




Speech By
Corrine McMillan

MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD

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**QUEENSLAND BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION COMMISSION AND OTHER
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

Second Reading

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (12.24 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. The Labor opposition supports the move to digitise licensing, making the service more accessible for builders and consumers and making it easier for licensing requirements to be met. The licensing reforms in this bill exist because Labor initiated them. Meanwhile, the Crisafulli government is now just rebranding our hard work from maroon to blue. However, we do caution against the removal of dual notification of serious safety incidents. This measure was introduced after the tragic death of Jason Garrels, who was fatally electrocuted at a construction worksite in Clermont in 2012. If information sharing between regulators fails as a result of this bill, responsibility for the fallout of incidents following this bill's assent will rest squarely on the shoulders of the Crisafulli government that chose to remove this protection. That should not be a situation any government should want or blindly legislate themselves into.

During our time in government, the Miles Labor government started the process towards removing the requirements for physical licence cards and allowing digital licences through the Queensland Digital Licence application. This bill enables the electronic service of documents and requires licence holders to update their details within 14 days. This reform also means customers will still have the option to have in-person services at regional centres and physical communication. The Labor opposition will continue to support these reforms.

However, we do have concerns about clause 26, which amends 54A of the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991. This section legislates the dual notification of safety incidents, and the amendment would legislatively remove this requirement. The Labor opposition does acknowledge that dual notifications would continue administratively, but we believe that this legislative requirement should continue. As such, we will not be supporting this clause.

These dual notifications were introduced in 2017 to ensure the Building and Construction Commission had direct awareness of safety incidents. The removal of this requirement means licensees will only be required to notify the Office of Industrial Relations, which will then share the information with the QBCC. This means the process that is required to be followed after an incident will be slowed down, rather than continuing with the same level of expediency they currently have. The Labor opposition would caution the government against weakening these statutory safeguards which have delivered real outcomes.

In the past five years, the commission has taken action on more than 900 safety notifications. As a result, 26 show cause notices were sought and five licences were cancelled due to serious safety breaches. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the dual notification system and that it leads to direct disciplinary action. Relying on administrative agreements, such as memorandums of understanding, will not substitute for a legislated obligation.

Mr Garrels, Jason's father, also raised similar concerns about the amendments proposed in the bill, stating that changes will remove the legislated statutory safeguard and that information sharing between the regulator and the OIR would be governed by a memorandum of understanding rather than a legislative requirement. Mr Garrels told the committee—

... 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.

In conclusion, the Labor opposition supports the digitisation of licences, as we did whilst in government. This will make it easier for Queenslanders to keep their licensing up to date. We hope the Crisafulli government will heed our calls for caution on the weakening of statutory safeguards which have delivered real regulatory outcomes for Queensland workers throughout all worksites in Queensland.