



'Serving Our Trade'

ABN: 93 147 249 769

e) info@spaq.com.au

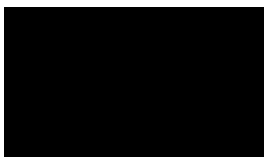
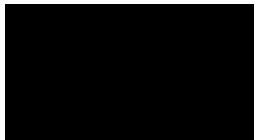
w) www.spaq.com.au

21st September 2012

The Research Director
Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Submission from Solid Plasterers Alliance Queensland

**Re. Inquiry into the Operation and Performance of the Queensland Building
Services Authority**



Inquiry into the Operation and Performance of the Queensland Building Services Authority.

As stated in previous correspondence, we have some very relevant issues in regards to the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry. We would like to take this opportunity to express our concerns with regards to the interpretation of Training Outcomes, and how they relate to Licensing and Contracting in the Construction Industry.

In particular, we would like to make comment on the following points

- **whether the current licensing requirements of the QBSA are adequate and that there is sufficient auditing processes to maintain proper standards;**

We have previously raised concerns regarding the interpretation of the License Scope of Work and associated Licensing Information Statements with BSA .

Whilst this forum is probably not the place to raise specific complaints about various trades, it is an opportunity to discuss the issues regarding how some Contractors and Industry Groups are able to use a very broad interpretation of Training Outcomes and Scope of Works to gain an unfair advantage in terms of tendering for Trade Packages.

As an example, we have highlighted concerns with the Painting and Decorating Scope and LIS No3, which is currently allowing Licensed P+D Contractors to take on Trade Packages including most aspects of the Solid Plastering trade, providing they are applying paint to the surface. The over-riding effect of this situation is that Painting Contractors are able to provide far more competitive rates for the total package, and are often Sub-Letting the Solid Plastering component back to S.P Contractors. With the large downturn in the Building Industry at present, the Solid plastering Contractors have little choice other than to accept the rates on offer. It is unacceptable that one unqualified trade can procure the bulk of the work on offer, and dictate the square metre rates to the qualified trade that will undertake the work. This is forcing a lot of our Members to participate into sham-contracting.

Solid Plastering contractors are struggling to provide a quality product at such reduced square metre rates, and the overall standard in the Industry is in decline.

Licensed Solid plasterers are required to be Trade Qualified and demonstrate experience to contract for this work, however there is no requirement at present for P+D contractors to demonstrate or provide evidence of any training in this scope.

The Scope of work stated in any Class of License needs to be un-ambiguous, with clear definitions of the type of work that particular trade may carry out. Using descriptors such as “any other substance” can certainly lead to misinterpretation. We challenge anybody to prove that they have been trained in, and successfully applied “every Substance”

The scope of work should have a defined link to Training Outcomes, and the Audit process should require evidence that the contractor has been successfully trained in the particular scope. Furthermore, the current practice of Contractors being allowed to contract for work of another trade, after the completion of only one subject from that Trade, is un-acceptable. Training Package Rules currently allow any two subjects to be imported into a Qualification, which is totally **acceptable, however, with the current Licensing situation, this could allow a contractor to** undertake work in three License Classes whilst holding only one license.

Part Statement from BSA dated 07.08.12 reads as follows:

You will need to meet all requirements to be apply to obtain the appropriate licence, just a subject/ subjects from the qualification are not sufficient. (Response letter from BSA dated 07.08.12 contained herein)

This is further evidence of bias in the licensing information statement #3, in that painting contractors are able to undertake parts of solid plastering contracts where solid plasterers are still unable to paint.

BSA Licensing Statement #3 05.07.12 Paragraph 5 – **BSA Licensed Solid Plasterers however cannot apply paint in isolation.**

- **The number of trades licensed by the QBSA and whether industry groups could take a greater role within QBSA in terms of licensing standards and procedures for their members;**

We believe the License Class system currently in place is the appropriate system, as it relates directly to Training Outcomes and Qualifications. There is a great opportunity however to involve Industry Associations in the issuing of Licenses and the required level of pre-checks of applications. License Applications should be checked and verified by Qualified Tradespeople with current Industry knowledge. This would provide applicants with an opportunity to discuss their application with Trade Qualified, experienced assessors, who could examine the application with better judgement and flexibility, as opposed to the “pigeon hole” type system that currently exists. Associations may also be able to suggest suitable relevant solutions for applications that are falling short of the mark.

Industry Associations could also provide a key role in the Dispute Resolution and Mediation process between Contractors, Builders and Consumers, as they would have a better understanding of Faults Causes and Remedies of their trade area. This could in turn reduce the cost of the Dispute Resolution process, and ultimately the cost of rectification work.

The opportunity for Trade Associations to be actively involved in this process should not be overlooked; however the focus should be on the Continuous Improvement of the Trades, as opposed to manipulation for financial benefit for the Association and its Industry.

Please contact Brian or Craig for all supporting Documentation.