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# **STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND WORKS COMMITTEE**

Mr JJ McDonald MP—Chair (via videoconference)  
Mr CG Whiting MP  
Mr TA James MP (via videoconference)  
Mr D Kempton MP (via videoconference)  
Mr SR King MP  
Mr BJ Mellish MP

**Staff present:**

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

## **PUBLIC BRIEFING—INQUIRY INTO THE QUEENSLAND BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION COMMISSION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2025**

### **TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS**

**Wednesday, 9 July 2025**

**Brisbane**

## WEDNESDAY, 9 JULY 2025

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**The committee met at 10.02 am.**

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

The purpose of today's briefing is to assist the committee with its examination of the Queensland Building Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This briefing is a proceeding of the Queensland parliament and is subject to the parliament's standing rules and orders. Only the committee members and invited witnesses may participate in the proceedings. Witnesses are not required to give evidence under oath or affirmation, but intentionally misleading the committee is a serious offence. Members of the public may be excluded from the briefing at the discretion of the committee. I remind committee members that officers are here to provide factual or technical information. Questions seeking opinion about policy should be directed to the minister or left to debate on the floor of the House.

The proceedings are being recorded and, as the secretariat outlined before we commenced, we are having some difficulties with the broadcast, but we will certainly broadcast that on the parliament's website later. Media may be present and is subject to the committee's media rules and the chair's directions at all times. You may be filmed or photographed during the proceedings and images may also appear on the parliament's website or social media pages.

Please turn off your mobile phones or put them on silent mode. Finally, I remind everyone to please remember to press your microphones on before you start speaking and off when you are finished.

**ATKINS, Mr Graham, Deputy Director-General, Public Works, Department of Housing and Public Works**

**BARRON, Ms Ainslie, Assistant Director-General, Building Policy, Public Works, Department of Housing and Public Works**

**LAMBRINOS, Mr Angelo, Chief Executive Officer and Commissioner, Queensland Building and Construction Commission**

**McPHERSON, Ms Naomi, Director, Emergent and Environment Workplace Health and Safety Policy, Work and Electrical Safety Policy, Office of Industrial Relations, Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning**

**SUTHERLAND, Ms Johanna, Executive Director, Specialised Health and Safety Services, Office of Industrial Relations, Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning**

**CHAIR:** I welcome representatives from the Department of Housing and Public Works, the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. I invite you to make a brief opening statement, after which committee members will have some questions for you.

**Mr Atkins:** Ms Ainslie Barron, our Assistant Director-General of Public Works, is going to make our opening introduction.

**Ms Barron:** Thank you. I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. My name is Ainslie Barron. I am the Assistant Director-General, Building Policy in the Department of Housing and Public Works. The

chair has introduced the people who are with me here today and I would like to thank them for joining us.

The Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill proposes to amend several building related acts. These are the Building Act 1975, the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018 and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991. Earlier this year, the government announced the Building Reg Reno reforms with changes to be implemented through four tranches. Overall, the aim is to make it easier to build in Queensland through cutting red tape, reducing unnecessary costs and ensuring the industry runs more smoothly.

The bill represents tranche 3 of the Building Reg Reno reforms and proposes two key areas of change: supporting digitisation initiatives of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission, or the QBCC, and improving how industry reports serious safety matters which I will now discuss further.

On digitisation, one key focus of the bill is to ensure the QBCC, the state's building regulator, can move from operating in a primarily paper-based environment to providing more services online. The QBCC has been working towards being more efficient, customer focused and user friendly. In essence, the bill seeks to make it easier for the QBCC, licensees and other customers to use digital services if they choose to do so.

Currently, the QBCC Act is written in such a way that assumes licences are applied for and issued in hard copy. For example, a person applying for a licence under the QBCC Act must provide photographs that are certified and passport size with their licence application. Current licensing provisions in the QBCC Act also require that the licence must be issued in the form of a card. Other licensing provisions in the QBCC Act, the Building Act and the Plumbing and Drainage Act require licensees to return their licence to the QBCC in several circumstances, such as if a licence is suspended, cancelled or surrendered.

