



MEDIA STATEMENT

1 November 2017

Australia's toughest building product safety laws start

New laws that give the State's building industry watchdog powers to clean up unsafe building sites and rid the supply chain of dodgy building products, have come into effect today.

The Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) Commissioner Brett Bassett said the laws brought the QBCC's powers into line with other regulators and will make more people accountable for safety on our building sites.

"For most people in the building and construction industry who already do the right thing and use the right products, the laws will have little impact on their business," Mr Bassett said.

"These laws shift the unbalanced burden of responsibility for non-conforming building products (NCBPs), away from the installers at the end of the supply chain, to everyone in the supply chain.

"This chain of responsibility includes building product designers, manufacturers, importers, suppliers and installers, and the laws mean that everyone can be held accountable when a building product is found to be non-conforming.

"Non-conforming building products are building products that are not of acceptable quality, do not meet Australian standards, are not fit for their intended purpose, or contain false or misleading claims.

"The presence of NCBPs in Queensland's building and construction industry puts lives at risk and has financial impacts on manufacturers and industry participants who adhere to legislated standards.

"Everyone in the supply chain now also has an obligation to report suspected non-conforming building products, to the QBCC.

"The QBCC will be able to investigate incidents of NCBPs and take appropriate safety or disciplinary action as needed.

"Our approach will be risk-based and we will be taking a facilitated regulatory response to compliance. We will help people in the chain of responsibility to comply through education, but disciplinary action will be available if appropriate.

“These new laws are so important to keep those who work in the building and construction industry safe, as well as building owners and those that frequent Queensland buildings.

“The recent Grenfell Tower tragedy in London has shown what can happen when building products are used incorrectly.

“The legislation also strengthens workplace health and safety, by providing requirements for QBCC licensees to notify the QBCC about any death or serious injury of a person on a work site, or any incident on a site that exposes a person to a risk of serious injury or illness.

“The changes also give the QBCC the power to take disciplinary action against a licensee when building or other work on a building site under the licensee’s control has caused the death of, or grievous bodily harm to a person, or involved a serious risk to the health and safety of a person.

“This legislative change has been a direct result of the advocacy by Lee and Michael Garrels, whose son Jason died in a workplace accident in 2012.

“The Building and Construction Legislation (Non-Conforming Building Products – Chain of Responsibility) Amendment Bill 2017 now gives Queensland the most comprehensive building product laws in Australia.”

The Bill was passed in Parliament in August, and proclamation is today.

For more information, and to report NCBPs please visit the QBCC website at www.qbcc.qld.gov.au/non-conforming-building-products.

Details on how the new laws affect the QBCC and people in the industry will also be presented in this month’s Tradie Tours, to attend a session near you, visit: <https://www.qbcc.qld.gov.au/education-engagement/education-engagement-in...>

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