

Media Release

Building industry welcomes small business support

June 11, 2019

The State Government's move to boost the powers of the Small Business Commissioner has been endorsed by Master Builders.

Master Builders Executive Director John Gelavis said small business owners were the core of the association's membership, including many subcontractors and suppliers, so any changes to enhance commercial conduct within the industry were welcome.

"The changes to the *Small Business Development Corporation Act 1983* will require further review by Master Builders to fully understand the implications to the industry, however the right of everyone in the building process to be treated fairly is paramount," he said.

"It is vital to ensure small and family businesses and subcontractors are paid in full and on-time. The overwhelming majority do the right thing and anyone who doesn't should be called to account, including state and local government departments.

"We understand the new rules will allow the Small Business Commissioner to shield subcontractors from retribution for complaints by protecting their identity but we also expect businesses to be protected from vexatious and baseless accusations.

"Builders and subcontractors will welcome the State Government's focus on improving the standard of commercial conduct within industry.

"Master Builders has previously recommended the State Government, through its procurement agencies such as Building Management and Works, adopt the following initiatives:

- Adopt more innovative procurement models such as early contractor involvement on some of its bigger projects
- Use more qualitative criteria to appoint builders rather than relying on lowest price
- Ensure contracts have a fair and equitable apportionment of risk with the builder
- Appointment of independent superintendents to oversee projects and ensure builders pay subcontractors on time
- Ongoing financial performance measurements.

"Master Builders urges the State Government to commit to continue working with industry on effective and lasting outcomes, while resisting simple solutions to what can be complex problems."

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