The bill proposes to address these matters by removing the requirement for photographs to be provided in hard copy and for licences to be issued in the form of card. For example, licensees would soon be able to optionally access their licence via the Queensland Digital Licence app. I understand that, subject to parliamentary approval, the QBCC is well positioned to implement digital licensing via the app.

Other amendments in the bill provide that if a licence needs to be returned to the QBCC—for example, if a licence is suspended, cancelled or surrendered—the requirement only applies to fit those physical licence cards.

Another amendment clarifies an existing provision that if a person is required by notice to attend before an investigator, they may attend by using technology, unless otherwise specified in the notice. This aims to provide flexibility for a person to appear online as an option to comply with an attendance requirement.

Other amendments to investigator powers clarify an investigator cannot seize a digital device used to store a QBCC licence if the investigator takes the device only to inspect or copy the licence. The bill also provides the ability for documents to be served via email under the QBCC Act. Electronic communication is obviously a cost-effective, efficient and a quick way of providing and receiving information rather than by physical options. This amendment really aims to assist the QBCC to be more efficient and cost-effective in its operational processes, as well as to assist customers in receiving documents from the QBCC more quickly. Crucially, the bill provides that the QBCC can only serve documents by email if an email address has been provided for use under the QBCC Act.

Overall, the amendments in the bill aim to make it easier for the QBCC, licensees and customers to use digital services where they choose to do so. Other forms of communication, such as exchanging documents via post or lodging documents at regional service centres, continue to be options which are available to QBCC customers.

Another element of the bill aims to improve how serious safety incidents on building sites are reported, given information-sharing arrangements between relevant regulators have improved and matured. In 2017, legislative amendments were made to ensure the QBCC was notified about serious safety incidents on building sites and to take appropriate action as needed. The amendments were made following a coroner's inquiry into the tragic death of Mr Jason Garrels on a building site in Clermont.

The 2017 amendments included requiring QBCC licensees to report relevant safety matters to both the QBCC and the regulator under the Work Health and Safety Act, the Office of Industrial Relations. Other amendments to the QBCC Act in 2017 included provisions to support the QBCC taking action against licensees and to ensure the QBCC and regulators, including OIR, can share relevant information and support confidentiality of that information. These amendments were fit for purpose at the time and aim to do everything possible to ensure the QBCC receive relevant information on safety matters that occurred on building sites. However, it meant that some QBCC licensees are required to report the same safety matter twice—once to OIR and again to the QBCC.

Since Mr Jason Garrels' death, the QBCC and OIR have strengthened information-sharing arrangements. This includes a memorandum of understanding and implementing an automated notification system from OIR to the QBCC. This provides prompt information on notifications of relevant safety matters on building sites. Regulators have continued to work together on system and process improvements and, for example, this year further refinements have been made to ensure the QBCC receives relevant information in a timely manner so it can investigate and take appropriate action. This amendment recognises the improvements in processes and practices between the regulators. The bill amends the reporting pathway for a licensee.

Other provisions that were introduced in 2017 are not being amended, including the ability for the QBCC to take action against a licensee or the strengthening of information-sharing arrangements between regulators, except for a penalty in a provision which is being increased which I will touch on a little later. It is important to note the QBCC's ability to take action against a licensee, including, for example, the ability to cancel or suspend a licence where building or other work on a building site may have caused the death or grievous bodily harm to a person, will not be changed. As a result, any precedence in relation to action by the QBCC against a licensee for such situations which the legislative amendments in 2017 introduced will also remain unchanged.

The bill retains the two types of safety matters that QBCC licensees need to report, which are a notifiable incident on a building site under the licensee's control or on which the licensee is carrying out building work, as well as contraventions of a notice or injunction issued under OIR legislation. The bill proposes to ensure that all licensees continue to have a reporting obligation for relevant safety matters, that the notice is provided in a form or contains the details approved by the relevant entity—which in this instance is the Office of Industrial Relations—and that existing information-sharing arrangements between the QBCC and OIR will mean that the QBCC is quickly notified of the incident.

