



Speech By
Hon. Samuel O'Connor
MEMBER FOR BONNEY

Record of Proceedings, 27 June 2025

QUEENSLAND BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION COMMISSION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. ST O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth) (10.30 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Building Act 1975, the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018 and the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 [821](#).

Tabled paper: Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, explanatory notes [822](#).

Tabled paper: Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, statement of compatibility with human rights [823](#).

I rise to introduce the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This bill continues the Crisafulli government's commitment to make it easier and safer to build in Queensland. These reforms sit under what we call the Building Reg Reno, a staged, commonsense overhaul of construction regulation in Queensland. Two tranches of reforms have already been delivered and today's bill introduction marks the rollout of tranche 3.

Earlier this year, we paused and delayed impending regulations to provide breathing space for industry. We gave small builders and tradies time to adapt while the Queensland Productivity Commission undertakes its inquiry reviewing the factors driving productivity in the Queensland construction sector. We have already removed annual financial reporting requirements for over 97 per cent of QBCC licensees. That is around 50,000 small operators freed from doing unnecessary paperwork so they can focus on what they do best: building homes, training apprentices and growing local businesses.

This bill now supports the Queensland Building and Construction Commission, our building regulator, to move fully into the digital age. Tradies and contractors should be able to access their licences just like they do with a driver's licence or a marine licence: quickly, securely and online. This bill removes the outdated requirements the QBCC currently has to operate with to modernise this important regulator. This includes enabling fully electronic applications for licences, including attaching certified passport-size photographs for those applying for a licence under the QBCC Act.

The bill makes other amendments such as clarifying that a physical licence card must be returned if a licence is surrendered, suspended or cancelled. Importantly, QBCC licensees will be able to choose whether they access their licence digitally or whether they wish to only have a physical licence; the digital licence is optional, not mandatory. The bill also introduces the ability for documents to be served by email under the QBCC Act where QBCC licensees have provided their email address to

communicate with the QBCC. To support this, the bill will ensure particular personal information, such as phone numbers and email addresses, are updated with the QBCC in a timely fashion. We must make it easier for the QBCC, their licensees and their customers to interact electronically where they choose to do so. Importantly, I reiterate the digital licence will be optional. No-one is being forced to change, but those who want a faster, simpler experience will soon have that choice. These are practical improvements, they reduce red tape and finally modernise how we do business in this state.

I now want to directly address the second element of the bill, improving how serious safety incidents on building sites are reported. These provisions originally resulted from a tragic situation, the death of Jason Garrels on a building site in Clermont in 2012. Following a Coroner's inquiry, amendments were made in 2017 to ensure the QBCC is aware of serious safety incidents on building sites and can take appropriate action. The double-reporting requirement introduced for QBCC licensees was fit for purpose at the time. This involved the insertion of new section 54A, requiring the notification of particular safety matters. There was also strong advocacy for change to ensure everything possible is being done to prevent what happened to Jason happening to anyone else and to hold persons responsible to account. This bill enhances that legacy.

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 resolves that. The bill retains the two types of safety matters that are to be reported: a notifiable incident on a building site under the licensee's control or on which the licensee is carrying out building work, and contravention of a notice or injunction issued under the Work Health and Safety Act or the Electrical Safety Act. Instead of providing two reports to two regulators in the wake of a serious safety incident, regulators will now share this important information directly and securely from a single point of contact. The QBCC will still be notified but by the WHS regulator, using tested, reliable, administrative channels which have been established and improved in the near decade since the original amendment. These improved information-sharing arrangements will support the timely provision of this information to the QBCC. As I have said, these arrangements are already being tested between the regulators and are functioning well. This bill brings our legislation in line with how the process works between our regulators. It will create a smarter, faster and more accurate system.

We are removing duplication, not responsibility. For tradies, that means safer worksites. Regulators will be on the same page, acting on the same facts and potentially able to intervene sooner when something goes wrong. We are also increasing the penalty for failing to report a serious safety breach, from 80 to 100 penalty units. That is a clear signal: safety reporting is not optional and failing to comply carries greater consequences. Under these provisions, the QBCC has been able to take action against licensees. This has ranged across show cause notices, disciplinary action, conditions imposed on licences, licence suspensions, including immediate suspensions, and licence cancellations. This bill keeps the intent of the law intact while making the reporting system work faster.

We want safer worksites across Queensland. These reforms ensure the right people get the right information faster. That means streamlined investigations from regulators, quicker interventions and, ultimately, a safer construction industry. We are not trading safety for convenience; we are building a better system, one that is fit for purpose in 2025.

This bill is about making our building industry more productive, more responsive and more accountable. I am advised the serious safety notification elements are a process improvement only, not a change to what is being achieved. Subject to the bill's passage, I propose reviewing the ongoing effectiveness of these arrangements after two years to confirm the changes are working as intended. That is to ensure the QBCC remains aware of serious safety incidents on building sites when they occur so they take appropriate action.

This bill delivers regulatory relief, enables modernisation and digitalisation and, crucially, it strengthens the safety system for workers across our state. Queenslanders deserve and expect a customer focused experience when dealing with government. The bill will make it easier for the QBCC, its licensees and other customers to use digital services when they choose to do so. It is what the industry has asked for, it is what tradies deserve and it is what Queenslanders expect from their government.

I want to acknowledge some of our hardworking public servants from our building policy team who are in the gallery today to see this bill's introduction. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. ST O'CONNOR (Bonney—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth) (10.39 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee.