

MEDIA STATEMENT

12 June, 2015

Stricter penalties for building offences

Tougher penalties will apply from 1 July for contractors who commit building offences.

The Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC) says the increased penalties will help to boost compliance with building standards and provide more options for removing recalcitrant licensees.

QBCC Acting Commissioner, Kellie Lowe, said a limited number of offences currently attracted demerit points and the number of points for each offence was insufficient to deter some contractors from doing the wrong thing.

The changes will provide the QBCC with an increased number of demerit offences and an increase in the demerit points attached to some offences. For example, a contractor who carries out defective or incomplete work and then fails to rectify the work when directed will be penalised 10 points instead of the current two.

"These changes will target activities where non-compliance can have significant impacts on consumers," Ms Lowe said. "For example, inadequate supervision is the main contributor to defective building work. By applying demerit points to supervision offences, contractors will be encouraged to closely supervise work and ensure it complies with relevant standards."

The changes will help to ensure all contractors are accountable for their work and follow last month's introduction of the 'Subcontractor Accountability for Defective Work' policy.

A person accumulating 30 demerit points with three years will have their licence cancelled and be disqualified from holding a licence for three years. If the person accumulates another 30 demerit points within 10 years of the first ban, they will be disqualified for life.

Some examples of offences which will attract demerit points from 1 July include when:

- a licensed contractor directs an unlicensed person to undertake work
- a contractor attempts to conceal their poor financial position and non-compliance with financial requirements
- a contract, contract document or variation is not in writing, is incomplete, or is not provided to the owner.

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