The obligation to report safety incidents remains the responsibility for all licensees. This is intended to ensure no-one walks past a relevant safety matter without reporting it. The bill means QBCC or licensees will report relevant safety matters once to reduce confusion and to ensure the regulators continue to receive information about the safety incident on a building site. The requirement for QBCC licensees to report contraventions of a notice or injunction under OIR's legislation to the QBCC remains the same.

The bill also proposes to increase the penalty for noncompliance with these reporting requirements to 100 penalty units from the existing 80 penalty units. This reflects the importance of reporting safety matters and supporting safer work sites. The increased penalty amount also aligns with similar penalties for failure to report an incident involving a non-conforming building product under the QBCC Act and notifiable incident under OIR's legislation. Importantly, the bill does not change the policy intent to report serious safety matters or the ability of regulators to take action but rather aims to improve the reporting pathway.

In summary, the bill being introduced represents tranche 3 of the Building Reg Reno reforms. This concludes the remarks I wish to make regarding the bill, and we are happy to take any questions the committee may have.

**CHAIR:** Thank you, and apologies for dropping out during my introductions. I turn to the deputy chair for the first question.

**Mr WHITING:** Thank you, but I will pass to the member for Kurwongbah for the first question.

**Mr KING:** Thank you for preparing this written brief. Looking through the consultation that occurred with the Building Ministerial Advisory Committee, I note that all of the industrial organisations represent companies and there does not appear to be any worker or union representation. Were unions consulted at all in coming up with this?

**Ms Barron:** A decision was made to undertake targeted consultation on the amendments. These amendments generally involve operational processes of the QBCC and have a very specific impact on stakeholders. That is why a targeted consultation approach was considered appropriate. An offer has been made to brief unions on the bill and the approach that is being taken.

**Mr JAMES:** Ainslie, can you address the concerns Mr Michael Garrels has raised in relation to what I understand he is describing as the precedent established under the 2017 legislative changes in relation to the suspension of principal contractors for serious safety incidents? Do the proposed amendments in this bill impact this?

**Ms Barron:** As I said in my opening remarks, the changes that were made in 2017 primarily had three elements: reporting to the QBCC; the ability for the QBCC to take action against licensees for the most serious safety related offences; and information sharing and confidentiality provisions. The ability for the QBCC to take action against licensees remains. The information sharing and confidentiality of those information-sharing provisions also remain. What Mr Garrels refers to as the precedence being established by that remains unchanged. It will remain the QBCC's responsibility to review, investigate and take appropriate action which was not something that was available to them prior to 2017.

What is proposed to change is the reporting pathway by which that information is received by the QBCC. So rather than a licensee needing to report that safety incident both to the Office of Industrial Relations and the QBCC, it is proposed that the legislation enable a system, which has been trialled between the two organisations for a little while now, which provides for an update to the OIR's form. This means that the licensee reporting will note that they are a licensee on that form to OIR and through that—the memorandum of understanding agreement between the two organisations—that information will be automatically shared with the QBCC. It is then up to the QBCC and OIR to undertake the appropriate investigation of that and action. As I said in my opening remarks, it is proposed that the penalty for not reporting increase as well. There is no precedent change there. It will, in fact, become a more serious offence not to report if the bill is passed.

**Mr MELLISH:** Is there a service level agreement in place between the QBCC and the relevant regulators—something that sets timeframes, responsibilities and pathways for the sharing of serious incident notifications? If so, will it be made available to the committee?

**Ms Barron:** The overall arrangement is in place under a memorandum of understanding but I might pass to the commissioner or my colleagues in OIR to answer that question.

**Ms Sutherland:** At the moment there is broad information sharing covered under the MOU. We do not have an SLA in place for the system that has been developed at the moment, but we have been engaging with QBCC around the timeframes for reporting. Because it is system generated, the view is that it is automated and, therefore, happens as scheduled.

**Mr MELLISH:** Are you moving towards a service level agreement? Is that what you are indicating?

**Ms Sutherland:** As indicated, the reporting has been enhanced significantly over the last six months. There is the opportunity now for us to review the MOU in light of the information that is being shared. We can certainly make sure it includes provisions around times so that there is confidence on the timeframes for that reporting to occur.

