework under part 60 currently addresses the waterproofing work and licensing framework. Do you have any thoughts about that? If you do not have it today, you might like to take that on notice.

Mr Marlow: We certainly do have some thoughts on that. It is very easy for someone to get their waterproofing licence, particularly if they are in another trade. Given how critical it is to the building and given the rates of water ingress, we think that clearly the licensing framework is not working. For 40 per cent of new strata buildings to have issues with waterproofing and water ingress, to me that says that things are not working—particularly given that, while water ingress sounds fairly mild, it can be absolutely catastrophic. We think there needs to be an acceptance that, if 40 per cent of new buildings do not have quality waterproofing, then let's move; let's do something about that.

CHAIR: It is obvious that you have a lot of experience around things that do not necessarily apply in other lone dwelling arrangements. Thank you for the suggestions you have made. Obviously, you are engaged with the government through the Building Ministerial Advisory Council.

Ms Bos: Correct.

CHAIR: We are looking at seeing some changes through tranche 4 for government consideration so please continue with your consultation.

Ms Bos: We will.

CHAIR: Is there anything else you would like to add in closing?

Ms Bos: Just to say that we are very supportive and we understand that we have a housing crisis and that strata living is going to form a very big part of that solution, and it is a growing part. We come at this from a confidence perspective. We need people to have confidence in what they are buying. As we said, we raise the buildings after they have been given birth; we do not want to leave a legacy and a litany of problems. As our insurers always say to us, 'Let's build it right to start with and then we can help.' That is part of the mitigation. We are also dealing with an insurance crisis, weather failure, market failure and increased costs on consumers, particularly those living in strata. Often these defects are not truly discovered until there is a weather event, particularly water, our favourite friend!

CHAIR: The farmers' favourite friend, but not necessarily builders. Thank you for appearing before the committee today. There are no further questions and the time allocated has finished.

CORNAH, Ms Penny, Chief Executive Officer, Master Plumbers' Association of Queensland (via teleconference)

CHAIR: Welcome. Would you like to make an opening statement before the committee has some questions for you?

Ms Cornah: Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of the Master Plumbers' Association of Queensland. The Master Plumbers' Association is the peak industry body representing plumbing, drainage and gas contractors throughout Queensland. We support our members through a wide range of services, including technical advice, advocacy, training and business support. Importantly, as you would all know, plumbers play such a vital role in protecting the health and safety of our communities. Whether it is ensuring safe drinking water, proper sanitation or gas safety, our members work at the front line of public health every day.

MPAQ broadly supports the proposed amendments within the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. We commend the Queensland government for its extensive and genuine consultation with industry stakeholders throughout this process. We welcome several key reforms proposed in the bill.

Firstly, the removal of the requirement to issue QBCC licences as hard copy cards reflects a practical and modernised approach that aligns with industry's expectations. Members have expressed support for digital licences as they are easier to access on site, reduce the risk of loss or damaged cards and support streamlined verification by clients and regulators. Approximately 50 per cent of our members are also gasfitters who obtain their gas licence through Resources Safety and Health Queensland, and it would be highly beneficial if this licence could also be made available through the same digital platform as the QBCC licence. In future, we would also support the introduction of a dedicated apprentice card to clearly identify apprentices within the industry. The QBCC is also currently reviewing its licence application process with a view to transitioning from the existing paper-based system to a more efficient digital platform, and our members are very supportive of this.

Secondly, we support the introduction of a digital pathway for the service of documents which will help streamline regulatory communication and reduce administrative burdens. Thirdly, for our members, we endorse the removal of the duplicate reporting obligation. Currently, licensees must notify both QBCC and Workplace Health and Safety or the electrical safety regulators of serious safety incidents. This bill proposes that, where notification is already required under the Workplace Health and Safety Act or Electrical Safety Act, the separate QBCC notification will no longer be necessary. This change directly responds to industry feedback and will help reduce duplication, support more efficient incident management and allow regulators to share information more effectively. Contractors are required to report on a range of metrics while simultaneously running a small business and managing clients, customers, employees, builders and subcontractors, which can be both demanding and very challenging.

We appreciate the important work of the plumbing industry in Queensland and we continue to look for ways that we can support our members and the work that they do.

CHAIR: Thank you for that opening statement.

Ms BUSH: Thanks for your submission. Your submission mentions that you do welcome the removal of the dual reporting, and you touched on that today. I imagine that is because it removes an obligation from your members and streamlines, in your words. I am trying to understand why you welcome it.

Ms Cornah: We welcome it because it does streamline it. The feedback that we have received from our members is that, if there is a safety incident or breach, they have to complete their paperwork required with Workplace Health and Safety Queensland and they also have to complete it with QBCC. The feedback they are giving to me is, 'We're trying to run a small business. We're managing so many different things. How come the departments can't communicate with each other and share that information between them to address the issues?'

