




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

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

Second Reading

 **Mr JAMES** (Mulgrave—LNP) (12.28 pm): I rise today to speak to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This bill represents a significant step forward for Queensland's building and construction industry, ensuring our regulatory framework is both modern and responsive to the evolving needs of the industry participants, consumers and the broader community. The first objective is to ensure a modernised regulatory framework for the Queensland Building and Construction Commission, QBCC. In particular, we aim to support the QBCC's transition to providing more services digitally, improving both efficiency and the customer experience. The third key objective is to streamline workplace safety notifications, boosting productivity without compromising on safety standards.

The changes proposed in this bill form part of the broader Building Reg Reno package of reforms. These reforms are all about improving productivity whilst ensuring regulatory controls remain efficient and risk-based and that building standards are upheld. Tranches 1 and 2 have already delivered regulatory relief, including pausing the further rollout of trust accounts, removing annual financial reporting requirements for some licensees and extending licensing timeframes. The amendments before us today represent tranche 3 of these reforms. Work continues on tranche 4, which will further impose review pathways, facilitate sharing of building certifier documentation, modernise licensing and insurance thresholds and ensure greater consistency and equity across building related legislation.

The QBCC stands as Queensland's primary building industry regulator, an independent statutory body responsible for several acts including the Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991, the Building Act 1975 and the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2017. The legislative framework under these acts is comprehensive, covering contractor, occupational, building certifier, pool safety inspector and plumbing and drainage licences as well as dispute resolution, building rectification, review processes and the Queensland Home Warranty Scheme. Queenslanders can now access a range of licences, including driver's and marine recreational licences, on the Queensland Digital Licence app. However, progress has been hampered by outdated legislative requirements. The current QBCC Act, for instance, requires licences to be issued in the form of a card and mandates the provision of two certified passport-size photographs for licence applications. These requirements are no longer practical in the digital age and create unnecessary inefficiencies and regulatory burdens. There is a clear need to simplify and streamline these legislative provisions.

Workplace safety is paramount. Amendments made in 2017 following the tragic death of Mr Jason Garrels required licensees to notify both the QBCC and the regulator under the Work Health and Safety Act or the Electrical Safety Act of serious notifiable safety incidents on building sites. The intent was to keep the QBCC informed and able to take appropriate action. Since then, improvements in information sharing between the QBCC and other regulators mean that duplicate reporting is no longer necessary.

Amendments to the Building Act, the Plumbing and Drainage Act and the QBCC Act will allow the QBCC to fully embrace digital technology, supporting initiatives to be a more modern regulator and improving efficiency and customer experience. For example, we are removing the requirement to issue hard copy licence cards, enabling licensees to access their licence via the Queensland Digital Licence app.

This bill also introduces pathways to serve documents digitally, requiring licensees to notify the QBCC of changes to their email address to ensure timely communication. Importantly, licensees, consumers and the QBCC customers will retain the choice of how they communicate with the QBCC, whether that is by post, in person or electronically. These changes introduce greater operational flexibility, reduce barriers to efficient business transactions and support the QBCC's move to a more customer focused environment.

Regarding workplace safety notifications, the bill simplifies the process. If a QBCC licensee is required to notify the regulator under the Workplace Health and Safety Act or the Electrical Safety Act, they will not need to also notify the QBCC. Information-sharing arrangements will ensure the QBCC is kept informed. This does not alter the policy intent. Serious safety matters will continue to be reported and dealt with appropriately. Operationally, notification processes will be improved to ensure the regulator can properly provide information to the QBCC about serious safety incidents. The QBCC will retain the power to take disciplinary action where necessary such as when the building work has caused death or grievous bodily harm or there is a serious risk to health or safety.

Other important amendments include extending investigators' powers to require an individual's email address where there is reasonable suspicion of an offence and allowing attendance at interviews via technology. These changes support compliance and make it easier for people to engage with the QBCC, particularly where physical attendance may be difficult. The bill also introduces a requirement for licensees to advise the QBCC of changes to their contact details within 14 days, with a modest penalty for noncompliance. Accurate contact information is crucial for effective communication, particularly in cases such as insolvency where business addresses may no longer be valid. The penalty is balanced to encourage compliance without being unduly onerous.

This bill does not introduce additional costs for government or regulators. Instead, it complements and supports work already underway to increase the QBCC's digital capabilities and service offerings, improving customer service, streamlining process and lowering costs. It removes legislative barriers to electronic service delivery, creating a regulatory environment fit for the 21st century.

Consultation has occurred with the QBCC and key industry stakeholders, with broad support for reforms. The Building Ministerial Advisory Council, which includes representatives from major industry bodies, has provided valuable input and support for these changes. In terms of consistency with other jurisdictions, it is important to note that, while each state and territory has its own regulatory framework, there is a broad move towards digital service delivery across Australia.

In summary, the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 modernises our regulatory framework, supports digital transformation, streamlines safety reporting and improves flexibility and efficiency for both the QBCC and industry participants. It is a practical, forward-looking reform package that will deliver real benefits for Queenslanders working in or interacting with the building and construction industry. I commend the bill to the House.