**CHAIR:** The briefing note said the exchange of information between QBCC and OIR would happen quickly. Is that instant or within days? Is there a service level around that?

**Ms Sutherland:** At the moment the reporting happens daily. There are two different reports that go daily. The first report is for any incident notification that we receive where the notifier has indicated that—at the moment it says that they wish to notify QBCC. We are in the process of amending that to instead capture 'Are you a QBCC licence holder?' and 'Has the incident occurred on a building site that you have control of or are currently carrying out work on?' The first report gives those incidents in a package.

The second report provides the details of any statutory notices issued by inspectors based on their attendance to those incidents. The QBCC will receive notifications daily that these are incidents that we have been notified of that have a QBCC licence holder involved. Then the second report will go if we issue any notices in relation to an investigation or inspector activity for that particular event—that would be infringement notices, improvement notices or prohibition notices. At the moment they are daily. Again, that is not in an SLA at this point in time.

**CHAIR:** Thank you. That is great.

**Mr WHITING:** So there is no SLA at the moment but there is still an MOU; is that right? Could we see a copy of that?

**Ms Sutherland:** Absolutely. It is public facing as well. It is available on our website but we can certainly send it through.

**Mr WHITING:** We are talking about specific incidents that have duplication or dual reporting. How many serious safety incidents have been dual reported to both agencies and regulators since the introduction of the 2017 changes?

**Ms Sutherland:** We do not have that information but we will come back to you with it. We have not done a validation of the dual reporting between both organisations at this point in time, so I do not have that information available.

**Mr WHITING:** One of the things we are looking at is stopping the duplication or red tape, but we need to know how many incidents have been involved so far.

**Ms Barron:** If I could pass some comment on that, as well. In terms of information which currently comes to the QBCC, they report this information publicly in their annual report. In 2023-24, the QBCC investigated 248 safety matters involving licensees. In that period, one licensee had one or more disciplinary actions or conditions imposed on their licence. That information is publicly reported and we can provide that to the committee.

**Mr WHITING:** We would certainly be interested in seeing how many of those are dual reported because I do not think that covers the dual reporting of incidents; is that right?

**Ms Barron:** The obligations on QBCC licensees are broader than the obligations under the OIR's legislation. If you are a licensee on a site you have a requirement to report, so 248 is the number of reports that come into the QBCC under the obligations in its legislation. It is a slightly narrower definition in OIR's legislation which relates to a person conducting a business or undertaking—a PCBU.

**Mr WHITING:** We will certainly look forward to seeing it, yes.

**Ms Sutherland:** I will add some context in relation to the changes. As identified there, currently under section 38 we only require notification for a person conducting a business or undertaking. The proposed changes will mean that people who are not PCBUs who are QBCC licence holders will also have to notify OIR. What we expect to see is an increase in notifications. This will also create the potential for us to be able to identify a contravention where a PCBU does not notify us because we receive a notification from a QBCC licence holder who is not a PCBU. So we do expect to see an increase in the number of safety notifications that come through. There are potential benefits for us around identifying where people with a duty to notify under our legislation have not notified.

**Mr WHITING:** We look forward to seeing how many dual reporting cases have occurred. How many times in the past five years has the QBCC—this may be publicly available—taken licensing or disciplinary action based specifically on those incidents notified under section 54A?

**Mr Lambrinos:** Which calendar or financial year are you referring to?

**Mr WHITING:** Any timeline in the last five years.

**Mr Lambrinos:** In the last year we have had 257 notifications received under section 54A. Of those, 219 were referred to us under our own internal consideration and we commenced 236 individual licensing investigations. Although a notification may come to us, it might involve multiple licensees. That is why there are more investigations commenced than actual considerations taken. So 236 licensing investigations were commenced. Of those, there have been 113 where we have sought upgrades of safe work systems or implemented improvements to the way their safety systems operate. There were 13 where remedial training and reprimands were exercised across those figures.

**Mr WHITING:** I understand that section 54A was brought in 2017 in relation to serious notifiable incidents. How many serious notifiable incidents are there in that number you have talked about?

