




Speech By
Hon. Samuel O'Connor
MEMBER FOR BONNEY

Record of Proceedings, 10 February 2026

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Housing Supply

 **Hon. ST O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth) (2.41 pm): We are in a housing crisis in this state because Labor chose to back the CFMEU over backing Queenslanders. The way that Labor ran construction and procurement policies meant that it took longer and cost more to build here than anywhere else in the country and housing supply just could not keep up. That is why the Crisafulli government swiftly re-established the independent Queensland Productivity Commission and asked them to look at what needed to change. The commission's findings were clear: since 2018 under Labor's policy settings construction productivity in Queensland declined by around nine per cent. That meant that construction costs rose, housing supply did not keep pace with demand, rents increased, and home ownership slipped further out of reach for far too many Queenslanders.

The independent commission found that Queensland has seen 77,000 fewer homes built than it otherwise should have seen since 2018. Its final report shows that today around 15,000 fewer homes are being built each year than were being built 30 years ago. That is despite technological advances and our state having a much larger population and far greater demand for housing. Those homes were not lost to the market; they were lost to Labor's bad management. Queenslanders today are paying the price. Some 53 per cent of Queenslanders aged 25 to 29 owned a home in 1971. By 2021 that figure had fallen to just 35 per cent.

Our response to the Productivity Commission is about fixing a broken system, which is why we have agreed, or agreed in principle, to the overwhelming majority of the commission's recommendations—over 80 per cent of the recommendations. We are already delivering reforms to make it easier to build in our state. Around half of the actions in the government's response are to be delivered by my department. There were few things more damaging than Labor's CFMEU tax, the so-called Best Practice Industry Conditions, BPICs. BPICs shut out more than 99 per cent of subcontractors from major government projects, crushing competition and driving up costs across the entire construction sector. That is why our government has now scrapped BPICs for good. Under our Queensland Procurement Policy 2026 we have overhauled government procurement, restoring competition and backing small and family businesses across our state.

The commission of inquiry into the CFMEU has today heard evidence that BPICs have cost Queensland between \$13 billion and \$40 billion since they were introduced. Imagine what else government could have delivered for that sort of money. It could have delivered homes for our most vulnerable, it could have delivered hospitals, it could have delivered road projects. The evidence is also clear from the inquiry that Labor ministers knew the damage these policies would cause. Industry warned them. They begged them not to put BPICs in place, but Labor persisted. We have heard shocking allegations today that the member for Miller was issuing pro-CFMEU directions to his department in negotiations. The member for Springwood, as late as April 2024 when he ran the public

works department, was giving confidential feedback on subbies' prequalifications through a procurement process to Michael Ravbar and running those subbies by him to see if they were acceptable. These are shocking allegations. As the CEO of the Civil Contractors Federation told the inquiry, BPIC was the most damaging policy for construction productivity and the affordability of capital works that he had seen in over 30 years in the construction industry.

We are cutting red tape. We are pausing costly and duplicative requirements. We are reducing reporting burdens that added cost without improving outcomes. We have already delivered three of four tranches of our Building Reg Reno reforms. We have new legislation, to be introduced in coming months, to continue to make it easier to build in our state. We are fixing Labor's mess with practical, commonsense changes, including targeted planning and regulatory reforms, and the Queensland Housing Code to improve consistency and reduce delays for straightforward housing types.

A more productive construction sector is not an abstract economic concept—it delivers real benefits for Queenslanders. It means young families can get into their dream home sooner because projects are being delivered on time, it means new and upgraded schools and hospitals are delivered sooner and Queenslanders get the services that they deserve when they need them. Queensland ground to a halt under Labor. This government is turning that around to make it easier to build across our state and fixing the housing crisis we inherited. That is what Queenslanders expect and it is what the Crisafulli government is delivering.