



NEWS

67 Banned Under Tough Building Reforms

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A Parliamentary Estimates Committee heard today that 67 individuals had either been disqualified or banned from working in Queensland's building and construction industry over the last 12 months.

Minister for Public Works, Housing and Racing said that legislation introduced by the Beattie Government in July 2003 was the toughest in Australia and was already cleaning-up the industry.

"The new laws will help rid the industry of dangerous building work and provide greater protection for Queenslanders from rip-off merchants and phoenix companies (failed companies that resurrect with changed identities)," he said.

Mr Schwarten said three individuals had now been permanently excluded from working in Queensland's building and construction industry.

George Weeden Dawes Jorgensen, George Ikstrums and Elwin Hall Cook have all been banned for life for repeated financial failure.

"There is no place for builders who repeatedly fail financially, leaving creditors, including sub-contractors, in the lurch," he said.

"Consumer and investor confidence is essential in this \$18 billion industry, so we must do everything we can to ensure the industry is free of disreputable characters who damage the industry's reputation for the vast majority of honest operators."

In May, Ahmad Habib became the first individual to be disqualified from the industry for three years for performing tier one defective work - grossly defective building work.

"Another two individuals, Stephen George Watt and Paul Rotheram, faced three year bans for failing to pay subcontractors and 61 individuals have now been banned for five years for financial failure," he said.

Mr Schwarten said from 1 October, the Building and Construction Industry Payments Act 2004 would further improve payment outcomes for industry.

"Non-payment will result in BSA licensees attracting a judgment debt which is penalised by the issuing of ten demerit points against the licence, he said.

Obtaining 30 demerit points in a three year period will result in a three year licence disqualification.

"For non-licensees receiving a judgment debt can trigger a winding up order or bankruptcy proceedings against the relevant company or individual, through a court of relevant jurisdiction."

"Honest contractors, subcontractors and suppliers will benefit from the tough new measures."

Mr Schwarten said BSA would continue to provide greater protection for Queensland consumers and raise industry standards.