**Mr Lambrinos:** Those numbers relate directly to incidents that are characterised as serious safety incidents.

**Mr WHITING:** So they are all serious?

**Mr Lambrinos:** Yes, 257 across the state.

**Mr KEMPTON:** I may be a bit naive. A lot of this is obviously after the event, but what is the process by which the findings improve the safety standards? Is that only on a case-by-case basis or does it go back into the standards generally across the industry? Is there a strong correlation between the role of supervising and the development of stronger safety standards within the industry?

**Ms Sutherland:** Can I just clarify: are you asking whether the information we receive from incident notifications informs guidance and legislative reform within the construction industry?

**Mr KEMPTON:** The role you take in relation to reporting, notifications and actions obviously should have an influence on the safety standards that have been breached. I am just wondering about the correlation between the work that is being undertaken by you and the work being undertaken within the industry generally. Is it on a case-by-case basis when there has been a breach, or is your work generally going towards improving safety standards in the industry?

**Ms Sutherland:** Speaking from the perspective of OIR, the information that we gather from incident notifications and the actions that our inspectors take both in issuing notices and in the broader investigations and prosecutions that we undertake is used to inform a range of different legislative reforms and priorities. The WHSQ Priority Plan focuses on both particular high priority industries and particular hazards within those industries. The datasets that we get are directly relevant to our understanding of risks and hazards within different industries and the work that we do as a regulator to enhance the guidelines that we have and also the legislative requirements that we place on industry to ensure that their standards are protecting workers in the manner that they should.

**Mr MELLISH:** It might have been touched on before, but I just wanted to check. Were any victims' families, such as the Garrels' family, consulted on the proposed changes? If so, what was their feedback?

**Ms Barron:** I am happy to respond to that question. The minister did meet with Mr Michael Garrels, Mr Jason Garrels' father, before the bill was introduced to discuss the changes. The minister focused on talking about the fact that the original policy intent will be maintained as well as flagging the increase to the penalty unit for failing to notify of a safety matter. The commissioner also met with Mr Garrels, and I have spoken with Mr Garrels as well. He can pass his own comment on the appropriateness or otherwise of the proposed amendments, as he has.

**CHAIR:** I have a question with regard to the digitisation. There were a few lessons and learnings from when the Queensland driver's licence went live. Are the department and the QBCC having conversations about those learnings to make sure that there are minimal interruptions to the operationalisation of this?

**Mr Lambrinos:** We have been working very closely with TMR over the last 12 to 18 months in terms of implementing the QBCC licence on the TMR licensing platform. In that regard, learnings from the original implementation of driver's licences would definitely have been taken into consideration. I do not have to hand what the key learnings were from that exercise. Suffice to say that we will be launching the QBCC licence in a small pilot later this year. During that time, we will certainly look at any opportunities for enhancements through that pilot before we do the full-scale launch at the end of the year.

**Mr KING:** Part of this bill is about digitisation, and I understand there will be efficiencies gained there. I will pass a comment: it seems to me that, if everything were digitised, dual reporting would be less of a hindrance. Has the department modelled or forecast any improvement in efficiency or cost savings to industry or government from removing the dual reporting, considering it will be digitised?

**Ms Barron:** We have not undertaken that modelling. We have worked to ensure that there will be a seamless approach between the two regulators. There will be a single point of entry into government, and that will be a faster process—rather than providing two reports, one will be provided. Within the context of what I am talking about, it will be a small update to the form to require someone who is reporting to notify whether or not they are a QBCC licensee and that sort of information can be shared by government, as people would reasonably expect. No modelling has been done but there is a reasonable expectation that it will be a simpler and faster process because it will be one report rather than two.

**Mr KING:** As the licensee will not be dual reporting anymore, it sort of removes an obligation on them. It seems that the obligations on the licensee will be less and any failure in the system would then become a departmental failure rather than that of a licensee not reporting.

**Ms Barron:** I understand where you are coming from in relation to that question. A different way of conceptualising it is that the obligation on the licensee changes. Even though they do not have to report to two separate regulators, they still need to provide the same information to the regulators which cover that work.

