



Speech By  
**David Lee**


**MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY**

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

### **Second Reading**

 **Mr LEE** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (4.03 pm): I rise to speak to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. People are discovering the pristine and unadulterated natural beauty of the Fraser Coast including the whale-watching capital of Australia, Hervey Bay. Therefore, it is no surprise that as more people move to Hervey Bay the population is rapidly expanding and so too is the demand for housing. Over the next 20 years, in Hervey Bay the number of housing dwellings is projected to grow by 9,000, or 36 per cent, and on the Fraser Coast it is projected to grow by over 21,000 dwellings.

The Queensland Building and Construction Commission was established in 1991, pursuant to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991, to regulate the building industry and manage the Queensland Home Warranty Scheme. The QBCC is the primary building industry regulator and is the statutory body responsible for administering legislation, including the QBCC Act 1991, the Building Act 1975 and the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018. A 2025 Queensland Productivity Commission interim report, *Opportunities to improve productivity of the construction industry*, highlights that Queensland's construction industry is facing significant challenges including rising levels of demand, a tight labour market, supply chain issues and declining productivity. The QPC report states that many stakeholders were 'dissatisfied with the performance of the QBCC, claiming it is not effectively and transparently managing its core regulatory functions.'

A Business Chamber Queensland submission to the Queensland Productivity Commission highlighted that 50 per cent of the respondents to an April 2025 efficient regulation survey considered that QBCC imposed a higher burden of regulatory compliance on businesses. Given that 21 per cent of Fraser Coast businesses are engaged in the construction industry, cutting Labor's red tape is critical to easing the burden on our construction businesses. Labor's CFMEU tax was costing Queenslanders \$17 billion a year. The QPC report states—

There is little evidence to support maintaining the BPICs in their current form. While Queensland Government has announced a pause on BPICs, there appears to be a strong case for permanently removing the policy.

This bill provides for amendments to the Building Act 1975, the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018 and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991. The Crisafulli government introduced the Building Regulation Renovation, known as the Building Reg Reno, to cut red tape, reduce unnecessary costs and support the building and construction industry in Queensland. Our Building Reg Reno is a staged and methodical reform that is targeted at improving productivity within the Queensland building and construction industry.

Tranches 1 and 2 of the Building Reg Reno reforms commenced with regulation amendments to pause the rollout of trust accounts and provide immediate regulatory relief for industry. These tranches included removing annual financial reporting requirements for certain QBCC licences and extending a

range of licensing timeframes. This bill forms part of the tranche 3 reforms. The objectives of the bill are to modernise and contemporise the regulatory framework for the QBCC, support the QBCC's transition in delivering more services from a digital platform and streamline workplace safety in Queensland's building and construction industry through amending how industry reports serious safety matters.

There are essentially two substantive aspects to this bill: a QBCC transition into the digital age and improving the management and reporting of serious safety incidents on building sites. Firstly, this bill facilitates a measured transition into the digital age. It is about our tradies being able to optionally access their QBCC licences quickly, securely and online. The existing card-form process leads to unnecessary inefficiencies and regulatory burden. This bill will remove the requirement for licences to be issued in card form with hard copy photographs and provide for licensees to optionally access their licence through the Queensland Digital Licence app. The bill does not require that licensees adopt a digital licence; rather, licensees are provided with an option to apply for a digital licence. Clauses 32 to 36 provide for some clarifying amendments in relation to digital QBCC licences to ensure that investigatory powers are exercised reasonably and proportionately. Clause 37 will amend the QBCC Act to provide for serving documents to be emailed to the person's email address last notified to the commission by that person for use under the act.

I now turn to the management and reporting of serious safety incidents on building sites. Section 54A was originally inserted into the QBCC Act following the tragic death of Jason Garrels in Clermont in 2012. Magistrate David O'Connell recommended, at paragraph 105 of his report following the coronial inquest into Jason's death—

... if the law does not already provide that the principal contractor, and building contractor are obliged to notify the QBCC of any death or serious injury on site, then the law needs to be amended to impose this obligation on them.

A footnote to the coroner's report stated that the collective submission from the parties was that the law did not provide for the principal contractor and building contractor to notify the QBCC. Instead, there was a memorandum of understanding between Workplace Health and Safety Queensland and the QBCC which put an obligation on Workplace Health and Safety Queensland to notify the QBCC of any such event. Accordingly, in 2017 the Queensland government inserted a new section 54A into the QBCC Act requiring QBCC licensees to make separate notifications to both the QBCC and the appropriate regulator under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 or Electrical Safety Act 2002 about serious notifiable incidents.

The Minister for Housing and Public Works, Sam O'Connor, said in his introductory speech to the bill—

The double-reporting requirement introduced for QBCC licensees was fit for purpose at the time.

The minister then adds—

The current system requires some licensees to report the same incident twice: once to the workplace health and safety regulator and again to the QBCC. It creates confusion, can slow down response times and can risk key details being missed or delayed.

This bill is consistent with the intent of section 54A and the recommendation from the Central Coroner, Magistrate O'Connell. This bill retains the two types of safety matters that are to be reported. However, instead of providing two reports to two regulators, a serious safety incident will now be reported through information-sharing arrangements between the QBCC and the regulator under the Work Health and Safety Act and the Electrical Safety Act.

Clause 26 of the bill preserves the two types of safety matters to be reported under section 54A of the QBCC Act. However, instead of QBCC licensees being required to provide separate notifications about a relevant safety matter to two different regulators, the bill seeks to amend section 54A. We are removing duplication, not responsibility. These changes do not weaken safety; they strengthen it. What changes is how regulators communicate, not what must be reported. This bill provides for section 54A to be amended to increase the maximum penalty for noncompliance from 80 penalty units to 100 penalty units. This amendment serves to underscore that the Crisafulli government takes work safety matters seriously.

In closing, the Crisafulli government is taking a careful and methodical approach to reforming the construction industry. These reforms come after a decade of Labor's jobs for CFMEU mates in the construction industry. I commend the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 to the House.