

Question on Notice

No. 442

Asked on 23 April 2026

MR P RUSSO ASKED THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR JUSTICE AND MINISTER FOR INTEGRITY (HON D FRECKLINGTON)

QUESTION:

With reference to media reports that suppliers of critical construction materials are requiring developers to accept new levies or conditions before guaranteeing supply, contributing to increases in the cost of building a new home—

Will the Attorney-General advise (a) what powers or mechanisms are available to the Crisafulli Government, including the Office of Fair Trading, to monitor, investigate or respond to such conduct in the construction materials sector and (b) what actions have been taken by the Crisafulli Government to date to identify, monitor or investigate the imposition of such levies or supply conditions?

ANSWER:

Australia has a free-market economy where traders can set their own prices for goods and services.

Market conditions impact prices for goods and services, and changes in a competitive market, including a reduction in supply, can play a role in the pricing decisions made by traders.

Activities occurring in trade or commerce are regulated by the Australian Consumer Law (ACL), which is administered by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission and state and territory consumer protection agencies, including the Office of Fair Trading (OFT).

The ACL contains protections for consumers and small businesses under which a court can declare that a term within a standard form contract is unfair and void.

In accordance with the ACL, a standard form contract is one that is provided on a 'take it or leave it' basis – a template contract that applies to all purchasers rather than an individual contract where the parties can negotiate the charges, terms and conditions. A small business is one that employs fewer than 100 people or has a turnover less than \$10 million.

If consumers or small businesses have concerns they are being subjected to unfair contract terms in a standard form contract, they can raise the issue with OFT. Complaints can be lodged online at www.qld.gov.au/fairtrading.