

Safer Buildings Taskforce

Terms of Reference

Overview

The Safer Buildings Taskforce (the Taskforce) is a dedicated Taskforce with a focus on delivering the necessary policy and practice to ensure the safety of Queensland's building infrastructure is maintained.

The Taskforce was established in October 2019 and will continue to build on the work of the previous Non-Conforming Building Products Audit Taskforce.

The Taskforce reports to the Safer Buildings Inter-Departmental Committee (SB IDC) – refer to Terms of Reference for the SB IDC for further details in relation to the governance arrangements.

The Taskforce Chair will provide monthly progress reports to the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement.

Purpose

The Taskforce is to identify and make recommendations to government on two key issues:

1. Provide oversight, advice and guidance about remediation of private affected buildings as these buildings move into Part 3 of the Combustible Cladding Checklist. This part is set to run until 3 May 2021.
2. Further advance Queensland as the nation's leader in implementing recommendations from the Building Confidence Report.

Membership

The Safer Buildings Taskforce shall be comprised of the following positions or their delegates:

Independent Chair	Peter Koutsoukis
Deputy Chair	Director, Building Surveying, Department of Energy and Public Works (DEPW)
Committee Members	Superintendent and Executive Manager, Cladding Support Unit, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
	Director Non-Conforming Building Products and Safer Buildings, Queensland Building and Construction Commission
	Member, Board of Professional Engineers of Queensland (BPEQ)
	Director, Building Legislation and Policy, DEPW

Independent experts and attendees: The Taskforce Chair can appoint independent experts as Committee Members as required and may invite additional attendees to provide relevant expertise, advice and/or presentations.

Priorities

The priorities of the Taskforce are (in order):

1. Oversee the ongoing systematic assessment and remediation and/or rectification of combustible cladding material, or any other significant historical defects. This is to include reviewing the availability and quality of safer buildings program data.
2. Provide options that effectively deal with the decline in availability and affordability of professional indemnity insurance for private building certifiers and other building industry professionals.
3. Provide regular reporting to the SB IDC regarding the assessment of buildings and associated rectification or remediation activities in a way that does not unduly undermine the public confidence in the safety of existing buildings.
4. Provide advice to the Minister on the need for a legislative framework to compel rectification of private buildings, if necessary (i.e. if private building owners are not taking timely and appropriate action).
5. Provide advice and develop a framework to assist building owners (both public and private) to actively pursue avenues available to recover costs from parties that are accountable and/or have contributed to the building defects, including potential class actions.
6. Provide advice to the Minister on the implementation of recommendations from the Building Confidence Report identified by the Building Ministers' Meeting to be priorities, namely:
 - a. Registration of categories of building practitioners (recommendation 1)
 - b. Consistent requirements for registration (recommendation 2)
 - c. Accelerate new processes for the design, construction and certification of complex buildings. Fire Safety Officers must have a legislated role throughout this process (recommendation 13)
 - d. Minimum statutory controls to mitigate conflicts of interest and increase transparency of private building surveyors (recommendation 9)
 - e. Provide private building surveyors with enhanced supervisory powers and mandatory reporting obligations (recommendation 11)
 - f. Building approval documentation that complies with the National Construction Code (recommendation 13).
7. Support and assist DEPW's review of Queensland's non-conforming building products and chain of responsibility legislation.
8. Facilitate the transition of work that has been led by DEPW to support the technical competency of Queensland building professionals through the Combustible Cladding Checklist to the BPEQ or other appropriate bodies.
9. Develop, for Ministerial consideration, an industry and community communication strategy to maintain confidence in Queensland's building and construction industry. This is to include reviewing the availability of online public information regarding the safety and structural integrity of the built environment in Queensland.

10. Build relationships with key stakeholders (internal and external to government) to understand their views on important issues and to maintain Queensland's leading position in responding to Building Confidence Report recommendations.
11. Share information across agencies and levels of government to facilitate the purpose of the Taskforce.
12. Other activities identified by the Taskforce or the SB IDC as being relevant to the purpose of the Taskforce.