Ms BUSH: I totally understand that. I assume then that your members would also put safety as a paramount feature. They still put safety as one of their No. 1 concerns and they do not want to see a loss of safety.

Ms Cornah: Definitely. We are not saying that safety should be removed in anyway. We are just looking for ways to make it a simpler process. We thought it could be one digital form that can go to both entities. Safety is definitely paramount with our members.

Ms BUSH: Can I clarify then. Under the proposed bill, there would be no prescribed requirement in legislation for that dual reporting. There is no service level agreement between the departments at the moment; it is simply an information sharing MOU that in two years time could effectively be removed under new leadership. Does that raise concerns for you? Would you prefer to see more stringent obligations put on that information sharing between departments?

Ms Cornah: All departments should be working together where they can. Yes, having the means for information to be shared between both entities is the most important part.

Ms BUSH: I guess what I am saying is that, if in two years time it was learnt that the information-sharing agreement fell down and those incidents were not being reported, would that concern your members?

Ms Cornah: Yes, I think it would concern our members. Having an MOU that is extended for a longer period of two years or encouraging the future to be able to continue to report back would be our recommendation.

Ms BUSH: Thank you.

Mr KEMPTON: Penny, could you give some practical examples of the advantages of the removal of the requirement for a licence to be a hard copy?

Ms Cornah: I suppose it brings it into the new age. It streamlines it. It is so people do not lose their cards. If you talk to a lot of plumbers, they have a plumbers licence, so an occupational licence. They also have a contractors licence, they have a gas licence and they have a gas contractors licence. You can imagine that their wallets would be filling up with all of these cards that they have. Any way to streamline that and have it in a digital wallet or a digital portal would just make it easier for them.

Mr KEMPTON: Good answer, thank you.

Mr KING: I want to go back to the streamlining and the dual reporting, and I think you said if there was one form they would have to report. If it is electronic, will it be more onerous to send that report to a few people so everyone is on the same page and everyone has the same information?

Ms Cornah: No, I do not think that would be onerous at all. I think the current situation though is that there are different requirements with what is required to be reported to the QBCC as opposed to what is being reported to Workplace Health and Safety. They are having to complete those two different sections, so they are just saying that if all of the information was in one portal and they submitted it once it would save them time and the information could be shared internally. That is the feedback we have received in that space.

Mr KING: I appreciate that.

CHAIR: The intention of the amendment bill is certainly to improve safety outcomes. Do you think the increased penalties with regard to nonreporting, as well as having the one door to multiple agencies, will assist in those reporting frameworks and compliance?

Ms Cornah: Yes, I believe it will. If all the information is together, it can be shared between the regulator and the department.

Mr WHITING: We heard earlier today from a witness about the need for a physical licence as well as a digital licence. There may be some places where your members go—say, correctional or defence facilities—and they have to surrender their electronic device. If they go into those facilities to do work, they cannot carry around a digital device because of security concerns. Does that happen to your members?

Ms Cornah: I have not received any feedback from members on that particular matter, but it is possible that they would be in the same situation as per the Fire Protection Association's comments earlier. Some people still do like to have a physical card. Some of our older generation of plumbers like to have that physical card, but the bill supports that you can have both.

CHAIR: Penny, you mentioned before some of the different skills that your members have. The wide range of things that the Master Plumbers' Association actually looks after surprised me. Can you go through that again?

Ms Cornah: Yes, of course. We not only represent plumbing contractors; the majority of plumbers are also drainers, who are licensed under the QBCC. We also have members who are gas contractors as well. They obtain their licence through Resources Safety & Health Queensland. They are members who are working on type A gas appliances—a gas water heater at your house, a stovetop et cetera. Our members do broaden out into that area. There are other areas which I did not

Public Hearing—Inquiry into the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025

specifically go into which are more subsections of the plumbing industry, including the installation and maintenance of onsite sewage treatment systems and thermostatic mixing valves as well as backflow testing.

CHAIR: Does your organisation have a breakdown of the safety issues across each of those different areas? Is there more danger working in gas or in drainage?

Ms Cornah: Usually there is a danger in relation to any sorts of gas issues that occur, and we do work closely with Resources Safety & Health Queensland when they put out a notification so we can educate and share that information with our members so they are also aware of any issues or concerns.

CHAIR: Thank you, Penny. That is great. You have been a great advocate for your organisation. The committee does not have any further questions for you, so thank you for your advocacy of the bill.

Ms Cornah: You are welcome. Thank you very much. I do apologise for the technical issues earlier.

CHAIR: They were resolved very quickly. Thank you, Penny.

Ms Cornah: Thank you.

CHAIR: That concludes this hearing. Thank you to everyone who has participated today. Thank you to our Hansard reporters and broadcast staff for their assistance. Thank you to our secretariat. A transcript of today's briefing will be available on the committee's webpage in due course. I declare this public briefing closed.

The committee adjourned at 10.32 am.