Part of what the Coroner was looking to address through his recommendations was the absence of an information-sharing arrangement between the two regulators. They were tragic circumstances. In fact, it was Mr Garrels Sr who advised the QBCC of his son's death. Those arrangements were not in place back then. They are now in place and they have been tested. It has been a thorough and methodical process in order to ensure that those information-sharing arrangements exist and those confidentiality provisions work. We are now at the point where we have an automated process where there is that daily feed of information from OIR to the QBCC about safety incidents.

A testing process was effectively run before coming to the parliament, and we are now in a position to say with confidence that regulators can do what regulators should be expected to do, which is share information and deal with that information appropriately. It is at that point that we are presenting to the parliament the proposed amendment on behalf of the government.

**Mr KING:** I know it is about stopping incidents like that from happening. I know that is the root cause.

**Ms Barron:** It is much better that the incident does not happen in the first instance.

**Mr KING:** That is the perfect world.

**Mr WHITING:** Obviously we need to build confidence in the system for the families and workers out there. They have to have confidence that it will work well and will be transparent. Can we prevent a situation under these amendments where a licensee manages to avoid QBCC scrutiny because another agency—and I am not meaning OIR—did not share that information? Can we prevent that situation from happening?

**Mr Lambrinos:** Regardless of the systems and processes that are in place to notify, communicate and act on these matters, they would always need controls and quality assurance over the top of them, regardless of whether it is a manual or electronic notification. The electronic ones come with robust processes around quality assurance, monitoring and ensuring availability, reliability and stability of systems. Regardless of whether it is a communication channel or an underlying technology that operates a finance system or a procurement system, when technologies are introduced into an organisation they come with that constant 24/7 monitoring.

I imagine it would be the same for OIR but, if an electronic information-sharing capability were introduced, our internal technology teams would ensure there would be a control overlay on it to ensure it operated the way it was supposed to. Does that create a deficiency in the communication channels for QBCC licensees? I would argue that, with those controls in place, we are ensuring the systems we have introduced remain stable, available, reliable and working as effectively as they need to be.

**Ms Barron:** I was just going to add, Mr Whiting, that the regulator to whom the report goes to is defined in the proposed provision. Proposed section 54A(2) of the bill states—

(2) The licensee must give notice of the safety matter under this section to—

(a) for a safety matter mentioned under subsection (1)(a)—the regulator established under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* ...

That is the relevant entity, according to the definition in the bill. It is very tight in terms of who that notification needs to go to. As my colleague Johanna expressed earlier, OIR are expecting to see an increase in the notifications they receive because a broader range of people will be required to report.

**Mr WHITING:** That is part of those control overlays that we have talked about?

**Ms Barron:** Correct.

**Mr WHITING:** In terms of building public confidence, will the control overlays be transparent and publicly available? I am not quite sure how that would operate, but will those control overlays be quite transparent, discoverable and viewable from a public point of view?

**Mr Lambrinos:** We certainly monitor the performance of our organisation across a number of metrics internally. Any technological performance metrics that we establish internally are certainly reported on. I need to better understand what our public reporting obligations are to see whether that would fall within that category.

**Ms Barron:** It is fair to say that through the annual report there has been the reporting of those matters. Disciplinary action does become a matter of public record, as opposed to necessarily public reporting. I am making a distinction between the two. When you go looking for information about a particular licensee, you will find information potentially in a way that is not advertised more broadly.

**CHAIR:** I have a question regarding the work in this space that has been happening for a while. I have copies are available for the other committee members and yourselves. I note response to recommendation 5 of the QBCC governance review. The previous government had established action 5.6 to 'implement streamlined processes across regulatory agencies' and provided a status update regarding that action as at December 2023, which again is available to be tabled if you need it. They recognised that work was underway at that time. There were also updates from the Work Health and Safety Board including their August 2024 meeting in relation to work to streamline dual incident



reporting. Can you confirm that the intent of the bill, which is to streamline the safety notification requirements while upholding safety outcomes, is something that has been in development for some time and prior to the current government?

**Ms Barron:** You are right in what you are saying. The QBCC and OIR have been committed to improving outcomes relating to safety notifications for some while. Mr Varghese's QBCC governance review, which occurred in 2022, did include a recommendation which went to this very point, within the context of talking about the importance of the QBCC having a very solid reputation for consistent and transparent decision-making.

