

To The Research Director
Transport, Housing & Local Government Committee
Parliament House
George St
Brisbane 4000

To Whom it may concern

This is my submission regarding the QBSA & my proposals to help fix the problems

Myself, & scores of other suppliers & contractors have been trying for months to have a rogue builder stopped & this should have happened a long time before myself & others were caught by this person who has rode roughshod over the QBSA & Australian Law for at least 2 years now & is still operating & still not paying

I was even asked by one QBSA officer to visit certain sites because they didn't have the manpower to do this.

It seems the QBSA are more than willing to take fees & insurance premiums from subbies & builders, but offer little or no protection to the subbies.

My proposal is that a percentage of any insurance premium paid on each job must go into a separate policy protecting the workers who currently have the least protection of any section of Australia's workforce.

I offer my example as a case in point. I signed a legal contract, fulfilled all my part of this [6 weeks working away as a landscape labourer in Cloncurry], none of this was ever disputed, even by the builder, yet I had absolutely no real course of action once the builder didn't pay. Every option open to me was either going to cost thousands of dollars or was at best a gamble.

The worst part of all this was the apathy from Government bodies including the QBSA

Currently we are all witnessing the huge public outcry from the premier's plans to cut jobs in the public sector, just imagine what would happen if the Government didn't pay the nurses or Police for 6 weeks of work.

The current schemes [adjudication QCAT, BCIPA] are toothless, costly, often weighted against the contractor & leave no avenue open when, as commonly happens, the builder simply goes into liquidation & starts a new company up.

This happens every day to contractors & suppliers in the building Industry & The QBSA need more power to stop rogue builders & freeze all their assets quicker & also the contractors need to have the same protection the customers get from these criminal builders [Insurance]. Another problem is the lack of co-ordination between the different Governing bodies [ASIC, QBSA, local councils etc.] who don't seem to communicate at all until aggrieved contractors bring them together.

There are some excellent people at the QBSA, many are as frustrated as we are about the lack of ability to achieve results, one officer openly asked me to complain about the lack of field officers.

My Concerns & possible solutions

- Absolutely no protection for the sub-contractors
- No inter departmental communication
- Lack of manpower & field officers at the QBSA [I offer myself as a candidate here]
- The QBSA need more authority to be able to act quicker & more decisively when dealing with rogue builders
- This has brought a complete lack of trust throughout the Industry toward the QBSA & many contractors simply stopped paying their licence fees because they see the QBSA as paper tigers
- ASIC & the QBSA need more power to act against people using bankruptcy as a shield & who carry on trading by naming other family members as directors of shelf companies

I would be happy to attend any meeting & discuss my thoughts if required.

In 2012 ,Australian workers shouldn't be subjected to this kind of treatment.

As I said earlier, I was completely blown away by the complete lack of empathy for sub-contractors & suppliers who are getting ripped off every day. It's almost as if we have become a sub-class of workers, denied the rites of other workers . I hope & sense that some at the QBSA feel the frustration we do

Regards

Alan English



18/09/2012