Given Mr Varghese's recommendation and the fact that the former government did respond to that review with a 90-day action plan, that response was published in mid-2022. There are publicly available implementation progress reports on the governance review recommendations in both December 2023 and December 2024 which went to providing progress updates on information-sharing arrangements between the two regulators including effective integration of the QBCC's requirements into the platform that OIR, I understand, has been developing for four years at this point. Johanna can talk a little more to the work that has been occurring to develop that. Yes, the commitment has been there, and the discussions have been underway for some while.

**Ms Sutherland:** The system that we use, RAPID, was released officially in November last year. We have been working with QBCC for those four years, acknowledging that we did not feel that the information sharing was focused enough at the time that it was done manually for quite a few years. We wanted that information sharing to be more focused both from an effectiveness position but also from a position of considering privacy concerns et cetera. This new system gives us the functionality to have the current reporting, and to review and to enhance that reporting if we think there are other elements that we should be providing that will assist QBCC in targeting their licence holders effectively. It also gives us confidence that the reporting process is automated and designed to deliver.

**Mr WHITING:** How long after a serious safety incident occurs will the QBCC typically be notified under those existing information-sharing procedures? How long would that take?

**Ms Sutherland:** The report will be sent at the end of each day. It would be at the end of the day. In saying that, we also have other communication with the QBCC, as we do with a range of other regulators when we get a significant incident. There may be other mechanisms where regional inspectorate would reach out to the QBCC specifically but, for the purpose of the report itself, the report is sent daily. Both of those reports are sent daily.

**Ms Barron:** In terms of the actual reporting, that is the responsibility of the person who is required to report—so the PCBU in OIR's instance or, for the QBCC, the licensee more broadly. The law currently remains that the 'notice must be given in the fastest way possible in the circumstances'. If the person is giving the notice by telephone, a written notice must be made within 48 hours of that verbal advice being given.

**CHAIR:** Commissioner, a big part of the bill is digitisation for the QBCC. Can the commissioner advise what the current customer experience is like transacting with the QBCC and how these changes will help modernise your organisation?

**Mr Lambrinos:** This is week 9 for me in the role. Clearly one of the highest priorities for me coming into the role was to do a thorough review and health check of our digital transformation program and to ensure that we are delivering the highest priorities and accelerating our digital transformation to ensure we are lining up with the customer expectations and the feedback we have been receiving with regard to reduction of red tape and making it easier to interact with us.

In that regard, in this financial year we have had the support of the department with the funding necessary to accelerate our digital transformation. The key priorities for us are to enhance the platform on which the digitisation capabilities are going to be built to upgrade the myQBCC portal, which will make it more intuitive to navigate and find information. It will also be the portal through which online licensing applications, smart forms and workflows—logic driven workflows—are going to be built. All of those priorities align with customer feedback we have received from the research we have conducted and align with the department's and the minister's view to bring QBCC into the 21st century.

**CHAIR:** Are there any more questions?

**Mr WHITING:** We are all fine, Chair.

**CHAIR:** Member for Mulgrave and member for Cook, do you have any questions?

**Mr JAMES:** No, I am fine.

**Mr KEMPTON:** No, I am good.

**CHAIR:** That concludes our questions and these proceedings. Thank you to everyone who has participated today. Would you be able to provide your responses to questions taken on notice by midday on Tuesday, 15 July? I believe there is one question on notice that the deputy chair asked about how many dual reporting incidents there have been since 2017. Could we have that annually as well? Do you want me to table that document?

**Mr WHITING:** Yes, we will table that. Chair, the other question on notice was the MOU.

**CHAIR:** That is the public facing one? What was the question about that? Was it when it was created?

**Mr WHITING:** We asked for a copy of the MOU.

**CHAIR:** Sure. It is public facing. Yes, no problems. Thank you to our Hansard reporters and broadcast staff. Thank you to our secretariat for your ongoing professionalism and assistance. A transcript of today's briefing will be available on the committee's webpage in due course. I now declare the public briefing closed.

**The committee adjourned at 10.57 am.**